THE MULTICULTURAL HISTORY OF BRITISH FOOD

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Spicing Up Britain

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For my wife Mundeep

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Preface

This book has deep roots in my own personal and academic life. Born to Greek Cypriot immigrants in London in 1962, I could not speak English until I went to school in 1967. During the next few years of my life I negotiated the path from child of Cypriot migrants to fully paid up member of multicultural British (or perhaps London) society by quickly learning to speak the language of the ethnic majority (as happens with children).

The food I ate in my new environment played a central role in my understanding of the differences between the two cultures I encountered. As I grew up, my own domestic consumption increasingly became anglicized as my parents backed down from forcing me and my two sisters, Myllia and Rodothea, to eat pulses cooked either in Mediterranean-style tomato flavouring or simply boiled, with olive oil and lemon juice poured on to them. Instead we chose to eat processed food such as fish fingers, baked beans and sausages, which our peers would have sampled. However, we did not offer much resistance to other Greek products such as stuffed vine leaves, pastichio or kebabs, so that we ate a variety of foods at home, while at school we tried the meals available which, in the 1960s and much of the 1970s, remained healthy.

While this book does not focus upon cakes to any great extent, they have played a central role in my life because my father, Nestoras, worked as a pastry cook from the age of twelve, initially as an apprentice to his uncle, who owned the most famous patisserie in Nicosia, Halepi, and then for various Greek Cypriots in London, where he became a leader in his trade, producing thousands of wedding cakes over four decades. For my father and his children cakes did not mean doughnuts and Mr Kipling cream slices but black forest gateaux, fresh cream éclairs and a variety of Middle Eastern delicacies made with filo pastry, which we ate (and still eat as far as possible) on a daily basis.

More recently, coinciding with the research and writing of this book, I have married Mundeep, an Indian Sikh, which has made my domestic food consumption increasingly interesting. If I had not already understood the complexities of multicultural and globalized Britain, then making food choices for a London-born couple with different ethnicities would have introduced me to them in a rewarding way.

This book has academic as well as personal roots. I have spent my career focusing on the history of migrants and ethnic minorities. While much of my

work initially looked at racism, following the dominant research agenda of the 1980s, at the end of the 1990s I put together a collection of documents on the impact of immigration on post-war Britain:[1] I realized that migration had played a central role in the development of the country both before and after 1945. While some scholars had carried out work on the importance of newcomers, nobody had tackled their impact on British food, which I suspected was quite profound. My own personal history, as the son of a Greek Cypriot pastry cook in London, therefore moved me towards this study.

While the book focuses on the impact of immigration on the transformation of British food since the Victorian period, it also pays attention to two other equally important structural social and economic developments: the increasing wealth of the British population over the past 150 years and globalization. During the middle of the nineteenth century the majority of the population was concerned simply with eating enough food to stay alive. While some critics of contemporary consumption might make the same point about eating patterns in twenty-first century Britain[2] (although by this time many Britons eat far more than they need to stay alive), choice has become bewildering. Just as importantly, globalization has also transformed British eating habits since the Victorian period, as new products have entered the country either as a result of the British Empire, increasing international trade or the influence of multinational companies, especially since 1945.

Despite the title of the book, the introductory chapter discusses the problems of assigning nationalities to food. Before 1950, in an age of Total War and before the spread of affluence, concepts of British – as opposed to foreign – foods hardly existed. This situation changed as a result of post-war immigration and brand labelling. From the 1960s increasing numbers of Britons visited Chinese and Indian restaurants to sample foods vastly different from the dishes they had eaten during the 'Age of Austerity'. The migrants did not serve the foods which they ate in their own homes. Instead, they created a commodity geared to increasingly affluent Britons. Commodification continued when supermarkets and multinationals manufactured ready-cooked meals based on those available in 'foreign' restaurants. Behind these developments, cookbooks focusing on different national cuisines increasingly appeared. While books on curry certainly existed before 1945, volumes on Italian, Chinese, Greek or any other food according to nationality have only surfaced in the past six decades.

Although eating has increasingly become categorized along national lines since 1945, many foods in Britain before that time had international origins. This applies to many staples including potatoes, chocolate, curry (which appeared in virtually every British cookbook before 1945) and even fish and chips. Such products had become domesticated, as would others which were introduced to the country after the Second World War. Food since the middle of the nineteenth century has therefore followed previous patterns. Increasing

wealth, internationalization and immigration have accelerated earlier developments.

After an introduction on concepts of British and foreign food, the book has two major sections. Part II examines the century before 1945 while Part III tackles the period since then. The extent of dietary change since the Second World War exceeded that of the preceding century. Since 1945 a culinary revolution has taken place in Britain. Within the entire period since the middle of the nineteenth century, the book tackles three basic themes. First, it examines the food of migrants themselves – from the European arrivals of the nineteenth century to the newcomers from all over the world after 1945. Virtually all migrants wished to eat the foods of their homelands and therefore established shops to supply them. In the initial stages of the migration process they could often not obtain such foods but as settlers and, especially, their descendants, became accustomed to their new environment, they increasingly adopted the foods of their neighbours and often created their own variations of locally available dishes.

The book also looks at the development of eating out since the Victorian period, where foreign influences have been profound. These are most obvious in the evolution of Chinese, Indian, Italian and other nationally defined restaurants after 1945. However, since the late nineteenth century, migrants have played a central role in the establishment of all places for eating out (whether or not they define themselves as foreign) as owners, waiters and chefs. Such eateries range from the Ritz to the local fish and chip shop. Furthermore, in the post-war period, multinationals, above all McDonalds, have also introduced foreign foods, symbolized by the hamburger, into Britain.

Attention is also focused on changes in the domestic eating habits of the population as a whole. By the middle of the nineteenth century, many staples certainly had foreign origins and had already become domesticated. Until 1945 the improvement in diet represents the main change which occurred, although even during the interwar years some sections of the population still suffered from nutritional deficiencies. Foreign influences manifested themselves in a variety of ways, including the increasing dependence of Britain upon imports, the adaptation of middle-class dining habits from the Continent and the role of migrant cookery writers and entrepreneurs. After 1945 a revolution occurred in the domestic consumption patterns of the British. While the quality of food may not have improved drastically for much of the population,[3] increasing wealth and growing consumer choice means that Britons have an enormous range of products available to them, marketed in a variety of ways, including nationality and ethnicity.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century food patterns in Britain differ vastly from those of 150 years earlier. Consumption has become increasingly internationalized. While the commodification of foods according to national

origin partly accounts for this change, the influence of particular streams of immigration has played a fundamental role in the choice of foreign products available. Chinese and South Asians have had the largest impact in providing overtly foreign foods, while other groups such as Jews, Greek Cypriots and Italians have opened up firms and restaurants which sell overtly British products.

The book concentrates on food and pays virtually no attention to drink which warrants a book on its own. Growing consumption of wine, lager, fizzy drinks and fruit juices may, like the spread of curry and pasta, be explained by internationalization, increasing wealth and commodification, but it has less to do with the influence of migrants.

Although this is a national study, there is a focus on two particular locations: London, a global capital and important culinary centre, which has acted as a magnet for immigration during the past 150 years; and Leicester, a much smaller location, with few international culinary traditions, which experienced little immigration before the 1970s, although it now has one of the largest 'Asian' communities (especially Gujaratis of East African origin) in Britain.

A book which covers a period of 150 years can only provide a survey. It does not offer an all-encompassing picture of dietary trends since 1850. Instead, it points to the ways in which globalization, increasing wealth and immigration have transformed the eating patterns of Britons. Since the Victorian period, food has increasingly developed an ethnic and international identity, largely because of the influence of big business and marketing techniques, but also because of the impact of specific groups of migrants. This identity, like the identities of the migrants who produce much of it, remains hybrid, undergoing a process of transformation and domestication in the move from the land of origin to Britain.

Part I

Introduction

Chapter One

British and Foreign Food

> The English have never had a cuisine. Even Yorkshire pudding comes from Burgundy.[1]

Although stereotypes of British food have tended to focus on two apparently endemic problems – its poor quality and its blandness[2] – by the beginning of the twenty-first century Britain had apparently developed into one of the leading culinary centres in the world, counting the highest number of top restaurants.[3] It has surpassed even France, regarded as the birthplace and home of taste and good cooking.[4] Just as importantly, Britons, and above all Londoners, now have a bewilderingly diverse array of foods available to them both in restaurants and shops.

While the quality and range of British food may have changed recently, assumptions about quality and diversity need questioning in a historical context. But before dealing with these assumptions, we need to tackle more fundamental issues regarding the very basis of the concept of British food which, in turn, raises questions about the authenticity of all national cuisines.

During the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as nationalism developed into the predominant signifier of identity, it encompassed all aspects of life for individuals within specific nation states. Most of the leading theorists of nationalism have spoken about imagined and constructed nations and nation states,[5] even leading to the evolution of new languages, one of the most important signifiers of nationhood and identity in the modern world.[6] Nationalism has led to 'invention of tradition' leading to 'formalization and ritualization'. Traditions help the establishment 'of social cohesion or the membership of groups or artificial communities'.[7] The development of the British monarchy or the growth of the highland tradition provide examples of the establishment of particular traditions in Britain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[8]

Ben Rogers has pointed out that 'historians and sociologists have not taken much interest in nationalism of the culinary kind. Perhaps the (mainly male) academics who study nationalism think food is trivial or frivolous, but they never identify it for what it is – a vitally important ingredient and a potent

Cornish versus Chinese food, 2007.

source of xenophobia.'[9] Yet how exactly does theorizing about nationalism apply to food in Britain or any other nation state? We can turn to one of the main contemporary proponents of the virtues and concept of British food in the form of Gary Rhodes, who claims that, in contrast to British cuisine, French and Italian cooking is based on traditions. Rhodes asks:

> So what happened to us? Was it that the traditions weren't strong or numerous enough? Or was it that we just didn't have the passion for food and cooking that we associate with the French and Italians? Probably, on reflection, a combination of all these.

Rhodes claims that British, in contrast to French, food 'had always been simple – with wonderful ingredients like our own beef, which didn't need anything more fancy than just roasting'. He asserts that: 'Our cooking by the early to mid-1970s consisted of well-done roast beef, soggy Yorkshire puddings, mostly served with over-cooked cabbage and thick, floury gravy'. Rhodes's book on British food, which contains these extracts, provides a variety of recipes including those from 'the culinary traditions of other countries'.[10]

A more recent volume on 'English' food, by Rose Prince, has taken a more complex approach to the subject in hand, asserting that:

> The national cuisine may be fossilised in people's minds as pies, roasts and nursery puddings, but there is now no reason why it could not include the rice noodle dishes of Southeast Asia or the delicious food of the Mediterranean. This is after all a country with a five-hundred-year-old history of food piracy: borrowing ideas from other shores, importing their raw materials and learning to cultivate them in our soil.

Prince also emphasizes the role of 'multiculturalism' in changing the diet of Britain.[11]

The most significant aspect of Prince's *New English Kitchen* is the acceptance of the complexity of food in the country, as well as an acknowledgement of foreign influences, although it still operates around the idea of English and foreign food. This dichotomy has evolved over the past fifty years and did not influence the outlook of Isabella Beeton, generally regarded as the founder of the modern concept of English cookery. Rose Prince writes, 'True English food has always gone far beyond the Mrs Beeton concept of plain food economically produced.'[12] But Beeton's volume is not about English or British food but, as suggested in Prince's statement and in the title of Beeton's volume, *Household Management*. As Nicola Humble, the editor of one of the most recent editions of *Mrs Beeton*, has pointed out: 'It is a remarkable fact (and tells us much about the constituents of national identity in the nineteenth century) that there are roughly as many recipes in the book from India as from Wales, Scotland and Ireland put together'.[13] Beeton's book essentially contains recipes for the middle-class housewife, without making an issue of their national identity or what they mean concerning Englishness or Britishness.

In fact, cookbooks published in Britain over the past century and a half divide quite comfortably into three categories: those which have overtly made a case about their Englishness or Britishness; 'general cookbooks' without any claims about the national origins of the food concerned; and those which look at the cuisines of specific countries or ethnicities. The last group, which has particularly taken off since the 1950s, has focused especially on Indian, Chinese and Italian food. The proliferation of these volumes in recent decades points to the increasingly accepted idea that foods have nationalities or ethnicities.

British Food

The concept of British food has developed partly as a reaction to the increasing popularity of what we might describe as foreign foods. Before the Second World War the idea of British food, like the concept of foreign dishes, remained relatively undeveloped. Few cookbooks before 1950 specifically focused on British food. One of the earliest of such volumes is Anne Bowman's *The New Cookery Book: A Complete Manual of English and Foreign Cookery* of 1867. Interestingly, the author begins with a statement about perceived Continental views of English cooks, suggesting that such images have a long history: 'In the art of cookery it is well known that we are stigmatized by our lively and accomplished neighbours beyond the Channel. They believe that no amount of instruction and experience could make an English woman-cook produce a perfect dish.'[14] The book itself does not spend time distinguishing between English

and French foods, but instead boasts six hundred pages of recipes with origins throughout the world, in a similar fashion to Mrs Beeton, *On Sound Principles of Taste and Science*, to quote the subtitle of Bowman's book.

The next major volumes focusing on English food seem not to have emerged until the 1930s. Just before this a book appeared by P. Morton Shand mourning the death of English cooking; the author put this down to a variety of causes, including the 'factory age', which meant working mothers did not have time to cook, while 'free trade sounded the death knell of regional cuisines' as foreign imports entered the country, especially from the USA. In addition, one of the more 'particular causes of decay in English cooking [was] the worship of that Victorian golden calf, the joint'. Shand also complained that food was cooked too quickly in England. On the other hand, he particularly praised good English meat pies, as well as cheeses, but wrote that 'sausage-rolls are simply horrible'.[15]

One of Shand's key themes is the richness of regional food, a theme taken up by Louise Nicoll in her *English Cookery Book* from 1936. Nicoll had no space for international dishes, particularly as she eulogized 'farm housewives' who 'have inherited, or perforce have acquired, a tradition of good cookery, and it is not surprising that in England, where the best food is produced, the best cooking recipes can be found also'.[16] She grouped her recipes according to the seasons ('First', 'Second', 'Third' and 'Fourth'), each divided into 'soups', 'fish', 'vegetables and salads', 'meats' and 'sweet things'. There is barely a foreign word to be seen in these recipes. While concepts of English and British food existed before this time, this appears to be one of the first cookbooks to specifically set out to eulogize the idea.

In fact, the publication of this volume came after the foundation of the English Folk Cookery Association, which appears to have lasted less than a decade.[17] Founded by Florence White, it described itself as 'a learned society formed originally for purposes of research, with the firm intention of restoring England's former high standard of cookery'.[18] White's 1932 volume on *Good Things in England*, despairingly opens with the following sentence: 'This book is an attempt to capture the charm of England's cookery before it is completely crushed out of existence.'[19] The chapter headings in this volume include 'English Breakfasts', 'The Roast Meat of Old England' and 'Savoury Pies and Puddings'. It contains nearly four hundred pages of recipes. Interestingly, White makes an assertion about foreign influences in the introduction:

> Many of the recipes for dishes and cakes, etc., may have been introduced from other lands – we have always been adventurers willing to admire others and learn from them and deprecate our own, but those we liked have become naturalized and suited to our constitutions, and represent –

as far as 'receipts' and recipes go – our national taste in food, English cookery at its best.[20]

During the Second World War, the Ministry of Food published hundreds of recipes aimed at making rationing more palatable, but while 'British' ones predominated, the Ministry did not have any overt aim to develop a native cuisine.[21] In the middle of the 1950s, two British cookbooks appeared, one of which must be regarded as seminal. This is Dorothy Hartley's *Food in England*, a tour de force of nearly seven hundred pages. It boldly begins with the following assertion: 'English cooking is old-fashioned, because we like it that way.' She continues, 'We do enjoy foreign dishes and admire Continental cooks, but when we cook the foreign dishes, the dishes, like the foreigners, become "naturalised English".' She asserts that 'this book is for English cooks, and belongs to English kitchens'.[22] The richly illustrated pages that follow are partly recipe book but also a history of English food.

Philip Harben's *Traditional Dishes of Britain* preceded Hartley's book by a year. By this time Harben had become one of the best-known celebrity chefs in Britain, a status emphasized by his television appearances. For believers in the concept of British food, this is a must-read book. The chapter titles simply list the stereotypical stalwarts of the British diet: 'Cornish Pasty', 'Bakewell Pudding', 'Yorkshire Pudding', 'Shortbread', 'Lancashire Hotpot', 'Steak and Kidney Pudding', 'Jellied Eels', 'Haggis', 'Clotted Cream' and, of course, 'Fish and Chips' which, by this time, had become an important signifier of British identity. Harben tells us that, 'This is a book about the fine food of Britain and of some of the associations – historical, geographical, traditional – that go with it.' The first page is littered with contradictions and unsubstantiated statements: 'If Britain enjoys the reputation of providing the worst food in the world she has no one but herself to blame'; 'Our repertoire of national dishes . . . is the largest in the world'; 'Our cooks . . . for sheer technical skill are unmatched anywhere in the world'. Harben wants to remind the reader that 'we in Britain can cook'.[23] The individual chapters provide information on the origins (as far as Harben could discover them) of the dishes concerned as well as detailed recipes.

The central chapter covers fish and chips, for it is here that every stereotype about British food (and, indeed, about food and nationality generally) reveals itself. Harben begins:

> What is the national dish of Britain? This book is full, of course, of national dishes which are all popular favourites; but what is the national food? The teeming millions of Asia subsist mainly on rice. Macaroni in its various forms is the staple diet of Italy. Germany and sausages are almost synonymous. When you think of Scotland you think of porridge. What, then, is

> the national dish of Britain? The Roast Beef of Old England? Not a bit of it! The answer is: Fried Fish and Chips.[24]

Interestingly, Harben does not delve into the origins of fish and chips. If he had, he would have discovered its rather exotic origins. Fried fish probably evolved from Jewish traditions, while chips had French origins.[25] An article about 'the fish-frying trade' in the *Fish Trades Gazette* of 29 July 1922 claimed:

> Originally it started in Soho. In those days the frier used to buy all the scrag ends and left over pieces from the fishmonger's shops, take them home, and fry them in open cauldrons over an ordinary kitchen fire. When the portions were cold they were hawked round the poorer districts. Later there was introduced into this country the frying and purveying of chip potatoes from France, and it was really the introduction of chip potatoes as a corollary of fried fish which had made the fried fish trade what it is today.

Returning to Harben, had he visited some of the fish and chip shops which he describes in his chapter on the subject, he would have found that Greek Cypriots now owned increasing numbers of them.[26]

Yet by the 1950s even *The Times* had accepted the link between fish and chips and Britishness in an article, 'Fish and Chips Still Frying', about the success and popularity of this dish, again ignoring the ethnicity of its purveyors: 'For a native invention, something that has gradually come to occupy a place on the national menu only a shade less secure than roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, fish and chips is remarkably unsung in British literature or social

Greek Cypriot-owned fish and chip shop in Leicester, 2007.

history.' The 'Special Correspondent' assigned to this story makes this assertion despite the fact that he reveals that 'potatoes chipped and fried in the French manner were introduced in Lancashire with great success about 1871'.[27] Gilbert Adair, who previously analysed this connection between fish and chips and British national identity, stated that 'it may enable every Briton symbolically – if only for a while – to reassert his national identity, his oneness with a culture in decline'.[28] Similarly, John Walton has also pointed out that the link between fish and chips and Britishness had begun from the 1930s, taking off in the post-war decades.[29]

This connection still survives into the twenty-first century. During the early stages of the research for this volume, a press release calling for interviewees was taken up by the Press Association and turned into a story about the foreign origins of fish and chips, which led to media attention throughout the world. Even the *Financial Times* of 9 January 2004 carried an article entitled 'Kosher French Connection with Fish and Chips', while the *Daily Star* on the same morning ran a story under the banner 'Le Great British Feesh and Cheeps: It's Frog Nosh Claims Prof'. The BBC asked a representative from Harry Ramsden's fish and chip chain to comment on the story. An official statement declared: 'It's very interesting to hear the professor's findings on the origins of the ingredients that are still, and we're sure will always be, a great British tradition.'[30] The press release attracted attention among the extreme right in Britain, so that my name appeared on a Neo-Nazi website, with numerous public figures, under the heading 'Know Your Enemy'.[31]

What does this aside about fish and chips tell us about British food? In the first place, it seems clear that it has become an important signifier of Britishness since 1945, as indicated most clearly by Philip Harben, but also emphasized by the furore caused by my suggestion that it may have foreign origins. Such attitudes suggest that public perceptions of food in Britain revolve around the concepts of native and foreign. Nevertheless, apart from the extreme reaction and the rather fixed view of Harben, much of the press attention of 2004 did accept the possibility of foreign influences on British traditions. Yet the headlines of the *Financial Times* and the *Daily Star* clearly operate on the idea of British/foreign food, rather than the view that foods have no inherent national identities but are assigned them by food writers and journalists. The most relevant assertion here might be the previously quoted one of Dorothy Hartley that 'foreign dishes . . . like the foreigners, become "naturalised English"', the view essentially put forward by the spokesperson from Harry Ramsden. Following this discourse, and placing it within the age of post-war nationalism when food, like everything else, must have a nationality, it is certainly possible for 'traditional' British foods to have foreign origins but, ultimately, there comes a time when the food itself has to become naturalized, just like foreigners, to repeat Hartley's assertion.

Yet this discussion precisely illustrates the complexity of foods that subsequently have nationalities assigned to them. Most dishes and cuisines evolve through a variety of international influences, as Rose Prince has recognized with regard to contemporary British food and as even Gary Rhodes, who prides himself as a supporter of the idea of British food.

Since 1945 numerous cookbooks have appeared on the subject of British food with ideas somewhere between those of Harben and Hartley and the more enlightened volume by Prince. We can only glance at the most important of these. In 1965 Theodora Fitzgibbon published *The Art of British Cooking* which, with a brief introduction, contains nearly three hundred pages of recipes. Despite the title, she makes no grandiose statements and accepts that foreign ingredients have always influenced British food. She also makes the simple observation that 'foreign dishes, such as curry . . . have been adapted to suit British tastes'.[32]

Two important books on British cooking appeared in the middle of the 1970s. Elizabeth Ayrton, in her *Cookery of England*, plays with stereotypes of English cooking. She spends much time writing about what she sees as the historical battle between English and French food and concludes, 'There is no longer gastronomic war between France and England; the French have long been acknowledged to have the victory. But the vanquished have largely recovered'.[33] While admitting that 'many dishes came to England from the colonies and came to stay', including 'curries, pepperpot, kedgeree and turtle

Curry comes home.

soup',[34] Ayrton also accepts the concept of a native cuisine. The greater part of her book is devoted to recipes. Jane Grigson's *English Food* comes with a far more sober introduction pointing to the problems of the concept of national cuisines:

> No cookery belongs exclusively to its own country, or its region. Cooks borrow – and always have borrowed – and adapt through the centuries. Though the scale in either case isn't exactly the same, this is as true, for example, of French cooking as of English cooking. We have borrowed from France. France borrowed from Italy direct, and by way of Provence. The Romans borrowed from the Greeks, and the Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians and Persians.
>
> What each individual country does do is to give all the elements, borrowed or otherwise, something of a national character. The history of cooking is in some ways like the history of language.[35]

Some recent volumes offer interesting perspectives on the idea of British food. Colin Spencer's *British Food* represents a fierce defence of this concept, which the author feels has 'became a world-wide joke'. His book 'is an attempt to revive our knowledge of the gastronomic importance of British cuisine, in the belief that we can be genuinely proud of it, and with a passionate hope that we can restore many of its past triumphs so that they will become familiar to us again'.[36] Sybil Kapoor (whose surname comes from an Indian husband) published a book in 1995 entitled *Modern British Food*, which included pizza and curry. Questioned by her friends about the Britishness of such dishes, she followed this up with *Simply British*, which worked upon the basis of using 'typically British foods', which she listed alphabetically and therefore eliminated foreign impostors. While this list includes impeccably British ingredients such as blackberries, elderflower and salmon, Kapoor seems unconscious of the origins of Mediterranean lemons and American tomatoes.[37] Volumes by James Martin and Brian Turner also praise 'authentic' British food.[38] A BBC book, accompanying a TV series, on the *Great British Menu* examines artificially constructed regions in the form of 'The South East', 'The North', Wales, 'The South West', Northern Ireland, 'The Midlands and East Anglia' and Scotland. Any believer in the concept of British food can take heart, as there appears hardly a curry or pizza in sight; except in the chapter on the South East, partly written by the Indian-born Atul Kochar and therefore including dishes such as 'Lobster Ke Panje', 'Hari Machchi' and 'Murg Ki Biryani'.[39]

What does this discussion of British food tell us about the evolution of this concept since the middle of the nineteenth century? In the first place, until recently, relatively few books on this subject had appeared. Instead, as we shall see, the vast majority of culinary titles had no particular geographical focus.

Those who have written about British food have taken a variety of approaches. Firstly, those who wholeheartedly believe in the concept and who have not delved into the complexities of how recipes and cuisines evolve. Philip Harben's *Traditional Dishes of Britain* represents the best example of such writing. It is almost nationalistic in tone and views cuisines as fixed concepts, influencing and influenced by nationalism. It is partly from such writing that the idea of a food signifying national identity originates. Significantly, Harben focuses most directly on fish and chips, the quintessential culinary signifier of Britishness. However, Harben represents just one approach. Most of the writers quoted above accept that Britain has borrowed from abroad. While Dorothy Hartley could argue that 'foreign dishes . . . like the foreigners, become "naturalised English"', Jane Grigson's assertion that the evolution of food cultures resembles languages seems particularly apt. By the time Rose Prince published her volume on English food, she could confidently welcome the 'rice noodle dishes of Southeast Asia or the delicious food of the Mediterranean' as fitting into this concept. We might say that such statements indicate the culinary aspect of the acceptance of British multiculturalism.

Yet we need to be wary of making too close a connection between food, nationalism and national identity. Certainly, Ben Rogers has correctly focused on the symbolism of beef in British history. But we must not overstate this link because, if we focus more squarely on cookbooks, the national origins of food are not the main concern. We might suggest that, particularly in the age of Total War, when killing for the nation state became a daily activity in Europe, food was simply too irrelevant to matter in concepts of national identity. As we shall see, only after 1945 did foods in Britain become major signifiers of national identity.

Food Without Nationality

A study of general cookbooks published in Britain and the recipes within them would indicate that national identity has nothing to do with the selection of recipes or even the way they have been laid out within most of them. We have already seen that Isabella Beeton's recipes had no concern with national origins. The same could be said about most of the cookbooks which have appeared in Britain since that time, culminating in Delia Smith, perhaps the modern-day Mrs Beeton, who has a similar (how to cook) approach to her predecessor. While many of the recipes might attract the description of British, the reader usually attributes this description because of the increasing acceptance of the link between food and nationality. The following paragraphs look at some of the most important general cookbooks published in Britain since 1850s.

We can begin with Beeton herself. As already mentioned, and as suggested in its title, her 1861 volume had *Household Management* as its core theme. Its

first three chapters cover 'The Mistress', 'The Housekeeper' and the 'Arrangement and Economy of the Kitchen', while the final four cover 'Domestic Servants', 'The Rearing and Management of Children, and Diseases of Infancy and Childhood', 'The Doctor' and 'Legal Memoranda'. The chapters in between certainly focus on cooking, but, in addition to recipes, many of them provide 'General Observations' on particular types of foods, before launching into advice on how to cook them. Beeton pays virtually no attention to the national origins of dishes and simply arranges them in chapters according to different types of food, such as 'Hog Recipes', 'Vegetables' and 'Puddings and Pastries'. This is an international cookbook teaching the middle-class woman in mid-Victorian Britain how to look after her home and family as well as how to cook.[40]

A direct contemporary of Beeton, Eliza Acton produced a volume almost as important as *Household Management* entitled *Modern Cookery for Private Families* which, like its competitor, stretched to over six hundred pages in length. Acton actually does recognize differences between British and foreign foods. In her introduction, she asks why 'the English, as a people, remain more ignorant, than their Continental neighbours of so simple a matter as preparing' food for themselves. She suggests that 'we should learn from other nations' in order to 'remedy our own defects'.[41] A chapter at the end of the book is entitled 'Foreign and Jewish Cookery' which, as its title suggests, encompasses a variety of dishes, including 'Jewish Smoked Beef', 'Indian Lobster-Cutlets' and 'Stufato (A Neapolitan Receipt)'.[42] However, the bulk of the book does not make national distinctions, so that Acton's volume, like Beeton's, is certainly not about the differences between English and 'foreign' dishes but, rather, about how to cook.

Other Victorian books reveal a similar approach, including those aimed at the working classes. One is Alexis Soyer's *Shilling Cookery for the People*, produced by Britain's first celebrity chef. It contains nearly five hundred dishes but makes little reference to the differences between British and foreign food although Soyer, a Frenchman by birth, refers to one recipe, 'French Pot au Feu', as the 'truly national soup of France', which he did not think could 'be made to perfection in England'.[43]

Another famous Victorian chef, Charles Elmé Francatelli, produced mass circulation recipe books for both the middle and working classes. The one aimed at the former certainly did recognize distinctions between native and foreign foods. This is even indicated in the full title of the volume: *The Modern Cook; A Practical Guide to the Culinary Art in All its Branches: Comprising, in Addition to English Cookery, the Most Advanced and Recherché Systems of French, Italian, and German Cookery*. Francatelli aims his volume at 'the largest establishments' and 'the use of private families'. In the preface to the first edition from 1846, he plays on the stereotypes of native culinary skills. He

describes 'the quantity and variety of spices and condiments' as 'the bane of English cookery'. He is particularly scathing about 'English writers on gastronomy' who 'at once betray their origin' because 'having neither studied the rudiments nor practised the art to any extent, take on themselves to instruct the public, not from the fullness of their knowledge, but either as a pecuniary resource, or to gratify an idle whim'. In contrast, cookery in France is 'considered as an important art . . . In Paris its great Professors have achieved an almost historical celebrity, and their school of cookery has become preeminent'.[44] The 1,462 recipes appear to aim at introducing such principles to the English family. While the majority of the chapter headings do not concern themselves with dishes according to national origin, those on soup deal with 'English Soups', 'Foreign National Soups' and 'Italian Soups'. Francatelli's *Plain Cookery Book for the Working Classes* makes no reference to British and foreign food. As the first sentence states: 'My object in writing this little book is to show you how you may prepare and cook your daily food, so as to obtain the greatest amount of nourishment at the least possible expense'.[45] These two books clearly point to the importance of class when examining food during the Victorian period. While the middle classes could develop distinctions according to the national origins of food, the main concern of the working classes, and those who wrote about their nutrition, was obtaining enough food of sufficient quality to keep them alive.

During the Victorian period most cookbooks therefore paid some attention to the national origins of foods, but the distinction between British and foreign foods usually only received consideration in introductory comments. We can now jump to the interwar period when, according to Nicola Humble, cookbooks took off as the decline in the number of domestic servants meant that middle-class women increasingly had to do their own cooking.[46] We can focus on just two cookery books here. The first, *Warne's Everyday Cookery Book*, might be regarded as falling in the Beeton genre, in the sense that it gives basic instructions on how to cook. In addition, like Beeton, it pays no attention to the national origins of the dishes it describes.[47] *Good Food*, by Ambrose Heath, who became one of the most prolific food writers of the twentieth century, is aimed at a middle-class audience. The distinguishing feature of his book lies in its focus on using ingredients according to season but Heath displays no concern about national origins, even though he takes a truly international approach in the range of dishes he lists.[48]

This trend continues in general cookbooks after the Second World War and we can return to Harben. Despite the fact that he recognized and accepted national differences, evidenced not simply in his *Traditional Dishes of Britain*, but also in other volumes,[49] he also produced a number of general books, which did not stress such distinctions. For instance, this is true of his *Television Cooking Book*, from as early as 1951, perhaps the first volume of its type. Again,

Classic confectionery from the 1930s. 1 and 2 are scones, 3 and 4 rolls, and 5 is a plate of 'Shrewsbury biscuits'.

following the Beeton tradition, this book devotes much attention to the basics of cooking. It would be untrue to say that Harben's 68 pages of recipes completely ignore national distinctions, in the way that Beeton or Warne do. For instance, a section on kebabs stresses that these are 'a famous Turkish dish'.[50] Similarly, pasta receives the description of the 'most famous of all Italian food'.[51] On the other hand, Harben glosses over the national origins of the dishes with French names, suggesting an acceptance of such food as international, part of the fare of the English middle classes by the 1950s.

Different to Harben is Good Housekeeping's *Basic Cookery*, which has absolutely no mention of the national origins of any of the dishes within it. This may find explanation in the fact that the book really does contain basic dishes. In fact, it outlines many of the staples of what could constitute the British diet, with little elaboration, although we need to remember that this volume, together with Harben's, appeared before the end of rationing.[52]

Bee Nilson's *Penguin Book of Cookery* initially appeared at the same time as these two volumes, with a completely revised edition published in 1961. Again,

this represents a Mrs Beeton-style approach, with the first four chapters setting out basics, including kitchen equipment, while the penultimate section examines 'Planning and Preparing Meals'. The introduction states that: 'This is a general cookery book designed for the busy woman who wants to serve good food, but who has only a limited time to spend in the kitchen.' The dishes presented 'are simple to make, but interesting and varied, including traditional English dishes and adaptations from the cookery of other countries'.[53] The beginning of the book also contains a glossary of cooking terms, including two pages on French ones. The volume presents a variety of dishes which we might, as in the Good Housekeeping volume, describe as recognizably British of the time, but Nilson does not focus on the 'nationality' of the food.

Finally, we can jump to the end of the twentieth century to look at two contrasting celebrity food writers. First, the modern Mrs Beeton, Delia Smith, who has actually produced three volumes entitled *How to Cook*. Like her predecessor, she begins with the basics of cooking, including the boiling of an egg. However, once she moves beyond the banal opening of chapter One in the first volume, the recipes provided in the books are international. While she mentions the national or regional origins of some of the dishes, this does not represent a key theme of her outlook, either in these volumes, or in the numerous other books she has published.[54] The modern-day reincarnation of Mrs Beeton reflects the original, with a stress on good cooking and little interest in concepts of 'nationality'.

If Delia Smith has become the modern day Mrs Beeton, then Jamie Oliver represents the contemporary Alexis Soyer,[55] with his campaigning for improved diets although, unlike Soyer, he does not appear to have foreign origins. Oliver certainly admits to his admiration for Italian food and has produced a book on this subject, which actually emerged from touring the country, rather than through a construction from England of perceived Italian dishes.[56] But his first book, *The Naked Chef*, contains a variety of dishes with origins from all over the world.[57]

This selection of general cookbooks published in Britain over the past 150 years points to a pattern in which the nationality of food does not really matter. While most writers have an awareness of the origins of the dishes they describe, few of those who have produced general texts make any play of the differences between British and foreign foods. Certainly, Francatelli stressed the superiority of French *haute cuisine* and some of his contemporaries followed his lead. But his *Modern Cook*, like other volumes in this genre, simply presented dishes with a variety of national origins. Class has certainly played a role in cuisine,[58] as books aimed at the working classes have generally contained the most basic of dishes, which might best fit the description of British, although most authors of such volumes do not make an issue of this.

While nineteenth-century cookbooks aimed at the bourgeoisie clearly had a distinct French influence, by the middle of the twentieth century this influence had declined as recipes became less elaborate and, perhaps, more focused on what might commonly be described as British food – although writers such as Harben and Nilson certainly do not restrict themselves to such dishes. The more basic recipes of this period clearly need setting against the backdrop of rationing. By the end of the twentieth century, returning to Rose Prince, food in England had become internationalized, with far less 'French' influence, as any contemporary cookbook would demonstrate.[59]

Foreign Food

So, as we have seen, general cookbooks reveal a disinclination to engage with the 'nationality' of foods, whereas some of the volumes on 'British' food accept the existence of the category, even though the most perceptive writers of this genre have recognized the artificiality of the idea, acknowledging the fact that the food of Britain has encompassed influences from all over the world. The third genre is cookbooks published in Britain specifically referring to the cuisines of particular countries of the world. Three have received the most attention: Indian, Chinese and Italian. Others have certainly not been ignored and have gone through phases, especially French food. 'Indian' dishes have actually attracted the most consistent focus over the past 150 years, while interest in Chinese and Italian food took off from the 1950s.

During the Victorian and Edwardian periods, 'foreign' cookbooks remained few in number. We can divide them into three categories: international, Indian and Jewish. The first refers to volumes concerned overtly with the national origins of dishes, making it their focus, unlike more general cookbooks. We can mention two. Firstly, *Cosmopolitan Cookery*, by Urbain Dubois, originally aimed at the French bourgeoisie and translated into English in 1870.[60] Four decades later a book by Robert Christie appeared, with 84 chapters of dishes from countries or regions throughout the world, listed in alphabetical order, beginning with Afghanistan and ending with Turkey. This work constructs distinct categories at the height of British imperialism, written for members of the Edinburgh Cap and Gown Club, founded in 1881 and 'comprising clergymen, advocates, lawyers, doctors, artists, musicians, and literary and other professional men'.[61] The bulk of Christie's volume consists of a list of menus according to area. These are preceded with an introduction giving a description of the peoples who eat the foods concerned. The following portrayal of Tibetans and their food is typical:

> In Tibet the natives are anything but cleanly in their habits, and their culinary arrangements are exceedingly primitive. They have a strong dislike to fish except in a cured form. The meal, as a rule, begins with boiled eggs and

> finishes with sour curdled milk. Diners squat on the floor, and most of the dishes are placed on the table at once. Towels and a basin of warm water are supplied after the eating is done, where they drink a cup of tea without milk or sugar, and afterwards tea made with salt and butter is handed round, and all smoke the water pipe.[62]

Christie is essentially involved in a culinary mapping of the world. He assigns eating characteristics to different peoples as part of an attempt to understand them and to place them in his imperialistic world view.

By the time Christie had written his book, Indian food, or curry, as understood and constructed by former colonial officials, had become part of the British diet.[63] Not only did the recipes for this dish appear in virtually every general cookbook published in English during the Victorian period,[64] but numerous volumes with a specific focus on the dish had appeared by 1914, usually produced by Britons, male and female, who had lived in the Raj. Publishers based in India issued many of these volumes, but London-based houses printed others. One of the earliest of the latter was W. White's *Indian Cookery or Fish Curries*, partly a publicity brochure for the curry pastes and powders available in London at the time (with a considerable bias towards those produced by a label called Selim's), but also a recipe book.[65] Of the other popular Victorian cookbooks we can also mention Richard Terry's *Indian Cookery* from 1861. Terry served as 'Chef-De-Cuisine at the Oriental Club', which meant that he produced a Briton's take on eastern food (not just Indian).[66] Meanwhile, Daniel Santiagoe, a chef who had lived in Ceylon, wrote a curry cookbook three decades later which, like Terry's, gives his individual take on Indian food.[67] In 1910 a similar volume appeared under the title of *Indian Dishes for English Tables* in which the author, who uses a pseudonym (Ketab), claimed that: 'The following recipes are all genuine Indian recipes, collected by the compiler during many years' residence in India, *and adapted for use in England with the materials available in this country*.'[68] The italicized (by me) section of this sentence is perhaps the most significant. On the other hand, Joseph Edmunds claims more authenticity for the dishes which he produces in his *Curries*, claiming that: 'Curry, as a dish, is of immemorial use in India.'[69] White, Terry, Edmonds, Santiagoe and Ketab have essentially begun the process of the construction of Indian food for Britons, which would develop into the standardized menu found in post-war Bangladeshi restaurants. The 'spiritual' descendant of these early authors on curry, Pat Chapman, would play the central role in the construction and legitimization of this menu. Ketab gives recipes for recognizable dishes such as 'Bindaloo', 'Dopiaja' and 'Koormah'. Both Santiagoe and Edmonds also recognized 'Madras'. Perhaps the beginnings and subsequent development of Indian food in Britain provide one of the best examples of the invention of tradition: curry is the imperial perception and

construction of Indian food. It is both English and Indian, the marriage of two civilizations, perfectly symbolizing the artificiality of giving food a nationality.

Does this assertion also apply to Jewish food? A series of religious rules control this diet,[70] to which believers adhere to varying degrees. However, these regulations still allow much flexibility. As Claudia Roden has written, 'Every cuisine tells a story. Jewish food tells the story of an uprooted, migrating people and their vanished worlds.'[71] Her book on the subject demonstrates the different ways in which the foods of the areas where Jews have settled have impacted upon their consumption patterns. While staples may exist, these are influenced by particular regions. Jewish cookbooks from late Victorian Britain illustrate these complexities. One of these is the *Jewish Manual*, written by Judith Montefiore, one of the leading lights of established and anglicized Anglo-Jewry in the middle of the nineteenth century.[72] It is a sort of Jewish Mrs Beeton, published before *Household Management*. The volume contains recipes with origins in Palestine, Britain, Central European Ashkenzi Jewry and France, ranging from matso soup to strawberry jam, to sauerkraut and vol-au-vents. The vast majority of dishes could be those of either Eliza Acton or Islabella Beeton.[73] We can make a similar assertion about *Aunt Sarah's Cookery Book for a Jewish Kitchen* from 1889.[74] Meanwhile, a volume from 1884 by Mrs J. Atrutel claimed that her recipes adhered to 'Strictly Orthodox Principles', although this would seem questionable in view of some of the dishes presented.[75] Mrs Atrutel asserted that 'the Jewish formula of cooking is certainly not confined to the old English of roast, boiled, or grilled, but largely partakes of the more savoury dishes of France, Italy and Germany'.[76] Like the other late Victorian Jewish cookbooks, this one contains an eclectic range of dishes. *The Economical Jewish Cookbook* also claimed to work on Orthodox principles and actually began with a section on 'Koshering', which quoted *Leviticus*.[77] However, the recipes contained within this volume do not differ drastically from those which would appear in general cookbooks of the late Victorian period.

The interwar years did not really see a significant increase in the publication of books on foreign foods nor, therefore, much development of this concept. We can again find some volumes which deal with a variety of international cuisines, including Countess Morphy's *Recipes of All Nations* from 1935, an attempt 'to show the English housewife how "Everywoman" cooks and eats in other countries'.[78] Like Robert Christie, this author sees food as central to national and even 'racial' identity.

> Racial and climatic factors are responsible for the wide divergences in national cookery and food, and the study of comparative cookery shows the unbridgeable gulf which exists between peoples. North, South, East, West – learn what they eat, and you will realize why they have always

> clashed. In Europe itself the abyss between plates of one nation and another explains the enmity and hostility which exist between human beings whose conception of feeding is completely antithetic. As to the food and cookery of the older civilizations – India, China and Japan – they are too remote to be fully understandable.[79]

Despite the final assertion, the Countess has a section on the last three cuisines, together with others from Europe, particularly French and Italian, which begin the book and receive the most space, because of the positive way in which she views these two countries,[80] anticipating Elizabeth David.

A couple of years after the first appearance of Morphy's book, Thomas Burke published a guide to restaurants in London with the subtitle *Eating Round the World in London*. Burke claimed that 'one can eat in almost every language from English and across Europe to Turkish, Indian, and Japanese.'[81] Clearly, a reading of this guide reveals the fact that a variety of restaurants in the capital served different types of cuisine. While cookery writers play a large role in constructing national differences in foods, ordinary people – at this stage the London middle class – could taste for themselves the variations between the dishes produced by migrants from a variety of origins. In the post-war period Britons of all classes living throughout the country would experience international cuisines in the restaurants which appeared in even the smallest of settlements.

Before 1945 foreign food did remain a concept for most of the population. Books on individual cuisines continued to appear, but remained few in number. E. P. Veeresawmy wrote the most famous Indian cookbook of the interwar years. Veeresawmy served as an alias for Edward Palmer, who had grown up in India and used Veeresawmy both for a company which imported food from India and for the name of a surviving Indian restaurant in Piccadilly.[82] Palmer had a sophisticated understanding of Indian cookery, asserting that it 'is not the cookery of a single nationality or of a recent civilization. It dates back centuries and is the combination of the cookery of many nationalities.' Significantly, he stressed the role of religion in the food of India.[83] The book contains a variety of recipes, including many 'genuine' vegetarian ones.

Chinese restaurants existed in Britain before the First World War and the food they served had received attention in periodicals.[84] But the first cookbook dealing with this cuisine did not appear until 1932. Written by Townley Searle, it is partly a volume of recipes but, just as importantly, a guide to Chinese restaurants in Britain at the time. The volume contains complex recipes with exotic ingredients, including, 'Stewed Shark's Fin', 'Small Intestine of Pig' and 'Hedgehog Boiled with Lotus in a Ball'.[85] Nellie C. Wong's Chinese cookbook from the following year (published for both British and US readers) does not have such unusual recipes but neither does it contain the standardized menu

Chinese restaurant in Limehouse in the 1920s.

recognizable in post-war British restaurants and cookbooks.[86] At this stage in the history of Chinese food in Britain the recipes appear 'genuine', demonstrating that a menu constructed for westerners had not yet fully developed.[87] A third Chinese cookbook, which appeared during the war, points to four major characteristics of Chinese food but, once again, the post-war western menu had not yet evolved.[88]

As well as publishing a volume distinguishing between different cuisines throughout the world, Countess Morphy also wrote one of the first substantial English books on Italian food.[89] She begins with fifteen pages listing the recipes included in her volume, which seem instantly recognizable, divided along the lines used in Italian restaurants.[90] She asserts that 'the degree of culture and civilization attained by a people is reflected as much in its gastronomic traditions as in its contributions to arts and letters'. She continues, 'In the latter sphere, Italy can certainly boast of a vast and rich cultural heritage', claiming that Italian cookery developed during the Renaissance.[91] Books on other less obvious European cuisines also appeared before 1939.[92]

By the early post-war period, concepts about food had developed in an entrenched manner among writers such as Morphy and Christie who regarded food as a signifier of civilization. Both authors certainly made a link between food and national identity and both saw cuisines as definite and almost unchanging categories. These authors contrast with the more sophisticated approaches which recognized the international elements which went into the construction of cuisines of all nation states and regions.

With the decline of racial theorizing after the Second World War, the assertions of Morphy and Christie about the relationship between food and civilization became unfashionable. On the other hand, the idea of foods falling into

distinct national categories has become increasingly popular. By the 1970s cookbooks and restaurants had developed a catalogue of dishes served up according to nationality. This categorization of food partly comes from the influence of cookery writers. We now have specialists on particular cuisines, usually originating from the country of the food about which they write, which gives their recipes more authenticity. However, other factors have played an equally important role in linking food with nationality. These include marketing and consequent commodification, witnessed most clearly by the fact that supermarkets had jumped on to the bandwagon of 'ethnic' foods by the 1970s.[93] Just as important is the growth of foreign restaurants. While these existed before the 1950s they remained concentrated in central London. With the impact of immigration, facilitated by the increasing wealth of British people, ethnic entrepreneurs opened up restaurants offering menus which British people found palatable, but which sometimes had a limited connection with the food eaten at home by the restaurateurs themselves. Having tasted Italian, Chinese or Indian food in a local restaurant, British people wanted to eat similar products at home, which helped to persuade the food industry to enter this market.

The importance of cookery writers since 1945 must be acknowledged. Unlike the years before 1945, the period since has resulted in an explosion of cookbooks focusing on national cuisines, making it impossible to carry out anything which resembles a comprehensive survey of them. Interest in foreign foods took off in the 1950s as restrictions imposed by rationing ended.

In the first place a series of volumes appeared with a focus on international recipes. In 1952 Theodora Fitzgibbon published a book on *Cosmopolitan Cookery*. She tells us that she has 'lived a considerable amount abroad' and that

'Very Traditional' Chinese food in contemporary Soho, London, 2006.

the recipes she presents 'are largely my own adaptation of meals I have eaten in France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Russia, Sweden, America, China, Japan and India'.[94] While she divides the book into sections by ingredients, she does have one entitled 'A Chinese Meal'. A book on *Continental Cookery* published by the Good Housekeeping Institute a few years later does, on the other hand, list recipes under their countries of origin, so that they essentially have nationalities, in an approach reminiscent of Christie and Morphy. Thus, the section on Greek food begins: 'The Greeks have always been a frugal people. Their country is beautiful, their way of life gracious and elegant, but not extravagant, and Greek food is delicious because it is carefully cooked, rather than because it is rich.'[95] Here again we have food which not only has a nationality but also reflects the character of the people in the land from which it originates.

The greatest indication of the acceptance of foods according to nationality during the 1950s comes from the appearance of at least three series of books with individual volumes on cuisines from particular countries or regions, an entirely new development in the history of food writing in Britain. A publisher called Nicholas Kaye issued volumes on Indian and Italian food, with cartoons of an Indian and Italian waiter on their front covers.[96] Andre Deutsch, meanwhile, also launched a series of books according to nationalities, including volumes on Chinese, German and Italian cooking.[97] The writers produced quite sophisticated volumes, with awareness of regional variations and with complete certainty in the nationality and distinctiveness of the cuisine they cover. Thus Robin Howe on German cookery begins: 'Germans are hearty eaters, and their meals are substantial. They love dumplings: thick, warming soups: meat and sausages: heavy dark breads and vegetables of all kinds.'[98] In the late 1950s a publisher called Spring launched a series which continued into the 1960s and included volumes on Italian, Chinese, Indian and Jewish food.[99] By this time, Chinese, Italian and Indian cuisines had become the most commonly written about, reflecting the fact that the largest number of foreign restaurants in Britain divided into these three categories, as they would throughout the post-war period.[100] The 1960s also saw the popularization of international dishes by Robert Carrier.[101]

But Elizabeth David wrote the seminal foreign cookbooks of the 1950s and the whole post-war period. Emerging at the end of the age of austerity, Nicola Humble writes that David was reputed to have 'burst onto the culinary scene like a firework, like the rising sun, like the clear note of the church bell on a Greek island'.[102] The daughter of a Conservative MP, she initially concentrated her attention during the 1950s on the food of the Mediterranean. Having lived in both France and Italy, she avoided the simplistic approach of contemporary national cookbooks. Her volume on Italian food is not aimed at working-class readers wishing to try at home the food they have sampled in a local Italian restaurant, but at members of the social group from which she originates. It is

partly a history book, partly a recipe book and partly a description of life and eating in Italy.[103] Only during the course of the late 1950s and 1960s would her recipes reach a larger audience, although it seems unlikely that they entered working-class homes. Together with the growing number of Italian restaurants appearing in the first post-war British decades, Elizabeth David may have done as much as anybody else to spread the idea of Italian food.

The equivalent figure for Indian cuisine is probably Pat Chapman but, unlike the distant relationship between David and the local trattoria, Chapman's recipes have a close link with the growing number of curry houses that appeared in post-war Britain. Chapman is certainly not the first Indian cookery writer of the post-war years as he did not make an impact until the 1980s. He may not even be as well known as actress-turned-cookery writer Madhur Jaffrey, perhaps an Indian Elizabeth David because of both her background and her focus upon the country and its ingredients.[104] The standardized Indian restaurant meal emerged before Chapman as seen, for instance, in one of the most important early post-war books by Mrs Balbir Singh, taught to cook by an Englishwoman in London,[105] but used by both English and Indian women in Britain.[106] The book contains a variety of foods which Indians would eat, combined with Anglo-Indian dishes including pullao, korma, massala, roghan josh, kababs and biryani.

In his many publications, as well as in his foundation of the Curry Club, Chapman transports the standardized menu served in Bangladeshi restaurants into the homes of members of the ethnic majority. Britons therefore have the impression of consuming authentic Indian food. In reality, the dishes they eat in their local curry house have emerged from the Anglo-Indian menus of the late nineteenth century which, with the arrival of migrants from Bangladesh, reached all sections of society, rather than remaining confined to cookbooks generally used by the middle classes. Chapman's countless volumes on 'curry' clearly aim to bring restaurant food into the homes of Britons. For instance, *Curry Club Bangladeshi Restaurant Curries* which, after an introduction giving his interpretation of the evolution of Indian food in Britain, then provides recipes. He claims that the early post-war restaurants served 'traditional savoury Punjabi dishes such as *keema*, *aloo ghosht*, *sag paneer*, *methi murgh*, *dhals* and breads. With these they coupled creamy Moghul dishes such as *kofta*, *korma*, *rhogan josht*, *pasanda*, *bhoona* and *do piaza*, along with *pullaos* and *biri-anis*.' Mistakenly, he believes that, 'Punjabis, like the British, are meat-eaters. So meat and chicken ruled the roost. Vegetables played a minimal role, as they do in the Punjab.'[107] Nevertheless, these dishes do form an important part of the post-war Anglo-Indian menu. This developed further with two new fads, which essentially became marketing catchwords: tandoori dishes, emerging in London during the 1960s, and balti, invented in Birmingham during the 1980s.[108] By the end of the twentieth century an Indian restaurant menu

usually combined these three phases of Anglo-Indian food. Chapman has acted, in a sense, as free publicity for the restaurateurs, by producing *The Good Curry Guide*, first published in 1984, which has proved just as important in spreading the concept of Indian food as his cookbooks. Britons with a particular taste for Anglo-Indian food can join his Curry Club.

The development of the concept of Chinese food in Britain follows a similar process to that of Indian cuisine, with the emergence of a westernized menu during the post-war period. As in the case of Indian food this menu differed from the food eaten by the Chinese, recognized, in particular, by Kenneth Lo who, along with Ken Hom, has done much to spread Chinese recipes in Britain. A significant difference between the emergence of Indian and Chinese food in post-war Britain lies in the fact that, while the former emerged from an essentially Anglo-Indian symbiosis, the latter is a global concept. Influenced by a system of international migration, particularly towards the USA, Chinese food eaten in the West remains similar in New York, Berlin, Sydney or London. It differs from that eaten by Chinese people either in their homeland or in their migrant communities, many of them working in the catering trade and serving up standardized western Chinese food.[109] While this menu emerged in Britain, until the 1970s some cookbooks still contained recipes with little resemblance to this food. Lo's *Cooking the Chinese Way* from 1955, for instance, does not make his subsequent distinction.[110] Similarly, a 1961 volume on the *Secrets of Chinese Cooking* makes no allowances for western sensibilities as the dishes it lists include 'braised shark fins', 'woodcock soup' and 'whole bird's nest in chicken'.[111]

While the growing concepts of Indian, Chinese and Italian food have meant that these cuisines have become part of everyday eating patterns in post-war Britain, Jewish food has not had the same level of success. This has nothing to do with the absence of an idea of Jewish cuisine. Jewish cookbooks which, like their predecessors before 1945, at least pay lip service to dietary rules, have continued to appear, most notably Florence Greenberg's *Jewish Cookery Book*. Originally published in 1947 and based on recipes produced for the *Jewish Chronicle*, it had reached its ninth edition by 1988. It contains, like its forbears, a wide variety of dishes.[112] Explanations for the failure of Jewish food to reach a wider market might include the fact that it is not different enough from the dishes consumed by the ethnic majority because, as Claudia Roden explains, it assimilates local foods extremely well.

However, as the discussion on Italian, Chinese and Indian food demonstrates, the presence of migrants serving up a western and generally standardized version of their food played a large role in the acceptance of these three cuisines. The migrants concerned had arrived in Britain with relatively little capital and viewed the opening of a restaurant as a business opportunity, a pattern repeated by other groups, including Greek Cypriots. Chinese migrants

have generally moved to Britain precisely to service the catering industry. On the other hand Jewish migrants had generally arrived in Britain either from Eastern Europe before the First World War, and were therefore well on their way up the social ladder by the time foreign restaurants took off during the 1960s, or had arrived as professionals from Nazi Germany during the 1930s.[113]

Before 1945 food writers probably played the largest role in spreading concepts of foreign food. From the 1950s they combined with the widespread presence of foreign restaurants throughout Britain and, just as importantly, with the marketing of the concept of foreign foods, which took off during the 1960s and had become a multimillion pound industry by the end of the twentieth century. The first foreign food brand name was Vesta ready meals during the 1960s.[114] During the 1970s and 1980s migrant entrepreneurs played a large role in the spread of similar products, establishing firms such as Raj Foods, Noon Products, Tilda and Geeta's. By the close of the twentieth century foreign foods had become standardized categories produced by major brands including Crosse and Blackwell and Uncle Ben's, together with all of the major British supermarkets. The latter now have sections of their shops devoted to ready-made chilled foods, arranged according to nationality.[115]

The nationality and branding of foods has been perpetuated by market research organizations including MINTEL and Key Note, who both produce regular surveys on 'ethnic foods', marketing-speak for meals not regarded as having origins in the UK. Thus, a 1998 MINTEL report recognized 'Indian', 'Chinese', 'Mexican' and 'emerging ethnic foods', including Thai, Japanese, Caribbean, Indonesian and Malaysian. Significantly, neither MINTEL nor Key Note consider Italian food as 'ethnic' suggesting that European foods, like the people who produce them, are not foreign enough to merit a separate category,[116] which almost takes us back to Christie and Morphy. MINTEL appears slightly more 'inclusive' in its categorization of 'ethnic restaurants' as it recognizes that one type of European food (Greek) falls into a subcategory of 'Kebab/Middle Eastern' which also includes Turkish and Lebanese. However, most of the divisions it uses also come from beyond Europe, including Thai, 'Mexican/Tex-Mex' and 'Caribbean', all of which, once again, are marketing categories.[117]

Guides to eating out also categorize restaurants according to nationality, a trend which has its origins before the Second World War. The annual *Time Out* guide to eating and drinking in London has divided food according to nationality from its first edition in 1984. In this year four major categories appeared: 'Europe', 'The West', 'The East' and 'The Rest'. These included twenty subcategories, of which sixteen followed nationalities or regions.[118] The 39 categories of 2004 included at least 24 divided along 'ethnic' grounds, leaving fifteen others, suggesting that the publication, aimed at the educated middle classes, had by this time begun to move away from the link between food and nationality. 'Global' and 'International' were two of the entries.[119]

At the start of the twenty-first century, food, nationality and ethnicity have a close association in Britain. While the origins of this link have roots stretching back at least to the nineteenth century, this idea had become orthodoxy during the post-war years and especially in the final few decades of the twentieth century. A series of reasons offer themselves for this developing link between food and nationality.

As already discussed, we can point to the influence of cookery writers, whose publications have increased dramatically since the 1960s. Perhaps for the purpose of creating a niche for themselves, some have specialized in particular national foods, particularly those who come from the country or region about which they write. While Elizabeth David is an exception to this rule, more recent cooks tend to prove it, including, most famously, Kenneth Lo, Ken Hom, Pat Chapman (the son of Britons brought up in India) and Madhur Jaffrey. The most recent writers on Indian food, including Manju Malhi and Vicky Bhogal,[120] were actually born in Britain, again finding a niche for themselves within the ethnic divisions perpetuated by multicultural Britain. Just as Christie and Morphy linked food with nationality, so do the recent writers on foreign foods. Cookbooks have probably done more than any social development to construct concepts of foreign and, in fewer cases, British food. They have virtually invented menus and entire cuisines, thereby playing a large role in the development of culinary traditions. But how do we prove the importance of cookery books? Some authorities, including Joanna Blythman, dismiss them as culinary voyeurism, contrasting them with the reality of the food consumed by Britons.[121] On the other hand Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson writes about culinary philosophers,[122] such as Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin.[123] Similarly, Elizabeth David acts like a philosopher, popularizing food which went on to be adopted by a mass media. David may represent a Rousseau or a Voltaire, both of whom were followed by a large number of writers producing texts for a variety of audiences. Similarly, more recent food writers have adapted her original ideas.[124]

But food commentators do not operate in a vacuum. While we might criticize the simple way in which food writers create ethnic categories, they do not all play this game. At the same time, it is obvious that vast differences exist between the food eaten by the English working classes over the past 150 years and the consumption patterns of an Indian, Italian or Chinese peasant. This difference really became apparent in Britain from the 1950s when migrants from India, Italy, China and elsewhere began to open restaurants which sold food significantly different from that previously eaten in British homes. Yet, as we have seen in the case of Indian and Chinese food, the dishes served to British customers specifically developed in the British context. While such cuisines have foreign origins, they very much reflect the countries in which they emerge.

The period of British history in which the idea of foreign foods really began to take off is also significant. Elizabeth David published her first books at the end of rationing. The excitement which many writers associate with her probably stems from the fact that the Second World War and its aftermath, associated with rationing and 'British' food, ended in the 1950s and 1960s as this 'decadent' writer introduced 'decadent' food into Britain. During the 1960s, when foreign restaurants began to proliferate, eating of Indian and Chinese food almost became the culinary equivalent of the sexual revolution. Foreign food equalled freedom and a move away from the age of austerity.[125]

But after the 1960s this liberation started to become orthodoxy as national and multinational companies jumped on to the bandwagon of 'ethnic' foods, turning them into brands. Corporations have done as much as the food writers to construct and perpetuate the idea of foods with nationalities.

While we have to accept that ethnic groups and people in different parts of the world eat distinct foods, some simplistic cookery books falsely attempt to link diet to nationality. As Rose Prince in particular has demonstrated, consumption patterns change over time. The transformation in Britain over the past fifty years in particular has proved particularly dramatic. The link between food, ethnicity and nationality is extremely complex and certainly not fixed in stone.

Part II

The First Ripples of Change, circa 1850–1945

Chapter Two

Immigration and the Emergence of 'Ghetto' Food

Tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are.[1]

Migration, Food and Identity

When Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin published his musings on food in 1825, he produced one of the most important statements about its relationship with identity. On the one hand, we might speak about the construction of national dishes as a by-product of nationalism. On the other, we need to recognize the relationship between eating and identity, as suggested in Brillat-Savarin's aphorism. For migrants, particularly those with religious restrictions on food consumption, what they eat provides an indication of the extent to which they practise and identify with their ethnic community.

In contemporary British society, the phrase 'You are what you eat' refers not simply to issues of ethnicity but also to questions of health. In this discourse fast, unhealthy and unintelligent people eat fast food, while more sophisticated individuals consume healthier products. This idea also has its origins in Brillat-Savarin, who linked food with class.[2] The dictum of the French philosopher was quickly taken up by a variety of writers. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson has pointed out that the German 'naturalist philosopher' Ludwig Feuerbach used the phrase 'Der Mensch ist, as er ißt'.[3]

Donna Gabbacia has also used the phrase in her study of migration and food in the USA. Her title, *We Are What We Eat* is followed with the subtitle *Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. She argues that the variety of products consumed by Americans reflects the multicultural nature of their country, developed through migration. She pays less attention to the relationship between food and the identification of individual ethnic groups.[4] This approach contrasts with that of Peter Scholliers in his edited collection of essays on *Food, Drink and Identity*.[5] Quoting the German social scientist Claude Fischler, Scholliers writes that 'Food is central to our sense of identity' and continues, 'People eating similar food are trustworthy, good, familiar, and safe.'[6] This approach informs the other major study of migrant food in the USA, by Hasia R. Diner. She argues that East European Jews, Italians and Irish people moved to the USA partly out of hunger, contrasting the food available

to these three groups once they arrived there with what they ate in Europe. She uses the concept of 'foodways', demonstrating how these migrants adapted, in differing ways, to the availability of vast quantities of food in their land of settlement. She tests the idea of the relationship between food and identity for the three groups.[7] But Diner did not invent the concept of foodways. An earlier collection of essays edited by Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell carried the title of *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. While the authors accept the fact that different eating patterns exist amongst ethnic minorities in the USA, they also point out the complexity of linking distinct cuisines to individual groups because of the transformation which occurs in the migrant setting.[8]

Migrant Communities in Britain, 1850–1945

While research has begun to emerge on the relationship between food and ethnic identity in the USA it remains, in the case of Britain, in its infancy. Only two real exceptions exist. One is the collection of essays edited by Pat Caplan in which ethnicity represents a minor theme.[9] More important is Anne Kershen's *Food and the Migrant Experience*, a groundbreaking collection. The author approaches the subject in a variety of ways including immigrant entrepreneurship, health and ethnicity.[10]

The absence of research on the relationship between food and migrant identity remains surprising because, as we shall see, the two have close links in Britain. Before 1945 a series of distinct communities had established themselves in the country, most significantly East European Jews and the Irish. The latter have constituted the largest migrant group in Britain for the last two centuries. A significant minority began to emerge in the middle of the nineteenth century as hundreds of thousands of people fled from the potato famine of the late 1840s. Streaming into British inner city areas, where they acted as cheap labour in the industrialization process, they developed distinct ethnic communities, centred largely on their Catholicism. Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow in particular developed Irish areas which would survive into the twentieth century, boosted by further immigration, although many of the descendants of the original migrants had by then disappeared into the majority grouping.[11]

The second largest ethnic minority in Britain from the late nineteenth century to the late twentieth was Jews. This community had expanded following its readmission under Cromwell. The original migrants came from the Sephardic areas of southern Europe, but during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the settlers increasingly originated in Ashkenazi Central and Eastern Europe. The largest influx arrived in the late Victorian years, leaving the Pale of Settlement in the west of the Russian Empire as a result of Tsarist pogroms and rapid social and economic change. Like the Irish

they had a transformative impact on many British inner cities, above all the East End of London. Also in common with the Irish, religion became the central identifier for this community. For the newcomers of the late Victorian and Edwardian period, assimilation would not occur until after 1945. In the meantime, most of them became involved in some way in the Jewish community, now backed up by a whole range of organizations, including those controlling diet. But many different Jewries existed in Britain before 1945, determined by religious adherence, land of origin, social status and political persuasion. The newcomers of the late nineteenth century were distrustful of the established community, a sentiment that was reciprocated.[12]

Apart from the large Irish and Jewish communities, which at their peak, would number one million and 500,000 respectively, smaller groups existed in Britain before 1945. For most of the Victorian and Edwardian period the most significant Continental minority was Germans, reaching a peak of about sixty thousand. This size meant that they only developed large concentrated communities in London, especially the East and West End. Like the Jews and the Irish, religion became the most important factor that held Germans together, so that churches (almost all Protestant) opened throughout the country. But, despite the richness and vitality that this community developed, anti-German feeling virtually eradicated it during the First World War.[13]

Although considerably smaller than the German community, as well as the French, which has left little trace, the Italians also developed concentrations, particularly in London (focused around Clerkenwell) but also, to a lesser extent, in Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester and South Wales. Religion again played a major role in London. Outside the capital, an organized community barely existed.[14] The Italian community certainly did not have the ethnic sophistication of the other three large European groups.

The only significant non-European group in this period, although tiny, was the Chinese. This community peaked at less than two thousand in England and Wales during the early 1930s.[15] Before 1945 the main areas of settlement, which numbered a few hundred people each, included Liverpool, Cardiff and London. The last of these communities focused on the East End. The small numbers of Chinese in Britain before 1945 meant that this group could not develop the ethnic sophistication of the European minorities.[16]

Migrant Communities and their Food

As we have seen, at least five distinct ethnic minorities existed in Britain before 1945, together with numerous others who had not become as identifiable.[17] Religion clearly played a central role in the ethnicity of the four European groups. The Irish, Jews and Germans developed all manner of organizations, revolving not simply around religion but also, particularly, around politics.

Residential concentration played a significant role in the emergence of ethnic organizations.[18] But our concern lies with the food of minorities. What did the Irish, Jews, Germans, Italians and Chinese eat? Did they open up their own shops to sell their own products? What relationship did food have to ethnicity maintenance for these minorities? Before examining our five migrant groups individually, we should address these three questions.

No scientific way exists to answer the first question because the relatively primitive nature of the British state before 1945 (and certainly before 1914)[19] meant that it did not record the dietary patterns of its citizens, and definitely not according to their ethnicity. We therefore have to rely on other sources to give us some idea of the food of our ethnic minorities, which is easier for some groups than others. For instance, oral history accounts provide clues about Jewish diet, as do the surviving records of the organizations which regulated Jewish diet. In addition, newspapers produced for the communities also provide clues, particularly through advertising.

Members of four of these communities opened up food shops providing products for people with the same ethnicity as themselves. The exception, despite its size, was the Irish community. Grocery stores emerged in areas where migrants lived because it was clearly here that a market would exist. Researchers working on migration in post-war Europe have identified the development of ethnic businesses as one possible way out of the poverty of the 'ghetto', although these scholars have also recognized that the relatively small amount of disposable income available to migrants meant that people who established shops serving their own communities did not automatically experience economic success.[20] These patterns certainly applied to four of the ethnic communities discussed although, in the case of the Germans, the First World War intervened in a unique way, leading to the destruction and confiscation of their businesses.

The main reason for the lack of Irish food shops in Britain before 1945 clearly does not lie in the size of the available market. Instead, we find an explanation in the fact that Irish food did not have enough distinction from that of the ethnic majority to warrant the opening of specifically designated food shops. Only at the end of the twentieth century, when cuisines became commodities connected with nationality, did the concept of Irish food emerge. What the Irish ate has not formed an important distinguishing factor. The consumption of more potatoes than the native British working classes may represent a difference, but hardly an ethnic characteristic. This contrasts significantly with Judaism. Strict observers of this faith lead a life controlled by rules which determine all aspects of their everyday existence. Food plays a major role in Jewish identification, with regulations governing consumption, backed up by religious organizations which enforce the production of kosher food according to religious regulations. Identification with food had more significance for Jews

than it did for any other group in Britain before 1939. While Germans, Italians and Chinese did consume different products from the indigenous population, religion did not determine their choice.

Irish Potato Eaters?

In her study of foodways in the USA, Hasia R. Diner has written that Ireland failed to develop an elaborate national food culture. Unlike other peoples, Irish writers of memoirs, poems, stories, political tracts, or songs rarely included the details of food in describing daily life. Those who observed the Irish and recorded their voices rarely represented them as wanting to eat better or craving particular items. They hoped to eat more so as to not be hungry, but dwelt little on particular tastes or special dishes. To the contrary, when the Irish remarked upon food, they did so negatively. They spoke of hunger and lamented the absence of food in general.

Diner stresses the importance of alcohol in Irish 'collective identity' but also emphasizes the role of the potato for much of the nineteenth century, asserting that 'being Irish . . . meant consuming potatoes'.[21] When turning to the food of the Irish in America, she again stresses its unimportance as an identifier in a chapter entitled 'The Sounds of Silence'. In all the 'manifestations of ethnic cohesion, food was the one element missing. It exercised little power and occupied no special place.'[22] She concludes her chapter, 'To the Irish, food was other people's cultural coin.'[23]

As in the case of America, the Irish in Britain have left few traces of their foodway, evidenced by the fact that, in the now established field of the history of the Irish in Britain, food has received virtually no attention.[24] Diner's reasoning for the Irish in the USA can also be applied to their counterparts in nineteenth-century Britain.

One of the few commentators to look at Irish food in Victorian Britain was Henry Mayhew, writing in the aftermath of the mass influx following the famine of the 1840s. In a description of the everyday life of 'The Street Irish', he provides a section 'On the Diet, Drink, and Expense of Living'. He stresses the changes which had occurred after arrival in London:

> The diet of the Irish men, women, and children, who obtain a livelihood (or what is so designated) by street-sale in London, has, I am told, on good authority, experienced a change. In the lodging-houses that they resorted to, their breakfast, two or three years ago, was a dish of potatoes – two or three, or four lbs., or more, in weight – for a family. Now half an ounce of coffee (half chicory) costs 1/2d., and that, with the half or quarter of a loaf, according to the number in the family, is almost always their breakfast at the present time . . .

> The dinner, or second meal of the day – assuming that there has been a breakfast – ordinarily consists of cheap fish and potatoes.

One particular individual interviewed by Mayhew informed him that, at lunch time, he boiled

> two or three lbs. of potatoes, costing usually 1d. or 11/4d., and fried three, or four herrings, or as many as cost a penny. He sometimes mashed his potatoes, and spread over them the herrings, the fatty portion of which flavoured the potatoes, which were further flavoured by the roes of the herrings crushed into them . . . For 'tea' he expended 1d. on coffee, or 11/2d. on tea, being a 'cup of tea', or 'half-pint of coffee' at a coffee-shop. Sometimes he had halfpenny-worth of butter, and with his tea he ate the bread he had saved from his breakfast, and which he carried in his pocket. He had no butter to his breakfast, he said, for he could not buy less than a penny-worth about where he lodged, and this was too dear for one meal. On a Sunday morning however he generally had butter, sometimes, joining with a fellow-lodger for a pennyworth; for his Sunday dinner he had a piece of meat, which cost him 2d. on the Saturday night. Supper he dispensed with, but if he felt much tired he had a half-pint of beer, which was three farthings 'in his own jug', before he went to bed.[25]

While Mayhew displays much concern about the way in which the Irish made ends meet, these extracts also indicate that the newcomers began to move away from potato eating and adopt the same food patterns as the rest of the London working class. Mayhew's main concern is actually the employment patterns of the 'Street Irish', confirming the absence of any identification with a concept of ethnic food, as they simply did not sell products which would merit the description of Irish. He claims that ten thousand costermongers lived in the capital. 'Of this large body three-fourths sell only fruit, and more especially nuts and oranges; indeed, the orange-season is called the "Irishman's harvest". The others deal in fish, fruit, and vegetables, but these are principally men.' The poorest sold other products, including watercress.[26]

Mayhew speculates on the reasons for the prevalence of the Irish as costermongers. He partly explains it by the unavailability of labouring work (one of the most usual occupations of the Irish)[27] all year round, although he does hint at some entrepreneurial spirit, especially amongst 'the better class of small farmers'.[28] But it seems clear from Mayhew that the Irish in early Victorian London did not develop an ethnic economy, which would characterize many of the other migrant communities who settled in Britain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The explanation for this probably lies both in the fact that they did not, in class terms, differ from natives to any great extent and

therefore, in this sense, tended to merge with them in their occupational structure. In addition, most Irish migrants to Britain, in contrast to many of the other ethnic groups, tended to have few skills and educational qualifications and this inevitably, like their English and Scottish counterparts, drew them into the labouring and factory jobs which proliferated during the height of the industrial revolution.[29]

Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish Ghetto

In many ways the Jewish community in Britain before 1945 had much in common with the Irish. The Jews also constituted a group distinguishable from the ethnic majority by their religious practices. They too developed distinct residential concentrations. However, when we turn to food, we recognize significant differences. While diet appears to have played little role for the Irish, Jewish food represented a central element of their identity, as laid down by biblical rules and enforced by communal organizations. In reality, individuals have chosen whether or not they wish to adhere to these restrictions, which usually provides an indicator of the extent to which they maintain other aspects of their Jewishness. Similarly, the diasporic nature of Jewish history has meant that this community has borrowed from and adapted to the products available in particular locations, and carried them with them from one part of Europe to another, making the concept of Jewish food problematic. Because diet matters for Jews, shops selling products adhering to dietary restrictions have sprung up wherever they have settled, leading to the development of ethnic economies.

Todd Endelman has written that

> Traditional Judaism is an all-embracing way of life. It does not occupy a segment of the observant Jew's daily or weekly routine but provides the framework in which, in theory, he or she lives all of his or her life. Religious law (*halakah*) regulates spheres of activity in which Christianity takes little or no interest including the preparation and consumption of food.[30]

The rules governing diet have their origins in the Old Testament. Claudia Roden writes that, 'According to tradition, the basis of the dietary laws was revealed by God to Moses on Mount Sinai as commandments',[31] although some modern scholars have gone back to the early verses of Genesis to find the origins of *kashruth*.[32] In fact, these laws have their origins in several of the early books of the Bible but 'were interpreted, elaborated, and expanded by Jewish sages and rabinnic commentators whose remarks are recorded in the Talmud'. *Kashruth* determines 'what is permitted or *kasher* (kosher-fit) and what is *terefah* (forbidden).'[33]

The most important dietary laws include the following: the meat of 'cud-chewing animals with cloven hooves' (including sheep, goats, cows, but not pigs), can be eaten; both meat and poultry have to be killed in the correct way (*schechita*) 'by a skilled professional slaughterer (*schochet*) with a razor sharp knife in a single slash, which must sever both the trachea and the jugular vein to cause the least possible pain'; only seafood with fins and scales can be eaten; milk and meat cannot be cooked together. In addition, laws determine food on the Sabbath as well as upon specific religious occasions, especially the Passover.[34] These laws have ensured that Jewish purveyors of food, particularly kosher butchers, have sprung up in Jewish settlements throughout the world, providing the perfect stimulus for the development of an ethnic economy.

In order to ensure the enforcement of these laws, a series of specific organizations representing important parts of the Jewish communal structure have come into existence with the aim of policing them. In the British case, following historic Jewish patterns, three national authorities, still in existence today, have played this role: the Kashrus Commission was established in 1920 in order to ensure that those institutions claiming to sell kosher food actually do so; similarly, the longer established Schechita Board supervises ritual slaughter and issues a seal to butchers who carry out this practice correctly; as a back-up, the Beth Din investigates, polices and legislates on establishments which claim to sell kosher food. This is a simplification of the whole picture, as these organizations historically evolved on a local level. At the same time, this simplification, which did not become formalized until the twentieth century, also hides the complexities of the different strands of Anglo-Jewry, including Sephardic versus Ashkenazi and, by the end of the nineteenth century, native versus East European.[35] Our main focus lies with those migrants who moved

Schechita chickens during the 1920s.

to Britain from the Pale of Settlement in the last few decades before the First World War. Bill Williams, in his study of Manchester Jewry, has described the establishment of the Schechita Board in the city in 1892 and the Beth Din in 1902 as part of 'the beginning of immigrant self-assertion'.[36]

These bodies had considerable power, as the example of the Schechita Board illustrates. This seems to have first come into existence in London in 1804, with responsibility for 'organising and supervising the supply of kosher meat to the Jewish public'.[37] Despite much dispute about the authority of this body at the start of the twentieth century,[38] by the 1920s it acted as the supervising agency for the four major Anglo-Jewish groups represented by the United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues, the Spanish and Portuguese congregation and the Western Synagogue. In 1927 the Chief Rabbi described the Board as 'an essential religious institution of Orthodox Jewry in every large community'. Its specific duties included: training and supplying *schochetim* (butchers) and licensing 'wholesale and retail butchers who undertake to supply kosher meat and poultry to the Jewish people in strict conformity with Jewish law as laid down by the Ecclesiastical Authority'.[39] Selling kosher meat without a licence could lead to legal proceedings taken out against individuals by the Board, as 'Dave Gitlin, a butcher of Cazenove Road, Stamford Hill' found out in 1937, when he appeared in the North London Police Court. One of his customers, Esther Hockman, complained that 'he sold to her 11/4lb. of veal chops and another 2lb of shoulder lamb which were not of the nature, substance and quality demanded, and to which false description was applied'. Gitlin claimed that he had received a licence to sell kosher meat from a body called the Rabbinical Association but, at the proceedings against him, Rabbi Harris Myer Lazarus of the Beth Din 'said that the Board of Schechita was the only authority to issue licences for the sale by retail of kosher meat which was killed and prepared according to the Jewish religious law'.[40]

As well as ensuring that the food eaten by the community had the correct kosher credentials, the religious authorities also tried to ensure that Jews wishing to do so received approved food in any circumstances in which they found themselves. For instance, they pressurized the state during both world wars. Thus in 1915 a Committee for the Supply of Kosher Food to Interned Jews came into existence in order to ensure that the thousand or so members of the community who found themselves behind barbed wire either on the Isle of Man or in Alexandra Palace had access to kosher food.[41] This followed an appeal in June 1915 for £500 to help with the provision of kosher food to internees.[42] By the following year the kosher kitchen in the Douglas Camp on the Isle of Man, originally established in 1914, had 'been greatly extended, is very well managed and is under the supervision of a Rabbi and a special Shomer (supervisor): 4 cooks are employed and supply daily meals to over 500 people'.[43]

While kosher food remained available to Jews who did not face internment during the Great War, provisions of meat lessened in the last year of the conflict, which led to complaints from E. Barnett, a large London kosher butcher, and also to a conference in March 1918 involving the Ministry of Food and the Food Committee of the Board of Deputies, in which the latter also complained about the lack of kosher supplies. The Ministry responded by making adjustments to ration cards held by Jews.[44] The *Jewish Chronicle* also issued appeals to its readers 'to exercise a little patience and restraint'. One solution to the shortages appears to have been the establishment of a Jewish Communal Kitchen in Camperdown House in East London.[45]

Similar problems arose during the Second World War but during this conflict the Ministry of Food, working together with the communal organizations, attempted to resolve any difficulties. As early as 16 September 1939 the Ministry drew up a memorandum outlining the measures envisaged to ensure the supply of kosher meat. These included the establishment of a list of officially licensed Jewish slaughterhouses, which initially totalled 31.[46] Throughout the War the Ministry worked together with the Schechita Board and the National Federation of Retail Kosher Butchers to ensure the supply of kosher meat and control Jewish butchers.[47] Although state-subsidized Jewish canteens had come into existence during the war as part of a government initiative to keep the working population fed, concern surfaced about the financial viability of some of them.[48] But despite the difficulties which may have existed, the attitude of the British government towards kosher food during the war was 'helpful', according to Tony Kushner. He points out that, with regard to rationing, 'Despite the shortage of vegetable oil, Jews were allowed to swap their bacon coupons for margarine, and matzos for Passover were exempt from regulations concerning biscuits.'[49] Therefore companies applying for licences from the Beth Din for the manufacture of Jewish food products during the war included matzos among the list of the items they wished to sell.[50]

The Jewish authorities also placed much effort into assuring the supply of kosher food to all sections of the population during peacetime, showing particular concern for those in hospital. At the start of the twentieth century concern arose about the absence of a kosher kitchen at the Manchester Royal Infirmary, despite the presence of Jewish patients there who had to have kosher meals sent to them from outside. In 1910 '1,036 meals were supplied to Jewish patients'.[51] At the start of the 1930s the London Hospital had a unit of four wards containing about fifty beds for Jewish patients whose food 'is prepared and cooked (by a Jewish cook) in a special kitchen attached to the unit'. Similar arrangements existed at other hospitals in the capital.[52]

In view of the importance of kosher food for the maintenance of Jewish identity and the extent to which the religious authorities went to assure its supply, stores selling food that met the needs of dietary rituals sprang up in all

of the major Jewish settlements in Britain. This would serve as one explanation for the emergence of Jewish entrepreneurs who opened up small businesses. Andrew Godley, who has addressed this issue, has focused his research on activity in the clothing industry, which employed most Jewish immigrants in Britain during the late nineteenth century.[53]

A significant number of Jewish butchers existed by the outbreak of the First World War. Mayhew mentioned the presence of two in Whitechapel market in the middle of the nineteenth century, who worked with the aid of assistants. He ascertained from the slaughterers that they killed 'weekly from 120 to 140 bullocks, from 400 to 500 sheep and lambs, and about 30 calves'.[54] By the beginning of the twentieth century the number of Jewish butchers had increased to such an extent that they organized themselves into several bodies. These included the Kosher Butchers Association, founded in 1908.[55] At least two trade unions emerged in the form of the London Jewish Butcher Workers Trade Union, founded in the East End in 1917, but only surviving for two years,[56] and the Manchester Jewish Master Butchers Association which, in contrast, lasted from 1908 until 1958, reflecting the period when the Manchester community reached its zenith. It admitted people who 'hold a licence granted by the Jewish Ecclesiastical authorities in Manchester'.[57] The number of members increased from nineteen in 1913 to a peak of thirty in 1920, after which it witnessed a slight decline, recovering in the late 1940s to stand at 32 in 1945 and 31 for the rest of the decade.[58] A Jewish Butchers' and Poulterers Association also existed at the end of the nineteenth century.[59]

One of the largest Jewish butchers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was E. Barnett of '79, 81, & 83 Middlesex Street, Aldgate', who placed regular adverts in the *Jewish Chronicle*. On 9 November 1888 one declared that the firm 'has steadfastly enjoyed the reputation of being THE LEADING HOUSE AMONGST THE POULTERERS, numbering amongst its numerous patrons nearly all of the leading Jewish families in the Kingdom'. An advert of 18 March 1921 offered 'SOMETHING BETTER FOR PURIM', including beef, mutton, veal, lamb, Vienna sausage, cooked tongues, smoked tongues, worsht, Warsaw worsht, breakfast sausage and cooked beef. In the same year, J. Nathan claimed to produce 'the only sausages that bear the schechita board seal', including worsht, liver sausage, garlic worsht, breakfast sausage, Viennese sausages and saveloys.[60]

Jewish bakers also proliferated by the end of the nineteenth century, particularly in the East End of London. At this time they faced much hostility from English bakers and found themselves in court because they worked on Sundays.[61] Conflict also arose within the Jewish baking community itself because of the long hours bakers worked.[62] Like Jewish butchers, bakers advertised their wares in the *Jewish Chronicle*. Levy Brothers of Bishopsgate, which claimed to have existed since 1710, offered 'Passover Cakes, Finest Manufactured', with 'carriage free to any part of London'.[63] Myers and Joseph, 'Cooks

and Confectioners' of Houndsditch claimed to 'supply the best confectionery' and described themselves as 'the only house in the trade that supply the Jewish nobility'. The firm offered 'ices, jellies, creams' and 'French and Italian pastry made to order'.[64] Meanwhile, Joseph Bonn claimed to provide a 'Gargantuan Feast of Passover Delicacies' which 'has its place on the thoughts of all bent on Passover Shopping'. The products it offered included 'dreadnoughts, made from the finest almonds by Captain Naph-Drukker', 'motza puddings and motza kleis'.[65] In 1933 *The New Survey of London Life and Labour* described the Jewish baking industry and its products:

> Jews prefer brown or black bread to white, and even when they eat the latter they prefer it to be baked by Jewish bakers. For their Sabbath every Jew must have his 'cholla', a particularly good quality bread baked in special patterns . . .
>
> There are about fifty Jewish master bakers, the majority of whom are in the Jewish Master Bakers' Protection Society. The number of skilled operatives has fallen from about 350 in 1914 to 90 in 1931. The operators are organized in the London Jewish Bakers Union, a union small but powerful in the sense that nearly every Jewish baker belongs to it.[66]

The existence of Jewish bakers and butchers, the latter controlled by dietary restrictions, provided the Jewish population with foods which adhered to these restrictions. As we have seen, cookbooks, together with recipes in the *Jewish Chronicle*, provided housewives with the opportunity to experiment with food. Such recipes, which were aimed at middle-class anglicized housewives

Unleavened bread manufacture in inter-war London.

rather than recently arrived 'greeners' from Eastern Europe, suggest that members of the established Anglo-Jewry had adapted their diet by the middle of the nineteenth century to incorporate more mainstream 'English' and international dishes.

In 1898 and 1899 the *Jewish Chronicle* actually carried a series of articles under the title of 'Kosher Dinners for Middle-Class Families', which could only have appealed to the established Anglo-Jewry. The dishes described confirm this picture, revealing limited traces of Jewishness. Thus a 'menu of a dinner for eight persons' included 'Potato Soup with Croutons', 'Codfish Balls', 'Boiled Salmon' and 'Roast Veal'.[67] Another 'dinner for eight persons' consisted of tongue soup, kedgeree, giblet pie, mashed turnips, potatoes, preserved ginger pudding and 'Welsh custards'.[68] In contrast, recipes for 'Passover Cookery' contained more recognizably Jewish dishes. An article in the *Jewish Chronicle* of 27 March 1896 included instruction on how to make motza pudding, motza fritters, charowzas and motza klies. But in 1921 another series of articles under the title of 'Jewish Cookery' again displayed few traces of Jewishness, resembling dishes which any middle-class housewife in Britain might cook. On 8 July, with the theme of summer vegetables, the recipes covered vegetable pie, green pea salad, cucumber and tomato rice and cooked vegetable mould, while two weeks later recipes for a 'meatless luncheon' included cucumber au gratin, fish mould and raspberry and redcurrant charlotte.

While we should not forget Claudia Roden's assertion about Jewish food picking up elements from all the areas where Jews have lived, it is tempting to view the recipes described above as indicative of the integration, or even assimilation, of established Anglo-Jewry into middle-class European norms, with just a hint of adherence to dietary restrictions, despite the various bodies which existed to control Jewish food. As we have seen, some of the Jewish cookbooks published before 1945 began with a section on koshering food. This applies, for instance, to the *Jewish Cookery Book* written by Miss Tattersall in 1895, which opened with just one page on 'Rules to be Observed in Koshering Meat, Poultry, Etc.'[69] May Henry and Edith Cohen's volume gives the impression of tokenism towards Jewish dietary laws with, again, just six paragraphs on koshering.[70] These volumes, like *The Jewish Manual*, all originally published during the Victorian and Edwardian years, contain a variety of dishes in terms of origins, most of which would fit into any contemporaneous British cookbook. The main distinguishing factor is adherence of the recipes to the basic laws of Kashrus. It is difficult, as with all cookbooks, to establish the extent to which any section of society, in this case established Anglo-Jewry, cooked and ate the dishes suggested within them.

What do we know about the dietary patterns of the Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe who moved into Britain during the second half of the nineteenth century? We would expect them to consume different foods to those

eaten by established Anglo-Jewry, reflecting the areas from which they originated. Oded Schwarz paints a delicious picture of Ashkenazi food, which had developed after the first Jews moved into central Europe about two thousand years ago. Schwartz provides descriptions of dishes such as lokshen, farfel, kreplach, schmaltz and chicken soup.[71] In contrast, both John Cooper and Hasia Diner place more stress on the poverty of East European Jews (which influenced their diet) and have also mentioned the inevitable geographic variations in food, in an area stretching from the North Sea to the Black Sea.[72] Cooper stresses that bread, bagels and the potato formed the basis of the Eastern European Jewish diet during the nineteenth century.[73] Schwarz, Cooper and Diner all point to the differences between everyday food and festival food, whether Sabbath meals or those consumed during one of the annual Jewish holy periods.

Migration into British cities helped alleviate the levels of poverty which the newcomers had experienced in Eastern Europe, even if they found themselves at the bottom of the British social scale. Evidence of continuing hunger is provided by the existence of communal kitchens serving basic food, organized by established Anglo-Jewry. The Chief Rabbi opened an East End Soup Kitchen on 19 December 1888, where the poor were greeted 'with nice hot soup'.[74] But the 'most enduring' Jewish soup kitchen opened in 'the heart of Spitalfields' in 1893, serving thousands of families at a time. 'For example, in April 1898 2,500 families were given food.'[75]

But this represents just one aspect of eating among the newly arrived immigrants. Claudia Roden writes that, in and around Petticoat Lane in the East End of London, 'Peddlars went around with baskets of bagels. Salt herrings,

East End bagel seller, *c.* 1910.

sauerkraut, and pickled cucumbers were sold from barrels.'[76] According to Richard Tames, many newly arrived East End Jews 'brought to this densely populated urban location the habits of peasant life in the *stetl*, keeping a rabbit or even chickens in their apartments'.[77]

Oral history sources also provide an indication of the type of food eaten by the immigrants. Tames quotes the reminiscences of a Lithuanian, who visited Polish neighbours in London:

> We used a great deal of pepper and seasoning. The Polish used sugar . . . when you had boiled fish. Ours was peppery and theirs was sweet . . . I went into Grodzinsky's family and they were having black bread with cream cheese and they sprinkled sugar on it. And I thought what on earth are they doing that for?[78]

Meanwhile, Clara Weingard, interviewed by Rosalyn Livshin, remembered her mother's sweet shop in the Jewish immigrant area of Cheetham Hill in Manchester. Weingard's mother came from Rumania, whereas her father's origins were in Austria. Her mother made 'sweets and cakes and bagels and cheese and big pats of butter', as well as '*smetne* and *kes*'. She continues:

> I mean, (even) in the days when things were really hard, she'd use to bake cheesecake, as she always used to have her own cheese. And she used to have a huge tray of cheesecake, and she'd used to make what they called *taigelach*, it was a sort of sweet dough, twisted and dipped in sugar and wine . . . And she used to make *strudel* . . . And she used to make the same kind of dough and mix it with what they used to call the *leits* of an animal, the heart and the lung and cheek of the animal, and she used to mince it and mix it with *kache*, some stuff called *kache* – it was like er a cereal sort of stuff, a maize. And she used to mix it all with onions and spices and she used to make it also very thin dough, and cook it, and it was GOURGEOUS. And on our hob, in the kitchen, there was always a huge black pan of butter beans . . . And she used to make what they called *kishke*. She used to buy the insides of the animal and what they throw away today, and she used to clean it and stiff it with flour and water and fat, like *helzel*, and it used to be rolled, round and round, oh and it was gorgeous. And she used to make a cabbage soup of a lump of brisket – fatty brisket – and she used to cook it with this soursalt and cabbage.[79]

Weingard is clearly remembering the Jewish food of her childhood very fondly. The products she ate have a close association, not only with her youth, but also with her Jewishness and with her mother. Similarly, Aubrey Rose, who grew up in the East End of London, remembered 'great dishes of boiled pota-

toes and herrings and tea' and her 'grandmother's magnificent cakes, strudels, pleyvas, honey cakes, fritters'.[80] No mention is made of the extent of adherence to dietary rituals. Jessica Gould, who was born in 1919 and grew up in various parts of London, claimed that her mother 'kept a kosher home', especially when they lived in the East End. She 'was a wonderful cook, and pastry cook and used to cook chicken Friday nights and light candles'. However, when they moved to Notting Hill, 'there were no kosher butchers' and she would 'buy ham if we wanted it, we'd have ham sandwiches'.[81]

As Gould indicates, festive occasions provided one of the main opportunities for the consumption of Jewish food. *The Friday Night Book*, which first appeared in 1933, concluded with a section on a range of Sabbath dishes, including 'chopped onion and chicken fat', borsht, 'gefillte fisch with egg sauce', pickled herring, sauerbraten and apple strudel.[82] These dishes indicate the central European origins of the food of the upwardly mobile Ashkenazi Jews and their offspring who had arrived at the end of the nineteenth century. Weddings also offered an opportunity to consume dishes connected with the ethnicity of the marriage partners. One menu from 1933, offered by Sam Stern, one of the largest Jewish catering firms in Britain, included, for lunch, chopped chicken livers, lockshen and kreplach soup, roast chicken and stuffed neck, and 'olives and cucumbers', although, the evening 'Menu Du Dinner', written in French, had a more mainstream European feel to it, even though it remained kosher and included 'Concombre et Olive'.[83]

By the middle of the twentieth century, following the growth of the Jewish community, Jewish food became available in abundance as butchers, bakers and grocers who sold kosher food emerged in the areas where Jewish communities developed. It is important to recognize the different Jewish communities existing in Britain between about 1850 and 1945, reflected in the food they ate. The only common denominator was the fact that most Jews in the period probably adhered to kosher rituals. But the food consumed by a member of the established Anglo-Jewish community in, say, 1885, would have resembled that eaten by any of the higher echelons of the European bourgeoisie. In contrast, the newly arrived 'greener' would have consumed Ashkenazi Jewish food similar to what he had eaten in the east European ghetto. Even here, his precise area of origin and his financial status would have had a significant impact on the food eaten. There may have existed kosher food, but many different types of Jewish dishes emerged in Britain before 1945, bearing a close relationship to the social status and geographical origins of the consumers.

German Food

German food in the decades leading up to the First World War does not reveal such complexity. Although the German community divided along similar class

lines to the Jews, as well as into Protestants, Roman Catholics and Jews,[84] these patterns do not appear to reveal themselves so obviously in their diet, although we can assume that observant German Jews adhered to the basics of kosher. The number of Germans in Britain before 1914 certainly allowed the development of food communities, especially in the East End and West End of London where this group concentrated. Eating may not have played the sort of central role in the identification of Germans that it did for Jews, but it played a more significant role than for the Irish. The selling of pork delicacies provides one example of the distinctiveness of German food in Britain.

By the outbreak of the First World War the total numbers of German nationals living in the country approached sixty thousand. The two main concentrations focused on the East End of London, particularly during the late nineteenth century, in the areas which Jews would gradually take over. The other focus lay in the West End, bordered by Euston Road, Portland Place, Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road. Other German areas existed at various times within the capital, in, for instance, Sydenham and Islington. Outside London more middle-class settlements emerged in Manchester, Bradford, Liverpool and Glasgow, in contrast to those mainly working-class groups in the major London concentrations. These communities developed their own ethnic institutions revolving particularly around religion, philanthropy and politics, especially the first of these and, by 1914, every German community of any size had developed its own Lutheran church.[85]

The concentrations of Germans in particular localities, although not on the same scale as the contemporaneous Eastern European Jewish community or post-1945 Asian groups, did allow some development of ethnic economies.[86] An examination of trade directories and advertisements which appeared in some of the German newspapers existing in Britain before the outbreak of the First World War helps to confirm this. By 1913 the main thoroughfare of the German community of the West End of London was Charlotte Street, as revealed by the 1913 Post Office Directory which contained at least forty shops with German names out of the 138 businesses listed. These included five tobacconists, three tailors, two artists and two employment agencies. In addition, food was also well represented, including two butchers, four restaurants, one baker and three foreign provision dealers.[87]

London German newspapers also reveal German businesses, especially those concerned with food. Looking at *Hermann*, the most important London German paper of the 1860s, for instance, shows us, in addition, to advertisements from 'Apotheken' and restaurants, several for recognizably German food shops. Thus, the baker John Wittich, of East India Dock Road, sold 'German brown bread'. A. Klapper of Whitechapel, describing itself as a 'Konditorei', sold 'German tarts, cakes and pastries' as well as coffee, tea and chocolate.[88] Another baker, who sold 'German pastries of all types', of Leman Street, the centre of

German East London, provided a list of these pastries, including Königsberg marzipan, as well as Nuremberg and Basle pepper cakes, together with 'fresh German black bread'.[89] Delicatessens had also appeared in London by the end of the nineteenth century. W. Bedbur of Portland Street described his business as a 'German mustard factory, delicatessen and wine factory'. This firm sold a wide variety of products including at least seven types of sausage, three of which originated in Frankfurt, as well as a 'truffle and garlic sausage' (probably a form of paté). Other delicacies included 'Westfalian and Brunswick ham', 'Pommeranian goose breast' and 'Hamburg smoked meat'. Pickles included 'Mainz Sauerkraut' and 'Saxon salt, vinegar, pepper and mustard gherkins'. The firm offered free delivery to all parts of London and could also send boxes to the provinces on payment of postage and packing costs. Underneath Bedbur's advertisement in the same edition of *Hermann*, William Linger of Frith Street in Soho offered a similar range of goods and could again deliver to all parts of London.[90] Several restaurants also sold Bavarian 'lager beer', as well as 'Viennese' beer.[91]

Shops which sold such products continued to survive until the Edwardian period. An advertisement by Löwenbräu in the *Londoner General Anzeiger* of 3 January 1900 listed seventeen establishments in London selling this lager. The same edition carried an advert by Edwin Schür of 7 Commercial Road, declaring that he produced the best wedding cakes. In fact, by the beginning of the twentieth century a German food community had developed comparable with the contemporary Jewish one and the Asian one which would emerge in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Unlike the last of these, German food remained largely confined to the capital although, as we have seen, some London firms would deliver further afield. In the years leading up to the First World War, a series of German food companies had become established in London. While they may not have had the nationwide distribution and power of the Indian companies which would follow after 1945, they certainly became sizeable. The Damm'sche Braun and Schwarzbrot-Bäckerei, which seems to have come into existence in May 1904, based in Fitzroy Square, the heart of German west London, distributed bread to thirty German bakers and other establishments in London.[92] By the Edwardian period, Charlotte Street even seems to have had its own 'German sausage factory' whose specialities included 'Viennise and Frankfurt sausages' and 'Thüringen blood and tongue sausages'. It even opened on Sundays.[93] In the German East End, J. Allmann, 'Importer of Foreign Provisions', of Commercial Road East, sold all variety of foods as early as 1886, including 'genuine honey combs from the Lünenberg heath', 'genuine Frankfurt sausages from Eschenheimer Street in Frankfurt am Main' and 'Magdeburg and Mainz Sauerkraut'.[94]

Two giants had emerged in the world of London German delicatessens by 1914. One was Rühmann Brothers, situated in Tottenham Court Road, but with

a café connected to it in Leicester Square. This business sold an extraordinary range of products, including sausages, hams, fish and cheeses. Specialities included 'smoked venison', 'German hares', 'live carps' and 'Pommeranian geese'. This firm delivered to all parts of London and beyond.[95] The other was H. Appenrodt who described himself as the 'most distinguished German delicatessen in London' and as the 'largest importer of all types of German delicacies' and wines. The premises had a German pastry shop and 'Viennese café restaurant' connected with it. The two branches of 1900, in Coventry Street and the Strand, had increased to nine by the outbreak of the First World War, with one in Coventry Street, one in Picadilly, two in Regent Street, two in Oxford Street and three in the Strand, locations lying outside the German West End, suggesting that its foods appealed to an English clientele. By 1914 this firm also had its own 'sausage and canning factory with the newest machinery and the most modern and hygienic appliances'.[96] Appenrodt opened his first shop in about 1890, having migrated to London in 1886 from Nordhausen in the Harz mountains. He initially worked in the shipping trade.[97]

Clearly, food played an important role for the German communities which developed in Britain during the Victorian period. It did not have the religious role that kosher products had for Jews but by the second half of the nineteenth century Germans in Britain had a range of products available to them recognizable from their places of origin. The successful marketing by the larger delicatessens of their products in the German press, and the readiness of many of the firms selling sausages, sauerkraut and Pommeranian goose breast to deliver their products throughout the country meant that a person living in any of the German communities existing in Britain before 1914 could consume food with some resemblance to that of his homeland. Community members could also attend one of the numerous German churches and participate in the activities of one of the countless German clubs in the country, which often served German food and beer, particularly in London.

But the First World War Germanophobia, particularly the nationwide rioting, combined with the confiscation of all German property in Britain, internment and subsequent repatriation, meant the disappearance of the vast majority of Germans from Britain, together with their businesses and food.[98] The German community never returned to its pre-war glory, although some institutions survived and new ones came into existence, partly as a result of the movement of Jewish refugees from Nazism.[99] We can find traces of German food in the interwar years. Appenrodt reopened some of his establishments in the 1920s having sold them (probably compulsorily) in 1919, although he finally dispensed with them in 1936.[100] Meanwhile, Schmidt's of Charlotte Street described themselves as 'importers of foreign produce' and 'manufacturers of all kinds of continental sausages and delicacies' including 'Frankfort sausages'.[101]

Germans in London toasting the emperor, *c.* 1900.

Emerging Food Communities

After 1945, when members of the ethnic majority increasingly consumed foods sold by migrants, two of the major purveyors of such produce were the Italians and the Chinese. These groups certainly opened restaurants before 1945,[102] but what did the members of these minorities consume themselves? These two communities remained smaller than the Jewish and German minorities. The Chinese could even be described as a micro-community. But were either the Italians or the Chinese numerous enough to develop into ethnic groups and sustain their own food communities? Evidence exists to answer both of these questions positively.

The Italians

The number of Italians stood at under fifteen thousand at the start of the twentieth century and just over 25,000 in the early 1930s.[103] As it concentrated on particular locations, especially in London (focused around Clerkenwell), some community development occurred. In Clerkenwell, St Peter's Church became the focal point. By the end of the 1930s eleven schools in London offered

tuition in Italian to 1,300 pupils,[104] while a range of Italian societies existed in all of the major Italian settlements.[105]

Italians became heavily involved in the food and catering industries before 1945, either as ice-cream purveyors, waiters or restaurant and café owners. This suggests that Italians consumed the food which they would sell to the British. In her study of migrant foodways in America, Diner contrasts the basic products eaten in Italy during the nineteenth century with the food of Italians in the USA. 'Italian immigrants placed a high premium upon eating certain foods and eating them well'.[106] Ethnicity had the same relationship with food for Italians as it did for Germans: while there was no religious significance, both of these groups created their own food communities.

Evidence certainly points to the availability of Italian products in the various areas in Britain where the Italian community settled from the end of the nineteenth century. In 1874 a publication called the *Food Journal* carried an article entitled 'Italian Produce'. This described a 'foreign quarter' in central London 'filled with an Italian population'. The author, C. Carter Blake wrote of 'two or three shops . . . where the Italians procure all they want'. He continued: 'Macaroni, in all its forms, is naturally the first characteristic of Italian produce' and then described the various types available as well as the ways of cooking them. It 'retailed at 4d per lb'. Meanwhile, dried mushrooms sold at 4d

Italian grocer from the early twentieth century.

per oz (28 g), Italian butter, 'sold in canvas parcels', at 1s 6d, Lombard wine at 8d per bottle and tomato puree at 1d per oz. The shops also stocked olive oil and 'numerous forms of preserved fish and meats' including 'pickled tunny'. Blake concluded that 'the Italian population in London fares extremely well'.[107] Similarly, Anthony Rea in his study of the Italian community of Ancoats in Manchester, has pointed to the Italian food shops here which sold 'salamis, cheeses and pastas'.[108]

There also exists an account of food eaten by an Italian family written by Mary Contini, born in Scotland, but with Italian origins. Her grandparents opened a shop in Cockenzie, 'a lovely old fishing village' in Scotland (previously owned by another Italian) at the start of the twentieth century, which sold fish and chips and ice cream. Contini mentions a wholesaler of Italian produce in St John's Hill in Edinburgh from as early as the 1860s. Her family in Cockenzie made their own Italian food including ricotta, bread and pasta. In addition, they also 'got welcome parcels of sausage and pecorino across from Italy'.[109] Contini's volume is actually a family recipe book, containing both Italian dishes and those with a Scottish flavour such as smoked salmon and 'Scotch Barley Broth', indicating the experience of migrant families who live 'between two cultures', consuming both the produce of their homeland and that of their adopted land. We can assume that German migrants before 1914 followed a similar pattern.

The Chinese

Although the Chinese community before 1945 was even smaller than the Italian one, evidence exists of the availability of Chinese food, if not of the precise domestic consumption patterns of the migrants. In the decades leading up to the First World War this community numbered just a few hundred, based mostly in the port areas of Cardiff, East London and Liverpool, evolving from sailors.[110] Anthony Shang has written that 'early Chinatown' contained 'a few provision stores and restaurants geared to the needs of Chinese seamen, dock workers and students'. In Liverpool the community of this period was centred around Pitt Street, Cleveland Square and Frederick Street, while the London settlers before 1939 concentrated on Limehouse in the East End. 'Streets such as Limehouse Causeway and Pennyfields had Chinese grocery stores, eating houses and meeting places.'[111]

These statements by Shang point to the importance of the availability of Chinese food for such a small community which, because of its size, developed relatively few communal organizations.[112] The few hundred Chinese in Limehouse managed to sustain grocery shops selling products aimed at their own community rather than westerners, even though some Britons visited these shops and provided colourful accounts of their contents. A description from 1916 points to an 'unmistakably Chinese stamp' in the stores in Limehouse:

> One establishment in Pennyfields exhibits two large vases among its wares, while the other window contains handsome figured silks. The comestibles on sale have the special appeal to the denizens of this quarter. Here, for instance, are spotted and other fish fried in lard, fried rice birds, lotus or water-lily roots, water chestnuts, canned bamboo-shoots, carambolas – an acid East Indian fruit – in syrup, green apricots with sugar, lichees or Chinese plums – a very agreeable fruit – dried or in syrup, Chinese ginger in vinegar with sugar, and so on.[113]

The largest and longest-lasting establishment appears to have been Wong's. Opened before 1914, this was a combination of 'opium den', restaurant and grocery store.[114] An account from the 1930s describes it as 'a shop crammed to the ceiling with the delicacies of the East' and goes on to provide details of the products it sold:

> Here can be purchased the Chinese oysters, fine fat prawns, bamboo shoots, water-chestnuts, noodles, shark's fin, spotty fish, rice birds, and the hundred other foods that only a Chinaman knows how to cook . . .
>
> In bins and boxes near the doorway are dried fish, and fruits and vegetables of infinite variety. Mushrooms, dates, chopped eels, beche-de-mer, lily roots, prawns, seaweed, scallops, flat fish, ink fish, flower fish, oysters, awabi, apricots, bitter melon, plums, ginger, several kinds of beans, birds' nests, fungus, olives, Chinese fish, cabbages – all of these and many more choice edibles are set out before those who enter Mr Wong's mysterious and seductive Arcanum.
>
> Above the bins and cases and hanging from the low ceiling is a curious medley of sharks' fins, Chinese sausages, eels . . .
>
> Beneath the counters are the eggs – salted eggs – pickled eggs – eggs caked in earth and sealed in clay – eggs black with age – far-travelled eggs[115]

By the interwar years the Chinese community in Soho had also begun to emerge, so that the second Chinese cookbook published in Britain from 1933 mentioned the Shanghai Emporium in Greek Street.[116]

Migrants Before 1945

The Chinese followed the pattern of most of the migrant groups existing in Britain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The continuation of the dietary patterns which Germans, Italians and Chinese had grown up with in their respective lands of origin played a central role in confirming their national and ethnic identification. Migrants could obtain familiar food in the early stages of community formation, as we have seen from the tiny

A Chinese shop in Limehouse, *c.* 1900.

Chinese communities which existed in Britain, as described, in an orientalist fashion, by English observers fascinated by the products available in Chinese shops. Jewish and German newspapers also reveal the range of goods available to members of these communities, as their advertisements clearly demonstrate: by the second half of the nineteenth century Germans resident in London could purchase an amazing array of sausages and liverwursts, together with sauerkraut and, by 1914, the ubiquitous Pommeranian goose breast. Clearly, ethnic entrepreneurs recognized the existence of a potential market and exploited it. Similarly, after 1945, companies selling Indian food on a nationwide scale would be set up by migrants or their descendants. Even by the middle of the nineteenth century several London firms could deliver food to Germans in any part of the country.

While the consumption of German, Italian or Chinese food remained a choice for the members of the communities concerned, the eating of kosher products followed established religious rules. We can probably assume that most Jews in Britain before 1945 adhered to basic food regulations, although we cannot measure this scientifically. However, we have seen that Jewish food in Britain

had different meanings for different people, determined especially by class and national origin. A new arrival from Poland, who settled in Whitechapel and shared only a nominally common religion with Lady Montefiore, would consume completely different food (assuming he had any money to purchase it) to this member of the British upper classes. In this sense Jews resemble post-war South Asians because of the difficulty of generalizing.

The Jewish cookbooks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reveal the extent to which established Anglo-Jewry increasingly adapted to British norms. It proves more difficult to assert the extent to which Germans and Chinese did the same. While the existence of Chinese and German shops suggest that these communities ate different foods from the ethnic majority around them, in all likelihood they also consumed the same products as their neighbours. Certainly, Mary Contini has suggested this in her autobiographical study as the descendant of Italians in Scotland.

The anomaly in our discussion is the Irish. The main reason for their lack of ethnic food would appear to be the absence of a distinct food culture in Ireland and a lack of distance from the products consumed by the ethnic majority in Britain. While migrants from Italy, Germany or China could remember with fondness pecorino cheese, sauerkraut with Nuremberg sausages or roasted duck respectively, the bland and monotonous potato diet did not evoke quite the same romantic memories for the Irish. Although they constituted a distinct minority in nineteenth-century Britain, food did not form an important part of their identity.

As the discussion of Jewish food has emphasized, diet changed from the place of origin to the land of settlement. While German and Chinese shops suggest otherwise, the diet of these two groups also probably adapted to the new surroundings. This becomes particularly evident in the dishes which the latter group began to produce for the natives of London by the 1930s. While the food practices of newcomers may have changed among themselves, the most dramatic transformation occurred when they served up a version of their food to the ethnic majority.

Chapter Three

The Birth of the Foreign Restaurant

> Nearly everyone likes a properly made curry, and it takes a native to make one, the best French chef in the world has never quite attained it. There are at least a dozen curries to choose from at the India Restaurant, rising in price from one to five shillings and averaging three shillings. Moglai Moorgee Birianni (Mogul Chicken Pillau) is a very special curry and costs five shillings; there is Moorgee Ka Salun Madrassi (Madras chicken curry, wings only) at four shillings; Dhall Cha (mutton and Dhall curry); Ginga Ka Salun (prawn curry) both three shillings. There is also a large assortment of other Indian dishes and the choice of English rump steak, lamb cutlet and so on.[1]

Three Types of Foreign Restaurant

The emergence of 'ghetto food' in inner city migrant concentrations at the end of the nineteenth century also meant the development of places where members of migrant communities could 'eat out'. Just as they could purchase products which reminded them of home in the grocery stores run by members of their community, ethnic minorities could also find restaurants where they could consume these products ready cooked. As we have already seen, some Chinese and German shops also doubled up as cafés and restaurants.

This is one aspect of the rise of the foreign restaurant. There are three distinct types of foreign restaurant in total. The first, as discussed in the previous paragraph, is an eating place run by and catering for members of the same ethnic communities. This type of restaurant served food which had a closer connection with products eaten in the homeland than those restaurants established for the dominant population. This occurs among virtually every group to have settled in Britain since the mid-Victorian period with the exception of the Irish.

The second type of foreign restaurant is less obvious. The use of the term 'foreign' to describe many of the great restaurants which emerged in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may seem questionable. Why should we consider the Ritz or the Café Royal as foreign? The explanation lies partly in the fact that they served the French-inspired cuisine consumed by the international bourgeoisie but, more importantly, these two institutions were opened by Europeans, and people from the Continent played a major role in staffing them from top to bottom, from waiters to chefs to maîtres

The Ritz in the interwar years.

d'hôtel. This employment of European staff went beyond the great hotels and restaurants, impacting on establishments of all sizes before 1945. Germans and Swiss became especially important before 1914 but, following the anti-German hysteria of the First World War, Italians replaced Germans and, in turn, lost their jobs following the entry of Mussolini into conflict with Great Britain in 1940.

As well as staffing large restaurants and hotels, members of migrant communities also opened up establishments selling food without making an issue of its foreign credentials. Two obvious examples of this development are ice cream – initially provided in the streets by migrant Italians, who often subsequently opened up cafés – and fish and chip shops, many of which were owned by Jews in interwar London. Similarly, a Jewish family founded Lyons which, during the interwar years and beyond, played a major role in opening up teashops, restaurants and corner houses throughout the country. This could be considered another example of 'British' food sold by foreigners.

The third type of foreign restaurant sold recognizably foreign food to British people. This type of foreign establishment really took off during the

post-war period, but its origins lie in the handful of Italian, Chinese and Indian restaurants open before 1945. Italian restaurants centred especially on Soho and other parts of central London and attracted a predominantly middle-class clientele. Chinese restaurants, on the other hand, generally remained confined to the main areas of Chinese settlement and appealed to a few curious Britons, while only a handful of Indian establishments had opened before 1945. In addition, restaurants originating in other parts of Europe also existed, including those describing themselves as French, together with Viennese-style coffee houses, while one of the best known and most reviewed central London Continental restaurants was the Spanish Martinez in Piccadilly. Such establishments had not yet constructed the type of standardized anglicized menu that would characterize Indian restaurants in Britain after 1945. This was because so few of them existed and the ones that did remained almost completely confined to central London. They were aimed at an overwhelmingly middle-class clientele, so only a small percentage of the ethnic majority would have consumed 'foreign' restaurant food before 1945.

The idea of the foreign restaurant does not refer to the food served which, as this book argues, remains a problematic concept. Instead, it primarily refers to the ownership and staffing of places where both members of the ethnic majority and the ethnic minorities dined. First-, second- and third-generation migrants opened up establishments for their own communities, staffed or owned many apparently British restaurants and also ran cosmopolitan institutions which attracted members of the ethnic majority, particularly the London middle classes.

The Foreign Restaurant, or Just Another Place to Eat Out

Just as we need to question the concept of the nationality of restaurants, we also need to question the idea of the restaurant itself. Rebecca Sprang has carried out one of the most fundamental deconstructions of this French concept, pointing out that, 'Centuries before a restaurant was a place to eat (and even decades after), a *restaurant* was a thing to eat, a restorative broth' distinguished 'from all other bouillons by [its] highly condensed nature, since, unlike the more plebeian sorts of consommés, *restaurants* were often prepared without the addition of any liquid.' Only during 'the last twenty years of the Old Regime' did the concept of the restaurant 'as a space for urban sociability emerge . . . one went to a restaurant . . . to drink restorative broths'. By the 1820s Parisian restaurants had emerged into the familiar patterns of today, spreading gradually beyond Paris to other French regions and other countries over the next hundred years.[2]

One of the few books on the history of British restaurants, by Gregory Houston Bowden, seems to concur with Sprang, as his narrative essentially

begins with the Edwardian period, claiming that, at the start of the twentieth century, 'There were about a dozen restaurants in London which could most appropriately be called Grand Restaurants'. Several of those he lists, including Romano's and the Savoy, were actually established by migrants.[3] Bowden is essentially referring to places where 'the cream of London society settled down nightly to enjoy themselves'.[4]

But our concern lies beyond just the dining habits of the highest sections of British society. While only these groups may have eaten in restaurants 'with their four-column menus, confused eaters, and waiters of variable politeness',[5] most sections of British urban society ate away from their home at some time during the week. Some historians therefore feel more comfortable with the concept of 'eating out' than 'dining in restaurants' because the former covers a larger portion of society. In the introduction to their edited volume on *Eating out in Europe*, Marc Jacobs and Peter Scholliers have interpreted this concept as encompassing 'coarse bread eaten during harvesting in 1840, a cordial meal at a Berner inn in 1870, the robust food of a factory's canteen in 1900, a sophisticated dinner at a three-star restaurant in 1950, as well as a hamburger consumed just outside a school gate in 1990'.[6] This offers an extremely broad interpretation of eating out, closer to the approach of this chapter, although it will not consider picnics, as such occasions usually involve home-cooked food eaten outside.

Our focus centres on cooked food purchased and usually eaten outside the home between circa 1850 and 1945. John Burnett, while asserting that among the British working classes eating out 'for pleasure' did not generally take off until the second half of the twentieth century did, nevertheless, recognize urbanization, together with increased income and leisure time, as important in the spread of this phenomenon even before then. He points to the emergence of the fish and chip shop and the rise of the first catering chains, such as the ABC cafés. To these developments we should also add the consumption of food at work canteens – hardly a leisure activity but still an aspect of eating out.[7] The working classes also consumed street food, especially in London as recognized by Mayhew and, more recently, following Mayhew, by Edwina Ehrman et al., focusing on nineteenth-century London, where the products available included whelks, baked potatoes, ham sandwiches, slices of pineapple and ice cream.[8] Burnett has pointed out that, by the end of the nineteenth century, women increasingly became visible in restaurants during the evening, having previously generally eaten out during the day. He links this change with the fact that, by 1900, women of the middle and upper classes began to move out of the domestic sphere.[9] Nevertheless, it probably remains true that for much of the century until 1945, eating out remained a predominantly male preserve, although the entry of women into employment, especially during the Second World War, as British restaurants opened, had a significant impact upon such patterns.[10]

This chapter examines more than just the restaurant, very much the preserve of the highest echelons of society in Britain before 1945. Our concern lies with the whole range of eating-out experiences – from buying an ice cream in the street to purchasing fish and chips, eating in a Lyons corner house to dining in a restaurant set up by ethnic minorities to cater for their own communities. Our main objective is to assess the role of migrants in the development of eating out in Britain before 1945.

Migrants Eat Out

Burnett in particular argued that class played a role in the development of eating out in Britain over the last two centuries. As most of the migrant communities with which we are dealing were overwhelmingly working class, this would suggest that they developed a limited number of restaurants. But did the migrants also eat out at other places? At this stage we also need to recognize the role of the restaurant as a place for socializing, conviviality and pleasure. 'In the restaurant eating is transformed into an entertainment experience: relieved of the chores of preparing a meal in a different environment where one chooses what to eat and is waited upon, diners are free to enjoy, converse and interact.'[11] The last two words seem most apt in regard to ethnic minorities. But what matters is not simply conversing and interacting, but the type of person with whom one converses and interacts. Jacobs and Scholliers have stressed 'a differentiation of catering businesses' along class lines, mirroring the rise and separation of elite and popular culture from the end of the eighteenth century.[12] The rise of the restaurant in London during the nineteenth century essentially provided the development of space where members of the upper sections of metropolitan society could mix with people from their own class, waited on in the same way as in their own homes.

If eating out worked according to class and taste,[13] then we would also expect it to work in terms of ethnicity, representing as it does the other major indicator of identity in the modern world in which, as we have seen, food plays an important role. Places where members of ethnic minorities ate out in Britain before 1945 would play a role in bringing together members of the same ethnic group and therefore perpetuate the existence of an ethnic community. Hasia Diner has recognized this in her discussion of the development of Jewish communities in American cities during the nineteenth century. 'Grocery stores, fish markets, bakeries, butchers shops, restaurants, cafes, and cafeterias in the larger cities, delicatessens in the smaller ones, defined Jewish urban space.'[14] Places for eating out in the USA played an important role both in the development of food communities and, in turn, the emergence of ethnic communities *per se*.

Does evidence survive to support this assertion for the major groups which developed in Britain before 1945? If we begin again with the Irish, we

find an almost complete absence of places where this group could gather to consume the products of their homeland. We can apply the same explanations as we did for the non-existence of grocery stores, i.e. that Irish food played little role in the maintenance Irish identity.

Jewish places for eating out, on the other hand, certainly did emerge, although not on quite the scale that we might expect given the size of the Jewish community – particularly in comparison with the much smaller Chinese population, for which restaurants played a central role in maintaining ethnicity. Adverts, together with other, miscellaneous, sources, help us to establish some of the most important Jewish restaurants before 1945, centred primarily on London, as well as giving some clues about the clientele and the food which they served.

It is difficult to establish the number of Jewish restaurants in Britain before 1945. A critical article on those which existed in the East End appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1911, claiming that 'ninety per cent of these establishments are unworthy of the name of restaurant or, indeed, of kosher'. It continued, 'It is a moot question whether there is really a need for these unwholesome eating-houses, with their ill-kept tables, unkempt patrons and uninviting fare,' although the same piece also mentioned the existence of 'more respectable kosher restaurants'.[15]

One of the earliest kosher establishments appears to have been Goldstein's in Bloomfield Street, London Wall, '3 Minutes from the Bank' according to its advertising in the *Jewish Chronicle* from the early 1880s.[16] By the end of the nineteenth century it had attracted the attention of the *Caterer* which, in rather orientalist language, described it as 'one of the most typical City temples of Hebraic food and feeding'. The writer claimed that 'Goldstein's is the restaurant patronised by the "froom", the strictest observers of religious observances of the community'. The menu certainly had an Ashkenazi feel to it as it included 'fimsell', 'matsoklese', 'sauerkraut', 'kugel' and 'apple staffen', although some of the other dishes could have come from any middle-class restaurant in late nineteenth-century London and included smoked salmon, fried plaice, 'filleted steak' and roast chicken.[17]

The *Jewish Chronicle* would have approved of Cohn's in Houndsditch in the East End, 'under supervision of the Beth Din' and, by the 1930s, also 'catering for weddings, bar-mitzvahs, etc.'[18] Another article in the *Caterer* from 15 July 1914 described Cohn's as one of the Jewish restaurants 'of the better class' which 'cater more particularly for the English Jew', in contrast to the numerous other establishments in the East End, 'some being mostly frequented by aliens from Eastern Europe'. Those who patronized Cohn's 'it is evident at a glance, belong to a fairly well-to-do type of city man, and some of them have been attending regularly for twenty years'. The reviewer described the menu in the following way:

> The bill of fare contains the ordinary headings, from soup, *entrées*, grill, and joints to salad and pastry, and among the distinctive items may be mentioned kreplich soup, made of squares of paste filled with meat, onions and seasoning folded into triangles and boiled in soup; vermicelli soup; fleishckugel, or rissoles of meat; gefüllte milz (stuffed milt); schmorbraten (beef *à la mode*); gedampfte rindebrust (stewed breast of beef); gefillte fische, in which fish is stuffed with a mixture of the flesh, onions, breadcrumb, egg, and seasoning; apfelmuss (stewed apple); linzer tart; almond cake; and German confectionery.

In fact, this menu has as much of a German character to it as it does an Ashkenazi Jewish one and it could be that its main customers were the German Jewish elite who worked in the City.[19]

Many Jewish establishments had a relatively short lifespan. For instance, 'The Kosher Restaurant Company' survived, as a public limited company, from 1881 until 1905.[20] Similarly, Kosher Caterers, which appears to have been an attempt to open a chain as 'proprietors and/or managers of restaurants, cafes, hotels and dining-rooms either generally or on "Kosher Restaurant" lines' only lasted from 1926 to 1929.[21]

But some establishments survived from the Edwardian years into the inter-war period and beyond, including Bloom's, which still exists today.[22] Abrahamson's, meanwhile, like Bloom's, lay in the West End, which by the inter-war years, had a concentration of kosher restaurants serving a community of around 25,000.[23] Abrahamson's described itself as 'The Only Kosher Restaurant in the West End' in 1908.[24] Another advert from the following year asserted that it served 'First Class Cuisine. Strictly Orthodox'. Its wares included 'Tongues, Worsht & Smoked Beef, Olives, Cucumbers, Biscuits, Pastries, Gateaux, Almond Puddings, Motzas, and Confectionery of every kind'.[25] By 1921 Abrahamson's could cater for 'Weddings or Receptions' of up to a hundred persons.[26]

Perhaps the best-known kosher restaurant of the interwar years was Sam Stern's, an East End establishment. This firm originally began as an outside caterer, based in Smith Street in Stepney. In 1927 Sam Stern bought a warehouse in Mansell Street which, in the following year, he opened as 'Stern's Hotel and Restaurant'. This acted both as a venue for functions, especially weddings, and as a restaurant. Although it appears to have attracted a high-class clientele, a menu from the 1930s would suggest that it must have appealed to a wide range of social groups from a variety of Jewish backgrounds. It included a range of straightforward dishes available in any 1930s restaurant such as egg mayonnaise, grapefruit and sardines as starters, while the main meals included fried fish, roast beef, roast lamb and mint sauce, together with strained prunes, apples or pears for dessert. These came with some recognizably Jewish dishes

including salt or pickled herring, lockshen, farfel and fried worsht and eggs. But the majority of dishes would not have looked out of place on any British restaurant menu of the 1930s. Sam Stern died in 1951 and his restaurant closed the following year. His premises had catered for over six thousand Jewish weddings.[27]

Kosher restaurants and catering establishments had clearly become part of the life of the Jewish community in Britain before 1945. Restaurant reviews in particular help with the reconstruction of the menus and details of some of the best-established eating houses which had developed from the end of the nineteenth century. These suggest the same developments in Jewish food in Britain as the cookbooks published from the middle of the Victorian period. While kosher food remains part of the menu, Jewish dishes, reflecting the process of Jewish acculturation, increasingly incorporate dishes which the rest of the population consume. Cohn's and Abrahamson's, which appear to have catered for a more middle-class clientele, included more recognizably Jewish dishes on their menu before 1914 than Stern's, which appears to have had a more universal group of customers during the 1930s. This would suggest, perhaps, a fairly rapid assimilation into the norms of British eating patterns while still, once again, adhering to the basics of the kosher diet. The extent to which Jews ate out is difficult to establish. While the *Jewish Chronicle* indicates that numerous nominally Jewish establishments existed in the late nineteenth century, a lack of sources prevents an analysis of either the regularity of dining out or the foods served by these places to newly arrived Eastern European immigrant Jews. If eating out proved important for the development of community, it did so especially at weddings and other celebration times, as the success of Sam Stern's would suggest.

The London German press suggests the existence of a variety of German restaurants by 1914. Gabaccia has stressed the importance of saloons and bars for the Germans in the USA, attracting both members of their own community and other immigrant groups.[28] Adverts in the London German press certainly indicate the importance of lager beer, although little evidence exists to suggest that the ethnic majority, or members of other groups, drank at the German bars and restaurants that emerged in London. But taking the novel approach of examining cultural transfer as an aspect of German migration to Britain, Stefan Manz has pointed to the development of the Tennent's brewery in Glasgow, established and staffed by Germans in the decades before the First World War. This firm survived as its beer reached a market beyond the tiny German community in Glasgow and the still small one within Great Britain. On the other hand, a series of smaller breweries with a largely German clientele did not survive for long. These included the Austro-Bavarian Lager Beer company, based in Tottenham and surviving from 1882 until the end of the 1880s, the Kaiser Lager Beer Company (1884–90) and the English Lager Beer

Company.[29] Together with establishments where the drinking of beer provided the main attraction for Germans, there emerged restaurants whose primary purpose was the consumption of German food together with coffee houses which also sold cakes and other delicacies.

Lager beer, particularly from Bavaria, served as the main attraction in many of the restaurant adverts which appeared in the London German press throughout the Victorian and Edwardian period. In fact, establishments describing themselves as German beer halls had developed in London by the end of the nineteenth century. These included 'The Imperial' in Newgate Street, which claimed to sell 'exquisite German food' and 'German and English beers'.[30] By the beginning of the twentieth century the largest 'beer hall' appears to have been 'Ye Olde Gambrinus' with branches in both Regent Street and Glasshouse Street in Piccadilly. This firm gave itself various plaudits including 'The Home of Lager Beer in England' and 'the Largest Original Beer Hall in England'. Its drinks included genuine Munich Pschorrbräu and genuine Kulmbacher 'Mönchshof' on tap.[31]

Beer did not serve as the only means of enticing German diners out of their homes, although it may have proved the most attractive, especially for males, who would have dominated the clientele of the beer halls. A few did not make this beverage the main feature of their advertising. These included Keller's restaurant of London Wall, a 'cheap and respectable house' which, in 1869, sold a 'selection of German, English and French dishes', including 'four types of soup', 'two types of fish', 'four types of joints', together with 'English

German beer hall in London, *c.* 1900.

and German style vegetables', and would probably have attracted a more even gender balance.[32]

After beer, but far less important, cakes featured as the most common bait for London's Germans eating away from home, perhaps attracting more women and children, although those who frequented the beer halls may have simply eaten their pastries earlier in the day. Thus Wolff's Conditorei in Broad Street advertised 'fine chocolate confectionery' and a 'list of unsurpassable cakes'.[33] The Wiener Café, also in the City, sold Viennese coffee, chocolate and tea, together with 'French and Viennese cakes'.[34] Appenrodt's advertised pastries among its many products.[35]

Thus a variety of places existed in Victorian and Edwardian London for the substantial German community which, like the German grocery stores, butchers and bakers, would face destruction and elimination as a result of Germanophobia during the First World War. Although the range of German eating establishments would never reach their pre-war peak after 1918, James J. and Patience P. Barnes have claimed that restaurants 'specialising in German, Austrian and Swiss cuisine abounded' in the London of the 1930s, including Schimdt's in Charlotte Street and Appenrodt's.[36]

The smaller Italian community, not so dependant on beer as sustenance, established a smaller number of places where they could eat out. But Italians did better at opening restaurants which attracted a predominantly middle-class English and cosmopolitan clientele in central London, especially in Soho, where an Italian community, connected especially with catering, had emerged by the beginning of the twentieth century.[37] One of the establishments which seems to have had a predominantly Italian clientele in this area was Albergo di Venezia in Old Compton Street, which listed its dishes in both Italian and French. Adolphe Smith, writing in the *Food Journal* after eating here on a Sunday, recommended the mortadella, the tagliarini and sautéed kidneys.[38] Restaurants which catered for a predominantly or solely Italian clientele do not appear to have developed in London before 1939, unlike in the case of Jews and Germans. The necessity for Jews to establish such restaurants can be explained by their dietary restrictions. German food does not have this distinction and it may be that the community remained large enough to sustain a significant number of restaurants, especially before 1914. Italians, on the other hand, also had to rely upon custom from other groups.

The Chinese restaurants which emerged before 1945 were aimed primarily at the small communities which had evolved in London, together with Cardiff and Liverpool, although a few native Britons with a taste for the exotic also ventured into these establishments. While Chinese food had no religious significance attached to it, it remained different enough from the diet of neighbouring groups to act as an important signifier of Chinese ethnicity. The food consumed in these restaurants, especially in the earliest decades of the twentieth

century, remained different from that served to the ethnic majority – particularly after 1945 – throughout London and the provinces, although the distinction was sometimes blurred.

J.A.G. Roberts claims that in the years leading up to the First World War 'there were some 30 Chinese shops and restaurants along two streets' in the East End of London – Pennyfields and Limehouse Causeway – 'patronized exclusively, or almost exclusively, by Chinese'.[39] An article in the *Caterer* from 15 July 1908 carried the orientalist heading of 'London's Chinatown: Its Restaurants and Opium Dens'. The author enters this area in the East End of London, rather like a missionary discovering China during the nineteenth century. 'Lacking some clue as to its whereabouts, the casual visitor might wander about for many hours without "striking" the precise locality. Local shopkeepers betray a sublime ignorance of any Chinatown in their midst.' When he eventually reaches Limehouse Causeway, 'the spot which a stranger in search of Chinatown should make for', he enters a restaurant. Interestingly, the dishes on offer include chop suey, the ultimate example of Chinese food for westerners,[40] although the author claims that, at 6d. per bowl, it 'is the standing dish of the poorer orders'. He also points out that 'knives and forks are never seen' and proceeds to describe the use of chopsticks. Eight years after the publication of this article, another reporter for the *Caterer* visited a restaurant in Limehouse Causeway. Again he claimed that, 'The well-known dish to natives of the Far East – chop suey – occupies a foremost place in the lengthy bill of fare', which however, also listed 'birds nests and water melon, whole chicken stuffed with birds' nests and soup, duck with orange peel and soup, and fried chicken with shark's belly'.[41]

The first Chinese restaurant opened in Liverpool in 1907 and the number in existence here fluctuated between two and six during the inter-war years. Roberts claims that they 'were opened initially to serve the needs of the Chinese community' but that one of them, 'the Foo Nam Low in Pitt Street . . . did attract some English customers' who particularly enjoyed chop suey.[42] These establishments also offered a variety of dishes aimed at the poor community which lived here.[43]

The restaurants established by the Chinese community differed from their grocery stores. While Chinese people almost uniquely shopped in the latter, the caterers managed to attract some native Britons, even when situated in Limehouse. As they spread out towards the West End of London during the interwar years the clientele became increasingly mixed, resembling the contemporaneous Italian eating houses. These differ from the special case of kosher restaurants, which peddled a cuisine with religious restrictions and did not attract Gentiles. While many of the German restaurants probably had a predominantly German customer base before 1914, others, most notably Appenrodt's, both a delicatessen and a café, attracted a variety of Londoners. With the

exception of kosher restaurants, it proves difficult to speak of purely ethnic minority restaurants frequented only by members of specific communities.

Foreign Street Sellers, Waiters, Cooks and Restaurateurs

While the first category of foreign restaurants therefore had specific features and remained, to some extent, distinct, it attracted members of the majority population. In the case of Germans, Italians and Chinese this occurred as a result of the food. Also in the case of the Chinese, as well as Jewish, catering establishments, the food served within them changed over time.

Migrant restaurants aimed primarily at migrants, as well as those displaying their distinctiveness in an attempt to entice native Britons, remain somewhat different from the second category of foreign restaurant. Here our concern lies with the concept of eating out in its broadest definition. From the Victorian period until the present migrants and their offspring have, in addition to using the distinctness of their foods as a selling technique, also played a major role in the development of the catering trade as a whole, from the most anonymous street seller to the founders of the Ritz and Lyons.

Mayhew's account of life in Victorian London devoted attention to the variety of ready-to-eat foods available on the streets. Migrants made up few of the purveyors, with the exception of a handful of Irish fried fish sellers.[44] One of the delicacies on offer was ice cream, which would subsequently become an Italian speciality, but Mayhew makes no mention of the nationality of those who sold it. However, by the 1870s 'ice cream street vendors had become a common feature in London – and they were virtually to a man, Italian'. Lucio Sponza has analysed how this occupation among London's Italian community evolved from the previous itinerant trades in which they were involved, most of them unconnected with food selling. By 1891 ice-cream making and selling had become the main occupation of the Italians in Clerkenwell,[45] as a clustering in employment, which would characterize many migrant catering occupations, developed.

Italian ice-cream selling in Britain remained neither confined to the streets of London nor to the Victorian period as Italians played the major role in spreading this delicacy on a nationwide basis. Sponza has linked the increase in the popularity of ice cream with a growth in disposable income and leisure time of the working classes during the late Victorian period, as well as improvements in transportation, which allowed a growth in seaside holidays, where Italian ice cream became 'fashionable and refreshing'.[46] One of the major figures in the evolution of this trade was a Swiss–Italian immigrant, Carlo Gatti, selling ice cream from the 1850s.[47] Many of the migrants could not make a living for the whole year round because of the seasonal nature of this trade, which meant that they often resorted to chestnut selling during the

Late nineteenth-century Italian ice cream vendor.

winter. By the beginning of the twentieth century some of those who had previously sold products on the streets had established their own shops offering a variety of products, including ice cream. In 1933 the Italian Association of Ice-Cream Vendors had 4,200 members, with branches in London, Glasgow, Dundee, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and South Wales.[48]

In Manchester Italian migrants began the sale of ice cream from Ancoats at the end of the nineteenth century and continued street selling into the twentieth.[49] In Leicester in the 1890s the father and uncle of P. Rossa began a business which involved walking through the streets with a barrel. Born in Italy in 1907, the son did not move to Leicester until 1920. He initially pushed a barrow through the streets, subsequently using a horse and cart and, after the Second World War, a motor van.[50] The Italian community in South Wales, which largely originated in the Como Valley, and especially the town of Bardi, developed a *padrone* system involving the importation of boys to work in the ice-cream trade, following patterns established for other itinerant Italian trades in the nineteenth century. During the early decades of the twentieth century Italians in South Wales increasingly established 'temperance bars' which embraced 'small confectionary shops at one end of the scale and large restaurants (in the cities) at the other end, with a variety of cafés in between'.[51]

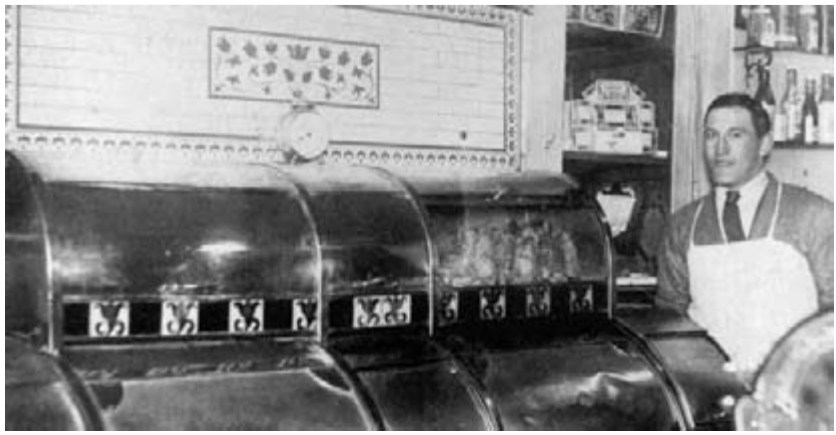
Italians clearly played a central role in the evolution of ice-cream selling in Britain. An analysis of this process would point to the fact that they sold a niche product imported from their homeland. Chain migration, especially through the *padrone* system, played a significant role in the spread of Italian ice cream. Over time, many of the more successful migrants moved away from peddling this product on the street to open up their own cafés, which often meant diversification. Interestingly, Italians dominated the sale of ice cream, at least on the street, for over a century. Their main rivals would eventually be large companies, who would produce their own variation and sell it *en masse*.[52]

A food contemporaneous with ice cream, which had an association with a migrant group, although not quite as direct as Italians and ice cream, was fish and chips, which had French and Jewish origins.[53] In addition, Jewish migrants played a significant role in its sale, at least in London. As Gerald Priestland has asserted:

> There is an important ethnic aspect to Fish & Chips. Being at the bottom end of the social ladder, frying has constantly been passed down to the latest and lowliest arrivals upon the scene. In the late nineteenth century, in the East End of London, there were many continental Jews in the trade. Later, Italians took to it and there are colonies of English-speaking Italians in Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Dublin to this day. The end of the Second World War brought in Cypriots, especially in London and Coventry. And more recently there have been invasions of Chinese and to a lesser extent Indo-Pakistani friers.[54]

Kelly's Post Office Directory from 1923 supports Priestland's assertion about Jews. The section on traders lists 776 individuals who owned fried fish shops. While my methodology is not completely scientific, 148 of these have either obviously Jewish names, or at least central European names. Those in the former category include eighteein Cohens, eleven Isaacs and eleven Levys. Although many of these remain concentrated in East London as a whole, rather than the inner East End (E1), some of them had premises in other parts of London. Eight of the eighteen Cohens lay in the core East End, together with others in Stratford, Great Western Road (W9) and Pentonville Road (N1). Those owned by individuals called Levy included properties in New Cross Road and Cartwright Gardens (WC1), while those listed under Isaac included only three properties in the East End heartland. This provides another indication of the closeness between Jewish and English food in Britain by the inter-war years, as both communities clearly consumed fish and chips. Overall, the 148 Jewish-sounding fish shops in London represented over 19 per cent of the total. In addition, the list in Kelly's also includes a small number of shops clearly owned by people with Italian names.[55]

The Jewish fish and chip shop owners included the father and uncles of Jessica Gould. Her grandparents, all from Russia, initially worked in the garment industry. While the shop of her father failed, those of her uncles succeeded 'cause they were in the right spots' in the West End. The locations of shops owned by her family included Commercial Road, Hammersmith and Soho.[56] This example suggests a different pattern from that of the Italian ice-cream men. While the former evolved through a process of chain migration, the latter moved into the fried fish trade as part of the process of social mobility which took Russian Jewish immigrants out of the clothing trade on which they overwhelmingly focused on first arrival.[57]



Italian fish and chips in Ayrshire, 1920s.

Ice cream and fish and chips provide an example of a niche product which became associated with a particular group, particularly in the case of the former. On a much broader scale, migrants became associated with all aspects of the development of the restaurant trade after 1850, from owners and managers to cooks and waiters. A full understanding of the importance of foreigners in the catering trade needs an appreciation of the international, or, at least, the European-wide nature of this business, which involved people on all levels of this industry moving between European states, almost as part of an apprenticeship system.

We can contextualize the growth of restaurants by analysing the 'rise of gastronomy'. John Burnett has looked at this development against the expansion of the middle classes in Britain during the nineteenth century. This led to an increase not only in the number of restaurants during the late Victorian years, but also hotels, where dining became an important activity. He links these changes with the 'diffusion of French cuisine', in which a series of French chefs played an important role.[58] While Burnett recognizes the importance of international influences, Bowden, mentioning the influence of foreigners, works around the concept of 'British gastronomy'.[59]

Migrants established two of the most famous dining houses in Britain before 1914: the Café Royal in Regent Street was originally opened by Daniel de Nicols, a French wine merchant, who moved to England in 1862;[60] similarly César Ritz founded the hotel which bears his name in 1906. Ritz offers an example of the international nature of caterers before 1914. Born in Niederwald in 1850, the thirteenth son of a Swiss shepherd, he began his career as a waiter in Brieg in the 1860s, after which he moved to Paris, where he took management positions in a number of hotels, subsequently working throughout the Continent. By the 1880s he owned his own hotel and restaurant. He moved to

César Ritz in 1900.

London in 1889 where he became manager of the recently opened Savoy and imported a predominantly Continental staff, above all Auguste Escoffier. He brought together a Ritz Hotel syndicate in 1896 with international financial backing, which led to the opening of the Paris Ritz in 1898, followed by the London version in 1906.[61]

Quite a different type of establishment also came into existence as a result of immigration, this time as part of the Lyons group. This firm originated with the business dealings of Samuel and Henry Gluckstein, German Jews who moved to Britain in 1841 and established themselves as a tobacco firm. Out of this emerged J. Lyons in 1894, the name originating from another descendant of Jewish immigrants, Joseph Lyons, born in Southwark in 1847. Catering always played a large role in the activities of Lyons, although its business dealings encompassed a broad sweep of food provision in Britain by the middle of the twentieth century.[62] The catering outlets appealed to a wide range of classes. At the top, the Trocadero restaurant opened in Piccadilly in 1896.[63] Simultaneously, the firm established teashops, which would develop into a national chain appealing 'to ladies shopping, to clerks who would return home for a hot evening meal', having had a light lunch in a teashop, and 'above all, at the turn of the century and after the First World War, to the growing army of London typists. Respectability, quality, cheapness, speed and cleanliness became the Lyons watchwords'. The year 1909 saw the opening of the first corner house,[64] a development which would become a mass phenomenon during the inter-war years.[65]

Lyons provides an example of second- and third-generation Jewish immigrant success in Britain, a development which would also characterize Asian

migrants after 1945. Clearly, Lyons played an important role in the spread of eating out from the end of the nineteenth century for both the working and lower middle classes as hundreds of teashops had opened by 1939, focused especially on London.[66] The capital also served as the main magnet for the army of Continental caterers who moved to Britain from the second half of the nineteenth century, involved at all levels of restaurant expansion.

In addition to César Ritz, a series of chefs developed a popular status before 1914, suggesting the celebrity chef has historical roots in Britain. Most of those who achieved this status during the Victorian period had Continental origins, reflecting the importance of foreign cooks in British catering establishments before 1914. Three in particular stand out. First, Charles Elmé Francatelli, born in 1805 in London 'was of Italian extraction, and was educated in France'. He became chef to Queen Victoria in 1841–2 and published several volumes, most importantly *The Modern Cook* in 1846, which had reached its 29th edition by 1896.[67]

Alexis Soyer, born in France in 1810, initially worked in his homeland before moving to London in 1831 to join his brother. He remained in Britain until his death in 1858 and truly gained celebrity status. As well as working in several clubs, before hotels and restaurants had taken off, he also created the Gastronomic Symposium of All Nations, which ran simultaneously with the Great Exhibition in 1850. Soyer invented various food accompaniments and cooking utensils and took up a series of good causes, including assisting the victims of the Irish potato famine and the London poor. The armed forces called on him to improve the food they served and his work included a stint in the Crimea. Naturally, as such a high-profile personality, Soyer published a series of volumes, aimed at all classes of British society.[68]

Kenneth James, the biographer of August Escoffier, boldly claims that he 'was the first great modern celebrity chef' and even more boldly that he 'changed the way we eat' and, 'in partnership with . . . César Ritz, the way we live'.[69] Clearly, James focuses upon the lives of the middle and upper classes. Escoffier did not have the same status within Britain as Soyer, although he had a more solid international reputation as a chef. Born in the Côte d'Azur in 1846, he moved to Britain in 1887 to work in the Savoy, by which time he had reached the height of his career. He followed César Ritz to the Carlton Club. While in London, he published his monumental *Guide Culinaire*. He changed the status of the chef in middle-class society; his biographers write about his concern for the ordinary cook. He also took an interest in the use of tinned food and catering on ships.[70]

Francatelli, Soyer and Escoffier formed the celebrity tip of an iceberg of foreign chefs staffing establishments throughout Britain before 1945, originating especially in France, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. This is not obvious from the census which, in 1861, recorded only 251 foreign cooks in England and

August Escoffier, *c.* 1920.

Wales. This figure had increased to 2,447 by 1901, making it one of the most important occupations for foreigners.[71]

Portraits provided by the catering press help to bring these figures to life. In 1911 Rudolph von Görög of the New Gallery Restaurant in Regent Street won the Grand Prix at the Culinary Exhibition in Paris. Born in Budapest in 1878, he initially worked in the Grand Hotel in his native city, before moving to Paris and then to the Carlton in London, where he worked under Escoffier.[72] Antoine Moisy, meanwhile, was 'chef de cuisine at the Kensington Palace Mansions' in 1904. He was born in Alsace-Lorraine and had worked in Paris before serving as a cook to an officers' mess in the French army regiment he joined. Following a spell in Germany, he obtained a job in Birmingham, after which he took up appointments in Newcastle, Blackpool, Aldershot and Dover. He then returned to Germany before moving to his post in Kensington Palace Mansions.[73] Another Frenchman, Angel Cabrol, 'in charge of the high-class "confiserie" of Lyons Corner House in Coventry Street' in London, had made his way to this position via a series of positions in France, Spain, Portugal and London.[74] While these three individuals did not achieve celebrity status, they are examples of highly successful chefs who migrated in search of the best possible position.

A series of organizations emerged from the beginning of the twentieth century to represent the interests of the hidden army of Continental cooks. A meeting in November 1900 founded the Society of German Chefs which, by

the following year, counted about a hundred members. It acted as an employment agency but survived for just a few years.[75] This may be a reflection of the relatively few Germans who worked in this sector of the catering trade. Similar organizations for Italian and French chefs lasted longer. In April 1901 the Italian Club of Culinary Art, essentially a body for Italian caterers in Britain, held 'a small but very interesting exhibition of artistic cookery'. Those present were 'Italian caterers domiciled in London and our large towns'.[76] Although this organization also had a short lifespan, the Italian Culinary Society, founded in 1924, survived longer. By 1931 its functions included employment bureau and cookery school. In 1937 it held a gala night at the Café Royal attended by over three hundred people.[77] The Société Culinaire Francaise de Londres appears to have existed from the end of the nineteenth century and survived beyond the Second World War, with similar functions to its Italian sister organization.[78]

In addition to becoming owners and chefs in the British catering trade, foreigners found employment as managers of hotels and restaurants. Many of these had made their way up from waiters, a profession in which Continental Europeans have played a central role since the first restaurants opened in Britain. Before 1945, German, Swiss, French and Italian nationals predominated. Waiting offered an occupational path, in which moving from one European country to another formed part of an apprenticeship system, with the hope of eventually securing a permanent position as a maître d'hôtel. Occupational clustering also played a role.

Before 1914 the most important group was Germans, although Italians, Swiss and French waiters also had a part to play. The 1901 census suggests a total of 8,634 foreign waiters in the country of whom 3,039 were German.[79] In 1911 about 10 per cent of waiters and waitresses in restaurant work in London were German and by this time they worked in cities throughout the country. For example, waiting had become the third most important occupation among Germans in Lancashire.[80] Twenty-three years later *The New Survey of London Life and Labour* estimated that 122,000 people found employment in the hotel and catering trade in the capital. While the *Survey* claimed that prospects for English staff had improved,

> foreign staff are still demanded by hotels and restaurants of the most expensive type, where, in consequence, they tend to congregate, accounting in these cases for perhaps 90 per cent of the kitchen staff and 70 per cent of the waiting staff. This is by no means due to race prejudice, but rather to the natural preference of a person in a position of responsibility to have around him assistants of the sort with whom he can most easily work, since it is on him that the blame for any contretemps will first fall.[81]

The recruiting of staff with the same nationality as managers, a type of occupational chain migration, offered one explanation for the presence of foreign staff in British hotels and restaurants. In addition, observers from both the late nineteenth century and the 1930s also pointed to the readiness of foreigners to work harder and for longer hours. Before 1914 German waiters laboured up to fifteen hours per day. In contrast to Englishmen, who demanded a fixed wage, foreigners relied on tips, from which they could make £2 per week. Germans had also had formal training, which accounted for their 'neatness and civility'. Those who intended to return home would accept lower wages to obtain experience, although others remained and rose to become hotel and restaurant managers and went on to employ other foreigners in turn, a practice, which, as we have seen, continued into the 1930s.[82] The *New Survey of London Life* pointed particularly to the readiness of waiters who lived in Soho to 'perform the lowest duties at the lowest wage' with a view to a 'rise in their profession'.[83]

Spending time abroad seems to have formed part of a type of apprenticeship system, as revealed in an article in the *London Hotel and Restaurant Employees Gazette* of 1890, which claimed that the owners of hotels in Germany and Switzerland sent their sons 'to foreign countries to pick up as many languages as possible and to learn their profession from the very lowest rungs of the social ladder'. The piece continued:

> The 'roughing' may not be pleasant, but the experience gained is great . . . After spending a year or two in London and Paris, they return home to assist in their parents' establishments. They have acquired a certain knowledge of both French and English . . . and they have also become acquainted with the wants of hotel visitors and the foibles of their fellow workers, which knowledge is valuable when they, in their turn, become hotel proprietors and responsible persons.[84]

Examples of individuals who would fit into this pattern certainly lived in Britain before 1914. The father of Raymond Bastianello, for instance, ran the Hôtel Brighton in Paris, where Raymond began his career, subsequently taking positions in Monte Carlo and, in this case, moving to become the manager of the Hans Crescent Hotel in Brighton.[85] Similarly, the father of Charles Meschini owned the Hôtel du Lac in Switzerland. Meschini worked in London, Zurich, Lucerne and Genoa, but then took more long-term positions in London.[86]

Most foreign waiters in London did not, however, come from such privileged backgrounds. Obituaries and autobiographies of those who progressed to senior positions indicate this although, for each of these individuals, there were probably dozens of others who remained junior waiters, or simply held positions at lesser-known establishments. Paolo Contarini, born to a shoemaker

in Ravenna in 1894, became a waiter at a local hotel where he undertook a range of tasks and learnt French, English and German. At thirteen he moved to Genoa, after his father had a stroke, and then to Santa Margherita on the Italian Riviera, where his command of languages increased. He then worked in France before taking employment in a small Soho restaurant, eventually establishing himself at the Savoy after 1945.[87] Similarly, W. Jung, born in 1873 near Nassau in Germany, worked in Wiesbaden and then moved to posts in Holland, Belgium and England.[88] Jules Ribstein actually seems to have made his way to London as a refugee following the Franco–Prussian War.[89]

The presence of large numbers of foreign waiters in London led to the establishment of societies which looked after their interests, often branches of bodies which had their headquarters on the Continent. As early as 1869 a German Waiters Club existed in London.[90] Three decades later, the London and Provincial Hotel Employees Society, based in Tottenham Court Road, acted as an employment agency and provided shelter to its members.[91] One of the largest bodies was the Ganymede Friendly Society for Hotel and Restaurant Employees, a branch of an international association established in 1878, with headquarters in central London. One report from 1907 claimed that it had ten thousand members.[92] Other Edwardian bodies included the International Hotel Employees Society and the London Hotel and Restaurant Employees Society.[93] These groups were aimed primarily at Germans. Similarly, the Caterers Employees Union represented a branch of a larger organization based in Hamburg.[94] This body devoted considerable attention to the working conditions of those involved in the catering trade.[95] At least two Swiss organizations existed in London before 1914. The Geneva Association, established in 1877, had 140 branches by 1911. One of the largest was London with a membership of 2,029. Other branches served Ramsgate and Margate, Manchester, Bradford, Bournemouth and Liverpool.[96] The Union Helvetica, an international body with over 2,000 members, opened in London in 1889 and by 1900 boasted four hundred Swiss members.[97] This grouping appears to have survived the First World War, unlike the German organizations and the Geneva Association which faced closure as a result of the Germanophobia arising during the conflict.[98] But the Geneva Association opened again during the late 1920s.[99]

Although the suppression of waiters' groupings during the First World War happened as a direct result of the conflict, this development had roots in nationalistic and xenophobic resentment at the dominance of foreigners in the restaurant trade, which began to surface before 1914. This led to the formation of the Loyal British Waiters Society in 1910, with 1,625 members at its inception, and its own newspaper, the *Restaurateur*. It aimed to provide 'employment for British waiters who are reliable and loyal' and protect 'the interests of British waiters as a class'. It asked 'every Britisher' to 'patronize and support' it for a

series of xenophobic reasons including its 'loyal and patriotic character' which aimed at 'the displacement of the foreigner and re-instating the Britisher'.[100]

The Germanophobia of the First World War meant that the wish of the Loyal British Waiters Society became reality. From the start of the conflict Germans faced dismissal, so that by September 1914 the Geneva Association could declare that 'Germans and Austrians are not wanted and for many years there will be no openings for them'.[101] In February 1915 the manager of the Hotel Cecil proudly boasted that 'there is not a German, Austrian, Hungarian, or any other kind of enemy employed in any department of this hotel, from the secretary's office to the scullery, naturalized or unnaturalized'.[102] The disappearance of the German waiter, either as a result of dismissal, internment[103] or both, was viewed as 'The British Waiter's Chance'.[104] Hostility continued at the end of the war when many establishments refused to employ Germans.[105]

But the German waiter made a reappearance during the 1920s, joined by other Europeans, especially Italians. Although the latter did not attract the type of hostility before the Second World War that the former had before 1914, the fate of Italians after 1939 mirrored that of Germans during the Great War. Matters came to a head in June 1940 following Mussolini's declaration of War, which lead to widespread anti-Italian rioting and to the British government decision to implement a policy of wholesale internment of enemy aliens.[106] The latter policy had a significant impact on those Italians employed in catering: some waiters, as well as managers and owners of restaurants and hotels would find themselves (and even perish) on the *Arandora Star*, sunk by a U-boat while transferring internees to camps in Canada.[107] Nevertheless, unlike in the First World War, most internees regained their freedom within a year.

Foreign Restaurants for Britons

Before 1945 Europeans clearly played a major role in the ownership and staffing of restaurants and hotels which sold food without any obvious foreign credentials. In addition, both Europeans and people from further away had, by the end of the nineteenth century, established restaurants selling overtly foreign food to a British clientele. As we have already seen, such establishments constructed a menu specifically aimed at British customers. By the end of the nineteenth century the first Continental restaurants, selling Italian or French food, had begun to emerge in Soho. Such establishments remained concentrated in central London until 1945. In addition, a few – usually short-lived – Chinese and Indian restaurants had also appeared from the late Victorian period.

Continental restaurants beginning to emerge during the late nineteenth century did not distinguish themselves from establishments which catered for migrants from the Italian and French communities. Referring to these 'Franco-Italian Restaurants', John Burnett has written that: 'At first they were patronised

mainly by the 8,000 or so French immigrants lodging around Soho, but their novel cuisines and modest charges soon appealed to "Bohemian" English artists, actors and authors, though not until somewhat later to the great and not so good of the "*fin de siècle*". The restaurants Burnett lists include Pinoli's, Monico's, Romano's, Oddedino's, Frascati's, Ketnner's and the Criterion.[108]

The earliest foreign restaurants to attract an English clientele include Rouget's in Carlisle Street in Leicester Square, which 'gives English and French dishes capitally done'.[109] The Maison Dorée in Glasshouse Street, whose 'chef is an importation from the Parisian Maison Dorée', seems to have served a mixture of dishes which would merit the description of French and English.[110]

By the beginning of the twentieth century, English writers had begun to recognize the existence of restaurants according to nationality. One of the most famous eating-out guides of this period, by Nathaniel Newnham Davis, began by categorizing the 122 restaurants mentioned in his book. These included seven 'small French' restaurants, eleven described as serving 'Haute Cuisines Française' which included some of the most famous in the capital such as the Cecil and the Savoy, which essentially served international French food aimed at the highest classes of society. Davis also listed thirteen Italian restaurants and four which served German food. The major concentration of small French and Italian London eateries before 1914 was in Soho.[111] One of these was Restaurant au Bienvenu in Greek Street, described in the *Caterer* as 'A Soho Snail Restaurant', snails being 'the great speciality of the establishment'.[112] Davis offered a description of Pagani's in Great Portland Street, slightly to the north of Soho, which he described as 'À la carte Italian'. Despite this, what he actually ate there seems to have little connection with any concept of Italian food and included 'Bortsch soup . . . the customary Sunday soup at Pagani's'.[113]

Also in central London was Appenrodt's which, as we have seen, did not simply supply the Germans of the capital, but also native Londoners.[114] A similar West End establishment to Appenrodt's was Rumpelmayer's, 'a byword for recherché pastry and chic confectionery', which opened a London branch to follow the 'half a dozen' already on the Continent.[115] Meanwhile, an Austro-Hungarian restaurant opened in Regent Street in 1910 serving a range of recognizably central European dishes including goulash, 'soup with liver dumplings', 'carp with paprika' and 'Viennese veal scollops'. This establishment had the same ownership as the Vienna Café in Oxford Street, which offered coffee, confectionery, pastries and food.[116]

All of these Victorian and Edwardian Continental eateries remained within central London, suggesting that the only people likely to have used them were the international and, especially, 'artistic' bourgeoisie and sections of the higher echelons of British society. The Viennese coffee shops, which may have attracted a slightly broader clientele than restaurants such as Pagani's, sold a distinctively central European product. But it is difficult to distinguish a

specifically Italian cuisine – of the type that would emerge after 1945 – in the restaurants described by Davis. The menu at Pagani's essentially consisted of Continental haute cuisine, indicated largely by the fact that this restaurant, like other high-class establishments in central London, offered French menus. The Italian nature of these restaurants comes from ownership rather than food. The categorizations produced by Davis clearly used no scientific method. The dominance of French-inspired haute cuisine in central London before 1914 meant that all other methods of cooking had to assimilate into the descriptions it offered. At this stage in the history of Italian food in Britain, a significant space had not yet opened up for a distinct product appealing to a wide cross-section of British society.

Some changes took place during the inter-war years, although the above assertions still remain largely true. While Italian caterers grew in number, they did not generally sell a distinct cuisine but continued to play a role in high-class restaurants, as evidenced by a list of those who faced internment and deportation in 1940.[117] New establishments included the Taverna Medicea, opened in Soho by B. Calderoni and Francesco Barbieri in 1928 with Italian décor.[118] 'Mr L. Donzelli and Mr Maccagno' opened Luigi's grill in Jermyn Street in 1936. 'Lunches and dinners will be featured, and all service will be *à la carte*.'[119] One of the most famous interwar Italian restaurants, Romanos, established before 1914, simply served haute cuisine.[120]

But establishments which sold distinct European cuisines did increase during the inter-war years. The 'higher class' Tuscan restaurant, which opened in Shaftesbury Avenue in 1921, imported Florentine chefs and printed a menu partly in Italian and French, which included 'Antipasto', 'Ravioli al Brodo' and 'Mandorino al Fiorentina'. But by 1925 this had become part of a chain owned by the Mecca Café Company offering an English menu with no trace of Italian influence other than, perhaps, macaroni cheese.[121] Another 'genuine Italian', Gennaro, opened in New Compton Street:

> There are many restaurants in the West End which are described as Italian, and claim to have an Italian cuisine; but a large proportion of these have a menu which is a mixture of English, Italian, and French dishes. Among the few which are thoroughly, though not exclusively, Italian is the Gennaro Restaurant.

The dishes it served certainly resembled those which would become part of the mainstream Italian menu after 1945 including macaroni, 'prosciutto Italiano', minestrone, ravioli, 'fritto misto' and various risottos.[122]

A variety of other international restaurants emerged in interwar London. One guide to eating out from 1924 by Elizabeth Montizambert gave a list of nineteen such establishments.

> The foreign restaurants of a big city have an irresistible attraction for many people, and London, of course, has its full quota. Soho abounds in them and since they all belong, more or less, to the same category, I merely pigeon-hole them, as follows, and leave the reader to do his, or her, own exploring.

She listed five French restaurants, five Italian, two Spanish, one Greek, one Jewish, one Armenian, one Russian, one Chinese and two Indian.[123] Similarly, Thomas Burke claimed that 'the field of choice is bewildering' in central London. Interestingly, he puts this down to 'the coming of petrol transport', which meant that 'central London receives everyday not only its constant people, but a large section of the seven Home Counties'.[124] Writing thirteen years after Motizambert, he listed considerably more foreign restaurants than she did, including five Spanish, three German, one Japanese, six Indian, three Hungarian and one Swedish, together with Italian, 'French or mainly French', 'Old English' and Chinese.[125]

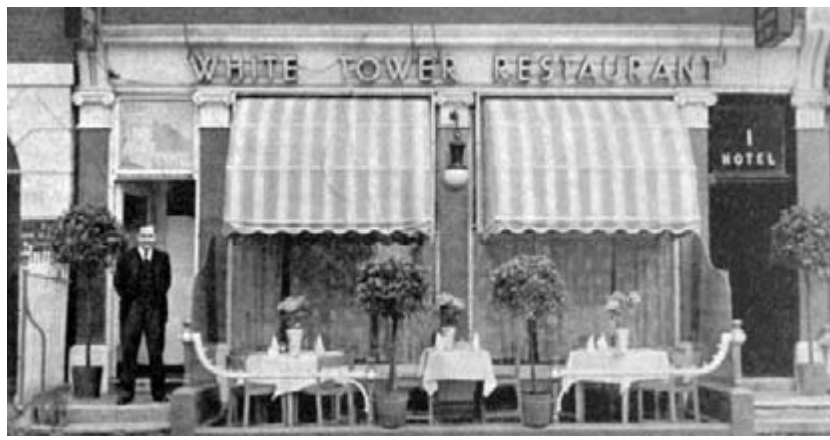
Many of the European restaurants that were established during the inter-war years served food that moved away from French haute cuisine. A handful of Spanish restaurants fit this description. The Espagnol in Dean Street seems to have catered primarily for the small Spanish community in London, with a menu in Spanish, including Jerez kidneys, Cuban rice and omelette with capsicum.[126] The Spanish Restaurant in Swallow Street, near Piccadilly, became one of the most famous eating establishments in inter-war London, receiving attention in many guides to eating out in the capital. Alfred Foster, for instance, wrote that, upon entering it, you 'are transported to Spain'.[127] 'As for the menu the dishes are Spanish if one chooses à la carte and the table d'hôte is composed of the usual French dishes.'[128] Foster 'insisted on purely native dishes' beginning with 'succulent juicy Spanish olives' with 'a glass of perfect sherry', followed by a Spanish omelette, 'Paella à la Valenciana' and a dessert, all washed down with Rioja.[129] This restaurant clearly did well, expanding its premises at the end of the 1930s.[130]

Greek restaurants serving a distinct cuisine had also appeared by the inter-war years, including Demos in Shaftesbury Avenue, which featured 'pilaffs, ragouts, and various fish dishes'.[131] The White Tower in Percy Street, owned by Yianni Stasis, stood on the site of a former French restaurant and, in outward appearance at least, did not flaunt its Greekness.[132] The first Greek restaurant of all appears to have been the Salonika in Beak Street in the West End, owned by a native of Athens, Christos Pandelis. The clientele included members of the London Greek community. The menu offers a fascinating insight into both the transformation of food in the migration process and its reporting by the London catering press. Although 'pickled young vine leaves are much used in cooking', the dolmades consisted of 'portions of forcemeat, which are wrapped

in the leaves of a lettuce with melted butter poured over and broth added. After cooking, the dolmas, as they are termed, are carefully arranged on some rice which has been boiled in stock, and a lemon sauce is poured over all'.[133] The *Hotel Review* described 'sour cream', presumably plain yoghurt, as a 'national delicacy'.[134] Although such products, particularly the latter, would become familiar in Britain by the end of the twentieth century, at this stage they either attracted almost orientalist attention because of their exoticism, or simply had an erroneous description attached to them.

By the interwar years some foreign restaurants had reached the suburbs and provinces, although diners outside central London do not seem to have sampled the type of exotic fare experienced by their central-London counterparts, as the menus remained 'haute cuisine'. For instance, the Valchera Restaurant in Richmond, owned by the Jacomelli family, who hailed from Ticino in Switzerland, 'would probably be called a Swiss restaurant'. But 'you could tell immediately it was a classical French cuisine'. The menu included a wide range of dishes from risotto to Welsh rarebit.[135] Four provincial restaurants with European names – Rinaldo's in Newcastle, Café Nord in Liverpool, the Swiss Alpine Restaurant in Sheffield and the Oriental Café in Leicester – did not, however, have exotic menus. The décor rather than the food reflected the choices of name.[136]

By 1939 some British people, again concentrated mainly in London, had also tasted food with origins beyond Europe, especially from China and India. Chinese cuisine reached national attention in 1884 during the Health Exhibition in London, which had an international range of exhibits, including a Chinese restaurant, with a menu in French and a combination of dishes varying from bird's nest soup to 'Vermicelli Chinoise à la Milanaise'. Reactions to the restaurant were wide-ranging – both positive and negative.[137] But few Britons would



Greek restaurant in inter-war London.

have sampled either the food on offer here or in the Chinese restaurants in the East End of London.

Instead, those adventurous and wealthy enough to try such exotic produce would probably have eaten in the establishments which started to appear in central London from the Edwardian period. Although these form the beginnings of the westernized Chinese menu in Britain, part of their appeal lay in the unique meals they sold. The *Hotel Review* of April 1914, describing the Cathay, wrote:

> For a change of diet and, perhaps, culinary instruction, a visit there may be profitable. If the French find l'escargot (snail) and grenouille (frog) *plats de merite*, there is no reason why the bird's nests, shark's fin, bamboo shoots and noodle (a bird of prey)[!] should not be, in China, fares for the gourmets.

By 1916 this restaurant stood on five floors. While it still served 'bird's nest or shark's fin', customers had to give half a day's notice for these. Westernized dishes included chop suey, chicken with pineapple and chicken with almonds and bamboo shoots.[138]

During the inter-war years the westernized menu increasingly came to dominate, as globalized Chinese food developed, even though some of the more unusual dishes, such as bird's nest and shark fin soup, still survived in some restaurants. But these essentially represented the exotic in an otherwise increasingly standardized menu aimed at western tastes. The range of dishes, now numbered, began to become a feature of Chinese restaurants. Immediately after the First World War the management of the Cathay appears to have opened the Chinese Café in Oxford Street, which contained '271 items on the menu, all numbered'. While it served bird's nest and shark fin soup at half a day's notice, most of the dishes on the menu, 'which is printed in English, are modified to suit western palates', which meant that about 90 per cent of the clientele was European. It could cater for 250 and employed thirty staff in two kitchens.[139] By the Second World War at least nine Chinese restaurants existed in London, the majority of them in Soho. This would become the major area of Chinese settlement after 1945. Ley On's, in Wardour Street, became the most popular with westerners.[140] Those which had spread to the provinces included the Blue Barn in Cambridge, a 'Chinese-American establishment' that 'served chop suey and chow mein (possibly sweet and sour pork) of the type beloved by Americans wanting a taste for the exotic'.

This desire for the exotic (albeit modified for western palates) represents one of the main reasons for the development of both Chinese and Indian food in Britain, together with cheapness in the case of the former.[141] The history of Indian food or, more accurately, its Anglo-Indian manifestation – curry – has less connection with the Indians who lived in Britain before 1945 than did the

Chinese Grill in East London during the inter-war years.

initial Chinese restaurants with the Chinese migrants. Those few Indians who opened up the first establishments during the nineteenth century usually catered for native Britons, especially people who had lived in the Raj or those with a taste for the exotic.

The first Indian restaurant in London, the Hindoostane Coffee House, appears to have opened in 1809: its site, in Portman Square, now has a plaque to commemorate its existence. It primarily catered for a higher class of clientele.[142] This institution did not last for long, a fate which befell several other curry houses which opened in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Short-lived restaurants in London before 1914 included one in New Bond Street opened by 'Pheroze Langrane, an Indian Lady'.[143] In 1904 Mahomed Futymed, the 'late Indian chef of the Trocadero Restaurant' in Piccadilly, 'opened a restaurant on the first floor of the "Prince Rupert"' nearby:

> Mahomed Furymed, who by the way is a native of Kurrachee and a Mohammedan, has a small staff of Indians for cooking and service. The waiters are garbed in white and brightly coloured kummerbands and turbans, and the decoration and service of the restaurant is distinctly oriental. As to the *cuisine* it should give satisfaction, for Mahomed's curries are not only appetising but by no means inordinately hot, which is one of the characteristics of the typical English curry.

Interestingly, this description from the *Caterer* of 15 April 1904 describes curry as English. Other dishes included 'the thin, crisp almost transparent cakes, known as "poppadums"'. Further short-lived Indian restaurants also opened in Holborn and Shepherd's Bush before 1914.[144]

In 1919 Indian Restaurants Ltd, a firm owned by an Indian barrister and an Indian doctor, operated two establishments, including the one in Rupert Street, but the company had wound up by 1921.[145] Other curry houses also opened in Manchester, Oxford and Cambridge.[146] The longest lasting Indian restaurant in Britain, Veeresawmy's in Swallow Street, came into existence in 1926, established by Edward Palmer after he had served food at the Empire Exhibition in Wembley in 1924. It catered both for wealthy Londoners and for returned Anglo-Indians.[147] By this time a couple of restaurants in the capital also catered for Indian students. At the same time, other cafés serving Indian sailors appeared in the East End, acting as 'the roots from which Indian restaurants in Britain were to grow'.[148]

Britons and Foreign Restaurants

In reality, few Britons would have eaten in either a Chinese or Indian restaurant before 1945. Despite the fact that Chinese and Indian eateries in Britain produced a menu suited to western tastes, they simply had little impact up to this time, largely because the Chinese and Indian communities remained so small, meaning that they simply could not open up a sufficient number of restaurants to attract a large section of the population. Only those Britons with a taste for the exotic, some of whom had lived in India, or who had enough money, would have sampled the fare on offer in such establishments.

However, any Londoner – and many other Britons – who had eaten out before 1945 would have come into contact with a migrant or food produced by a migrant. To begin with, the very concept of the restaurant, which arrived in Britain in the late Victorian period, had its origins in post-Revolutionary Paris and therefore its very existence involved the British adaptation of an originally French idea. This partly explains the staffing of restaurants, especially in London, but also in the provinces. While the foreign waiter became a permanent characteristic of London life from the end of the nineteenth century, Europeans staffed restaurants from top to bottom throughout the country. But Britons did not simply come into contact with foreigners when eating in restaurants which was, after all, an activity confined to the higher social classes. They would also encounter them, again particularly in London, when purchasing ice cream or fish and chips.

When dining in a foreign restaurant or simply eating out, Britons consumed products with little idea of their foreign origins. Relatively few of them would have visited any of the overtly foreign restaurants that existed in London, whether established by Europeans or Asians. Many of these catered for members of their own community and, during the nineteenth century, only a few intrepid explorers, as portrayed in the catering press, would have entered them. Eating in an Italian restaurant in Clerkenwell or a Chinese one in

Limehouse resembled a journey to foreign parts at the height of British imperialism. Even during the interwar years, when the numbers of such establishments increased, few would have used them, due both to their small numbers and their cost, particularly European establishments in central London.

Perhaps they were also just too foreign, unlike fish and chips, ice cream and French haute cuisine, which appealed to different sections of British society. During the post-war period curry, pasta and Chinese food become increasingly anglicized in the same way that French *haute cuisine* had been during the nineteenth century. By 1900, the middle and upper classes who ate in expensive restaurants would simply have accepted what they ate as British food, or just as food, without thinking about its nationality or origins. Only after 1945 would Britons become similarly comfortable with the more exotic products they had not previously tried *en masse*.

Chapter Four

Changes in British Eating Habits

> The mention of macaroni conveys to nineteen out of twenty Englishmen, as it does also to our cooks, the idea of an indigestible mess, containing much toasted cheese and butter, well peppered and over-baked, which is sometimes served at the end of dinner as a 'savoury' to complete the repast.[1]

Background Factors

Most accounts of the food of the British from the middle of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century stress two major points: first, the importance of class; and, second, although variations existed, a gradual improvement in diet, a process which would intensify after 1945, as 'want' became 'plenty'.[2] Not only did the quantity of food improve from the mid-Victorian period, but so did the quality as government increasingly intervened.[3]

State intervention played a key role in the eating patterns of the British from the middle of the nineteenth century. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, together with the elimination of duties on other basic products, aimed at providing cheap food for all.[4] A century later the introduction of rationing during the Second World War attempted to ensure that all sections of the population reached a basic nutritional standard, even though the availability of some foods declined.[5]

Any discussion of food consumption in Britain from the middle of the nineteenth century needs contextualization against the fundamental changes taking place in British economy and society due to industrialization. Urbanization and the move away from the land meant that the gradually increasing proportion of the population living in towns and cities no longer had access to food which it grew. The quantity and quality of the food consumed by the rural labourer compared with the urban working classes did not significantly differ for much of the century before 1945; the main concern of the lower sections of society was, in dietary terms, consuming enough to survive, most clearly indicated, perhaps, by the fact that, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the working classes spent up to 71 per cent of their income on food. But most authorities, above all John Burnett, accept that improvement occurred for urban workers following the repeal of the Corn Laws,[6] a process which would continue into the twentieth century. While gradual improvement occurred, Derek Oddy has stressed the poverty and poor

nutritional standard of many sections of the working classes before 1914, indicated most clearly, he argues, by the 'consistently high level of infant mortality' as late as the 1890s.[7] Oddy asserts that 'malnutrition was widespread in Britain before the First World War' but concludes that 'those working-class adults who survived the toll of infancy and childhood were relatively healthy' in adulthood with a life expectancy of between 45 and 50.[8] Similarly, much of the rural population in this period was 'undernourished'.[9] On the other hand, all sections of the middle classes had seen a significant improvement in their diet from 1815 to 1914.[10]

The next forty years would also reveal significant differences in dietary quality and nutritional levels so that, while most sections of the population may have witnessed improvement, significant pockets of poverty and malnutrition remained. The First World War did not make a major difference to nutritional or mortality standards in Britain although, if anything, according to one of the most thorough surveys carried out by Jay Winter, the general trend was one of improvement, a claim disputed by other scholars.[11] Although improvement occurred during the interwar period as a whole, both Oddy and Burnett mention variations according to class and income, aggravated by the depression of the 1930s. Oddy has stressed the fact that malnutrition survived,[12] while Burnett has concluded:

> For most people the inter-war years were years of wider food choice, better health and improved nutrition: for a minority – and in some years and some regions, a large minority – the progress was so frail, and started from so low a base, that it could easily revert to conditions of hunger, disease, and misery not seen since the turn of the century.[13]

This background, the needs of the British wartime economy for a healthier population and the genuine shortages caused by the upheavals of war led to the introduction of rationing, which went some way to equalizing food consumption during the 1940s.

Thus a complex picture emerges of nutritional standards in Britain in the century leading up to 1945. While a general improvement occurred, income and social status played a central role in determining the quantity, quality and variety of food consumed. Before examining the changes in the products actually eaten by Britons between 1850 and 1945 and analysing the role of foreign influences, we also need to identify the major changes which scientific progress, transportation, industrialization, urbanization and business organization had made to the supply of food during this period. These factors changed the nature, range and availability of products in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The classic account of *The Englishman's Food* has outlined some of the most important developments. During the Victorian period nutritionists

began to play a role with the emergence of the science of food. This examined concepts such as calories, vitamins and the overall nutritional value of particular foods. Despite this, the influence of nutritionists, at least on government policy, would only really become apparent after 1945. Scientific advances also resulted in the development of a range of methods of preserving foods, above all canning and freezing.[14]

Population growth and urbanization also meant an improvement in food supply, facilitated by increasingly scientific and industrial farming techniques. Improved transportation within both Britain and North America (which supplied significant amounts of cereals in the late nineteenth century) also eased the supply of produce, although even before this time an efficient system had emerged, rapidly bringing perishable food such as meat to London from all over Britain.[15]

The late Victorian period also saw the development of 'food industries'. This meant that small-scale production declined as 'large-scale, highly mechanized industries, concentrated into fewer units with wide distribution networks' began to dominate.[16] A wide variety of products moved from small-scale to mass production, while the appliance of science to food production, which allowed preservation, also meant the development of new products.[17] The availability of tinned foods increased especially during the interwar period.[18] The commercialization of food processing also meant the growth of firms such Ranks and Spillers in flour and bread making, and Hartley, Chivers and Lipton in jam making.[19] The end of the nineteenth century also saw the beginnings of multifaceted food-processing firms including Lyons and Heinz.[20]

A 'retailing revolution' with a series of characteristics occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, according to Burnett.[21] In the first place, street trading continued to thrive. Although many of London's largest and most famous markets pre-dated the nineteenth century, new ones also came into existence with the city's expansion during the industrial revolution.[22] During the 1930s 60 per cent of women in west London used street markets, with 25 per cent using them exclusively, especially for the purchase of vegetables.[23] According to Mayhew over thirty thousand costermongers and itinerant traders hawked their wares in London and its suburbs during the middle of the nineteenth century,[24] many of them selling food. Although this figure would decline over time, the hawking of food remained a characteristic of Victorian Britain.[25]

Fixed retailers of a variety of types developed. In the first place, co-operative societies began to emerge, especially in the north, so that, by 1920, they accounted for around 10 per cent of food sales in Britain. Department stores also developed from the middle of the nineteenth century, although most of these did not specialize in food. Those that did included Fortnum and Mason in Piccadilly, catering for the richest members of society. More important from

a food point of view were 'multiple shop retailers', or chains of stores. One of the pioneers in this field was Thomas Lipton, who opened his first shop in Glasgow in 1871. The official history of Sainsbury's dates its foundation to 1869, when the first store in Drury Lane opened. By 1939 it had 255 shops, compared with the 798 of Home and Colonial and 449 belonging to Lipton's. In this year a total of 21,546 branches of larger food retailers existed in Britain, including both general ones and those specializing in specific products such as bread, milk, fish, meat and fruit and vegetables. About 50 per cent of women in west London used multiple and department stores during the 1930s, an eighth exclusively so.[26] One study of retail trading in Britain estimated that 750,000 shops existed in 1942, with about half of these 'mainly engaged in selling food and drink',[27] suggesting that many consumers purchased their food from local self-standing outlets.

The Food of the British

Thus significant changes took place in the availability, distribution and retailing of food in the century before 1945. Class appears to have constituted the determining factor, far more than ethnicity and region, in the consumption patterns of the majority of Britons. While historians do not agree on the extent to which diet and nutrition improved, and while some choose to stress continuing high mortality rates and the persistence of poverty, it would appear that a gradual improvement occurred in the food of most sections of the population from the first spurt of industrialization in the early nineteenth century.

In order to draw firmer conclusions about these developments, we need to discover exactly what people in Britain ate between 1850 and 1945. A variety of sources help to establish the picture. The two most obvious are social surveys, carried out by both governmental and non-governmental organizations, and recipes, especially as provided in cookbooks. While the former may prove more reliable, foods tend to be divided into their basics such as meat (sometimes categorized by type), bread and potatoes. Recipes, on the other hand, provide an indication of what people may have eaten, but no measurement of the extent to which Britons utilized them. Some of the most reliable indications are accounts written by individuals, especially for the public opinion organization Mass Observation, which tend to confirm the picture provided by statistical surveys, if not recipe books. This section will try to establish the foods that Britons ate, determined, as we shall see, by class, before examining the role of foreign influences.

George Dodd's *The Food of London* provides one of the most thorough accounts of the products available in the Victorian period. He claimed that people in the UK consumed between 100,000 and 120,000 tons of cheese per year, breaking it down even further into nine categories, with Cheshire counting

the highest tonnage at 18,000. Dodd also claimed that the London markets sold 361,590 tons of vegetables per annum, with potatoes way out in front at 138,000 tons followed by cabbages, turnips, onions and broccoli. The 45,030 tons of fruit were headed by 17,150 tons of apples, followed by pears, gooseberries, plums, currants and damsons.[28] Dodd estimated that the number of retail food outlets in the metropolis was in the region of 24,000. This appears to take into account shops of all types. The most numerous of these included '4,400 publicans, 3,000 grocers and tea dealers, 2,550 bakers, 1,750 butchers, 1,500 greengrocers and fruiterers, 2,450 beer retailers, 1,300 dairymen, 1,550 coffee-room keepers, 950 cheesemongers, 950 wine merchants, 700 pastry cooks'.[29]

Dodd's estimates suggest the availability of a wide range of goods in London in the middle of the nineteenth century, but establishing which sections of the capital's society actually consumed these proves more problematic. Using an anonymous publication from 1853, Dorothy Davis has claimed that a grocery shop in that year generally contained the following items: 'Tea, coffee, cocoa, chocolate, chicory, spices, barley, patent flour, semolina, sauces, pepper, mustard, bird-seed, scent'.[30]

Oddy and Burnett have stressed the lack of food choices of the working classes in the Victorian period. Burnett uses a survey from 1863 which concluded that agricultural workers and the poorer sections of the working classes barely ate enough food to meet their basic requirements. The staple products were bread, sugar and treacle, butter, dripping and suet, bacon and meat, milk, cheese and tea. The most important staple was bread, which could total up to 12½ lb (5.7 kg) per week for agricultural labourers, while the urban working classes only consumed about 13½ oz (383 g) of bacon or meat per week. Another survey from 1881 by the British Association for the Advancement of Science still indicated the importance of bread, followed by potatoes, with fish and meat increasing in importance.[31] Oddy has carried out extensive research on the diet of the working classes in the decades leading up to the First World War. Using a series of contemporary surveys, he has indicated that the staples of the mid-nineteenth century generally prevailed in the form of bread, potatoes, sugar, cereals, fats, meat and milk. Regional variations existed. Fish remained largely absent from rural areas, but common in towns, especially London, where Billingsgate market provided all manner of products from cod, haddock, whelks and halibut to salmon, red mullet and lobsters. Fruit consumption also displayed regional variations.[32] Anna Davin's study of food consumption among the poor in late nineteenth-century London has stressed the importance of bread, fish and scraps of meat including pigs' heads and tails.[33]

Middle-class consumption patterns became more diverse and sophisticated than those of the working classes, which helps to explain the variety of products available, especially in London, during the Victorian period. In addition, 'most of the new processed, packeted, bottled and canned foods which came in'

during the second half of the nineteenth century 'were only for people who lived "above stairs". The poor could neither afford them nor make use of them.'[34] By the 1890s a cook's cupboard in a middle-class home was 'full of packets and cans', while most fresh foods came to the door.[35]

'Eating three meals a day was the accepted pattern everywhere in Britain as early as the eighteenth century', including workhouses.[36] By the 1860s breakfast for those in the higher social classes could encompass a variety of dishes, influenced by seasonal availability, from game, veal cutlets, pork chops and anchovies to marmalade and honey. By the beginning of the twentieth century most people ate bacon for breakfast, although those at the top of the social scale had a much wider range of foodstuffs available.[37] Lunch appears to have become the main meal for the working classes during the middle of the nineteenth century, although not for those with a higher social status.[38] By the First World War 'High Tea' had become increasingly important for the working classes, encompassing 'some kind of fish or meat usually cooked in a frying-pan'.[39] This habit of eating a more substantial evening meal mirrored the patterns of the middle classes who, however, by the end of the nineteenth century ate several courses *à la Russe*.[40]

While cookbooks cannot offer a scientific analysis of the food eaten by the Victorians, they do provide an indication. The more sophisticated volumes were aimed at those who had a secure income, but numerous other publications tried to improve the food of the working classes, creating recipes that took wages into account. Celebrity chefs and social reformers wrote such books. The extent of their use is difficult to establish. Although Colin Spencer claims that British cooking declined during the nineteenth century, he does not provide any statistical evidence to support his claim.[41] But the 'poorer classes were generally very ill-supplied with cooking equipment' and could often not afford fuel, which meant that some families only prepared two or three hot meals per week. Affordable cookers and ovens only become available towards the end of the nineteenth century.[42]

Despite the problems faced by the working-class housewife in the second half of the nineteenth century, some of the volumes aimed at her seem to have sold well. For instance, Soyer's *Shilling Cookery for the People* had already printed 210,000 copies by 1860, having first appeared in 1854, although there was also a US edition. Other volumes also went through more than one printing.

Such books are characterized by an appreciation of the low incomes earned by the intended audience. Francatelli's *Plain Cookery for the Working Classes*, for instance, begins with the following paragraph:

> My object in writing this little book is to show you how you may prepare and cook your daily food, so as to obtain from it the greatest amount of nourishment at the least possible expense; and thus, by skill and economy,

> add, at the same time, to your comfort and to your comparatively slender means. The recipes which it contains will afford sufficient variety.[43]

Francatelli listed the items needed in the kitchen with their prices next to them including 'a cooking-stove, 2ft. 6 in. wide, with oven only £1 10s.'[44] Cookery books for the poor encouraged them to use scraps. A volume originally appearing in 1895 had a section entitled 'Well-Tried Recipes' which stated that, 'Where economy is practised, sufficient scraps are often left from the various meals to furnish other meals and the usual family soups and broths without buying fresh for the purpose.'[45] Similarly, Edward Smith urged the 'labouring classes' to buy the cheapest cuts of meat including 'cow's cheek, sheep's head, liver, ox heart and sometimes pig's head'.[46]

Many of these cookbooks simply provided a few basic recipes, the aim often to teach the working classes how to cook. For instance, *Dainty Dishes for Slender Incomes* contains recipes for the most basic dishes including fried chicken, carrot soup, stewed peas and potato chips. *Cookery for Working Men's Wives*, which, like many cookbooks published in Britain over the last two centuries, stressed the importance of cooking and eating real food, also contained the most basic of recipes including porridge, tea, eggs, potato soup and fish.[47] Francatelli's book contains 242 recipes as we might expect from a professional cook. After a preface stressing the need to make ends meet, the vast majority of recipes are relatively straightforward.[48] Soyer provides 416 recipes, some of which are simple, such as frying sausages and 'How to toast Bread'. On the other hand, it is unlikely that those at the lower ends of society would have made 'Beef-à-la-Mode', especially in view of the ingredients, which included 'the thick part of the rump of beef, about four pounds'.[49]

While cookbooks for the working classes cannot provide a statistically accurate account of consumption patterns in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, they do support the findings of surveys carried out before 1914 which reveal the basic nature of working-class food. Writers producing volumes for those at the lower end of society clearly had an awareness of the limited income of the families for which they wrote, especially in the case of Smith, who had worked among them, and Soyer, a champion of numerous good causes. A variety of evidence indicates that the 'common people' before 1914 consumed plain fare.

An examination of more sophisticated cookbooks, on the other hand, would suggest that the middle and upper classes ate 'fancy' food on a daily basis. Either the housewife herself spent much time preparing meals or, more likely, the kitchen staff undertook the task. The opening two chapters of Mrs Beeton carry the titles 'The Mistress', compared to 'the commander of any army', and 'The Housekeeper', 'second in command in the house'.[50] Similarly, Francatelli's most important volume is entitled *The Modern Cook* and does not appear to be aimed at housewives. Complexity and range of dishes characterize

these volumes. The 242 recipes in Franctelli's *Plain Cookery Book* increase to 1,462 in *The Modern Cook*.[51] Eliza Acton, meanwhile, provides 622 pages of recipes.[52] It would probably take decades to eat all of the dishes listed in Acton and Francatelli. Establishing the regularity with which any middle-class family ate, for instance, 'fillets of haddocks, à la royale', proves impossible.[53] It should also be borne in mind that the Victorian middle classes formed a diverse social group[54] and it is likely that only those at the top of the scale, together with members of the aristocracy, could have aspired to consuming the type of food listed particularly in Francatelli and Acton. We are essentially referring to the consumption patterns of a small percentage of the British population in the nineteenth century.

Both Beeton and Francatelli provide bills of fare arranged according to season. Beeton proves particularly useful here in the sense that she offers monthly meal plans for varying numbers of people and for different types of meal, including 'dinner for 18 persons', 'dinner for 6 persons' and 'plain family dinners'. For January, the first two categories (the one for eighteen actually accompanied by diagrams) contain four courses. The 'dinner for 6 persons' includes Julienne Soup as a first course, 'mutton cutlets, with mashed potatoes' as an 'entrée', a second course which includes 'haunch of venison', followed by four desserts. Perhaps the best indication of the daily consumption of the Victorian middle-class family comes from the meals suggested in 'plain family dinners'. These contained between two and three courses, with 'meat and two veg' featuring prominently, together with pudding. While the meals suggest sufficient calories, they do not generally indicate long cooking times. Interestingly, they also point to the use of leftovers. The January bill of fare runs as follows:

> *Sunday*. – 1. Boiled turbot and oyster sauce, potatoes. 2. Roast leg or griskin of pork, apple sauce, broccoli, potatoes. 3. Cabinet pudding and damson tart made with preserved damsons.
> *Monday*. – 1. The remains of turbot warmed in oyster sauce, potatoes. 2. Cold pork, stewed steak. 3. Open jam tart, which should have been made with the pieces of paste left from the damson tart; baked arrowroot pudding.
> *Tuesday*. – 1. Boiled neck of mutton, carrots, mashed turnips, suet dumplings, and caper sauce . . . 2. Rolled Jam pudding.
> *Wednesday* – 1. Roast rolled ribs of beef, greens, potatoes, and horseradish sauce. 2. Bread and butter pudding, cheesecakes.
> *Thursday* – 1. Vegetable soup (the bones from the ribs of beef should be boiled down with this soup), cold beef, mashed potatoes. 2. Pheasants, gravy, bread sauce. 3. Macaroni.
> *Friday*. – 1. Fried whitings or soles. 2. Boiled rabbit and onion sauce, minced beef, potatoes. 3. Currant puddings.

Saturday. – 1. Rump-steak pudding or pie, greens, and potatoes. 2. Baked custard pudding and stewed apples.[55]

Francatelli does not produce bills of fare for plain family dinners but does list dinners for six persons, according to month. While more sophisticated than the basic Beeton menus,[56] the recipes of both of these cookery writers above all indicate the ability of the middle classes to afford the best meat and vegetables as well as their use of domestic staff. Clearly, this meant that they would also sample more sophisticated and complex dishes, including those with more obvious foreign influences, especially from a reading of Francatelli who, as someone with French origins educated in the art of cooking in his homeland, used French terminology throughout his *Modern Cook*.

Although Oddy has doubts about the quality of food available during the First World War, pointing out especially what he views as discontent caused by shortages,[57] other authorities, especially Burnett, do not share this view. Compulsory, as opposed to voluntary, rationing did not actually come into force until 1 January 1918. The main foodstuffs eaten were sugar, butter, margarine, jam, tea and bacon. The main dietary items by 1918 resembled those of the pre-war years in the form of bread, meat, bacon, butter and margarine, lard, potatoes and sugar. The weekly consumption of most of these, with the exception of meat, increased during the war.[58] The working classes also benefited from the establishment of factory canteens, especially as many 'came from families which had been struggling for decades to alleviate hunger pangs'. The dishes on offer, which might be described as classic British fare, included 'chops and mashed potatoes, roast beef, mashed potatoes and vegetables, steak pie and potatoes, liver, onions and potatoes, tripe and onions, fish, parsley sauce and potatoes, fish pie, shepherd's pie and puddings'.[59]

Recipe books encouraged women to make the most of the rations they received. One of these, from the Ministry of Food, gave instructions on how to cook 'Delicious Stews' and 'Thirty-Four Ways of Using Potatoes'. Some of the stews assumed the availability of considerable amounts of meat, such as the 'haricot mutton en casserole', which needed 'about 1½ lbs of mutton free from bones' and 4 oz bacon, although others used non-rationed items such as 'fricassee of rabbit', 'stewed pigeons en casserole' or 'stewed ox kidney'. The 'Thirty-Four Ways of Using Potatoes' included a variety of biscuits, cakes and breads. The Ministry of Food also provided a list of 'Eighteen Very Cheap Dishes', including 'Hot Pot of Sheep's Heart', 'Stewed Green Peas (Dried) and Rice' and 'Turnip Tops'.[60] Meanwhile, the *Daily Mail* published a book of war recipes which included a section on meatless dishes such as 'vegetable stew', 'potato and nut cutlet' and 'vegetable cutlets'.[61] Such dishes were aimed at the middle-class or lower-middle-class *Daily Mail*-reading housewife, who would have tried to survive with decreasing amounts of meat under rationing.

By the inter-war years, increasing government and popular attention to the subject means we can be more knowledgeable about the meals and amounts of food consumed by the various sections of British society. In fact, relatively little change occurred in terms of the products eaten so that a list of everyday items in the late 1930s did not differ significantly to those consumed in 1900.

But some developments did occur which would have an impact on cooking, especially for the middle classes. In the first place, and perhaps most significantly, particularly as a long-term trend, the 'servant problem' evolved. Working-class women who had worked in munitions factories during the Great War had no desire to return to domestic service and it proved increasingly difficult to find replacements for them. While some middle-class women still employed servants, increasing numbers now carried out the cooking themselves.[62] Methods of food preparation also altered, with the spread of gas and electric cookers. In 1942, 81 per cent of households in London used the former, although the figure in rural Gloucestershire only stood at 3 per cent. Just 6 per cent of households nationally used electricity to prepare their food in 1936.[63] This still meant that a large section of the population, especially the working classes and those in rural areas, used other fuel, especially oil.[64] Food processing also developed during the interwar years. The consumption of chocolate and sweets, for example, increased dramatically.[65] Tinned products became popular during the 1920s and 1930s as a British canning industry developed.[66] By the outbreak of the Second World War 'almost every kind of domestic and foreign fruit, meat, game, fish and vegetable was available in tins at prices which many people could afford, at least occasionally'.[67]

Class and income continued to determine food consumption, as revealed by several surveys from the 1930s. First, the *New Survey of London Life and Labour*, which also discusses the durability of the staples of the working class diet. The most important item was white bread, followed by meat. 'The Sunday joint is of course an institution in most households', although the leftovers survived into Monday and beyond. 'Stews are extensively used, and are usually composed of cheap cuts of meat and vegetables. In the poorest families such things as bones, pork rind, split peas and crusts will be used as ingredients.' Fruit consumption had apparently increased significantly, 'possibly as a result of the health propaganda of recent years'. Most poor families could 'still not afford tinned foods'. For working-class families, breakfast consisted of 'bread, margarine or butter and tea, and often porridge or some other cereal. When eggs are cheap they are included. For dinner there is usually meat with vegetables, and in very many households apple dumpling or suet pudding is a favourite dish'. Members of most families had 'one good meal a day'. Interestingly, the survey also mentioned 'a tendency to conservatism and to suspicion or dislike of new tastes', put down especially to children. Eels also proved popular as 'a cheap and nourishing meal'.[68]

Greengrocer in London during the 1920s.

John Boyd Orr's survey from 1936 looked at the connection between food, health and income. He constructed six income groups, with the first earning less than ten shillings per week and the sixth over 45 shillings. These two made up 10 per cent of the population each, whereas the four groups in between made up 20 per cent. Orr found that the amount of food consumed had increased since 1909–13, but that bread consumption had actually fallen and the eating of potatoes and meat had slightly risen. Those products which witnessed the greatest rises included fruit, vegetables, butter, eggs, cheese, margarine and sugar, with the first of these almost doubling. Those with the highest earning power spent more money on food, but less of a proportion of their income. Thus, those in group I spent four shillings from ten on food, group IV, ten shillings from twenty to thirty and group VI fourteen shillings from 45. Orr concluded that, 'The consumption of bread and potatoes is practically uniform throughout the different income level groups. Consumption of milk, eggs, fruit, vegetables, meat and fish rises with income.' He also drew a link between the quantity and quality of food and nutrition.[69]

Orr did not provide a detailed breakdown of the products consumed. A survey led by Sir William Crawford, based on five thousand interviews, with five social groups, from AA at the top to D at the bottom, carried out in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Newcastle, Liverpool and Cardiff, provided more precise information.[70] For breakfast, for instance, the survey listed fourteen items including: bread, rolls or toast; butter; margarine; dripping; marmalade; jam, honey and syrup; porridge; other cereals; eggs; bacon or ham; fish; sausages; fruit or fruit juice; and tomatoes. Over 50 per cent of classes AA, A, B and C ate bacon and eggs, falling to 32 per cent for D. The last of these was 'a mark of social achievement'. Bread, rolls and toast were almost uniformly consumed.[71] For the midday meal, the survey listed 22 items ranging from soup to desserts. More than two thirds of all groups ate potatoes. Between 20 and 24

per cent of all categories also ate beef or veal. Green vegetables ranged from 50.7 per cent for AA to 32.3 per cent for D. All other meats including poultry, pork, mutton or lamb and fish proved less popular than beef. Fruit was eaten by the higher groups, but not those at the bottom. In fact, C and D ate few desserts of any description.[72] The survey also gave information about 'tea and high tea' as well as 'the evening meal', both taken by the vast majority of all social groups. The former appears to have essentially consisted of a snack on arriving home, indicated by the fact that jam and preserves and cakes and buns were the most popular items and the fact that the overwhelming majority of all groups took it between four thirty and five thirty.[73] The evening meal varied from one social group to another. 'The upper-class evening "dinner" is a full regimented meal . . . The lower-class supper is more in the nature of an afterthought to high tea.'[74] Whereas the most important items for groups AA, A and B consisted of soups, fish, meat, potatoes and vegetables, for C and D it was cheese, bread and butter.[75]

Crawford and Broadley investigated a variety of issues about food consumption during the 1930s, including cooking. The overwhelming majority of women in all social classes declared themselves either 'very much interested' or 'moderately interested', although 'this interest in cooking was not, however, always supported by interest in cookery books'. Whereas around half of women in AA and A used them, this fell to 15.3 per cent for D.[76]

Most surveys indicated that at the end of the 1930s class still had a relationship with food consumption. The major changes that had occurred appear to have been in the eating of fresh fruit, especially for the higher social classes whereas, particularly for those lower down the social scale, white bread remained the most important staple. Interestingly, the most popular meat was beef or veal for all social groups and a majority of people appear to have eaten bacon and eggs for breakfast. While the surveys do no tell us exactly how the food was cooked, it appears that the late 1930s represented a high point of the stereotypical British meal, particularly in the light of the absence of foreign cookbooks.[77]

This dominance continued into the Second World War, a period during which the government increasingly came to play a role in diet, as a food policy

Beef carving during the 1930s.

developed.[78] This was partly a reaction to the difficulties of war, which meant that the importation of food became more problematic, as well as a desire to keep a healthy population in wartime, needed for the servicing of the munitions industry. The policy emerged during the 1930s, informed by the experience of the First World War. A Ministry of Food was established immediately after the outbreak of war, with the aim of 'complete control' to ensure 'sufficient supplies and effective distribution'.[79] For much of the population in wartime Britain, the development of a food policy manifested itself most clearly in the introduction of rationing in January 1940. Britons became bombarded with advice about what to eat and how to cook, as well as ways to make ends meet and support the war effort, including the growing of food in gardens. Furthermore, in order to ensure that workers obtained sufficient nutrition and did not waste production time by going home to cook, the government oversaw the opening of 'British Restaurants', perhaps the one form of eating out in modern Britain which had few foreign influences.

Rationing began in January 1940 and initially worked on the assumption of 'a flat-rate individual ration'.[80] This proved difficult to enforce because of the needs of different sections of the population such as children, who had special arrangements made for them for the supply of 'milk, oranges, dried eggs and fruit juices and cod liver oil'.[81] A variety of rationing schemes evolved during the course of the war. Initially 'ordinary rationing' worked on the principle of 'a fixed quantity of each food for a fixed period', which continued for some basic items such as 'meat, fats (including butter and margarine), bacon, tea, cheese, sugar and preserves (including jam, marmalade and honey)'. From November 1941 'points rationing' came into operation, which meant that 'the consumer is allowed to spend, in a period of four weeks, a given number of "points" on any of the foods' which were rationed. Catering establishments of every variety also became subject to rationing, as did 'institutions' such as hospitals and prisons.[82]

The types of food rationed gradually increased. The first was those which came under the ordinary rationing scheme. Points rationing broadened the range of goods affected to: 'canned meat and meat products'; 'canned fish'; 'rice, sago and tapioca'; 'canned fruit'; 'canned vegetables'; 'condensed milk'; 'cereal breakfast foods'; 'rolled oats and oatflakes'; 'dried peas, beans and lentils'; 'dried fruits'; 'syrup and treacle'; and 'bisucits'.[83] Goods which never faced rationing during the War included 'perishable fresh foods such as fish, fruit, and vegetables' (owing to their 'limited quantities as well as seasonal and regional variations') and bread and potatoes.[84]

The introduction of rationing was accompanied by a propaganda and advice campaign. At the beginning of 1941 the Treasury approved the opening of seventeen Food Advice Centres.[85] By 1943 the Food Leader Scheme was in operation; this was essentially a way in which the Ministry of Food, using local

women's organizations, had contact with housewives, tried to listen to their problems and distributed its leaflets, as well as *Food Leader News*.[86]

The publication of booklets and leaflets, the use of posters and the utilization of the radio represented three of the most important ways in which the Ministry of Food spread its various messages. Two of the major campaigns focused on the need of individuals to grow their own vegetables, and the way in which women could make the best use of the foods available to them, with their nutritional value often stressed.

In 1940 a London evening paper coined the phrase 'Dig For Victory', adopted by the Ministry of Food to encourage people to grow their own products. In the following year the government began to issue 'Dig for Victory' leaflets. Allotment associations also helped town dwellers to grow their own vegetables. As many as ten million instructional leaflets followed in 1942. By 1943 1.4 million allotments existed and over half of all manual workers grew some of their own food. Many urban farmers produced between 3 lb (1.4 kg) and 6 lb (2.7 kg) of potatoes per week, together with 5–6 lb (2.3–2.7 kg) of other fruits and vegetables.[87]

The Ministry of Food also issued booklets instructing women on how to make the best of the foods available to them. These included the 1943 publication *Wise Eating in Wartime*, which urged variety in consumption, as well as an awareness of the nutritional values of foods.[88] In 1945 there followed the *ABC of Cookery*.[89] The Ministry of Food also issued numerous recipe booklets and leaflets.[90] The official advice went together with 'a bewildering number of cookery' books published during the war.[91]

The government also developed the concept of the *Kitchen Front*, the title of 'a radio programme aimed specifically at the working class housewife'. The first broadcast occurred in June 1940 and subsequent ones followed on an almost daily basis for the whole of the war. Features included housewives from different parts of Britain, as well as foreign housewives, giving talks about their own recipes.[92] Thus on 23 February 1945 Mrs Ingillson instructed listeners on how to cook 'egg croquettes, made with dried eggs, cheese and onion or leek'.[93] On 16 January 1942 'A Chinese Housewife' provided a recipe for chop suey.[94] Suggestions also came from 'A Norwegian Housewife', 'A Cook From Ireland' and 'A Czechoslovakian Housewife'.[95]

The government made provisions for the communal feeding of those on the home front. The Ministry of Food encouraged the opening up of works canteens and British Restaurants, the latter essentially being establishments providing midday meals for workers in a number of nearby factories. By the end of 1943, 10,570 factories had their own canteens serving hot meals, while the number of British Restaurants had reached 2,119. By March 1944 these two types of establishment served 36.6 million meals per week, 21.2 million of which were main meals. These remained concentrated in industrial areas.[96] In

order to service British Restaurants the Ministry of Food also established a course for cooks who worked within them.[97]

The government clearly put an enormous amount of effort into maintaining the nutritional standards of its population during the war. Did it succeed? The emergence of the black market in food, providing 'under the counter' rationed produce from the early stages of the war, might suggest otherwise. Between October 1939 and August 1945 the Ministry of Food carried out nearly 115,000 prosecutions against people who broke rationing regulations.[98]

Burnett, however, has described the war and its immediate aftermath as one of the 'crucial periods for the improvement of the diet of the majority of English people'. He claims that calorie intake increased slightly from a pre-war average of 3,000 per head per day to 3,010 by 1944.[99] On the other hand, Oddy points to inequalities in consumption despite rationing.[100] The intake of the basic staples of bread, potatoes, meat and milk increased between 1937 and 1945, although fats decreased, while sugar intake fell by almost half.[101]

Variety did exist in the diet, despite the importance of the staples. In 1944 the Ministry of Food issued a leaflet aimed at those who ran canteens, suggesting 24 different possible meals of two courses, from the weekly rations received. Thus meal one consisted of shepherd's pie, watercress or raw vegetable garnish with 'wheatmeal' bread, followed by rice pudding and tea. Number ten, meanwhile, contained liver pudding, carrots, watercress, mashed potatoes and wheatmeal bread, followed by blancmange and tea. In fact, virtually all of the meals consisted of classic meat with potatoes, vegetables and bread. Even a vegetable curry came with potatoes and bread.[102]

Whether customers actually enjoyed the food on offer proves difficult to establish. A Ministry of Food Report following a visit to a British Restaurant in Leicester concluded: 'As usual the food at the Restaurant was not very palatable. We believe that this is mainly due to the fact that it is kept hot so long during transport in containers, but it is also probably poorly seasoned.'[103] An alternative view comes from a report on a visit to 'the newly opened British Restaurant in Sutton Surrey' in January 1942, the diner describing his meal of vegetable soup, 'a 3" square piece of meat, boiled cabbage and gravy' followed by 'bread and butter pudding but with no currants in it, covered liberally with custard' as 'very good but not much of it'![104] Questionnaires carried out in British Restaurants indicated that about two-thirds of people wanted them to continue after the war.[105]

Domestic eating during the war mirrored the food served in British Restaurants. Housewives had to make full use of their rations, often involving leftovers, with the help of the barrage of advice and menus from the Ministry of Food.[106] Mass Observation reports[107] allow a look into the reality of consumption patterns during the war. Lionel Randle from Bournville in Birmingham, with three children, ate a working-class diet of the type suggested

by Crawford and Broadley in 1938. On Sunday 12 November 1944, for instance, his family consumed:

> Breakfast. Porridge, oranges, scrambled egg and toast, marmalade, tea. Children – milk.
> Dinner. Potatoes, curley, greens, baked potatoes, roast beef, apples, oranges, biscuits.
> Tea. Toast, marmalade, jam, malt bread, sponge sandwich, tea.
> Supper. Bread and dripping, chutney, cheese and biscuits. Tea. Children – milk.

Three days later, on Wednesday 15 November, the same family ate the following:

> Breakfast. Porridge/cereals, bacon and fried bread, marmalade, tea. Children – milk.
> Dinner. Fish and chips, semolina pudding.
> Tea. Bread and butter, grated raw cabbage, cheese, carrot, water-cress, cake, tea.
> Supper. Bread and butter, watercress, cheese and biscuits, tea. Children – milk, bread and butter.[108]

In contrast, Mary Roberts of Altrincham seems to have had a more substantial evening meal. For instance, on Wednesday 14 January 1942, after a breakfast which included 'toasted cheese on white toast' and a lunch of 'corned beef and potato croquettes' with bread and 'thin white biscuit and syrup', her tea consisted of sausage and mash with marrow tart, followed by a supper which included 'raisin patty' and Madeira cake.[109]

Looking at the period from the middle of the nineteenth century until the end of the Second World War, a series of developments strike us. First, despite disagreement among some historians, there seems little doubt that nutrition improved. At the same time, class clearly played a role in food eaten in Britain in terms of quantity and quality and to some extent, sophistication. Furthermore, the staples of bread, potatoes and meat did not alter greatly so that in the middle of the twentieth century they made up the classic British meal of meat, potatoes, veg, bread and pudding.

Foreign Influences

In the half-century following the Second World War the classic British menu would come under attack from a variety of foreign forces. But to suggest that international factors did not influence the British meal before then would simply ignore the complexities of ingredients and eating patterns. Fish and chips

provide the best illustration of this fact, as would other dishes if deconstructed in the same way. A book on *The Great British Breakfast*, for instance, claims that bacon 'was the old French name for pig'.[110] But foreign influence does not simply manifest itself in particular foods. In the first place, many ingredients, and even staples, of British food by the middle of the nineteenth century either came from abroad as imports, or originated from other parts of the world but had become domesticated during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Secondly, migrant entrepreneurs played a role in retailing and food processing in the period 1850–1945, again from top to bottom, as in the case of the restaurant trade. These two areas, however, do not have the same dependence upon migrants as the rise of the restaurant. Finally, a deconstruction of many dishes would also reveal foreign influences, ranging from French, which had come to dominate middle- and upper-class eating by 1900, to imperial, indicated by the presence of curry in most British cookbooks. Methods of eating, in terms of times and menu patterns of the higher classes, also showed increasing Continental influence during the nineteenth century.

As we have seen, by the second half of the nineteenth century, potatoes had become one of the staples of the British diet. So too, by the twentieth century, had sugar, which was used in a variety of products and as a sweetener for the two most popular non-alcoholic beverages, tea and coffee. Jim Walvin has described such products as the 'fruits of Empire', which 'took root in Britain between the years 1660–1800'. By the nineteenth century the British population 'took for granted the exotic commodities and associated habits which had been introduced into British life between 1660–1800'. These staples had become 'so much a part of the unquestioned fabric of local life that their exotic origins had been lost in the mists of time'.[111]

While potatoes came to be grown in Britain, tea, coffee and, until the end of the nineteenth century, sugar, still came from abroad. In fact, during industrialization the country increasingly became dependent on foreign food. By 1876 Britain imported large quantities of spices including 1 million lbs (454,000 kg) of cinnamon, 1 million lbs of cloves, and '500,000 to 700,000 of nutmegs'. It also imported about 5 million lbs (2.27 million kg) of pepper, together with a variety of other 'spices' such as ginger and vanilla.[112] George Dodd recognized in 1856 the international origins of London's food, pointing to the importation of grain from Odessa, Galatz, Danzig and Mississippi. Dairy produce 'comes from a dozen or more countries'. Of the 100,000 tons of cheese consumed in London, he described 19,000 tons as 'foreign', including, 'globular Dutch cheeses'.[113] Like the products outlined by Walvin, oranges, which had become part of British life well before the nineteenth century, were also imported in large quantities, mainly from parts of Spain.[114]

After 1850 Britain became increasingly dependent upon foreign food. This partly followed from the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. Other factors also

played a role, perhaps most importantly 'the opening-up of the North American interior by railways', a process completed in the second half of the nineteenth century, which meant that 'the vast quantities of wheat grown in the mid-western states' could 'be moved to the Atlantic ports for shipment to Europe'. The development of the frozen meat trade also meant that 'the English farmer on the eve of the First World War contributed less than half our total requirements'.[115] By the end of the 1930s Britain imported 88 per cent of her flour, 93 per cent of her butter, lard and margarine, 82 per cent of her sugar, 55 per cent of her meat, 40 per cent of her 'eggs and egg products', 76 per cent of her cheese and 74 per cent of her fruit.[116]

The growth of food processing between the First and Second World Wars partly involved the transformation of products imported from abroad, although this development certainly did not originate in this period, as sugar refining already had a long history in Britain.[117] Thus jam making developed from the late nineteenth century, involving the use of both imported sugar, together with fruits in some cases. Similarly, Heinz first canned baked beans in Harlesden at the start of the twentieth century. In addition, already tinned fruits also entered Britain by the late Victorian period.[118]

Migrants and their descendants established some of the larger food-processing firms in Britain. In addition, they also found employment as retailers from market traders to chain-store owners. Mayhew recognized Jews 'as an integral, but distinct and peculiar part of street-life', especially the one hundred 'Jew-boy street sellers', who dealt in fruit and cakes. Jews also recycled tea leaves and controlled the import and sale of 'fruits, especially green fruits, such as oranges, lemons, grapes, walnuts, cocoa-nuts &c., and dates among dried fruits'.[119] Mayhew further detailed 'How the Street-Irish Displanted the Street-Jews in the Orange Trade'.[120]

During the late Victorian and Edwardian years Germans also became important in the provision of both the meat and bread supplies of Britons as numerous German bakers and butchers opened their own retail outlets. Many of these small businessmen initially entered Britain to work as employees in these occupations with the long-term aim of acquiring 'sufficient knowledge and a little capital' to open up their own businesses. They subsequently employed their own newly arrived countrymen, who had the same ambition.[121] After importing German agricultural labourers, German master bakers would initially provide their new employees with food and lodging for a couple of years, after which they would move to earn about 18 shillings per week. Subsequently 'their thrift pushes them on to become masters in a small way so they progress'. Like many small-scale migrant businessmen in post-war Britain, German bakers worked longer hours than English ones.[122]

The Board of Trade estimated that half of the four thousand master bakers in London in 1887 were German,[123] while an article in *The Times* of 28

February 1910 claimed that, 'In the Metropolis the German baker is ubiquitous – he flaunts his name over the palatial shops in the West-end and he is equally in evidence in the slums of the East End.' The piece listed the names of German bakers 'from Tooting to Holloway, from Fulham to Stepney, from Edgware to Cricklewood'.

While the Board of Trade might exaggerate the situation, *The Times* presents an accurate picture of the ubiquity of the German baker. All of the censuses between 1881 and 1911 provide a national figure of over two thousand.[124] Germans became important in bakers' friendly societies and trade unions before 1914. The *Journeyman Bakers' Magazine and Chronicle*, the journal of the Amalgamated Union of Operative Bakers and Confectioners of Great Britain and Ireland, even carried German poems about the plight of the baker in London.[125] Germans also played a role in the Master Bakers' Association, counting nine of the 72 regional secretaries in 1892.[126] Those present at a meeting of the London Master Bakers Protection Society, which took place at the Holborn Restaurant in February 1905, included Messrs Whiting, Lotz, Marks, Göbel, J. and A. Beck, Konrath, Moritz, Shrivner, Kistner, Offer, Karsh, Zoller, Steil, Ullmar, Schmidt, J. Dhonan, P. C. Dhonan, J. E. Stredder, E. G. Stredder, F. Theis, W. Theis and Muller.[127]

As indicated by the titles of the bakers' organizations and the newspapers they produced, Germans worked both as bakers and confectioners, the most famous example being Appenrodt. It is tempting to form the theory that Germans introduced new breads and cakes into Britain – the produce sold by this chain delicatessen would suggest so.[128] An article on the Soho bakery of P. Hahn might also support this suggestion, as the outlet made a wide variety of breads, including 'cottage', rye, black and caraway, together with 'rows of French rolls resembling huge cigars'.[129]

Germans also established themselves as butchers, becoming especially important in the sale of pork, where it is again tempting to suggest that they introduced a variety of German meats into Britain at the end of the nineteenth century, especially sausages. They certainly seem to have cornered the market for the sale of sausage skins: a list of seven firms in the *Meat Trades Journal* which provided these in 1905 includes four with German names.[130] Between 1881 and 1911 the census counted about 1,200 German butchers.[131] One of these butchers, who simply described himself as 'The Pork Butcher' on his letterhead, was George Friedrich Hohenrein, who opened a shop in Hull as early as 1850 after working for another German in the same trade in the city. He sold a variety of products including 'home-cured ham and bacon, warranted pure lard, celebrated Brunswick sausages and Cassel polonies as well as all kinds of German sausages'.[132]

German bakers and butchers followed a peculiar path. Unlike many of the foreign influences on British food and retailing, they did not gradually seep

German butcher in Hull before the First World War.

into the national subconscious, whereby their Continental origins no longer mattered like, for example, fish and chips. Instead, during the First World War, they became the main symbols of German influence in Britain. The Germanopbobic hysteria that gripped the country vented its fervour on German butchers and bakers in the riots that broke out particularly in May 1915 following the sinking of the *Lusitania*. German food came to symbolize German influence in the country and its rejection in riots reflected the turn against Germany.[133]

The experience of Jewish retailers contrasts with that of Germans. While anti-Semitism may have remained an integral part of British life before 1945,[134] it never reached the same peak as the anti-German feeling that led to the closure and forced sale of businesses during the First World War.[135] The largest supermarket chain in contemporary Britain, Tesco, emerged during the interwar years as a result of the efforts of Jack Cohen, the son of Polish Jewish immigrants, who initially sold his wares in Hackney market.[136]

The Tesco story resembles that of Lyons, in the sense that it emerged from the efforts of the descendants of Jewish immigrants. As well as becoming important in catering, Lyons developed into one of the largest food-processing firms in Britain by the inter-war years, specializing in tea packaging, the pro-

duction of meat pies and the manufacture of ice cream. This delicacy actually indicates the influence of more than one migrant group. While Italians may have initially introduced it and sold it in scoops, Lyons developed ice-cream bricks.[137]

At the lower end of the food-processing industries, Germans had become important in the refining of sugar in the East End of London from the end of the eighteenth century and would continue to play a role until the second half of the nineteenth century. This process essentially involved the boiling and refining of sugar imported from the West Indies, demonstrating that this product not only entered Britain as a result of imperialism but also reached its final stage of refinement and palatability as a result of the labours of German immigrants. Members of this community had become involved in this trade partly because of the very low wages paid, reflecting the position of many of them at the bottom of the social scale, and also because a type of occupational chain migration developed, with German owners of factories importing their countrymen. It declined in importance as sugar beet production began to take off.[138]

While migrants played some role in the food supply of Britons in the period before 1945, it is easier to detect aspects of foreign influence in terms of the ways of serving and eating and the foods consumed. For instance, the method of consuming one dish at a time among middle-class families began to become increasingly normal during the early Victorian period, with soup and fish initiating the meal followed by up to three meat dishes with vegetables, sweet

Inter-war ice cream cart in Manchester.

dishes and desserts. This type of dining attracted the description *à la Française*, which also reflected the way in which table setting took place.[139] By the 1870s a new form of dining became common in Britain, described as *à la Russe*, essentially a modification of *à la Française* 'in which courses instead of containing a number of dishes were reduced to one or two only, and the recognized order of the meal familiar today – soup, fish, entrée, roast, dessert – became standardized in its varying degrees of complexity'.[140] The term *à la Russe* appears to have arisen from the imitation of the way in which the Tsars ate, a custom that may have first entered Britain when Alexander I dined in London following the defeat of Napoleon.[141] These phrases actually reflect the consumption patterns of the European middle and upper classes from the nineteenth century and pinpointing their origin to a specific French or Russian influence may be little more than an exercise in nomenclature. Dining *à la Française* or *à la Russe* tells us more about the availability of 'plenty' for the higher social classes and the triumph of European bourgeois values than it necessarily does about foreign influences.

However, we can also see both of these forms of dining as indications of the 'triumph of French cuisine'. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson has demonstrated how the invention of French cuisine began during the early nineteenth century and involved the standardization of already existing dishes and the adoption of recipes from outside France.[142] If the importation of French dining manners into Britain occurred during this period then French terminology became even more prevalent. Mrs Beeton's *Household Management* contains numerous French titles for dishes, although she also maintains some English names. This contrasts with Francatelli's *Modern Cook*, originally published in 1846, which almost suggests the complete and rapid conquest of French cuisine in Britain, its 560 pages being almost a taxonomy of French dishes. For instance, he presents fifteen ways of cooking 'turbot and brill', all of which have French descriptions including, 'à l'anglaise' (or 'plain boiled turbot'), 'à la Parisienne' and 'à la Provencale'.[143] For much of the nineteenth century, cookbooks would continue to carry dishes with French descriptions, although Francatelli represents perhaps the most extreme example. As late as 1926 Xavier Marcel Boulestin's *Simple French Cookery for English Homes* emphasized the superiority of French food.[144] Perhaps the best indication of the triumph of French cuisine comes from the fact that restaurants, reflecting the French origins of this way of eating out, published their menus in French.[145] This nomenclature has a clear class aspect to it. While Francatelli's *Modern Cook* may have carried one dish after another with French descriptions, his *Plain Cookery Book for the Working Classes* carries almost entirely English descriptions.

Cookbooks also contain dishes which have obvious origins beyond British shores, although there appears to be no way of measuring the popularity of such dishes. Together with these, we can also mention 'foreign' cookbooks,

which remain few and far between before 1945 and more especially before 1914.[146] The main genre unquestionably is 'curry', the 'foreign' dish most commonly found in all volumes of recipes.

Before the First World War some interest developed in German cookery, with two publications actually appearing on the subject. The first, from 1873, carried the title of *German National Cookery for English Kitchens* and operates, as the title suggests, on concepts of German national food. The volume, which did not identify an author, was aimed at people who had travelled to Germany and at 'the use of the vast numbers of Germans in England who have English cooks'. Over a thousand recipes followed with their German names, sometimes translated and sometimes not, because 'it would deprive them of their nationality'.[147] These included over thirty different types of sausage, with advice on how to make them.[148] The other book on German cookery published before 1914 actually had an English author, Ella Oswald, who developed 'the idea of bringing out a German cookery book in our language' while 'staying in the house of a hospitable German friend at Frinton-on Sea'.[149] It seems unlikely that many British people would have used these cookbooks unless, as the preface to the 1873 volume suggests, they had stayed in Germany or worked in German households. Although there were German restaurants in Britain before 1914, they were aimed specifically at migrants, which meant that the indigenous population did not develop the taste for German food or go on to cook it at home, as would happen with curry after 1945.

In this sense Italian cuisine resembles its German counterpart, even though a few Italian restaurants had emerged before 1945. Only a handful of these served the post-1945 conception of Italian food, especially pasta, focusing, instead, on European *haute cuisine*. Italian cookbooks certainly appeared prior to 1945, the earliest being *The Cook's Decameron*, containing 230 recipes, only five of which used pasta. The volume instructed readers how to cook meat, fish and soup and how to make sauces.[150] Antonia Isola's volume from 1912 covered a similar range of dishes, with slightly more emphasis on pasta.[151] Two further volumes appeared during the interwar years. Countess Morphy again produced a general volume on Italian food,[152] while Janet Ross simply concentrated on the cooking of vegetables, perhaps aiming at a vegetarian audience.[153] All of the volumes published before 1945 were undoubtedly aimed at the middle classes as even a superficial glance at them would indicate. Morphy, for instance, praised Italy because its people were 'the first to raise cookery to the rank of a fine art',[154] while Janet Ross began with a history lesson on Italian food.[155] Recipes for pasta also reached the columns of *The Times*. One of these followed a demonstration by Mr R. Piazzani in London in 1917 on how to make macaroni.[156] On 26 October 1938 the newspaper carried an article entitled 'Pasta: Recipes from Italy' followed by instructions on how to make five different dishes. Interestingly, the piece claimed that 'shops festooned with sausages and flasks of Chianti' could 'be found in any

Italian quarter' together with 'quite an interesting range of varieties of the familiar macaroni and spaghetti'. A London firm by the name of Criscuolo, Kay and Co. manufacturing pasta actually existed from the 1870s.[157]

Measuring the extent to which Britons ate food with origins in Italy proves very difficult. Pizza does not make an appearance in Britain before 1945. On the other hand, general cookbooks contain recipes for macaroni. Beeton, for instance, instructs her readers on how to make 'macaroni, as usually served with the cheese course', although this dish seems to have virtually no Italian influence, other than the use of Parmesan (or Cheshire as an alternative) cheese. The best we can say is that it represents a British way of cooking pasta. Certainly, Beeton does not make any references to foreign origins. It actually makes its appearance in a section dedicated to cheese dishes.[158] Similarly, Soyer's *Shilling Cookery Book for the People* provides one macaroni recipe of nine lines simply instructing readers to boil it and then sprinkle cheese on it.[159] *Warne's Everyday Cookery* from 1937 suggests four ways to cook macaroni. Two of these are macaroni cheese and boiled macaroni, which 'may be used as a garnish to soup, with fish or meat dishes, as a sweet course, or as a savoury dish, the latter being the most popular way of serving it'. The volume also provides recipes for macaroni soup and 'minced veal and macaroni', a bizarre concoction which went with a garnish of 'cooked turnip or fried bread'![160] While some people may have eaten macaroni at home in Britain before 1945, few ate anything resembling the concept of Italian food that became widespread after 1945.

Curry, on the other hand, would appear to have become popular in Britain before the arrival of South Asian migrants, indicating its introduction by Britons who had lived in the Raj. In essence, Indians who moved to Britain after 1945 popularized dishes that already existed in cookbooks and the recipe pages of catering magazines, while also subsequently constructing new meals.

Although curry may have little to do with the consumption patterns of the natives of India, it does ultimately have its origins there, as an imitation of what Britons perceived as the food of Indians. Like the eating patterns of all areas of the world, those of South Asia do not lend themselves to easy generalizations. As in the case of British food, that of India has, during its history, been subject to a range of foreign influences as a result of invasion and trade. At the same time, significant regional variations exist in an area which stretches from the fringes of the Middle East in its northernmost reaches to the equator further south, in which differing foreign influences, climate and environment have played major roles. Any discussion of Indian food must also stress the importance of the major religions of the country, especially Hinduism and Islam, as well as smaller religions such as Sikhism and Buddhism, each of which has its own distinct dietary restrictions. The consumption patterns of a Hindu in southernmost imperial Madras would differ significantly from those of a Muslim in northernmost Kashmir.[161]

When the British arrived in India from the seventeenth century, they fairly rapidly adopted – but adapted – the local eating habits, a process that would continue over several centuries. This involved not only the use of Indian spices to flavour meat, but also the consumption of similar vegetables, breads, dhals and rice.[162] As Lizzie Collingham has written, 'Anglo-Indian dining tables were not complete without bowls of curry which, eaten like a hot pickle or a spicy ragout, added bite to the rather bland flavours of boiled and roasted meats.'[163]

But Indians did not understand the concept of curry, as Europeans imposed it on India's food culture.[164] Collingham has asserted that 'Anglo-Indian cookery was the first truly pan-Indian cuisine'[165] because it made an attempt, with many inaccuracies, to divide up Indian food according to specific areas. A type of culinary mapping occurred which involved adapting dishes regarded by the British as specific to particular regions.

Recipes and cookbooks help to illustrate the construction of the Anglo-Indian menu. Henrietta Hervey, for instance, 'the wife of a retired Indian officer', recognized Madras curry, Bombay curry and Bengal curry.[166] Similarly, *The Nabob's Cookery Book* provided recipes for 'Malay currie', 'Madras currie' and 'Bengal currie'.[167] Daniel Santiagoe, who had served as a cook in British India, outlined regional differences:

> I have tasted the Curries made by Bengalees, etc., on board of steamers and on shore. They use proper Curry stuffs etc., but they flavour it too much; using plenty of ghee and fat mutton etc., – these spoil the taste. Just the same with Bombay Curries, but in Madras is the only place you could taste a proper Curry, and also in Ceylon as a good many cooks of Madras Presidency came to Ceylon several years ago and spread the art of general cooking in Ceylon.[168]

Some dishes eaten by the British in India and subsequently imported into the homeland seem to be achieved simply by adding curry power, chillies or other ingredients to familiar British recipes. Thus we have the example of 'cocoanut roly-poly', involving 'a cupful of desiccated cocoanut' added to 'half a cup of golden syrup or treacle' and 'a suet crust as for ordinary roly-poly'.[169] Meanwhile, Santiagoe provided a recipe for 'liver curry, with bacon'.[170] Such dishes not only symbolize an Anglo-Indian culinary marriage, but also an insensitivity to Indian dietary rules, indicated also by the common use of beef. Mrs Grace Johnson, for example, provided two recipes for 'calf's head soup' and one for 'beef-bone soup'.[171]

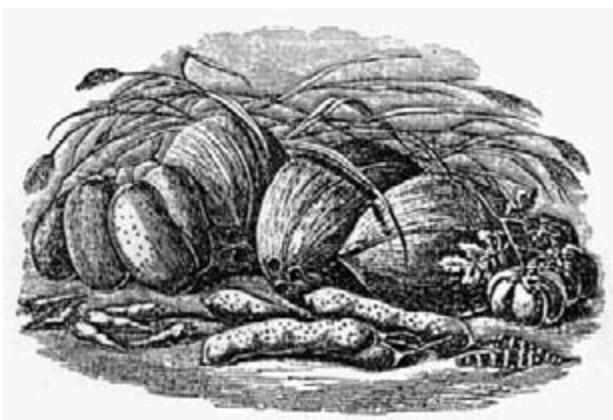
In other cases, British recipes adapted more traditional Indian ones. Kedgeree, for instance, built on 'the simple rice and lentil dish khichari, the ordinary food of the majority of the population'.[172] This found its way into the mainstream of British recipes. During the Second World War, for instance,

the Ministry of Information issued a recipe for 'curried kedgeree', which actually incorporated pearl barley, curry powder and cooked fish.[173]

Anglo-Indian cooking therefore offers an example of the construction of a cuisine involving the standardization and bastardization of a number of regional recipes. Those who consumed it were primarily the British in India, although from the late nineteenth century onwards curry became a popular cooking concept in the homeland. One of the best indications of this lies in the proliferation of books on Indian food from the mid-Victorian Period. Edmund White published one of the earliest volumes in London, which was essentially a marketing brochure for Selim's curry paste and powder.[174] Such products became increasingly popular from this period and indicate one of the main ways in which curry came to Britain. Over the next hundred years perhaps a dozen books on Indian food appeared in Britain. At the same time, catering journals also ran entire series on curry recipes, lasting many weeks or months.[175]

Just as importantly, recipes for curry made their way into virtually all general cookbooks published in Britain. Thus Eliza Acton has a chapter rather bizarrely entitled 'Curries, Potted Meats &c.' whose recipes include, even more bizarrely, 'curried macaroni' and 'curried sweetbreads',[176] indicating not just an Anglo-Indian marriage but even an Indo-European marriage. Similarly, A. Kenney-Herbert's *Common Sense Cookery for English Households* contains an entire chapter on 'curries'.[177] Most interesting is the fact that curry recipes reached books aimed at the working and lower middle classes. The 1895 *Dainty Dishes for Slender Incomes* included recipes for curried cod and 'kedgree'.[178] Similarly, Mrs C. S. Peel's First World War meatless dishes listed curried lentils and rice and curried haricots.[179]

How do we explain the apparent popularity of curry in Britain? David Burton has seen food as the most important influence and legacy of the Raj on Britain, contrasting with 'all other spheres of British life, where Indian influence has been minimal'.[180] This suggests the relative ease with which British



Curries from Eliza Acton, 1865.

food has absorbed foreign influences. Nupur Chaudhuri, following a similar line of argument to Burton has, however, examined the ways in which India influenced British women who lived there and has pointed to their importance in bringing both fashion and curry to Victorian Britain.[181]

But who actually ate curry in Britain before 1945? The proliferation of cookbooks and the ubiquity of curry recipes would suggest that significant sections of the population may have tried it. Another indication of its popularity is the availability of curry powders and curry pastes, in many ways the ultimate synthesis and anglicization of Indian food, and often advertised in curry cookbooks. Victorian and Edwardian firms and trademarks in addition to Selim's included 'British India' Curry Powder, R. Alexander of Edinburgh, and Halford's Curry Preparations.[182]

Actually measuring the extent of domestic curry consumption in Britain before 1945 proves impossible. On the one hand the proliferation of Indian cookbooks and the ubiquity of recipes might suggest that it had become widely accepted. However, the small number of Indian restaurants and the short lifespan of those that emerged suggests otherwise. The one group who definitely consumed curry was Britons who had returned from India and who wished to continue the consumption of the food which they and their cooks had created while there. Many of the Indian cookbooks were written and aimed at such people. This applies, for instance, to Santiagoe. Henrietta Hervey, wanted 'to supply a cookery book for "Old Indians" in England',[183] while *The Wife's Help to Indian Cookery* had 'the view of meeting the requirements not only of Residents in India but of English and Anglo-Indian Families at Home, who will find in it reminiscences of olden days'.[184]

British Food Before the Culinary Revolution

While Anglo-Indian cuisine had reached Britain before 1945, only the arrival of Indian immigrants, who helped commodify curry in an increasingly affluent society, popularized this dish for the masses. While it would provide one of the clearest examples of Britain's imperial legacy by the end of the twentieth century, before 1945 it had not reached the status of tea and sugar. These two products exemplify the problems of the concept of native food. So, by the First World War, does the increasing reliance of Britons on foreign imports. Similarly, migrant labour and entrepreneurship also played a role in Britain's food industries from the nineteenth century. A focus on middle-class consumption patterns also demonstrates the extent to which European influences had come to play a role, from the eating patterns imported from the Continent to the influence of foreign cuisines, above all French.

Yet despite the fact that foreign influences had profoundly affected the food patterns of Britons, regardless of social group, the majority of the population

by the end of the Second World War had reached something of a culinary stasis in which meat, potatoes and bread characterized most meals. Mass Observation reports point to the monotony of much English food, irrespective of class. Standardization is particularly apparent in the breakfast menu, where the majority of the population during the 1930s appears to have consumed fried breakfasts. Of course class played a role in variety, quantity and quality of food eaten, as well as the relative proportion of bread, meat, potatoes and vegetables.

Yet anyone who was unaware of the foreign influences on British eating habits before 1945 would draw the conclusion that British food had reached something of a standstill, awaiting a renaissance and a move to a future in which variety and more overt foreign influences would come to dominate. While foods such as curry and pasta had arrived in Britain well before 1945, they were either not widely eaten, as in the case of the former, or had become completely assimilated in the British diet, as most clearly exemplified by macaroni cheese. With the increasing wealth of the post-war period and the arrival of immigrants, Britain would undergo a culinary revolution.

Part III

The Culinary Revolution since 1945

Chapter Five

The Multiculturalization of Migrant Food

> With the free world screaming integration, the greatest threat to Jewish survival in an open society is disintegration through excessive integration and outmarriage.
>
> The observance of kashrut helps us maintain our identity, reminding us at every meal that we are 'a people apart', owing allegiance to our coreligionists.[1]

Migration and Ethnicity

Before 1945 immigration to Britain had already become a mass phenomenon with the arrival of at least two groups, numbering hundreds of thousands of people, in the form of the Irish and Jews. Other migrant communities into Britain remained small by comparison. While the Germans and Italians counted tens of thousands of people before 1914, the Chinese minority consisted of small groups based in London, Liverpool and Cardiff.

Whatever their size, all these groups continued practices begun in their homelands. This included the consumption of foods originally eaten in their places of origin, often involving the importation of unusual products in the British context which members of the ethnic majority would not consume and might view as exotic. While food played a central role in the consumption patterns of Jews, Germans, Italians and the Chinese, the same did not apply to the Irish for a variety of reasons, particularly the closeness of their diet to British norms. In terms of the development of food communities, size did not matter. The few thousand Chinese migrants who lived in Britain before 1945 appear to have developed a more distinct cuisine than the hundreds of thousands of Irish.

Migration certainly impacted on Britain before 1945 but it is essential to recognize the different scale of movement to Britain since that time. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Britain contains communities from all over the world. Many of these have brought their own languages, religions and foods. At the same time, we also need to recognize the perpetuation of ethnic communities, above all Jews, who arrived before 1945. As a result of a peak of fertility, the Jewish community reached its height, in terms of numbers, in the immediate post-war years. After this time it would decline in size, as would many of the signifiers of its vitality, including kosher food. In its place would come new food communities, most significantly an Asian one, based on a

nationwide market of about two million by the beginning of the twenty-first century. This united different religious groups in the form of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who, while distinguished by unique dietary patterns, shared enough similarities to allow South Asian entrepreneurs to create a distinct food market. Some of these entrepreneurs have become millionaires and subsequently sold their products to the ethnic majority.

The nature of immigration into post-war Britain differs from that which preceded it in at least three ways. First, the newcomers after 1945 have come from a more diverse range of origins. Not only did they migrate from beyond Europe, especially in the case of South Asians and African–Caribbeans (the best-known groups to arrive as a result of the imperial connection), they also came from a variety of European countries. The second difference in post-war migration lies in its scale: by the time of the 2001 census, 7.9 per cent of the population could be described as members of ethnic minorities.[2] This, however, only really refers to black and Asian people and would not, for instance, include the million Irish and their descendants,[3] or the 200,000 Germans[4] or the 600,000 Poles who have arrived since 2004.[5] Thirdly, migrants have settled in areas that had previously had little experience of migration. Although the Irish and Jews counted large numbers, they tended to settle in industrial locations, in the case of the latter, or inner city ghettos, in the case of newly arrived Eastern European Jews. After 1945 areas which had previously experienced little migration, such as the Midlands or London beyond the East End, witnessed significant influxes.[6]

Since 1945 numerous ethnic communities have therefore developed in Britain. While African–Caribbeans[7] and Asians may form the most visible and significant for most of the post-war period, the visibility of these two groups has helped to hide the numerous other ethnic communities in the country, some with origins in the period before 1945. These two large minorities have transformed vast areas of Britain, especially inner cities. South Asian migrants have brought with them their own religions, which they have introduced into the country for the first time. The residents of these ethnic enclaves look different, dress differently, speak foreign languages and have their own unique places of worship, together with their own food and clothes shops.[8] This does not simply apply to British Asian communities, but also to other groups such as, for much of the post-war period, Greek Cypriots, especially in parts of north London.[9]

But this image of the inner city enclave, while it still exists, remains a simplification of the complexity of ethnic minority lives in post-war Britain. Most members of ethnic minorities work outside the 'ghetto'.[10] Increasingly, migration has taken place out of the first areas of settlement, especially in the case of some Asian groups, as the example of Leicester Asians moving to the suburbs would indicate.[11] At the same time, some of the larger groups, including

the 200,000 Germans who lived in Britain at the end of the twentieth century, completely distinct from the pre-1914 community, did not follow the concentrated patterns of their ancestors or other more visible post-1945 groups.[12] The absence of ethnic institutions does not mean that European migrants have cut their contacts with their homeland, as Kathy Burrell has demonstrated in her study of the small European communities which have lived in post-war Leicester.[13]

Just as importantly, migrants and their offspring are not caught in a time warp. Like mainstream society, they experience change over time. On the one hand, we might argue that the increasing numbers of South Asian migrants who have moved into British cities have allowed the development of the symbolic pillars of their communities in the form of, for instance, places of worship or faith schools, aimed at the perpetuation of a distinct ethnicity.[14] On the other hand, everyday interaction between members of ethnic minorities and the majority population, as well as the difference between the land of origin and the land of settlement, means that significant change occurs among these ethnic communities and their members. The clearest indication of this is the decline in the size of the Jewish minority of the early post-war years to half of its size by the end of the twentieth century, due to a combination of demographic factors, including exogamy.[15] While the overwhelming majority of Britons marry members of their own ethnic group, intermarriage has increasingly become a feature of relationships among post-war migrant groups.[16]

Migrant Communities and their Food

Our concern lies with the food patterns of migrant communities in post-war Britain, especially the old established but declining Jewish minority and the expanding 'Asian' community (a constructed concept, which has seen a significant expansion from the handful of Indians who lived in Britain before 1945). The concept of an Asian community remains highly problematic, particularly from a dietary point of view, as food separates, as well as unites, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims from South Asia.

Jews and Asians would appear different from the other migrant groups existing in post-war Britain because of the link between religion and diet. But this remains a simplification. In post-imperial, multicultural Britain, members of all ethnic groups have, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, one of the highest disposable incomes in the world, opening up a vast choice in all aspects of life, including food.[17]

We must therefore outline the types of relationships between migrants and their food in post-war Britain, before concentrating in more detail on Jews and Asians. In the first place, we need to maintain Brillat-Savarin's link between

food and identity. Because of more extensive material available for the years since 1945, we can develop this link further and illustrate the ways in which it has different meanings within particular communities down to an individual basis. To take those groups who have a religious link to food, those who adhere to the strictest dietary patterns might be viewed as those who practise other aspects of their religious identity most closely, as the discussion on Jews and Asians below will illustrate.

Yet, following Brillat-Savarin's statement that you are what you eat to its logical conclusion, the extent to which individuals adhere to traditional dietary practices also acts as a signifier of their relationship and integration into British society. Dietary choice has remained a signifier in post-war life, not simply from the point of view of ethnicity but also 'lifestyle', as argued so eloquently by Peter Scholliers when describing his choice of vegetarianism as he grew up.

> In 1968, I was fifteen years old, I lived in Brussels and I was desperately seeking to affirm my personality. Medium-long hair, dark clothes, left-wing sympathies, and a lively interest in rock music seemed to provide possibilities to count me in with both nearby (hip school friends) and more distant groups (Amsterdam *provos*). The thing that definitely gave me a special status was my ardent rejection of red meat due to an intense aversion to its smell and flavour, as well as rebellion against my parents' attempt to make me eat it . . . I needed to justify myself again and again, not only to my close relatives but also to a large number of people in various situations (friends and their parents, trips, parties, school). My attitude was given the erroneous but (to me, at least) attractive name of vegetarianism.[18]

For most vegetarians in the West, abstinence from meat-eating represents an aspect of their world view and their relationship to what they see as mainstream society.[19] This applies to all ethnic groups, including members of South Asian minorities in Britain, with a religious ban on meat, who make family and individual choices about maintaining vegetarianism. We might draw a direct link between food preference and the extent of integration within British society for ethnic minorities.[20] Those least integrated continue to eat kosher, halal or just vegetables, wear 'traditional' clothes, practise their own religion, marry a partner from their own group and do not stray outside the 'ghetto'. At the other extreme we might find those who have completely abandoned their ethnicity, eating a diversity of foods, wearing what they want, entering relationships with whomever they choose and residing wherever they wish.

In reality most members of ethnic groups, whether first or subsequent generations, eat a variety of foods and most would not completely abandon all

aspects of their traditional dietary practices, even if it means, in the case of Jews and Muslims, simply avoiding pork. Food choice varies according to whether it is consumed in or outside the home, the time of day and the company with whom it is consumed, especially in terms of the ethnic composition and family relationship with this company. Immigration has profoundly changed the diet of the majority population in Britain, but years of living in a foreign land has influenced the types of food which migrant communities eat, so that a fusion, or exchange, takes place, most clearly indicated by the ways in which Jews and South Asians consumed food which had traditional elements combined with locally available ingredients.[21]

But not only those groups partly or primarily defined by religion continue to eat foods originally consumed in the homeland. Germans, Italians and Chinese all opened up their own food shops before 1945 and ate products associated with their land of origin in their new homes. The same variety of choices remains available to migrant groups before as after 1945.

The large size of many migrant communities in post-war Britain has allowed the development of localized economies where members of groups purchase foods associated with their homelands, continuing the patterns of the years before 1945. Yet, as we have seen with the Irish, this pattern did not apply to all groups. In fact, despite the movement of more than a million Irish to Britain after the Second World War, an Irish food community has still not developed in the same way it has for Jews and South Asians or much smaller groups. The main explanation would appear to remain the close similarity between Irish and British food patterns. This reflects the easier path of integration of the Irish in post-war Britain[22] compared, especially, with groups from beyond Europe. While the end of the twentieth century may have witnessed the apparent emergence of Irish food in Britain, this has more to do with branding than the longing of Irish migrants for the food of their homeland, especially when connected with Irish pubs, which took off during the 1990s.[23]

Similarly, despite the fact that over 200,000 Germans lived in Britain by the end of the twentieth century, members of this group, in contrast to its predecessors before 1914, did not develop a food community. Like the Irish, this is linked to the fact that Germans in post-war Britain have become increasingly acculturated and assimilated into British society, partly through intermarriage. Despite the large numbers of Germans in Britain, this group has not developed the kind of geographical concentrations that existed before 1914. Unlike their predecessors the new Germans are an overwhelmingly professional and middle-class group working among the majority population.[24] A concentrated population has simply not emerged to allow the development of German food shops, even though some of the churches that emerged before 1914 have survived. The German Food Centre in Knightsbridge, which must have served the London German community, has now closed down. Lothar

Kettenacker, a German academic in Britain from the 1970s, has offered an interesting explanation for the absence of German food retailers, suggesting that Germans do still consume products originally eaten in the homeland. After asserting that 'the importance of food should not be underestimated', he continues, '"English cuisine" has become much more palatable with the spread of Italian, Greek and Chinese restaurants. What used to be available in special delicatessens or at the German Food Centre in Knightsbridge can now be bought in most supermarkets, for example certain brands of German beer and bread.' However, speaking from personal experience, he writes, that 'the variety of freshly baked bread is still sadly missed among the German community'.[25]

Kettenacker makes an important point about the increasing diversity of products available in supermarkets, which attracts members of all ethnic groups, including those who have developed their own food communities, who shop in a variety of retail outlets. Italians, a European group with more notable concentrations than the Germans in areas such as Clerkenwell and Bedford, have opened their own shops. A 1964 article on Bedford, entitled 'Napoli, Bedfordshire', spoke of 'tiny greengrocers with names such as *La Bottega Italiani*, *Militia & Cimapa*, and *Ferretti's*' which 'practically spill great bags of pasta and jugs of Chianti on the pavement'.[26] This image should not mask the complexity of Italian identities in post-war Britain, manifested not simply in the availability of foods found in the homeland.[27] But it suggests enough differences exist between Britons and Italians, who do have some concentrations, to allow distinctive food shops to evolve.

This becomes just as obvious in the case of Greek Cypriots, a group which developed in the post-war period, concentrated in north London. Primarily migrants from rural backgrounds moving to Britain during the 1950s, Greek Cypriots distinguished themselves because of language and Greek orthodox religion.[28] In the initial concentration in Camden Town businesses 'began to flourish, as they were now serving a sizeable community. It was not only that people were able to buy familiar goods, they could buy them from shopkeepers who spoke their own language. It was no longer necessary to point to items, and then to hold out for a handful of change.'[29] In these shops, which spread out to other parts of north London, especially along Green Lanes, a distinct aroma signified the availability of products not available in mainstream stores such as halloumi, vine leaves and olive oil. At the same time, many families obtained food from Cyprus either through relatives who made the trip home or by having boxes sent over.[30] With the passage of time, Greek Cypriot grocery stores have disappeared, as members of the second generation have not wished to work the same hours as their parents running these shops. This applies particularly to more educated members of this community, who have increasingly moved into professional occupations. This has reflected the decline of the relatively small Greek Cypriot community, which never totalled more

than about 150,000 and which continues to shrink due to exogamy.[31] A move has therefore taken place away from the foods cooked by first-generation mothers, although this represents a simplification because families ate a combination of 'traditional' Cypriot and 'British' food.[32] On the other hand, virtually all the products previously purchased by Greek Cypriots from their countrymen are now sold by a newer migrant group, eating an almost identical cuisine and prepared to put in the long hours – Turks.[33]

Italians and Greek Cypriots had enough of a distance from mainstream British society and developed geographical concentrations to allow the opening of distinct food shops. This situation existed for the Chinese even before the First World War and would continue to do so after 1945. However, this has only happened in the few small 'Chinatowns' which have emerged in Britain, as such a large percentage of the Chinese in Britain moved to the country to open up their own scattered restaurants or work for already existing establishments up and down the country.[34] The destruction of the former heart of London's Chinese community in Limehouse by German bombers during the war and the opening up of a series of restaurants in Gerrard Street during the 1960s meant that Soho became the largest Chinatown in Britain. The Chinese who worked in these restaurants could relax among their compatriots and purchase foods familiar to them. Similar developments occurred in Liverpool.[35]

The German, Italian, Greek Cypriot and Chinese communities, while they may number hundreds of thousands, remain smaller than the most significant ethnic minorities in post-war Britain in the form of African–Caribbeans, Asians and Jews, each of whom have, at least at one stage, counted over half a

Cypriot shopkeeper in Haringey, North London, 1980s.

Chinese restaurant in contemporary Soho, 2006.

million people. While the second and third of these have developed nationwide food communities, the number of outlets providing food from the Caribbean homeland remains relatively small, even though such shops have existed. A list of Asian and African–Caribbean businesses in Leicester from 1990 includes just two food shops not owned by people with Asian names (and therefore presumably of Caribbean origin), together with a 'Caribbean Supermarket', owned by J. D. Patel, while Kishore Tailor owned Naklang Greengrocers, 'retailers of tropical fruits and Afro-Caribbean vegetables'.[36] In the case of Leicester, this partly reflects the fact that over ten times as many Asians as African–Caribbeans lived in the city by 1990.[37] But the relative size of these two groups on a national scale would not help to explain why the former has developed a nationwide food market, while the latter has shopped in pockets of stores of particular African–Caribbean concentration.[38] Other explanations include greater entrepreneurship amongst Asians than African–Caribbeans, a point which particularly applies to the first generation. In 1982 while a total of 18 per cent of Asian males in employment owned their own businesses, the figures for whites stood at 14 per cent, while West Indians counted just 7 per cent.[39] On the other hand we cannot argue that a lack of distance exists between food eaten in the Caribbean and that consumed in Britain, as the staples of West Indian food in the 1950s and 1960s, when most migration occurred, remained quite different from those of the British diet.[40] Perhaps the lack of a religious element to West Indian consumption patterns

also offers an explanation. But, returning to Brillat-Savarin, since the arrival of West Indians in the 1950s, the distance between this group and whites has perhaps narrowed more significantly than it has between Asians and whites, indicated by the much higher level of exogamy among people of African–Caribbean origin (especially among males)[41] meaning the desire for such food in the home lessens. Finally, we might argue that, linked with the relative lack of entrepreneurship amongst this group, West Indian food has not undergone branding as a result of the growth of niche restaurants in the same way as Asian, Italian or even Greek food, and so has had less opportunity to reach the mass British market.

While differences may exist in the extent to which the communities discussed continue to consume the food of their homeland, similarities also reveal themselves. In the first place all, to some extent, at least among their respective first generations, make efforts to eat the same food as previously. However, just as importantly, significant changes take place, involving the consumption of readily available foods and the incorporation of British and international elements into 'traditional' dishes. However, not only does it prove difficult to apply these generalizations to all groups, food choice operates on an individual basis, reflecting the extent of integration into wider society.

An examination of two of the largest food communities in post-war Britain – Jewish and Asian – allows a deeper insight into these patterns. The obvious similarities between the two groups include the religious underpinnings dictating food, their relatively large size and the high self-employ-

Caribbean takeaway in contemporary Leicester, 2007.

ment rates. On the other hand, post-war Anglo-Jewry represents a minority in decline, while Asians in Britain have increased in number.

The Rise and Fall of Kosher

As a result of the central role of diet in Jewish religious adherence, Anglo-Jewry had already established a series of organizations to authenticate and regulate kosher food by the early twentieth century. In the decades immediately after the Second World War these bodies would really come into their own, as Anglo-Jewry reached its peak size of perhaps 450,000 in the early 1950s, subsequently declining by about 50 per cent. The intervening years have witnessed a high incidence of exogamy, a net emigration rate, a move up the social scale and consequent decline in birth rates meaning a surplus of deaths over births and, consequently, a decline in synagogue attendance and adherence to Jewish rituals,[42] including those controlling diet. On the one hand we might argue that a 'radical assimilation' has taken place since the 1950s, more rapid perhaps than in the years before 1945 originally covered by Todd Endelman in his book on the subject[43] but, on the other hand, Jewishness has, for some, changed from a religious to a personal identity.[44] Generalizations prove difficult because of the complexity of Anglo-Jewry, reflected in attitudes towards food.

A superficial examination of the Jewish dietary authorities would not provide much indication of the decline of kosher, although a scratch slightly below the surface reveals the concern which these bodies had even in the immediate aftermath of the war. The main regulatory organization has remained the Kashrus Commission, which aimed at supervising 'the Kashrus of Caterers, Restaurants, Hotels, Boarding Houses, Bakers, Food Product Manufacturers, Public Institutions and to assist in the Kashrus of other suitable establishments'.[45] It continued to represent the majority of Jewish communities for much of the post-war period.[46] However, some divisions began to open up so that, for instance, the Sephardic community made a decision in 1969 to establish its own Beth Din, with connections to this sect in Israel.[47] More seriously, the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations ran its own organization for the purpose of overseeing adherence to dietary rituals in the form of the Kedassia, which did not always agree with the decisions and views of the Kashrus Commission. This group represented a small minority of Anglo-Jewry who adhered more closely to Jewish laws, although the majority of Orthodox Jews, affiliated to the United Synagogue, remained under the supervision of the Kashrus Commission in dietary terms. Nevertheless, by 1979 the Kedassia licensed seven kosher butchers out of a total of 73.[48]

While the Kashrus Commission may not have attempted to control 'Right-wing Orthodox' Jews in Britain, it did speak for the rest of the community,

especially 'Central Orthodox', the majority of those who have continued to practise their faith.[49] Throughout the post-war period it has attempted to ensure the survival of kosher practices in a number of ways. In the first place, it regularly issues publications about the laws of kosher, most significantly, by the twenty-first century, *The Really Jewish Food Guide*, a trendy name for a publication previously entitled the *Kashrut Directory and Religious Services Guide*. Apart from reiterating the laws of kashruth, this publication also lists shops licensed to sell kosher goods, as well as giving details about kosher products, extending beyond food to include e-numbers, medicines and cleaning products, some of which, after investigation, had been found 'to contain animal derivatives', and therefore labelled as 'Not Kosher'.[50]

A group called the Jewish Marriage Education Council, 'sanctioned by rabbinical authority', also offered guidance on how to keep a kosher home. It gave advice on acceptable foods, the dietary laws, dishes eaten during festivals – especially Passover, fasts, and how to equip the home with the correct utensils.[51] The publication of such leaflets suggests a concern for the decline of religious adherence, as well as an attempt to instruct newly wedded women on how they should perpetuate Jewish practices in their home, especially with regard to food.

In fact, throughout the post-war period, the rabbinical authorities have displayed increasing concern about the decline of religious adherence.[52] As early as 1949 Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie complained about 'the increasing number of banquets, receptions and other social occasions arranged by Jewish organizations without regard to the requirements of Kashrus', which he described as a 'reprehensible feature of our Jewish social life'. He instructed ministers to decline 'absolutely and unanimously to be present at social functions at which there is no guarantee that the laws of kashruth are being observed', a request also made eleven years later.[53] Brodie also appealed directly to Jewish parishioners. For instance, in an act resembling naming and shaming, at Passover 1956 he asked all rabbis to read out a statement asking parishioners to avoid 'a few butchers shops in some districts of London which have the outward appearance of . . . kosher shops' but do not have licences from the London Schechita Board and therefore sold 'quantities of *trefah* meat'.[54]

The Beth Din continued to play a role in ensuring that retailers and others adhered to the laws of kashruth. In 1974, for instance, it displayed concern about the fact that a branch of the baking firm Groszinski's sold frozen meat provided by a Kedassia-supervised firm, although this partly appears to be an issue of inter-Jewish strife.[55] There also appears a system of informers, which contacted the religious authorities about breaches of dietary laws. For instance, S. Cherkoff of Stamford Hill wrote to the Beth Din following a stay at the Majestic Hotel in Bournemouth. After eating Brussels sprouts he 'was surprised that they were not cut in half for examination before being cooked to

see whether or not there were any worms inside'. He believed that 'according to the Din they must not be boiled unless cut in half for examination'.[56]

One of the undeniable facts about the Jewish community in post-war Britain has been the move out of the East End ghetto, which had developed before the First World War and which had begun to dissolve as migration from the area began during the interwar years. The main reason for this lay in the social mobility of the descendants of the late nineteenth-century migrants who, by the 1960s, had living standards above those of the rest of the population in the areas of north-east and north-west London where they now concentrated.[57] This allowed the Jewish ethnic economy, including food shops, to move out of the East End to the new areas of residence, especially Golders Green. But the increasingly dispersed nature of Jewish settlement in the capital, as well as in the provinces, meant that the supply of kosher products became more challenging, a challenge which the religious authorities tried to meet, as seen with the rise of the Kosher School Meals Service, described by Rabbi Brodie in 1953 as 'a most essential religious and educational institution'.[58] This service, concentrating on those children who did not attend Jewish schools, appears to have had its origins in the early days of the Second World War as the Chief Rabbi's Kosher Canteen Committee.[59] In September 1945, an average of 235 children per day from fourteen schools ate kosher meals,[60] a figure which had increased to 535 by 1947. In 1953 the office of the Chief Rabbi, after negotiation with the London County Council, announced the opening of new central kitchens of the Kosher School Meals Service.[61] While local education authorities paid for the food, the Jewish authorities had to finance the kitchens, where cooking took place, costing about £8,500 per year. Consequently, in 1953 the Chief Rabbi made an appeal for £20,000 to enable the Kosher School Meals Service to 'run and extend its services to cover the needs of the great number of Jewish children for which it has not so far been able to make provision', otherwise they would have had to eat sandwiches rather than a hot meal for lunch.[62] By 1956 the Service cooked 2,500 meals per day, or 500,000 per year, by which time it sought new premises in north London to provide food for another 1,500 meals daily in Golders Green, Edgware, Finchley and Hendon.[63] The service continued into the 1960s,[64] but appears to have ceased in 1972 due to a decline in kashruth observance and a shift in government policy requiring parents to pay for meals at school.[65]

Just as the Kosher Schools Meals Service declined, and probably reflecting the ageing of the Jewish community, the Hospital Kosher Meals Service came into existence in 1968. By 1988 this facility provided approximately seventeen thousand dishes per month in 250 different hospitals in greater London.[66] Also during the 1960s, mirroring the social mobility of the Jewish community, as well as developments in transportation, and travel to Israel and the USA, the

Kashrus Commission ensured the availability of kosher meals to airline passengers with the help of El-Al Airlines.[67]

Thus two contradictory developments appear in post-war Jewish food consumption. In the first place, the rabbinical authorities made attempts to centralize and organize the provision of kosher meals to different sections of the population. While they seem successful in the early post-war decades, their efforts appear to have become increasingly difficult to sustain by the 1970s as the demographic rot set in.

Although the efforts of organized Anglo-Jewry may have increased in the post-war years, the same period also witnessed a continuation of other developments which had occurred before 1945. In the first place, while the underlying concepts of kosher remained unchanging, the meals eaten by Jews appear to have become increasingly anglicized or, perhaps more accurately in the post-war British setting, internationalized, following the consumption patterns of the population as a whole. East European ghetto food increasingly declined in importance. Jewish cookbooks provide one of the best indications of this change. For much of the post-war period the best-known Jewish food writer in Britain was Florence Greenberg, the cookery correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle*. In 1934 she published *The Jewish Chronicle Cookery Book* followed, in 1947, by *Florence Greenberg's Jewish Cookery Book*, which had reached its ninth edition and sold nearly 48,000 copies by 1988.[68] Although Greenberg devotes just one paragraph to Jewish dietary laws,[69] the recipe section adheres to them as there remains an absence of dishes involving pork or shellfish, for instance. Meat dishes mean beef, mutton, lamb, veal and sweetbreads. Fish dishes consist of fish with fins and scales. Meals of Eastern European origin remain, including 'liver balls', 'einlauf', 'kreplech' and 'stuffed necks'.[70] Other dishes would appear in any English cookbook of the second half of the twentieth century. This applies, for instance, to the sections on salads[71] and puddings, sweets and cakes.[72] 'International' recipes include 'fish Florentine' (above a recipe for 'gefillte fish') and 'spaghetti with Bolognese sauce'. At least three references exist to curry in this book including 'banana and spaghetti curry'. Just as bizarre and truly international are 'sausages and savoury noodles' and 'boiled tongue with sweet and sour sauce'.[73] After 276 pages of culinary experimentation and exchange, however, Greenberg's book concludes with a return to established Jewish dietary patterns, with sections on 'The Seder Table', 'Passover Cookery' and 'Traditional Jewish Dishes'. The volume provides an excellent insight into the evolution of Jewish dietary practices in England during the course of the twentieth century, indicating the influence of a variety of traditions.

A book by Anne Kaye and Hetty Rance follows a similar pattern to Greenberg with recipes varying from 'spaghetti carbonara' to 'beef satay'. The introduction to their volume declares: 'We do not want people to abandon their traditional cuisine but we do want to expand their horizons.'[74] Judy

Jackson, meanwhile, concentrates on 'typical' Jewish food, while recognizing that it 'is as varied as any international menu'.[75] Interestingly, by the end of the twentieth century Claudia Roden had replaced Florence Greenberg as the most popular Jewish cookery writer in Britain. Her *Book of Jewish Food*, partly a list of recipes and partly a historical narrative, is international, with Jewish dishes from all over the world.[76] While Roden recognizes the complex origins of Jewish food, her book appears at a time when food had become increasingly divided along ethnic lines by both retailers and publishers. Unlike Greenberg's book, Roden's appeals to an audience beyond the Anglo-Jewry, encompassing a wider British and US readership. Jewish home cooks in Britain, like the rest of society, probably have Roden's book next to volumes on Indian, Chinese or Italian cuisine.

Recipe books suggest an increasing multiculturalization of Jewish food patterns in Britain, reflecting wider society. Shopping also indicates a change in the dietary patterns of the Anglo-Jewry. Some firms providing kosher food on a national scale took off after 1945, most notably Rakusens and Blooms.[77] At the same time, kosher bakeries, delicatessens and butchers survive into the twenty-first century, both within London and, in much smaller numbers, outside. They total a handful of stores in the larger provincial cities, most notably Manchester, where the largest Jewish community outside the capital can be found. Similarly, kosher and Jewish stores and restaurants (i.e. not approved by the Kashrus Commission) have also survived in London, especially in Golders Green, which has developed as the main Jewish retailing and dining area, as well as in other parts of north London, including Stamford Hill.[78] These include Kaifeng, a Chinese restaurant under the supervision of the London Beth Din, located in Hendon.[79]

The post-war period also saw the emergence of Jewish hotels, leading the London Beth Din to develop a list of regulations for those wishing to describe themselves as such, several of which lay in Bournemouth in the early post-war decades.[80] But by the 1980s the *Jewish Chronicle* could report on the 'tragic' decrease in 'the demand for Jewish hotels in seaside resorts . . . in recent years' despite the fact that 'those which do exist still give marvellous value in a truly Jewish atmosphere'.[81]

The decline in the number of kosher retail outlets remains one of the facts of post-war Jewish consumption in Britain. By the 1980s the *Jewish Chronicle* regularly carried stories of food shops closing down.[82] The decline of kosher meat and poultry received particular attention from both the *Jewish Chronicle* and the religious authorities. On 24 January 1975 the former reported that 'less than 50 per cent of the Anglo-Jewish community are today buying kosher meat and poultry, as against 90 per cent before the war'. The number of kosher butchers declined from 198 in 1956 to 73 in 1979 and just 26 by 2005.[83] Apart from demographic factors and the fall in religious observance, the other major

Jewish butcher in London during the 1970s.

causes for this reduction include the more expensive price of kosher meat compared to non-kosher alternatives, because of the costs involved in producing it. This price difference caused much consternation amongst Jewish housewives, leading to coverage in the *Jewish Chronicle* and a series of enquiries launched by the rabbinical authorities.[84] The growth of supermarkets also played a role in the decline of Jewish bakers and butchers. Those who no longer practiced kosher would simply buy the same meat as the population as a whole. But some retail outlets increasingly sold kosher products in Jewish areas. Selfridges, for instance, has offered such foods for much of the post-war era, although these would probably cater for the wealthy Jewish housewife prepared to travel in from north London suburbs. A guide to *Jewish London* in the 1980s, in addition to listing six kosher grocers and delicatessens, also named over forty firms selling 'Jewish Style' products. These included 'supermarkets, grocers and delicatessens' which stocked 'a number of kosher packet or canned foods, wine or Jewish delicatessen items such as gefillte fish, latkes etc.' These outlets included the Safeway, Tesco and Sainsbury's supermarket chains which had branches selling kosher goods throughout London.[85]

Despite the decline of kosher observance, many Jews in post-war Britain have observed the laws of kashruth, as revealed in letters written to the *Jewish Chronicle* on 19 March 1977. Judith Niman, for instance, wrote that 'Jewish food earns top marks for delectability', while several women spoke of the pride in overcoming the difficulties in maintaining a kosher household. Most boldly, Mrs F. Witrol made the link between kosher food and identity. These three women probably came from Orthodox backgrounds.

Elaine Hallgarten, a cookery writer born in Hendon in 1934 to middle-class parents, had memories of a variety of foods which she consumed during her childhood when she lived not just in London, but also Canada and the USA. She claimed that the food her mother cooked 'wasn't particularly Jewish I don't think, though on occasions like Passover which we did, and still do, keep, even though we have no religious input, we still have a Passover meal because it's a wonderful family meal, for the family to come together'. Hallgarten ate Eastern European-style Jewish food (as her parents came from Poland) such as kreplach, chicken soup and lokshen. As her family 'didn't have a kosher house' they did not need to 'worry about going to a kosher butcher'. Nevertheless, as an adult who married a German Jew, and with children and grandchildren, she cooked

Jewish grocer, Mile End Road, 1957.

the meals which her mother produced, especially during festivals. But like her mother she also produced all sorts of increasingly international dishes. Her own publications did not focus on Jewish food. Hallgarten represents one type of Jewish life in twentieth-century Britain, in which Jewishness provides a link with the past as she increasingly moves into mainstream British society. She cooks the Jewish food of her mother, together with the increasing diversity of meals available to post-war Britons, rather than adhering to kosher rules.[86]

Renie Chapman's life has similarities to that of Hallgarten, as well as differences. The most obvious of the latter include the fact that she was born in Düsseldorf and eventually reached Britain in 1945 via Latvia, Baghdad and Palestine, living first in Wales and then Leicester. In Germany she 'had mostly German food, but we didn't eat pork' while in Latvia, with her grandparents, she moved to a kosher diet. In the Middle East she ate a variety of European, Jewish and Arabic dishes. When she moved to the Gower peninsula to live with her Welsh husband and his parents in 1945 Jewish food disappeared as they faced the challenges of rationing. After moving to Leicester in 1948, her food became increasingly international.[87]

Renie Chapman, Elaine Hallgarten and the women who wrote to the *Jewish Chronicle* indicate the variety and complexity of Jewish food patterns in post-war Britain. A survey carried out by David Graham in 2003 confirmed the link between food and religious adherence. 'As one might expect, the less religious the outlook the greater the likelihood that non-kosher meat would be eaten outside the home.' While 8 per cent of those describing themselves as 'secular'

Feast of the Jewish Tabernacles, London, 1970s.

Jews kept kosher outside the home and 22 per cent at home the figures rose to 84 and 89 per cent respectively for those who saw themselves as 'religious'.[88]

The Rise of 'Asian' Food

While kosher food in post-war Britain unquestionably underwent a decline, the extent to which individuals continued to adhere to kosher rituals had a correlation to religious practice. The history of Asian food in Britain since the 1940s may also reflect the link with religious adherence, but it represents a story of success, in terms of its spread, rather than decline. The obvious explanation for this lies in the increase of the South Asian population of Britain, so that the few thousand Indians and Pakistanis who lived in the country at the end of the Second World War had increased to a community of at least two million who saw themselves as such in 2001.[89]

Before moving further, however, it is necessary to recognize the problems which arise with the very concept of Asian food in Britain and, indeed, the very idea of 'Asians'. This term evolved in the 1970s as a catch-all to unify the different ethnic and religious groups who migrated to Britain after the Second World War. We might view the term as a post-colonial construct, but it has become increasingly widely used by the second and subsequent generations. The differences between Asians are almost as great as the similarities. Several key factors distinguish Asians in Britain. In the first place, areas of origin, which basically divide into four: India, but especially the Punjab and Gujarat; Pakistan, especially Mirpur; Bangladesh, particularly Sylhet; and Sri Lanka. To make the picture more complicated, Asians also migrated to Britain from East Africa, having moved there during the Raj. While those who came from South Asia arrived first, from the 1950s, followed by East Africans during the 1960s and '70s, women and children tended to follow husbands and fathers so that significant migration from South Asia continued well into the 1970s.

As well as having differences in terms of geographical origins, religion plays a central role in distinguishing Asians in Britain. The main groups are: Hindus, mainly originating from Gujarat, either directly or via East Africa; Muslims, from Bangladesh, Pakistan and north India; Sikhs, originally from the Punjab, some of whom had spent time in East Africa; and Buddhists, especially Sri Lankans, although this group also includes Hindus and Christians. Finally, we also need to add social differentiations between and within Asian groups. In the first place, we should not ignore caste, especially in the case of Hindus and, to a lesser extent, Sikhs, an aspect of the social organization of these communities which does not disappear upon arrival in Britain – although, over the passage of time and the development of the second and third generations, these differences play a less significant role. At the same time, however, we must recognize the position of South Asians within the social

structure of Britain, largely determined by their social status in their country of origin. Thus, by the end of the twentieth century, while indicators of wealth and occupation suggested that Indians did better than the population as a whole, they also suggested that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tended to do worse.[90]

Religious diversity plays a large role in determining food choice in the lives of people in South Asia. In the first place, Muslims have similar dietary restrictions to Jews, with religious authorities controlling the slaughter of animals. Hinduism, meanwhile, essentially dictates vegetarianism, while Sikhs also traditionally follow a vegetarian path. But even these categorizations represent simplifications. Area of origin plays a role so that Bangladeshi Muslims eat different foods to Pakistanis. Similarly, Gujaratis consume a distinct regional cuisine characterized by deep frying. In the case of Hindus, caste also plays a role in consumption patterns.

But similarities also exist between the different South Asian groups who have settled in Britain, particularly those who originated in the north of the Raj. In the first place, a variety of distinct spices play a greater role, particularly chillies. North Indians and Pakistanis also use similar tomato and onion based sauces, as well as eating flat bread as their daily staple.[91]

Our concern lies with the consumption patterns of South Asians in Britain. More specifically, we need to ask three questions: have South Asians managed to continue with their precise eating patterns? Or has the British environment transformed the diets of the homeland in the same way in which Jews increasingly adapted British foods into their daily meals from the nineteenth century? Finally, what do eating patterns tell us about South Asian identities?

The extent to which South Asians could continue consuming the foods they ate in their homeland partly follows the evolution of the different communities in Britain, from a few thousand people in the 1950s to the development of inner city concentrations in many locations by the end of the twentieth century. While the early settlers of the 1950s had to make do with what they could find, two decades later Asian British inner cities sold anything that migrants desired, provided by shopkeepers of the same ethnicity and sourced or manufactured by increasingly large British Asian companies.

A handful of Indian grocery stores emerged in Britain in the immediate post-war years. 'The first Indian grocery business started in 1928–9 in London' while the 'first Gujarati grocer started business in Birmingham in 1949', rising to six in that city by 1961 selling 'everything which is found in a Gujarati grocery shop in India' including spices, cereals, pulses, rice and wheat flour. Selling involved 'a weekly round to distribute goods to various clients'.[92] In Leicester, meanwhile, the number of grocers remained small until the end of the 1960s, totalling about nine in 1969.[93]

The earliest migrants, therefore, had problems continuing the dietary practices of their homeland. Some obtained the types of products they desired from English-owned shops. 'We could get mixed vegetables in tins or we could eat beans,' recalled one early Punjabi settler in Leicester.[94] Another who moved to the city as early as 1948 remembered that he could initially only 'get a few things like lentils, curry powder, chilli powder', although an English grocer subsequently provided home deliveries.[95] Some pioneer migrants had problems obtaining dairy products, including butter, particularly those who arrived under rationing, meaning that some gained an extra amount on the black market.[96] The continuance of vegetarianism proved problematic, which meant that many migrants simply started eating meat, at least in the short term, until the development of Asian food shops.[97] Muslims faced particular problems because of the absence of halal butchers. This resulted in a number of solutions: in the first place they could turn to kosher butchers as 'the Jews' halal meat was OK and we could eat that';[98] secondly, they could purchase live chickens and then 'make them halal at home'[99] by slaughtering them 'whilst reciting our religious prayers';[100] thirdly, some migrants simply ate vegetables rather than consume meat provided by English butchers.[101]

These represented short-term solutions between the 1940s and the 1960s. From the 1970s, when both the collective Asian community began to grow, as well as the different regional and religious sub-groups, such compromises increasingly became unnecessary. Asian shops stocking Asian goods, provided or sourced by companies founded by Anglo-Asians, increasingly became the norm.

Leicester provides a good example of the spread of Indian food shops, especially after the arrival of a predominantly Gujarati community originating in Uganda in the 1970s. By the beginning of the twenty-first century the city was also home to a significant number of Sikhs and Muslims. Collectively these groups make up around 40 per cent of Leicester's population.[102] While many of the migrants began working in manual employment concentrated in the inner city, rife with racism during the 1960s and 1970s,[103] many had undergone significant social mobility thirty years later. An important reason for this upward movement lies in the business opportunities available in a city with an Asian population of over a hundred thousand, which clearly provides a significant market. A study of Leicester in the late 1970s, after the large influx from Uganda, drew a clear link between this growth and an increase in the number and percentage of businesses owned by immigrants, including food shops.[104]

Theorists of Asian business success have also focused on other factors that have contributed to this success. These include: racism, which prevents Asians from succeeding in the labour market when competing with members of the ethnic majority, leading them to self-employment; the role of religion, which provides rooting and drive; and the fact that some Asian migrants, especially those from East Africa, had previous experience of running businesses.[105]

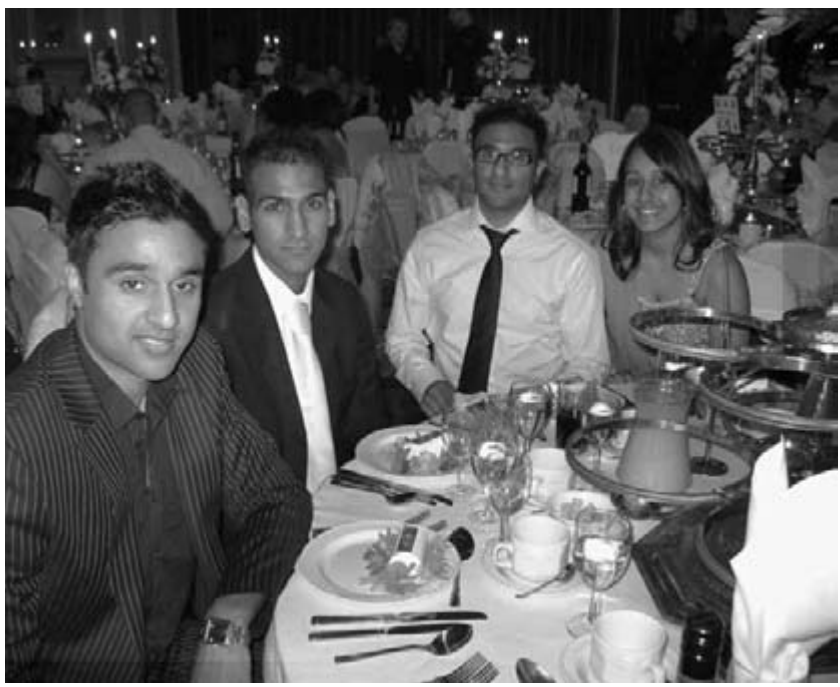
Asian grocer in contemporary Leicester, 2007.

Nevertheless, we need to see success as relative, ranging from the small profits of a local grocer to the massive turnover of some of the largest Indian food chains in Britain. By the early twenty-first century some indicators suggested a decline in Asian self-employment due to a series of factors including the reluctance of the second generation to continue the hard work of their parents and the opening of smaller outlets by supermarket chains.[106]

But the number of grocers with Asian names in Leicester increased dramatically from the 1970s. While some of these have overwhelmingly sold recognizably South Asian products, many have also stocked at least a selection of goods found in supermarkets. By 1990 Leicester contained 78 food shops (including butchers) owned by Asians. Some of the products sold in these retail outlets were manufactured in Leicester by companies which produced ready-made foods, such as Punkah Wallah Traditional Curries. By the end of the 1970s Asian sweet shops had begun to open in Leicester, some of them re-creations of establishments which had previously existed in East Africa. By the 1980s, when a national Halal Food Authority had come into existence, halal butchers had opened, reaching 32 in Leicester by 1994. A larger percentage would have been concentrated in cities with more substantial Muslim communities, especially in Birmingham and the north and north-west of England.[107]

Leicester provides a microcosm of the spread of Asian food shops serving local populations. A series of companies catering for a national market would

emerge. These transcended some of the religious differences when manufacturing products such as spices and rice. In some instances the foods reached beyond the original South Asian market to stock the shelves of supermarkets. The leading Asian food firms in Britain include Noon Products, NATCO, Pataks, Geetas and, for rice, Tilda, established by Rashmi Thakvar, a refugee who moved from Uganda in 1972. By 1990 Tilda commanded over 50 per cent of the market. L. G. Pathak (the 'h' was dropped when the company was formed), meanwhile, started making samosas in his own kitchen in 1956, then bought his first shop in Drummond Street. The company subsequently moved to Lancashire where it has become a multimillion-pound business providing a whole variety of products, including pickles and curry pastes, aimed at all ethnic groups. Other Asian immigrants moved into niche markets aimed primarily at people of South Asian origin. These include Ibrahim Kanamia, who migrated to Britain from Gujarat in 1972 and established Kwality Ices, which produces kulfi. Raj and Shobnha Radia, meanwhile, founded Raj Foods in Park Royal in London, which has made ready meals since the 1980s as well as products such as Bombay Mix.[108] Bestways, NATCO and T. R. Sutewalla have mostly engaged in the importation of goods from India and Pakistan. Sutewalla, for example, established in 1957, brought in 'rices, pulses, cereals, spices, herbs, pickles, edible oils and poppadoms'.[109]



Guests awaiting dinner at an Indian wedding in 2007.

Just as with the Jewish community of the middle of the twentieth century, Asian children have had the opportunity to continue eating foods according to dietary restrictions at school. At the end of 1975 a group called the Indian National Club lobbied the Department of Education and Science to provide vegetarian meals in those schools in Leicester where Asian children formed the majority.[110] But a report on 'Asian Girls in a Midlands Industrial City' from 1980 highlighted the continuing absence of Asian food in some areas so that one of the children interviewed could declare, 'We had an English dinner yesterday – it was sickening.' The two Muslim and two Sikh girls interviewed preferred to have vegetarian meals rather than eating the meat dishes on offer.[111] In contrast, Jane Noble, the headmistress of Cumberland School in Poplar, which had a diverse ethnic mix, including 'a substantial number of Muslim children', pointed out that her school provided a range of dishes including 'a full vegetarian range' while 'the vast majority of all our meat is halal and we make sure they know that when they want a burger it's a chicken burger which is halal chicken' with the right 'certificates'. This sometimes causes hostility from 'white kids' who complain, 'Why should we eat Paki foods?' In this particular London borough – Tower Hamlets, which has a large Bangladeshi community – local councillors play a significant role in influencing the contents of school dinners.[112]

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Asians in Britain, especially those who live in neighbourhoods with members of their own group, have solved most of the food supply problems initially experienced by the pioneer migrants of the immediate post-war decades. However, the domestic consumption patterns of Asians in Britain, like those of Jews, show no uniformity, but instead, reflect levels of assimilation and acculturation. While the most ardent believers may continue to maintain more traditional diets, the experience of living in Britain for decades – or of spending an entire lifetime in the country for those of the second and subsequent generations – means that the majority of Asians consume foods in which the British environment has had an influence.

Religious festivals would appear to offer an occasion when Asians in Britain can best consume traditional foods. In Leicester the Hindu Diwali, which has become part of the civic calendar in the city, offers an opportunity to demonstrate the culinary skills practised in the 'homeland' which, in this case, would often be East Africa.[113] In addition, many Hindus in the city regularly fast, sometimes on particular days of the week, but also on 'special feast days'.[114] Ramadan represents perhaps the most widely adhered-to religious festival among the Asian community in Britain, when Muslims fast for a month between sunrise and sunset. At the end of this period, Eid, those who have carried out the fast can consume special foods including dates, halwa, lamb samosas and carrot and rice pudding.[115] But this simplifies the situation. While some Muslims might not eat during daylight hours in the month of

South Asian burgers, 2006.

Ramadan, what they consume during darkness includes dishes found in any British household. For instance, at a time when the morning meal becomes important for the entire day's sustenance, a 'full Muslim' breakfast consists of sausage and bacon made from animals slaughtered according to halal ritual.[116]

This development reflects the range of foods eaten by Asians from different communities on a daily basis. Continuing with the consumption of products previously eaten in the homeland clearly represents a personal choice which those migrants who arrived after the initial pioneers of the 1950s and 1960s could make. A study carried out among Bangladeshis in East London during the 1990s concluded that their diet 'is currently very similar to the traditional diet since many foods are imported to the UK from Bangladesh and other Asian and Far Eastern countries'. These included a wide selection of fish.[117] Similarly, some Gujaratis in Leicester have continued to eat traditional foods. Joshi Chamiaben, for instance, claimed to 'always cook Indian food for the family every night'. On closer probing, however, her children ate chips, eggs and beans, while breakfast consisted of 'bread, toast bread and cereals, cornflakes, that type'.[118] An official survey of Leicester from the 1980s suggested a move away from traditional dietary practices in the land of origin among Hindus. The research indicated that while the electoral district of Latimer in the north of the city had an Asian percentage of 63.5 per cent, its vegetarian rate stood at 30.4 per cent, meaning that only about half of the Asians in that area

Indian Kitchen in Southall, 2007.

were vegetarians, despite the fact that Hindus made up the overwhelming majority.[119] It is likely that the impact of living in Leicester during the last 25 years has further eroded Hindu dietary practices.

Decades of residing in Britain have clearly changed dietary practices among all Asian communities so that the connection with traditional foods becomes increasingly tenuous, even during religious feasts. Cookbooks written by Asians, especially those born in Britain, confirm this. A volume produced by Vicky Bhogal, who describes herself as a 'British Asian', aims primarily at other 'British Asians', but also at English readers. Bhogal, a Sikh Punjabi influenced by her family and her own community, asserts that:

> As this book is specifically about the food we British Asians have grown up eating – and not food from the Indian subcontinent – I found it impossible not to include the variants on English foods our parents invented to make use of the ingredients readily available at the local supermarket.[120]

The numerous dishes in her book reflect this assertion and include 'finger-licking potato wedges', 'maharajah's mash', 'baked beans with spring onion sabji' and 'masala burgers'. Manju Malhi, who has become the most famous Indian television cook, has taken a similar approach to Boghal in her book entitled *Brit Spice*. Her introduction, perhaps influenced by a Penguin copy-editor, declares:

> Brit-Indi cooking is my way of using British and Indian ingredients in fresh adventurous, trendy, vibrant, quick and easy dishes – the best of British and the essence of Indian. It's about adding a bit of spice to your life, and is a celebration of two distinct cuisines whose flavours and textures

unite in harmony. I've included many of my favourite dishes, such as spicy Cheese on Toast, Ten-Minute Chicken Curry, Fried Mackerel, Coconut and Mustard Chutney, Bread and Butter Pudding With Papaya and Saffron and, of course, Baked Beans Balti.[121]

The similarities of Bhogal and Malhi to Florence Greenberg and her nineteenth-century Jewish predecessors are striking.

Migrant Food Choices

Any discussion of migrant influence on the food of the British also needs to take into account the fact that the majority population and the ingredients available, especially to the initial pioneers of particular communities, profoundly impact on immigrant diet. For the first generation, obtaining the right ingredients remains a significant problem which, in itself, means that those individuals who have religious constraints on their diet usually have to make compromises.

Decades, or even centuries, of the presence of a particular group can lead to a wide range of organizations which attempt to ensure the continued practice of diet according to the restrictions of religion. The history of the Jewish community in Britain provides a good illustration of such developments. By the middle of the twentieth century, fifty years after the most significant movement of Eastern European Jewry which had created the modern community, Anglo-Jewry reached its peak. Despite the efforts invested by the Jewish establishment in ensuring its survival, the second half of the twentieth century would witness a dramatic fall in the number of practising Jews in Britain, clearly indicated by the decline of kosher butchers and bakers. Yet this does not tell the whole picture, as many Jews simply started shopping, like the rest of the population, in supermarkets, where they could purchase kosher products. At the same time, most Jews kept at least a residual Jewish identity through their diet by refusing to eat the most blatantly non-kosher products such as pork. Despite this, by the end of the twentieth century, the descendants of the nineteenth-century immigrants, with the exception of the most Orthodox, ate significantly different meals to their forebears, incorporating foods in wider British society.

Post-war migrants also have a complex picture of eating patters. Certainly, like their Jewish predecessors, communities with religious links to their diet, above all Muslims, have made efforts to guarantee the availability of acceptable food products. Yet, as with the Jewish community, post-war migrants eat a complex range of foods and adapt dishes eaten by the majority to their own tastes, as foods such as 'baked beans with spring onion sabji' would suggest. Most fascinating of all is the concept of the 'full Muslim' breakfast, perhaps an

ironic dish invented by a *Guardian* journalist, but providing a good symbol of the complexity of food identities in Britain. If we return to Brillat-Savarin again, perhaps the 'full Muslim' provides a perfect indication of British Muslim identity: a full English breakfast, without pork, eaten during Ramadan. This offers an excellent example of multicultural Britain.

Chapter Six

The Victory of the Foreign Restaurant

> Lots of people from eastern Europe and elsewhere come here and work in restaurants without having the level of English or the skills they should have.

Restaurants: Native, Foreign and Ethnic

The above statement by the 'celebrity chef', Antony Worrall Thompson[1] points to the continued existence of xenophobia in the catering trade, reminiscent of the hostility faced by German waiters before and during the First World War.[2] But, just as importantly, it provides a clear example of the ignorance of the role that migrants have played in the evolution of the dining patterns of Britons outside their homes over more than a century. Polish and other Eastern European waiters simply represent the latest stream of people in the catering trade. Before 1945 Continental newcomers not only introduced the very concept of the restaurant to Britain, they also provided much of the staffing. In addition, London witnessed the arrival of the first establishments selling distinctly foreign foods.

While the years to 1945 saw the birth of the foreign restaurant, the years since that time have seen its victory. A full illustration of this assertion needs to address the whole idea of 'eating out', as identified by Marc Jacobs and Peter Scholliers as encompassing cooked food purchased and usually eaten outside the home.[3] One of the most important recent studies of 'eating out' in Britain, by Alan Warde and Lydia Martens, which focuses on the last two decades of the twentieth century, takes a consumption-based approach. The authors link greater variety and a growth of dining outside the home with increasing disposable income, although they recognize wealth- and class-based variations. While they do not concentrate on the introduction of foreign tastes, they recognize their arrival.[4]

But the practice of eating out in the post-war period continues trends that emerged before 1945. John Burnett recognizes the fact that the decades since the war have witnessed an increase in the number of meals eaten out per week and the percentage of income on food spent on dishes outside the home.[5] At the same time, the number of people employed in catering has also increased, leading to the assertion in one study from 1988 that 'almost ten per cent of

British workers are currently employed' in this sector,[6] reaching 2.38 million people by 1990,[7] a significant increase from the 691,000 employed in catering in 1966 – 2.91 per cent of the working population.[8]

While more meals *may* be taken outside the home in 2006 than 1945, the picture is more complex than might at first appear because the nature of meals eaten outside the home has also changed. In the first place, a decline has taken place in institutional catering establishments, whether in the form of British Restaurants, which would survive into the first post-war decade as Civic Restaurants, or factory and school canteens.[9] Such developments meant that, in the late 1970s and 1980s, the 'average number of meal occasions per week of food purchases outside the home has been declining at the rate of about 1½% per year'. At the same time, one of the biggest expansions took place in what have come to be described as 'takeaways' which, by 1984, 'accounted for 27% of all meal occasions compared with 14% in 1975'.[10] We need to recognize, however, that the concept of takeaways has origins in the foods sold in Mayhew's London, continued especially through the development of the fish and chip trade. Warde and Martens have written about the development of eating out as a leisure activity at the end of the twentieth century, particularly in a chapter entitled 'Eating Out as a Source of Gratification'.[11] This can be seen as a trickle down of the emergence of the middle-class restaurant of the late nineteenth century to impact on a broader section of society, especially as disposable income significantly increased at the end of the twentieth century. Burnett has linked eating out as a sociable activity for an increasing percentage of the population with the decline in the size of families and an increase in the number of people living alone or just with their partner. In 1999 31 per cent of households consisted 'of only one person, and another 34 per cent of two'.[12]

The general increase in eating out has clearly meant a growth, or perhaps a change, in the nature of catering establishments. A Board of Trade inquiry estimated that Britons spent £480 million on dining outside their homes in 1964. This was divided in the following way: holidays and hotel camps, 12.9 per cent; public houses, 9.1 per cent; restaurants, cafés and snack bars, 45 per cent; fish and chip shops, 12.5 per cent; catering contractors, 4.6 per cent; canteens, 13.1 per cent; other catering establishments, 2.8 per cent. This survey had broader terms of reference than a MINTEL survey from 1997, by which time Britons spent £13.6 billion on eating out but, nevertheless, indicates the changes which took place in the intervening thirty years. The percentages by this time broke down in the following way: burgers, 8.5 per cent; pizza and pasta, 6.2 per cent; fish and chips, 5.5 per cent; fried chicken, 3.8 per cent; ethnic takeaway, 3.9 per cent; other fast food, 1.3 per cent; pub catering, 37.5 per cent; restaurant meals, 19.2 per cent; in-store, 6.8 per cent; ethnic eat-in, 4.5 per cent; roadside, 3.0 per cent. While we cannot directly compare the results, the most significant developments include the emergence of burgers and fried

Thai Restaurant in Crouch End, London, 2007.

chicken outlets, roadside meals, as well as what MINTEL describes as 'Ethnic Foods', a category encompassing any sort of products with origins outside western Europe including, above all, Chinese and Indian, but also kebabs, Thai and Japanese. The figures also point to passing fads such as snack bars.[13]

Clearly, in the eyes of market research organizations, which predominantly aim at providing information for business, the concept of 'ethnic' foods had emerged by the end of the twentieth century. This phrase essentially represents a marketing term with clear boundaries. In fact, the highly problematic term 'ethnic', which has become a politically correct phrase to signify foreign (essentially from beyond Europe, with similar usage in non-culinary terms) even found its way into the language of John Burnett. Referring to the 1960s, he could speak of 'traditional English and French' as distinguished from 'ethnic' foods, by which he presumably meant, in view of the period covered, Chinese and Indian.[14] While 'ethnic' restaurants may have taken off in the post-war period, adding the two MINTEL categories of 'ethnic takeaway' (3.9 per cent) and 'ethnic eat-in' (4.5 per cent) suggests that 8.4 per cent of restaurants have overtly foreign influences. Although this may represent a significant percentage of catering outlets, we need to move beyond the marketing-speak to come to a full appreciation of the influences of immigration and globalization on the British way of eating out in recent decades.

Migrants already had a profound influence on catering in Britain by 1945, opening up restaurants for their own communities, providing staffing for 'Continental' establishments and beginning to open up eating places that even MINTEL would accept as 'ethnic'. Similar trends occur after 1945, intensifying from the 1960s. While the changes appear dramatic, the developments of the

years before 1945 provide the preconditions for apparent revolution after 1945 and, more especially, from the 1960s and 1970s. To use an analogy from the British industrial revolution, the years before 1945 in the British catering industry amount to a period of proto-multiculturalization, with the revolution occurring in the latter decades of the twentieth century.[15]

In order to justify the idea of dramatic change, we need to move beyond the narrow confines of the popular idea of the ethnic restaurant to take a similar approach to that of the years before 1945. Once again, the concept of the foreign restaurant lends itself to three different interpretations. In the first place, migrants have continued to play a large role in the staffing of apparently British establishments, from fish and chip shops and Wimpy bars to the Ritz and Savoy. Secondly, a broadening of the concept of ethnic restaurants to the use of the term 'foreign' perhaps best demonstrates the influence of migrants and outside influences upon catering in post-war Britain. Such an approach not only allows a move away from the narrow confines of the 'ethnic' Chinese and Indian restaurant and takeaway to encompass Italian, Greek and other cuisines. It also allows a consideration of one of the other major changes in the restaurant business in the form of the arrival of US multinational chains, above all burger bars, pizza and pasta and fried chicken which, as the MINTEL statistics suggest, make up almost a fifth of catering establishments in Britain. But migrants even play a significant role in these sectors as MINTEL terminology covers both McDonald's and individually owned takeaways specializing in hamburgers, often owned by Turks. Nevertheless, this still leaves (continuing with MINTEL) 'restaurant meals' and, more significantly, pub catering, which accounted for 37.5 per cent of spending. While the former would include establishments with foreign staff, as well as 'European' establishments, the employees of the latter are largely British people. Nevertheless, even here changes have occurred. In the first place, continuing with pubs, the very concept of food within them remains an imported one, while an examination of all meals served in apparently British establishments would have to recognize significant changes in menus since 1945, either as result of migrant or of wider influences.

In terms of chronology, the most significant changes occurred from the 1960s, when Chinese, Italian and Indian restaurants and takeaways began to proliferate in high streets throughout Britain. US multinationals followed from the 1970s. Foreign staffing essentially continued pre-war patterns whereas changes in menus involved more mainstream restaurants aping the food served in establishments opened by migrants and US firms.

Significantly, while those institutions which overtly marketed themselves as foreign remained confined to central London before 1950, Italian, Chinese and Indian restaurants spread not only to the whole of the capital, but to the entire country by the 1980s. In fact, as early as 1964 over half of Britons had visited 'foreign' restaurants, a broad definition that included Chinese, Indian,

Italian, French and German. Responses to the National Catering Inquiry, from where these figures originate, suggest that a higher percentage of the population had visited such establishments in Liverpool, Birmingham and Cardiff than in London.[16] The spread to the provinces of eating out indicates the increasing popularity of this activity as a result of demographic and economic factors recognized by Warde and Martens and Burnett.

Foreigners and British Food

The importance of migrants in the catering trade beyond the narrowly recognized confines of 'ethnic' food has continued from the end of the nineteenth century to the present. Indications of such developments include the employment of foreign staff at overtly British or Continental establishments of all categories and sizes – from the Ritz to local restaurants in London or the provinces. Just as importantly, newcomers have also opened numerous catering establishments serving foods familiar to Britons. These have included sandwich bars, fish and chip shops, steak houses and Continental restaurants.

Despite Worrall Thompson's outburst against Polish staff in Britain, he recognized the historical importance of employees with Continental origins but asked, as the Loyal British Waiters Society had done a century previously,[17] 'Why can't the British discover the profession of waiting?'[18] The answer probably lies in the generally transitory nature of this occupation for most of the Britons employed within it, who do not see it as a career path, but rather as a way to make money before embarking on more long-term employment. Broadening the picture to the whole catering industry, chefs and proprietors have to work long and unsociable hours which traditionally puts off native Britons. At the same time, low pay also means that those at the bottom of the British labour and class structure – immigrants – have had more need to enter catering.[19] During the 1950s, the height of labour migration from the West Indies to Britain, when some companies sent out representatives to specific islands,[20] the British Hotels and Restaurants Association 'made arrangements with the Government of Barbados to import hotel workers from that country', although the number of people who moved seems minimal.[21] In the era before Britain enjoyed the benefits of EU membership, allowing free movement of labour from one member state to another, those employers wishing to utilize European workers were required to apply for labour permits, although the Caterers' Association and the British Hotels and Restaurants Association facilitated this process.[22]

Worrall Thompson also lamented the fact that 'we have seen a revolution in the kitchens and you can barely find a French head chef in London'.[23] The revolution has, in the past few decades, partly resulted from the entry into such occupations of new streams of immigrants, particularly since the recent expansion of

EU membership, and the increasing popularity among members of the ethnic majority of the idea of working as a chef, perhaps inspired by such 'working-class heroes' as Gordon Ramsay and Jamie Oliver. Whereas during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the leading chefs in Britain had Continental names, for instance Soyer, Francatelli and Escoffier, by 2000 Ramsay, Rhodes, Oliver and Martin had established high profiles. Lower down the scale, while British Restaurants and their successors, Civic Restaurants, certainly employed native labour, staff from the Continent continued to play a role in many of the leading London establishments until well into the second half of the twentieth century. One of the clearest indications of this picture lies in the fact that the Ritz appointed its first chef from the British Isles, Michael Quinn, as late as the 1980s.[24]

This suggests that staff with origins on the Continent continued to play an important role in many of the better-known London hotels and restaurants in the early post-war decades. In 1946 the Association Culinaire Francaise had four hundred members and its staff bureau was aimed at 'hotels and restaurants who require a chef, cook or assistant'.[25] Many of those employed in senior positions had worked on the London scene for decades and came to retirement in the first post-war decades. For instance, A. Avignon, who had served as chef de cuisine at the Ritz from 1928, ceased working in 1955, replaced by another Frenchman, Edouard Peray, who had previously worked in several British establishments including the Midland Hotel in Belfast and Brown's in London.[26] Similarly, in 1957 Jack Pedersen, a Dane who had moved to London in 1912 and had worked in several leading British hotels and restaurants, beginning in the kitchens of the Carlton Hotel under Escoffier, retired as general manager of Scott's Restaurant in Piccadilly.[27] As late as 1975 Eugene Kaufeler, who had moved from Switzerland to the Dorchester in 1936, was head chef at the hotel, a position he had held since 1950.[28]

In many ways such distinguished individuals represented a hangover from the pre-war years. They found employment in leading British restaurants which made no play of the foreign or 'ethnic' origins of their food, but which had menus written in French until well into the second half of the twentieth century.[29] They had followed well-established migratory employment patterns which had emerged in the late nineteenth century and which linked many of the leading European hotels and restaurants.[30]

Some of these individuals had opened their own houses, most famously César Ritz. But the first post-war decades also witnessed the arrival of a new entrepreneurial group of migrants from the Continent who would set the pattern for many of the developments among ethnic minorities in the independent restaurant sector from the 1960s. While some Italians and Greek Cypriots opened establishments serving a version of their native cuisine to Britons, others simply perpetuated existing catering patterns or played a role in pioneering new ones.

Italians had owned catering establishments from the end of the nineteenth century, few of which overtly espoused their national origins.[31] Some had faced internment and would return to run their businesses again after a spell on the Isle of Man.[32] The early post-war years witnessed the first real emergence of the concept of the Italian restaurant in Britain. But while some migrants chose to peddle products originating in their homelands, others entered new or existing niches that did not do this, as seen especially in the rise of the coffee bar and the sandwich bar, building on the milk bars that had emerged in the interwar years. About two thousand coffee bars existed by 1960, including two hundred in the West End. Their number would subsequently decline because they provided small profit margins, which meant that some owners turned to cafés and trattorias. The invention of the espresso machine in 1946 had helped the initial emergence of the coffee bar.[33] A new bar which opened in Leicester in 1960, owned by Louis Brucciani, 'became known throughout the city' for its 'American type of black coffee, served with fresh cream' and 'made in the latest type of Minimax coffee machine'.[34] Many Italians opened sandwich bars, especially in central London, where they would provide lunch for office workers. For instance, J. Cacchioli bought a shop in Hanover Square for £5,000, spent a further £7,000 to convert it and opened it as the Queen's Soup and Sandwich Bar in July 1960. 'From seven in the morning until seven at night customers can choose from the six soups and 150 types of sandwiches served there.'[35]

Cypriots, who remained a fairly small group in Britain, played a role in catering in early post-war Britain. Following the passage of the British Nationality Act of 1948, citizens of the Empire essentially had the right to reside in the country. This facilitated the free entry of people from all over the world,[36] including tens of thousands from Cyprus, entering a wide variety of occupations, with a high representation among the self employed. By 1966 a total of 19.6 per cent of Cypriots in London worked for themselves at a time when the national figure for the whole of the population stood at 7.1 per cent.[37] While some of the newcomers would eventually open up recognizably Greek restaurants, especially from the 1970s, until that time they followed three distinct paths. First, aping the patterns of many other Continental migrants from the end of the nineteenth century, they worked in and opened up restaurants aimed at a predominantly middle-class clientele. Second, they came to play a significant role in the fish and chip trade, together with members of other ethnic minorities, continuing the patterns established by Jews during the interwar years. And, third, Turkish Cypriots in particular, especially in London, found themselves taking over Wimpy bar franchises.

Greek Cypriots who moved into the restaurant business often did so shortly after arriving in Britain, suggesting a high propensity for risk-taking, but also reflecting a desire for self-sufficiency rooted in the fact that land and home ownership among the predominantly agrarian population had become

the norm from as early as the sixteenth century.[38] Three and a half years after arriving in Britain, 23-year-old Andreas Paraskos purchased the Ritz Café in Leeds, then bought the Montevideo restaurant in the same city where he also opened a coffee bar.[39] Similarly, 'while working hard as a waiter in a London hotel and as a head waiter in a south coast restaurant, Mr M. E. Papadoboullos, a Cyprus-born Greek, planned his ideal restaurant', which he opened as the Silver Grill in Commercial Road, Southampton, serving 'English and Continental dishes of many kinds'.[40] In Nottingham Greek Cypriots owned at least four restaurants by the end of the 1950s.[41]

In Leicester, home to just a few hundred Greek Cypriots throughout the post-war period,[42] members of this community played a significant role in the development of the restaurant trade in the early post-war years. This is not immediately obvious from looking at the 1963 *Kelly's Directory* of Leicester because of the fact that, at this stage, the 'ethnic' food craze remained in its infancy. The absence of a significant Greek Cypriot community meant that Greek food would never take off in this provincial city. However, Cypriot-owned restaurants in 1963 included the Continental, the Flamingo, the Gourmet and the Steak House.[43] In addition, Greek Cypriots also opened a casino in 1958 with a restaurant for forty people and also jointly owned the Riviera Club which could cater for eighty.[44]

A 'Traditional English Café' opened by the Polish migrants Mr and Mrs Horbacz in Welford Road, Leicester, during the 1940s. The items for sale include hot dogs and sandwiches, roast pork, roast beef, apple tart, 'bread + butter pud' and 'jelly + cream'. Since the 1950s the renamed Leicester Grill has been owned by a Greek Cypriot.

Andreas and Maria Constantinou, the owners of the Steak House in Leicester, present a good case study of Greek Cypriot business entrepreneurship. Significantly, Andreas, born in 1919, already had experience working in catering in Cyprus, as he had found employment in his brother's hotel and had also owned his own grocery shop. He moved with his wife to Northampton in 1949, where her brother already owned a café. They purchased one from another Cypriot in the same year. Not only did they have a link to the place where they moved, but they also brought money with them as a result of selling their grocery shop. They subsequently moved to 'the pure English city' of Leicester in 1954 and purchased an already existing establishment 'from the English people'. They employed Cypriot waitresses but served steak dishes until 1994.[45]

As well as owning restaurants, Greek Cypriots also played a significant role in the evolution of the fish and chip and trade after 1945. Over time, these outlets have diversified as 'foreign food', especially kebabs, entered them and as the concept of the takeaway developed. *Kelly's Directories* of London provide an indication of the role of Greek Cypriots and other migrant communities in the fish and chip shop trade. In 1954 we can identify sixteen Greek names among the fried fish shops listed, together with 23 Italian ones out of a total of around eight hundred. At this stage Jews also continued to play a role. Nevertheless, because not all owners name their shops after themselves and do not always give them a name suggesting their places of origin, these figures are the lowest possible estimate of migrant influence.[46] By 1975, when the number of London fried fish shops remained similar, at least 150 recognizably Greek Cypriot-owned businesses existed in the capital although, again, this does not reflect the true picture. If we add to this those names of Turkish Cypriot, Chinese, Italian and other foreign origins, then it seems clear that migrants had come to play a major role in the fried fish trade by this time,[47] a process which would continue as increasing diversification occurred in subsequent decades.[48]

A few examples help to illustrate the attraction and role of migrants in the fish and chip trade in the country as a whole from the 1950s. While the overall number of such establishments may have fallen from a peak of 35,000 in 1927 to 8,600 at the start of the twenty-first century,[49] many of them have diversified to sell burgers and kebabs and have fallen into the catch-all description of takeaways.[50] The Elefheriou family, which owns Grimsby Fisheries in Leicester, offers a good example of migrant lives in catering. The father, Costas, moved to England in 1950, originally working in the West Midlands for Hovis and then in a Lyons restaurant in Granby Street, Birmingham. He subsequently moved to work for a Cypriot contact in Kingston upon Thames as a waiter in a 'snack bar' that made its own pastry, jam rolls and apple pies. He then moved to Coventry and bought a 'working man's restaurant', subsequently sold 'to a Yugoslavian', which made 'chops, lamb chops, pork chops, mixed grills'. He bought his first fish and chip shop in Leicester from 'an Englishman' in 1966, at

a time when Cypriots were moving to this business in large numbers, and then bought Grimsby Fisheries. The son of Costas, Lefteris, who partly owns the shop, explains the different work ethics between the former English owner of Grimsby Fisheries and his own family:

> The owner used to close to have a break between 6 and 7, you know . . . put the closed sign to have his break for an hour . . .
>
> He never used to open on Monday, he used to do Saturday. He used to close after lunch time . . . He was making enough you see.

In contrast, Lefteris's parents had worked under 'hard conditions in Cyprus, like my father used to work on the land'. Although running a fish and chip shop in England 'was hard, it was much easier than the job they were doing there'.[51]

As with many of the migrant movements into catering, ethnic employment clustering clearly operated by which individuals followed their countrymen already working in a particular sector. This certainly occurred with the opening up of foreign food restaurants marketed as such but also, to offer another example of migrants selling overtly 'British food', in the evolution of Wimpy bars. This chain offers an example of the complexity of the multicultural and international nature of eating out in Britain after 1945. To begin with, the Wimpy chain formed part of the Lyons Group which, while it may have become recognized as a British company, had nineteenth-century Continental Jewish origins, at least in terms of the people who founded it.[52] Add to this the concept of the hamburger, of essentially US origin – although by the 1970s the British outlets had developed their own distinct menu. This included a grooved sausage which could curl around a grilled tomato.[53] The American Eddie Gold had developed the idea of the Wimpy hamburger. He sold the rights to his product to Lyons during the 1950s. By 1961 the company had opened two hundred outlets in the UK, a figure that had increased to 461 by 1969.[54] Wimpy operated in an interesting way with franchisees owning the restaurants. 'The franchise operates very simply. The franchisee owns his Bar. He is self-employed and all the profits go to him . . . But he also has the massive support of Wimpy International behind him' including training schemes and local advertising support.[55] This arrangement attracted entrepreneurial migrants into the ownership of Wimpy bars. A list of thirteen opened in late 1970 and early 1971 includes five owners with Turkish names (one of whom owned two), almost certainly Cypriots, while a variety of other individuals and organizations opened the others, including 'The London Eating Houses' and, at St Pancras Station, 'British Transport Hotels' which would have employed its own staff. Of the eleven opened outside London, three owners were Cypriots, including 'Y. & G. Mustafa' in Barking, T. Kasparis and and S. K. Sparsis in Brighton and G. Nicolaou and V. Vasilliou in Stockport.[56]

Wimpy: An American, Jewish, Cypriot, British meal, 1970s poster.

While the concept of the foreign restaurant may have one particular meaning in popular discourse, whereby members of distinct ethnic minorities sell their products to the population as a whole, this is clearly a simplification. Migrants had played a central role in the development of all variety of eating-out establishments since the end of the nineteenth century, a process that continued after 1945. Once again, they remained important in the provision of that apparently most British of products – fish and chips.

Ethnic clustering occurred in the development of coffee bars, sandwich bars, Wimpy restaurants and fish and chip shops. This becomes even clearer when we examine the universally recognized 'ethnic' establishments, above all Indian restaurants but also those eateries selling distinctively Italian and Greek food, for instance. A different pattern exists in the case of Chinese restaurants, repeated in other parts of the world, whereby migration from Hong Kong to Britain has close connections with the growth of the restaurant trade.

The increase in the number of 'ethnic' restaurants serving their own distinct cuisine has a variety of explanations. The business-based approach, which sees it as an opportunity for financial success and social mobility may offer a starting point, but this provides a one-dimensional argument. Many Chinese, Indian and other restaurants and takeaways either fail or make limited profits because of the competition that exists in this sector both from restaurants selling the same product and those selling different types of ethnic food, as well as multinational takeaway chains. While 125 Indian restaurants may have opened in 1997, 'at least 300' closed.[57] At the same time, while this sector may count numerous owners, these entrepreneurs employ thousands of people from their own ethnic group, most of whom never go on to own their own business.[58] Nevertheless, this does not change the perception of many migrants that business opportunities exist as many have succeeded.

Alan Warde and Lydia Martens take a more market-based approach to explain the development of eateries selling distinct foods. They write that competition in the expanding restaurant sector led to increasing specialization 'as businesses try to secure a share of the market'.[59] An acceptance of this argument needs to go back to the 1960s when Chinese restaurants began to take off and even the 1950s, when the first overtly Italian outlets appeared.

Business- and market-based explanations carry more weight than some of the other more culturally based arguments put forward for the spread of 'ethnic' restaurants. For instance, while the growth in foreign holidays from the 1970s may, in theory, have opened the eyes of British people to the existence of unfamiliar foods, this idea needs careful analysis. In the first place, the main destinations for British holidaymakers, Spain and Greece, do not correspond with the most popular national cuisines in the country. Spanish food hardly exists in Britain. On the other hand, in 1997 only 222,000 people visited India, with even fewer taking a vacation in China.[60] Even when Britons do travel abroad, especially those who venture into British holiday hotspots on Spanish or Greek coasts, many stick to foods familiar from home, so that the fried breakfast has become ubiquitous in Mediterranean resorts. This is perhaps best symbolized in the play (and subsequent film) *Shirley Valentine* by Willy Russell, a romantic account of Greek island life as

seen through the eyes of Liverpudlians, where the lead character, working in a 'taverna', asserts:

> Even the Dougies and Jeanettes, we get a pair of them every week, y'know. They come in, order a drink, and look all dead nervous at the menu. I always say to them, 'Would you like me to do y' chips and an egg'. And they're made up then.[61]

The idea that eating in a restaurant run by members of ethnic minorities provides an indication of the multiculturalization of Britain also proves problematic. Pierre L. van den Berghe has put this argument forward most eloquently, romantically and naively (in view of the fact that he makes no attempt to deconstruct the concept of 'ethnic'), writing that

> ethnic cuisine represents ethnicity at its best, because at its most shareable. It does not take much effort to learn to like foods, even exotic ones. Ethnic cuisine is the easiest and most pleasant way to cross ethnic boundaries. As eating together is perhaps the most basic expression of human sociability, ethnic cuisine could well be the ultimate reconciliation between a diversity we cherish and a common humanity we must recognize if we are to live amicably together.[62]

However, as Scholliers has pointed out, the company with whom one eats matters,[63] so that a group of ethnically British friends who eat in a curry house and do not have friends from other communities hardly cross boundaries. As Anneke van Otterloo has asked, 'When autochthonous and allochthonous peoples enjoy each others' cuisine, do they come closer together or do the distance and inequalities remain just as they were?'[64] One could argue that class and ethnic boundaries remain as migrants work in a service industry primarily for the benefit of the ethnic majority. It proves very difficult to view the provision of food offered by ethnic minorities in restaurants as anything other than a product, as a business transaction, which means that migrants construct meals which would appeal to the wider population, rather than serving the foods which they eat at home. Even before 1945 the few Chinese and Indian restaurants in existence in Britain sold constructed meals, explained by Kenneth Lo, in the former case, as the difference between Chinese food in the West and Chinese food in China.[65] Curry represents the ultimate constructed product and, as Vicky Bhogal has written: 'The food eaten in the vast majority of Indian restaurants bears very little resemblance to the food British Asians eat in their homes.'[66]

While restaurants selling nationally based cuisines began to appear in London by the inter-war years, two significant changes have occurred since 1945. First, the number of such establishments has dramatically increased.

Second, they have moved out of their central London heartland to the suburbs and the provinces. The most obvious and important explanation for the latter development lies in the spread of immigration out of the East and West End of London to the whole of the country. Vast areas of south and west London, together with large parts of the Midlands and the north, had experienced little immigration before 1945.[67] Those migrant groups who did count significant numbers and who had some geographical dispersal, the Irish and Jews, did not enter the ethnic restaurant market on a significant scale.

But some Jewish restaurants survived into the post-war period and even into the twenty-first century. Interestingly, reflecting the extent to which food has become multiculturalized for all sections of British society, the seventeen London kosher restaurants authorized by the Kashrus Commission in 2005 included Isola Bella Café, La Fiesta, Tasti Pizza and Kaifeng.[68] In addition to these, Jewish-style restaurants have also emerged.[69] As in the pre-war period, these establishments appeal almost exclusively to a Jewish clientele.

Thus they differ from the vast majority of other types of restaurants opened by ethnic minorities, which have squarely aimed at customers from the wider population, rather than from their own ethnic group. The diversity of national cuisines also offers a difference from the pre-war years. While we should recognize the artificiality of such a process, we can again point to the 24 different national and ethnic cuisines listed by the 2004 *Time Out Guide to Eating and Drinking*. Similarly, *Harden's London Restaurants* from 1998 lists over forty different types of food according to ethnicity, region or nationality including, apart from the obvious culprits such as Chinese, Greek, Indian and Italian, others as diverse as British, French, Burmese, Argentinian, Japanese, Afghani and Sudanese.[70] While migrants from the countries concerned probably establish these restaurants, they indicate an increasing market specialization.

An attempt to construct a timescale for the arrival of 'ethnic' restaurants would point to the following pattern. In the decade immediately after the end of the war Italian restaurants first appeared. Chinese quickly followed, with an explosion during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Although '300 Pakistani restaurants'[71] may have existed by 1960, the real expansion in Bangladeshi establishments took place during the 1970s and 1980s. Further diversification occurred from the 1980s and into the 1990s and beyond.

While a revolution may have occurred in the proliferation of restaurants serving foods with origins from all over the world, it built upon establishments already in existence before 1945 and in the very immediate post-war years. Central London, and Soho in particular, continued as the focus of many of these. By the second half of the 1940s, the concept of eateries selling distinct ethnic, regional or national cuisines had established itself. They thrived despite the 'pinch of austerity' as rationing continued, which meant difficulties obtaining products such as 'macaroni, olive oil, salamé, cheese, wines, cunning

'Indian' restaurant in Bradford during the 1980s.

spices, caviare'.[72] A guide to Soho claimed that it was not 'easy to say that one restaurant is French, another Italian and a third exclusively Greek'. The writer continued:

> Nowadays, one takes pot-luck in most places. I know a place in Dean Street where the French chef downed carvers on Monday to be succeeded by a Cypriot on Tuesday. An Italian took over on the Thursday, became temperamental at lunch the next day, and the week finished with the patron himself in the kitchen.[73]

Despite this assertion, which probably points to some sort of reality about foreign London restaurants, others certainly marketed themselves along particular national lines. A guide to *Dining Round London* from 1947 divided restaurants in the capital, essentially in the centre, into various categories, including, along ethnic and national lines, 'Cuisine Française', Hungarian, Greek, 'Chop Suey', 'Slavonic', Spanish and 'Scandinavian'. The four Greek restaurants mentioned, the Crete, Elyse, White Tower and Akropolis 'are owned and mainly run by Greek Cypriots'. Most of the Chinese restaurants lay in or around Soho. Slavonic included Polish, probably following the migration of Poles that had occurred during and immediately after the war.[74] The 'over 400 restaurants and cafés' in Soho included 'French, Italian, Greek, Cypriot, Jewish, Russian, Danish, Chinese' and Spanish.[75] Such places sold food with a resemblance to the products eaten in the places from which they claimed to originate. For example, Goya, owned 'by a sad-eyed little Cypriot with generations

of catering experience behind him, takes great pains over native dishes like *mousakka* and *shish kebab*'.[76]

Although foreign restaurants were largely focused on central London in the second half of the 1940s, it would appear that some establishments had opened in the provinces by the end of that decade. A 'Chinese Restaurant' existed in the Evington area of Leicester from as early as 1947, together with an 'Anglo Chinese Café', as well as what clearly appear to be Italian establishments called Lombardelli (an 'espresso bar') and Massarella. These Leicester houses differ from those with exotic names in the same city such as the Egyptian Café and the Mikado, neither of which sold particularly exotic products.[77]

Further expansion of restaurants marketing a distinct ethnic cuisine occurred outside central London, as well as within it, during the course of the 1950s. The first edition of the *Good Food Guide*[78] from 1951, which lists only a selection of restaurants existing across the country, provided an indication of the spread beyond the London heartland. The only one outside the capital to be mentioned was the Nanking Restaurant in Brighton.[79] The 1954 edition of the *Good Food Guide* listed, beyond central London, in addition to the Nanking: Little Vienna in Broadstairs, with 'Viennese' dishes; the French Chez Maurice in Eastbourne, run by Maurice Ithurbure, 'a pupil of the great Escoffier', and Au Bon Plaisir, run by an Englishwoman who 'has lived long in France'; and Genoni's Swiss restaurant in Plymouth, together with the Octagon in the same town, owned by English people but serving Greek dishes. Liverpool boasted a Chinese restaurant called The Far East, together with Restaurant Meurice, while a Bombay Restaurant existed in Manchester together with establishments serving Greek and Italian food. In Edinburgh 'The Greek Restaurant' offered dolmades and souvlakia. The Parthenon Restaurant had also opened in Golders Green.[80] Further expansion had occurred by the end of the decade.[81]

Greek Cypriots and Italians appear in some of the earliest foreign restaurants of the immediate post-war years: while some members of these groups sold products that did not market themselves according to nationality, others provided foods sold precisely in this way. Terri Colpi has argued that the coffee bars 'were the first attempt to sell "Italianness" . . . to the population at large' and asserts that they began 'to offer simple Italian dishes which soon became very popular including spaghetti bolognese, ravioli, pizza and minestrone'. These, however, differed from the trattorias, with Italian names, which 'became extremely popular with the newly affluent classes for whom a meal' at the established central London Italian eateries 'was financially out of the question'.[82] The Ristorante Ferrovia in Walham Green Arcade, Fulham Broadway, offers an example of these new Italian restaurants, opened in 1962 by a firm called Dino's, which owned another five establishments. The 'Italian specialities' here included pizza napoletana, tagliatelle bolognese and lasagne verdi al forno.[83]

Fulham counted other similar eateries including 'Il Porcellino of Florence . . . which is run by three gentlemen who immediately inspire confidence with names like Mario, Franco and Luciano'.[84]

Like their Italian counterparts, Greek Cypriots increasingly established restaurants that served an interpretation of Greek food, a generic concept covering dishes served in both Greece and Cyprus. It bore a limited resemblance to the predominantly vegetarian pulse dishes which many of the migrants would have eaten in their villages of origin.[85] The menu usually included various types of kebab (the central feature) together with roast lamb (kleftikon) and chicken, fish, dolmades, mousaka, halloumi, Greek salad, dips and pitta bread. Floya Anthias has analysed the move of Greek Cypriots into self-employment pointing to its origins in the fact that most migrants owned land and homes in Cyprus, which gave them 'a strongly developed ideology of property possession as both a right and a goal'. Those who moved to England did so for purely economic reasons, meaning a readiness to work long hours and to take risks.[86] She gives the example of Stavros, who moved to Kentish Town in 1948 at the age of sixteen, worked in a restaurant as a waiter, married a Cypriot, opened up a café in north London and subsequently owned three restaurants.[87]

The life story of Stavros resembles that of Andreas and Maritza Constantinou and Costas Elefheriou. While Anthias does not tell us the type of restaurants that Stavros established, there is a good possibility that they would have sold Greek food because, while eateries peddling this concept took off in London, they did not do so in the provinces. The majority of Greek Cypriots who moved into catering either opened up restaurants which did not serve particularly 'ethnic' products, as the example of the Constantinous illustrates, or they moved into the fish and chip trade. We can offer a series of reasons for these developments. On the one hand, we might speculate about more adventurous tastes in London than the provinces, but this falls down when we consider the spread of Chinese and Indian food. While Anthias speaks about Greek Cypriots taking risks, these remained calculated, meaning that few would stick their necks out too far by attempting to sell Greek food in the provinces. Instead, they preferred to follow the path of their countrymen who owned fish and chip shops. One of the reasons for the development of Greek restaurants in London does not simply lie in the fact that the capital has such a great variety of eateries, due largely to the concentration of population, but also to the fact that diverse populations help to sustain a new cuisine. A significant percentage of the custom of Greek restaurants comes from the Greek Cypriot community, overwhelmingly concentrated in the capital, whereas small numbers live outside.[88] This also has implications for the supply of Greek food beyond London because the absence of a Cypriot community outside the capital means that local food markets, in contrast to the situation for South Asians, have not developed in the provinces, giving rise to firms which supply them

and restaurants. Chinese food, meanwhile, represents a global product, a status which Greek food has not achieved.

A few Greek restaurants have, however, developed outside London. Leicester, for instance, has counted at least one, but never more than two, since the 1960s. During the 1970s these were the Acropolis and the Cyprus Cottage, 'two family restaurants, probably not connected, offering Greek-Cypriot cooking where it is most needed: hummus, taramosalata, dolmades, kleftiko, pork kebabs, with good pitta and a few sweets'.[89] Only the Acropolis appears to have survived into the 1980s,[90] although a couple of new ostensibly Greek restaurants have appeared since then.[91] The scarcity of such establishments in the provinces contrasts with their proliferation in London. By the middle of the 1960s the *Good Food Guide* included ten Greek restaurants in London, many of them in the suburbs, a selection of the total.[92] The same publication provided the names of seventeen such eateries in 1985.[93] The Cyprus government actually claimed that over three hundred existed in London by 1968.[94] Another estimate from 1978 spoke of 1,075 Greek and Turkish restaurants.[95]

A product connected with Greek restaurants, but which developed a life of its own, sold by Greek Cypriots but, more especially, Turkish Cypriots and Turks, was the kebab, leading to the development of the kebab shop in Britain. These actually tend to sell a variety of products, especially burgers and often pizza or fish and chips. They may have totalled 125 by 1978,[96] reaching perhaps two thousand by the end of the 1990s, according to 'Socrates Camenon, of Golden Delight Foods, which sells complete kebab systems as well as the ingredients, meat and ancillaries'.[97] Siman Eskisan offers a good example of a kebab shop owner. Born in Turkey, he moved to Britain in 1977 and initially worked in his father's establishment from the age of fourteen. He subsequently ran the Kebab House in Redhill with his brother Mustafa, while a third brother ran a different shop in Godalming. As well as selling such delights as 'Chef's Special', made up of 'shoulder of lamb skewered with onions, green peppers, mushrooms and tomatoes', the Kebab House also made burgers, 'quarter pounders with or without cheese, half pounders and mega burgers'.[98] From the example of the Eskisans, it seems clear that a space in the British catering trade had opened up for Turks, in the same way that space emerged for a variety of other post-war communities.

One of the largest of these spaces has developed for the Chinese, selling the western manifestation of their food to people throughout Britain and throughout the world. In contrast to Greek Cypriots and Bangladeshis, who did not all instantly move into the catering trade, the migration of Chinese people to Britain from the 1950s had close connections with the evolution of restaurants. A process of labour recruitment by early Chinese eateries evolved. Most of the migrants to Britain originated in Hong Kong, which experienced a series of economic problems, partly caused by a transition from rice to vegetable farm-

Donner kebab, West Kensington, 2007.

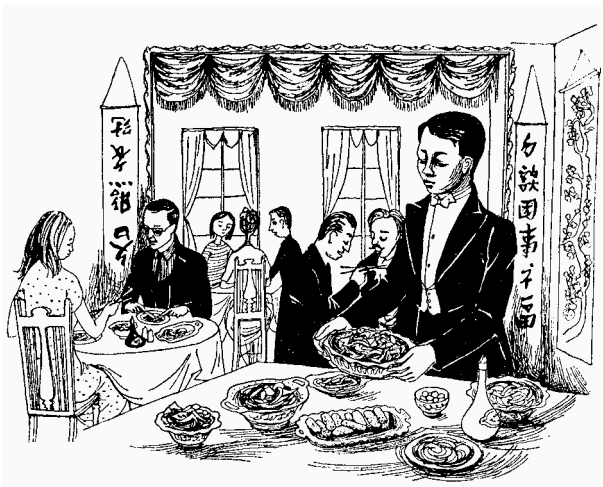
ing, as well as increasing pressure on land resources caused by an influx of refugees from the Chinese revolution. An increase in movement to Britain occurred during the early 1960s due to the impending introduction of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, which would severely curtail migration from the Empire and Commonwealth to Britain. The developing Chinese restaurant sector acted as an important pull factor in attracting the Chinese to Britain, so that a type of recruitment developed during the 1950s, formalized in the establishment of the Association of Chinese Restaurants in 1961. Even after 1962 movement for the purpose of staffing the restaurant trade continued, as owners could import people from Hong Kong if they could prove the need for them and the absence of native workers who could do the same job.[99]

Some of those who moved to the country as employees often went on to open up their own restaurants and takeaways. The *Daily Mail* carried the story of Tem Suin Yuk, who entered Britain in 1949 'with only a shirt and trousers', yet by 1965 he was being 'driven in his Mark x Jaguar to a disused warehouse . . . to organize a banquet of Chinese food'.[100] While the Chinese community represents one of the most successful in post-war Britain,[101] and while catering may form the basis of this success, it would be wrong to view the progression from

restaurant worker to owner as the only paradigm for this group. One study of Chinese women in this sector has indicated that while a formally 'employed female kitchen hand might earn a weekly' wage, albeit quite a low one, 'many Chinese women working in family takeaway shops or restaurants receive no wage at all, except for that which they might personally negotiate from husbands, fathers, or sons on a weekly basis.'[102] The same authors wrote that 'the task of running a fast food shop as a small family business is not a particularly rewarding experience. It is fraught with economic insecurity, long and unsociable hours of work . . . low levels of remuneration and racist attacks'. Those who do not run their own business suffer even worse conditions. Competition from high street multinational hamburger restaurants from the 1970s further aggravated existing problems.[103]

J.A.G. Roberts has outlined a series of phases in the evolution of the Chinese catering trade in Britain. The first of these occurred in the immediate post-war period 'during which the Chinese concentration . . . gradually increased'.[104] Establishments began to open up outside both Limehouse and, more especially, central London and Soho, where expansion had taken place during the interwar years, although Soho would continue to increase in importance. Restaurants emerged in Kensington, Chelsea, Croydon, Harrow, Ealing and Purley,[105] as well as the provinces. By the middle of the 1950s approximately three hundred Chinese restaurants may have existed in Britain.[106]

The real boom in the growth of the Chinese restaurant trade (when they began to become part of the British way of eating out) occurred from the middle of the 1950s to the middle of the 1960s. This expansion took place slightly earlier than the spread of Indian eateries, due to the direct connection with migration from Hong Kong. Between 1957 and 1962 the pages of the *Caterer* carried regular stories about the opening up of new establishments



Chop suey in London after the Second World War.

throughout the country, giving an indication of the scale of the expansion. For instance April 1957 witnessed the arrival of the first Chinese restaurant in Bournemouth, the Nanking which, typically in the early stages of the growth of 'ethnic' restaurants, sold a combination of 'Chinese' and 'British' food, totalling '150 different dishes, ranging from many kinds of chop suey to roast beef'. The owner, Cong Kai Yan, had actually owned a similar establishment for ten years in Brighton.[107] Two years later, Bristol had four Chinese restaurants either already opened or under construction.[108] A headline in the *Caterer* of 23 June 1962 declared 'Chinese Catering Under the Walls of Windsor Castle', referring to the opening of H. S. Leung's second Yangtze restaurant in Windsor, 'that most English of all places'. While this article might have undertones of xenophobia, Chinese food, like most of the foreign products which took off in the post-war period, received an overwhelmingly positive reception. But a few negative stories appeared in the *Caterer*. A letter from Frederick Gamble, the Vice Chairman of the Northern Division of the British Hotels and Restaurant Association, described the restaurants as expensive and 'tawdry'.[109] Meanwhile, Jack Knowles pleaded guilty to 'assaulting Mr Shing Yung, proprietor of the Golden Bamboo restaurant in Bradford', the adjoining premises to his house, because he 'could not stand the smell of Chinese cooking' and 'for a whole year, since the day the Golden Bamboo Restaurant opened in the house next door, he has lain in bed each night with the smell of chop suey and fried rice drifting through his bedroom walls'.[110] But the nationwide explosion of the late 1950s and early 1960s meant that, by 1965, there were as many as 2,500 Chinese restaurants in Britain. A survey carried out by Unilever into dining habits during that year indicated that 31 per cent of people who regularly dined out had eaten Chinese.[111]

Expansion would continue after this time with the development of the takeaway, which a Chinese family could open 'for a fraction of the price' of a restaurant in a large city. Writing in the early 1980s Anthony Shang identified the '"Chop Suey House", offering a range of adapted Chinese fast-food dishes palatable to Westerners' taste buds.' Meanwhile, the 'Chinese chippy', a particularly northern development, consisted of a former fish and chip shop taken over by Chinese people, offering a range of other products including Chinese fast food. Five hundred of these existed in 'the north west region' by 1984. By this time Britain counted as many as seven thousand Chinese restaurants and takeaways, a remarkable increase from the handful of the late 1940s.[112] Despite the threat of 'McDonaldization',[113] expansion continued even further so that, by 1997, about nine thousand takeaways and three thousand restaurants existed, meaning that Chinese food had become part of British life, the outlets that sold it having literally become ubiquitous.[114] Roberts has written that from the late 1990s 'substantial amounts of capital were invested into more sophisticated restaurants'.[115]

Roberts has most perceptively revealed the fact that the post-war growth in Britain represented part of a global phenomenon, 'Chinese Food Abroad' in the words of Kenneth Lo, whereby a distinct product surfaced for western tastes. Most of the outlets in Britain, other than some of those concentrated in Soho, simply represented 'Chop Suey Houses', to use the phrase of Anthony Shang.

Indian food, in contrast, remains distinctly British, rooted in the culinary exchange that took place in the Raj and spread to the homeland after the arrival of Indian or, more accurately, Bangladeshi migrants. Most accounts of the growth of Indian restaurants in the post-war period point to the role of sailors from Sylhet, originally forming part of East Pakistan after partition, becoming Bangladesh during the early 1970s. Many of these had served as cooks on British-owned ships and would often take over 'bombed out cafés in need of renovation' during the immediate post-war years, serving a combination of native foods and curry. The early clientele in these establishments included other South Asians[116] and 'ordinary Englishmen' who had 'spent a year or more in the Far East, in India, Burma, Malaya' during the war and had sampled curries or chappatis.[117] The dishes which would come to dominate, based on the culinary constructions that had occurred in the Raj during the previous century, included vindaloo, korma and madras. A late 1960s menu from the Everest in Leicester indicates the meals offered in early Indian restaurants, which included 'biryanies', pillao dishes, medium, madras, vindaloo, bhuna, dansak and kurma curries, together with chicken dopiaza, Ceylon chicken, Bombay chicken and 'rogon josht'. At this stage a separate English and small Chinese section existed on the menu.[118] Although only 'a handful of Hindu-operated catering establishments' existed by the early 1960s,[119] the Sylheti establishments had begun to spread all over the country by this time. But while 31 per cent of those who regularly dined out in 1965 had sampled Chinese food, only 8 per cent had tried Indian.[120]

The few hundred Indian restaurants that existed during the early 1960s had increased to around three thousand by the early 1980s and 7,500 a decade later, a figure which would stabilize during the 1990s. In 1995 a 'random' sample of 690 people who attended the BBC Good Food Show in Olympia demonstrated that 71 per cent of respondents ate in an Indian restaurant at least once a month.[121] Most of the expansion therefore took place during the 1970s and 1980s. The explanation would largely lie in the fact that, while more than one group of South Asians has opened restaurants, Bangladeshis, a community with higher rates of unemployment than the population as a whole,[122] have seen the restaurant trade as a way of business success despite the long hours involved, small profits and increasing numbers of restaurant failures. A shortage of staff from the middle of the 1970s meant an importation of people directly from Bangladesh using work permits, following the earlier Chinese

pattern, because it 'was usually hopeless trying to teach British workers how to prepare and cook Asian food'.[123] In 1995 Bangladeshis owned seven thousand of the eight thousand Indian restaurants in the UK, while by the end of the 1990s there were '70,000 Bangladeshi waiters and cooks at work in our curry houses'.[124] Ali Ashra, owner of the Taj Mahal restaurant in Leicester, offered some interesting insights into the growth of a Bangladeshi restaurant. His father and three others had initially owned the establishment which was previously the premises of a Jewish delicatessen. Ali became the proprietor in 1987, having followed his father to Leicester in 1966 at the age of fourteen. Asked why he took the restaurant over, he replied, 'Because it was business.'[125]

Bangladeshis take the main responsibility for the developments occurring in the menus since the late 1960s, which have seen various fads. The first of these, the spread of tandoori, lasted from the end of the 1960s until the 1980s, although other Asian groups had also jumped on the bandwagon to some extent, including the Sikh Pabla family, who opened up Friends Tandoori in Leicester. By the 1980s the balti (meaning 'bucket' in Hindi) had emerged, to sweep the country for about a decade. This dish originates in Pakistani-run restaurants in Birmingham. By the end of the twentieth century vegetarian

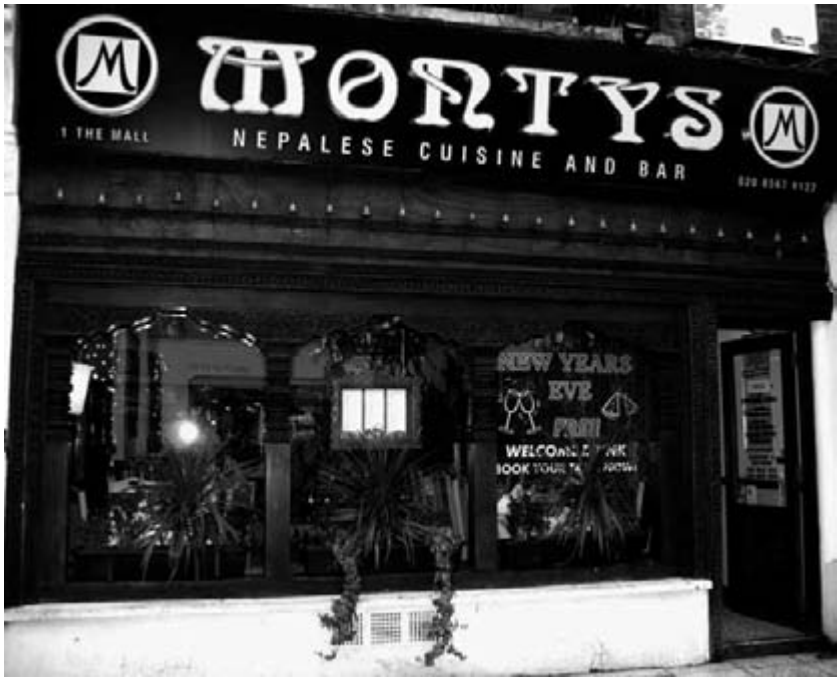
Indian restaurant in central London, 1971.

restaurants run by Indians rather than Bangladeshis had also emerged, especially in London and the Belgrave area of Leicester, the heart of the Gujarati community in the city. Das Sreedharan, a trained accountant born in Kerala, represents an alternative story to the Bangladeshi paradigm. While he claims that he had an interest in food from his childhood, catering offered a good business opportunity. At the end of 2006 he owned eight London outlets, which serve South Indian food. The development of such higher-class establishments reflects patterns in Chinese food in the same period, particularly in the capital. The growth of the Indian restaurant trade has also meant the emergence of firms to supply them.[126]

One of the most symbolic moments in the history of curry in Britain came in 2001 when Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, declared that 'chicken tikka masala is now Britain's true national dish, not only because it is popular, but because it is a perfect illustration of the way Britain absorbs and adapts external influences'. Although criticized for claiming that chicken tikka is an Indian dish to which the 'masala sauce was added to satisfy the desire of British people to have their meat served in gravy', the validity of Cook's main point, about the influence of immigration on British food, remains pertinent.[127]

Originating in the British colonization of India, the spread of curry in post-war Britain represents an example of the Empire striking back. It has become a type of cult food, taking on a life of its own, quite distinct from the products eaten by South Asian immigrants in Britain. It has even given rise to the Curry Club, established in the early 1980s by Pat Chapman, the ultimate popularizer of curry in Britain.[128] By the middle of the 1980s the organization had eight thousand members.[129] The accompanying *Curry Magazine* (subsequently *Curry Club Magazine*) publishes a combination of items including restaurant reports and letters from readers. In fact, subscribers to this periodical actually write reviews, following the pattern of the Good Food Club and Good Food Guide, upon which the Curry Club clearly models itself. A list of these reviewers in the spring 1993 edition of the *Curry Club Magazine* emphasizes the British nature of the organization and of curry eating itself, as the overwhelming majority of them have 'native' British names: South Asian names remain virtually absent. A similar magazine, but one aiming more specifically at the restaurant trade rather than 'curryholics'[130] is *Masala*. Like its counterpart, the latter aims to perpetuate myths about curry. For instance, it published a series of articles on the origins and nature of some of the standard dishes (rogan josh, korma, jalfreezi, madras and vindaloo), under the title of 'So Just What is . . . '[131]

At the end of the 1990s Chapman claimed that 'Indian meals are still very much the preserve of the younger generation', with 73 per cent of them consumed by people under 44, suggesting that Indian restaurants had become so widespread by this time that people in these age groups could not avoid



Nepalese restaurant in Ealing, 2007.

them.[132] Robert Miller, slightly older than the most numerous curry eaters, who dined out regularly while travelling during his work for the CID during the 1970s, gravitated towards the increasing number of curry houses.[133] The much older Michael Pearce, meanwhile, had developed a taste for the dish while working in Uganda in the early 1950s, where he came into contact with the 'Asian community'.[134]

It would be wrong to speak of the victory of the foreign restaurant without referring to 'McDonaldization',[135] the spread of American fast food in Britain from the 1970s. While Wimpy had arrived two decades earlier, Lyons had taken it over and both migrants and natives owned the franchises and made the bulk of the profits. This situation changed with the arrival of McDonald's and Burger King in particular, firms which sold a corporate standardized product in all of their outlets using staff (a large percentage of whom came from migrant backgrounds) in uniforms.[136] Those who have written about the spread of fast food, focusing particularly on McDonald's, have linked its success to wider developments, especially connected with the growth of corporate America.[137] Those firms which operate along similar lines include fried chicken outlets and pizza and pasta restaurants, most notably Pizza Hut.

It is tempting to contrast the spread of restaurants run by migrants with those run by multinationals by suggesting that, while the success of the former

may resemble a quiet and peaceful invasion, the growth of fast food outlets seems more like a conquest. However, we need to be cautious because the spread of 'fast food' forms part of a phenomenon that has also involved members of ethnic minorities, especially through the growth of copycat burger restaurants, or at least the spread of burger products to takeaways, especially kebab shops.

Kentucky Fried Chicken first appeared in Britain when Ray Allen bought the rights to the US corporation. The first twelve outlets all opened in London in 1970.[138] McDonald's arrived a few years later, opening its first restaurant in 1974,[139] with 'plans for further developments in Greater London already well advanced'.[140] By 1997 the number of McDonald's outlets in Britain according to one estimate had reached 1,400,[141] although this remains significantly less than the number of Chinese and Indian restaurants. Most significantly, an estimate from 1993 pointed out that the 3,614 chain-owned outlets which existed in 1993, while threatening independent takeaway owners, only represented 9.5 per cent of all takeaways, meaning that over thirty thousand independent outlets existed throughout the country.[142] According to Burnett, by 2000 Britain counted a thousand McDonald's restaurants, six hundred Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets, four hundred Burger Kings and 286 Pizza Express.[143] Thus figures from 1997, which point to over £1 billion spent on burgers, £838 million on pizza and £515 million on fried chicken,[144] should bear in mind the fact that chains only account for a fraction of the total. Migrants have also established some of the chains, including Costa Coffee and Pizza Express.[145]

Menu Change

Foreign restaurants selling foreign products that eventually become domesticated still only represent one aspect of eating out in post-war Britain. In 1997 the sector described by MINTEL as 'pub catering' had the largest turnover of any of the categories devised by this organization.[146] But what actually made up pub food? This in itself represented quite a new phenomenon because during the 1930s most establishments had offered nothing more than 'cheese and pickles that lay on the bar counter'.[147] As late as 1964, pub food only accounted for 9.1 per cent of meals eaten outside the home.[148] But changes took place from the 1970s, especially under the influence of breweries such as Bass and Whitbread, which set up chains serving food such as Harvester.[149]

Our concern lies with the meals served by pubs and other establishments that either do not market themselves as 'ethnic' or do not fall under migrant ownership. Do they still serve foods eaten historically in Britain? Or have they started offering the types of meals available in other types of establishment? Warde and Martens have questioned the idea of change in foods eaten outside the home, suggesting that 'meat and two veg', or variations of this pattern,

remain dominant and that marketing has exaggerated the extent of change. Nevertheless, they recognize that 'Neophilia is a major mechanism driving contemporary consumption'.[150] A survey of catering trends from the middle of the 1980s claimed that 'Britain's favourite lunch is soup, fish and chips, peas, ice cream and coffee', while 'Britain's favourite dinner is prawn cocktail, steak, chips and peas, gateaux and wine',[151] the second of which certainly demonstrates change since 1945. While Burnett recognizes the durability of meals in the early post-war decades, he points to significant changes from the 1970s claiming that, by 1989 the favourite lunch foods of the British included garlic mushrooms, hamburgers and gateaux, together, however, with soup and apple pie.[152]

Products such as garlic mushrooms and hamburgers certainly indicate a significant change from the early post-war decades. The transformation of British Restaurants into Civic Restaurants and continued rationing helped to perpetuate the meat and two veg culture. In Leicester nine Civic Restaurants existed in 1949.[153] While a decline had occurred from the peak national figure of two thousand in 1943, a total of 773 still survived in January 1948.[154] Those in Coventry continued until the early 1960s.[155]

The popular perception of the British meal certainly survived into the 1960s, as outlined in the *Bad Food Guide*, a scathing attack on catering including a tour of eateries throughout the country, providing details of dishes served. For instance, an 'archetypal' menu from a café in Hornsea of a 'sort' that 'hasn't changed for 30 or 40 years' consisted of a set lunch of 'Soup or fruit juice, roast beef, 2 veg., fruit pie, custard and cup of tea 6/-'. The other dishes on offer were:

Bacon egg and tomatoes	4/-
Baked beans and chips	2/6
Fried egg and chips	3/-
Ham egg and chips	5/6
Sausage and chips	4/-
Chicken and chips	5/-
Hamburger and chips	4/-
Poached egg on toast	2/9
Steak and kidney pie chips and peas	3/6
Cod and chips	3/6
Haddock and chips	4/-
Halibut and chips	5/6
Plaice and chips	5/-

All of these meals came with 'tea, bread and butter'.[156] Contemporaneous with the menu but slightly more upmarket, Poole's Catering Ltd of Leicester offered the following choices at 1/6 per head:

Soup (choice of) Oxtail, Vegetable, Tomato, Mushroom, Asparagus

Roast Beef
Roast Lamb } with appropriate garnishes
Roast Pork

Baked and Creamed Potatoes
New (if in season)

Frozen Peas
Green Beans
Brussels Sprouts

Apple Pie and Cream
Fruit Salad and Cream
Sherry Trifle

Cheese and Biscuits

Coffees[157]

While such menus may come quite close to the reality of what the majority of Britons ate out during the 1960s, to suggest that they formed the totality of dining out options would represent a serious distortion of the truth. Lyons, for instance, introduced a series of themed restaurants, transforming its pre-war corner houses. These included 'The Bacon and Egg Experiment' and 'Grill and Cheese Restaurant' which remained confined to central London and hardly represented revolutionary innovation.[158] More interestingly, 'The Brasserie', another Lyons-owned outlet, sold a Continental selection as early as 1954 including 'Spaghetti Napolitane' and beef curry.[159] Lyons also appears to have introduced the concept of Steak Houses into Britain from the USA during the 1960s.[160] But by the 1970s the firm faced crisis and takeover.[161]

However, as Burnett has suggested, significant changes have taken place in mainstream menus since the 1960s. In her study of curry in Britain, with the subtitle of *The Story of the Nation's Favourite Dish*, Shrabani Basu has emphasized the fact that this dish has moved out of the Indian restaurant and into generally accepted British outlets, above all pubs, estimating that '6,500 pubs all over the country serve Indian food, which goes to show that pub landlords see the potential in offering a chicken tikka with a pint to the locals'.[162] At the end of 2006 the Wetherspoon pub chain sold curry every Thursday afternoon and evening to about thirty thousand customers who chose 'from up to 15 great curry dishes, all served with yellow basmati rice, naan bread, mango chutney,

poppadums and, of course, choice of drink'.[163] This represents the ultimate symbol of the naturalization of curry, as well as the way in which mainstream catering menus have altered.

Even a provincial city such as Leicester has adapted to foreign flavours. Part of the change has clearly occurred because of the large influx of Indian immigrants from the 1970s, although the connection remains rather tenuous. While Indians have constituted the majority of the South Asian population in the city, Bangladeshis, who make up a minority, have owned most of the restaurants.[164] Even more interestingly, Leicester has also adapted to what we might describe as more cosmopolitan ways of eating, as indicated by the opening of a restaurant such as Mobius, owned by Indians and employing an Indian chef, but serving international 'haute cuisine'.[165] In one sense this continues the tradition established by Greek Cypriots in the city in the immediate post-war years, who did not sell products associated with their homeland.

The Victorious Foreign Restaurant

By the beginning of the twenty-first century the victory of the foreign restaurant in Britain appears complete. The trends established in central London from the late Victorian period continued after 1945. Migrants continue to play a leading role in running and working in establishments of all descriptions, whether or not they overtly sell their products as 'foreign'. In the earlier post-war years Greek Cypriots and Italians became increasingly important. Taking the sector as a whole, and including takeaways and burger bars, Turks grew in prominence during the last few decades of the twentieth century. Similarly, migrants have played a central role in the ownership of the apparently quintessentially British fish and chip shop, increasing the smaller part that Jews played in London in the interwar years. While Greek Cypriots may have focused on this trade in particular, the Pakistani owner of a northern chip shop in the 2001 Channel 4 Film *East is East* provides the most memorable migrant involved in this trade in British popular culture.

The most dramatic change has occurred in the emergence of restaurants and takeaways selling overtly foreign products. The handful of such establishments in existence before 1945 had increased to tens of thousands by the end of the twentieth century, with Indian and Chinese food dominating. The arrival of hamburgers and fried chicken, owned by US multinationals, represents a new phenomenon. The central reason for the victory of the foreign restaurant, especially indicated by the dominance of Chinese and Indian food in Britain, clearly has to lie with immigration, which has fundamentally transformed the nature of British life since 1945. While immigration occurred on a significant scale before the Second World War, since that time its diversity and scale have meant far more dramatic changes.[166] The clearest indication of this lies in the

Foreign influences in the contemporary British high street, 2006.

emergence of Indian and Chinese restaurants, as well as the growth of kebab shops. The arrival of Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonald's and Burger King, on the other hand, points to another phenomenon by the end of the twentieth century in the form of the spread of US big business.[167]

Just as significantly, more mainstream restaurants have also adapted what was previously considered foreign food, so that the menu of the Hornsea café from the middle of the 1960s would have become rare by 2000. Instead, pizza and curry had made their way into restaurants throughout the country as these products, like fish and chips before them, have became increasingly domesticated. A further indication of the spread of foreign food lies in the changing patterns of domestic consumption.

Chapter Seven

The Revolution in the Home

> Everything suffers a sea change when removed from its native shores. Chinese food and cooking are naturally no exception. Some changes are for the better, but, in the case of Chinese food abroad, the change seems either to be for the worse or involves a loss of authenticity.[1]

The Age of Choice

Although class and income would continue to play a significant role in domestic food consumption choices after 1945, it becomes increasingly difficult to argue that nutritional levels in Britain suggest anything other than a country in which plenty had defeated want. The spread of obesity provides the best indication of the move away from the subsistence diets that characterized large sections of British society during the Victorian era and into the 1930s.

But while obesity itself might suggest an increase in the quantity of food, it indicates a continued problem with quality, as stressed by Joanna Blythman in her scathing attack on diet in Britain. Blythman, irritated by the idea that 'we have become a nation of foodies', suggests, on the contrary, that 'British eating habits are getting worse, not better'. She provides a stream of assertions in support of her statement including 'the stifling of an independent local grocery sector or small food commerce under the hulking boot of supermarket monoculture' and 'our addiction to industrial techno-foods'. Her statistical evidence includes the following: in 2003 'Britain ate more ready meals than the rest of Europe put together'; 'Britain eats more than half of all the crisps and savoury snacks eaten in Europe'; by 2020 a third of British adults would become obese if current trends continued.[2]

Blythman's assertions suggest that food habits in Britain have deteriorated, although a longer-term perspective would lead to different conclusions. The first overwhelming fact about food during the whole post-war period is the conquest of want by plenty, whatever the consequences for food quality. Despite the recent rise in obesity, an examination of the past sixty years shows significant improvements in the health of the British population, as suggested by a series of indicators including an increase in life expectancy of around eight years and the growing height of individuals. Perhaps the most symbolic indicator of the elimination of want lies in the rise of slimming, especially when considered against the background of the history of food in Britain since the mid-Victorian years.[3]

In spite of the increasing availability of food, surveys still indicate differing consumption patterns according to wealth and, linked to this, region. In particular, northern Britain, with a lower standard of living and a higher proportion of people involved in manual work than areas further south, indicates less healthy food choices.[4] A survey from 2006 suggests that 42 per cent of those regarded as eating an unhealthy diet, with a high incidence of 'crisps, rice pudding, brown ale, sherry and ready meals', viewed healthy foods ('such as low-fat cottage cheeses, bran flakes, haddock') as too expensive, although they actually spent the same amount of money on their weekly shopping as those who consumed healthier products.[5]

Thus, while quantity of food may have increased for all social and income groups in post-war Britain, most authorities question whether quality has seen a similar positive change. The underlying factor, which has led to an increase in quantity, if not necessarily quality, has been rising levels of income, perhaps the most important social and economic change in Britain since 1945. Thus, 'over the whole period from 1951 to 1983 the average real weekly earnings (i.e. with purchasing power) of adult male workers almost doubled from £60 to £111'.[6] But, as suggested by the apparent decline in quality of food, the actual percentage of income that went towards it has fallen. Thus, while food had taken up 33 per cent of total expenditure in 1954, this had declined to 20.2 per cent by 1985.[7] Writing two decades later, Blythman asserted that, 'Psychologically speaking, Britain is largely locked into a mindset where it views food as one of the first things on which economies can be made.' By this time Britons spent just 16 per cent of their income on food.[8]

In one sense an examination of rising incomes suggests that the demand side, i.e. increasing wealth, has played a significant role in the availability of food, certainly in terms of choice. However, taking into account the importance of price indicates that supply plays just as important a role. The economies of scale available to supermarkets mean that they have come to dominate food provision. Other demand factors stressed by writers and surveys on food include the decline of the family meal. Blythman points out that 'one out of every two meals eaten in Britain is now eaten alone'.[9] This reflected changes in 'household structure' which had taken place in the post-war period so that the mean household size had declined from 3.1 in 1961 to 2.4 by 2000.[10] Just as this has played a role in the increasing popularity of eating out during the evening,[11] it has also helped the rise of convenience foods. The increasing number of women working away from home also played a significant role in the growing popularity of frozen, canned and packaged food including, by the end of the twentieth century, the ready meal.[12]

These developments indicate the increasing importance of technology in the supply of food to Britons. While frozen and canned products had become available before 1945, processed foods have become increasingly sophisticated

Italian ice cream van with an Indian driver in Leicester, 2007.

and varied since then. The increase in the consumption of canned products continued trends from the pre-war period, as did the development of freezing technology and its application to a wider range of goods. The most significant change in the supply of frozen foods appears to have occurred as a result of the entry of Unilever into this market at the end of the war. The firm quickly began to freeze fish and freshly picked vegetables. By the 1960s all manner of frozen foods had become available, including meat, ice cream, poultry, fish fingers and ready meals. The spread of electricity and, consequently, fridges and freezers, clearly helped these developments. Whereas only 8 per cent of households possessed a refrigerator in 1956, this had risen to 85 per cent by 1973 and had become virtually universal by the end of the twentieth century. Spending on frozen foods therefore increased from £150,000 in 1946 to £56 million in 1961. By 2006 the market size had reached £5.4 billion.[13]

Other technological developments in the post-war period allowing a further increase in the availability of processed foods included advances in dehydration, especially freeze drying, which played a role in the emergence of the first ready meals, requiring the addition of water. In addition, the increasing use of additives and preservatives has given manufacturers the power 'of controlling such qualities as flavour, colour, texture, and palatability, as well as for extending the "shelf-life" of manufactured foods'. Without additives 'the modern food manufacturing industry would not exist'.[14]

Developments in processing and preserving have meant the ready availability of a wider variety of foods. Frozen fruits and vegetables of all types fill supermarket freezers throughout the year, out of season. It would probably prove impossible to supply enough food for an almost completely urbanized population without the use of preserving techniques.[15]

The evolution of food processing points to a further central development affecting food in the post-war period, in the form of the increasing importance of big business, which has meant that foods have become brands in a similar way, for instance, to electronic products or cars. By 1973 food manufacturing had become the biggest industry in the UK in terms of gross output, employing 8 per cent of the total manufacturing labour force.[16] Foods in Britain have essentially become brands, whose number increased from 1,500 in the 1950s to ten thousand by the early 1970s.[17] Such statistics cover everything from chocolates to baked beans to cooked curries. These developments have meant that multinational companies have come to dominate the food market in Britain, squeezing out most independent producers, despite the emergence in recent decades of small companies offering local produce.[18] In the early 1970s companies such as Kellogg's and United Biscuits dominated the cereal and biscuit markets respectively, while Unilever, the ninth largest company in the world, provided all manner of food products.[19] Blythman has summed up the consequences of this branding in an interesting way, stating that, for 'some Britons abroad', the culinary delights which remind them of home include 'Tunnock's marshmallow snowballs, Cadbury's Curly Wurly, Bisto gravy granules, Walker's prawn cocktail crisps, Angel Delight, spam, Pot Noodle' and Hula Hoops.[20]

For a full understanding of such developments it is necessary to consider the role of the supermarkets and the move away from purchasing in local outlets, intensifying developments which had begun before 1945. In October 1946 a total of 146,881 'retail shops selling groceries and provisions' existed in the UK. Although the large majority (121,509) were 'independents', 'multiples', defined as 'a branch of a firm (not being a co-operative) with ten or more branches in the United Kingdom', made up 15,168, while the remaining 10,204 were co-operatives.[21] The end of rationing and the introduction of self-service stores in Britain during the 1950s meant the end of the 'enforced relationship between food retailer and consumer'.[22] The number of self-service shops increased rapidly to three thousand by 1956. Six years later almost twelve thousand supermarkets and self-service stores existed in the country.[23] Since that time, as the supermarket has become the most important of retail outlets, several developments have occurred. In the first place, a small number of firms have come to dominate. By 1990 Sainsbury's, Tesco, Argyll (Safeway), Asda and Gateway (Somerfield) controlled 60 per cent of the total UK 'grocery market',[24] a trend which has continued since then, despite the change in ownership of some of these stores. By 1994 Sainsbury's counted 341 stores, increasing to 752 by 2006.[25]

With the passage of time supermarkets have become larger and have increasingly moved to sites out of city centres, facilitated by the irreversible rise of the car. The emergence and dominance of the supermarkets has had implications for the entire food industry in Britain, particularly as a result of the development of own-brand foods, with consequences for the food supply chain.[26] In 1990, when 'the food sector' accounted for 9 per cent of the labour force, 2.1 per cent worked in agriculture, horticulture and fishing, 2 per cent in processing (packing, refining and manufacturing) and 4.6 per cent in wholesaling and retailing.[27]

The social, technological and business changes which have occurred in Britain since 1945 have had a number of consequences as plenty has eliminated want. The most obvious is the rise of processed foods, a term that covers a multitude of products. Just as importantly, we can point to the increase of choice so that, compared to their Victorian or interwar counterparts, consumers now have a wide array of products available to them even though the choice operates within the constraints of multinational and supermarket power. But increasing diversity represents one of the main reasons for the rise of 'foreign' foods as they form an important aspect of this change.

This diversity, combined with increasing concerns about the health consequences of food, as well as the emergence of an increasingly educated population, has also meant the emergence of personal food choice so that, especially in the case of vegetarianism, diet has developed a close link with identity.[28] Concerns about weight have also led to the rise of slimming companies and slimming foods, sold by the supermarkets.[29]

The National Food Survey, which essentially measures the domestic consumption of raw foods grouped under a small number of categories, has revealed a series of trends in the period since 1945 including a rise in fresh fruit and vegetable consumption, a fall in bread, milk, sugar and fish, while meat, eggs and cheese have shown limited change. These figures would appear deceptive, however, as they do not fully take into consideration the implications of the purchase of frozen foods or the consequences of eating out.[30]

Our concern lies more with the specific products eaten in British homes since 1945 rather than with general dietary patterns. More especially, how much of a role has foreign influence played in the changing nature of meals? Above all, what part have migrants played in the evolution of domestic eating habits? The presence of immigrants and, more especially, the food they served in restaurants, played a central role in the evolution of domestic consumption because British people wanted to eat at home the meals they had sampled when eating out. From the 1960s they could – either as a result of cooking such meals from scratch or, more likely, because the large food-processing firms and retailers offered them the food in question already cooked, initially frozen and, by the end of the twentieth century, chilled. At the same time, as predominantly

Cypriot pastry cooks in London during the 1960s, including author's father (far left).

cheap labour, newcomers, especially those with South Asian origins, played a role in food processing.[31] In addition, resembling their late nineteenth-century German predecessors, the post-war migrants, particularly those with South Asian backgrounds and, increasingly, those from Turkey and the Middle East, opened up local stores.[32] Finally, some of the Jewish-founded retailers, above all Marks and Spencer and Tesco, have become so much a part of British life that their origins have been forgotten.[33]

Together with the influence of migrants we need to consider the increasing role of globalization. Globalization does not simply manifest itself in the availability of ever-more exotic fruits and vegetables, which already existed in London before 1945. It is also demonstrated in the entry of new staples such as rice and pasta. Just as importantly, foreign influence has entered Britain through multinational firms that have helped supply new products.

An examination of increasing foreign influences on domestic consumption fits neatly, if not entirely comfortably, into three phases, which also reflect the food history of post-war Britain. The first of these is the 'age of austerity', until the middle of the 1950s which, in food terms, meant the continuation of rationing and a limiting of choice. During the second phase, lasting from about the middle of the 1950s until the late 1970s, a food revolution occurred. In some ways, while covering a slightly different time period, it represents the culinary aspect of the 1960s[34] involving liberation from the repression of the 1950s. During this period, choice replaced control and the products served in the emerging Chinese and Indian restaurants moved into the home. An 'intellectual' culinary revolution in cookbooks also took place so that writers led by Elizabeth David (but including numerous others, many of them of migrant origins) almost acted as the literary leaders of the revolution, perhaps a British culinary Rousseau, Voltaire or, more accurately, Brillat-Savarin or Escoffier. By

the final period, from the end of the 1970s, the vestiges of the early post-war order have completely disappeared. In the most recent decades choice has become bewildering, curry has become completely domesticated and supermarkets and multinationals have introduced an increasingly diverse range of products which they commodify along national lines. As with much else which had become revolutionized during the 1960s, such as fashion and music, big business had taken it over by the end of the twentieth century.[35]

The Age of Austerity

The end of the war did not mean the end of rationing, which continued until 1953. The economic situation in which Britain found itself, above all a balance of payments crisis and the owing of money to the USA, as well as a catastrophically cold winter in 1946–7, which froze vegetables in the ground, meant that food supplies became yet more problematic. Rationing actually became most severe in the first few post-war years. Bread, which had not faced control during the war, did so for two years from July 1946, while potatoes became restricted in the winter of 1947–8. In fact, consumption of most products, including meat, bacon, cheese and eggs, declined to below wartime levels in the years 1946–8. In order to fill some of the shortages the government made available some unusual products in Britain. These included whale meat and snoek which, however, remained unpopular, despite the devising of recipes by Ministry of Food cooks such as the rather unappetizing snoek piquante, which involved canned snoek, spring onions, syrup, vinegar, salt and pepper to produce a dish served with a cold salad. But the second half of the 1940s also saw positive developments including, at the end of December 1946, the arrival of the first bananas in the country for six years. The Ministry of Food had made some provision for minority groups so that, for instance, Jews could purchase kosher cheese, although only 'very few retailers' stocked it. Meanwhile, Jews, vegetarians and Muslims who 'surrendered' their bacon or meat rations could obtain, in their place, cheese or vegetable margarine. With the official end of rationing in 1954, consumption of most of the controlled products witnessed an increase including sugar, cheese, meat and butter, as people rejected margarine, while sales of brown bread collapsed.[36]

In the latter 1940s choice, in the case of some products, therefore remained limited to an even greater extent than during the war, despite protests from a series of women's groups including the British Housewives League.[37] But the Ministry of Food also continued to work with women, in an age of clear gender roles in the kitchen, through the survival of the Food Leader Scheme which, by 1949, counted over 25,000 housewives, of whom seventeen thousand actually had badges following an official training course.[38]

Continuing the activities of the war, the *Food Leader News* suggested to women how to use their rations. Some of the editions of this publication

proposed ways of cooking whale meat, for example, and also placed great stress on the use of fish. Several recipes for roast fish suggested a poor substitute for roast beef, which remained in short supply. One of these involved '2lb. of middle cut cod, 8 oz. onions, 1 oz. fat or dripping, 1 level teaspoon salt, pinch of pepper. Tomatoes can be used instead of onions'. The instructions ran as follows:

> Remove any fins and make about four shallow slashes across the back of the fish. Cut one of the onions into thick slices and place one of these in each slash. Dot the fish with fat or dripping, sprinkle with salt and pepper and put into baking tin. Put the rest of the onions round the fish and bake in a hot oven for about half an hour until the fish is cooked. Baste once or twice during cooking.[39]

Suggestions also appeared in *Food Leader News* 'from the experimental kitchens' on 'cooking whale meat', which should 'be treated as ordinary beefsteak' because 'although the raw meat', previously frozen, 'looks somewhat unattractive, most people cannot distinguish it from beefsteak, particularly when it is finely cut before cooking or mixed with strong flavourings'. There then followed recipes for frying with onions, 'meat curry', 'hamburgers'[40] and 'Hungarian Goulash'.[41] The Ministry of Food essentially tried to 'flog' a surplus of dead and frozen whales to a less than enthusiastic public craving for greater supplies of beef.

Another Ministry of Food publication, *Food and Nutrition*, provides an indication of the durability of more traditional dishes into the early post-war years. A suggestion on how to plan a week's rations in March 1946 included a variety of dishes typical of meals in mid-twentieth century Britain. Wednesday's idea consisted of 'bacon with fried bread or potatoes' for breakfast, liver, heart, tripe, rabbit (all unrationed), sausage meat or fish with mashed potatoes, green vegetables and dried fruit fritters for 'dinner', and 'sardines on toast, raw vegetable salad, bread and butter, jam tarts' for 'high tea'.[42]

Those with large gardens or living in the countryside often had access to a wider range of products. The parents of Gillian Bates in north Leicestershire kept their own chickens producing fresh eggs and grew their own vegetables. 'The round beans were rather enormous, tomatoes, they were bottled, all fruits were bottled, and all jams were made and marmalades were made.' Her husband, Des, who grew up in the same area, remembered that 'my dad used to keep a pig. Oh Yeah! And we used to feed it up and kill it and we used to keep chickens, hens, cockerels, all in the garden'. With the end of rationing, fruits which neither of them had tasted as children became available including bananas and pomegranates. Interestingly, Gillian, born in 1943, claimed that she did not eat

processed food 'and I don't think we ever had a tinned food, the only tinned food I can ever remember was tinned spaghetti'.[43] This certainly contrasts with the experience of people born later in the century, as well as with much of the contemporaneous urban population, who certainly would have consumed tinned meat and fish.

Many cookbooks of this period followed the Ministry of Food pattern instructing the reader on how to 'make do'. One Ministry publication, *The ABC of Cookery*, opened, 'This is not a recipe book. It is a book which explains cookery *methods* . . . how to boil, bake and fry.' One section carried the title of 'How to Season Food' and provided a list of a variety of flavourings and their utility from bay leaves to capers to lemons, despite the difficulties of obtaining some of these in 1945.[44] In a similar vein Philip Harben published *The Way to Cook or Common Sense in the Kitchen* in 1945, which began: 'This is not a recipe book. Its purpose is rather to explain the basic ideas and principles that form the foundation of all cooking.' But this volume does have some recipes in the 'French tradition'.[45]

Other foreign influences also appear in the earlier post-war decades, especially with the publication of Elizabeth David's books in the early 1950s, although in many senses her works really prepare the way for developments towards the end of that decade.[46] In 1950 Ambrose Heath issued *Good Food Again*, having previously published, in 1932, *Good Food*.[47] Heath, one of the most prolific of twentieth-century cookery writers, described by Michael Bateman in his account of *Cooking People*, along with Elizabeth David, as a 'Cook's Cook', interestingly had a Portuguese mother and a 'gentleman' father.[48] Pointing to the frustration caused by rationing, Heath's *Good Food Again* begins:

> This little book was written nearly five years ago, but economic circumstances have after all denied it publication until now . . . What I optimistically expected in 1945 is now actually beginning to happen. There has been talk of cream, eggs (or egg) and bacon are no longer the nostalgic dream they were. Wine is more plentiful, various and cheaper, and the grocers' shelves are becoming more interesting.[49]

The volume contained a wide variety of international dishes. The opening lines of the volume indicate the revolution that would follow. Heath's words speak of pent-up frustration ready to explode in a creative culinary spree.

An upsurge of interest in curry appears to have surfaced immediately after the war, before the development of a large number of Indian restaurants, essentially continuing the fascination with this product perpetuated by Britons who had lived in the Raj. A total of 92 tons of curry powder entered Britain in 1946, although this actually represented a decline from the 216 tons of 1943.[50]

In 1951 J. A. Sharwood, which would experience significant growth later in the century, sold a variety of products including 'Green Label Chutney', curry paste, ginger, celery salt, as well as olive oil, 'French anchovies' and cayenne pepper.[51] Only the middle classes would have purchased these products.

Recipes for Indian-influenced products certainly circulated in the early post-war years, again continuing pre-war traditions. Even the Ministry of Food issued a recipe for 'Green Tomato Chutney', although this formed part of an attempt to encourage people to make the most of their vegetables and did not contain any particularly exotic ingredients.[52] In July 1946 an article in the *Restaurant Trade Journal* complained about the difficulty of cooking curry because 'the basic foundation of Indian eating rice and *ghee* (it looks like but doesn't smell like, rather stiff hair cream) is not to be had'. But the same article mentioned 'a very great demand for food cooked in Indian ways' due to soldiers returning from the war in the Far East where they had tried such food. In the following February the same journal published 'A Plea for Curry' by Ambrose Heath, which rather arrogantly provided instructions on how to cook it 'properly'. Rather bizarrely, but indicative of the Anglo-Indian symbiosis which created this dish, Heath provided a section on 'Iced Curries'. This described dishes eaten in his childhood 'for supper on Sundays when the servants were out' including 'a cold curried rabbit shape, generally appearing in a mould to represent the animal itself'. Another article from the *Restaurant Trade Journal* of November 1948 provided a variety of curry recipes including 'chicken forcemeat', African, Lobster, Madras and Javanese.

Despite the interest taken in such foods by cookery writers and journalists in the immediate post-war years, curry did not become a staple of the British domestic diet until several decades later. Both official and unofficial surveys point to the stability of domestic consumption patterns until well into the 1950s and beyond. The *National Food Survey* from 1956, for instance, which only indicates the raw ingredients used, rather than the way in which Britons cooked them, nevertheless allows us to deduce information on the availability of the most common staples listed under the categories of dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, butter and margarine, sugar and syrups, potatoes, pulses and nuts, fruit, vegetables and cereal products.[53]

Three years later a more useful account appeared, published by 'the Market Research Division of W. S. Crawford', a firm established by the author who had carried out the survey of *The People's Food* two decades earlier. Like this volume, the new one investigated different meal times and the consumption of varying social groups. The new publication, *The Foods We Eat*, opened by stating that 'the pattern of spending on five principal groups of food' (dairy products, cereal and sugar, fats and preserves, meat and fish, and fruit and vegetables) in terms of the percentage of income they took 'was almost the same in October 1954–March 1955 as in October 1936–March 1937'.[54]

Most interestingly, this new survey, which involved interviews with 4,557 people throughout the country,[55] broke down the contents of meals of different times of day. Over 92 per cent 'of all adults in the country take breakfast and of these more than half the men and over a third of the women have a cooked course, with eggs and bacon in high favour'. Just over a quarter of the population ate cereal, with fairly limited variations according to class and region.[56] The survey also examined the 'mid-day meal'. 'To those accustomed to a longish journey – in time if not distance – from their dormitories to the commercial centre of, say, London, it will come as a surprise to learn that throughout the week in summer as in winter, six out of every ten men go home to their mid-day meal.'[57] The narrative claimed that 'the British housewife' provided 'the whole gamut of "main dish" foods, roasts, stews, ham, bacon, sausages, offal, cold meats, fish, cheese and egg dishes'. On Sunday roast pork, beef and lamb dominated. The text described the roast as 'a family matter and its roots lie very deep'. Even 'in midsummer heat the "cut off the roast and two veg", followed by a sweet, remains paramount'.[58] Most people consumed their 'principal evening meal' between five and seven p.m., with 'the peak time . . . between 6 and 6.30 p.m.' This dish was 'on the whole . . . lighter' than food eaten at lunch time as 'heavier meats, roasts and stews go down, and ham, bacon and sausages and corned beef, spam and other cooked meats go up'.[59]

Well into the 1950s and beyond Britons continued to eat the food to which they had become accustomed since the end of the nineteenth century. While *The Foods We Eat* recognized social, regional and seasonal variations, the main conclusions to be reached from this survey, together with other sources on domestic consumption during the 1950s, lie is the durability of what we can describe as the British diet. This meant fried breakfast in the morning, meat and two veg at other times and roast on Sunday. This pattern would not begin to disintegrate until the end of the twentieth century. A series of developments over the following two decades would begin to undermine such meals, introducing a wide choice of foods.

The Years of Culinary Revolution

The culinary revolution, the years when rapid change in the British diet became normal, occurred from the late 1950s until the end of the 1970s. While this process would continue into the 1980s and beyond, the twenty years before then witnessed a series of dramatic developments, facilitating the move from fried breakfast and meat and two veg to greater variety. In the first place, a type of culinary enlightenment set the groundwork, led by Elizabeth David, the most illustrious figure in this movement. At the same time, immigration also began to play a role because Britons increasingly wished to sample the foods they had tried in Chinese and Indian restaurants in their own homes. This

brings in the role of multinationals, which introduced imitations of such dishes as the food-processing industry expanded and supermarkets increased their product range. Growing disposable income available to most of the British population facilitated such change. The diversity of goods available in 1980 had changed dramatically since the middle of the 1950s.

The changes which occurred from the 1960s did so against the background of a shift in attitudes towards food, including the assignment of nationalities to them, a process which began during the course of the 1950s. The background to this development was the end of rationing, as indicated by the publication of Heath's *Good Food Again* in 1950. In fact, this book mirrors several other significant contemporaneous culinary developments. Christopher Driver has written about the foundation of the Good Food Club in 1950, which set out to 'raise the standard of cooking in Britain',[60] although Derek Cooper asserted that this had not happened seventeen years later.[61] The year 1950 also saw the publication of Elizabeth David's first volume, *A Book of Mediterranean Food*.

Before analysing the importance of David's work, we might ask if the culinary revolution forms part of the wider 'cultural' changes taking place at the same time, described as 'the Sixties'. Arthur Marwick, in his monumental study of this period which, he suggests actually stretches from 1958–74, gives as many as sixteen characteristics of these years. Some do not apply to the culinary revolution, such as 'the unprecedented influence of young people'. But many of his descriptions seem apt. These include, most importantly: the 'formation of new subcultures'; 'an outburst of entrepreneurialism, individualism, doing your own thing'; 'advances in technology'; 'unprecedented international exchange'; 'massive improvement in material life'; and the beginnings of the concept of 'multicultural societies'. Marwick also recognizes the fact that big business increasingly jumped on the bandwagon of 'the Sixties'.[62] These years can also be seen very much as a reaction against the age of austerity, against the standardized food imposed by rationing and, in this sense, we can certainly view the culinary developments as part of a process of subculture formation and individual expression. Interestingly, Marwick also speaks about 'the continued existence of elements of extreme reaction'[63] against 'the Sixties' and we might perhaps see the rising interest in British food as an indication of this: the first books on British food appeared after Elizabeth David's.

This cookery writer therefore appears to represent the leading philosopher of the culinary revolution, the Voltaire, or perhaps even the Marx. This may seem inappropriate for such an apparently impeccably upper-class woman, but she led an unconventional life (especially in terms of her relationships) which involved spending much time in Continental Europe, especially the Mediterranean. Born in 1913, the formative years of her life, certainly in terms of their influence on her cookery, occurred when she lived in France, Italy, Spain and Greece during the Second World War and its aftermath. Her biogra-

phers view Norman Douglas, the British travel writer with a deep appreciation for food, resident in France and Italy, as the most significant influence on her life. At the end of the war, after a failed marriage and a spell in India, she returned to Britain, where her interest in cooking began to manifest itself in writing, partly because of the contrast between what she had eaten during her travels and what she now found available. But she made the most of the limited ingredients under rationing and also strenuously tried to obtain more exotic products from Soho such as lemons and olive oil.[64]

To anyone with an appreciation for food or southern Europe, suffering under the restrictions of rationing, the opening page of Elizabeth David's first *Book of Mediterranean Food* presents perhaps the most evocative and inspirational passages in the history of British cookery writing, more like literature than the cookbooks that would follow later in the twentieth century:

> The cooking of the Mediterranean shores, endowed with all the natural resources, the colour and flavour of the South, is a blend of tradition and brilliant improvisation. The Latin genius flashes from the kitchen pans.
>
> It is honest cooking too; none of the sham Grand Cuisine of the International Palace Hotel . . .
>
> From Gibraltar to the Bosphorous, down the Rhone Valley, through the great seaports of Marseilles, Barcelona, and Genoa, across to Tunis and Alexandria, embracing all the Mediterranean islands, Corsica, Sicily, Sardinia, Crete, the Cyclades, Cyprus (where the Byzantine influence begins to be felt), to the mainland of Greece and the much disputed territories of Syria, the Lebanon, Constantinople, and Smyrna, stretches the influence of Mediterranean cooking, conditioned naturally by variations in climate and soil and the relative industry or indolence of the inhabitants.
>
> The ever recurring themes in the food throughout these countries are the oil, the saffron, the garlic, the pungent local wines; the aromatic perfume of rosemary, wild marjoram and basil drying in the kitchens; the brilliance of the market stalls piled high with pimentos, aubergines, tomatoes, olives, melons, figs and limes; the great heaps of shiny fish . . . [65]

To further appreciate the full impact of such writing, we can place it against her introduction to the 1988 edition of this volume:

> When in 1947 I started putting together the recipes which made up this book it was less with any thought of future publication than as a personal antidote to the bleak conditions and acute food shortages of immediate post-war England. Looking back to those days, when meat, butter, cheese, sugar, eggs, bacon, milk, and even biscuits, sweets and chocolate were

> rationed, when fresh vegetables and fruit were scarce, lemons, oranges and tomatoes as rare as diamonds, commodities such as olive oil, rice, and imported pasta no more than exotic memories, and fresh fish something you stood in a queue for, I see that it was largely in a spirit of defiance that I wrote down those Mediterranean recipes.

She had actually collected them in the various places where she had lived.[66] The text is more than simply a list of recipes, also informing readers where to buy ingredients and including literary extracts. The dishes listed vary from *avgolemoni*, the 'best known of all Greek soups', octopus and cuttlefish, kid, boar, through to jams, preserves and sauces. Shortly after the publication and success of her first volume, David also published *French Country Cooking* and *Italian Food*. The former asserts that good food existed in the French provinces beyond the stylish restaurants, while the latter also looks at Italian cooking on a regional basis. However, unlike her first book, which generally works on the interplay between the Mediterranean region and the localities within it, these volumes, particularly *Italian Food*, do operate, to some extent, on national stereotypes, as evidenced by a sentence such as: 'Italians, unlike the thrifty French, are very extravagant with raw materials.'[67] In some ways David involves herself in a culinary mapping of France and Italy for British readers, similar to that undertaken by writers on Indian food during the century before the publication of her volumes.

Despite this, David has the reputation as one of the most influential cookery writers in post-war Britain. While she published subsequent volumes, this reputation originates in the first five. The best indication of her importance lies in the fact that her early books still remain in print, fifty years after their initial appearance, together with all of her subsequent volumes.[68] At the same time, cookery writers of today speak of her influence.[69] David changed ideas about cooking by consciously bringing foreign influences into the English kitchen. In this sense, her early books, and especially *Mediterranean Food*, attract the epithet 'seminal', because she wrote the first major volume to consciously do this, differing from the more tentative books that came before. The fact that David actually lived for so many years in different parts of the Mediterranean gave her work added credibility: she did not invent the dishes contained in her volumes once in England, but had eaten and cooked them in their own environment. In addition, she demythologized cooking, moving away, as she wrote, from the 'sham Grand Cuisine of the International Palace Hotel' to look at what people in the Mediterranean ate in their homes. She appealed especially to the middle-class housewife in a post-servant era when cooking became a necessity. Finally, in contrast to the majority of cookery books, Elizabeth David knew how to write, particularly for the educated classes, as her volumes contain

not only beautiful evocations of the ingredients she uses and the places where her dishes originate, but also literary references.[70]

The publication of David's first volume not only prepared the way for her own subsequent books, it also opened the floodgates for countless other, usually less sophisticated authors, who had often not lived in the areas whose cuisine they described and who could not hold a candle to David's literary style. Robin Howe, for example, produced at least four books on various international cuisines during the course of the 1950s. Perhaps she did travel to Germany and Italy before writing her volumes on the cuisines of these countries, as she has an awareness of regional variations, but her prose style is rather matter-of-fact.[71] These two books appear to have had little impact.[72] More importantly perhaps, in view of the gradual post-war move away from meat and two veg, Howe also produced a book on *Rice Cooking* which, over thirteen chapters, examines the different ways to use this food from soups to risottos to sweet dishes.[73] The appearance of Good Housekeeping volumes, looking at 'Continental' and 'international' dishes during the 1950s, would certainly appear to follow in Elizabeth David's footsteps. While very crude in their categorization of dishes according to area of origin, they may well have had a wider readership.[74]

Two writers who had already begun to make their names before the war reacted to the international realities sweeping cookery writing and broadcasting during the 1950s. Thus, for instance, Ambrose Heath, published his *International Cookery Book* in 1967. Similarly, Philip Harben, who certainly believed in the national origins of dishes, did not simply produce a volume on British cooking,[75] but also more international books.[76] But he still had a rather fixed view of national origins and qualities of food. 'American food is terrible. They are tone deaf about food. Germany is very limited. The Swiss have two dishes, sausages in potato cake, and *fondue*.' While his reputation has not lasted, Harben may have had, in the short term, more influence than Elizabeth David as the first celebrity television cook, working for both the BBC and ITV.[77] The similarly ephemeral Fanny Cradock also had a short-term influence. In Nicola Humble's words, 'the food Fanny demonstrated was bizarrely grand', perpetuating the world of Escoffier as it went out of fashion.[78] The other major celebrity chef who appeared on British, as well as international, television during the 1960s and 1970s as the 'Galloping Gourmet' was Graham Kerr, one of the first all-singing, all-dancing variety, who stuck to fairly conventional dishes.[79] Robert Carrier may have had as great an influence on the internationalization of food in Britain as Elizabeth David. His *Great Dishes of the World* proved particularly influential. Despite the title of his book, and his rather grand opening statement that the 'history of every nation lies visible at its table', the book essentially represents a world view inspired by French *haute cuisine*, with some self-standing dishes from elsewhere.[80]

The three major international restaurant cuisines to emerge during the course of the 1960s and 1970s – Italian, Chinese and Indian – also attracted much attention in print, indicating the way in which eating out influenced cookery writing and domestic consumption. Sub-genres of these cuisines developed, which have survived to the present. Interestingly, many of the writers who produced the Chinese and Indian books in particular were Chinese and Indian people although, in an age in which members of ethnic minorities remained absent from British television screens, they did not become personalities.

Italians, however, did not tend to produce much of the writing on their food in Britain, perhaps because Elizabeth David laid down the template. An exception is Malya Nappi. Interestingly, as she points out in her introduction, 'the mental picture of the average Italian consuming with gusto vast quantities of greasy spaghetti' had already become entrenched in Britain by this time.[81] Nappi defensively asserts that 'to suppose that Italians eat spaghetti for every meal is a pure fallacy. As a matter of fact in many parts of the country it is not eaten at all'.[82] Despite this assertion, Nappi's book does contain a chapter on pasta where she, rather contradicting herself, describes it as 'the most famous and most popular of Italian foods'.[83] Other chapters exist on fish, meat and soup, as well as pizza, which had taken off in Britain by the time Nappi wrote. She only gives three basic versions of this dish. The book seems to be aimed at a broader market than David's book on Italian food, with comic illustrations interspersed between the text, in contrast to the historic pictures of cooking implements in *Italian Food*. Nappi's volume runs to 64 pages in contrast to David's 376 and seems to have appeared in just one edition.

Most of the other early Italian cookbooks published in Britain fall somewhere in between Nappi and David, in terms of the sophistication of their approach, with primarily British authors. This applies, for instance, to Robin Howe's *Italian Cooking*, which has chapter categories along the pattern set by David including spaghetti, soup, fish and meat, suggesting that something of a standardized menu had emerged by this time, copied from both Italy and the USA.[84] This contrasts with the situation in Britain before 1945 in both the home and the 'Italian' restaurant, where no standardization had emerged. One of the central achievements of Italian cookbooks lies precisely in producing a currency of Italian dishes. Dorothy Daly's volume on Italian food from 1958 follows this pattern, taking a much more sophisticated approach than Nappi but, again, without the literary qualities of Elizabeth David. She does, however, provide detailed commentaries on Italy and the different types of food covered in her chapters. When she deals with pasta, for instance, she informs her readers about its possible origins ('brought back by the traveller Marco Polo when he returned to Italy during the thirteenth century after years of travel in the Orient').[85]

Despite the pleas of Nappi, by the 1960s Italian food in Britain increasingly came to mean pasta as witnessed, for instance, by the appearance of recipes in magazines and newspapers. An article in the *Caterer* of 20 October 1962 could claim that the 'finest pasta is now made in Great Britain' from 'milled Canadian amber durum wheat that is of quite exceptional quality'. This article does not specifically identify pasta as Italian, although one of the dishes (which speaks of '150 grated scampi' sautéd in '1lb of butter and 1 pint of olive oil') carries the name of 'Scampi Meuniere with Noodles'. A recipe for spaghetti in curry sauce, involving apples, sultanas, chutney, olive oil and grated coconut, seems as frightening as attempting to prepare 150 grated scampi in 1lb (454 g) of butter and 1 pint of olive oil. More reliable recipes appeared in *The Times* of 14 September 1959 which stressed the Italian origins of this food and also instructed readers on how to make it fresh. By the 1970s the same newspaper produced equally palatable recipes written by Katie Stewart.[86]

If Chinese food writing in Britain has an equivalent of an Elizabeth David, it is the Anglo-Chinese son of a diplomat, Kenneth Lo.[87] We should not, however, stretch the comparison too far. Chinese cookbooks had already appeared in Britain before 1945, albeit in limited numbers, while Lo's *Cooking the Chinese Way* did not have the same impact, either in the long or short term. This finds partial explanation in the fact that numerous other volumes immediately followed and, in fact, preceded it, but also because Ken Hom, with an international publicity machine of the type associated with multinational electronics firms,[88] has subsequently become the pre-eminent western representative of Chinese food. The main explanation for the dominance of Chinese people in the spread of awareness of their food in Britain probably lies in the fact that relatively few Britons would have travelled in China in the way that Elizabeth David did in southern Europe. The Chinese cookbooks appearing from the early 1950s helped to standardize the dishes eaten in the newly emerging restaurants and bring them into the homes of British people. At least nine such volumes appeared by 1965, some of which formed part of a series on international cuisines.[89]

The first of these, by Doreen Yen Hun Feng, contains a lengthy introduction outlining the basics of Chinese cooking followed by a long list of recipes, many of which would not appear in a restaurant menu.[90] Kenneth Lo and Oliver Frank ponder the relative merits of Chinese and French cuisine and whether the former surpasses the latter.[91] Lo's book, which aims to simplify Chinese cooking, provides extensive detail on the basic ingredients, together with a relatively small selection of dishes. Frank has an equally detailed introduction, but follows this with more recipes, including those which would become increasingly recognizable, such as chicken with a variety of products including pineapple and mushrooms. It would seem unfair to accuse these early writers of constructing a standardized range of dishes. Others also follow

the pattern of Lo and Frank of going into great detail about the nature of Chinese food and providing a wide variety of recipes.[92] But by the middle of the 1960s some standardization had occurred. In 1960 Son Chan, a restaurateur who had left China in 1928, published his *Good Food from China* in which he suggested 23 set menus, increasingly recognizable from Chinese eateries in Britain and specifically aimed at western palates. These included 'Chicken Livers Sauté, Shrimp Fried Rice, Beef and Broccoli and Tea' as well as 'Savoury Chicken Wings, Rice, Shrimps Cantonese Style, Bok Choy and Tea'.[93] In 1965 a long-established British writer, Helen Burke,[94] turned her attention to Chinese food, suggesting this cuisine had become so popular that even those who had already made their names in food writing felt the need to focus on it. But, once again, the menus she provides look familiar. They include 'Sweet corn and chicken soup'; 'pacific prawns and black soya bean'; 'boned duck Cantonese style'; and 'fried soft noodles'.[95]

In view of the number of Indian cookbooks that had appeared before 1945, it might seem problematic to speak about a culinary revolution having an impact on the spread of this cuisine. Nevertheless, change does take place, partly because of the impact of those returning from the British Empire who wished to continue eating familiar foods. At the same time, while a large number of cookbooks on curry had appeared before the 1950s, the years after this time gave rise to an increasing proliferation, just as in the case of other cuisines. The number of such volumes began to grow from the middle of the 1950s, reflecting the emerging interest in international cookery, some appearing as parts of series of books on food from other parts of the world.[96] The spread of Indian food, or at least the concept of it, develops in an evolutionary rather than revolutionary way, as evidenced not simply by the existence of books on curry from the Victorian period, but also by the presence of curry recipes in more general nineteenth-century cookery volumes. It is difficult, therefore, to speak of a seminal book or pioneering figure in the history of curry in Britain because so many writers produced volumes on this dish, both Indians and Britons.

An examination of some of these early post-war books certainly reveals a degree of standardization, replicating the Anglo-Indian dishes that had emerged during the nineteenth century and which appeared on restaurant menus. But it would seem unfair to tar each of these books with the same brush, as many have some elements of originality and a claim to some sort of 'authenticity', if not in the manner of Elizabeth David, who travelled around Italy. Anyone visiting India would essentially find a population heavily dependent on vegetarian food with little resemblance to Anglo-Indian curry.[97] In essence, virtually all dishes that appear in Anglo-Indian cookbooks represent Anglo-Indian constructs.

One of the volumes fitting most comfortably into this description is Harvey Day's *Curries of India*. Despite a claim to authenticity in the intro-

duction it must represent one of the most standardized cookbooks of the post-war period. The chapter on 'Meat, Game, Egg Curries' contains dishes such as 'pork vindaloo', madras beef curry, 'jal farazi', 'country captain' and egg curry.[98] A number of other volumes published in this period resemble Day's in the sense of basically reproducing familiar Anglo-Indian recipes.[99] More interesting volumes, in terms of both the amount of effort put in by the writers and the variety of recipes described, include those written by Shanti Rangarao, Balbir Singh and Dharamjit Singh.[100]

Curry recipes became increasingly common in magazines and newspapers during the 1960s and 1970s. Once again, the *Caterer* produced some of the most bizarre of these including fruit curry, whose ingredients consisted of '4lb. forequarter of New Zealand lamb, 1 lb. onions, 2oz. butter, 2 garlic cloves, 4 bananas, 1 pint yoghurt, 2 pints stock, 1½ oz. curry powder, salt to taste, 4oz. chutney'. The same journal carried a recipe for 'rice and curry stuffing in roast of lamb'.[101] *The Times* naturally took a wholly Anglo-Indian attitude towards curry, as well as avoiding bizarre dishes. An article of 6 August 1963 reiterated the nomenclature established in the nineteenth century:

> Of curries, there are as many varieties as ingredients, each with its enthusiasts. Ceylon and Madras, Malaya and Bombay, Bengal and Bihar, each has a curry of distinct character, differing in texture and colour and flavour . . .
>
> There are chutneys and pickles too . . .
>
> All these you must add to the side-dishes, yet still your curry furnishings are incomplete. You must have *chuppaties*, and *parattas* and *poppadums*.

The increasing circulation of recipes with foreign origins does not provide a concrete indication of the spread of the consumption of such dishes. In many ways the revolution in the interest in foreign food would have its real impact in the last two decades of the twentieth century, particularly as big business became increasingly interested in these products. While some evidence suggests that the domestic consumption of international cuisine had taken off by the 1960s, other indicators do not.

For instance, although foreign cookbooks may have increased in number from the 1950s, so too did those claiming to focus on British foods, despite the ambiguity of the concept.[102] These partly represented a reaction against the proliferation of books on Chinese, Italian and Indian food. But, once again, these publications do not provide concrete evidence about domestic consumption patterns.

Several surveys and contemporary accounts from the 1950s to the 1970s suggest that the foods found in foreign restaurants and cookbooks had little impact at the dining tables of Britons. Unfortunately, most of these accounts

do not break down the products consumed into enough detail to allow definite conclusions. Government figures prove especially limited in this sense. For instance, while we learn of expansion in 'convenience foods' between 1958 and 1964, we have no further details.[103] Similarly, an analysis of the National Food Survey from 1979 actually suggests 'resilience' in British household diets during the 1970s in terms of 'the overall distribution of the diet between meat, fish, dairy products, cereals, sugar, fats, fruit and vegetables' but, once again, such information proves of limited use. This analysis does, however, point out that domestic rice consumption increased, probably because more people ate Indian and Chinese dishes.[104]

But other indicators provide more detail on the spread of new foods into British homes from the 1950s. The first is the increasing availability of 'exotic' products in Britain after the end of rationing. Many of the classic cookbooks cited above, for example, guide readers to shops selling the ingredients necessary to produce the dishes they describe, although they are aimed primarily at middle-class readers. As early as 1950 Elizabeth David mentions the availability of 'stuffed vine leaves imported in tins from Greece . . . in many supermarkets and delicatessen shops'. She advises readers to 'turn them out of the tin, rinse them in a colander, arrange them in a pyramid on a flat dish, and squeeze lemon over them'.[105] She also mentions, for instance, that 'Genuine Greek *taramá* can be bought from King Bomba's Italian produce stores' in Old Compton Street in Soho.[106] Malya Nappi also refers to this store in her 1959 volume on Italian food, together with thirteen other shops that sold products for her dishes. All of these were in London and included leading department stores such as Selfridges, Army and Navy and Harrods, again indicating the social status of those who cooked such dishes.[107] By the end of the 1950s, when Indian and Chinese immigrants had begun to open grocery stores for their own communities, native shoppers could also purchase products for eastern dishes from outlets in London.[108] Those wishing to cook Indian meals could also buy 'Ranji's Readi-Curry' a 'paste' made of a 'blend of 16 different spices, plus tomatoes, onions, garlic and fat'.[109]

A 1958 volume entitled *Shopping for Food*, aimed at the middle-class housewife, suggests the ready availability of a wide range of products by this time. The authors, Rachel and Margaret Ryan, divide their book into a series of chapters according to different products. The one on fish, for instance, mentions 'common fish' such as sea bream, cod, haddock, mackerel and red and grey mullet, as well as 'unusual fish', such as octopus and squid.[110] Most interestingly, a chapter on 'Dry Groceries' lists a wide range of products including curry powder and curry paste, which 'can be bought in any grocer's'.[111] Olive oil of various types also existed, although 'virgin' was 'expensive and not widely stocked'. Some bottles carried the initials 'BP', meaning 'British Pharmacopaeaia', indicating that 'it is suitable for medicinal use, though it is perfectly

suitable for table'. Olives, meanwhile, could be bought 'from an increasing number of grocers'.[112] Pasta had also become widely available:

> At one extreme, there is the village grocery store where you will almost certainly find some form of macaroni and tinned spaghetti. At the other extreme, at an Italian grocer's in Soho or a similar shopping district you will be confronted with perhaps a score of varieties, sold loose by the pound or the packet. In between these two, many grocers stock a number of Italian pastas which are always made with hard wheat and cook to a much better consistency than English products.[113]

By the end of the 1960s Pasta Foods of St Albans produced a 'hundred varieties of British pasta'.[114] The Ryans divided rice into two types: 'a shortish, plump grain, used mainly for puddings' and 'a longer, harder variety . . . suitable for curries and other dishes using boiled rice'.[115]

During the course of the 1960s supermarkets increasingly stocked more exotic products, either as ingredients or as processed foods, as the influence of eating out in Indian, Chinese and Italian restaurants became ever more influential on domestic consumption. We should not forget the Jewish origins of two of the major supermarket food chains – Tesco and Marks and Spencer – although this was not reflected to any extent in the products they sold as, mirroring the assimilation of the Anglo-Jewry, these companies increasingly became part of British life.[116]

Similar comments apply to one of the main food-processing firms of the early post-war years, Lyons. This company played a leading role in the spread of frozen food products, through the Lyons Maid and Findus brands, as well as ready-made cakes and other desserts such as Swiss rolls, trifle sponges and Battenbergs. Findus products introduced by the early 1970s included beefburgers, 'Fish Bake Bordelaise', savoury pancakes and lasagne, while its rival, Birds Eye, produced a similar range of goods, including 'Cod in Butter Sauce'.[117] The pioneer brand for 'ethnic' food was Vesta, which launched its first convenience meal, chicken curry, in 1962. Its range would subsequently expand to encompass more curries as well as Chinese and other international products.[118]

These types of food became increasingly familiar in British supermarket freezers, which grew in size and in the percentage of space they took up. Sainsbury's, 'sometimes . . . tailored its products to a particular locality' so that in Swiss Cottage (with a community of Jewish refugees from the Nazis as well as exiles from Eastern European communist states) the local store sold a variety of 'Continental foods' by the end of the 1950s including salami, ravioli, sauerkraut and liver sausage. By the middle of the 1970s such items became available at delicatessen counters in Sainsbury's stores. The first of these, opened in Wandsworth in 1971, 'stocked 73 items which included pâté,

Continental sausages, salamis, hams, apfelstrudel, Danish pastries and cream cakes'.[119] Marks and Spencer, with its own product range, St Michael Foods,[120] also introduced increasingly exotic products during the course of the 1960s and 1970s with the help of its food technologists. In 1973, for instance, it launched food in 'aluminium pouches', with the pioneering products being 'ravioli in cheese sauce with ham; ravioli with mushrooms in cream sauce'; and 'tortellini in cream sauce'.[121] By the following year Marks and Spencer offered pâté in 150 stores, as well as launching a range of 'Indian' foods.[122] During the 1970s Marks and Spencer also introduced new fresh products, including avocados.[123]

Oral narratives reflect the changes that took place in domestic consumption patterns from the 1950s to the 1970s. Mavis Mullahay of Leicester remembered the meat and two veg patterns of the 1950s and 1960s and claimed that she did not eat pasta and rice until the late 1960s and early 1970s because of its limited availability. By the 1970s she also began to cook Indian food, helped by the availability of spices due to the Ugandan Asian influx into the city, as well as spaghetti Bolognese, despite a rather conservative husband who ate it with a 'knife and fork' and 'four rounds of toast'.[124] In contrast, Jane Noble faced an earlier introduction to 'foreign food' because her father was a well-travelled sailor with a wide range of eating experiences. As a resident of various parts of inner London during the late 1960s and 1970s, she also came into contact with Greek, Italian, Chinese and Indian food.[125]

Dramatic changes had taken place in domestic consumption from the end of rationing to the beginning of Thatcherism. Against the background of the culinary enlightenment pioneered by Elizabeth David, Britons in 1980 ate quite different foods to those they had eaten in 1955. The development of food-processing industries played a significant role in the transformation. Companies such as Unilever and Lyons worked against the background of the impact of immigration which resulted in Britons wishing to sample at home the Indian, Chinese and Italian food available in restaurants. Increasing availability of new products, especially pasta and rice, gave them the opportunity to make their own curries and spaghetti dishes. However, while meals as diverse as pizza and prawn cocktail may have become increasingly popular, meat and two veg retained an important influence.

The Success of the Culinary Revolution

The final two decades of the twentieth century witnessed the assimilation of products that had taken off from the late 1950s into the British way of eating. Dishes such as curry and pasta increasingly moved away from restaurants and on to dining tables or laps in front of the TV. Contrasting the beginning of the twenty-first century with the end of the Second World War, the one word clearly differentiating the two periods is 'choice'. Whereas the state limited the foods

available in the early 1950s, by the start of the new millennium consumers faced a bewildering array of products, categorized in a variety of ways, including nationality and ethnicity. In addition to the cuisines that had become established during the culinary revolution, above all Italian, Chinese and Indian, new national and regional foods also began to have an impact, including Thai and Mexican, the latter largely as a result of US multinationals bringing products from their domestic market to Britain.[126]

Cookbooks reflect the changes which took place in the home. The culinary enlightenment of the 1950s and 1960s meant that no writer could have the same seminal impact as Elizabeth David. Nevertheless, we can identify several developments in the cookery book market since the 1980s. First, the increasing importance of television because, as the influence of Graham Kerr and Fanny Cradock disappeared by the middle of the 1970s, new personalities would take their place, many of whom had complex ethnic origins. With the arrival of satellite and digital broadcasting, channels devoted simply to food have emerged.[127] As a consequence, an increasing proliferation of books has occurred, some of them written by the leading TV celebrity chefs. While health and nutrition have increasingly represented one of the major sub-genres of cookery writing, as concerns about the welfare of Britons have come to the fore,[128] cookbooks have increasingly appeared along national and ethnic lines. In addition, French influence, which had been dominant until the 1960s, lessens in more general cookbooks that tried to become truly international. This is in contrast to the 'international' works of Francatelli or Escoffier which simply viewed food through a dominant French paradigm. The end of Fanny Cradock's influence symbolizes the death of the French master narrative in Britain,[129] as post-modern international and ethnic minority influences emerge.

Since the 1980s a series of figures on the British cookery scene have emerged. Some of these, such as Gary Rhodes, Delia Smith, Gordon Ramsay and Jamie Oliver, appear to have 'pukka' British credentials, to use a phrase beloved of the last of these, although both Ramsay and Oliver have a truly international outlook.[130] However, perhaps moving away from the mid-twentieth century domination of the British cookery scene by Britons such as Elizabeth David and Fanny Cradock, and returning to the nineteenth century, many of the new stars have interesting ethnic origins. In the first place, three individuals with German/Jewish origins emerged in the form of Nigella Lawson and the restaurateurs Rick Stein and Heston Blumenthal. Although none of these emphasize their ethnicity either personally or in terms of their cooking, their progress to the top of the British culinary scene reflects the move of the Anglo-Jewry into the highest echelons of British society. Unlike previous Jewish cookery writers such as Florence Greenberg, who focused on Jewish food, Nigella Lawson fits comfortably into the mainstream.[131]

This contrasts to Indian cookery writers, whose influence remains almost entirely confined to their own cuisine. This applies to the doyen of this group, Madhur Jaffrey, who actually lives in New York but has had considerable influence in Britain, especially as a result of working with the BBC.[132] While she is seen as something of an Indian Elizabeth David, she has not had the seminal influence that David did, because she ultimately remains one of many writers on Indian food. In addition, despite her description of most Indian restaurants in Britain as 'second-class establishments that had managed to underplay their own regional uniqueness',[133] most of the dishes she describes in her *Invitation to Indian Cooking* do not appear on dining tables in India or the diaspora. There seems little difference between Jaffrey and the culinary geographers of the Raj, as she clearly writes for a western readership. This contrasts with the more educated and subtle approach of the second-generation Indian cookery writers in Britain, particularly Manju Malhi and Vicky Bhogal, who remain conscious of the origins and nature of the food they describe. But neither of these two Anglo-Indian writers nor any others have moved beyond the Indian food ghetto, unlike Lawson. Perhaps this is because they do not wish to do so or perhaps it is because, like some actors, they have become typecast as specialists in Indian food, working, like South Asian restaurant owners, in a niche market. In contrast to the writers of Anglo-Jewish origin, they focus on a distinct cuisine, one which has made a profound impact on Britain, unlike Jewish food, which has never really moved beyond observant Jews.

Pat Chapman has probably had a deeper influence on the spread of curry in Britain than any other food writer over the past 150 years, having written more about it than anyone else. For Chapman, the popularization of curry has become his life's work. His approach clearly has roots in the culinary geographers of British India. Chapman's interest in Indian food has different origins from that of Bhogal or Malhi, as he is from a British family who spent much time in India, although he was born in London in 1940. His 'grandparents returned in 1930 and brought the family back to England, thus ending an association with India that went back over 150 years'. They carried with them 'a deep love and nostalgia towards India, and a craving for spicy food'.[134] Chapman went to his first Indian restaurant at the age of six, although he had previously eaten 'curries cooked at home by my granny and mother'.[135] Clearly his Raj heritage had an influence on his food writing, which he subsequently passed on to a broad section of British society.

One of the most interesting (in terms of ethnicity) and high profile chefs is Ainsley Harriot. The son of Jamaican immigrants, he has, unlike those involved with Indian food, moved straight into the mainstream. We might see his success as a symbol of British multiculturalization. But, just as importantly, his lack of focus on West Indian food also reflects the fact that this cuisine has had a limited impact on British tastes.[136]

By the end of the twentieth century, as the link between nationality and food became established, there was a proliferation of cookbooks based on national and regional origins, often written by people with appropriate ethnic origins, especially in the case of Indian food.[137] Ken Hom, meanwhile, although a Chinese–American, has developed an international reputation, reflecting the global nature of the food about which he writes. He has become the best-selling author on Chinese food in Britain, as well as the most familiar representative of this cuisine on TV in Britain and beyond.[138] Thai cuisine, which took off in Britain as Thai restaurants expanded in the 1990s, has largely been written about by westerners,[139] while people of a variety of ethnicities have published on food recognized as Italian, as it has entered the mainstream.[140]

This ethnicization of food has partly resulted in a reaction, leading to the publication of books on British food, whose leading practitioners include the Yorkshire-born James Martin and Brian Turner. The front cover of Martin's *Great British Dinners* even features him holding a bulldog in a blatant example of branding. Both of these authors emphasize their Yorkshire roots, almost as if this gives them pride of place among Britons.[141]

Despite the increasing proliferation of cookbooks based on ethnicity and nationality, a look at any general volume of recipes provides one of the best indications of the multiculturalization of food in Britain. In this sense continuity exists with the majority of cookbooks published in British history, as so few of them have focused on ethnicity or nationality. Take Jamie Oliver's first volume, *The Naked Chef*, which has a wide variety of dishes, very few of which have a nationality assigned to them. Instead, they have an extraordinary variety, with influences from all over the world, ranging from 'Dry Grilled Chicken with Ginger, Chinese Greens and Noodles in a Herb Broth' to 'Ravioli with Prosciutto, Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Basil and Mozarella' and 'Boiled Bacon with Pease Pudding'.[142] Meanwhile, Good Housekeeping's *New Step-by-Step Cookbook* has a similar variety of dishes. Looking at the section on soups, the recipes include French onion, carrot and coriander, minestrone, Tuscan bean, hot and sour prawn, mixed fish chowder and gazpacho.[143] As well as suggesting internationalization, these two volumes also indicate the death of Escoffier and French dominance. By delving into such works, as well as those of authors such as Nigel Slater,[144] and comparing them with rationing recipes from the 1950s, we can fully appreciate the culinary change that has taken place in post-war British history.

Instead of the standardized uninspiring recipes, largely determined by the lack of available ingredients of the early post-war years, by the beginning of the twentieth century a bewildering array of cookbooks offers a wide range of recipes to all classes of society. From the age of austerity, through the culinary revolution, the late twentieth century went on to become the age of choice because of the range of products available. One manifestation of this was

the internationalization and multiculturalization of food. The success of vegetarianism, the organic movement and dieting products also indicate the proliferation of food choices, and cookbooks offer a literary back-up to all of these movements.[145]

While the increase in the range of cookbooks available, including those on ethnic lines, does not actually prove that domestic consumption of 'ethnic' foods has necessarily increased, it does give a fairly good indication that change has taken place. Blythman's writing remains rather sceptical about the extent to which British people actually cook. She argues that while TV schedules, publishers' catalogues and newspapers demonstrate an obsession with food and cooking, 'watching other people cooking food or talking about cooking food has become a substitute for doing it yourself', meaning that Britons 'have become a nation of food voyeurs'.[146]

This aspect of Blythman's argument is largely irrelevant to the spread of more diverse food products and does not change the fact that increasing multiculturalization and internationalization has occurred. More important is her assertion that, by 2003 'Britain ate more ready meals than the rest of Europe put together'.[147] This needs contextualization against the background of the post-war proliferation of processed foods in Britain. Ready-made Chinese and Indian dishes in particular reflect this trend as they represent another 'product'. While most Britons may have decided not to cook the sort of dishes they see on TV, in cookbooks or weekend supplements, or which they have eaten in their local Indian or Chinese restaurant, usually because they choose not to invest the time required in making them from scratch, this does not mean that they do not eat them at home.[148] They do – but, like much of the food eaten in British homes, factory workers and machines have prepared them.

Other indicators suggest that the cooking of exotic foods does take place in British homes. A MINTEL survey from the end of the 1990s suggested that 'three quarters of users of Chinese foods had purchased products defined by MINTEL as being ingredients', while the figure for Indian food stood at 68 per cent.[149] A Key Note Survey pointing to the growth of 'ethnic' ready meals, also indicated an increase in raw ingredients such as, in the Chinese case, soy sauce, noodles, vegetables and fruit, as well as, especially in the Indian and Italian food sector, 'cooking sauces'.[150] The increased popularity of rice provides one of the best indications of the spread of oriental foods in the home kitchen indicated by the success of Rashmi Thakvar, the owner of Tilda Rice and the nineteenth wealthiest Asian in Britain in 1999.[151]

Most importantly for the spread of 'ethnic' foods, multinationals and supermarkets had jumped on the bandwagon, producing and publicizing them by the end of the twentieth century. Marks and Spencer, for instance, which pioneered many new products during the 1970s, continued to do so in subsequent decades. As early as 1981 this retailer introduced 'heat and serve' dishes

in the form of chicken chasseur, chicken supreme and Chinese style roast chicken. Four years later it extended its pizza range to include 'cocktail pizza squares'. By 1990 the products available included: 'Authentic Dim Sum' such as 'crispy prawn wonton . . . and cocktail spring rolls', each of which 'are served hot and can be baked or shallow fried and served with a selection of sauces' available from the same range; 'three traditional Indian dishes' in the form of 'potato and pea vegetable curry and spiced lentil dhal' which 'come in 415g cans, and chickpea dhal in a 425g can'; and three Thai dishes consisting of chicken satay, chicken curry and coconut rice.[152] By the middle of the following decade Marks and Spencer had re-branded its food under the slogan, 'This is not just food, this is M & S food'. As Blythman points out, the focus is entirely on 'expensive processed food', competing with the major supermarket chains – Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Morrison's – with similar upmarket brands.[153]

The Waitrose supermarket chain produced a range of Indian products including ready meals. In addition, it also offered 'a complete Indian dinner from our Special Order Service', whereby customers could place orders six days in advance, collect their meal from their local branch and serve it to dinner party guests. However, like other chains, Waitrose also sold ingredients that would allow, for instance, the cooking of dishes such as 'Okra and Potato Curry', whose constituent parts included previously difficult to obtain products such as ghee, cumin, tumeric and okra.[154] By 2000 such ingredients had moved out of shops owned by South Asian immigrants and into supermarkets, supporting the idea that some sort of adventurous home cooking did take place in ethnically British homes, notwithstanding the fact that this occurred more often in areas with high concentrations of South Asians. In 1995 Asian shopkeepers in Leicester feared that 'they could be put out of business by big chain stores who have started selling exotic fruit and vegetables',[155] although this remained a largely ungrounded concern.

As well as supermarkets, multinational food companies, together with businesses set up by South Asian migrants in Britain, have also produced ingredients for processed foods and have created their own ready meals. Sharwoods, established during the nineteenth century, experienced significant growth during the twentieth. A 1980s pamphlet entitled *Sharwood's Indian Food* provided a background to products from this part of the world, pointing to regional variations, before moving on to outline the main spices used in Indian cooking as well as some of the 'pulses, food and vegetables'. The pamphlet concluded with details of the product range which included four types of mango chutney, 'authentic canned curry sauces', 'easy-to-use sachet mixes', canned vegetables 'to accompany an Indian meal', seven types of curry powder, 'quick versatile curry pastes', 'a range of Indian spices' and 'puppodums and pappards'.[156] With an advertising budget of £800,000, in 1983 Sharwood's launched a range of frozen 'Indian classics' including tandoori chicken, chicken korma and lamb rogan josh.[157]

Twenty-first century store cupboard ingredients, 2007.

Sharwood's remained one of the 'major market players' in 'ethnic foods' into the 1990s. The other major firms included a range of multinationals and home-grown South Asian companies. G. E. Costa's brands included Blue Dragon, with a focus on Indian and Chinese ingredients as well as introducing Thai products. Heinz, through its 'Weight Watchers' frozen food range, included Indian meals, while Findus, a subsidiary of Nestlé, took a similar approach through its 'Lean Cuisine' range. Master Foods, meanwhile, sold Uncle Ben's cooking sauces, while Home Pride launched a similar range. All these products are aimed essentially at the ethnic majority. The major companies established by South Asians, notably Patak's and NATCO, also sell to members of their own ethnic groups.[158]

By the end of the twentieth century 'ethnic foods' had clearly become part of the everyday consumption patterns of Britons. Not only did the dishes represent a particular British interpretation of foods eaten in other parts of the world, the methods of preparation fitted perfectly into the food-processing revolution of the post-war period. While Blythman may present a fairly accurate assessment of the allergy of Britons to cooking, some individuals embarked on the preparation of international foods with enthusiasm, as indicated by members of the Curry Club. Its founder, Pat Chapman, claimed to 'receive, on average, 30 letters a day addressed to me personally, on the subject of curry' which 'during a period of twelve months adds up to around 10,000'.[159] Although the Curry Club primarily aims to review and promote Indian restaurants, it has also encouraged Indian cooking at home. Chapman himself has written numerous cookbooks.[160] In addition, the Curry Club has launched its own range of ingredients, covering dozens of products, from ground spices, beans and pulses, to chutneys, pickles and bottled sauces.[161] Those who cooked from scratch included Mike Bates, from Ratcliffe in Greater Manchester, who contacted Pat Chapman:

> I feel compelled to write to you and express my gratitude for the wonderful publication that you have produced. I refer to your book 'FAVOURITE RESTAURANT CURRIES'. As an avid curry fan for many years and countless hours sweating over a hot stove in my kitchen attempting to produce an authentic Indian curry thanks to your book I feel that I can now safely say that I have cracked it.[162]

Similarly, Alan Shaw from Cleveland wrote to Chapman:

> I recently purchased a copy of your book, '250 Favourite Hot and Spicy Dishes', and as a keen amateur cook have had great pleasure in preparing many of the recipes for both friends and family.[163]

The Domestication of Foreign Food

In the half-century since the end of rationing a revolution has taken place in the domestic eating habits of Britons. Led by increased affluence, the impact of immigration and big business, the meat and two veg culture of the 1950s, while not disappearing, sits comfortably alongside curry and rice or pasta with sauce.

Much of the transformation occurred in the period generally described as 'the Sixties', when something of a culinary revolution occurred. Led above all by Elizabeth David, the first British food writer to produce books on the diet of people who lived outside Britain, with a strong focus on authenticity and ingredients, she set a pattern that others followed, leading to an increasing proliferation of foreign cookbooks by the 1960s and 1970s. The spread of Indian, Chinese and Italian restaurants during these decades also played a profound role in the entry of the products they served into British homes.

Big business, whether in the form of supermarkets or multinational firms, has also played a central role in the move of foreign foods from the restaurant to the home. In the same way that restaurants produce foods tailored to British people, large firms have copied these dishes, moving further away from what members of ethnic minorities initially consumed. By the end of the twentieth century, much of the 'ethnic food' eaten in British homes mirrored the more general consumption of processed products.

Nevertheless, while only a small minority of Britons may have cooked the recipes of individuals such as Elizabeth David or, more recently, Nigel Slater, it seems rather simplistic to dismiss the rise of interest in cooking simply as 'voyeurism'. Foreign foods have not entered the home only as a pre-cooked and complete meal requiring heating at gas mark seven for 25 minutes. The rise in pasta and rice sales from the 1960s provides the best indication that foreign foods are being cooked. Similarly, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, the availability of all variety of ingredients for Indian food, from raw spices to

sauces, suggests that many Britons prepare their own meals. This can either involve cooking from scratch with spices and chickpeas, for instance, or it may mean frying chicken for a couple of minutes and then pouring a sauce on top of it.

Whatever the extent to which Britons cook, it seems clear that a culinary revolution has taken place since the 1950s. Driven forward by a combination of factors against the background of wider developments in British economy and society, the ethnic origins of the foods consumed have undergone the most rapid and dramatic transformations to have taken place in British culinary history. As is the case of restaurant food, these products have become domesticated, not simply because they have moved into the home, but also because their nature and cooking methods have changed in accordance with the tastes of the British consumer.

Part IV

Conclusion

Chapter Eight

Food and Multiculturalization

> You people are quite capable of making absolutely anything English if you choose to do so . . . I should not be the least bit surprised if, eventually, curry, like fish and chips, is considered 'English'. No doubt a day may come when the traditional Sunday roast will be replaced by the 'traditional' Sunday curry.[1]

Food, Income, Globalization and Migration

In the conclusion to her study of the relationship between food and immigration in the USA, Donna Gabaccia asserted,'Our food reveals that we are cosmopolitans and iconoclasts; we are tolerant adventurers who do not feel constrained by tradition,'[2] essentially stressing the melting-pot theory of US immigration and ethnicity.[3] She indicates the way in which foods with migrant origins, such as frankfurters and pizza, increasingly became part of US life, even though they may have undergone some transformation in the move into the USA. She precedes her quotation by asserting that Brillat-Savarin 'would have no trouble describing American cultural identities' in the way that she does. Thus Gabaccia differs somewhat from Hasia Diner, who lays greater stress on the 'foodways' of particular migrant groups who made their way to the USA during the nineteenth century.[4]

In the USA immigration remains central in the country's creation myth, reflected in its historiography. Britain, on the other hand, does not have a creation myth based on the centrality of immigration in its evolution, despite the fact that population movements over millennia have shaped the country.[5] An acceptance of the concept of multicultural Britain usually focuses on the African–Caribbean and South Asian populations who arrived after the Second World War.[6] This approach ignores other migrant groups in modern British history, especially those who entered the country before 1945.[7] In reality, migration has played a central role in the evolution of modern Britain, indicated by the hundreds of thousands of Irish and Jews who moved to the country in the century before 1914.[8]

The development of British food patterns since the Victorian period provides one of the clearest indications of the way in which migrants have impacted on the 'British way of life', influencing consumption both inside and outside the home. Over the past 150 years the vast majority of Britons have moved from a situation in which food choice remained very limited to one in which it

became bewilderingly complex. While migration offers one explanation for this transformation, other factors also need consideration.

Increasing wealth and personal disposable income underlie most other developments in British society over the past century and a half.[9] Only the strength of the British economy could have led to the demand for migration in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[10] Similarly, the move away from the concept of food simply as sustenance during the mid-Victorian period to the choice available today clearly needs contextualization against the background of the increasing wealth of Britons. A reading of cookbooks published in the late nineteenth century indicates that choice did exist, especially for those higher up the social scale who possessed servants able to cook the type of food suggested in *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*. While volumes for the working classes also suggest choice, this remained more limited. Social surveys conducted until the early post-war decades indicate that all groups in society ate a fairly limited range of 'traditional' British dishes, whether fried breakfast or meat and two veg. While the higher sections of British society may have eaten the best cuts of meat, those lower down had to make do with fatty and scraggy scraps. The increasing disposable income of all sections of British society in the post-war period meant that choice became a reality, manifesting itself not simply through the increasing availability of overtly 'foreign' products, but also in the rise of vegetarianism, foodyism and, most ironically in the context of the past 150 years as a whole, slimming.

While increasing disposable income may provide the background to the expansion of choice, a series of other structural developments also allowed the evolution of multicultural food choices, especially in the post-war period. In the first place, we might look at the catch-all term of globalization[11] which, in the context of the past 150 years, has a series of meanings. In the first place it refers to the internationalization of trade. This process does not signify modernity because of the availability of products within Britain from beyond its shores before the nineteenth century. Chocolate, coffee, tea and the potato provide examples of products with origins from beyond Europe that had become staples of the British diet by the Victorian Period.[12] Since the mid-Victorian period international trade in Britain has increased significantly, meaning that by the end of the nineteenth century the country had become heavily dependent on imports.[13] Some of these such as wheat, became staples, while the twentieth century meant the increasing domestication of originally exotic fruits, symbolized by the banana.[14]

One of the clearest indications of globalization for Britain since the Victorian period lay in the British Empire. While the international legacy of this system of government had many effects on the peoples around the globe who became its subjects,[15] the Empire also struck back in a number of ways. One of these was immigration, especially from the Commonwealth in the post-war

years,[16] but also through the movement from Ireland from the nineteenth century. From a culinary point of view, the legacy of the Empire is curry, evolving from the autochthonous eating traditions that existed in India combined with the desire of those Britons who lived in the Raj from the eighteenth century to consume meat.[17] With the arrival of migrants after 1945 the ultimate symbol of the Anglo-Indian encounter would spread beyond the experience of the small number of Britons who had lived in India to become available to the entire British population, whether in restaurants or ready made in packaging.

This leads to the third aspect of globalization in the form of the rise of big business, both British and foreign, and its influence on the eating habits of Britons. This had already begun to manifest itself before 1945 as seen through the arrival of brands such as Heinz.[18] But, since that time, large companies have played a major role in the dining habits of Britons both inside and outside their homes. The victory of the foreign restaurant in Britain after 1945 partly means the entry into the country of US chains, especially McDonald's, Burger King and Kentucky Fried Chicken during the 1970s so that, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, at least one of these, if not all three, has a presence in every British city centre. Just as importantly, processed foods have reached the British table, or at least the lap in front of the TV. Supermarkets and multinationals have essentially involved themselves in a copycat process, replicating food eaten in restaurants established by migrants, so that the most important 'ethnic' products to reach the home are Chinese and Indian meals. In addition, US multinationals have also helped to bring into the home other foods with no British connection, such as Mexican.

These essentially represent post-war developments, connected with increasing wealth. Another aspect of globalization is the spread of ideas about food, whose most important medium comes in the shape of the cookbook. It may seem easy to dismiss such volumes as irrelevant in contemporary British society because they do not mirror the cooking patterns of most of the population. However, cookbooks have the same role for culinary development as political ideology has for the evolution of states. Without Rousseau or Voltaire the political history of France and Europe would probably have taken a different turn and without Marx and Lenin the course of twentieth-century Europe would almost certainly have been different. In the same way, without Brillat-Savarin and Escoffier, French-inspired dishes would not have dominated concepts of European cooking up to the 1970s, while without Elizabeth David the reaction against 'haute cuisine' and towards 'real food' may never have occurred in Britain. Thus, for much of the past 150 years the most important culinary writing in Britain originated in France, whether reflected in the books of Francatelli, Soyer, Escoffier or even Fanny Cradock. By the end of the twentieth century (perhaps mirroring the decline of French international influence, but also indicating increasing globalization) cuisines from other parts of the

world had become popular in Britain as interest in French-inspired food declined. While this process involves a move away from the 'haute cuisine' despised by Elizabeth David, it also has its roots in the interest in curry which, before the immigration of large numbers of people from South Asia after 1945, had circulated for over a hundred years in the form of numerous cookbooks on this subject.

Immigration brings together many of the above developments and also determines the nature of products eaten in Britain. It is difficult to overestimate the influence of migrants on the food industry (incorporating both restaurant and domestic consumption) since the middle of the nineteenth century. Most obviously, they have profoundly influenced the development of eating out. To suggest that they have dominated this sector exaggerates the situation. For most of the period under consideration the majority of restaurateurs, as well as catering staff, have ultimately been native-born Britons, usually with no obvious foreign origins. Yet the percentage of migrants and their descendants in the restaurant trade remains high. Before the First World War over 10 per cent of London waiters were Germans, to which should also be added Italian, French and Swiss nationals. By the end of the twentieth century the foreign waiter, or at least foreign staff, ranging from employees in Chinese and Indian restaurants to workers in McDonald's, had become ubiquitous.

Perhaps the most important influence of migrants lies in the innovations they have introduced to the catering trade in Britain. Clearly, they have brought in the foreign restaurant in its most obvious sense, i.e. the Chinese, Indian, Italian or Greek eatery that sells itself as such. But migrants have played a central role in the evolution of the concept of the restaurant *per se* during the nineteenth century, an idea which spread out from post-Revolutionary Paris. Immediately after the Second World War, meanwhile, Italian migrants in particular played a role in the spread of coffee and sandwich bars, although these also built on the already existing milk bars of the interwar years.[19] At the same time many Italians and Greek Cypriots opened restaurants in the provinces. Most ironically, migrants from all over the world, especially from Cyprus, since the 1940s have played an important role in the survival of the fish and chip trade although, once again, we should not exaggerate their numbers. Similarly, Turkish Cypriots and Turks in particular have also helped the spread of the concept of the hamburger outside multinational chains, as they sell this product in their kebab takeaways.

The influence of the commonly accepted idea of the foreign restaurant, essentially a post-war phenomenon as foods have developed nationalities, has become particularly important. The spread of ready meals in Britain has close connections with the growth of the Chinese and Indian restaurant trade from the 1960s. Once Britons had become accustomed to such flavours, they wished to eat them in their own homes. It was possible to do this in a variety of ways.

First, they could bring home the exact same products in the form of takeaways, either from the same restaurants or from takeaway outlets. Second, by the 1980s, or earlier if they ventured into Chinese or Indian grocery stores, they could purchase all of the spices and other necessary ingredients and cook from scratch the meals they had previously tasted. Third, again by the 1980s, Britons could prepare meat or vegetables and then pour cooking sauces on top of them either in the frying pan (or wok) or in the oven. Finally, and perhaps most commonly in a society that has relegated one of the most basic aspects of life, cooking, to one of its lowest priorities, they could reheat previously cooked meals, a process which began with frozen products during the 1960s and evolved to have the capability to produce a near replica of a restaurant curry by 2000.

This returns us to the role of the supermarket, which plays an increasingly dominant role in British eating patterns. Even here migrant influences become evident through the Jewish origins of Tesco and Marks and Spencer. South Asian migrants have also played a significant role in the manufacture of products associated with their countries of origin, including pickles, cooking sauces and, above all, rice, whose increased consumption symbolizes the transformation in the foods eaten in Britain since 1945.

Multicultural Food

Thus, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Britain appears to have reached a situation where 'multicultural' food is the norm, reflecting contemporary society. Nevertheless, this concept has many meanings and does not simply reflect developments in the post-war period. Migration had become a fact of British life before 1945, while numerous international influences had already impacted upon foods, indicating that they have never had nationalities. We can proceed with this discussion of multicultural food along the following lines. First, we can reiterate long-term foreign influences. Second, we can stress the adaptation of migrant foods which has taken place in the move to Britain. And third, we can reiterate the changes that have occurred in domestic consumption since 1850 and, more especially, since 1945.

For much of British history the central dietary aim of the majority of the population was simply to secure enough food to stay alive. This point applies to a large percentage of Britons in the centuries before 1945. Under such circumstances the notion of food having nationality did not really exist, even for those sections of British society who, during the nineteenth century, did not have worries about obtaining sufficient nutrition. Those who ate the dishes of Francatelli or Isabella Beeton consumed food inspired by the spread of French haute cuisine without considering such issues to any great extent. Similarly, general cookbooks carrying recipes for curry did not usually make any refer-

ence to its origins. At the same time, working-class potato eaters and those who ate anything containing sugar would not have cared about the fact that potatoes and sugar arrived in Britain and became domesticated in the country as a result of the evolution of Britain's overseas Empire. By the nineteenth century, such products had become part of the everyday meals of Britons. While they may have had little to do with immigration, they certainly had connections with globalization, especially through the spread of the British Empire. Even by the Victorian period Britons ate multicultural – or certainly international – food which had become domesticated.

While meals began to develop nationalities before 1945, so that some cookbooks had appeared along such lines by the Second World War, only in the post-war period did the notion of foods having nationalities evolve. The only real exception was curry, the ultimate multicultural dish and the culinary symbol of Britain's encounter with India. While a few Chinese restaurants and cookbooks had appeared in Britain before 1945, these had not yet had the impact that they would subsequently have. Notions of Italian or other types of European food hardly existed in these years, even though European migrants lived in Britain and even though they ate, at least initially, quite different products to those eaten by indigenous Britons. In reality, in the age of Total War in Europe, when so much else mattered, the idea of foods having distinct nationalities remained irrelevant.

This situation changes significantly after 1945, partly as a result of the arrival of migrants who sell distinct foods, particularly Chinese and Bangladeshis. They play an important role in the evolution of the concept of foods with nationalities, as well as changing the nature of dishes consumed in Britain. However, as part of the migration process, the food of newcomers undergoes a process of transformation. Their meals also become multiculturalized. In the same way as migrants and, more especially, their descendants, generally change from using their mother tongue to speaking English, the food they eat also changes. A good illustration is the Jews, who arrived from Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. Originally Yiddish-speaking, they tried, as far as possible, to maintain their language, especially in the 'ghettoes' they established.[20] They would also purchase and cook foods closely resembling those they had eaten in their *shtetl*, even though their dishes, like their language, had developed as a result of thousands of years of previous migrations.[21] In the same way, as subsequent generations moved out of the ghetto and spoke English as their mother tongue, so Jewish food gradually changed to become similar to the meals eaten by the rest of the population, except for the avoidance of the products most offensive to Jewish dietary ritual. Individuals have made their own choices about the extent to which they adhere to these restrictions. The migration process from South Asia followed a similar path. In fact, the newcomers of the 1950s initially had difficulty obtaining the products

they traditionally ate and often had to consume native foods until their specific communities grew large enough to allow the establishment of food shops. But even then, as the second generation went to English-speaking schools and used the language of their neighbours, so their foods changed accordingly. Dishes such as 'maharajah's mash' offered a spicy adaptation of what the ethnic majority ate. At the same time South Asians also consumed toast, cereal and other products common to the rest of the population. Even the most apparently marginalized Muslim communities (who may choose to wear what appears to be traditional dress) speak English as their mother tongue[22] and, in many cases, eat all sorts of meat products consumed by the rest of the population, provided that slaughtering has taken place according to halal ritual. Such individuals, like the food they eat, provide a clear indication of cultural transfer, of the realities of multiracial Britain.[23]

But just as migrants and their descendants undergo transformation as a result of their movement, so they also change the environment in which they live. To reiterate once more, migration has had a profound impact on Britain since the Victorian period as millions of people have entered the country. They have played a significant role in economic growth, as well as in the evolution of aspects of high and, more especially, popular culture, especially since 1945. They have multiculturalized Britain.[24] Food represents perhaps the most obvious way in which this has occurred.

While curry symbolized the Anglo-Indian symbiosis during the Raj, it also reflects the same process in Britain, but in this case arises as the result of Indians moving to Britain rather than vice versa. While the first phase in the history of curry may have developed during the culinary mapping of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the initial nomenclature evolved, new dishes developed after 1945. All these products represent culinary transfer or exchange. They differ significantly from the food eaten in Indian homes, either in South Asia or Britain. In contemporary Britain, they also indicate the commodification of food to suit native tastes, providing another symbol of the impact of immigration and multiculturalization, whereby migrants open small businesses with the specific aim of serving the interests of the majority population.[25]

Although it is difficult (without a self-standing project on the subject) to prove the origins and evolution of fish and chips and to pinpoint with certainty the ethnic groups responsible, we can speculate about its Jewish and French origins and, more confidently, speak about the important role played by migrants in the purveyance of this dish, especially after 1945.

Curry and fish and chips provide the clearest indications of the multicultural nature of Britain and its food. Ironically, such products have evolved precisely at a time when dishes have increasingly had nationalities assigned them. But this process has largely occurred as a result of branding. In reality,

Surjeet Kaur Deogan frying pakoras in Southall, 2007.

virtually all dishes eaten in British restaurants or in front of the TV usually have some international or multicultural influences. Chicken with pineapple from a Chinese takeaway has little resemblance to the food eaten by a resident of Beijing, in the same way that a Sainsbury's chicken korma has nothing to do with the vegetarian dishes eaten by the overwhelming majority of Hindus in India. The foods consumed in Britain have undergone profound transformation during the migration and commodification process. They are multicultural foods, hybrid products, eaten in early twenty-first century Britain in a country profoundly transformed by immigration and globalization during the past 150 years.

'Tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are.' An application of Brillat-Savarin's statement to contemporary Britain would reveal some of the major developments in the country's history over the past 150 years. First, imperial rise and fall. Second, increasing wealth and commodification, in a fully industrialized state, where much of the population has lost touch with food outside the restaurant and supermarket. And, third, immigration, which has impacted on both the foods of the migrants and the dishes consumed by the population as a whole.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BL/NSA/NLSC	British Library, National Sound Archive, National Life Story Collection
BT	Board of Trade
ED	Ministry of Education
FS	Register of Friendly Societies
HLL/HRP	Highfields Library Leicester, Highfields Remembered Project
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
JML	Jewish Museum London
LCC/PH	London County Council Public Health Department
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LRO	Leicester Record Office
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture
MH	Moving Here
NA	National Archives

PREFACE

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

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PART II: THE FIRST RIPPLES OF CHANGE, CIRCA 1850–1945

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PART III: THE CULINARY REVOLUTION SINCE 1945

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PART IV: CONCLUSION

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