2013

Sitting at the table of nation: narratives of bacalhau, the Portuguese national dish

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Social Sciences, Media and Communications

Title of the Thesis

Sitting at the Table of Nation:
Narratives of Bacalhau, the Portuguese National Dish

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This thesis is presented as part of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Wollongong"

Month and Year
October 2013
I, Ana Paula Arvela, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of Social Sciences, Media and Communications, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged.

The document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institution.

Signature

Date

24th October 2013
Food is more than what we eat. Food is also a cultural and social marker inscribed by relations of power, class, ethnicity and gender. This is what makes food a powerful cultural signifier. Grounded by the concept of national dishes I explore the role of food in the production of cultural identities. I use bacalhau as a tool of analysis because bacalhau (codfish) is the main ingredient of the Portuguese national dish. I examine what constitutes a national dish and explore why, how, and for what purposes a fish, which is not a Portuguese native species, has been recognised as the national culinary icon.

Using qualitative methods of research, I investigate multiple sites where cultural representations of bacalhau come into view. I draw on interviews with Portuguese chefs and food writers. I analyse a range of textual sources and I evaluate the main exhibition in the Museum of Ilhavo, which is dedicated to the practice of bacalhau-fishing.

The findings of this study are significant because they hinge on the role of food as a marker of difference. Based on these results I argue that bacalhau has been made a cultural signifier through historically bound processes that are manifested in various ways. Indeed, in the early decades of the twentieth century bacalhau was made to connote the nation through the deployment of representational strategies that produced “imagined communities” and unified national cultures. At the cusp of the twenty first century, chefs and food writers are using a new lexicon – cozinha d’autor, cozinha da terra and matrix of flavours – to use food (and bacalhau) as a cultural signifier that demarcates difference and articulates the tensions between the local and the non-local, between tradition and innovation, between sameness and hybridity.

By asserting its role as a cultural signifier, bacalhau confers membership with the nation and contributes to the production of cultural identities. Hence, this study contributes to an evaluation of bacalhau as an instrumental marker of Portugueseness that re-asserts cultural difference and re-defines the local in the current European pan-national context.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would have not been possible without the support from many people. In particular I wish to acknowledge the continuing and unconditional mentoring of my supervisors. My gratitude goes to Chris Barker who over the last four years has patiently reassured and supported me through the many stages of this project. Chris’ guidance and numerous proofreads encouraged discipline in my writing and provided this work with the required academic insights. Likewise, Anne Collette’s advice has been invaluable, giving me the necessary enthusiasm, support, constructive critique and editing expertise that I needed to complete this undertaking. To you both, thank you.

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents. They have always supported my decisions and trusted my judgment. I would like to make them proud. I also want to show my gratitude to my two daughters Jessica and Nicole – I feel privileged to have their support, unconditional love and words of encouragement.

I have shared this four-year journey with many people. The ‘post-grad corridor’ and more recently the ‘research hub’ have been my second home over the last four years; they have also been the place where I shared many moments and laughter that not only made this project possible but also made it an enduring memory that I will cherish. Thank you Jenn, Josip, Trent, Emma, Nga, Frank, Clara, Azadeh, Marisa, Mostafa, Farzaneh, Cecilia, Tshering, Hannah, Scott and Lukas.

I am grateful to Brian Martin as the coordinator of the High-Output Writing Group. Brian’s enthusiasm and encouragement was inspirational and helped me to appreciate the significance of daily writing to complete a PhD thesis.

I wish to acknowledge the Faculty of Arts for the research funding I was granted through an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA), which financially enabled me to complete this thesis. Likewise, I extend my appreciation to the Faculty Post-Graduate Support Team and the editorial assistance of Rowan Cahill.
Finally, I want to express my gratitude and acknowledge the unreserved willingness of all the chefs and food writers who enthusiastically participated in the interviews. Without their contribution this project would not have been the same.

To you all, my wholehearted token of appreciation.
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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Food is usually taken as an ‘ordinary’ and mundane aspect of everyday life because it is essential for human survival. Yet, food is also associated with culturally meaningful practices which play a major role in generating processes of identification. I explore the role of food in the production of cultural identities, particularly focusing on national dishes and national cuisines as a representation of nation. I use bacalhau – the Portuguese national dish – as my tool of analysis, and explore why a fish that is not a local natural resource has become recognised as the culinary signifier of nation.

Bacalhau (salted-dry codfish) has been part of Portuguese eating habits since the sixteenth century. Initially a way to fulfil religious dietary prescriptions, bacalhau became an entrenched eating habit and gradually entered various other fields of cultural production. That is, from its presence at the table, to becoming a valuable commodity and later a culinary icon, bacalhau has been present in a gamut of sites and media where meaning is produced.

This dissertation expands on previous research which has focused on the study of bacalhau. It differs from them in that it broadens their scope by specifically centring on the cultural consumption and production of bacalhau as a signifier of nation. It purposely examines the way bacalhau has been discursively utilised across various sites of cultural signification in order to produce a narrative of nation. Furthermore, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the role of bacalhau in Portuguese culture and particularly highlight the multiple ways in which signification can make food a powerful tool in the production of national cultures and identities. It will evaluate and question the seamless articulation between food and nation and contest the assumed ‘natural’ and ‘innate’ taste that the Portuguese people have for bacalhau. One of the main questions that this study proposes to explore is to evaluate what has made bacalhau, a non-native resource, Portuguese.

Bacalhau is not just food; it is also a “way of life”. I do not use Raymond Williams’(1997) terminology in an essentialist and reductionist way, but rather as a way
of recognising the many links that this fish has generated across cultures, cooking practices and food habits. Bacalhau has been an integral part of many people’s lives across time and space and despite elitist attempts to fix its meaning and its cultural ‘location’ by calling it national, I will show that bacalhau has proven to be a vehicle for cultural and culinary hybridization. Nonetheless, in Portugal bacalhau has been identified as a culinary signifier of nation, highlighting the cultural construction of meaning given to food.

A constructionist theoretical framework underpins this research project. That is, this study takes the stance that meaning is not essential to objects and practices; meaning does not exist in an independent world ‘out there’ waiting to be found. Rather, it is constructed in and through language and other signifying practices, so that meaning does not exist independently of culture. The application of this theoretical principle is particularly pertinent in this study because it explores the meanings and values that have been endowed to a fish to make it a national culinary icon.

A relevant aspect of this study is its empirical approach to the analysis of the various fields where the cultural consumption of bacalhau involves the production of meaning. It focuses and explores a range of texts and includes interviews with Portuguese chefs and other cultural agents. Borrowing from Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1984) and Mike Featherstone (Featherstone 1987), I have called these informants cultural intermediaries because I consider them to have a relevant role as arbiters of taste and style, interpreters of symbolic consumption of goods and as ‘experts’ that decodify systems of culinary knowledge.

This project is located within the context of Portuguese food culture. Its main objectives are to examine what makes bacalhau Portuguese, who named it as such and for what purposes. By exploring these issues the present study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of food as a signifier of national culture. Furthermore, I expect the results from this research to contribute towards a better appreciation of some taken-for-granted and normalised ‘truths’ around the consumption of bacalhau in Portugal: one is that bacalhau is an ‘innate’ taste, or as one interviewee said “it’s in our DNA”; the other is that the consumption of bacalhau over hundreds of years in Portugal is
primarily a legacy of stringent Catholic dietary requirements for which the solution was the ‘dumping’ of large quantities of the seemingly endless supply of North Atlantic cod in the European market despite long and treacherous trips to source it.

An important part of the argument here is the claim that the meanings attributed to bacalhau are a function of its “semantic networks” (du Gay, Hall et al. 1997 p15). That is, I argue that bacalhau has acquired specific meanings and values because of its expanded cultural connotations with other key cultural signifiers, of which the sea has particular relevance.

Throughout this study, I argue that the sea is a primary signifier of Portuguese national culture. This is the result of complex works of cultural signification which I analyse and that I consider to be a specific feature of this study. In turn, the symbolic association between the sea and bacalhau has contributed to the cultural significance the latter has acquired in Portuguese ethos. Using bacalhau as a tool of analysis, this study examines cultural representations of bacalhau across different historical contexts, sites and practices in order to ascertain what makes it a signifier of nation.

1.2 Outline of Chapters
This thesis consists of eight chapters preceded by an introduction and followed by a conclusion.

In Chapter 1 I define the topic of the thesis. I start by tracing and mapping a narrative of bacalhau using historical texts and archival resources to establish how bacalhau entered Portuguese eating habits. I explore the food-culture nexus using a theoretical framework that underpins the conceptualisation of national cultures and processes of identification. Moreover, by centring the analysis on specific examples where bacalhau is named as a symbol that is made to signify the nation, I demonstrate how the food-culture nexus works through the exercise of cultural forms of power that can name because they momentarily stabilise meaning.

In Chapter 2 I justify the methods and techniques used in this study and analyse the
outcomes of fieldwork. This is an empirical research project that uses a range of techniques of investigation underpinned by a constructionist theoretical framework. This study analyses the production of cultural meaning thus favours qualitative methodology based on micro-level research and primary data collection. A range of cultural texts are explored: from cookbooks, to newspapers, archival sources and the museum. Likewise, the analysis of semi-structured interviews with Portuguese chefs and other cultural agents is also deployed.

In Chapter 3 I undertake a textual and semiotic analysis of representations of bacalhau by focusing on two main topics. First, using historical texts and archival material I explore the Problema do Bacalhau\(^1\) (the problem of bacalhau) because it contextualises problems of consumption and supply during the nineteenth century and frames them as a social and cultural issue that left residual effects in the Portuguese way of life. As I demonstrate, in the early 1930s the Estado Novo\(^2\) attempted to resolve the follow-on effects of the Problema do Bacalhau with the implementation of the Campanha do Bacalhau\(^3\) (the bacalhau campaign). Thus, as a second topic I analyse the Campanha do Bacalhau using two resources: the newspaper Jornal do Pescador\(^4\) (the fisherman’s newspaper) and the ceremony Benção dos Bacalhoeiros\(^5\) (the blessing of the fleet). The objective is to evaluate the cultural implications of political and economic policies and to show that a campaign initially launched as a program of economic recovery and nation-building, needed to use bacalhau’s already established significance to attain its goals.

In Chapter 4 I examine a cross-section of culinary texts in Portuguese cookbooks. I search for culinary accounts of bacalhau in a wide range of texts from sixteenth-century manuscripts to the most recent publications in the twenty-first century. Cookbooks are

\(^1\)Problema do Bacalhau translated as the ‘Problem of Bacalhau’. I will use the Portuguese referent throughout this study.

\(^2\)Estado Novo (New State) refers to the dictatorship headed by António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970) which lasted between 1932 and 1968 when he stepped down due to illness. The regime ended in 1974 with a democratic revolution.

\(^3\)Campanha do Bacalhau translated as Bacalhau Campaign, referring to an economic program of economic recovery launched by the Estado Novo in 1934 based on the implementation of the bacalhau fishing-industry. In the literature Campanha do Bacalhau has been compared to Mousseline’s Wheat Campaign in Italy (Garrido 2010).

\(^4\)Jornal do Pescador (The Fisherman’s Newspaper), first published in 1939, analysed in Chapter 3.

\(^5\)Benção dos Bacalhoeiros translated as the ‘Blessing of the Fleet’, analysed in Chapter 3.
cultural artefacts that shape and are shaped by the context in which they are written and read. Thus, I evaluate the study of these texts as a window into the eating habits of the audiences to which the cookbooks were directed. I consider accounts (or otherwise) of bacalhau in cookbooks as evidence of patterns of consumption and indicative of the food habits of their readers. Hence, I expect to establish a better understanding of bacalhau’s culinary status over time with the outcome of this investigation.

In Chapter 5 I examine culinary representations of bacalhau through the eyes of chefs and food writers/critics whom I interviewed when undertaking fieldwork in Portugal. I name the respondents cultural intermediaries. I use this concept because I analyse a sample entirely constituted by individuals with high media visibility who are as much involved in the symbolic as in the material production of food. As opinion makers, arbiters of style and taste these individuals are actively engaged in creating what they refer to as cozinha d’autor (author’s cuisine). I analyse this term and explore its meanings and function, arguing that cozinha d’autor is a symbolic good that conceptually and pragmatically creates a ‘new’ cuisine with one eye on tradition and the other on innovation. That is, cozinha d’autor makes contemporary Portuguese cuisine a hybrid and decentred cultural signifier.

In Chapter 6 I broaden the scope of this research and analyse culinary representations of bacalhau using the concept of national cuisines and exploring the role bacalhau plays in it. Considering that cuisine and cooking are sometimes used interchangeably and that for the purposes of this study it is important to highlight their differences, I explore the conceptual differentiation between the terms. In a further and closer examination of the interview material, I focus particularly on two notions introduced by the interviewees – cozinha da terra (cuisine of the land) and matriz de sabores (matrix of flavours). In conjunction with cozinha d’autor, these are concepts that to my knowledge are yet to be analysed within a theoretical framework because they have only recently been introduced in culinary discourses in Portugal. I contend that the articulation between these terms – cozinha da terra, matrix of flavours and cozinha d’autor – is evidence of the dynamic ways food and cuisine can be culturally represented in the context of the twenty first century.
In Chapter 7 I explore the cultural representation of bacalhau in the Museum of Ilhavo. This analysis is underpinned by the material collected during fieldwork undertaken whilst visiting the museum at the time of the annual *Festival do Bacalhau* (Bacalhau Festival) in Ilhavo. The objective is to present a personal, cultural reading of the Museum of Ilhavo, whose major exhibit is entirely dedicated to the *Faina Maior*[^6], that is the practice of bacalhau-fishing in Newfoundland. The results attained have made a significant contribution to this project because they are indicative of the symbolic value bacalhau has been endowed within past and current cultural narratives. Furthermore, the dynamic development of the museum as part of the local tourism industry reveals the intentional strengthening and future plans for using bacalhau as a cultural (and national) signifier of what is local. Thus, at the Museum of Ilhavo bacalhau as a signifier of the local is made to signify the national.

In Chapter 8 I expand on the concept of the local, launching the discussion within the broader local non-local nexus. The objective of this last chapter is to explore how the local is constructed. I explore two specific case studies: first, I use research material collected in an interview with the *Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa*[^7] (the Lisbon Academy of Bacalhau) to evaluate the use of bacalhau (local) in the Portuguese diaspora (non-local). This analysis enables me to evaluate how individuals conceptually articulate the practice of eating bacalhau which emotionally attaches them to a local (nation) whilst helping them to negotiate the feelings of physical absence when living ‘away from home’. The second case study is based on an interview with governmental officers from the central department of Tourism – Turismo Portugal. This material gives an insightful view into how cultural elites, in this case institutional leaders, construct the idea of a ‘national-local’ by counterpointing it with the non-local European ‘other’. They do this, by discursively using national products that generate cultural difference, re-affirm cultural identities and bolster national competitiveness in the tourism industry.

[^6]: *Faina Maior* was coined by the Estado Novo and refers to the practice of bacalhau-fishing in Newfoundland at the time the *Campanha do Bacalhau* was implemented.

[^7]: *Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa* is one of the many non-profit community organisations which use bacalhau as its logo. *Academias* carry out fundraising programs to assist underprivileged populations. They have a strong membership network support system. For more details see Chapter 8.
Using the results of this research I make a final analysis of the role of bacalhau as a signifier of culinary and national culture and assess how these results contest the initial normalised and taken-for-granted assumptions about the consumption of bacalhau in Portugal. Moreover, I further integrate the three terms collected in the interviews – *cozinha d’autor*, *cozinha da terra* and *matrix of flavours* – within a broader discussion of the *local* in the production of the national and the role bacalhau and food take in this process.
DEFINING THE TOPIC

1.1 Introduction

_The nation is a fluid cultural construct and food is one among many agencies which participate in its construction and the continuing process of its redefinition (Ashley, Hollows et al. 2004 p89)._ 

Bacalhau is recognised as the Portuguese national dish, a culinary unifier which as Daniel asserts “… is the only thing that (in Portugal) everyone agrees on” (Daniel, 2001). In narratives of Portuguese food, bacalhau is represented as the culinary signifier of nation. Bacalhau flags ‘Portugueseness’ as much in mundane everyday meals, as in the ritualised symbolic feasts often associated with traditional commemorative events. Tales of bacalhau are intertwined with epic narratives of a maritime nation and of its brave national heroes, illustrating bacalhau’s place in the Portuguese national ethos and also reminding us that despite food’s ordinary-ness, it is culturally and even politically significant. As Ashley et al. argue:

In this opening chapter I define the topic of this dissertation. I introduce bacalhau, exploring what it is and how it was initially integrated into the Portuguese eating habits. I examine primary sources of research that include archival material and historical accounts of bacalhau. Acknowledging the constructionist stance of this study I assert these texts are not a ‘truthful’ (where ‘truth’ means an accurate representation of an independent object world) description of events, but rather are an historical account involving an already selective and interpretative narrative of the past. This is not to say that these events are fictional, but rather to assert that they have been selected and interpreted in a manner that makes them relevant to the argument and to the purpose of this study.

I follow this analysis with an evaluation of the food-culture nexus. Using bacalhau as a tool of analysis I explore its place in Portuguese culture; how it became recognised as a signifier of nation, and how it enabled the discursive production of national identities. That is, I start to evaluate bacalhau symbolically as a food with a cultural meaning and
function. To this end, I utilise Semiotics to explore bacalhau as a sign in language and then proceed to examine it as a discursive device.

This analysis is underpinned by a discussion of the relevant theoretical framework that guides the conceptualisation of ‘national cultures’. The aim is to create a canvas where I can start outlining the multiple components that have contributed to the making of bacalhau as a culinary and cultural signifier of Portugueseness. That is, I start evaluating bacalhau as a food integrated in many narratives of nation and as a node of articulation with powerful signifiers of national culture – the sea, the Sea Voyages of Discovery and the national heroes of the sea. It is a fundamental premise of this study that the iconic role bacalhau plays in Portuguese culture is a result of the many stories that have symbolically associated it with the foundational signifiers of nation most of which foreground the role of the sea.

Throughout this work I draw on the concept of ‘foodways’ as a term which has entered scholarly literature and has been increasingly used in Food Studies. I use it to mean “… everything about eating, including what we consume, how we acquire it, who prepares it, and who is at the table” (de la Pena and Lawrence 2011 p2). As argued in the literature, the term foodways has the added advantage that it can be used as a conceptual tool which enables the exploration of questions of “… mobility, locality, and local embeddedness of foodstuffs” (de la Pena and Lawrence 2011 p2). The significant role that bacalhau has had across time and its impact on many people’s lives is better expressed and captured through the use of ‘foodways’ because bacalhau is more than food; it is also as cultural signifier.

1.2 Historical narratives of bacalhau

1.2.1 What is bacalhau

It is accepted as a ‘matter of fact’ that bacalhau entered Portuguese eating habits as a result of the stringent dietary prescriptions imposed by the Catholic Church on its followers. These measures made fish a valuable commodity and contributed to the integration of salted codfish into the culinary repertoire of several European countries
since the Middle Ages. Portuguese call it *bacalhau*, Spaniards refer to it as *bacalao*, Italians *bacalla* and the French *morue*, attesting to the presence of this salted-preserved fish across multiple European foodways. In none of these locations was the fish ever available or eaten fresh. In contrast, Anglo-Saxon cultures have no specific referent for salted codfish because traditionally it has never been part of their eating habits. To the British economy salted codfish represented a valuable commodity associated with past trading practices, despite the current popular consumption of fresh or frozen codfish in the iconic British fish and chips.

The codfish’s natural habitat is the cold water of the North Atlantic Ocean. Although the biological codfish family has a wide range of affiliations, the most praised species are the Atlantic cod, haddock, pollock, whiting and hake (Kurlansky 1999 p38). In this work I always refer to *bacalhau* as the sun-dried, salt-preserved Atlantic cod, scientifically nominated by its taxonomic classification as Gadus Morhua (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p205). Although Atlantic cod may also be found near the coast of New England in the USA, the best quality is native to the colder waters of the North Atlantic, more precisely off the Canadian coast in Newfoundland and Cape Labrador (Kurlansky 1999). Codfish’s prolific and fertile reproductive cycle largely contributed to the belief it would be an everlasting resource, as attested by the French writer Alexander Dumas who in 1882 described the once plentiful supply thus:

> *Cod’s fecundity is equal to its ferocity. In a very large cod, weighing sixty to eighty pounds, up to nine million eggs have been found. It has been calculated that if nothing happened to prevent the hatching and growth of its progeny, within three years one could walk over the Atlantic Ocean on solid codfish* (Dumas 1964 p92).

Despite the abundance of this natural resource, the introduction of technology in the fishing industry in the nineteenth century and thereafter, contributed to codfish being declared close to extinction a century later. The 1994 Canadian Moratorium imposed

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8 For an analysis of the different linguistic origins of these referents see Mark Kurlansky (1999 p35-37).
9 The generic name ‘codfish’ refers to ten families and over two hundred species of fish (Kurlansky, 199 p37).
10 By the end of the nineteenth century, the use of steam-engines in fishing boats and the introduction of trawlers produced a dramatic and indiscriminate increase of fish being harvested. This practice had a detrimental impact on the natural reserves of cod.
stringent quotas to regulate its harvesting and allow for re-stocking (Best 2009). Most of
the codfish currently available for consumption is resourced in the territorial waters of
either Iceland or Norway, making the latter the main exporter to the Portuguese market.
The very limited supply of the Newfoundland codfish places it at the top of the range
and at a premium price.

The use of salted codfish is not restricted to European countries. The past colonial
presence of the Portuguese in Brazil (1500-1822) and of the Spaniards in South and
Central America is attested to by the presence of salted codfish in their eating habits,
confirming the role of food as a historical and cultural testimony of people’s
trajectories. For instance, the presence of salted codfish in the eating habits of the West
Indians is a culinary legacy of its role as the main supply of animal protein in the
nutrition of the black-African slaves during their transportation to the Americas in the
seventeenth century (Kurlansky 1999). Likewise, Brazilians have incorporated bacalhau
into their eating habits making them the second highest world consumer of bacalhau,
closely following the Portuguese who rank first\(^{11}\) (Norge Norway Exports 2013). These
findings suggest that salted-codfish is embedded in the past and present eating habits of
many populations, yet Portugal is the only country that claims bacalhau as its national
dish. This gives rise to the key question that this study proposes to analyse: taking into
account that bacalhau is not a local resource why and what made the Northern Atlantic
harvested fish, bacalhau, the Portuguese national dish?

1.2.2 How it all began

Historical records of preserved codfish go as far back as the period between 985AC and
1011AC when the Vikings were already in Greenland roaming the North Atlantic
Ocean (Kurlansky 1999). According to the same source, the Vikings owed their survival
in this inhospitable environment to the sourcing of codfish which they preserved by

\(^{11}\) According to the Norwegian Seafood Exports Annual Report (2006-2007), Portugal ranks first claiming 35% of
Norwegian total exports of bacalhau. Brazil and Italy rank third with seventeen percent each (www.nor-
seafood.com). Recent literature, which I analyse in later chapters, confirms current similar trends.
hanging it to dry in the icy air during winter (Kurlansky 1999 p21). The Vikings were later joined by the Basques who were able to improve the quality of the final product by salting it straight after the catch. This technique added extra advantages to the preservation process because it enhanced the flavour of the fish and extended its shelf life. As a result, codfish could be transported back to Europe without perishing and it would be ready for consumption when it reached its destination\(^\text{12}\). These preserving techniques were used until refrigeration became available in fishing boats in the twentieth century. Consequently, codfish was never available fresh in continental Europe. This explains why in all the Mediterranean cultures that integrated it into their eating habits, the referent is always to the fish in its salted presentation (Kurlansky 1999 p37).

The trade in salted-cod proved to be a valuable asset to the Basques who held the European trade monopoly until the fifteenth century. In Catholic Europe, rigid dietary prescriptions prevented the inclusion of red meat consumption for nearly one third of the calendar year\(^\text{13}\) and gave the Basque providores the opportunity to conduct a lucrative operation (Kurlansky 1999 p24; Matos 2001; Garrido 2010 p34). As a result of the preserving techniques utilised by the Basques, salted-preserved codfish proved to be a more palatable source of animal protein than the hitherto commonly used whale (Moutinho 1985; Abel and Consiglieri 1998). Consequently, its consumption increased in popularity and preference amongst the European population dependent on the supply of preserved fish as a source of animal protein. Thus, it is no surprise that the Basques tried to keep secret the location of such a prized catch for as long as they could.

By the end of the fifteenth century the interest in the North Atlantic grew. Trips were as much commissioned by the main European crowns searching for the passage that would take them to the spices of Asia, as they were conducted to ensure self-provision of the

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\(^\text{12}\) The Basques do not sun-dry salted codfish. This is called ‘green codfish’ (bacalao verde). Only the Portuguese have traditionally preferred a double preserving technique: salting and sun-drying the fish.

\(^\text{13}\) This is how the Swedish Lutheran pastor in the nineteenth century described the dietary prescriptions by the Catholic Church: “To the seven long weeks of Lent, we need to add the three days in every week throughout the year (jejum das quarto estações) as well as the Almanaque’s (calender) fifteen days of total abstinence when one is only allowed to have one meal a day constituted by fish and vegetables” (Rudders in Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p19) (my translation).
valuable commodity – cod. In 1500 the Portuguese Corte Real commissioned by the Portuguese King D. Manuel I charted and explored the North-Eastern coast of North America (Moutinho 1985; Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Matos 2001). The interest was not so much in finding the spice route, since Vasco da Gama had already reached Calcutta in 1498 rounding the southern tip of the African continent and sailing eastward. Rather, the Portuguese King D. Manuel I was seeking to ensure the Portuguese share of the valuable cod commodity in the Northern Atlantic waters. In 1506 D. Manuel I claimed the crown’s right to regulate the imports of bacalhau into the kingdom by taxing (royal tithe) all the fish from Newfoundland entering Portuguese ports (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010), demonstrating bacalhau’s commodity value.

Resourcing the fish and subsequently processing it became a successful venture for the Portuguese crown. In 1574 a Portuguese colony was established in Newfoundland by order of King D. Sebastião, so that straight after the catch the initial stages of cod processing (cleaning and salting - bacalhau verde\(^\text{14}\)) could take place. The final ‘sun-dried stage’ (secagem) would follow once the fish arrived in Portugal at a commercial ‘seca’\(^\text{15}\) (fish-drying enterprise), already operating in Aveiro at the time (Cole 1990 p2). As the Bristolian merchant Anthony Parkhurst documented in his 1578 writings, the major European Catholic kingdoms were present in Newfoundland actively engaged in resourcing large amounts of fish for their populations with a count of “100 Spanish fishing boats, 50 Portuguese, 150 French and 50 English” (Parkhurst in Moutinho 1985 p21).

By the end of the sixteenth century, Portuguese bacalhau fisheries achieved considerable economic gains. As Varela (Varela in Garrido 2010 p26) documents, at that time codfish seemed to be a resource with no end in sight with as many as seven-hundred multi-national ships catching bacalhau in the Great Banks. At the time, the total

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\(^\text{14}\) Bacalhau processing had several stages, starting with cleaning the fish and salting it straight after the catch. The fish was then stored in stacks in the hull of the ship (salting room) throughout the trip. When it arrived back in Portugal, the fish was washed and salted again and submitted to a process of sun-drying that took place until the fish reached the right degree of dehydration (Abel and Consiglieri 1998). This system was used until the late 1970s in Portugal. Currently the fish is dried in ‘de-hydrating rooms’.  

\(^\text{15}\) ‘Sun-dried stage’ (secagem) is the technique that differentiates the Portuguese processing of bacalhau from any other process.
production reached 3,000 tonnes of bacalhau and generated 100 cruzados in tax revenue (Azevedo in Cole 1990 p2). Based on the volume of production and consumption of bacalhau in the sixteenth century, Cole argues that the commodity was already a staple of the Portuguese eating habits by the 1500s (Cole 1990 p2).

The Portuguese bacalhau trade flourished and was successfully maintained until 1578. Studies carried out by Ivone Baptista (Baptista in Garrido 2010 p35) claim that in 1566 and 1567 Portugal produced enough bacalhau to guarantee self-sufficiency. The excess, which constituted one third of the total production, was exported in exchange for other commodities (Baptisita in Garrido 2010 p35). Sixteenth-century bacalhau self-sufficiency was a unique trend that was never repeated because ever since, the Portuguese expenditure of bacalhau has always been one of deficit, thus making Portugal always dependent on imports for local consumption.

It was in 1580 that the trend changed. The annexation of Portugal by Spain and the consequent integration of the Portuguese fishing flotilla into the Spanish Armada\textsuperscript{16}, brought with it the total loss of the boats that had secured consistent supply of bacalhau to the Portuguese population. Since then, and with the increasing disputes between France and England over the control of the North Atlantic\textsuperscript{17} (Matos 2001; Varela 2001), Portugal became totally dependent on importing bacalhau for internal consumption from the English merchants now in control of the codfish supply to Europe. Despite increased difficulties in accessing the commodity, especially due to market speculation and fluctuations, consumption did not decrease or stop (Moutinho 1985; Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Dias, Filipe et al. 2001). Portugal’s total dependency on importing the necessary supply of bacalhau was to be maintained till the beginning of the nineteenth century when the first attempts to revitalise the national fishing industry were initiated. This is analysed in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{16} At the time the differentiation between fishing and war vessels was unclear or even non-existent. Thus, when required, fishing boats were used as part of a navy flotilla. This proved to be disastrous for the Portuguese fishing fleet which at this point counted a large number of boats (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p35).

\textsuperscript{17} In the North Atlantic the struggle was between the English and the French, both aspiring for territorial and resource control of the area (Matos 2001; Varela 2001).
Nonetheless, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Portuguese never ceased to eat bacalhau. In fact, despite price speculation and inconsistent commodity supply, nothing seemed to constitute a deterrent to its consumption. As the food critic and writer Zé poetically expressed in interview, the relationship between the Portuguese people and bacalhau “is an authentic love story … incomprehensible!” (Zé 2011).

1.2.3 Consumption Patterns of bacalhau

To search for evidence of patterns of consumption and supply over the period of Portugal’s total dependency on imported bacalhau, I have used two different resources: archival and historical texts. I gathered data from the National Archives held at the Gabinete de Estudos Olisiponenses (Centre for Lisbon’s Studies) (Gabinete de Estudos Olisiponenses 2013) in Lisbon, where the proceedings of Lisbon’s City Council meetings are held and available for public consultation. These documents, dated as early as the 1600s, provided valuable evidence of bacalhau’s consumption and short supply. This latter, which rarely satisfied demand, was aggravated in peak periods in Easter and Christmas when religious dietary prescriptions increased product-demand and price speculation. For example, proceedings of council meetings dated 1612 referred to S. Francisco Convent receiving over Easter a donation of “uma arroba de bacalhau”\(^{18}\) (one arroba of bacalhau) (my translation) to feed the needy (Oliveira 1885 1Parte, TomoII p296). The scarce supply of bacalhau and the speculative prices practiced by the market, constituted a persistent problem that authorities found difficult to regulate, as attested to in different occasions within the same document.

Between the years of 1646-1647, the same source referred to the 1646 legislation which was passed in Parliament to regulate the entry of imported bacalhau (Oliveira 1885 1Parte, TomoV p26); in 1647 the same document addressed the measures taken by authorities to ensure bacalhau was kept safely and distributed to those that most needed

it. The aim was to avoid it falling into speculative hands (Oliveira 1885 1Parte, TomoV p92). Later, in 1653 the document clearly stated and made reference to the “foreigners” who unlawfully speculated on market prices to the detriment of disadvantaged buyers (Oliveira 1885 1Parte, TomoV p459).

Ten years later the situation escalated to new heights. Rather than generically referring to “foreigners”, the proceedings named the culprits and directly requested the English consul in Lisbon to intervene and make the English merchants accountable for evading the Portuguese law (Oliveira 1885 1Parte, TomoVIII p13-14,54). These documents clearly illustrate the total powerlessness of the Portuguese authorities to control the unlawful market techniques of unscrupulous wholesalers who financially benefited from the total reliance of the Portuguese consumer on outsiders for the supply of bacalhau.

This situation was further aggravated throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Portugal’s increased bacalhau consumption triggered the country’s even greater dependence on English imports (Moutinho 1985). Analysing a 1923 study by Mosés Amzalak, Mário Moutinho (1985) produced statistical evidence that showed the amounts of imported fish over a period of three centuries and illustrated the consistent increase in bacalhau’s consumption between 1672 through to 1929 (Moutinho 1985 p23-24). According to these figures, in 1672, 1,232 quintais of bacalhau (equivalent to 74 tonnes) were imported; in 1730, the total increased to 3,148 quintais (189 tonnes) (Fontes in Moutinho 1985 p23); in 1829, it rose to 277,920 quintais (16,675 tonnes) (Amzalak in Moutinho 1985 p24) and in 1902 a total of 17,962 tonnes were imported (Amzalak in Moutinho 1985 p32). As Moutinho argues, these figures document a steady increase in the amount of bacalhau imports and consumption over a period of three centuries. Expanding on Cole’s argument, Moutinho further asserted that “…bacalhau, at least in the nineteenth century became a staple with high financial representation in the national economy” (Moutinho 1985 p24).

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19 Quintal is an old measuring unit equivalent to 60Kg (www.ancruzeiros.pt/ancunidades.html).
For these reasons, the need to maintain a plentiful supply of animal protein to the Portuguese population was a long-lived problem with which governing bodies had to contend to prevent civil unrest. According to Marilia Abel and Carlos Consiglieri (1998), this was a problem already faced by the Portuguese King D. João IV (1604-1656) who went to great lengths to ensure steady imports of bacalhau because he was well aware that “to have the people’s support, the king needed to feed them” (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p53) (my translation). Likewise, and as the Lisboa City Council archives demonstrated, the official entities tried to contain market speculation and ensure free supplies to the financially disadvantaged at least at the time of higher demand such as Easter and Christmas. To this date, with the exception of the measures above-mentioned, I have been unable to find data that could substantiate the existence of any system of state subsidies or price-control policies designed to regulate and prevent market speculation and ensure consistent consumer supply. Nevertheless, evidence shows that the consumption of bacalhau never stalled.

The dietary requirements imposed by the Catholic Church triggered high demand for a fresh seafood supply. Consequently, the commodity’s market value increased, thus making it a signifier of class and prestige: the elites consumed the scarce and expensive supply of fresh locally caught seafood; and the populace resorted to the second rate salted fish 20 (Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Sobral 2007). Under the circumstances, throughout the nineteenth century the consumption of bacalhau took on more complex dimensions, which I explore in Chapter 3.

These results clearly assist in establishing some key points. First, they provide evidence to suggest that bacalhau, which had entered the Portuguese eating habits in the late 1400s in response to religious dietary restrictions, was by the turn of the nineteenth century well integrated into the people’s foodways, despite difficult supply and market speculation. Second, these results conclusively indicate that, with the exception of limited periods in the sixteenth century, bacalhau’s procurement was entirely dependent

20 Coastal communities also had access to seasonal fresh sardine and congo. However, they constituted a small percentage of the total population, thus leaving the vast majority dependent on the consumption of preserved fish (Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Sobral 2007).
on the commodity’s importation. Finally, there is also evidence suggesting that at least until the nineteenth century, bacalhau’s consumption was targeted to the less affluent, thus clearly segmented along vectors of wealth and status.

Thus far, the discussion has illustrated how a necessity, which started as the result of religious dietary codifications, evolved over time into a habit and a complex practice embedded in a range of fields of cultural production. This directs us to the central part of my argument: the food-culture nexus which I explore in the following sections. I proceed by defining the theoretical underpinnings that will guide the study in evaluating the role of food as a cultural signifier in the production of national cultures.

1.3 Bacalhau in Portuguese culture

…it (food) is also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and behaviours (Barthes in Kirkby and Luckins 2008 p4).

Food is essential to human life. Food is both nature (cultured nature) and culture; food is both nutrition and a ‘system of communication’ – a language that generates meaning creating a system of cultural representation. For example, bacalhau is both the food that has been integrated into Portuguese eating habits since the sixteenth century and a culinary icon of Portuguese cooking.

As a system of communication, food has long been part of the “cultural apparatus” (Ashley, Hollows et al. 2004 p81) that produces the nation. Review of the relevant literature in the field identifies food as a key signifier utilised to construct a homogeneous and essentialised system of representation of an idealised unified nation. As Bell and Valentine argue, “[t]he history of any nation’s diet is the history of the nation itself….” (Bell and Valentine 1997 p168). I argue further, that it is not only diet that represents the history of the nation, it is also the meanings that are attributed to some of the foods which become identified with it. For example, Igor Cusack (2000) asserts that nations are expected to have a national dish, a culinary icon, that represent it just as a flag or an anthem does (Cusack 2000).
After examining how bacalhau entered the Portuguese foodways in the previous section, I now explore how bacalhau became a signifier of national culture. Bacalhau’s narrative has been intertwined with that of the nation, not only as a staple food that feeds it, but also as a signifier that represents it. Thus, to evaluate its role in Portuguese culture I need to critically examine how the process of signification has taken place in a way that has integrated bacalhau within a broader conceptualisation of nation and made it the Portuguese national dish. So, what then is a national dish?

The idea of a national dish does not exist per se; it is produced in, and by language. That is, the idea of a national dish is a discursive device that uses the language of food to represent the nation. It generates meaning and knowledge that organises a way of talking, thinking and acting about a particular dish or food, giving it an imagined culinary quintessence of nation. There is a vast amount of literature exploring food as a tool of nation-building. Arjun Appadurai (1988) explores how cookbooks enabled post-independence India to think of itself as nation through the food it ate. Carol Helstosky (2003) analyses how the Italian writer Pellegrino Artusi (1820-1911) used the ‘language of food’ to assist the nineteenth century Italian unification process of nation-building. Sally Howell (2003), examines how Jordan’s Tourism Bureau ‘re-invented’ Mansaf as the national dish to promote Jordan-ness amongst ex-patriots. Yael Raviv (2003), explores falafel as the national dish of Israel. Geoffrey Pilcher (1998) studies the role of tamales in the production of Mexico’s national cuisine.

To analyse why, how and what made bacalhau the Portuguese national dish, I look at multiple sites where meaning about bacalhau is produced. To my knowledge there are no equivalent studies addressing this particular aspect of research on bacalhau, despite recent literature focusing on particular features of bacalhau’s historicity in Portuguese culture. For example Elsa Peralta’s (2008) A Memória do Mar, focuses on the Museum of Ilhavo as a construct of local memory; José Sobral’s work examines Portuguese official functions’ menus as signifiers of class and nationalism in the nineteenth century (Sobral 2007); Álvaro Garrido’s (2010) work centres on a comprehensive historical and
economic study of the Estado Novo’s\textsuperscript{21} deployment of the \textit{Campanha do Bacalhau}\textsuperscript{22} in 1934 (Garrido 2010 p15). In turn Mário Moutinho (1985) is a recognised and frequently referenced source of historical data. Finally Marília Abel and Carlos Consiglieri (1998), in work funded and sponsored by the \textit{Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa}\textsuperscript{23}, give a historical and culinary account of bacalhau in Portuguese culture. These are all significant contributions that highlight the need for a scholarly, multifaceted, approach in order to appreciate the role bacalhau plays in Portuguese culture. Nevertheless these works leave a gap that this study proposes to close by focusing on, and exploring, cultural representations of bacalhau across a range of sites where it comes into view to narrate the nation.

To name bacalhau as the Portuguese national dish is to give the fish a broader meaning with which bacalhau was not initially associated – the nation. This is what Barthes (1993) refers to as ‘myth’ or a second level of signification. That is, bacalhau which denotes fish (first level of signification), is made to connote nation (second level of the signification). Bacalhau, through a network of meanings or what du Gay refers to as “semantic networks” (du Gay, Hall et al. 1997 p15), is made to carry a symbolic meaning\textsuperscript{24}, which links it with nation. Giving bacalhau a second level of signification and associating it with nation, fixes and essentialises its meaning.

To attribute any food or dish with the tag \textit{national} is to ignore, at least temporarily, that food is a polysemic signifier; it does not take into account that meaning is arbitrary, constructed and contextual; that meaning is not essential and ‘naturally’ inherent. Meaning is always ‘sliding’ and being deferred (Derrida 1976), and is only ‘fixed’ through its temporary stabilisation (Hall, 1997). Thus, there is no food or ingredient that is inherently \textit{national}; rather, to name a dish \textit{national} is to endow it with a meaning that has been culturally generated and ‘fixed’ by forms of power. For these reasons, any study exploring this concept needs to address the reasons

\textsuperscript{21} See Footnote 2 in Introduction.
\textsuperscript{22} See Footnote 3 in Introduction.
\textsuperscript{23} See Footnote 7 in Introduction.
\textsuperscript{24} For a comprehensive analysis of myth as a second level of signification see Barthes (1993) or Stuart Hall (1997 p39-41).
underpinning how, when, why and by whom such a label was produced and made to ‘stick’. I address these questions in the following sections.

1.3.1 Bacalhau, a culinary signifier of national culture

Throughout this study I analyse a broad range of sites where bacalhau is represented. I start by exploring culinary accounts of bacalhau in tourist guides because tourism is one of the most influential industries of the twenty-first century; one which uses food as a device that promotes national cultures through demarcations of difference. Two main reasons have led me to this decision. Firstly, the various associations between the tourism industry and bacalhau to which I return at different points in this dissertation. Secondly, the tourism industry is a key sector in the Portuguese economy (Ministry for Economy and Innovation 2007), thus the need to acknowledge and evaluate the cultural implications of the many political and economic decisions the industry makes. For example, Cultural Tourism, a thriving and already established alternative form of the industry, facilitates and promotes the “contact between visitors and locals through experiencing local customs and ways of life” (Craik in Wearing, Stevenson et al. 2010 p31). In this context, local foodways occupy centre-stage in the industry’s market strategies.

Recognising tourism’s significant power in naming and sponsoring certain aspects of national foodways, I started by examining well-known tourist guides and webpages, searching for their accounts of bacalhau in descriptions of Portuguese food. The material I found was instructive because it illustrated how ‘truths’ become naturalised and taken for granted through multiple forms of cultural production, thus becoming a type of unquestionable knowledge and a matter of fact. For example, the 2011 edition of the *Lonely Planet Portugal* states:

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25 A 2007 study published by the Portuguese Ministry of Economy and Innovation forecast that by 2015 the tourism industry would be contributing 15% of GDP and contributing a similar percentage towards the national employment rates (Ministry for Economy and Innovation 2007).
As for seafood, even if you think you don’t like bacalhau (salted cod) there are two words for you: learn to. Bacalhau is bound up to myth, history and tradition in everything from everyday dishes to important celebrations; it would be bad form to pass it up... there are 365 recipes for cod – one for each day of the year (Regis, Kate et al. 2011 p391).

In turn, Jules Brown et al., in the 2010 edition of the Rough Guide to Portugal, affirms:

The most typical Portuguese fish dish is bacalhau (dried salted cod), which is virtually the national dish with reputedly 365 different ways of preparing it (Brown, Ellingham et al. 2010 p46).

The 1990 Fontana Holiday Guides Holiday Portugal made similar claims:

Being a coastal region, fish is a popular traditional dish, with excellent selections of varied seafood on offer. The Portuguese national dish of bacalhau – dried, salted cod – should be available (Wood and McDonald 1990 p229).

In addition, changing the medium of research to material available on the internet, the results did not vary. A random search on Google using ‘Portugal’ and ‘national dish’ as keywords, brought up multiple results. For example, the webpage for Solmarfoods, writes “Salt Cod – Portugal’s national dish” (Solmarfoods 2012). Similarly, the blogger Michelle in Montreal publishes several bacalhau recipes with the heading “Portugal’s national dish – Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá” (Michelle 2010). In turn the blog oldnewthing entitles its entry “Bacalhau the unofficial national dish of Portugal” (oldnewthing 2008), and makes unflattering commentary related to the saltiness of the dish.

As this material demonstrates, across a range of various mediums bacalhau has been recognised as the Portuguese culinary icon and named as the national dish. It is also worth noticing that these mediums of popular culture are either associated with the tourism industry (as is the case of the tourist guides) or with forms of social media. Either way, they act as vehicles with the power to reach large audiences to whom they promote and name the signifiers that become recognised as gatekeepers of local particularities inherent to that culture. In the present case, bacalhau was consistently named and promoted as the official national culinary icon.

It is in this sense that I explore food as culture. Expanding on Barthes’ initial statement – “food is a system of communication”, and borrowing Hall’s (1997) metaphor “culture
works like a language”, I assert that food also works like a language because it works as a system of representation that generates meaning. As a cultural device language produces knowledge, so that when I say that a dish is ‘national’, I am assigning it meanings and values unrelated to its nutritional and material existence as food. In turn, through the operation of forms of power, I stabilise meaning within a historical context; I produce regulated ways of talking about that particular food, thus making it a discursive device. That is to say, by referring to a dish as a ‘national dish’ I am giving it connotations that are contextual and have been culturally assigned to it. Thus, I assert and recognise the relevant role played by food as a symbolic signifier that produces cultural identities and is used as a discursive device for nation-building. Furthermore, as this discussion has illustrated, the naming of dishes with the classifier national occurs in sites where meaning is produced and stabilised through the exercise of forms of cultural power. In the next section I analyse how food discursively ‘constructs’ the nation.

1.3.2 Bacalhau, a discursive signifier of national culture

In the modern world, the national cultures into which we are born are one of the principal sources of cultural identities (Hall 1992 p291).

In this section I examine the way national cultures and identities are produced, specifically exploring the ways in which bacalhau has been discursively integrated into this process.

National cultures constitute pathways of meaning that help us to negotiate our way within the context of the nation. Since its inception, as a formation of modernity, the nation has been imagined as an essentialised, homogeneous and coherent body whose members share a common culture embedded in narratives told and retold through national histories, literary texts and popular culture. Stories of nation generate values and meanings which are consensually shared and reproduced by the members that subscribe to this “imagined political community” (Anderson 1983 p15), and which holds itself together within a temporal (historical) context. The nation is a ‘community’ “… because regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 1983
It is ‘imagined’ “…because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 1983 p15).

The interview with the President of the organisation *Academia do Bacalhau*[^26], illustrated how ‘imagined communities’ work. It further demonstrated how the communities of the Portuguese in diaspora use bacalhau as a tool that keeps them linked with the ‘imagined community’ they left behind (President 2011). According to the President, the *Academia do Bacalhau* is a community organisation originally constituted by the Portuguese diaspora, one that aims at preserving the essential markers of Portugueseness, its traditions and values. He further explains that to achieve these outcomes the *Academia* has chosen bacalhau, the ‘fiel amigo’[^27] (faithful friend), as its logo. In interview the President of the organisation enunciated the reasons for this choice. Bacalhau, he clarified, is a symbol that not only represents conviviality and togetherness through the sharing of food with those of a common ethnic background, but it does more: when migrants sit around the table eating bacalhau, in their imagination they are emotionally engaging and identifying with ‘something’ that is bigger than themselves – the nation, those others that they never met but with whom they share common narratives and traditions. In this case the sharing of food (and bacalhau), particularly on special occasions, took centre stage because of its symbolic meaning.

Narratives of nation produce an imagined body that thinks of itself as unified by the continuity of a shared past, common language, practices, traditions, and symbols (Smith 1991) that ‘enact’ the modern nation (Hall 1992). As Timothy Brennan (1990) asserts, ‘nation’ refers to “…both the modern nation-state and to something more ancient and nebulous – the ‘natio’ – a local community, domicile, family, condition of belonging” (Brennan 1990 p45). As expressed by the *Academia*’s spokesperson, in diasporic communities, bacalhau works as the link that gives the dispersed peoples a sense of

[^26]: See Footnote 7 in Introduction.
[^27]: Bacalhau is often referred to as the ‘fiel amigo’ (the faithful friend) because it was always available in the pantry.
belonging and emotional connection with the faraway home, the relevant others and the national culture they left behind.

The Portuguese national culture is anchored by some powerful signifiers – the sea, the *Sea Voyages of Discovery*, and its national heroes. They are divulged and universally promoted through the social institutions of the nation-state – the education system, the media and the museums – and passed on via processes of acculturation to the national citizens of all ages as part of a national historic heritage and culture. These are the institutional and discursive mediums that have been actively engaged in the making of national cultures, as unifying and harmonious “discursive devices” (Hall, 1999:297) that gloss-over difference and evade the deep internal divisions of class, gender and ethnicity that can only be “‘unified’ through the exercise of different forms of cultural power” (Hall 1997 p297). This is the essentialised national culture, unified by Andersons’ (1983) “deep, horizontal comradeship”, which does not accept dissent, does not welcome contested meaning, and which generates centred and stable processes of identification based on signifiers, often promoted by institutionalised forms of culture, as for example the museum.

The Museum of Ilhavo, which I examine in detail in Chapter 7, illustrates the institutional and symbolic role of the museum-institution in the production of national cultures. This particular case study illustrates how the Museum of Ilhavo, by dedicating its major exhibit space to the practice of bacalhau-fishing, brings to the fore the power the institution has to name cultural signifiers and assign hierarchical values to them. In this case, the museum has named the sea and by association bacalhau, as two signifiers of local identification. In turn, and by promoting bacalhau-fishing as a practice that in the 1930s and thereafter was constitutive of a strategic plan of nation-building, the museum discursively articulates the local with the national and recognises bacalhau as a signifier of cultural identities connoting ‘nation’.

28 I address this topic at length in Chapter 3.
Unified national cultures have been anchored by (violent) processes that eliminate cultural difference, promote allegiance and common signifiers of symbolic identification, thus making them robust structures of cultural power (Hall 1992 p296). The Portuguese nation has been imagined dialectically between the ‘us’ and the ‘others’; the holy and the pagan; the land and the sea. The land connotes the mundane, predictable and gendered security of home (Featherstone 1995 p59). In turn, the sea, with its associated dangers, represents the heroic life (Featherstone 1995) of the mostly male deeds that led the nation on a ‘magnificent’ path of national glory. In this enabling role, the sea has become a key signifier of national culture (Vakil 1996).

It is my contention that to fully evaluate the cultural role of bacalhau, one needs to acknowledge the polarising effect that the sea and the heroes that navigated it, have had on narratives of nation and how they have become discursively articulated with bacalhau. The sea has been narrated as the route that took the nation to its heroic heights, classically epitomised by Luís de Camões’29 sixteenth-century literary work Os Lusíadas (Vakil 1996). The sea has been the medium where national heroes have thrived – os heróis do mar (the heroes of the sea) – and where the defining events of nationhood – the epic Sea Voyages of Discovery of the sixteenth century – took place. The sea has also been the path that enabled the nation to accomplish its civilizational and messianic mission of taking the church to Africa, the Americas and Asia (Saraiva 1982; Vakil 1996; Sobral 2006). Thus the sea has been discursively given a central role in the production of myths and narratives of nation that underpin a collective consciousness of being Portuguese. I argue that bacalhau’s discursive association with the sea, which as I analyse in Chapter 3 was significantly promoted by the Estado Novo and its Campanha do Bacalhau, has equally contributed to making it a cultural signifier. In fact, the referent the Estado Novo gave bacalhau – o pão dos mares (the bread of the seas) – attests to my claim.

29 Luís de Camões (1524-1580) and his epic poems Os Lusíadas are to date still recognised as the most significant Portuguese literary work.
These are the narratives that underpin Portuguese national culture. They are drawn from different sites and diverse historical contexts yet they have been collated to narrate the nation. Discourses that associate bacalhau, the fishermen and the nation produce relations of power, knowledge, imagery and ideas that once deployed, acquire cultural connotations that those referents did not originally have. Epic narratives of sea, bacalhau (*the bread of the sea*) and fishermen (*the heroes of the sea*) when associated with new and originally un-related meanings (nation), through repetitive usage became ‘naturalised’, uncontested and ‘taken for granted’. Ultimately they come to discursively connote the nation, thus becoming signifiers of national culture and centred (imagined) national identities.

The question we now face is how do essentialised national identities negotiate the current conditions of globalisation, Europeanisation and, as some commentators argue, the weakening of the nation-state? (Harvey 1989; Hall 1992).

Identities are not stable ‘things’ but dynamic, fragmented and de-centred processes, always evolving into something new and only fixed through a ‘cut’ in the flow of language (Hall 1992). So too national (cultural) identities, as the “… form of imaginative identification with the symbols and discourse of the nation-state” (Barker 2000 p197), ought to be re-conceptualised as contingent, contextual, dynamic forms of cultural representation, able to accommodate the cultural, social and political conditions of late-modernity and globalisation which have de-stabilised them. These contemporary conditions require the openness and inclusiveness of difference and contingency rather than the hermetic ideological and geographic constraints imposed by the borders of the nation-state. In the case of Portugal, the homogeneity that once characterised the discursive definitions of nation is now being challenged by the contesting circumstances forced upon it by globalisation and the condition of being a member of the European Union. The complexity of such circumstances have patently increased the porosity of the national borders, arguably challenged previous understandings of Portugueseeness, and shifted the world-view of its citizens (Sobral 2011).

The impact of these changes is currently felt universally across Portuguese society and culture. They have also become obvious in food habits with the introduction of new
cuisines and international/transnational food chains like McDonalds or Pizza-Hut, which are creating new challenges to the conservative and static food habits that have characterised Portuguese traditional foodways. As chefs and other participants in this study attested, the eating habits and food tastes of people in large urban hubs (Lisbon, Porto and Algarve) have been slowly changing and have become more tolerant of culinary innovation. In contrast, centres located on the periphery of large metropolitan areas were reported to be less adventurous and more reluctant to any changes in their foodways. That is, food habits and a culinary national culture that has been largely perceived as stagnant and only open to mild variations are now being challenged by the new globalising trends and the highly mobile middle-class population living in urban areas. These are the current challenges that face Portuguese society, culture and foodways, triggering a re-thinking of the previously centred conceptualisation of national cultures.

As illustrated by the interview material analysed in detail in the following chapters, the current conditions under which Portuguese professional chefs are producing contemporary forms of cooking, document these challenges. Despite being grounded by discourses of tradition, uniqueness and originality, the chefs as cultural producers are ‘re-inventing’ traditions. By using innovative methods of cooking and ingredients borrowed from other cultures, they are re-interpreting ‘old’ Portuguese dishes and recipes, creating ‘new’ hybridised culinary entities (including new hybrid dishes of bacalhau). They are demonstrating that food and cooking are cultural practices always evolving into something new and only ‘fixed’ by forms of power. Bacalhau’s culinary resilience over five centuries has only been possible because it has become a deeply embedded cultural marker with the ability to adapt to historical contexts, making it a dynamic culinary and cultural signifier.

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have defined the topic of this dissertation. Using archival and historical narratives, I have provided evidence that illustrates how and why bacalhau has been part of the Portuguese eating habits since the sixteenth century. I have also explored the
food-culture nexus, framing it within the theoretical underpinnings that guide this study, in order to examine how national cultures are produced, and how bacalhau in association with the sea has become a culinary signifier of nation.

In Chapter 2 I outline and discuss the methodology that I use in this study.
2 SCAFFOLDING THE PROJECT

2.1 Introduction
This chapter examines the methodology used in this project. It outlines the theoretical framework underpinning it and explores the methods and techniques that enable the process of investigation. This is an empirical study focused on the analysis of the different sites where cultural representations of bacalhau take place. Employing an anti-essentialist framework and qualitative methods of research, I explore how bacalhau became discursively embedded in Portuguese national culture, focusing on what makes it the iconic dish that defines Portugueseness.

2.2 Framework
A constructionist theoretical framework contends that meaning is not essential and fixed. Instead, it asserts that the way we make sense of ‘things’ and the meaning we give to the physical world is a human construction (Hall 1997). That is, rather than assuming that objects/practices/texts “possess an underlying essence which defines their ‘true nature’” (Brooker 1999 p74), this work takes the view that the production of cultural meaning (representation) is produced through language (Hall 1997 p16). Thus, language (Barthes) and discourse (Foucault) constitute systems of representation underpinning culture.

Meaning is not essential and does not exist independently of culture. Instead, meaning is produced by cultural actors in processes of signification which makes representation “one of the central practices which produce culture” (Hall 1997 p1). Culture is constituted by the maps of meaning that regulate distinctive ways of life. This is not to say that objects do not have a material existence of their own, but what we, as cultural and social agents, do with them and our understanding of their function is culturally generated. In the realm of Food Studies this theoretical approach is particularly pertinent because food is as much a material object of everyday life with a nutritional function as it is a symbolic polysemic signifier. That is, the same item of food can be given multiple meanings cross-culturally, thus making its cultural value contextual and historical.
There are numerous examples illustrating the constructed meaning given to any food. For example, a cow as an animal belongs to the ‘natural world’ independently of any human activity. However, when the animal cow becomes food and is integrated in the human cultured and dietary world, the cow becomes beef – a material object for human consumption. Moreover, it is the culturally constructed meaning that is given to a cow that makes it beef in some cultures and a holy animal in others. Thus, the meaning attributed to the animal cow is the product of the regulatory discourses that enunciate it within a cultural context determining different cultural attitudes towards this hoofed animal: in India the cow is not eaten and (customarily) allowed to freely roam the streets; in Australia, it is one of the most popularly eaten meats.

The anti-essentialist approach used in this study is informed by what Hall considers the “two versions of ‘constructionism’ – the semiotic and the discursive approaches” (Hall 1997 p62). The use of semiotics (Barthes) assists with the understanding of how the use of signs in language (signification) works to produce meaning. In turn, using Foucault’s concept of discourse, discursive practices and discursive formations,30 I can evaluate how ‘bodies of knowledge’ construct specific objects/topics in a particular way, within a specific historical context and according to particular relations of power/knowledge (Hall 1997). Used as complementary techniques of analysis they enhance the research outcome. For example, when in Chapter 7 I analyse the museum as a cultural text, a semiotic framework enables its interpretation, by de-coding the meaning of the exhibiting objects because it examines them as signifiers within a system of representation. In turn, the use of a discursive framework enables me to evaluate and ‘read’ the exhibiting material within the historical context which constituted it as an object of knowledge, which is never neutral and always associated with the production of relations of power (Hall 1997 p42).

Taking into account the ‘problems of representation’ encountered in any empirical research that uses a theoretical constructionist framework, I acknowledge that the work

30 Hall refers to Foucault’s discursive formation as “the systematic operation of several discourse or statements constituting a ‘body of knowledge’, which work together to construct a specific object/topic of analysis in a particular way” (Hall, 1997 p191).
of the researcher is positioned (socially, culturally and politically) and produced in, not outside of, discourse. That is, as a researcher, my work is not value-free nor is it immune from my own worldviews and the way they impact on the interpretations I give to it. This is not to invalidate my own research but instead to acknowledge the problems of representation within a constructionist framework. But perhaps more importantly it is to decline any claim to universal and objective truths and validate the relations of power always inherent to any cultural act of research.

My aim is to produce a study which rather than claiming to ‘discover’ the facts ‘out there’, engages in a dialogue with myself, as the researcher, the respondents and the material of research giving voice to the respondents’ experiences and the “thick descriptions” (Geertz 1973) of their cultured world. As a researcher I engage in a double process of translation. On the one hand I translate word by word (from Portuguese to English) the data collected; on the other hand, I also interpret meanings and utterances, sometimes difficult to translate across cultures and worldviews. I am aware of the epistemological risks in making claims about the ‘real’ experiences of the people that I interviewed and the ‘real’ meaning of the texts that I read and analyse.

Thus, I do not make claims of universal, overarching or objective truths because there is no accurate word-translation in representation. Instead, I acknowledge the difficulties deemed in the work of translating and interpreting language and cultural meanings, which can nevertheless be successfully superseded through a “‘good enough’ reporting” (Barker 2000 p30) embedded in a responsible and meticulous process of investigation. The empirical methodology I employ in the work will enable the achievement of this outcome.

2.3 Methodology

A research design that is underpinned by a constructionist framework favours qualitative methods of study because it focuses on the production of cultural meaning and the way cultural actors generate it. This project investigates the food-culture nexus by specifically examining the meaning given to bacalhau within multiple historical
contexts. It integrates different qualitative techniques of research such as *ethnography* whereby I interviewed chefs, food writers and gastronomic critics as well as a range of *textual* approaches. For example I analysed the Museum of Ilhavo as a *text* where I deployed the “two versions of constructionism” (Hall 1997), (semiotic and discursive approaches) to examine the museum as a site where cultural meaning is produced and as an institution that produces, regulates and reproduces power and knowledge. Furthermore, I examined cookbooks as cultural artefacts and as *textual* narrative in order to explore culinary representations of bacalhau. Finally, I undertook evaluation of archival material searching for data that could provide a historical contextualisation of the presence of bacalhau in Portuguese national culture.

This research was supported by a bibliographic review of a relevant body of literature which will be referred to throughout this dissertation, rather than located in a dedicated chapter. In the next sections of this chapter I explore in detail the different methods of research, highlighting their value and contribution to the study, and integrating them within the totality of this project.

### 2.3.1 Bacalhau in textual representations

>*History can help us understand the things that are deeply rooted in a culture by examining what human beings have thought, attempted and accomplished* (Miller and Deutsch 2009 p77).

To successfully understand the role of bacalhau in Portuguese culture we need to explore its consumption across a historical context. That is, in order to be able to critically evaluate its cultural relevance we need to ‘dig up’ the past in search of the underpinnings that have made bacalhau such a significant component of Portuguese culture. This is one of the aspects that give this study its own specificity.

An initial literature review dedicated to bacalhau was essential. The lack of literary resources in the English language was compensated by the vast amount of work in Portuguese literature which is generally located within the disciplines of economics and
historiography with only a limited sample addressing the cultural embeddedness of bacalhau.

This pattern mirrors the works published in English, which mostly examine the politico-economic and nutritional role of bacalhau in the world food chain. I am particularly referring here to the work by Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: a Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (Kurlansky 1999), as well as some brief references to bacalhau in works by Margaret Vissier (1999) and Richard Wilk (1999). Also worth mentioning is the work by David Sutton (Sutton 2011) and Sally C. Cole (1990), the latter insightfully analysing the impact of an outdated fishing fleet on the fishermen’s productivity and working conditions at the time the *Campanha do Bacalhau* was coming to an end.

Nonetheless, and despite their relevance, these works were of limited value to the present study in that they did not address the cultural and symbolic role of bacalhau in Portuguese culture. This is a gap that this study intends to close, despite acknowledging that primary sources of investigation in Portuguese historiography and bacalhau-fishing practices were central to setting up the indispensable historical background for the present research. They provided the evidence, insights and the descriptions of practices and consumption patterns that will eventually substantiate the cultural and symbolic role of bacalhau. The use of these textual sources will enable me to metaphorically ‘dig up’ past representations of bacalhau that will substantiate and contribute to the present project.

The use of the concept of genealogy and archaeology as deployed by Foucault (1981) is useful to this discussion. Despite acknowledging Michel Foucault’s contribution to the theoretical guiding ideas of archaeology and genealogy in the Social Sciences, it is not my intention to address them in a full theoretical discussion because it would deter the attention from this work which is empirically orientated. I refer here to the spirit of genealogical analysis rather than to specific technicalities of method.

Genealogy is a concept utilised in the later work of Foucault to explore relations of power/knowledge which acknowledges their temporal continuities and discontinuities within a historical context. Foucault’s approach concedes the significance of historical
documents as “one way in which a society recognizes and develops a mass of
documentation with which it is inextricably linked” (Jary and Jary 2005 p26). By using
bacalhau as the ‘subject’ of discourse and historicising it, I can begin to understand its
cultural integration as a food and a culinary icon. In particular, this method enables me
to look at the use of bacalhau as a discursive formation which is integrated in material
culture across a variety of sites from media, to cookbooks, to schools and museums.

In conjunction with genealogy, the use of archaeology (also derived from Foucault)
proves to be a valuable tool of analysis. As a method, archaeology assists ‘digging up’
specific sites of the past where discourses and discursive practices took place, defining
fields of knowledge that demarcate specific “regimes of truth” (Foucault 1981). In turn,
genealogy recognises the need to contextualise events without however intending to
find ‘their origins’ and ‘essence’. Rather than lending them a foundational and absolute
essence or ‘truth’ in order to ‘fix’ the present and foresee the future, a genealogical
approach enables the contextual analysis of discourses within relations of power-
knowledge. Moreover, it also assists in exploring, analysing and evaluating how social
and cultural actors within those same historical and cultural contexts have come to
endorse and perform them. Thus, the use of genealogy as an approach, complemented
by archaeology as a method, “tracks how objects of study [in this case bacalhau] are
identified; how discourses constitute and evaluate these objects and how general
propositions emerge from this process and are dispersed to uphold a particular
‘discursive formation’” (Brooker 1999 p93).

2.3.1.1 ‘Digging up’ the past

In this study, I ‘dig up’ the past to make sense of a worldview within a particular
timeframe. For example, if discourses of dietary prescription imposed by the Catholic
Church had not been so prevalent in sixteenth-century Europe, bacalhau might have not
become such a significant commodity for Europe, and Portugal in particular. Similarly,
had the preserving techniques utilised in bacalhau curing been less effective and unable
to enhance the flavour of the fish and extend its shelf-life at a time when refrigeration
was not available, codfish would never have reached European tables fit for
consumption. Likewise, and as this study analyses at a later stage, the cultural positioning of bacalhau might not have been so prevalent had it not been so strongly endorsed by the policies of the Estado Novo. In the same way, had bacalhau not become a symbol of nation, discursively constructing ‘regimes of truth’ about patriotism, discipline, authority, family and religion, perhaps bacalhau’s cultural meaning would not have been as relevant to this study.

This study deploys a historiographical analysis of bacalhau which is underpinned by the examination of primary and secondary textual sources of information. According to Miller and Deutsch (2009), primary sources are first-hand sites of information that often correspond to what the researcher can count as an eyewitness. They are usually contemporaneous to the event being studied (Miller & Deutsch 2009 p81). In turn, secondary sources are usually constructed on the basis of primary resources and in that sense they can be useful as pointers to the originals (Miller and Deutsch 2009 p81). For instance, whereas a transcript of an interview, a newspaper article, an artefact in a museum would constitute primary sources of investigation, a dictionary or an encyclopaedia would instead be a secondary source of research.

Most of the material used in this study is primary source information collected from the works of recognised Portuguese authors. José Sobral (2007), as historiographer and anthropologist at the Social Sciences Institute (ICS) in Lisbon, has written a vast amount of material on the study of food, particularly bacalhau. José Hermano Saraiva (1979) and João Medina (2006) are highly referenced and recognised authors in Portuguese historiography. Álvaro Garrido (2010), lecturer in Economics at the University of Porto, dedicated his doctoral dissertation to the study of bacalhau, in particular the Estado Novo’s economic policies associated with the fishing industry. Garrido’s work is particularly relevant because it offers historical resources and also, because of his role of director of the Museum of Ilhavo, he has access to a vast repertoire of work on bacalhau. In turn, Mário Moutinho (1985) has carried out a socio-economic study of bacalhau in his 1985 book História da Pesca do Bacalhau. In this often cited work I found valuable statistical and historiographical resources useful to this study as I also did in Abel and Consiglieri’s (1998) study of bacalhau as an item of
popular culture. This study has the particularity of being the result of a funded project by the *Academia de Bacalhau de Lisboa*\(^{31}\). Finally I have consulted the works of Elsa Peralta (Peralta 2003; 2008) in which the author makes a detailed analysis of the Museum of Ilhavo, the politics of memory of bacalhau-fishing, and the powerful influence of the tourism industry in Ilhavo – the so called *Capital do Bacalhau* (bacalhau’s capital).

Another significant primary resource utilised for this study is the newspaper *Jornal do Pescador*\(^{32}\). The sample used was purposely contextualised within the decades of the 1930-1940s because I was particularly interested in evaluating the media coverage of bacalhau at the time the Estado Novo implemented the *Campanha do Bacalhau*\(^{33}\). This historical location is particularly relevant because it coincides with the promotion of bacalhau-fishing, firstly as a key economic factor for nation-building and secondly as an ideological tool tactically manipulated by the Estado Novo’s political elites for political purposes.

In the early stages of the literature review process I often encountered references to the *Jornal do Pescador*. It later proved to be a significant resource, despite being difficult to locate. After an exhaustive process of chasing up people and leads, I was finally directed to the National Hemeroteca (in Lisbon), which is the national archive of newspapers and magazines published to date, whose hard copies are still available for public viewing. It was a personally emotional experience, after so much effort, to actually be able to hold the series of hard bound volumes in my hands, smell the scent of old paper and see the marks of time in the yellow pages.

*Jornal do Pescador* was originally published as a monthly appendix to the *Revista da Marinha* (Navy Magazine). After 1939 it became an independent publication, and remained so throughout its forty-five further years of publication. The newspaper has been compiled so that each volume contained two years’ worth of issues. The analysis of *Jornal do Pescador* in itself would give enough material for several studies. Its

\(^{31}\) See Footnote 7 in Introduction.  
\(^{32}\) See Footnote 4 in Introduction.  
\(^{33}\) See Footnote 3 in Introduction.
significance as a primary source of research is that it enables an eyewitness evaluation of the Estado Novo’s investment and commitment to the development of the bacalhau-fishing industry. As a reader I could assess the way the regime used the magazine and its contents as a tool of ideological propaganda. The content analysis of the *Jornal do Pescador* is carried out in Chapter 3.

During fieldwork I was referred to another valuable archival document by one of the National Library’s archivists in Lisbon: the 1885 compilation of meetings and decrees carried out by the chief archivist Eduardo Freire de Oliveira (1885) under the sponsorship of the Lisbon City Council. This material proved of significant value, providing evidence of practices and patterns of consumption of bacalhau dating as far back as 1612. It also indicated the regulatory measures necessary to protect consumers’ rights and to prevent market speculation, especially in times of hunger, low supply or high demand, as was the case during Christmas and Lent. The analysis of this material was carried out in Chapter 1.

This multi-sourced archival and bibliographic research has enabled me to situate bacalhau in a multi-disciplinary context. This material is essential to the project because it assists with the identification of particular cultural characteristics that have contributed to the discursive production of bacalhau as a signifier of national culture and national identities. Further, it is my contention that the diversity of the material available for research attests to bacalhau’s representation across a broad range of sites where cultural meaning is produced: from the religious to the economic, in literary and historical accounts, in popular culture, in customary practices, in culinary practices, to name but a few. This evidence, I argue, illustrates the rooted-ness of bacalhau in Portuguese culture and substantiates Douglas and Isherwood’s assertion that culture is constituted as much by the everyday popular and routine sites and practices that involve food (and drinks) as by ‘high culture’ (Douglas and Isherwood in Miller and Deutsch 2009 p177).

The already existent body of work greatly assisted resourcing material for the present dissertation. Nevertheless, I argue that this thesis can further contribute to the field because it specifically examines and articulates the diverse fields where bacalhau is
culturally represented, illustrating not only the various facets it takes in Portuguese culture but significantly how it has been discursively produced as a signifier of nation, national culture and identities.

2.3.1.2 Bacalhau’s culinary representations in cookbooks

*We need to view cookbooks in the contemporary world as revealing artefacts of culture in the making (Appadurai 1988 p22).*

The analysis of Portuguese cookbooks constitutes a significant part of this study because they provide pertinent clues about the eating habits and cultural mores of the audiences to which they were targeted. As an item of material culture, cookbooks are an open window into the historical milieu in which they are produced – its authors, its audiences, their eating habits, their interests and the cultural trends of the time. By focusing on Portuguese cookbooks I specifically identify the patterns of bacalhau’s culinary utilisation, explore the undisclosed meanings associated with its consumption and evaluate the historically specific structures of power in which the cookbooks are embedded.

As Richard Johnson asserts, bodies of texts and literary genres are best explored “not so much in the literary text itself, but more in the ‘larger social text’” (Johnson in Gray 2009 p14). As I demonstrate and explore in Chapter 4, although bacalhau was a staple food up until the nineteenth century, its presence in cookbooks was notably non-existent, suggesting some underlying social and cultural motives worth exploring. By comparison, during the twentieth century the number of bacalhau recipes in cookbooks increased exponentially. Thus, I use cookbooks as an analytical tool, to explore this shift in bacalhau’s textual representation.

Following Johnson’s lead, I consider cookbooks as sites of cultural signification and power struggles activated in the text by the author (Gray 2003 p14). The meanings they convey can be instructive in the understanding of how cooking practices are constructed as Portuguese and how bacalhau has come to signify Portugueseness. This
aspect is particularly relevant to this study in that it can provide significant clues to understanding the making of bacalhau as the Portuguese national dish.

Data collected for this study is evaluated along longitudinal and transversal temporal axis. This is important because exploring cookbooks over a span of time provides contextual clues about patterns of consumption and shifts that might have occurred. Likewise, a study of cookbooks along a transversal timeframe can provide insights into cultural trends taking place at a particular point in time. For instance, some of the recent publications by Portuguese celebrity chefs include recipes that make use of recently devised cooking techniques. I am referring here to the method of cooking bacalhau using sous-vide\textsuperscript{34}, which has over the last decade become very popular in first class restaurants. By the same token, other recent publications are still using traditional methods associated with ordinary everyday practices of cooking bacalhau. These findings suggest societal transversal variations in the pattern of bacalhau consumption, arguably associated with prescribed meanings of bacalhau as a cultural marker of class and status. Eating bacalhau cooked sous-vide connotes as much assumed culinary knowledge, taste and distinction as it signifies cultural capital of the clientele frequenting first class restaurants.

The cookbooks constituting the sample cover a broad longitudinal timeline: the first being a study based on a compilation of sixteenth-century culinary manuscripts and the latest being a 2008 publication. For this reason, the sample had to be collected taking into account the factors resulting from the wide-ranging widespread timespan, the most obvious of which is the initial low number of publications compared to the steady increase since the beginning of the twentieth century.

From the sixteenth century until the nineteenth century, only seven cookbooks were published. For this reason, all the items were included in this study constituting what I name Cluster 1. Alternatively, the increasing number of culinary publications from the

\textsuperscript{34} Sous-vide is a cooking technique whereby food is cooked in vacuum-packed plastic bags, immersed in water which is kept at a 60 degrees centigrade for a longer than usual time. The aim is to attain a thoroughly cooked piece of food without over/under cooking it and retaining the natural juices. This method of cooking is mainly utilised in first-class restaurants and connotes 'high-cuisine'.

41
end of the nineteenth century onwards required different methodology for sampling, namely, the frequency that books were referenced in the relevant literature. For example, *Culinária Portuguesa* by António M. O. Bello (1994), is recurrently referenced across a series of Portuguese specialised publications in the field of gastronomy and frequently recognised as a valuable resource; likewise, *Comida Traditional Portuguesa* by Maria Lurdes Modesto (1982), is a very popular and highly cross-referenced cookbook. Thus, because these books were historically significant and frequently referenced they were considered to have high reliability, legitimacy and representation making their inclusion in this study obligatory.

Nonetheless, and despite the mandatory inclusion of some titles in the sample for the above mentioned reasons, the majority of the sample was gathered through library databases and catalogues. The Lisbon City Council Library (BLX) database in conjunction with Rêgo’s (1998) *Livros Portugueses de Cozinha (Catálogo)* (Catalogue of Portuguese Cookbooks) were the main resources utilised.

To facilitate the handling of data, the sample was chronologically structured into two clusters. Cluster 1, comprised the seven publications that constitute the universe of Portuguese cookbooks released between 1680 and 1876; Cluster 2 comprised the books released thereafter. While the reduced number of publications in Cluster 1, associated with their wide recognition in the field of Portuguese cooking, granted them legitimacy and justified their inclusion without any further selection, the same criteria could not be applied to Cluster 2. An initial search in the BLX database indicated that by the turn of the twentieth century there was an ever-increasing number of cookbook publications. A database search using the keyword *cozinha* identified 1,814 items. This result prompted further refining of the field because the sample needed to be representative and manageable without being exhaustive.

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35 I had initially planned to utilise the database of the National Library of Portugal (BNP) and of the Lisbon City Council network of libraries (BLX). Unfortunately, I did not have access to the former due to its temporary closure for maintenance works for most of the duration of fieldwork.

36 *Cozinha* in Portuguese means both cooking and kitchen, the meaning being determined by the context in which the word is utilised.
The selection criterion was re-defined to reduce the sample size but increase its specificity. In a first stage, the use of more selective keywords filtered the content by classifying it. Changing the search keyword from *cozinha* (cooking), to *cozinha Portuguesa* (Portuguese cooking) immediately reduced the results to 332 titles. In a second stage, the search was further refined by filtering the content with the use of the keyword *bacalhau*. The result was refined to 63 items. Data was then organised chronologically (by year of publication) so that each item could be labelled and integrated within a temporal context. This method illustrated the existence of multiple editions of some of the titles. I considered this finding relevant because it equated to the high number of a book’s re-edition, with its popularity, audience reception and representativeness. Consequently, the next stage of the study was to identify the books with the highest number of editions and give them a classificatory rank within the cluster. Thus, I consider the final sample that I attained with the use of the BLX database to be relevant, representative, reliable and constituted by a manageable number of cookbooks. Table 1 and Table 2 represent the sample that constitutes Cluster 2: the former determined by the use of *Cozinha Portuguesa*, the latter by the use of *Bacalhau*, as keywords in the title of the book. The cookbooks selected for analysis in Chapter 4 are those with the highest number of editions, the reason I considered them to be the most representative.

The *Catalogue of Portuguese Cookbooks* by Isabel Rêgo (1998) proved to be a valuable auxiliary resource when used in association with the BLX database. Used in conjunction they effectively complemented each other in locating titles and number of editions, which sometimes were not either explicitly referenced in the BLX database or available for consultation. The comprehensiveness of *Catalogue of Portuguese Cookbooks* proved to be essential to ensure the accuracy of the sample, in particular with some older publications which were not part of the BLX database. Moreover, some cookbooks whose titles did not include the above mentioned keywords, would have been excluded from this study had Rêgo’s Catalogue not been used. For example, Berta R. Limpo’s *O Livro de Pantagruel* and Laura Santos’ *A Mulher na Sala e na Cozinha*.

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and *Escola de Noivas* were not in the BLX database yet their presence in Rêgo’s Catalogue not only documented their repeated re-edicitions\(^{38}\), suggesting high audience reception, but also made them strong candidates for incorporation in this sample. The association of the two sources (BLX database and Rêgo’s Catalogue) were collaboratively essential in the creation of the present sample.

Table 1 and Table 2 refer solely to the items that were accessed via the BLX database; the former using *Cozinha Portuguesa* as keywords in the title of the book, the latter using *bacalhau*.

**Table 1** - Cookbooks with *Cozinha Portuguesa* in title (BLX database accessed 22-04-2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of Titles</th>
<th>Authors and Editions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A.M.O. Bello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A.M.O Bello (1963)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Valente (1973) 1(^{st}) edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Modesto -10 editions Crato - 3 re-edicitions Valente - 1 re-edition (1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>Modesto – the 18(^{th}) edition is the last on record in 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total - 332 titles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results attained with the use of the keyword *bacalhau* deserve some attention. Firstly, of the list of books not all were necessarily related to cooking. That is, some of the books catalogued under the topic *bacalhau* were categorised also under other topics and fields of knowledge: children’s books (1) history and theatre (2) and various other fields (23). In itself this is of interest because it illustrates the literary presence of *bacalhau* in fields other than cooking, attesting to its broad presence in Portuguese culture. It is also worth noticing that the number of publications dedicated *entirely* to the

\(^{38}\) *A Mulher na Sala e na Cozinha* first published in 1949 had 16 editions by 1983 (Rêgo 1998 p106) and *Escola de Noivas* had six editions, none of them dated (Rêgo 1998 p105).
culinary representation of bacalhau has increased markedly over the last twenty years, mirroring a similar pattern to that of the cookbooks.

**Table 2** - Cookbooks with *Bacalhau* in title (BLX database accessed 22-04-2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of Titles</th>
<th>Book’s content description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children’s book story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Recipe book (Mimoso)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>History &amp; Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10 cookbooks; 5 non-cookery fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26 cookbooks; 18 non-cookery fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>–</strong></td>
<td><strong>63 titles</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conclusion, the final sample was sorted out chronologically and grouped into two clusters. Cluster 1 is constituted by seven items, recognised as representative of ‘old’ Portuguese cookbooks published up to the end of the nineteenth century. Cluster 2 is constituted by eighteen items published thereafter and comprising cookbooks specifically related to *Cozinha Portuguesa* (Portuguese Cooking) and bacalhau. The outcome is a well-balanced selection of cookbooks constituting a legitimate, valid and representative final sample. I consider this sample to be a reliable cross-sectional representation of cookbooks which includes simultaneously a sixteenth-century collection of manuscripts as well as the 2008 publication by a well-known Portuguese chef – Hélio Loureiro.

The final sample is listed in Appendix B of the thesis, and a detailed study of the cookbooks takes place in Chapter 4. For the moment, I focus on the analysis of another method of investigation utilised in this study: the interview.

**2.3.2 Talking to chefs and food writers about bacalhau**

*If you want to know what I think or do, it would be as well to ask me* (Gray 2003 p95).
2.3.2.1 Interview design

Interview data constitutes a significant component of this project. Churton (2000 p201) defines an interview as a research method where the researcher meets and converses with the participant, usually face-to-face. Because this study focuses on meaning, it favours qualitative methods of research and uses semi-structured interviews. Despite following a pre-scheduled plan, semi-structured interviews have the advantage of permitting the interviewee to elaborate on the content of his/her answers; importantly, interviews are also a representation, or account, of the respondent’s first-hand experience and view of the world. For these reasons, semi-structured interviews are considered to be high in validity, potentially promoting a strong rapport between the researcher and the respondent, encouraging the development of trust and the likely exchange of information that otherwise could have been withheld.

Although high in validity, qualitative research has been criticised on the grounds of its low degree of reliability, representativeness and generalisability (Gray 2003 p15; Miller and Deutsch 2009 p153). Questions about reliability are raised because the results attained are based on personal and subjective findings rather than scientifically quantifiable data (Churton 2000 p199). For the same reason, the representativeness of the results can also be questioned because they are considered to lack the measurable consistency that could guarantee generalisation and consequent application to similar studies. In this context, and according to the critics of qualitative research, the size of the sample is important because it validates the breadth and scale of the study. These aspects are at the heart of the main differences between qualitative and quantitative methods of research.

As a counter-point, quantitative research relies on techniques such as standardised questionnaires and large-scale surveys. The outcomes are based on objective findings thus considered to be highly reliable, quantifiable and as a result credited with scientific authority. Moreover, since the results can be quantified, their measurability gives them consistency, reliability and representativeness because they can be repeated and reproduced by other studies. Nevertheless, quantitative methods don’t go without criticism of their own.
Questionnaires and surveys are considered by their own nature, to be potentially suggestive hence giving results that are low in validity. The questions can be structured in such a manner that they can prompt and pre-empt the content of the answer, not giving the respondent the opportunity to present his/her insights and the unique-ness of his/her contribution to the study (Churton 2000 p200). As this thesis explores cultural meaning, the nature of the issues under research can only be fully evaluated with the use of a methodology that provides the respondents with the opportunities to give in-depth answers that are reflective of their personal experiences. These are outcomes that only qualitative methods of research can deliver.

From the beginning of my imagining this project, I considered the interviews with Portuguese chefs and food writers/critics as one of the significant aspects of this project. Defining the sample and its size were relevant factors I had to consider. Firstly, I defined the sample on the basis of a selective group of interviewees; that is, I did not aim to approach the universe of Portuguese chefs or food writers. Rather, it was my objective to focus on a particular cohort – those highly visible professionals who I name as cultural intermediaries, (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991), a concept that I analyse and expand on in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. Secondly, I had to carefully determine the size of the research sample because I needed it to be representative and valid, yet manageable in size.

I was interested in ascertaining how the selected respondents viewed bacalhau as a culinary product deeply rooted in Portuguese culture. In the interviews I focused on how the chefs used (if they did) bacalhau in their restaurants and culinary practices; I evaluated the meaning of bacalhau in their cooking and how their professional practices could impact on consumption patterns. On the other hand, when interviewing the food writers and gastronomic critics I wanted to ascertain how they viewed their role and that of their writings and commentary in potentially shaping audiences’ food tastes and preferences.
Thus, the collection of qualitative data is pertinent to this study because it provides valuable information on the respondents’ role as cultural producers and gatekeepers\(^{39}\) of Portuguese cuisine and the role bacalhau plays in it. This is a central aspect of this research project because it enables the understanding of how cultural and culinary representations of bacalhau may impact on the production of national cultures and national identities. As this study demonstrates, these are the everyday ‘banal’ (Billig 1995) practices that are integral to national culture and that relate to questions of cultural and national identities. Thus, it is my contention that the specificity of these issues and the intended outcomes of this study demand what only qualitative interviewing techniques can provide.

2.3.2.2 Choosing the sample

The selection criterion for the interviews was carefully prepared prior to the start of fieldwork. I started by familiarising myself with the names of chefs that were consistently being mentioned in the media: some through their restaurant’s gastronomic reviews; others in interviews or TV programs; others as the ‘advertising face’ of some of the major supermarket chains. Finally, through personal networking within the industry I was able to further extend the list of potential respondents\(^{40}\).

The sample selection is purposely orientated towards Portuguese chefs because this study is about evaluating how chefs as cultural intermediaries, represent bacalhau in their culinary practices. Despite giving preference to interviewing chefs, the opportunity to interview other power brokers could not be dismissed because of their privileged access to the media, decision-making and active role in ‘gate-keeping’ the current cultural role of food. I am specifically referring here to food writers and critics as well as to Tourism officials at central and local levels. Their inclusion in the sample is a result of making use of resources, that despite not being part of the initial plan, could not have been dismissed at the risk of wasting potentially valuable data. As I

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\(^{39}\) Clive Scale defines ‘gatekeeper’ as “the sponsors, officials and significant others who have the power to grant or block access to and within a setting” (Seale 1999 p.221).

\(^{40}\) At the end of some interviews, I was referred to other chefs by the interviewee.
demonstrate at a later stage, the material collected in these interviews gave the study legitimacy because they represent a ‘position to speak from’, which is powerful and legitimised by the respondents’ expertise in the topic.

Due to the qualitative characteristics of this study, I considered it appropriate to limit the sample size to between 12 and 15 respondents. The selection criterion was highly selective because I only wanted to interview key professional chefs with high media profiles and significant influence within the local hospitality industry. All the interviewees needed to be visible in the media via book publications, interviews, endorsement of merchandise as well as the promotion of their business enterprises (restaurants). Their media ‘visibility’ (Rojek 2001) gave them an enhanced positioning that legitimised their ‘voice’, making them ‘expert advisers’ with the capacity to symbolically and discursively guide audiences in their choices and preferences. Their media coverage credited them as culinary ‘experts’ and recognised them as trendsetters of food culture. These attributes gave them audience recognition and validation of their competency, endowing them with the cultural and social discursive power ‘to name’, which legitimised their status as ‘experts’ (Giddens 1991) and ‘cultural intermediaries’ (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991).

Despite the full development of these theoretical concepts in Chapter 5, for the moment and for the sake of justifying the methodology of this study, it is important to raise them and introduce them to the reader as fundamental aspects underpinning the project. First, because my approach explores the role of the chef as a cultural intermediary with the power to sponsor and name what constitutes a national dish. Second, because I take into consideration the role of the chef as a highly visible cultural agent who, in contemporary cultural environment, has acquired a pivotal role as a trendsetter, arbiter of taste and promoter of consumption patterns.

An important aspect of this study is the opening of a space that explores and analyses the views and roles of powerful cultural lobby groups. The aim is to demonstrate their significant role in producing and reproducing knowledges and discourses that can either generate and maintain the concept of ‘national cuisines’ and/or ‘national dishes’ (both
constitutive of national culture), or can alternatively produce and promote a new type of hybrid or trans-national cuisines within the context of the European Union (EU).

2.3.2.3 The interview process

The objective of the interview was to engage with the respondents as cultured and social agents in a way that could capture their ‘world view’ as professionals deeply involved with food production. All the interviews were conducted with the previous written permission of the interviewee and in a public place (either the restaurant or professional office). To guarantee consistency throughout the interview process, and despite acknowledging the semi-structure characteristics of the interviews, I still ensured consistency in the topics to be addressed. Nonetheless, it was also important to have some flexibility in order to give the respondents some room to manoeuvre and expand on the proposed topic of conversation. Without losing control over the interview process, I considered it important to empower the interviewees’ capacity to generate meaning they thought relevant to the point in discussion.

In doing so, I was able to prevent the process from being confined to potentially predetermined agendas and boundaries of meaning. Moreover, as a result of this technique, I gave myself the opportunity to “get dazzled and surprised” (Gray 2003) by some of the collected material which I would have not attained if I had not given the interviewee room to elaborate and expand. Although I was not ‘dazzled’ by the interviews’ results, I was nevertheless surprised by some of the findings. For example, the interviewees were vocal in expressing their views about the influences that contemporary Portuguese cuisine is currently experiencing, which is as much reflected in their culinary practices as it is in the way they cook with bacalhau. For example, chef Lito, who considers himself a “cosmopolitan” with an “irreverent” approach to cooking, revealed innovative culinary ways of using bacalhau that I explore in Chapters 5 and 8.

Another unexpected outcome was the results of the interview with two managerial officers that work at the governmental tourist department – Turismo Portugal. As I discuss in Chapter 8, their commentary in regards to the official position of bacalhau in contemporary Portuguese cuisine was unpredicted.
I conducted what Gray refers to as an ‘active interview’ (Gray 2003 p95). I experienced the process as an engaging moment where both participants (the interviewee and myself) were active players in a “discursive event” (Gray 2003 p95): myself as the researcher conducting and orientating the interview, yet giving the respondent the opportunity to produce meaning. The objective was not to dictate interpretation but to provide the environment that facilitated the production of a range of meanings that addressed the issues relevant to the discussion (Gray 2003 p95).

The interviews were translated, transcribed and analysed upon return to Australia. I used NVivo 9 as an auxiliary tool of investigation. NVivo 9 is a computer software program with a broad usage profile for the analysis of qualitative research (NVivo 2012). It allows the study of vast amount of unstructured information by tagging it and organising it in ‘nodes’ of content. It also allows audio and visual material to be analysed simultaneously, especially when group-session interviews are conducted. The use of NVivo9 in this project was limited to tagging, coding and clustering of data in order to facilitate its location and classification. This methodology facilitated the process of translating and transcribing and made the handling and location of material more manageable.

In my experience, this technique assisted the painstaking process of translating and transcribing the content of the interviews without jeopardising the validity of the outcome. In fact, the initial triage process followed by tagging and coding required meticulous, attentive and repeated listening to the recordings, hence promoting in-depth familiarisation with the interviews’ content. As an added advantage, I focused on the tagged and coded material which I considered to be of high relevance to the research at the initial stages of the transcription process. I found this was an efficient technique of time management. Finally, as Seale (1999 p151) draws to our attention, coding material gives the option of quantifying data, hence increasing the reliability of the results attained. For instance, if the same topic is repeatedly tagged and coded in every interview, it becomes a recurrent theme that is addressed and acknowledged by several interviewees, hence increasing its legitimacy and validity.
2.3.2.4 Discussion

During fieldwork the initial process of organising the interviews was difficult. Celebrity chefs are busy people. They run their demanding lives to tight schedules and they have learnt to be discriminatory in terms of whom they are willing to give their time to. To persuade the respondents that I ‘deserved’ one hour’s worth of their day (from which they would not be getting anything in return) was testing. Yet, once the interview was scheduled, they kept to their commitment. The outcome was rewarding; not only did I achieve what I had set myself to accomplish but the quality of data was highly relevant to the study. It was also comforting to personally come to realise that in fact even ‘celebrity chefs’ are human beings as we all are. All of the interviewees were welcoming, actively participated in the discussion and made themselves available for further comments. To this day I still network with most of them, as they were willing to be contacted from afar if additional information was required.

I consciously made the decision not to disclose to any of the interviewees my previous experience and professional involvement with the hospitality industry. After a lot of consideration based on informed reading material, I established that the chances of a more fruitful outcome would increase if I was to introduce myself in my present capacity of a researcher with a professional and personal interest in exploring cultural aspects of food. In fact, my focus on examining the role of bacalhau in Portuguese culture was a feature that increased the respondents’ willingness to participate in the study because they found it a curious facet of my work.

As Seale (1999) asserts, sharing the same field of knowledge assigns common “expert language”, which in turn “confers membership” and “bestows authority” (Seale 1999 p248). When interviewer and interviewee ‘share’ experiences, subjectivity may blur the interviewing process and the outcomes (Churton 2000 p205). For these reasons, I consciously opted out of acknowledging common professional membership with the chefs I interviewed. I decided to confer on the interviewees authority in their field of knowledge and expected their recognition of my own professional competencies. Yet, I silently benefited from the “expert language” that, unknowingly to them, I have. It did
not alter the outcome of the interview but it gave me a deeper understanding of their arguments and views. Looking back, I consider I made the right decision.

Finally, there is a last point that needs to be addressed: the gender of the interviewees. In my preparatory work for the interviewing process I only encountered one female chef with a quasi-equivalent recognisable professional status to that of her male counterparts. This in itself is evidence of gender bias in the conservative and male dominated environment of commercial kitchens. The case of chef Zita is a case in point. Zita is a female chef whose media representation and professional accolades are always depicted in association with that of her father’s. Zita’s career has been constructed on her father’s ‘shadow’, who successfully initiated the business which he still manages. For this reason, Zita is represented as if she were unable to stand professionally on her own competencies, which are nevertheless publically recognised. Unfortunately, because the restaurant is not in Lisbon, constraints in transportation prevented me from attempting to interview her. The lack of female chefs at the top-end of the professional scale in Portugal suggests gendered stereotyping, especially when in smaller restaurants and cafes, the kitchens are vastly populated by female untrained black-African cooks from the Portuguese ex-colonial territories. While the racial and gender dimension of the profession is an aspect that deserves further investigation it is not the concern of this work.

2.3.3 Museum of Ilhavo

Museums have a dual function: as a system of representation they produce social and cultural meaning; as institutions they play a significant role as social regulators (Bennett 1995; Hall 1997).

Ilhavo is recognised as the Capital of Bacalhau and the Museum of Ilhavo “witnesses the strong link between Ilhavo and the sea” (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012). Thus, a

41 This is the result of personal observation. To my knowledge there is no investigation conducted on this trend, hence making it a field of needed research.
visit to the Museum of Ilhavo seemed to be a quasi-obligatory component of fieldwork. I considered it important to be an eyewitness to the institution that I had visited virtually and read about during the preparatory stages of work in Australia. The Museum of Ilhavo (a small city in the mid-North coast of Portugal) dedicates most of its exhibiting space to the practice of bacalhau-fishing. Previous viewings of its website gave me a preliminary overview of the emphasis this institution gives to the exhibition of artefacts related to the practice of bacalhau-fishing, highlighting its impact on the Portuguese culture. Even without physically visiting the Museum, my virtual visits to its website drew my attention to the institution’s mission statement and the strong endorsement given to the idea that the practice of bacalhau-fishing was a ‘way of life’ vividly imprinted on Ilhavo’s people memory. I also became aware of the emphasis the Museum placed on its educational program in schools and guided tours operated throughout the school year. These aspects were strong indicators of the active and participatory role of the Museum of Ilhavo in the making of a national culture.

I visited the Museum of Ilhavo in August 2010 during the Festival do Bacalhau. I made my three-day visit to Ilhavo coincide with this event because I wanted to witness its dynamics and impact on audiences visiting the Festival. I also deemed it important to personally observe and experience the event so as to ascertain its significance and how it articulated with the city, the Museum and the tourist industry that sponsors it. I explore these results more extensively in Chapter 7, but for the moment address the methodological aspects of the visit to the Museum.

During my visit to Ilhavo I kept a fieldwork journal. I made a record of my thoughts, observations and quoted people I spoke to. I have used this data throughout the study if and when appropriate. My conversations with people at the Museum and at the Festival do Bacalhau cannot be classified as formal interviews because they took place at an early stage of fieldwork and interviewing these individuals was not part of the initial

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42 The Festival do Bacalhau (Festival of Bacalhau) is a five-day yearly event taking place during the summer holidays in August. The festival was first organised eleven years ago under the sponsorship of the local Council in partnership with local community organisations, the Museum of Ilhavo and the still powerful industry of bacalhau processing.
plan. This is unfortunate, because I later realised I missed out on the opportunity to record relevant data. Nonetheless, the chance to speak to some of the Museum librarians and people that I met at the Festival do Bacalhau, such as the president of the Confraria do Bacalhau,\textsuperscript{43} gave me a better understanding of the relationship between bacalhau and the people of Ilhavo. I kept photographic records of the exhibition at the Museum as well as at the ‘floating-museum’ St. Andre,\textsuperscript{44} which I have used as research evidence.

I explored the Museum of Ilhavo as a representational system, that is as a site that generates meaning about the role of bacalhau in Portuguese culture. The analysis of the museum is underpinned by the work of Stuart Hall (1997), Tony Bennett (1995), and complemented by that of Elsa Peralta (2008). Although a full analysis of the museum is made in Chapter 7, I am presently drawing on the central conceptual aspects that underscore the methodological techniques utilised in this project.

The work of Hall (1997) and Bennett (1996) are particularly useful for the study of the Museum of Ilhavo. Hall studies the museum as a system of representation whereas Bennett analyses it as an institution. The complementarities of these two approaches dictate their concurrent use in this project. Bennett’s analysis is underpinned by a Foucauldian theoretical framework which recognises the museum as an institution where regimes of governmentality take place, that is where ‘hidden’ systems of discipline, regulation and surveillance are put into place (Bennett 1995,1996). Moreover, Bennett claims the role of the museum as a site where citizens are formed and especially where children, the “citizens-in-the-making”, are subjected to pedagogical strategies that instruct them in the important “lessons of civics” (Bennett, Trotter et al. 1996 p6). As I will demonstrate, the Museum of Ilhavo comprehensively fulfils these two roles. In turn Hall (1997) looks at the museum as a site where symbolic meaning is constructed and where cultural representation takes place.

\textsuperscript{43} Confraria do Bacalhau (Bacalhau’s Brotherhood) is a community organisation aimed at preserving the tradition of bacalhau eating. In Europe these organisations, all of which call themselves Confraria (brotherhood), are mostly but not exclusively related to food and drink. Confraria do Bacalhau is not the same as Academia do Bacalhau which I analyse in Chapter 8.

\textsuperscript{44} The ship St. André was one the last fishing-boats to go to Newfoundland. It is now a ‘floating museum’ anchored in Ilhavo’s harbour where the Festival takes place.
Following Hall’s lead, I analyse the museum as a site where meaning is generated using the display of objects as cultural artefacts. This conceptual framework allows me to explore how the exhibition of objects in the museum signify – the poetics of exhibiting – and to what effect – the politics of exhibiting (Hall 1997). The museum, is a system of representation constructed by its curator, who stands for the museum’s “symbolic power” (Hall 1997 p183) because he/she has control over the selection of the objects exhibited, thus being able to give them a preferential reading.

I examine the museum as a cultural text where objects are made to signify in line with a hegemonic discourse. As Hall states, “a museum will endow objects with importance and meaning because these come to represent a certain kind of cultural value” (Hall 1997 p205). A semiotic framework assists in the analysis of the constructed meaning of the exhibited objects, enabling its de-coding and demonstrating that what seems ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ is rather contingent (Hall 1997). As Cohan argues, semiotics is a useful initial means of “opening up a narrative for interpretation” (Cohan in Johnson, Chambers et al. 2004 p167). Hence, I contend that a semiotic analysis of the museum is a valuable tool of investigation which can help de-code the symbolic role of bacalhau in Portuguese national culture.

However, a semiotic and structuralist approach has its limitations because it fixes meaning and disables audiences’ active participation. Moreover, a semiotic analysis does not take into account the “polysemic possibilities of a post-structuralist reading, one that allows for multiple meanings, fluidity and contradiction” (Johnson, Chambers et al. 2004 p167). It is in this context that the Foucauldian framework of power/knowledge (Bennett 1995; Hall 1997) and the reading of the museum as an institution holding “institutional power” (Hall 1997 p184), demonstrate their value. In the present case, this conceptual outline is instructive. It constitutes bacalhau as an object of discourse and enables its articulation with specific relations of power and knowledge that are historically contextual (Hall 1997 p185).

The work of Peralta (2008) is also relevant to this study because it provides local details and particularities, filling in the gaps left by the broader literary body of knowledge. Her work is informative in that it provides specific data associated with the politics behind
the making of the Museum of Ilhavo. It is especially useful in that it locates the museum’s construction and development within an integrated and broader context, centred on the production of a memory of the ‘local’ and the development of the tourism industry. According to Peralta, tourism was recognised as a major tool in the development of a strategic plan to revitalise a crippled local economy. The tourism industry was devised as a replacement for the once thriving fishing-industry, which found itself dismantled after 1974. The industry’s downfall was a result of the end of the regime which had supported it. Aggravated by the major blow caused by the 1980s European Economic Union (EEU) fishing policies, the crisis was later deepened by the 1994 Moratorium that banned Portugal from fishing bacalhau in the waters off the Canadian coast in Newfoundland (Garrido 2010).

2.3.3.1 Final remarks on the Museum of Ilhavo

The Museum of Ilhavo is integrated within an advertising discourse that promotes Ilhavo as the Capital of Bacalhau. My decision to undertake fieldwork in Ilhavo had two main purposes. The first was to visit the Museum to explore the signs of meaning of bacalhau in Portuguese culture, its symbolic representation and how it was constructed. The second objective was to visit the Festival do Bacalhau. I wanted to be a tourist; I wanted to participate in the same experiences as a tourist does. I wanted to experience how a tourist comes out ‘feeling’ after visiting Ilhavo, the Festival do Bacalhau, and the Museum. However, I am also aware that my experience, my thoughts and the conclusions I drew were most likely different to that of other tourists, partly because they were personal but also because they had already been informed by my reason for the visit. My visit had an agenda, and I was not just performing the role of the tourist. I was equally taking the subject-position of the informed researcher looking for answers for my project. My fractured identity fluctuated between that of the researcher and that of the tourist.
When I visited the Museum of Ilhavo and its main exhibition – the Sala de Faina Maior\textsuperscript{45} – I looked at the museum through the lens of an individual who conceptualised it as a site where meaning is generated; a site which is not neutral because it represents meanings and values that go into the constitution of a national culture and national identities.

Yet, strolling through the festival I found myself engaging in consecutive and sometimes conflicting roles. I felt myself performing the expected role of the tourist, buying and eating an array of local bacalhau specialties. However, when trying to find out more information about what I was purchasing and eating, I caused perplexity to the stall assistants, as they were more interested in serving their customers than answering my questions. All the time I felt that the festival grounds constituted a site that ‘organised’ the visitors spatially so that one’s behaviour inadvertently replicated that of the other visitors – queues, stop-and-watch, photo-taking, move on to the next stall... We (myself included) were all engaged in the same ‘rules of discourse’, time and space-structure (Gray 2003 p87) of a public place with a specific agenda to fulfil.

Unfortunately, my visit had time constraints. It also coincided with the summer school holidays, which prevented me from joining a school guided-tour as I had planned. The scheduled tourist-tours of the museum had been cancelled, as most of the museum staff was attending the tourist visits to the ship St. André at the festival. My initial plan was to return to the museum during the school term, but financial and time limitations associated with field work, prevented me from doing so. However, I did revisit Ilhavo at a later stage at the invitation of the Fábrica Pascoal, a place where bacalhau is processed.

In conclusion, the analysis of the Museum of Ilhavo as a site of cultural production enabled me to explore the role that institutions (museum) and elites and organisations (curators, tourism industry, Confraria do Bacalhau) play in generating and promoting discourses or ‘regulated ways’ of talking about bacalhau that assist in the construction

\textsuperscript{45} This is the name given to the main exhibit, which has been named after Faina Maior (see Footnote 6 – Introduction).
of national cultures and national identities. Detailed examination of these topics is developed in Chapter 7.

2.4 Conclusion
This chapter has explored the methodology (and multiple methods) used in this study. It analysed the theoretical framework that underpins it, and named the techniques of research utilised. It particularly focused on the qualitative features of the interviews; the semiotic and discursive approach to the analysis of the Museum of Ilhavo and the textual analysis of the Portuguese cookbooks and archival data. All this material was collected during fieldwork in Portugal in 2010-2011.

Chapter 3 analyses and evaluates the archival and historical material that allows the contextualisation and narration of bacalhau within the Portuguese culture and foodways.
3 STORIES OF BACALHAU

3.1 Introduction
This chapter is a ‘poetic’ account of bacalhau in Portuguese culture. It traces, contextualises and explores narratives of bacalhau through the eyes of different people, mediums and practices to demonstrate its powerful capacity as a cultural signifier.

The material that I analyse in this chapter spans a period of time that starts in the early decades of the nineteenth century with the so called Problema do Bacalhau. It proceeds with an examination of nineteenth century literary accounts of bacalhau because I consider the shift from oral to textual representations to have been a significant contribution to bacalhau’s increased culinary visibility and cultural significance. Finally, this chapter focuses on the study of the 1934 Campanha do Bacalhau. These were defining moments in bacalhau’s cultural, culinary and economic representation. These events substantially contributed to bacalhau’s increased prominence in Portuguese culture as much in the media – Jornal do Pescador – as in symbolic events – The Blessing of the Fleet – as in people’s lives through the Estado Novo’s welfare policies.

I argue that both, the Problema do Bacalhau and the Campanha do Bacalhau were pivotal in shifting bacalhau’s cultural profile. In particular the Campanha do Bacalhau transformed the practice of bacalhau-fishing into a feature of national culture and consciousness by exploiting bacalhau’s already entrenched culinary and cultural role.

Bacalhau as a staple-food became the link articulating several realms of social and cultural life, validating the powerful symbolic value of food. These findings establish an understanding of how textual, discursive and semiotic representations of bacalhau

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46 Problema do Bacalhau translated as the ‘Problem of Bacalhau’. I will always use the Portuguese referent throughout this study.
47 See Footnote 3 in Introduction Chapter.
48 Jornal do Pescador (The Fisherman’s Newspaper) is analysed in section 3 of this Chapter.
49 Benção dos Bacalhoeiros translated as the ‘Blessing of the Fleet’. I will always refer to Benção dos Bacalhoeiros, due to the symbolic connotation the term carries in Portuguese which is lost in translation. I analyse this event in Chapter 3.
50 See Footnote 2 in Introduction Chapter.
contributed to make it a ‘whole way of life’, a signifier of national culture and a tool for nation-building.

I start by addressing the *Problema do Bacalhau* because it frames the ‘politicisation’ of bacalhau. This highlights the processes by which the national supply and consumption of bacalhau entered the political discourse, becoming a bi-partisan political tool which utilised bacalhau’s already established embeddedness in people’s ways of life, and manipulated it for political purposes.

### 3.2 Framing bacalhau

#### 3.2.1 The *Problema do Bacalhau*

The medieval dietary codes of practice implemented by the Catholic Church were the catalyst for the introduction of bacalhau in Portuguese foodways. As analysed in Chapter 1, the abundance of the fish in Newfoundland, the successful preserving techniques and a robust monopoly maintained by the British fishing industry and suppliers, ensured a speculative but mostly steady supply of fish to an ever increasingly European market. In Portugal, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the rising consumption of bacalhau constituted a serious economic and social problem that both the governed and governing bodies had to face (Moutinho 1985; Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Garrido 2010). The former, needed it as a staple food, and their demand outweighed supply; the latter, had to contend with the always looming threat of civil unrest due to the commodity’s inflated market value and sometimes erratic supply. An additional problem for the government, was the rising deficit of the crown’s safe as a result of the high volume of imported food supplies of which bacalhau ranked highly (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010).

In the corridors of power, voices of dissent were being heard. On one side of the spectrum were those arguing for policies promoting the fishing industry and the return of Portugal to the waters of the North Atlantic, no longer an English monopoly and outpost. On the other hand, those favouring an overhaul in policy making, centred on a romanticised ‘return to the land’ that focused on agriculture and meat production
(Quitério 1987). For example, in 1841 the politician, pastoralist, writer and social commentator Vilarinho de S. Romão argues:

*It would be desirable if rather than buying 3,500,000 cruzados worth of bacalhau, which are equivalent to 291,666 golden coins and 29,166 heads of cattle, valued at 10 coins each, we were instead using our vacant lands to raise cattle for local consumption* (de S. Romão in Quitério 1987 p178) (my translation).

The nineteenth century Portuguese economy was fundamentally agrarian in nature. Thus industrial development, in particular that of the fishing industry, constituted the first step of an ideological and political shift from a rural to an industrial based economy. However, and following wider European trends, the discursive influence of nationalists and the Romantic Movement was filtering through the Portuguese political, social and cultural discourse (Vakil 1996). Thus, not surprisingly, the rhetoric of modernity, entrepreneurial development and industrial innovation were accompanied by competing voices that were critical of the negative effects of ‘civilisation’ and progress. That is, at the same time as some approved industrial growth, in particular the fishing-industry, others endorsed the rural world and the development of cattle and agriculture production. Nevertheless, both parties agreed that the key to the national trade deficit problem could only be resolved with a solution to the national food supply.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, 90% of the bacalhau consumed in Portugal was imported (Amzalak in Moutinho 1985 p23). Recognising the implausibility of any changes in the populations’ eating habits, and at the same time admitting that the increased budget deficit was partly due to a constant rise in the consumption of a commodity totally dependent on external supply (bacalhau), politicians accepted that the only reasonable solution was to implement national self-provisioning. Rather than asking the Portuguese to stop eating bacalhau, they decided to promote self-supply.

By the 1830s, this volatile situation was coined the *Problema do Bacalhau*[^51]. It is at this point that bacalhau entered the political discourse. Governments, politicians in

[^51]: Alvaro Garrido considers three constitutive components in the *Problema do Bacalhau*: insufficient national production of the commodity, reliance on imports for internal consumption and cyclic crisis of the commodity supply (Garrido 2010 p14).
opposition and social commentators alike, recognised bacalhau’s potential as a strategic tool with which they could capitalise and make political gains. The seriousness of the situation pressured the government into making comprehensive attempts to correct it because it was perceived as a sign of a weak State, incapable of solving the problem of national food supply (Garrido 2010).

A national program promoting the fishing industry was launched. The aim was to generate private capital interest which would be supplemented and funded by robust tax-exempted loans and State subsidies in order to make the industry viable and competitive (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010). As part of this plan, steps were taken to undertake a total overhaul of the national fishing fleet. Here the English were called upon for assistance (Moutinho 1985). At a time when the English fishing industry was already planning a total refurbishment of its own fleet with more efficient and innovative fishing boats, Portugal purchased the already obsolete fishing vessels and had the national crew trained by the English fishermen. Vestiges of the English heritage in the industry are present in the nomenclature, colloquialisms and techniques utilised by the Portuguese fishermen, mirroring that of their English counterparts. For instance, words like dóris[^52], lêvas (livers), trota (throater), flais (flys) and quêtes (kits) are a legacy of English terminology that have been assimilated into the Portuguese fishing vernacular (Moutinho 1985 p25), demonstrating the integrating power of language.

Despite State efforts to decrease bacalhau’s imports by increasing its national production, the outcomes were never encouraging. The ‘new’ fleet, which only rose in number of units but not in efficiency, was unable to keep pace with increasing consumption[^53]. As previously mentioned, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, 90% of the bacalhau consumed in Portugal was imported (Amzalak in Moutinho 1985 p23). In 1829 the amount of fish imported was 16,675 tonnes[^54] (Moutinho 1985 p24),

[^52]: Dóri is the Portuguese translation of the English word wary. These were small boats carrying one man that would go out fishing away from the mother-ship. Several authors consider wary to have been based on the native-Indian fishing boats (piroga) (Garrido 2010 p29).
[^53]: Based on Mosés Amzalak’s study, Moutinho demonstrated that the increase of the fishing-fleet did not correspond to increased production (Moutinho 1985 p24-38).
[^54]: Moutinho’s data is expressed in the old measuring unit – quintal – thus, I converted to tonnes. 16.675 tonnes is equivalent to 277,920 ½ quintais, where 1 quintal is equivalent to 60kg (www.ancruzeiro.pt/ancunidades.html).
increasing to 24,133 tonnes in 1904, reaching 40,830 tonnes in 1930 (Moutinho 1985 p44). In turn, the amount of fish caught in Newfoundland by Portuguese fishing boats in 1848 amounted to 2,374 tonnes (Moutinho 1985 p27), which remained unchanged until 1901 with 2,336 tonnes, increasing to 3,559 tonnes in 1930 (Moutinho 1985 p43).

These figures demonstrate that consumption kept rising at a rate that far outweighed national self-supply, which only moderately increased. Thus, consumption was still vulnerable to market speculation because it was more dependent on imported product rather than national production. The unsuccessful attempt to create a national industry generated powerful criticisms. Some authors argued that the alleged “bacalhau’s popular demand” (Moutinho 1985 p203) for which the bacalhau fishing-industry was being developed, was a constructed ‘myth’ to disguise the State’s incapacity to promote alternative sources of affordable animal protein. They further contended it was a cover-up to keep feeding the interests of a powerful oligarchy that vigorously lobbied for the development of the industry (Moutinho 1985). Their claims were fuelled by evidence of flawed policies that aimed to develop an industry on the basis of total dependency on government subsidies and a cheap labour force.

Throughout the nineteenth century, progressive social circles began framing the Problema do Bacalhau politically. Their aim was to make government accountable for policies that would positively benefit most of bacalhau’s consumers, the majority of whom were located at the lower end of economic affluence. At the same time, conservative and nationalist groups demanded strong policies of national independence, economic self-sufficiency and state protection of traditional cultural values (Garrido 2010 p38). Also echoing these views were the literary national circles willing to put forward their political and ideological agendas as the next section will demonstrate.
3.2.2 Bacalhau in ‘high culture’ – the texts of the gourmand writers

An influential group of nineteenth century Portuguese writers are at the intersection of these discussions. They constitute another significant aspect of narratives of bacalhau which I will now explore because it underscores the ubiquitous presence of bacalhau in Portuguese culture.

The nineteenth century’s textual depiction of bacalhau has been a topic of study in literary and culinary works (Quiterio 1997; Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Sobral 2007), but it is short of a comprehensive cultural analysis. In this section, it is my intention to contribute to the discussion by collating and analysing dispersed textual representations of bacalhau by some of the most recognised late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries’ Portuguese writers. I will argue that these texts were pivotal not only to increase bacalhau’s culinary visibility and cultural mobility across social classes but also to enable it to connote nation. Furthermore, the nineteenth century emerging literary representations of bacalhau in texts of bourgeois fiction and in socio-political commentary, coincided with bacalhau’s first documented accounts in cookbooks. The simultaneous textual account across multiple literary genres not only potentiated bacalhau’s shift from oral to textual representation but also enabled its bourgeois recognition and endowment with ‘new-found’ attributes and symbolic meanings. It is at this point that bacalhau ceased to be the “food of the poor” to become the “food of the rich” (Basilio Teles in Garrido 2010 p46). To this symbolic ascendency across the class barrier, bacalhau’s augmented price-tag also contributed to its increased class acceptability as a sign of status and distinction (Bourdieu 1984) at the table of the economically affluent.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Problema do Bacalhau generated heated debates in political circles and profuse social commentary with wide media circulation. Consequently, repeated references to bacalhau were well documented in novels and public writings. For example, in 1871 the Portuguese writer Ramalho de Ortigão (1836-

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55 In Chapter 4, I explore Portuguese cookbooks and their representation of bacalhau.
In 1915, commenting on the *Problema do Bacalhau*, foresaw its impact at different social and cultural levels by stating:

...bacalhau is affirming its place as an important food. As a result, we ought to be cautious with the detrimental consequences its rising influence might have on the social body (Ortigão in Moutinho 1985 p199) (my translation).

Reference to bacalhau in fictional literature was extensive and represented across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Writers, such as Camilo Castelo Branco (1825-1890), Eça de Queirós56 (1845-1900), Raúl Brandão (1867-1930), Aquilino Ribeiro (1885-1963) and Ferreira de Castro (1898-1974) to name a few, consistently included repeated references to bacalhau in their works. Eça de Queirós, in his book *Os Maias* (1888) wrote “… bacalhau’s arrival at the table was triumphal” (in Abel 1998 p126) (my translation); and in a letter written to a friend, de Queirós confessed his preference for bacalhau and explicitly associated it with “being Portuguese”:

> My books are, as I also consider myself to be, French; however, there are some exceptions which constitute some very special features that define being Portuguese – my affection for fado57 and my love for bacalhau de cebolada58 (de Queirós in Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p125) (my translation).

In turn, Aquilino Ribeiro in his book *Terras do Demo* (1919) (Land of Evil), made frequent references to *bolinhos de bacalhau* (bacalhau fritters) and referred to bacalhau as the *Faithful Friend* (Fiel Amigo) (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p127).

Another example is Ferreira de Castro, a well-travelled writer and journalist who “…considered bacalhau as one of the strongest links that connected the Portuguese to their land” (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p130) and an eating habit they endeavour to maintain. de Castro writes:

> …considered bacalhau as one of the strongest links that connected the Portuguese to their land (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p130) and an eating habit they endeavour to maintain. de Castro writes:

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56 Eça de Queirós is one of the most popular nineteenth century Portuguese writers and political commentators. He also held the position of Portuguese consul in England (Bristol and Newcastle) and Paris.
57 *Fado* is considered a Portuguese style of music and has been considered similar in style to the blues. *Fado* was recognised 2011 by the UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Humanity [ UNESCO. (2012). “Fado, Urban Popular Song of Portugal.” Retrieved 10 September 2013, from http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&RL=00563.].
58 A popular dish of bacalhau cooked with a lot of sauté onions, garlic and olive oil.
In India, Malaysia and China when Portuguese people recount stories of hardship and difficulty with social and cultural integration into the host environment, they almost invariably complain about the bad quality of bacalhau available in those places (de Castro in Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p131) (my translation).

Similarly, Vitor Wladimiro Ferreira (1998) writing the preface to Abel and Consiglieri’s (1985) book, described the anticipation with which expatriates living in Mozambique in the 1940s waited for the arrival of fresh deliveries of food and drinks from the Metrópole prior to Christmas. The most anxiously awaited item, was bacalhau and despite the heat of the African summer nothing would deter them from having the traditional bacalhau for dinner on Christmas Eve (Ferreira 1998 p10-12).

As these examples illustrate, since the nineteenth century bacalhau has been embedded in literary representations which have contributed towards bacalhau’s increased cultural and culinary visibility across class consumption.

These are literary works by individuals with well-established writing careers, which gave legitimacy to their writings and made them cultural producers. The meanings generated in their texts and the discursive associations they produced between bacalhau and Portugueseness, would have not only had an effect on the readership but arguably also increased bacalhau’s acceptability amongst the more affluent social classes. That is, bacalhau’s consumption and culinary/cultural status underwent a shift in the late nineteenth century. The previously class-tagged food of vernacular oral traditions embedded in the cultural eating habits of the less affluent, increasingly saw changes in its cultural and culinary prestige. Addressed to a bourgeois audience, bacalhau’s textual representation by means of social commentary – ‘high culture’ literary narratives and cookbooks, contributed to a newfound cultural signification which buttressed class acceptability and changes in its consumption patterns. That is, the ‘written word’ sponsored by literary elites instigated paradigmatic shifts which, as illustrated by de Queirós’s confessions, suggestively associated the practice of eating bacalhau with “some very special features that define being Portuguese” (de Queirós in Abel and

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59 Expatriates living in Africa usually referred to Portugal as Metrópole (metropolis) and the African colonies as Ultramar (overseas).
60 Bacalhau is the traditional dish eaten for Christmas Eve supper (Consoada).
Consiglieri 1998 p125). Bacalhau’s role as a cultural signifier and its symbolic associations with the nation had been laid down.

Some authors went even further. The Portuguese writer Fialho de Almeida (1857-1911) in his book Os Gatos (1894) clearly asserted his views on the role of food in the definition of nation. In favour of everything national, de Almeida voiced his discontent regarding the influence of French cuisine in Portugal by saying “…if we don’t stop this tendency of letting us be influenced by French food … soon all the national dishes will forever be lost” (de Almeida in Sampaio 2000 p147). Proceeding with his own definition of a national dish, de Almeida asserts:

...a national dish is a culinary product, aloof to textual representation and scientific rigor... it is oral in tradition and no foreigner can ever cook it ... it is the product of a collective genius ... the first thing we think of, when away from home (de Almeida in Sampaio 2000 p150) (my translation).

de Almeida’s conceptualisation of a national dish not only associated it with the “collective genius” of nation but also made it a symbol of folk and customary oral tradition indifferent to scientific rigor. Nevertheless, I argue that it was the shift from oral to textual representation that brought bacalhau into view and gave it a culturally symbolic value.

Thus, it is my contention that the late nineteenth – and early twentieth century – Portuguese writers had a pivotal role in promoting the mobility of bacalhau across cultural fields giving it a bourgeois aesthetic connotation, often associated with nation. By introducing bacalhau in their novels, voicing their views about its role in national culture and cuisine, they constructed bacalhau into a discursive device that articulated food with national values and meanings. To this symbolic value, the ever-increasing market price further made the commodity less affordable to its initial consumers and fostered its representational value amongst the new users.

This situation remained unaltered as Vice-Admiral Augusto Neuparth in a 1922 newspaper article commented. The inflated market prices, he argued, had changed a “a rooted eating habit” (Abel and Consiglieri 1998 p43), transforming the once ‘fiel amigo’ (faithful friend) into the “caro amigo” (expensive friend). In a ‘play of meaning’
Neuparth used the word ‘caro’ which can either mean ‘expensive’ or ‘dearest’ depending on the context. Hence, favourable textual representations associated with an increased price tag encountered a more accepting bourgeois audience willing to recognise bacalhau’s culinary and cultural value, endowing it with status and symbolism.

After ‘framing’ the Problema do Bacalhau and illustrating the shifts in bacalhau’s consumption and cultural signification during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I now turn to what I claim to be the most decisive point in bacalhau’s narratives – the Estado Novo’s Campanha do Bacalhau.

3.3 Estado Novo and Campanha do Bacalhau

Campanha do Bacalhau is one of the major economic revitalising programs implemented by the Estado Novo to promote the bacalhau-fishing industry. In this section I analyse media representations of the Campanha do Bacalhau through the eyes of one newspaper – The Jornal do Pescador – and a ceremony – The Benção dos Bacalhoeiros. Both are closely linked to the practice of bacalhau-fishing and their analysis in this study is contextualised within the timeframe of 1939-1945. I have purposely chosen this epoch because it is the period at the height of the Estado Novo’s governmental policies that were intended to implement the return of Portuguese fishing boats to the waters of Newfoundland as part of a strategic program of economic recovery and nation-building. It is also in this context that bacalhau is endowed with extra layers of symbolism that were to be etched in the national ethos for time to come.

As earlier examined, the Problema do Bacalhau persisted unchanged throughout the nineteenth century and well into the first two decades of the twentieth century. What was from the beginning an unresolved and persistent question of insufficient food supply, was further aggravated by the political instability and social unrest that characterised the years subsequent to the end of the Portuguese monarchy in 1910 and the impact of World War I on global markets.
The First Portuguese Republic (1910-1926) was never able to accomplish its promises of ameliorating or solving the chronic and recurrent problem of inadequate food provision. Before the 1926 military coup, that put an end to the sixteen years of the First Republic, António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970) in his professorial role chairing Economics at the University of Coimbra, wrote extensively about this topic (Garrido 2010 p137). After 1926, first as Finance Minister and from 1932 as Prime Minister, Salazar was able to put into practice his vision for a future national economic recovery (“ressurgimento económico nacional” (Garrido 2010 p24). His grand plan was as much about political and economic change – a strong corporatist state – as it was symbolic and ideological – reviving the link between the nation and the sea (“reencontro da Nação com o mar” (Garrido 2010 p24) and strengthening what the dictator named the “pillars of the State” – nation, family, God, work and authority (Ferrão 2010). The Campanha do Bacalhau was one of the cogs in an overarching strategic plan of national economic recovery.

It is in this context that the Campanha do Bacalhau needs to be considered. The Campanha was officially initiated on the 5th of June 1934, and persisted for thirty three years until its official closure on the 22nd of July 1967 (Garrido 2010 p15). Its aim was to prevent the recurrent problems with supply shortages, and its launching was accompanied by stringent policies that ensured State regulation of the industry and price control, all the while keeping a tight lid on any social unrest that could destabilise and disrupt State power (Garrido 2010 p14;86;137). The analysis of the Campanha do Bacalhau is relevant in this study because it illustrates how a symbolically meaningful staple – bacalhau – was utilised for the endorsement and enactment of a program of economic national recovery. This is an example of a synergetic work of political and cultural representation by which the State embodied in the fishing-industry, sought the strengthening of their political legitimacy by piggybacking on bacalhau’s already established cultural value. The anticipated outcome was to validate economic policies, making them a feature of national culture and further bolstering bacalhau’s cultural authority and meaningfulness.
Centring the *Campanha do Bacalhau* at the heart of State policies and programs of economic and social recovery had multiple effects. At the same time as it attempted to bolster the Estado Novo’s legitimacy by solving a problem of food supply that previous governments had failed to resolve, it also made the Estado Novo dependent on the men that would carry the industry through – the fishermen. Lobbying for their uncontested support, the State initiated an overhaul of social policies which were demagogically implemented as a means ‘to protect’ the ‘class’61.

Fishermen were key players in the Estado Novo’s plan. Without a dedicated, subordinate and cheap labour-force the regime would have not been able to use the fishing-industry as one of the contributors to economic recovery and nation-building (Garrido 2010). To gain the class’ support, the regime implemented a series of different strategies. On the one hand it developed populist and protectionist social welfare policies that would safeguard the basic needs of the fishermen; on the other hand it developed harsh systems of discipline, surveillance and political repression that could silence any form of resistance or dissent. Finally the Estado Novo launched a powerful work of symbolic cultural representation, ‘inventing’ ceremonial rituals of significant value which worked at the level of meaning and emotional investment. The aim was to make the fishermen indebted to the State, and identify with values that transcended them – nation, God and family – values that would make the *Campanha* meaningful to them.

For these reasons, the *Campanha do Bacalhau* (and bacalhau) was utilised as a tool of political and symbolic manipulation which further maximised bacalhau’s pre-existent symbolic value and made it the linchpin in the Estado Novo’s grand plan of economic recovery and nation-building.

The analysis of the *Jornal do Pescador* (newspaper) and the *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros* (event), further assist in the evaluation of the work of discursive and symbolic representation associated with the *Campanha do Bacalhau*.

61 In the literature the fisherman are always referred to as the ‘class’.
3.3.1 O Jornal do Pescador

Jornal do Pescador translates as Fisherman’s Newspaper and I frequently refer to it as JP. As a newspaper directed to the fishermen engaged in bacalhau-fishing, I consider JP to be an ideological text which illustrates the way cultural signification can discursively produce and reproduce historically specific world-views that tend to maintain relations of power-knowledge of dominant social groups. It is my contention that the Estado Novo used the Jornal do Pescador as a tool of political propaganda to promote welfare policies directed to the bacalhau-fishermen and their families. Without their cheap labour, support and commitment to the practice, the Campanha do Bacalhau could have never been deployed and developed (Garrido 2010).

The Journal do Pescador was initially published as a supplement to the Revista da Marinha (the Navy’s Magazine). However, from 1939 JP became a monthly publication in its own right, with its own editorial team that tactically, as the title of the newspaper indicated, targeted a specific audience – the bacalhau-fishermen. During its 45 years of publication, JP allegedly claimed to be at the service of the fishermen and their families. Yet, and as a close examination of its content demonstrates, the newspaper’s content was a promotional tool of State policies and welfare governance, underpinned by Salazar’ regime ideological pillars: family, authority, discipline, God and work (Ferrão 2010). The exhaustive analysis of the newspaper throughout its 423 editions between the years 1939 and 1974 is well beyond the limits of this study. Consequently, I will primarily focus my analysis on the first five years of the newspaper’s publication in order to capture the Estado Novo’s bacalhau-fishing policies at the height of their implementation. For example, in JP no.5 dated 31st May 1939, (see Fig.1) the front page exhibited a photo of a fisherman mending the fishing nets with the help of his young son. The caption reads:

*Dad what is the Estado Novo? Son, the Estado Novo is a government that helps us by giving us work and bread”* (no.5 Jornal do Pescador 1939 p1) (my translation).
Both father and son sitting side-by-side in what seems to be a well-staged photographic shot, were wearing the same checked shirts that later became the trade’s emblematic uniform. The black and white photography with different shades of grey, captured the harsh environment in which these people lived and worked, while at the same time disclosing the need for children’s engagement in small chores as part of their acculturation process.

Studies by A. B. Nunes (1993) show that in 1940 in the coastal regions of Aveiro and Ilhavo, the literacy levels were 43.8% (Nunes 1993 p25) with many children starting work at an early age to contribute to the families’ income rather than attending school. According to Nunes, in 1950 20% of the seven to ten-year old children were still not enrolled at school (Nunes 1993 p10-11). For these reasons, it is possible that children in fishing communities would help their fathers mending the fishnets; nonetheless, this harmonious photographic setting of a fisherman engaging with his young son in this conversation is more suggestive of an editorial technique to endorse the regime’s policies than an event taking place on the beach. In fact, the intended representation of inter-generational passage of life, vocational skills and oral knowledge between parents and their children is a feature often utilised by the JP’s editors in an attempt to portray family harmony and community unity.

Another example of the same editorial effort is the front-page photograph of the issue dated March 1945, in which a group of fishermen’s wives on the beach are repairing fishing nets (consertando as rédes) with a young boy sitting beside them (no.75 Jornal do Pescador 1945 p1) (see Fig.2). It is my contention that these photographs constitute a powerful representation of a communal ‘way of life’ produced and reproduced through the everyday cultural and social practices of those that lived it.
A close examination of the newspaper promptly draws the reader’s attention to a feature that was repeatedly used in each and every edition of the JP that I consulted. Entitled “Advice to the Fisherman” (Conselhos ao Pescador) (my translation), these statements rather resembled what I metaphorically refer to as ‘the fisherman’s 10 commandments’. They constituted guidelines on conduct, beliefs and the work ethic a fisherman was supposed to follow; in fact they were recommendations and codes of practice for personal demeanour, professional performance that promoted discipline and respect to the authority. Moreover, they constituted affirmations that through repetition were expected to become an engrained and ‘naturalised’ behaviour. These statements were usually clustered in groups of two or three and usually boxed at the bottom of a page. Occasionally they were assembled in groups of eight or ten as the centrefold of the newspaper. As examples:

*Fisherman, respect and protect the uniform of the Portuguese fisherman; it is a symbol of Patria and it will be your own uniform when tomorrow your duty to defend Portugal will be called upon (no.30 Jornal do Pescador 1941 p11) (my translation).*

*Fisherman: God, Patria, Family and Sea should constitute the four cardinal directions in your life (no.30 Jornal do Pescador 1941 p11) (my translation).*

*Fisherman: don’t be afraid of strong winds and rough seas because death spares the courageous (no.30 Jornal do Pescador 1941 p11) (my translation).*

*Don’t let sadness overwhelm you; if you feel homesick and you miss your family, work. If you miss your homeland, work more. Always keep focused on your work, try to be happy and you’ll see everything will be ok! (no.41 Jornal do Pescador 1942 p10) (my translation).*

These are just a few of the many ‘conselhos’ (advice) given to the fishermen in the Jornal do Pescador. As I verified, these exhortations were a constant feature in every newspaper, repeatedly reminding the fisherman of their duties to the nation, the family and God. The rugged working conditions were mentioned as character-building; the sea
was referred as one of the fisherman’s cardinal referents and the reader was often reminded of its historical and symbolic meaning as if it were an anchor of conviction and resolution, epitomised in the event the *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros*. Finally, the tone of the advice is noticeably patronising and directive, demonstrating how *JP* was utilised as an ideological tool. The editorial explicitly promoted discipline, obedience, respect and faith, thus linking the practice of bacalhau-fishing with the ideological pillars of Salazar’s regime and strategies for nation-building – family, authority, discipline, God and work.

As I have argued, examining the *Jornal do Pescador* contributed to a better understanding of the strategies that the Estado Novo generated to gain legitimacy and support from the fishing communities. However, despite being ostensibly targeted at fishermen, the low levels of literacy amongst labouring communities poses the question as to how and when the fishermen could find the time and ability to read the newspaper. These were men who worked long days at sea, and when back home had to provide for their large families. Nonetheless, as the newspaper’s content illustrates, a lot of thought was put into editorial work as means of promoting the policies of the regime. It is my contention that the newspaper was a propaganda device, which despite being directed to the fishermen and their families would have most likely been read by the top and middle range officers as means of politically acculturating them to the regime and its policies.

Further analysis of the *JP*’s content illustrates how the newspaper was utilised to promote the State populist programs of social welfare, education and family assistance. These were the tools of enticement which the Estado Novo expected would capture the fishermen’s class support, and the work commitment required to make operational its ambitious program of national recovery in which the *Campanha do Bacalhau* played a central role (Garrido 2010 p24-64).

3.3.1.1 Family, education and welfare

Family was one of the major referents consistently addressed by the *Jornal do Pescador*. For example, in *JP*, no. 3 dated 31st March 1939 the emphasis given to the
family institution cannot go unnoticed. In different articles the newspaper unreservedly promoted the social work implemented by the Estado Novo with photos and accompanying articles of recently inaugurated health centres exclusively for use and support of the fishermen’s families in the village of Buarcos62 (no.3 Jornal do Pescador 1939 p3-p8). In the same publication, an article entitled “Pão para o Lar, Conforto para o Espírito” (Bread for the Family Home, Comfort for the Spirit) (my translation) emphasised the work carried out by the Estado Novo in providing subsidies to fishermen’s families. The article reads:

The building of housing commission for the fishermen, a plan that is happening as we speak, is accompanied by the Estado Novo’s implementation of subsidies for widows and orphans, medical and pharmaceutical assistance, distribution of glory boxes to future brides and grooms and schooling for their children ... nationwide, in all the fishing villages and communities, there have been 139 fishermen’s weddings and 113 fishermen’s children have been baptised (no.3 Jornal do Pescador 1939 p11) (my translation following original punctuation).

As the newspaper article illustrates, family values were central, hence the assistance for marriages, pregnant women and childbirth. Group marriages were performed and monetary assistance was provided to the bride and groom with the offer of free glory boxes. Mothers-to-be were assisted in health centres before and after birth; new-born babies were given basic clothing at birth (enxovais) and group baptisms were organised and subsidised by the State. For example, the 1939 JP has on page three a photo of five-month old baby João – “a future fisherman”, the subtitle adds. The article’s punch line reads:

Fisherman, we are here to let you know that you are not on your own providing for the welfare of you children ... (we) protect them, educate them, treat them when they are sick and welcome them when they are born by providing them with clothing (enxoval) (no.4 Jornal do Pescador 1939 p3) (my translation).

The Jornal do Pescador emphatically addressed family values by referring to the fishermen and their families as the Grande Família do Mar (the Large Family of the Sea). Paternalistically, the State ensured their access to basic services. Education

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62 Buarcos is a small fishing village in the North of Portugal.
deserved top priority in policy making, as the government targeted fishing communities as the recipients of basic schooling in order to boost the 40% literacy rates of 1939\(^6^3\) (Nunes 1993 p22). In a program initially orientated to the fishing communities, new schools were built and the *Jornal do Pescador* was the chosen vehicle to announce the rollout of the initiative.

Children were taught the basic literacy and numeracy skills and coached in gendered and vocational skills that would prepare them for the social and cultural roles the State expected them to fulfil. For example, *JP* no.22 in 1940, displayed photos of young girls in the classroom taking sewing and crocheting classes (see Fig3). The photo was subtitled “Fishermen’s daughters being prepared to become good housewives” (no.22 *Jornal do Pescador* 1940 p9). On the other hand, boys were to be trained in the role of fishermen, securing job opportunities in the industry as soon as the basic schooling was completed and ensuring a constant stream of labour which fed the industry. Some of these young boys would be sent to Pedrouços (Lisbon) to a trade school where they were inducted into the fishing métier. For example, in 1942 the October edition of *JP* published a two-page article dedicated to the Pedrouços Fishing School, which was illustrated with photographs of young graduates wearing the official fishermen’s uniform and subtitled “Pedrouços students – tomorrow’s fishermen” (see Fig4) (no.46 *Jornal do Pescador* 1942 p8-9).

\(^{63}\) National literacy rates (higher than regional) were 41% in 1932 when the Estado Novo came to power, and progressively increased at a rate of 1% per year. In 1974 when the dictatorship was overthrown the rate was at 72.2% (Nunes 1993 p23).
The education system to which these children were submitted aimed at reproducing gender and vocational roles. Further, it sought to keep the children tied to the occupational activities rooted in their families, promoting continuity of social capital and the stability of communities and their values. It also left them unprepared and unwilling to exit their local villages, thus encouraging social and geographic isolation. It was an education system structured in a way to reproduce inter-generational vocational life skills and ensure the establishment of the social roles required to implement state policies rather than encouraging personal growth. These strategies can be understood in terms of the Foucauldian conceptualisation of the relationship between power and knowledge which thus illustrates the powerlessness and power-imbalances to which these communities were subjected. As Nunes argues, under Salazar’s regime there was evidence of a negative influence and outcomes on the level of education for ideological reasons, a claim supported by the low literacy levels until the 1950s (Nunes 1993).

Like the “Advice to the Fisherman”, JP’s wording used for the reporting of these policies and events was manifestly paternalistic. It demonstrated how these benefits delivered to the fishermen and their families were to be seen as special privileges rather than universal entitlements. Because they covered the basic needs of impoverished populations, these benefits also worked as a tool of political and ideological manipulation.
The regime attained the anticipated outcome as illustrated by Sally C. Cole’s study (1990). In 1990 Cole carried out an ethnographic study in Portugal, conducting interviews with Portuguese fishermen who had been in Newfoundland. Manuel, one of the interviewees, described his experience as a bacalhau-fisherman as “a life of slavery” (uma vida de escravidão) (Cole 1990 p7). Yet, unreservedly Manuel also recognised the exclusive advantages and privileges the ‘class’ had been awarded by the State. That is, Manuel acknowledged the social benefits granted to the fishermen and their families as beneficiaries of the Estado Novo’s emergent welfare policies’ initial uptake. Universal welfare entitlements were increasingly extended, but national coverage did not come into effect until the 1960s64 and especially after the democratic revolution of 1974 (Pereirinha and Carolo 2009 p5).

The exploration of the Jornal do Pescador was instructive. It highlighted the newspaper’s institutional role as a device for the endorsement of State policies with well-defined objectives: to promote rigid forms of work ethic, discourses of discipline, respect for authority and the catholic faith, and to inculcate family values. The anticipated outcome was to produce disciplined and obedient army-like professional-fishermen. On the other hand, the assistance provided by the emerging welfare-state policies can be considered as a positive practice. Nevertheless, a critical evaluation needs to be judiciously made.

In small coastal and remote communities, high levels of illiteracy were partly the result of large families, minimal financial resources and the need for families to increase their income by sending children to work rather than school. For them, the chance of having community-built schools, delivery of school material and free school-lunches to their children would have been a positive change. For communities with non-existent social assistance, high levels of unemployment and very basic housing conditions, any amelioration in their circumstances would have been welcome.

64 For details on the Estado Novo’s Social Policy see Pereirinha and Carolo (2009).
Nonetheless, the context in which these measures were delivered was problematic. They were implemented not as an entitlement but as ‘gift’ patronisingly offered to the citizen by the State, with the purpose of seeking support for its policies and legitimise its own existence. The social welfare policies were nevertheless an economic respite for the fishermen and their families. As Garrido (2010) argues, the Estado Novo had launched its fishing industry and the *Campanha do Bacalhau* with the assumption of the fishermen’s full adherence to the policies underpinning it. Without a cheap work force and the certainty that any industrial dispute would be immediately suppressed by the despotic State, the bacalhau-fishing industry would have not survived. Salazar needed the fishermen, as much as they need respite from a life of economic hardship. Thus an un-negotiated pact was established, whereby a patronising welfare system could buy cheap labour despite relentless hardship in Newfoundland and with the conviction that any dissent would be ruthlessly repressed and punished by the regime’s secret police⁶⁵.

Nevertheless, the Estado Novo was also aware that the effectiveness of repression was short lived and unsuccessful in the long run. To enable the implementation of a strategic plan of economic recovery, the State needed the fishermen and the population on its side. Thus, despite employing the pragmatic measures that I have just outlined, the Estado Novo also cunningly and concurrently utilised auxiliary methods that worked at a symbolic level, of which the ceremony *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros* (the blessing of the fleet) is an example. This is a ceremony which became a ritual event and a signifying practice deployed by the Estado Novo to gain popular consent, and give the *Campanha do Bacalhau* legitimacy and recognition of its fundamental role in the national economy. Its effects were enduring on the ethos of a people.

3.3.2  *A Benção dos Bacalhoeiros*

The Blessing of the Fleet is a traditional ritual practiced in Mediterranean fishing communities. To this date the practice still involves boats and crew being ‘blessed’ by the local priest to provide the ship and its crew with divine protection and hope for a

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⁶⁵ A repressive and brutal secret police organisation was institutionalised in 1933. Its name was PIDE (Policia de Intervenção e Defesa do Estado) (State Defence and Surveillance Police).
bountiful season. In Portugal the tradition was followed across fishing communities with reverence. Since the return of the Portuguese fishing fleet to Newfoundland in the nineteenth century, the traditional ritual took place in Lisbon, where most of the fishing companies were based and from where the fishing fleet departed to Newfoundland every year in April-May.

Up until 1936, the ceremony was a low-key event involving the fishermen, their families and some bystanders in the area of Belém, an onshore suburb of Lisbon (Garrido 2010 p236-238). However, by 1935 (one year after the launching of the *Campanha do Bacalhau*), increasing media speculation suggested the government’s intention to start overseeing the organisation of the event and alter its format. The plan was to transform what had always been a private occasion into a ceremonial event, symbolically matching the *Campanha do Bacalhau*’s significance in the national economy (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010 p236). That is, what had always been a simple religious service attended exclusively by the fishermen and their families before departing to Newfoundland, became appropriated by the State, thereby turning the occasion into a public event of significant symbolic proportions (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010), and further developing bacalhau’s symbolism as an icon of national culture.

In 1936, the first-time that State intervention oversaw the organisation of the ceremony, several navy battle ships⁶⁶ escorted the fishing fleet out of Lisbon’s harbour into high seas (Garrido 2010 p237). The involvement of the State and the Navy in this event heralded their intentions of appropriating the occasion for ideological motifs which would further assign the practice of bacalhau-fishing with symbolic and ideological meaning. Moreover, by taking control of the organisation of the event, the State could ensure the fishermen public and official recognition for their efforts at the same time as it provided the nation with a symbolic event of national unity.

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⁶⁶ Amongst the naval escort was the Nurnberg, a German navy battle ship that was visiting Lisbon at the time. The presence of a German naval vessel escorting the fishing fleet could be read as indicative of the ideological confluence between the Estado Novo and the German authorities.
As the following analysis illustrates, the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros was utilised as a launching platform for a strategic plan of cultural signification. In it, the sea took centre stage and became the medium that articulated the heroic past of the Seafaring Voyages of Discovery with the no less epic voyages to Newfoundland in the twentieth century (Abel and Consiglieri 1998; Garrido 2010). This link did not just articulate the glorious national past with the present but also essentialised it, giving it a quality of permanency and continuity. Moreover, it also reminded the public about the role of the past national heroes, equating them with the present bacalhau-fishermen who were endorsed by the Estado Novo’s rhetoric as the twentieth century heróis do mar (heroes of the sea).

As I demonstrate in this section, the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros represented a successful play of meaning appropriated by the Estado Novo. Cultural referents were given a second level of signification (Barthes 1993) that made them constitutive of an event of national symbolic significance. I now undertake a semiotic analysis of the various constitutive elements of the ceremony/ritual Benção dos Bacalhoeiros – the ‘site’, the ‘choreography’ and the ‘spoken words’ – because once integrated as a whole, they come to represent a “semantic network” (du Gay, 1997) that made bacalhau and the practice of fishing it culturally significant and meaningful.

3.3.2.1 The site

In Lisbon the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros was always conducted near the Torre de Belém (Belém Tower) and the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos (Jerónimos Monastery). The ceremonial event received extensive media coverage in the JP and other daily newspapers. The site was of great significance because both monuments are symbolically embedded in historic narratives of nation. They are located in the vicinity of the harbour where, throughout the sixteenth century, the Caravelas67 departed for the Voyages of Discovery, commonly narrated as a signifier of the epic Golden Era of the

67 Caravela is the name given to the style of sailing boat whose improved nautical characteristics enabled the Portuguese to successfully engage in long distance sea voyages to India and the Americas in the sixteenth century.
nation (Garrido 2010). Torre de Belém, is a tower located on the right bank of the mouth of the river Tagus (Tejo), which was constructed in 1514 as part of the city’s defence system. Nearby, the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, currently the national pantheon, was built by order of King D.Manuel I in 1501 with crown revenues from the spice trade and as a tribute to Vasco da Gama’s successful 1498 trip to India. It was built on the site previously occupied by a small hermitage where Vasco da Gama prayed the night before his departure. The site still remains one of the most popular touristic attractions in Lisbon because of its embeddedness in narratives of nation.

Prior to 1936, Belém would have been the ‘logical’ place to have the ceremony because that was where Lisbon’s harbour was located. However, the layers of meaning attributed to the place after 1936 were purposely activated by the new organisers. Belém’s location proved to be the ideal venue for the ceremony because it discursively articulated the nation’s past with the present. Moreover, by associating the event with a symbolically meaningful venue, the former would take a second level of signification by which the ceremony would acquire a meaning that it did not initially have but would now secure. The implementation of such a strategy entailed a sophisticated work of cultural signification which discursively and semiotically brought the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros and those associated with it, au-par with past events that had been made to signify the glory of the nation. To that effect, the Estado Novo named the fishermen as the present version of the sailors and called them the fishermen-sailors, the heróis do mar (heroes of the sea); the practice of bacalhau-fishing was coined Faina Maior (the major task) and bacalhau became pão do mar (bread of the sea). Naming the sea as the medium, and using Belém as the site where major and glorious events had taken place, the Estado Novo identified them as a signifier of nation and by association fishermen and bacalhau acquired similar connotations. Moreover, the maintenance of cultural signifiers between past and present events secured and illustrated the continuity of the nation.

This is how the Jornal do Pescador described the site in 1941, in a front-page article headed “In Belém, the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros was an impressive ceremony viewed by thousands of spectators”, the text reads:
Belém, in Lisbon’s offshore, is without any doubt the most appropriate place for this ceremony. This is the place where in the 1500s the Portuguese Fleet (Naus de Quinhentos) departed; this is where the Jerónimos Monastery is, witnessing the Portuguese Golden Era as the ‘Master of the Seas’ and Empire-building nation who gave ‘worlds to the world’ (no.28 Jornal do Pescador 1941 p2) (my translation).

The religious ceremony and the official speech that followed the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros were delivered by the Bishop of Helenoplis, himself a fisherman’s son from Ilhavo, whose father had perished at sea. Addressing the fishermen on the eve of the departure of the 1941 Newfoundland trip, the Bishop spoke metaphorically. He drew analogies between the present fishermen and past sailors (nautas). In an emotional plea the bishop proclaimed:

Portuguese sailors! You are giving continuity to the glorious acts of your predecessors – the nautas of five centuries ago who, with their audacity and Christian spirit conquered the world for God...we are the ‘pilgrims of Eternity’ (romeiros da Eternidade) (Jornal do Pescador 1941 p8) (my translation).

In a complex work of signification, the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros and the Campanha do Bacalhau came to epitomise nation-building and its practitioners were recognised as the heroes of the nation. As fishermen they fed the nation and ensured its economic viability; as sailors they secured the nation’s political and symbolic integrity.

3.3.2.2 The choreography and the spoken words
Aesthetics played a significant role in the choreography and media representation of the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros. The benefit of retrospectively examining newspapers published between 1939 and 1945 is that it makes clear the patterns of visual and textual editorial work. That is, one starts to appreciate how the reproduction of meaning over time makes it seem ingrained, ‘normal’, unquestioned and taken for granted (Hall 1997).

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68 Originating from Latin the Portuguese nauta means sailor.
The event’s choreography successfully produced a visual representation of grandeur, solemnity, continuity and order that was described in the greatest detail by the media. For example, in *Jornal do Pescador* dated April 1941, a seven-page article reported the *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros*. On page three, the photograph showed the Bishop of Helenoplis delivering the Mass surrounded by fishermen wearing their checked shirts, knee-high gumboots and holding their hat signalling respect (no.28 Jornal do Pescador 1941 p3).

A similar photograph was published in *JP* dated 1945. As World War II was drawing to a close, the April issue of the *Jornal do Pescador* reported on the *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros* showing a photo-group of forty-seven fishermen kneeling down by the side of the altar (see Fig5). The photo’s sub-title indicated that these men had been awarded medals of “[e]xemplary behaviour and fishing efforts” (no.76 Jornal do Pescador 1945 nn) in the previous year’s campaign. Two older fishermen received special awards in recognition of their thirtieth trip to Newfoundland.

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69 Fishermen’s salaries were topped up with a bonus which was calculated on the basis of their daily catch. The awards were given to those who had attained the highest tally, thus contributing to the success of the *Campanha* (Garrido 2010; Moutinho 1985).
This was the first time that fishermen were awarded as if they were soldiers fighting for their nation. It is worth mentioning that during the years of the Second World War, the Portuguese fishing fleet had been painted white (the so called White Fleet) in order to be signalled as fishing boats thus preventing them from being bombed by the German submarines (as some did) whilst sailing the Atlantic Ocean (Garrido 2010). The similarities between the 1941 and 1945 photos reinforce the sense of continuity of the event and its meanings – the same surroundings, mood and even some familiar officers’ faces. The black and white photography vividly captured the ‘play of meaning’ embedded in the ceremony.

A constant feature of the media representation of the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros was detailed photographic shots of the different characters involved in the event and their ‘staging’ throughout the Mass. The photography was centred by the altar and the Bishop of Helenoplis, whose arms raised to the skies claimed divine protection for the fleet (see Fig-6); behind him, and framing the religious service, were the flags with the of Cross of Christ70 prompting the symbolic association of the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros with the Era of the Discoveries, the man behind it (Prince Henry the Navigator) and the Crusades. The Cross of Christ worked effectively as a visual cue that symbolically suggested the fishermen representing the twentieth century crusaders defending the nation and the ‘word of Christ’ (see Fig.7). Thus, fishermen, just as their forebears had done in the past, were symbolically portrayed as sailors risking their lives in the cold and fearful waters of the Atlantic Ocean, harvesting the fish (the bread of the seas) that fed the nation. In the words of Garrido (2010), their mission was “ir ao bacalhau, alimentar o povo, reencontrar a nação com o mar” (Garrido 2010 p238) (fetch bacalhau, feed the people and rekindle the nation’s association with the sea) (my translation). By accomplishing this mission at the risk of their own lives, the fishermen became recognised as the twentieth century heróis do mar (heroes of the sea).

70 The cross of Christ was originally used by the Portuguese Military Order of Christ. Since then, it has become one of the symbols of Portugal. The order of Christ was founded in 1319 as a legacy of the Knights of Templar. Henry the Navigator (1394-1460) was the Order’s Grand Master, hence the Portuguese ships carrying the ‘cross of Christ’ on their sails during the Discoveries Era. The cross of Christ was also the symbol the Crusaders had worn on their white gown.
To secure the continuity of the ceremony, the industry and national recovery, it was essential to keep the trade and practice, alive. The fishermen’s sons were called upon as main players in this role. In 1940 the Escola de Pesca de Pedrouços (Pedrouços Fishing School) was inaugurated specifically to channel fishermen’s sons into vocational training in the art of fishing. Two years later Jornal do Pescador, dated April 1942, on its front page showed a photograph sub-titled “students of the Belém Fishing School attending the ceremony” (Jornal do Pescador 1942 p1). These young teenagers were the first graduates and they were embarking on their maiden voyage to Newfoundland. Attending the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros, they too were wearing the same checked shirts, the knee-high gumboots and the gravity of their faces demonstrated the solemnity of the occasion as well as the apprehension of young boys embarking on a dangerous trip. Illustrating the power of signs, the fishermen-to-be were wearing the same attire that had become identified as the “fishermen’s uniform” and the “symbol of Patria”, as described in the ‘Advice to the Fishermen’ in JP (Jornal do Pescador 1941 p11) (see page 73 in this chapter).

Fishermen became fishermen-sailors and their checked shirts had become their official uniform. In turn their sons were expected to follow their fathers’ footsteps. These men were given an institutionalised dress code and a code of conduct (the advice to fishermen) as if they were soldiers/sailors. When wearing the uniform they were no
longer individuals but an institutionalised Defence Force whose duty was to defend and feed the nation, even at the risk of their own lives. They were treated as warriors in good and in bad times. They could be heroes of the nation and awarded medals, as they could equally be considered deserters, judged in martial court, as happened after the draconian legislation of 1938 following the 1937 fishermen’s strike that was violently repressed by the State apparatus \(^71\) (Garrido 2003). Nevertheless, good behaviour was recognised and awarded because, whilst heroes of the nation, the fishermen/sailors perpetuated the heroic deeds of their ancestors: they kept alive the nation’s symbolic survival (Smith 1991) by giving continuity to its glorious past in which the *sea* was the medium signifying nation.

The *Tradition of the Sea*, had been initially ‘invented’ \(^72\) (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) by the Romantic writers and the Portuguese historians in the nineteenth century (Vakil 1996; Garrido 2008). In 1910 the First Republic epitomised the *sea* in the first line of the Portuguese anthem “heroes of the sea, noble people, epic and immortal nation…”, and in the 1930s the *sea* regained new heights through the Estado Novo’s powerful propaganda machine. The *Tradition of the Sea* discursively narrated Portugal as a nation with a long-standing maritime tradition, in which the *sea* was a referent of national identity. By bringing it into view and symbolically associating it with the fishing industry, the Estado Novo gave the *Campanha do Bacalhau* a cultural representation that made it equivalent to “the last adventure of the Portuguese people in the sea, the last dramatic and epic saga, which persisted till 1974” (Garrido 2010 p72). Thus the *Campanha do Bacalhau* and the tradition that it represented, became symbolically intertwined with the core values of nation and nationhood. The rhetoric utilised by Salazar was based on essentialist concepts of the nation, focusing on myths of origin, ethnicity and national heroes. It worked at a symbolic level seeking legitimacy and

\(^{71}\) As a result of the 1937 strike, the Estado Novo legislated harsh measures to be applied to fishermen evading recruitment. Absenteeism was considered an evasion of duty, thus classifying them as deserters subsequently to be judged in a martial court (Garrido 2003).

\(^{72}\) Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) argue that many of the national traditions promoted in the nineteenth century that underpinned the development of a nationalist ideology were invented.

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recognition through populist policies of welfare assistance provided to the fishermen and their families.

Nonetheless, the Tradition of the Sea lives on, reproducing the same meanings and values and still proving to be an effective propaganda tool in the twenty-first century. In 2008, the daily Diário de Notícias, one of the major newspapers with large circulation nation-wide, published a sixteen page article entitled Bacalhau – O Pão dos Mares (Bacalhau – the bread of the seas). Just prior to Christmas, author Sarah Adampolous started her article by stating:

Where does this urge to eat bacalhau for Christmas come from? It comes from the power of narrative choreographed by the regime\(^3\) over the collective consciousness (imaginário\(^4\)) of a people (Adamopoulos 2008 p58) (my translation).

And later:

The Sea Voyages generated a national collective consciousness (imaginary) underpinned by robust relationship between the Portuguese people and the sea (Adamopoulos 2008 p74) (my translation).

Two years later, President Cavaco Silva, in his 2010 presidential campaign, recycled the same rhetoric when he visited Ilhavo and the University of Aveiro (near Ilhavo). In his speech the President referred to the many centuries of association between Portugal and the sea. In 2010 the argument was updated with features that made it contemporarily meaningful: it focused on the research carried out at the University of Aveiro to develop environment friendly industries using the waves’ natural energy. Interestingly, bacalhau was not forgotten. Cavaco Silva was the guest of honour to the lunch organised by the local Confraria do Bacalhau\(^5\) and after delivering his speech, President Silva was photographed holding a large specimen of bacalhau. The photograph circulated widely in the media and at the time of writing was still available on line (Martins 2010). This

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\(^3\) Adamopoulos is referring here to António d’Oliveira Salazar’s regime that governed Portugal between 1928 to 1974.

\(^4\) Adamopoulos refers to ‘imaginário’, a term extensively utilised in Portuguese literature to describe the collective national consciousness.

\(^5\) See Footnote 43 in Chapter 2.
example illustrates how the circulation of powerful signs enables the production and reproduction of meaning and encoded values to become naturalised, taken-for-granted and an indisputable ‘matter-of-fact’.

Figure 8- President Cavaco Silva holding one bacalhau (source: Martins, F. 2010).

Thus, as I argued at the beginning of this section, *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros* was a symbolically relevant event connoting nation. The spoken words, the site, the choreographic staging and the media representation, were given a denoted and connoted meaning that made them culturally significant. It is their connotations that transformed what was a simple and private occasion, only meaningful for those directly involved in it – the fishermen and their families – into a symbolic event of national proportions. In a successful work of representation they promoted the core values that underpinned the Estado Novo’s political framework making the once humble bacalhau a signifier of nation, which in 2010 still made public appearances in the company of the President of the Republic.

### 3.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on cultural representations of bacalhau as constitutive of nation. I started by ‘framing’ the *Problema do Bacalhau* with the view to contextualise and demonstrate the multiple effects of its increasing consumption and supply-shortfall which turned an economic concern into a significant cultural and political matter.
The launching of the *Campanha do Bacalhau* by the Estado Novo in 1934 ostensibly attempted to resolve the problem of food supply and an economic crisis, although as demonstrated, it simultaneously constituted a strategic social policy with significant cultural impact. Far from being exclusively a plan of economic recovery and nation-building, *the Campanha do Bacalhau* integrated several strategies and practices which generated cultural meaning at a symbolic and discursive level; I demonstrated this through the analysis of the *Jornal dos Pescadores* and *Benção dos Bacalhoeiros*. In conclusion, through the analysis of the *Problema do Bacalhau*, nineteenth century literary texts, and the *Campanha do Bacalhau*, I have demonstrated how bacalhau and the practice of fishing it became constitutive of national culture.

In the following chapter I will proceed with the analysis of Portuguese Cookbooks, the aim being to evaluate cultural representations of bacalhau in culinary texts and practices.
4 BACALHAU IN PORTUGUESE COOKBOOKS

4.1 Introduction

We need to view cookbooks in the contemporary world as revealing artefacts of culture in the making (Appadurai 1988:22).

In the previous chapter I explored how bacalhau entered and acquired a predominant significance in Portuguese culture. In this chapter I evaluate the representation of bacalhau in cookbooks in order to further evaluate its placement in Portuguese culture and a national cuisine.

Cookbooks are cultural artefacts with a double function. They have a utilitarian role in that they provide the reader with prescribed practical instructions on how to cook. Yet, their content simultaneously shapes and is shaped by narratives representing the values imbedded in the culture. Cookbooks encapsulate time. They tell us stories of places, habits, beliefs, and aspirations of the people for which they were written. Cookbooks tell us about available cooking technologies, patterns of production, trends, tastes and even the prevalent aesthetic codes of the time. In turn, their recipes describe the way ingredients were used, cooked and eaten. As cultural artefacts, cookbooks tailor, as much as they are tailored by, taste, styles and patterns of consumption of those that authored them, generating a dynamic continuum in their engagement with audiences.

This study focuses exclusively on Portuguese cookbooks. The aim is to evaluate how bacalhau’s textual representation has contributed to make it the national culinary icon. The study’s sample is based on a wide range of items selected according to the criteria defined in Chapter 2 of this study, which I will briefly recall.

The books in the research sample are chronologically grouped in two clusters. Cluster 1 contains seven samples, constituted by the items recognised as representative of ‘old’ Portuguese cookbooks published between the sixteenth and the end of the nineteenth century. Cluster 2 comprises cookbooks published thereafter. Due to the increased number of items available, I deployed a relevant search criterion to limit the selection with the use of two resources: the database of public libraries of the Lisbon City Council (BLX), and Manuela Rêgo’s Catalogue of Portuguese cookbooks published in 1998.
I will start with a brief review of historical accounts of this literary genre to contextualise its increased cultural relevance.

### 4.2 Cookbooks in history

Cookbooks owe their increased popularity and accessibility to the 1454 Guttenberg printing press (Mennell 1985; Notaker 2010). This is not to say that there weren’t documented manuscripts with cookery advice and information prior to the fifteenth century, but rather to assert that with printing the genre’s availability increased, making it more accessible to larger audiences.

The initial format of cookbooks was far removed from their current structure. Content was broad-based and usually a compilation of writings by several scribes. Recipes proper, as a codified unit of standard structure delivering instructions about food preparation, were sparse in number and of a different format\(^{76}\), as ingredients were not quantified and instructions lacked precision and methodology.

Cookbooks in Renaissance Europe became a distinctive and popular genre within the so-called “how to” books, which were considered an essential consultation tool in most households of the European elites (Notaker 2010 p1). Despite the genre’s increased popularity, the number of printed cookbooks was still small in comparison to other literary works. According to Notaker (2010), 75% of early printed material was dedicated to religious and Latin classical literature and only 1% to cookbooks.

Nonetheless, between 1470 and 1700 more than one hundred items were published and about 650 were re-printed in Europe (Notaker 2010 p2), suggesting the genre’s increased popularity. However, the readership was still conditioned by two variables: low literacy levels and affordability (Notaker 2010).

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\(^{76}\) For consistent genre classification it has been agreed that a cookbook needs to have at least two thirds of its total text dedicated to recipes (Notaker 2010 p2).
As Cluster 1 in this study illustrates, in Portugal from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century, cookbooks were sparse in number and only written by royal chefs. It was not until the nineteenth century with the emergence of gastronomy\textsuperscript{77} (Berchoux 1819), and an increasing number of individuals calling themselves gourmands, that an accompanying rise in publications by non-professional cooks occurred. Most of these works specifically addressed the expensive culinary tastes of an aspiring audience – the bourgeoisie. Thus, their content was a representation of the eating habits of the aristocracy and the literate political and social elites for whom the professionals cooked. It was not until literacy levels expanded at the end of the nineteenth century with the project of nation, that cookbooks began to represent the eating habits of the population at large. Illustrating the role of print in the formation of nation (Anderson 1983), the expanding genre facilitated the homogenisation of culinary practices, habits and techniques that created a common culinary language for an emergent national cuisine. Thus, I expect the analysis of these two samples to establish additional information about bacalhau’s consumption patterns and to provide further evidence of its role in the making of national cuisine.

4.3 Cluster 1

4.3.1 Early cookbooks – sixteenth to nineteenth centuries cookbooks

\textit{Livro de Cozinha da Infanta D. Maria}\textsuperscript{78}, usually referred to as the Infanta’s Cookbook, is recognised by Food Studies experts and philologists as the first Portuguese item in this literary genre (Manupella 1986; Quiterio 1997; Sobral 2007). Originally a collection of sixteenth century manuscripts found in 1895 in the National Library in Naples (Italy), they were later restored, compiled into a book which was in 1986 edited and published by the historian Giancinto Manuppella. Currently recognised as an important repository of sixteenth century Portuguese recipes, the Infanta’s Cookbook

\textsuperscript{77} Gastronomy entered current use since the publication of the \textit{Physiology of Taste} by Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin in 1825. Research indicates that the term was first used in 1801 in a poem by Joseph Berchoux entitled \textit{Gastronomie} and published in 1819 (Berchoux 1819).

\textsuperscript{78} #284 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p67.
provides a valuable insight into the cooking practices and aristocratic eating habits of the time. I will not make a detailed analysis of the cookbook and its contents but rather contextualise it and evaluate the presence of bacalhau recipes in it.

Infanta D. Maria was King of Portugal D. Manuel I’s grand-daughter. According to Manuppella, the manuscripts accompanied Infanta D. Maria when she married the Duke of Parma in 1565 in Brussels (Manuppella 1986 pp n). The original documents followed the general structure of medieval culinary manuscripts in that, besides offering a variety of recipes, they also included practical advice and instructions for everyday household management (Manuppella 1986; Notaker 2010). Nonetheless, most of the content broadly represented the ingredients, cooking techniques and culinary practices of the time.

Significantly bacalhau is absent from the Infanta’s Cookbook. In fact, the presence of recipes for fish dishes in comparison to meat or poultry is remarkably low, which is puzzling due to the strongly held belief that Catholic dietary prescriptions made fish-eating mandatory for the Portuguese Catholic population (Moutinho 1985; Quitério 1987 p13). The absence of bacalhau recipes in the Infanta’s Cookbook would suggest the exclusion of bacalhau from the royal and aristocratic tables, especially when we know, as evidence provided in previous chapters illustrated, the practice of bacalhau-fishing in Newfoundland was a flourishing trade in the 1500s and a source of revenue for the crown. It is worth recalling that the monarch D. Manuel I (Infanta D. Maria’ grand-father) was the first to enforce a royal tithe on bacalhau revenue (Moutinho 1985; Garrido 2010). It is also likely that some of the manuscripts had been written prior to bacalhau-fishing becoming a common practice in the sixteenth century thus justifying its absence from the Infanta’s Cookbook.

As I argued in Chapter 1, the profitability of the trade was as suggestive of bacalhau’s significant economic role by mid sixteenth century as it was indicative of high demand, consumption and integration in the population’s eating habits. Yet, and in accordance

79 Recipes were rudimentary and non-quantified instructions. For detailed analysis of recipes see Notaker (2010) and Mennell (1985).
80 See Chapter 1.
with the Lisbon city Council proceedings (Chapter 1), the hypothesis that bacalhau’s consumption was distributed on the basis of status and class would be further supported by the absence of bacalhau recipes in the Infanta’s Cookbook.

It was not until 1680 that the first Portuguese cookbook authored by a professional chef was published. *Arte de Cozinha* by Domingos Rodrigues was the work of the royal head-chef to King D. Pedro II (1648-1706) and his wife D. Maria de Savoy, for which Rodrigues received the title of “Mestre de Cozinha de sua Majestade” (His Majesty’s Kitchen Master) (my translation). The Portuguese Queen Maria de Savoy, was familiar with the rising gastronomic discourse initiated by the French chef Varenne (1651-1678) and later pursued by Careme (1784-1833), which made France the arbiter of gastronomic taste of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Aspiring to introduce French standards to the Portuguese royal table, Maria de Savoy insisted that Rodrigues should follow the Francophone masters. Reflecting these social trends, Rodrigues’ *Arte de Cozinha* became a popular item utilised by professional chefs employed by the aristocracy and an increasingly influential bourgeoisie. As Rêgo’s Catalogue illustrates, Rodrigues’ cookbook was published throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth (8 editions), and nineteenth (3 editions) centuries, and then again in 1987 and 1995 (Rêgo 1998 p103).

The Renaissance rhetoric which pervaded the European culinary discourse robustly postulated that “[i]n the kitchen, reversion to ancient texts and Greco-Roman sources of inspiration demanded the abjuration of [hitherto] strong Arab influence” (Armesto 2002 p138). The European medieval cuisine, which had thus far emulated the Ottoman Empire culinary codes, underwent fundamental paradigmatic changes during the European Renaissance. The use of spices and perfumes in cooking, previously considered markers of status and signifiers of taste and distinction (Bourdieu 1984), fell into disrepute. Likewise, the use of new sauces using meat stocks and butter replaced...
the sweet-and-sour\textsuperscript{83} versions, which had been the mainstay of medieval cooking tastes (Saramago 1995 p24). The aim was to eradicate any vestige of the Arab cuisine and construct a new European (French) protocol with new codes, styles and tastes to produce a new culinary language. At a time when the French monarchy, and its iconic Louis XIV (1638-1715) the Sun King, were in clear ascendancy in Europe, Francophone cuisine was used as an ideological stance that contested the previous Arab supremacy.

Rodrigues adhered to the French culinary influences wholeheartedly. In \textit{Arte de Cozinha}'s prologue, and in accordance with seventeenth century gastronomic discourse, Rodrigues made a plea for the recognition of cooking as an “art-form” and acknowledged the need for profound changes in the Portuguese cooking practices (Rodrigues 1995 p32). He advocated the need for innovation and the establishment of new techniques, methods of cooking and use of new ingredients utilized by the new culinary trends. The paradigmatic changes implemented by the French cuisine that Rodrigues enthusiastically followed not only impacted on the way cooking was to be practiced thereafter; they were also part of broader ideological and cultural shifts associated with the scientific and aesthetic values of modernity in which one could already “…discern certain strands of a new culinary aesthetic which was to be carried out more fully into culinary practice in the eighteenth century” (Mennell 1985 p73).

The influence of the French cuisine in Portuguese cookbooks and culinary practices was maintained until the end of the nineteenth century when the project of the nation became pervasive. By then the emphases shifted towards the local and the volk emphasising the ‘invented traditions’ that came to connote a national culinary culture, which as I illustrated in the previous chapter, was sponsored and promoted by the literary and political elites of the time.

Nevertheless, Rodrigues also included in his cookbook many recipes recognised as constitutive of the more traditional Portuguese culinary protocol. The presence of these

\begin{footnote}{83 These flavours were produced by the association of favourite Arab ingredients – sugar, vinegar, lemons and gooseberries.}

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recipes in Rodrigues’ _Arte de Cozinha_ is currently interpreted by Portuguese food writers and historians as evidence of a valuable “…rooted identity within the Portuguese traditional cuisine” (Saramago 1995 p10). For example, some of Rodrigues’s recipes are considered to constitute the template for a savoury “matrix”\(^84\), whereas some of his desserts are claimed to be the base of the Portuguese sweet-making repertoire (Lima-Reis 2008 p152), in particular that which is currently practiced and classified as ‘Doçaria Conventual’\(^85\) (Saramago 1995 p26).

There is a discernible intention by current Portuguese food historians to name, classify and conceptually construct a Portuguese ‘matrix’ of flavours which they argue has been present in recipes and cookbooks dating from as far back as the Infanta and Rodrigues’ cookbooks. They further assert that this ‘matrix’ underpins the Portuguese cuisine, establishing the foundations for a rooted culinary tradition that defines it. It is my contention that this rhetoric constitutes a central plank of contemporary discourses that endorse national cuisines\(^86\), but which was not present in the texts of sixteenth and seventeenth century cookbooks nor of any concern to the writers and chefs of Rodrigues’ time. The idea of a ‘matrix’ of flavours is a recent discursive construction frequently referred to by food writers and contemporary Portuguese chefs, which I intend to address in my later chapters.

Significantly for this study, there is a total absence of bacalhau recipes in Rodrigues’ _Arte_, despite an entire section dedicated to “seafood menus” for Fridays and Lent (Rodrigues 1995 p161). Thus, the exclusion of bacalhau recipes in Rodrigues, as in the Infanta’s Cookbook, confirms my assertion, also noted by other authors (Quitério 1987; Sobral 2007), that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries bacalhau was stereotyped

\(^84\) Some of the chefs and gastronomic authors that I interviewed referred to some ingredients and techniques as constitutive of the ‘matrix’ of the Portuguese cuisine. As they described, the ‘matrix’ of any savoury dish is represented through the use of olive oil, garlic, onion and fresh herbs usually referred to as _refogado_. I have not been able to identify who coined the concept, however from my own research I can ascertain that it is widely used by the Portuguese chefs and food writers alike.

\(^85\) ‘Doçaria Conventual’ is a category of ‘sweet making’ widely practiced in Portuguese convents by nuns and subsequently sold outside the convent as fundraising for the institution. The hallmark of ‘docaria conventual’ is its traditionally abundant use of sugar, eggs and almonds, all expensive ingredients to which only convents had privileged access.

\(^86\) Here, I am only concerned with the analysis of the Portuguese cuisine, although it is possible that this rhetoric could be observed more widely.
as a food for the less affluent. This claim is further supported by the conclusions drawn from an examination of the Lisbon City Council Archives (Chapter 1), which illustrated bacalhau to be recognised as a food for the poor.

*Arte de Cozinha*’s successful publication is illustrated by the multiple editions throughout the two centuries that followed its initial publication (Rêgo 1998 p103). Nonetheless, this did not spare Rodrigues from the virulent criticisms made one century later by Lucas Rigaud when he was appointed to the position of “Chefe de Cozinha de suas Majestades” (His Majesty’s Chef – my translation) to King D. Pedro III (1717-1786) and Queen D. Maria. Rigaud’s professional title introduced the French word ‘chef’ into the Portuguese cooking vernacular. In a desperate attempt to demarcate himself and his work from that of Rodrigues’, Rigaud criticised his work considering it saturated with mistakes and in urgent need of being replaced by his own work *Cozinheiro Moderno ou a Nova Arte de Cozinha* (Rigaud 1999) (the Modern Cook or the New Art of Cooking) (my translation).

The new trends in cooking that had been introduced one century earlier by Rodrigues in the royal kitchen had evolved further and had become mainstream in European’s haute cuisine. In Portugal, these changes, although recognised and adopted by foreign chefs working for Portuguese aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, were yet to be universally integrated as everyday practices. Public’s tastes and preferences were difficult to shift and they still demanded the moderate use of spices and some old cooking techniques.

Rigaud’s arrival in Lisbon as the royal chef was to change this. The royal table and the aspiring bourgeoisie, keen to follow the canons set by their counterparts abroad, generated a thriving market and an increasing demand for professional expertise. Grounded in French culinary codes, Rigaud’s cuisine promoted innovative methods and an inventive approach to new and exotic ingredients brought from the new Americas. These were enthusiastically accepted by the elites, eager to demarcate themselves through the consumption of unusual foods. For example, Rigaud made wide use of

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87 #455 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p102.
turkey, to which he dedicated thirty-one recipes in his cookbook (Rigaud 1999 p14).

Other examples of innovative ingredients were potatoes, corn and tomatoes. Further expanding on the modern concept of novelty, Rigaud introduced less commonly used types of fish in his cooking, one of which was bacalhau. The Francophone chef referred to bacalhau as *merlus*, which is the French name of the fish, and he provided the following introductory note:

*Merlus is what is referred to in Portuguese as bacalhau. It is available either dried or fresh/salted (verde). The English are responsible for its trade and the best fish comes from Newfoundland* (Rigaud 1999 p195).

Rigaud’s *Cozinheiro Moderno* included three recipes for bacalhau: ‘Bacalhau à Provençal’88, ‘Bacalhau à Béchamel’89 and ‘Char-grilled bacalhau’ (Rigaud 1999 p196). Despite the use of sauces and methods of cooking directly associated with the French cuisine, the presence of bacalhau in Rigaud’s cookbook corresponds to a shift in the ingredient’s cultural worthiness in Portugal. Ironically, it was a Frenchman who introduced it to the tables of the Portuguese ‘haute-cuisine’ thus contributing to bacalhau’s gradual shedding of previous stereotypes and its upward mobility into the culinary echelons along with a higher degree of tolerance and acceptability at the table of the affluent bourgeoisie. I further argue that Rigaud’s culinary use of bacalhau and other newly arrived ingredients to Europe reflected the intentional use of novelty in cooking, highlighting the emerging discourses of modernity and the use of taste and style to connote social status. The incessant search for originality and uniqueness is a key point in professional cooking circles which was as relevant in the eighteenth century as it is today. The capture of these cultural patterns and shifts in cookbooks confirms my initial claim that cookbooks as cultural artefacts, shape their times as well as being shaped by them.

The next two cookbooks further illustrate this point. The nineteenth century witnessed the publication of Paulo Plantier’s90 *Receitas para Gastrónomes Requintados* (Plantier

88 Rigaud’s Provençal method is most likely his version of *brandade*, a dish of salted cod traditionally from Marseille.
89 See Footnote 82 in this Chapter.
1994)\textsuperscript{91} (Recipes for Sophisticated Gastronomes – my translation) and Visconde de Vilarinho de S. Romão’s\textsuperscript{92} Arte do Cosinheiro e do Copeiro (1841) (Art in the Kitchen and in the Scullery) (my translation). None of these authors were professional chefs, but rather self-proclaimed gourmands with access to influential social and cultural networks. Following the trend instigated by Rigaud, both Receitas and Arte do Cosinheiro have references to bacalhau.

Vilarinho de S. Romão’s cookbook had two particular facets that are relevant to this work: the presence of bacalhau recipes and political commentary. The former documented the presence of bacalhau at the aristocrat’s table by the mid-nineteenth century. The latter echoed broader governance concerns, by which governments were increasingly expected to take responsibility for and a pro-active role in the populations’ well-being and food procurement requirements. Reflecting the emerging involvement of political power and control over matters related to the health and nutrition of its citizens (bio-politics within a Foucauldian framework), food provisions constituted a contested field of public debate, and bacalhau was right in the centre of the polemic. As I argued in Chapter 3, at the time de S. Romão’s book was published, the Problema do Bacalhau and the broader problem of food provision were contentious political issues.

As a pastoralist, de S. Romão voiced his critique of “our century-long preference” (Quitério 1987:178) for bacalhau consumption, favouring the development of the cattle industry rather than that of fishing (de S. Romão in Quiterio 1997 p178). Nevertheless, the inclusion of bacalhau’s recipes in his book (Quitério 1987 p178) are evidence of its increased acceptability at the elite’s table as well as of the polemic generated by its supply and consumption.

The second book published in 1870 was Paulo Plantier’s Receitas para Gastrónomes Requintados, an example of a cookbook made by gourmands for gourmands. A flamboyant gastronome, Plantier was well-known amongst the popular restaurants and

\textsuperscript{91} This is a 1994 edition of what was originally the last chapter of the 1870 Plantier’s cookbook Cosinheiro dos Cosineiros.

\textsuperscript{92} \#83 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p31.
Despite having been trained as a watchmaker, Plantier developed an interest in gastronomy and maintained a fruitful network within the Lisbon cultural elite of the time. When he took to writing a cookbook he decided to request the participation of his well-known literary and artistic friends. The result was a series of 100 recipes shared amongst some of the literary elites to whom Plantier referred to in the book’s title, as well-versed gastronomes and “distintos artistas e escritores” (distinguished artists and writers) (my translation) (Plantier 1994). Their culinary participation included five bacalhau recipes.

Plantier’s initiative of including in his cookbook recipes by “distinguished artists and writers” is indicative of two interrelated trends. First, it accounted for the recognition of a new science – gastronomy – and of cooking as a culinary art, all of which constituted new fields of cultural representation connected to the aesthetic predispositions linked to modernity (Featherstone 1987). Second, it illustrated the concurrent rising influence of a group of individuals that took upon themselves the role of the gastronomic expert. Their public visibility and influential social network granted them public validation and legitimated the discourses and “regimes of truth” (Foucault 1972), which were made true through discursive practices that they produced, promoted and reproduced. These social/cultural agents performed an equivalent role to that of what Bourdieu later coined ‘cultural intermediaries’, that I will analyse in Chapter 5. For the moment, it suffices to say that these individuals, Plantier representing himself as one, had a significant role to play as opinion makers, trend-setters and arbiters of tastes and styles.

The third significant feature of Plantier’s cookbook is the inclusion of bacalhau recipes. In itself, this constitutes yet another manifestation of the slow but steady ascendancy of the fish’s culinary worthiness; the fact that bacalhau was being cooked by “distinguished artists and writers” added further signification to bacalhau’s culinary

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93 Chiado is a trendy area in the Lisbon CBD where, in the nineteenth century, artists and bohemians circulated as part of a café and restaurant society. As I will document in Chapter 5, currently Chiado still maintains its position as a cultural hub to which the upcoming suburb of Santos has now joined. Trendy restaurants populate both areas, some of which are owned by the chefs interviewed for this study.

94 The book’s editor (signed as NE p6) draws the reader’s attention to the participants chosen by Plantier, all of whom were well recognised Portuguese writers: Fialho de Almeida, Ramalho de Ortigao, Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, Bulhão Pato. It is worth pointing out that some of these authors were mentioned in Chapter 3 for their role in promoting bacalhau’s connotation with nation.
visibility. I contend that these changes were pivotal for the increased public acceptance of a fish that had been previously stereotyped, class-tagged, and that throughout the nineteenth century progressively moved upward in culinary merit. From the table of the common men and women to the tables of the most expensive eating outlets, its recognition by gourmands as a dish worthy of being included, first in Rigaud’s and later in Plantier’s cookbooks, increased bacalhau’s prestige and approval at the table of an affluent public for whom Plantier and his artistic friends were writing.

Some of these writers, to whom I referred in Chapter 3, had influential roles in the nineteenth century Portuguese Romantic and Republican Movements. Throughout these broader paradigmatic societal and structural changes, the cultural representation of food habits was shaping and being shaped by cookbooks. The Portuguese bourgeoisie who had thus far “… prayed in French, thought in French and ate French” (Lapa 1993 p8) was prompted to change. Despite French cuisine’s assertiveness as the leading culinary bastion, there was a growing ideological shift towards promoting, praising and validating the nation, the land, the local products, the traditional eating habits and cooking practices of the volk. The Romantic Movement and the Portuguese writers were influential in this counter-cultural transformation. As intellectuals and recognised gourmands, their fictional writings and political commentary significantly contributed towards a more accepting attitude towards bacalhau’s consumption by the elites. As I have previously argued, the literary elites were pivotal in their role as a class zealously committed to carry out the project of nation as an ideological bourgeois enterprise, for which they developed a newfound meaning for bacalhau as a culinary symbol of nation.

The later editions of Plantier’s cookbook were indicative of the increasing relevance given to food in the project of nation. In a 2003 study, J.M. Sobral analysed Plantier’s *Cosinheiro dos Cosinheiros* (1870) and was able to ascertain the differences between the cookbook’s first edition of 1870 and the 1905 version. The former exclusively included recipes of French origin and expensive ingredients used by the French ‘haute-cuisine’ like truffles, French cheeses and wines. By comparison, the 1905 edition included Portuguese wines, olive oil and recipes that Plantier himself explicitly recognised as representative “of the traditional Portuguese cuisine” (Plantier in Sobral
Sobral did not refer to Plantier’s criteria for his choice of recipes in his cookbook’s later edition. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that the French watchmaker-come-food writer recognised the importance (and perhaps the need) to include recipes representative of a Portuguese national culinary ‘tradition’, which points to the ascending role of food in national culture. This trend was to become even more predominant in the twentieth century, as the cookbooks in Cluster 2 illustrate.

4.4 Cluster 2

Cookbooks in the twentieth century began to address a different readership. Whereas items in Cluster 1 were authored by male chefs for the use of their male counterparts cooking in the public sphere, cookbooks in Cluster 2 were in their majority written by female authors for female home-cooks, cooking in the space of the home kitchen where they prepared the family meals. The early twentieth century was a time of major social, cultural and political changes in Portugal, particularly with the end of the monarchy in 1910 and later with the beginning of Salazar’s dictatorship in 1932. These changes can be detected in the content of cookbooks and the audiences they addressed. As I will demonstrate, cookbooks became a tool for nation-building both in the private and the public sphere, and a device of socialisation and acculturation of women into the role of domesticity. In this section I will examine how the literary genre captured these significant cultural shifts and I will evaluate how the textual representation of bacalhau relates to the active processes of nation-building that Portugal underwent in the first decades of the twentieth century.

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95 S. Mennell (1985) contended that cookery writing falls into two categories: cookery books and gastronomic books, the former directed to domestic cooks and the later to professional chefs. This argument seems to be substantiated by the present sample of Portuguese cookbooks.
4.4.1 Cookbooks in early twentieth century – bacalhau in nation-building

Bento da Maia’s *Tratado Completo de Cozinha*[^96] was first published in 1903. Unlike the previous cookbooks which were mainly targeted to the professionals employed by the social elite (Mennell 1985), *Tratado Completo* was directed to a different readership. The nineteenth century massive exodus of population from country to urban areas generated a group of under-class, jobless and unskilled young women newly-arrived to the capital (da Maia 1995). They constituted an increasing pool of untrained female labour that could, if trained, become participant citizens fulfilling the increasing demand for household servants in the houses of an expanding prosperous urban bourgeoisie. Recognising the lack of educational outlets, da Maia called for governmental funding for vocational training of these women and proposed *Tratado Completo* as a didactic tool for the teachings of Home-Economics (“utilidade doméstica” (my translation).

*Tratado Completo* addressed theoretical material as much as practical instructions on hygiene, kitchen equipment and culinary information. Significantly for this study, the cookbook presented an extensive collection of recipes most of which da Maia sourced from friends and acquaintances. da Maia confidently claimed his cookbook to be a legitimate indicator of the population’s quotidian eating habits and timely sub-titled it – *Portuguese Recipes Approved by Decades of Everyday Practice* (my translation) (da Maia 1995).

A close examination of the book’s index is informative. The savoury recipes disclose 32 entries for bacalhau dishes as well as a series of recipes making profuse use of olive oil, garlic, onion, eggs, potatoes and fresh parsley, which as I have indicated earlier, are recognised as the ‘staples’ or ‘core’ ingredients in Portuguese cuisine[^97]. The presence of 32 bacalhau recipes is significant because it is indicative of an increasing textual representation of bacalhau in culinary literature, thus facilitating its expanded textual access to a larger and a more diversified readership cohort. Some of these recipes are

[^96]: #302 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p70.
[^97]: See Footnote 84 in this Chapter.
still popular dishes, as is the case of Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá (da Maia 1995 p30) and bacalhau à Portuense (da Maia 1995 p31).

The popularity of da Maia’s 1903 *Tratado de Cozinha* led in 1921 to the equally successful publication of a more concise version *Manual de Cozinha*98. *Manual’s* targeted a different audience in that it particularly addressed an increasingly large cohort of young middle-class women, mostly the beneficiaries of mass basic primary education, who were subjected to the rising demands put on women to fulfil roles as wives and mothers.

The book became a kitchen companion to a large number of Portuguese women (Quitério 1987). It provided them with the practical recipes used in everyday familiar dishes, that helped them to fulfil, and endorse, the strongly held views and expectations of the time which recognised that “culinary art is one of the most necessary skills of any housewife” (da Maia 1975 p nn). By cooking healthy and economic meals for the family, women were fulfilling their role as female citizens in feeding the nation’s future generations and workforce. As Quitério (1987 p64) noted, da Maia’s books became and continued to be, a popular gift for brides, despite the plethora of cookbooks published throughout the subsequent decades.

da Maia’s *Tratado* and *Manual* document the significant role of cookbooks in the production of nation. As Smith asserts (Smith 1991), the continuity of nation is underpinned by the reproduction of its culture, in which cookbooks prove to be a useful tool because they reproduce culinary practices and grassroots eating habits. The reproduction of these culinary mores has been frequently used in gastronomic literature as evidence of a robust and enduring culinary matrix which ensures the continuity of nation and the central signifiers of a national culinary culture. Furthermore, da Maia’s cookbooks are evidence of their role in processes of socialisation and acculturation of women in civic and gendered roles, a facet that became even more prominent in the

ensuing decades when the Estado Novo named the *family* as one of the ideological foundations of nation-building.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s cookbooks constituted a successful literary genre. The author Rosa Maria was a particularly prolific writer with a series of publications, as attested to in Manuela Rêgo’s Catalogue. Maria’s cookbooks *A Cozinheira das Cozinheira* (Maria 2010)\(^{99}\) (The Cook’s Cook) (my translation), *Como se Janta or 3$00*\(^{100}\) (Maria n.d.) (How to Dine for Under 3$00) (my translation), *Como se Almoça por 1$50*\(^{101}\) (Maria 1933) (How to Cook Lunch for Under 1$50) or *Como se Cozinha Bacalhau de todas as Maneiras*\(^{102}\) (Maria n.d.) (Different Ways of Cooking Bacalhau) illustrate the popularity of the genre. *A Cozinheira das Cozinheira*, was particularly popular with a fifth edition in 1941 and in its thirtieth edition in 1982 (Rêgo 1998 p80). Likewise, the 1945 Bertha Limpo’s *O Livro de Pantagruel*\(^{103}\) (1945) (Pantagruel’s book), Laura Santos’ (c.1954) *A Mulher na Sala e na Cozinha*\(^{104}\) (Women in the Kitchen and in the Lounge) (my translation) and *Escola de Noivas*\(^{105}\) (c.1954) (School for Brides-to-be) (my translation) were also successful publications, which are as indicative of the thriving genre’s audience reception as they are of the socio-cultural and political context of the time which sponsored and supported the publication of cookbooks.

The genre’s success is translated in the number of editions. *O Livro de Pantagruel* (1945) was by 1997 in its 49\(^{th}\) edition (Rêgo 1998 p66), whilst Laura Santos’ *A Mulher na Sala e na Cozinhas* (c.1954) was in its 16th edition in 1983 (Rêgo 1998 p106) and *Escola de Noivas* (c.1954) first published in 1951 was on its 10\(^{th}\) edition in 1990 (BLX-Rede Municipal de Bibliotecas de Lisboa 2011).

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\(^{99}\) #331 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p80. The first edition is not dated but in 1941 the 5\(^{th}\) edition was published. The author owns the latest edition published in 2010.

\(^{100}\) #330 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p80.

\(^{101}\) #328 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p80. This is the only book with a date for its first publication 1933.

\(^{102}\) #329 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p80.

\(^{103}\) #278 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p66.

\(^{104}\) #474 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p106. Author owns a 4\(^{th}\) edition copy, not dated thus referenced as c.1954.

\(^{105}\) #470 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p105. Author owns a 3\(^{rd}\) edition copy, not dated thus referenced as c.1954.
The increasing number of cookbooks published in this period is surprisingly high in particular when one takes into consideration that literacy was far from being universal\textsuperscript{106}, suggesting that other factors contributed for this trend. I contend that the success of these publications is in line with the conformism of the historical and political context in which these books flourished, which robustly promoted strict family and gendered oriented social policies, underpinned by a conservative religious rhetoric. Most of these books were authored by women and for women, who were paid tribute for their valuable role as mothers, wives and household managers (Limpo 1945; Santos c.1954; Santos c.1954). Through their writings, these female authors were “do(ing) gender” because they were endorsing the idea that “[b]y feeding the family, a woman conducts herself as recognizably womanly” (De Vault in Ashley, Hollows et al. 2004 p133). But the cookbooks were doing more: they were producing and reproducing discourses that ascribed normalised female gender roles as necessary to nation-building. The success of these publications suggests a conservative historical and political context that sponsored the literary genre, where any pocket of contestation would have been seen as anti-patriotic and politically dealt with accordingly.

The years that followed the First Republic (1910) were troubled years. In 1932 when Salazar came to power as the self-elected prime minister, drastic measures of economic and social national reconstruction were put into place. The emphasis on nation-building was master-minded via economic rehabilitation for which, as I argued in Chapter 3, the revitalisation of the fishing-industry and the \textit{Campanha do Bacalhau} were paramount. It is no coincidence that accompanying an era of conservative politics, one that strongly promoted family policies, domesticity, thrift and consumption of national products, cookbooks became a popular genre. Thus a closer examination of their content, in particular the presence of bacalhau recipes, can be insightful as it can provide pointers indicative of the relationship between the \textit{Campanha do Bacalhau} and the use of cookbooks as an incentive for its consumption.

\textsuperscript{106} Expanding on the statistical details provided by Nunes’ study, which have been analysed in Chapter 3, it is worth referring to the literacy gap between urban and regional areas. For example, Lisbon’s literacy rate in 1940 was 59.5\%, and regional Beja (Alentejo) was 27\% (Nunes, 1993 p25).
In Rosa Maria’s *Como se Cozinha Bacalhau de todas as Maneiras* there were one hundred bacalhau recipes (Rêgo 1998 p80); in *A Cozinheira das Cozinheira* (Maria 2010) there was a total of 103 bacalhau entries. In turn Santos’ books dedicated one chapter entirely to bacalhau, with a total of 40 recipes across her two books107. Likewise, *O Livro de Pantagruel* dedicated 50 recipes to bacalhau. These figures suggest bacalhau’s popularity in Portuguese kitchens, indicating a successful outcome for the *Campanha do Bacalhau*, in full swing by the 1940s (see Chapter 3).

The present analysis provides mounting evidence of the cookbook’s popularity and of their role in consistently promoting bacalhau’s consumption. The vast number of bacalhau recipes arguably suggests that fishing bacalhau, cooking it and eating it, would have been seen as patriotic practices that the government of Salazar robustly encouraged and sponsored through the well-known saying “there are 365 different ways of cooking bacalhau – one for every day of the year”. Equally, writing cookbooks was a practice strongly endorsed by the status quo as a significant tool of socialisation and acculturation in the private sphere. This is the space where eating habits and tastes are first shaped; the domain where everyday practices of food preparation and consumption are produced and reproduced becoming ingrained as dispositions or habitus108 (Bourdieu 1984) and a form of “banal nationalism” (Billig 1995), thus demonstrating the fundamental role of cookbooks.

Jennifer Horner’s study of the 1950 post-war *Betty Crocker’s Picture Cookbook* drew similar conclusions. Asserting that cookbooks were more than a repository of recipes, Horner demonstrated that they could also be vehicles sponsoring hegemonic ideology that promoted nation-building. She argues that cookbooks in post-war American played a significant role in renegotiating certain forms of female domesticity and producing an image of nation. By glorifying “the celebration of uniquely American food and practices” (Horner in Ashley &al, 2004 p155) *Betty Crocker’s Picture Cookbook* “symbolically connect[ed] the domestic practice of modern women’s cookery to …the

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107 *Escola de Noivas* with 16 recipes and *A Mulher na Sala e na Cozinha* with 24 entries.
108 Bourdieu defined habitus as “a system of structured, structuring dispositions …which is constituted in practice” (Bourdieu in Ashley, Hollows et al. 2004 p133).
post-war renewal of the nation” (Horner in Ashley &al, 2004 p156). Similarly, 1930-40s Portuguese cookbooks endorsed nation-building: ideologically by sponsoring forms of female domesticity; economically by encouraging the consumption of bacalhau, thus economically supporting and politically legitimising the *Campanha do Bacalhau*. These examples illustrate my argument that cookbooks (as cultural artefacts) simultaneously shape and are shaped by the historical narratives and hegemonic cultural values that they (cookbooks) concurrently represent and assist in reproducing. Discussion of the next two cookbooks expands the topic further.

4.4.2 Bello and Modesto – culinary blueprint for the nation

Two Portuguese cookbooks epitomise nation-building in the public-sphere: the 1936 *Culinária Portuguesa*¹⁰⁹ (Portuguese Culinary) by António M.O. Bello¹¹⁰, and the 1982 *Cozinha Tradicional Portuguesa*¹¹¹ (Portuguese traditional Cuisine) by Maria de Lurdes Modesto. Despite being published nearly fifty years apart, both cookbooks are still recognised as the ‘must have’ reference that any professional chef or food literate ought to have in their personal library. In fact, most of the Portuguese chefs that I interviewed referred to both books as milestones they treasured and frequently consulted when researching their restaurant’s menus. My argument is that both books contributed to the process of nation-building in different historical contexts: Olleboma’s in the early decades, and Modesto’s in the late years of the twentieth century.

*Culinária Portuguesa*’s (Bello 1994) was published posthumously one year after Bello’s accidental death in 1935. In the preamble to the 1994 edition of *Culinária Portuguesa*, José Quitério (1994) argues that this book, is “the first systematic and comprehensive compilation of the Portuguese ‘receituário’ (recipe protocol)” (Quitério 1994 p8) and the “authentic bible of the Portuguese regional cuisine” (Quitério 1994 p10).

¹⁰⁹ #94 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p33.
¹¹⁰ A. M. O. Bello was popularly known as Olleboma.
¹¹¹ #375 in Rêgo’s Catalogue 1998 p89.
Bello was an influential figure who walked the corridors of political and economic power, his heart devoted to good food and wine, his purse invested in the wheat and fishing industries (Quitério 1994 p7). Bello was a renowned gourmand whose work has been recognised at two levels: on the one hand he is recognised for his contribution to the development of the tourist industry by outlining the role of food as a signifier of national culture (Bello 1936); on the other hand, Bello’s Culinária Portuguesa was more than a cookbook. Culinária framed the nation through the food the nation ate. Bello’s views were a political, ideological and a culinary statement proclaiming the ‘uniqueness’ of Portuguese food as a signifier of nation.

Conducting a country-wide gathering of recipes, Bello gave legitimacy to a book which constructed a national culinary map. Similarly to what da Maia’s Tratado Completo had accomplished thirty years prior, Culinária also converted recipes and techniques, thus far part of an oral and vernacular repertoire, into a printed and published text contributing to the codification and indexation of a large body of culinary material. Culinária Portuguesa became a body of knowledge that named and gave recipes, ingredients and techniques a language that ‘spoke’ the nation through the practice of cooking. Significantly, Culinária Portuguesa narrated a nation which was as much defined by the continental boundaries of European territory as it was by the lands that constituted the Portuguese Empire, the so called colónias – that is, the overseas Portuguese territories in Africa and Asia.

Culinária Portuguesa has an extensive collection of savoury and dessert recipes. Some describe and represent the national territory in Europe. For example an analysis of the recipe index demonstrates a diverse range of dishes amongst which bacalhau is well represented, suggesting its integration in the everyday eating habits of the population since as Bello claimed, most of the recipes had been provided to him by housewives. There are forty-five entries for bacalhau recipes with some well-known examples like ‘Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá’ and ‘Açorda de Bacalhau’, to date still popular dishes.

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112 Olleboma pays tribute in the book to “…the ladies from Lisboa and country areas…” (Olleboma, 1994 p4) who provided him with the recipes which he included in the book.
But Bello’s *Culinária Portuguesa* also included recipes that represented Empire. For example, there were recipes from Macau (Bello 1994 p268; p281), India (named India Portuguesa) (Bello 1994 p183; p186), Angola (Bello 1994 p186; p291) and Cabo Verde (Bello 1994 p218; p288), demonstrating that the nation was imagined as much through its European territory – *continente*\(^{113}\) (continent) – as through the *colónias ultramarinas* (overseas colonies) in Africa and Asia. The inclusion of recipes from Empire was a significant facet of Bello’s cookbook because it illustrated how the nation (state) could be gastronomically defined as a political structure that glossed over difference (Hall 1992), cutting across race, gender and religion but always finding ways of naming differences that establish forms of power. For example, Bello defined *caril* (curry) as a spicy (*apimentado*) dish whose consumption was demarcated on the basis of its ‘heat’. The author explained that whilst eaters of working class background preferred hot-spicy curries, the “classes superiors especialmente as mais abastadas” (the upper class, specially the more affluent) (Bello 1994 p8) (my translation), had a preference for milder versions of the dish. Thus, although *Culinária Portuguesa* was intended to portray the nation as a unified territory extending from the most western tip of Europe to the far east – Macau, it nevertheless found subtle ways of establishing class *differences* (and power) through the ‘fine ways’ and the ‘know how’ of taste, class distinction and ethnic boundaries which, in this example, were defined through the degree of spiciness in a curry.

Nonetheless the effort to describe a unified nation through a national menu is worth scrutinising. An appendix to *Culinária Portuguesa*, featured the menus of the Portuguese Society of Gastronomy of which Bello was the president (Bello 1994 p12). The menus clearly illustrated the Association’s culinary conceptualisation of nation. The description paralleled that of a mosaic of different geographic regions, each one with their own speciality, but all contributing to the culinary definition of nation. There was fish from Setubal (lunch, 25-2-1933); prosciutto from Chaves; chorizo from Évora;

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\(^{113}\) The nation was defined in political discourse as constituted by the ‘continente’ (Portuguese European territory) and ‘ultra-mar’ (overseas) or *colónias ultramarinas* which constituted the Portuguese overseas colonies in Africa and Asia.
black pudding from Gouveia (lunch, 17-4-1935); salada à Macaense (salad from Macau) (lunch, undated); coffee from Cabo Verde-Africa (dinner1-4-1933); pineapple from Azores (lunch12-8-1934). The institutional calling for regional diversity and national unity was reproduced gastronomically in the kitchen and at the table, as if the nation were the sum-total of its culinary specialities.

The nation’s description through its food is not new. There are multiple examples described in literature. Julia Csergo (1996) described a similar strategy in post-revolutionary France in the nineteenth century whereby political homogeneity, national territorial unity and cultural uniformity were sought using food, wine and cooking practices as the tools that narrated the nation and enabled its integration. A similar conclusion can be drawn from Carol Helstosky’s (2003) readings of Artusi’s *La Scienza in Cucina* (1891) and from Arjun Appadurai’s (1988) analysis of the role of cookbooks in constructing the nation respectively in Italy and India. I analyse these works in detail in Chapter 6 but for the moment the common features amongst these studies, highlight how the gathering of recipes and the use of ingredients from grassroots levels is a practice often used by cookbook writers across cultural and historical contexts. It is my contention that this is a successful strategy of cookbook authors to seek legitimisation, validity and credibility for their work; it is equally a way of discursively building a cuisine from the ground-up, based on the practices purportedly ‘rooted’ in (oral) tradition and reproduced across generations. Once codified, categorised, classified and printed, the authors make claims to their legitimate culinary representation of nation.

These studies illustrate the significant role cookbooks play in the process of an ‘imagined’ (culinary) national unit. They are also evidence of the way a ‘national cuisine’ can be ‘invented’ and sponsored (by elites), legitimatised (because it is grassroots based) and divulged (in cookbooks) for the imagined consumption of the nation. Cookbooks on the one hand guarantee the codification, standardisation and

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114 Appadurai (1988) analyses the role of cookbooks and the sharing of recipes amongst housewives at a national level, as a significant contributor to the process of imagining a newly independent territory as a nation. Refer to Appadurai’s quotation at the beginning of the chapter.
permanency of the vernacular and banal (Billig 1995) culinary practices that reproduce
the nation. On the other hand, as a literary genre they constitute the textual
representation of culinary practices that are made to signify the nation. As Anderson
(1983) claimed, the press is a fundamental element in the formation of nations. Through
the production of a unified culinary protocol, cookbooks activate an ‘imagined
community’ (Anderson 1983) sitting at the table, sharing the same eating habits, food
tastes and preferences, unified by a common tradition and discourse.

Bello’s *Culinária Portuguesa* represented a diverse but symbolically united nation at
the table. Despite the geographic location of some territories, which could be as far
away as Macau, their culinary representation signified a nation united through the food
eaten by its citizens. Moreover, the codification of recipes, foodways and the
recognition of culinary practices by the *centre* – Bello and the Portuguese Society of
Gastronomy – validated and justified its labelling as national. As Priscilla Fergusson’s
study (1998) on the making of French cuisine in post-revolutionary France
demonstrates, the centralisation and codification of culinary practices is the condition
‘sine qua non’ for a cuisine to come into being. To these pre-requisites, Michael
Freeman (1977) advocated the existence of a clear system of social stratification in
which social elites have access to time and economic resources; they can afford
expensive ingredients and pay a specialised labour force – cooks – who within a system
of division of labour come to be responsible for the mastering of the practice of
cooking. Without centralisation, codification and social stratification there is no basis
for a national cuisine.

Paralleling Bello’s *Culinária Portuguesa*, Maria de Lurdes Modesto’s 1982 *Cozinha
Tradicional Portuguesa* is equally recognised as a master reference in Portuguese
cuisine. At the age of 82, Modesto’s career spans over fifty years, since the 1960s when
she started as the first hostess for a TV cooking show. As late as 2010, when the
interviews for this study took place, Modesto was still mentioned with high respect and
veneration by the majority of the respondents, chefs and hospitality professionals alike.

115 I expand on the conceptual differences between ‘cooking’ and ‘cuisine’ in Chapter 6.
Modesto’s *Cozinha Tradicional Portuguesa* is a significant primary source of research. Following Bello and da Maia’s footsteps, Modesto also utilised an ethnographic-like methodology to resource the material for her cookbook. Confidently, she claimed her work to be based on “representation and authenticity” (representatividade e autenticidade) (Modesto 1982 p5) and the result of a meticulous nationwide gathering of “…thousands of recipes…most of them with genuine local roots” (Modesto 1982 p5) (my translation). Ironically, Modesto also acknowledged that *Cozinha Tradicional Portuguesa* was the result of twenty years of relentless work. She experimented and tried out all the recipes, codified them, quantified them and finally gave a “fixed” methodology and indexation to eight-hundred recipes featured in her book.

Modesto’s claim to ‘authenticity’ of her recipes is problematic, given she spent twenty years experimenting, testing, categorising and codifying them. How much has she changed the recipes from their ‘original’ format? How can she claim them to be a legitimate representation of the “genuine local roots”? Arjun Appadurai’s comments about the ‘originality’ and ‘authenticity’ of recipes in Indian cookbooks are pertinent here:

*The new cookbooks are not a simple or mechanical replica of existing oral repertoires. The transition to print in this particular social and cultural context results in a good deal of editing (Appadurai 1988 p17).*

The ‘editing’ to which Appadurai refers is relevant in this context. As he observes, the effort the cookbooks’ authors put into creating a print version of ‘original’ recipes is usually regulated by standardisation, codification and indexation. These requirements invariably alter the vernacular and ‘original’ recipes by adapting them to a milder taste directed to a national audience and a standardisation of methods and practices that will underpin a national cuisine. Appadurai further argues that this process in fact effaced the signs of ‘otherness’ that the vernacular had instilled in their cooking practices as a process of self-identification, which in the context of a nation would be lost to homogeneity and standardisation. For instance, some ingredients appreciated locally (potentially used as a means of highlighting difference from the neighbour ‘other’) could be considered distasteful or even disgusting to others. In this case, the cookbook’s author acted as an intermediate ‘outsider’ to the vernacular and oral practices, toning
them down, making them blander or even ‘cleansing’ them from some oddities, to
manipulate them so as to become standardised and universal, although to the detriment
of local differences and particularities. Thus, as Appadurai argues, a recipe’s ‘editing’
can take on overtones of hegemonic-produced values of ‘worthiness’ that assist in the
definition of taste as a signifier of the hegemonic class that purges the unwanted and
defines the tastes of the nation.

As Bourdieu (1984) demonstrated in *Distinction*, food tastes, rather than being entirely
based on individual preferences, are instead the result of social and cultural dispositions
resulting from group dynamics trying to assert power relations and class struggles.
Consequently, it begs the question of who, how and for what purposes the selection
criteria of recipes is made; what norms regulated its choice and what narratives were
meant to be told. My argument is that the choice of recipes was made to produce and
reproduce unified tastes that were made to signify (at least partly) the nation.

Like her predecessors, Modesto’s *Cozinha Tradicional Portuguesa* aimed at describing
the nation through its culinary diversity and regionality. Unlike Bello’s Empire
gastronomic representation, Modesto’s recipes referred exclusively to a ‘continental
diversity’, in that the African territories were already independent nations in the 1980s
when Modesto’s book was first published, highlighting the contingent character of
overarching metanarratives produced to suit a purpose.

Nonetheless, Modesto, just as Bello had done fifty years prior, also appealed to and
contributed to the production and reproduction of a culinary discourse of nation. Both
cookbooks ensured the textual record of (edited) recipes, methods, techniques and
‘traditions’, giving credibility to the conceptual culinary continuity of the nation.
Whereas the continuity of nation is grounded in myths of origin, common heritage,
language and customs (Smith 1991), the persistence of eating habits and cooking
practices is underpinned by a ‘matrix’ (Saramago 1995) of ‘authentic’ ingredients,
practices and habits that simultaneously ground and “revitalise ... (a) culinary heritage”
(Modesto 1982 p6). Further illustrating how the everyday cooking practices of “banal
nationalism” (Billig 1995) reproduce the nation, Modesto asserts: “the recipes are well
and alive being daily cooked in thousands of Portuguese kitchens, gate-keeping our
gastronomic traditions and projecting them into the future” (Modesto 1982 p6) (my translation).

But how is bacalhau represented in *Cozinha Tradicional Portuguesa?* Modesto’s *Cozinha* includes forty-six bacalhau recipes with wide geographic representation throughout the national territory, suggesting the universal culinary utilisation of the fish. The region with the highest number of bacalhau recipes is Minho and Douro (15), followed by Trás-os-Montes (6) and Estremadura (6), with the remaining recipes spread out amongst the other regions, demonstrating the universal usage of bacalhau across geographic areas and Modesto’s determination to make her book a thorough culinary representation of nation.

It is my contention that Bello’s and Modesto’s cookbooks have similarities worth exploring. Despite being published fifty years apart, both are underpinned by an overarching project of nation-building. Notwithstanding claims to be a representation of grassroots’ food habits, the books address an aspiring middle-class audience to whom the nation was narrated through discourses of gastronomic regional diversity and national unity.

The project that Bello initiated in the 1930s, at the time of nation-building promoted by the Estado Novo, was later reignited by Modesto just prior to Portugal entering the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986. Coincidental or not, both cookbooks were extremely popular in contexts where there was an historical necessity to bolster the project of nation by re-creating and re-inventing a language that described it and unified it through the geographic and culinary diversity of its territory.

The books’ popularity, and their wide use to date by professional chefs highlight the apparent need these individuals still have to resource the alleged ‘roots’ of a cuisine for their professional culinary practices. I suggest that in times when concepts of ‘authenticity’, ‘originality’ and ‘local’ are buzz words, going back to the grassroots is always considered a way to validate one’s own work. Likewise, in times of alleged cultural homogenisation as a result of globalisation and Europeanisation, the need to re-assert difference and enhance one’s ‘uniqueness’ become prevailing. It is in this context
that I now proceed with the analysis of cookbooks published in the late 1990s and early
twenty first century which I consider relevant to this study because of their innovative
facet: they constitute a specialisation within the genre, offering recipes exclusively
dedicated to bacalhau.

4.4.3 Cookbook in late twentieth century – bacalhau building the local

Cookbooks with word ‘bacalhau’ in their titles were sparse until the late 1990s. To my
knowledge, only two cookbooks by Febrónia Mimoso\textsuperscript{116} (1919; 1924) and two other
publications by Rosa Maria (1956; n.d.)\textsuperscript{117}, to which I have referred previously in this
chapter, can be categorised as cookbooks entirely dedicated to bacalhau recipes prior to
the 1990s. Thereafter, and according to results attained by this study, there was an
obvious shift, characterised by a substantial increase in culinary publications that
specialised in bacalhau.

In this section I propose to analyse these findings because, as I will demonstrate, the
increased number of these speciality cookbooks is indicative of broader societal,
cultural and culinary changes. These shifts are contextualised by Portugal’s 1986
membership to the EEC as well as the 1992 Moratorium which banned Portugal from
total access to bacalhau fishing in Newfoundland (Best 2009)\textsuperscript{118}. I contend that these
two events produced the cultural need to enshrine bacalhau with a symbolic meaning for
which cookbooks have become the medium.

I do not intend to undertake a detailed analysis of every cookbook in the sample but
rather to highlight the conclusions that are relevant to my argument. The first
cookbooks that specialised in bacalhau recipes were published in 1996, with repeated

\textsuperscript{116} I was unable to access these books, as they were not available in the BLX Libraries and the National Library was
closed for maintenance at the time I undertook fieldwork. However, Rêgo’s Catalogue signals two books by Mimoso
with the word ‘bacalhau’ in their titles – the 1919 \textit{Cem Manaias de Cozinhar Bacalhau} (One Hundred Ways of
Cooking with Bacalhau) (one edition only) and the 1924 \textit{Mais de Cem Maneiras de Cozinhar com Bacalhau} (More
than one hundred ways of Cooking with Bacalhau) with at least five editions recorded (Rêgo, 1998 p85-86) (#353
and # 361).

\textsuperscript{117} I am referring to Maria’s two titles \textit{Como se Cozinha Bacalhau de Todas as Maneiras} (n.d.) and \textit{100 Maneiras de
Cozinhas Bacalhau} (1956).

\textsuperscript{118} See Barbara Best’s Report on \url{http://www.oecd.org/tad/fisheries/43017593.pdf}.

*30 Receitas em 30 Minutos* (Figueiredo 2003), is as much a sleek hardcover cookbook as an advertising tool. It endorsed one of the most popular brands of Portuguese olive oil. It reminded its readership of the well-known cliché that named olive oil as bacalhau’s ‘natural partner’ and claimed the enhancement of any dish that used this *specific* brand of olive oil. Likewise, the brand *Pascoal* – one of the largest bacalhau’s processing brands – sponsored the contemporary food writer Filipa Vascondeus (1998) to write a cookbook that is unashamedly a marketing tool to promote the brand. These examples, which are far from being unique, illustrate how bacalhau is utilised in cookbooks as a ‘floating signifier’, with culturally constructed inherent features that can be ingenuously used as market tools to promote the vested business interests of large companies.

As Appadurai (1985) contends, any commodity with increased market specialisation is accompanied as much by the emergent textual material in the form of cookbooks as by the increased product diversity in the supermarket shelves. My own observation of food retailing outlets in Portugal allows me to testify to a marked diversification of bacalhau products. From frozen ready-cooked meals, to frozen pre-packed uncooked bacalhau, the choice has markedly increased over recent years, taking advantage of an expanding product supply and the demands of consumers, eager to purchase convenient and easy-to-prepare meals.

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119 Other examples would be the Norwegian Company Norge (one of the majors suppliers of bacalhau to Portugal) in association with the supermarket chain Continente sponsoring many of the Portuguese chefs (some of which participated in this study), as a visit to [http://r2com.pt/home/2012/10/academia-do-bacalhau/](http://r2com.pt/home/2012/10/academia-do-bacalhau/) webpage illustrates.
These examples are evidence of how speciality cookbooks can be used as marketing strategies for product placement. However, the research conducted in this study illustrates that cookbooks can also contribute to the reproduction of cultural meanings taken as long-held ‘truths’ or taken-for-granted ‘traditions’. For example, 30 Receitas em 30 Minutos acknowledges bacalhau as a fundamental part of Portuguese eating habits by stating:

*The presence of bacalhau at the Portuguese table is essential. It is genetic... and despite its price, the ‘faithful friend’ is a must at the Portuguese Christmas’ table* (Figueiredo 2003 p1) (my translation).

With a single sentence the text reiterates the *genetic* link between Christmas and bacalhau, yet the naturalness of this ingrained tradition has been difficult to trace. Cândida Correia’s *O Grande Livro das Receitas para o Natal* (2002) (Christmas Festivity Cookbook) argues that the ‘tradition’ of eating bacalhau for *Consoada* (Christmas Eve supper) is a newly “invented tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Despite recognising the symbolism of bacalhau at the Christmas table, Correia (2002) displays results from her own research to assert that in the seventeenth century, Christmas Eve dinner was far from being a festive and elaborate meal; rather it consisted entirely of pescada (hake) or sardines, cabbage and egg (Correia 2002 p3).

The idea of an elaborate meal on Christmas Eve, and especially the inclusion of bacalhau, was a practice that only emerged in the eighteenth century (Correia, 2002:3). Later it became associated with romanticised literary accounts of celebratory Christmas family meals to which Correia’s suggests a text by the Portuguese writer Ramalho de Ortigão in his book *As Farpas* (Correia, 2003:3) could have served as template. The idealisation of the Christmas meal seems to have progressively become embedded in people’s imagination, becoming a ‘tradition’ that is still followed in most households as part of Christmas Eve celebrations. I consider Correia’s argument relevant in that it constitutes the first reference that I have so far encountered in my research to address a

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120 Worth recollecting here is that the interviewee Zé claimed “bacalhau is part of our DNA” (Zé 2011).

121 *As Farpas* was a journal initially edited by Ramalho Ortigão and Eça de Queiroz in the late nineteenth century and later under the sole editing of Ortigão when de Queiroz was called to UK as the Portuguese consul to Bristol. For more on Ortigão see Chapter 3.
ritualised practice difficult to trace back to its origins, yet manifestly ingrained in the Portuguese eating habits despite its seemingly recent initiation.

As Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) argue, traditions should cautiously be taken as a representation of practices or events with reference in time. For Hobsbawm ‘invented traditions’ have been fabricated with the purpose of fixing meaning and creating imaginary bridges between the nation’s past, present and future, legitimising it and giving it validity. Often ‘invented traditions’ are underpinned by ideological purposes that foster national identity and unity (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). In this case, the taken-for-granted tradition of eating bacalhau could have been ‘invented’ to serve ideological purposes such as to nurture the sense of a rooted and stable national eating ritual represented by the consumption of bacalhau, the symbolic meal that unites an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983) of Portuguese sitting down at the table on the evening of the 24th of December of every year.

If tradition is represented in these cookbooks, so is culinary innovation. Most cookbooks specialising in bacalhau recipes include a mixture of selected dishes. The so-called ‘traditional’ way of cooking bacalhau is invariably accompanied by recipes using more esoteric types of ingredients and techniques of cooking. For example, both 30 Receitas em 30 Minutos (Figueiredo 2003) and Cozinhar com Bacalhau (Oliveira 2007) include popular well-known recipes such as ‘Bacalhau com Natas’ (Oliveira 2007 p38), ‘Migas de Bacalhau’ (Oliveira 2007 p12) ‘Linguas de Bacalhau’ (Figueiredo 2003 p10) and ‘Cataplana de Bacalhau’ (Figueiredo 2003 p54). Yet, other recipes introduce ingredients that are not routinely utilised in Portuguese cuisine such as ginger and porcini mushroom. The influence of Italian and Asian products and techniques of food preparation currently pervading Portuguese cuisine, are illustrated by the use of ‘porcini mushrooms’ and ‘Carpaccio’122 in the same recipe (Figueiredo 2003 p32).

A similar example is the ‘Bacalhau Salteado com Nhoques Rossados’ (Oliveira 2007 p12), (sautéed bacalhau with red gnocchi) in Cozinhar com Bacalhau. This dish is an

122 Carpaccio is the name attributed to a technique utilised in Italian cuisine where raw meat (or fish) is sliced paper-thin and eaten accompanied with a mustard dressing and fresh capers.
illustration of hybrid cuisine whereby a recognised Portuguese ingredient – bacalhau – is associated with an Italian potato dumpling – gnocchi. Likewise, ‘Bacalhau Assado com Curgete’ (Oliveira 2007 p44) (oven-baked bacalhau with zucchini) illustrates the culinary use of an ingredient like zucchini, which has only recently become readily available and popularised in everyday Portuguese cooking, as a result of free flow of goods within the European Union. Another example is chef Hélio Loureiro (2008), presentation of a recipe for Lasanha de Bacalhau (Bacalhau Lasagne) (Loureiro 2008 p26), illustrating the adaptation of bacalhau to Italian dishes. The diversity of bacalhau dishes in these recent publications represents an innovative approach aimed at introducing new dishes and ingredients to contemporary readership. This trend confirms the much publicised versatility of bacalhau as an ingredient that ‘goes with’ almost everything, but it is also evidence of current influences of other cuisines in Portugal and the free flow of commodities which has introduced new ingredients to the supermarket shelves. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, culinary innovation is not a new phenomenon. Similar trends occurred in the nineteenth century when aspiring cosmopolitan audiences used culinary innovation as cultural signifiers of distinction and identity (Bourdieu 1984). The current willingness of chefs and editors to promote novelty and the integration of new ingredients and methods within the Portuguese cuisine suggests, I argue, the existence of an audience receptive to newness. Culinary innovation attracts cosmopolitan audiences enthusiastic for novelty and with the culture capital (Bourdieu 1984) to appreciate new products and the economic capital to purchase them. As Allan Warde et al. (1999) argue these urban audiences are always eager to practice ‘choice’ and exercise their symbolic “culinary cultural capital” (Bell 2002) by sponsoring new codes of culinary taste which they capitalize as assets embedded within a particular historical culinary context (Bourdieu 1984) of a nation integrated in the European Union. For predominantly urban audiences, to whom choice signifies class identification, a broad range of options is mandatory. As some of the interviewees admitted, eating an eclectic dish of bacalhau (say bacalhau with gnocchi) when they go out with some city
friends, goes hand in hand with their desire to eat bacalhau com grão (bacalhau with chickpeas) when they have a meal with their family at home. That is, eating a ‘traditional’ dish (bacalhau com grão) does not invalidate the enjoyment of also having an innovative dish of bacalhau, demonstrating that identities are fragmented and contextual and that the practice of eating bacalhau can negotiate both subject positions – the urban and eclectic as well as the traditional.

Innovation in cookbooks is accompanied by a faithful collection of recipes that reproduce the traditional method of cooking bacalhau. The former is illustrated by eclectic mixes and hybrid dishes; the latter is represented by conventional ingredients and techniques that purposely enhance the notion of permanency and continuity of the tried and tested dishes, and the ‘matrix’ of a long-standing culinary repertoire, rhetorically portrayed as ingrained and ‘natural’. The analysis of these cookbooks entirely dedicated to bacalhau recipes illustrates a series of parallel discourses and practices, in that tradition runs hand in hand with innovation, more as a complementary than competing phenomena.

Eating bacalhau represents as much a ritual as a novelty. Two concepts seemingly at the opposite end of the culinary spectrum sit comfortably side by side in contemporary Portuguese cookbooks. The annually repeated ‘invented tradition’ of eating bacalhau on Christmas Eve, has become enshrined in ritual and symbolism as if it has always existed. Yet, it also comfortably sits on the menu of chef Eloi’s well-heeled restaurant, mostly frequented by the top-end-of-town clientele and tourists, where he has included his eclectic version of a traditional bacalhau dish – “char-grilled bacalhau with chickpea mousse, potato brunoise 123 and golden egg”. Thus, it is not a matter of either/or, but rather a question of context, audiences and tastes and the power of food as an agent of cultural hybridisation 124.

Bacalhau in cookbooks discursively strides two parallel fields – cultural transformation and rooted tradition. Based on this evidence I argue that the substantial increase in

123 Brunoise is a French technical term that signifies finely diced vegetable (precisely cut cubes 3-5mm).
124 Some chefs whom I interviewed although receptive to change and innovation, also argued that some of their colleagues ‘go too far’ with experiments.
bacalhau publications since the late 1990s, and specifically since the turn of the twenty-
first century, is a consequence of three major phenomena – Portugal’s integration into
the European Union in 1986, the relentless effects of globalisation, and finally the total
banning of Portugal from access to a five-centuries tradition of bacalhau-fishing in
Newfoundland. In association, these events have confronted the physical and symbolic
borders of a nation-state, hitherto looking inwards, with new political and cultural
milieus that imposed the need to open up. In this context people are simultaneously
being prompted to accept cultural renewal, at the same time as they anxiously look for
grounding and the need to re-assert and re-establish the sources of difference that go
into the making of cultural identities.

“Difference matters” (Hall 1990 p227): in an environment of constant flow of values,
meanings and foodways, it seems the need for culinary identity has become paramount
despite the acceptance of innovation and creativity. For these reasons, and as the
cookbooks illustrate, there is an increased emphasis on exploring and valuing the role of
bacalhau as a signifier of culinary and cultural Portugueseness. Bacalhau as a ‘floating
signifier’ is as much a distinctive marker of national cuisine (and national identity), as it
is open to the influences of cosmopolitanism and innovative hybrid methods of cooking.
Either way, in people’s imaginations bacalhau still comfortably secures its long-time
association with the mystic ‘faithful friend’.

4.5 Conclusion
Cookbooks shape as much as they are shaped by the cultural context into which they are
inserted. In this chapter I set out to evaluate cultural representations of bacalhau in
Portuguese cookbooks. Cookbooks in Cluster 1 represented the food of the aristocracy
and the royal table. The absence of bacalhau recipes indicated patterns of its
consumption were based on class, status and affluence. The earlier cookbooks of the
twentieth century (Cluster 2) disclosed two main trends. First there was an increased
number of bacalhau recipes suggesting robust culinary representation and higher
consumption. This, I argue, was the result of improved supply as an outcome of the
_Campanha do Bacalhau_. Second, I contend that cookbooks in this period were used as
tools of nation-building both in the private and public spheres; the former with women cooking it in their kitchens and the latter through recipes that ‘called’ the nation through its regional diversity and territorial space. Based on these findings I have argued that cookbooks and their recipes discursively construct the nation because they constitute sites of cultural representation that produce it and reproduce it.

Finally, the cookbooks exclusively dedicated to bacalhau recipes (Cluster 2) demonstrate that bacalhau in the twenty-first century not only maintained a significant presence in the Portuguese foodways, but also showed its capacity to adapt to the new environment that demanded innovative ways of cooking while maintaining its place as the icon of the national cuisine.

In the next chapter I will further examine the use of bacalhau by the chefs in order to better evaluate how the chefs are representing the fish in their menus.
5 THE CHEF AS A CULTURAL INTERMEDIARY. COZINHA D’AUTOR

5.1 Introduction
In the previous chapter I examined textual and culinary representations of bacalhau in cookbooks. In this chapter I evaluate how contemporary Portuguese chefs and food writers represent bacalhau in their professional ‘practices’ – cooking and writing. To this end, I evaluate research material gathered in qualitative and semi-structured interviews conducted whilst in Portugal. I am particularly interested in exploring how the food the chefs produce – which they have called cozinha d’autor – articulates with the already well-established national cuisine iconically represented by bacalhau. Will cozinha d’autor undermine, complement or re-invent national cuisine? Are they competing and incommensurable concepts or are they only different moments of the culinary cycle?

I have named the chefs that participated in this study – the producers of cozinha d’autor – as cultural intermediaries, because of their influential role in the production of food as a symbolic good. Hence, I begin by contextualising the contemporary significance of food representations in the media because this is the platform from which chefs as cultural intermediaries deploy their ‘presence’ and come into view as highly visible cultural agents with the power to name. Subsequently I examine the theoretical underpinnings of what makes chefs cultural intermediaries, and finally, validating my argument with evidence-based data, I analyse the cultural and culinary articulation between cozinha d’autor, bacalhau and national cuisine.

5.2 Food Culture, the chef and the media

...watching makeover television or cooking from a celebrity chef’s book are significant social and cultural practices, through which we work on our ideas about taste, status and identity (Bell and Hollows 2005 p1).

125 I consider the verbal material the food writers expressed in the interviews to have the same value as what they write in their books and articles.

126 Cozinha d’autor translated as ‘author’s cuisine’ (my translation). I will always use the Portuguese referent throughout this work because the term loses its cultural ‘feeling’ in translation.
The presence of cultural representations of food is currently ubiquitous in Western milieux. Cooking programs, cooking contests and food documentaries are a permanent feature of TV programming. For example, according to the Annual Reports of the E.W.Scripps Company, the expanding reach of the pay TV-Television Food Network covered 13% of USA households in 1995 with a total of 13 million of viewers (Ray 2007 p58). In 2006, these figures had increased to a total coverage of 80% of households and an audience of 91million viewers (Ray 2007 p58), illustrating the popularity of TV food programming. At the centre of this phenomenon are the chefs, some of whom have attained high media projection and even celebrity status. They are frequently featured in magazines, newspapers and radio interviews either sharing culinary tips with their readership, promoting cooking equipment, or sharing some personal details of their private lives as celebrities are expected to do (Rojek 2001).

Likewise, over the last decades, the textual representation of food has also risen with a swollen number of cookery publications populating the bookstores shelves. For example, in Australia, according to Adele Wessell’s 2011 interview on ABC radio program Food and the Fabric of Culture, the sharp rise in this literary genre is manifested in the collection of the National Australian Library. In 1968 with only 36 cookbooks, the Library currently holds a total of 779 items (Wessell 2011). A similar pattern is repeated in Portugal with an increasing number of cookbooks published since the 1980s, as illustrated by the data analysed in Chapter 4.

The popular and scholarly interest in food is pervasive and shared by a variety of fields of research. Present concerns with global inequity in food distribution, food safety, population nutrition, environmental and sustainability in agricultural practices have brought food into the political spotlight and at the intersection of many cross-disciplinary discourses. Food is taking up a role which goes beyond its nutritional functions. Food has become a prominent aspect of culture.

In this process, chefs are assuming major cultural roles. Whereas in the past they were mostly involved in the material production of meals, currently chefs have a more complex engagement with food, one that surpasses the physicality of that function. For these reasons, any study dedicated to the cultural functions of food needs to take into
account the chefs’ positioning as prominent media figures with access to large audiences. Their “high visibility” (Rojek 2001) and recognition as celebrities (Ashley, Hollows et al. 2004; Bell and Hollows 2005) cannot be discarded because they have come to occupy a privileged position as cultural mediators, actively engaged as much in symbolic representations of food as in its material production.

Inserted into a market economy, chefs have acquired vested financial interests not only in the food they produce and sell, but also in the construction of a ‘personalised’ media image to which brand names and cultural values are often associated. For example, the British chef Jaime Oliver has had his public name associated with values that promote cultural change and social values127. In turn, chef Gordon Ramsay, also based in the UK, has been associated with masculinity, toughness and even ruthlessness128. Likewise, and as a controversial symbol of femininity and domesticity, Nigella Lawson’s media imagery has been constructed to connote the twenty first century (curvaceous) house-goddess (Rousseau 2012). These individuals not only have become brand-names to multiple culinary paraphernalia but they also promote hegemonic cultural values and meanings that due to their ‘naturalness’, go undisputed. As Foucault reminds us, “the effect of discourse is to reduce to a ‘fact of nature’ that which is contentious and power-loaded” (Foucault in McCrone 2005 p56).

Underpinned by the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1984), Mike Featherstone (1991;1995) and Anthony Giddens (1990 ;1991), I name these chefs cultural intermediaries. They endorse desirable lifestyles (Rousseau 2012) thus becoming arbiters of taste and style (Bourdieu 1984), interpreters of symbolic goods (Featherstone 1987) and experts that de-codify complex systems of culinary knowledge (Giddens 1990).

I start by addressing the theoretical underpinnings of the term ‘cultural intermediary’. I continue by exploring the work of Portuguese chefs validating my argument with evidence-based data form qualitative interviews. Finally, asserting that both national

127 Jamie Oliver’s cultural role lobbying for improved quality of food at the school canteens in the UK has been documented on the TV series Jamie’s School Dinners.
128 Under the pretence that commercial kitchens are highly stressful and competitive professional environments, Ramsay’s conduct has been normalised and justified as ‘what it takes’ to achieve professional success and delivery of high food standards.
cuisines and national identities are discursive and dynamic processes brought into view through language, practice and discourse, I ask – what role do chefs as cultural mediators have in the production of cuisines; what is *cozinha d’autor*, how does it articulate with national cuisine and what place does bacalhau play in it?

5.3 **Chefs as cultural intermediaries**

Cultural intermediaries are creatures of late-modernity. They inhabit a space where the “free play of signs detached from their referents” (Bell and Hollows 2005 p124) makes their expertise a valuable asset to be used in interpreting and decoding the hierarchy of value of symbolic goods. Late-modernity is a time-space characterised by the high mobility of peoples, ideas, goods and a plethora of differentiated consumption dispositions; it is also a space characterised by the high permeability of the nation-state’s political borders and a milieu of intense media coverage. This is an environment of complex economic, technological, social and cultural ex-changes that accompanied the transition of western societies from industrial to post-industrial modes of production (Featherstone, Lash) and post-traditional societies (Giddens 1991). Associated with these paradigmatic shifts, there have been social and cultural transformations which underpinned the transition from modernity to postmodernity (Featherstone 1991; Lash and Urry 1994) or late-modernity (Giddens 1991).

Profound changes in the processes of economic production also had a major impact on the way cultural identities were generated. The shift from structural mass production (Fordism) to specialised niche markets (Post-Fordism) encouraged patterns of consumption based on differentiated goods and services (Lash and Urry 1994). Whereas Fordism generated identities in accordance with access to the means of production and class structure, post-Fordism endorsed processes of identification which were underpinned by reflexive individual deliberations over practices of consumption, choice and lifestyle patterns. Highlighting the fundamental differences between the two systems, Frank Mort asserts that whereas in Fordism the aim was to keep up with the Joneses, in Post-Fordism the aim was “…differentiating oneself from the Joneses”
In this process cultural intermediaries play a major role as guiders of consumption practices and arbiters of taste and style.

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) first deployed the concept in his work *Distinction*. Bourdieu referred to cultural intermediaries as an emergent “new\textsuperscript{129} faction of the middle class or new petit bourgeoisie” (Wright 2005 p109) of the French mid-twentieth century society. He further argued that cultural intermediaries referred to the “…occupations involving presentation and representation … in all the institutions providing symbolic goods and services” (Bourdieu 1984 in Negus 2002 p503). Bourdieu described these individuals as having a lower level of education than most of their affluent counterparts but that they were nonetheless “predisposed to play a vanguard role in the struggles over everything concerned with the art of living, particularly domestic life and consumption” (Bourdieu 1984 in Bell and Hollows 2005 p43).

The relevance of Bourdieu’s theoretical development has not exempted it from criticisms (Nixon and du Gay 2002) in main because of its reductionist approach to a classificatory system based on class. Particularly pertinent is the post-Marxist approach that views “… class more as a discursively formed collective subject position” (Barker 2000 p382) than as a static signifier solely determined by its relationship to the means of production. Likewise, current theorisations point towards identities as complex processes, or ‘projects’ (Giddens 1991) where narratives of self-identity are generated no longer on the basis of essentialised notions of class, race and gender, but rather theorised as fragmented, de-centred and based on consumption practices and aesthetic dispositions – a becoming rather than a being (Hall 1990). For these reasons, the privileged location of the cultural intermediary at different levels of cultural signification makes it a useful conceptual tool of cultural research.

\textsuperscript{129} According to S. Nixon and P du Gay (2002), Bourdieu’s classificatory attribute “new” is problematic because it frames the “cultural intermediary” into a historical period specific to the mid twentieth-century French environment. Nonetheless, they also acknowledge that Bourdieu’s classification highlights the contrasts he demarcates between the ‘new’ cluster’s increased cultural authority and that of the ‘traditional’ holders of authority – the intellectuals and traditional legitimate producers and reproducers of knowledge and authority (Nixon and du Gay 2002 p497).
The chefs’ media visibility and easy access to large audiences play a vital role in “open(ing) up the links between production and consumption and the interplay between these discrete moments of the cultural form”\(^{130}\) (Nixon and du Gay 2002 p498). That is, the chefs’ prominent role as cultural intermediaries arises from their location at multiple sites where meaning is produced, thus making them important agents of cultural signification. For these reasons, and as Angela McRobbie (2002) asserts, cultural intermediaries are not just “worthy of study … (they) matter” because of their “capacity to condense and focus broader questions about social and cultural change” (McRobbie in Nixon and du Gay 2002 p499).

The term’s conceptual association with the consumption of symbolic goods is at the core of its analytical value. For example, Featherstone has explored cultural intermediaries as a “progressive”\(^{131}\) cultural cluster engaged in the production, promotion and dissemination of patterns of specialised consumption of symbolic goods (Featherstone 1991 p35). Further, he mobilised the cultural intermediary as an individual concerned with constructing a coherent and integrated project for an “aestheticization of life” associated with the ‘post-modern’ disposition for the “stylisation of life into a work of art” (Featherstone 1991 p35). In fact Featherstone defined cultural intermediaries as “[t]he new tastemakers, constantly on the lookout for new cultural goods and experiences, (who) are also engaged in the production of popular pedagogies and guides to living and lifestyle” (Featherstone 1991 p35).

The concept of ‘lifestyle’ is also utilised by Anthony Giddens to highlight increasing control over the regulatory mechanisms in which individuals in post-traditional hierarchies produce identities. For Giddens (1991), lifestyle constitutes “a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces … give[ing] form to a particular narrative of self-identity” (Giddens 1991 p81). In this context, the use of the concept of lifestyle is a useful analytical tool. It articulates practices of self (self-

\(^{130}\) This is a reference to the ‘Circuit of Culture’, a conceptual tool developed by Paul du Gay to explore the articulation amongst the five moments of cultural production of meaning - production, consumption, regulation, representation and identity.

\(^{131}\) ‘Progressive’ because they were associated with the counter-culture movement of the 1960s and 1970s.
knowledge, self-improvement, self-monitoring, self-reflexiveness), with increasingly complex systems of knowledge that populate the individual’s life-world which, according to Giddens, require constant expertise, advice and monitoring. For these reasons, experts become prominent in implementing and articulating knowledge with practices of lifestyle which become a project of the self “…increasingly important in the constitution of self-identity and daily activity” (Giddens 1991 p5).

As an expert the chef assists audiences to navigate through complex systems of culinary knowledge where ingredients, techniques and styles of cooking are ever increasing in complexity and diversity. By instructing (and educating) audiences on how to use new items and incorporate them into their lives, chefs act as de-codifiers, interpreters and mediators of the product’s use-value, thus providing a hierarchy of values and “advice about how the commodity will enhance one’s lifestyle” (Bonner in Bell and Hollows 2005 p45).

Food as a commodity begins to be used as a signifier of taste, style and cultural capital. As Featherstone (1987) highlights, in a “world of goods” material artefacts become communicators, not just as utilities with a use-value, but rather as cultural goods with an exchange-value (Featherstone 1987 p57). At a time when identities are fractured and no longer defined on the basis of traditional values of class structure, processes of identification have become a project in which individuals are compelled to be more actively engaged (Giddens 1991). Consumption and lifestyle have become the templates through which contemporary identities are generated. Thus, the significance of the role played by cultural intermediaries and experts in guiding audiences through the maze of new products, style and techniques facilitating their integration in people’s everyday lives.

As cultural intermediaries, chefs give meaning to the practice of consumption because they are located at the node of articulation between the production of meaning and the consumption of food as a symbolic good. Their media exposure gives them easy access to large audiences which places them in a privileged position that other individuals without the same advantages do not have. For example, the impact of Jamie Oliver in the British School Canteen’s Project might have had far reaching and prompter effects
than teachers and groups of parents could have had through daily work at the school canteens.

Whether these are permanent changes or only the result of media hype is an issue requiring further study. Likewise, the chefs’ high visibility and preferential location in urban areas makes them targets for cosmopolitan and cultural capital-rich audiences in search of signifiers of cultural identification. For these reasons, the analysis of the work of the Portuguese chefs and their cozinha d’autor can provide this study with useful pointers about the way these chefs and their mainly cosmopolitan audiences negotiate their cultural identities through the food they produce and consume. Will cozinha d’autor replace a well-established national cuisine? Will bacalhau still be part of it?

In sum, cultural intermediaries act as a seamless bridge between the point of production and the point of consumption. In sponsoring the latter, they actively participate in practices and discourses constitutive of projects of individual cultural identity and in the way food is integrated in these processes. As Wright argues:

*As the making of things is replaced by the making of meaning about things in late-modernity, the cultural intermediary is a pivotal generator of meaning, not just about art and literature, but about ways of being (Wright 2005 p110).*

5.3.1 Contentions over the role of the chef in the media

Despite previous evidence about the role of cultural intermediaries, literature in the field of Food Studies still takes a cautious approach to claims about the effects that media and celebrity chefs have on audiences’ eating habits and cooking skills. For example, Martin Caraher & al.’s (1999) study, expanding on the results of a 1993 Health and Lifestyle Survey conducted in the UK, concluded that mothers were still the prime source of learning skills, followed by cooking classes and cookbooks. Subsequently in a 2000 study Martin Caraher with a new team of researchers, showed that “TV cooking programs rate low as an influence on cooking behaviour” (Caraher, Lange et al. 2000 p27). According to the same study, TV cooking programs were seen by audiences as entertainment and the chef as an entertainer rather than an expert on nutrition or an
educator on cooking practices. Instead, Caraher & al. concluded that “cooking programs appear to have an influence on the aesthetics of viewing, with viewers using them as a window on a wider social and cultural world” (Caraher, Lange et al. 2000 p27).

Alternatively, Gilly Smith (Smith in Rousseau 2012 p59) in a 2008 study undertaken in the UK, analysed the effect Jamie Oliver’s TV shows had on consumption practices. Coining it “The Jaimie Oliver Effect”, Smith drew some interesting conclusions. For instance, the day after Jamie Oliver used nutmeg in his Spaghetti Bolognese, the ingredient’s sales in British supermarkets surpassed all the usual sales patterns. Sainsbury’s supermarket chain (for whom Oliver is the market face) proceeded to order two years’ worth of stock to keep up with public demand for the spice (Smith in Rousseau 2012 p59). Similar effects were observed with other ingredients in programs also hosted by Oliver. Subsequent to Jamie’s Fowl Dinners TV program (focused on chicken welfare and animals rights), the sales of “free-range eggs overtook those of battery-farmed eggs” (Hodgson in Rousseau 2012 p59). In turn the TV program Jamie Saves our Bacon, focused on saving the British pork industry from cheaper European Union meat pork imports. In this case “supermarket’s sales of British pork increased in the region of twenty per cent” (Rousseau 2012 p60) demonstrating that the lobbying by a celebrity chef, even when it refers to pork meat, can still stir (nationalist) emotions and have an effect on audiences.

These examples are suggestive of the powerful impact that chefs with the kind of media visibility of Jamie Oliver may have on TV audiences’ food choices and consumption practices. They also illustrate how consumption practices can be modelled on ethical, emotional and political values to which the chef, as a cultural mediator, has drawn audiences’ attention. Significantly, these studies also highlight the lobbying power with which these individuals are endowed as a result of their access to platforms by which chefs are the link between commercial interests and diversified large audiences. In this context, I maintain that chefs as cultural intermediaries have a significant impact on facilitating audiences’ culinary literacy and eating habits which impact on individual and collective processes of identification.
5.3.2 What we know about the Portuguese chef as a cultural intermediary

The lack of equivalent studies carried out in Portugal hinders any possibility of comparative data analysis. Nevertheless, this should not make the findings in the present research less pertinent because as most respondents in this study alleged, there is evidence of similar phenomena occurring in Portugal over the last five to ten years. The food writer Daniel illustrated the impact celebrity chefs are having in urban audiences by forcefully asserting that chefs have become “formadores the opinião” (opinion makers) (Daniel 2011). Likewise chef and restaurateur João acknowledged in his interview that “… as a result of some chefs’ work in the media and TV … there has been a trend whereby it seems chefs are influencing people’s behaviours …” (João 2010).

The increasing popularity of cooking shows on Portuguese TV, the presence of food columns in magazines, food blogs on the internet and the popularity of some chefs and their restaurants was acknowledged by all the respondents. In fact, data collected suggested that this is a phenomenon not restricted to the UK, Australia or other large urban centres. Rather, the interest in food-related topics by “educated audiences” (Daniel 2011) has increased over recent years, illustrating that the phenomenon is also taking place in Portugal. Notwithstanding acknowledgment of active audiences’ agency over media content (Hall 1980), these results are further suggestive of the influential (although disputed) effect chefs (as cultural intermediaries) and their TV shows can have on audiences’ behaviours. So, who are the chefs that participated in this study and what was the selection criterion for this study’s sample?

As I established in Chapter 2, the chefs that qualified for this study needed to have successful careers and business ventures, high media profiles, thriving publishing contracts, and a profitable entrepreneurial association with brands of cooking paraphernalia and ready-made-food. The resulting sample is constituted by a specific cohort of individuals with a privileged cultural position that I examine and evaluate. Ultimately, the aim is to articulate the cultural work of the chef as a cultural intermediary, with the production of culinary signifiers constitutive of a national culture.
and a national cuisine which includes bacalhau. I start by examining the pathways chefs have traversed to reach their influential position.

5.3.3 Cultural intermediary as a *traveller*

Chefs as cultural intermediaries travel through the space of late-modernity, which is characterised by nation-states with porous borders that facilitate the movement of peoples, ideas and commodities. Ambitious professionals located in these environments have greatly benefited from the new opportunities that these interstitial spaces (Bhabha 1990) have generated. As a result, they have broadened their social and professional network and maximised possibilities for advancing their professional competencies. All the Portuguese chefs to whom I spoke recognised the advantages accrued from the new career prospects open to them, especially as a result of Portugal’s membership in the European Union.

Inter-nation-state travelling has greatly promoted offshore work placement. Subsequent professional ‘know-how’ (Bourdieu 1984) and peer networking has further increased professional exposure and access to media outlets and career advancement. This pattern is evident in my interviews with Portuguese chefs, most in their 40s. They recognised how their travel and work in Europe, Brazil, Asia and Australia has substantially increased and enhanced their future employability in leadership positions within the hospitality industry, partly due to professional recognition of their acquired competencies. As a consequence of their professional mobility they gained access to positions of power where they now deliberate on style, trends and generate discourses about how to define a (Portuguese) cuisine.

The chefs effortlessly recounted the career path that took them into the spotlight. For example, chef Lito stated that he had trained in Belgium and worked in the USA and Hong Kong (Lito 2010). When he returned to Portugal he was offered consultancy work for several hotel chains and in 2009 he launched his first entrepreneurial venture –
Restaurant Statement in the upcoming trendy district of Santos in Lisbon\textsuperscript{132}. Likewise, chef João was initially trained in the USA at the Pennsylvania Institute of Culinary Arts. After completing his professional training he worked in the UK and Australia. His exposure to the celebrity frenzy in the city of Sydney during, and in, the years that followed the 2000 Olympics, remained etched in João’s memory, igniting in him the wish to shape his own career to that of the chefs he worshiped. Twelve years on, he is recognised as the Portuguese replica of Jamie Oliver. Upon returning to Portugal and after working for several hotel chains such as the Hilton, João opened his first restaurant in 2009 – \textit{Soul}, which is also located in the district of Santos in Lisbon (João 2010).

Chef Eloi admitted that he started his hospitality career as a kitchen-hand (Eloi 2010). Recognising the lack of career development opportunities in Portugal, his professional ambitions prompted him to migrate to France and further his professional training by working for Alain Ducasse\textsuperscript{133} and later the Culinary Institute of America. He then worked in Brazil and upon his return to Portugal he contributed to multiple projects, finally settling as the current head-chef at the Hilton-Lisbon\textsuperscript{134}. Similarly, chef Fernando, who was born in Mozambique, worked in South Africa and has been the head-chef of major restaurants in Lisbon (Fernando 2010). Currently, he associates his activities as head-chef-proprietor of one of the major restaurants in the capital with that of the director of the ACPP\textsuperscript{135}, one of the most recognised bodies of hospitality professional training in Portugal.

It is not my intention to make this list extensive or exhaustive. Nonetheless, these examples illustrate that the current group of Portuguese chefs that I have identified as cultural intermediaries have a successful professional career underpinned by and implemented through their professional exposure to overseas markets, trends and culinary techniques/knowledges. Moreover, I also assert that these examples

\textsuperscript{132} Santos is a district in Lisbon close to the Lisbon Harbour in the mouth of the Tagus. Santos has undertaken a revamp over the last decade. What was considered as the ‘slums’ of Lisbon has now been taken over by the new professionals and re-classified as a cultural hub equivalent to what Chiado was in the nineteenth century (see Footnote 95). Both, Lito and João’s restaurants are within a radius of 500 metres of each other.

\textsuperscript{133} Alain Ducasse is currently acknowledged as one of the most current influential French chefs.

\textsuperscript{134} Since the time of this interview, chef Eloi has now launched his own restaurant.

\textsuperscript{135} ACPP – Associação de Cozinheiros Profissionais Portugueses – Portuguese Association of Professional Cooks.
demonstrate the accumulated professional capital these individuals acquired as a result of movement across national boundaries and market barriers. These ameliorated professional opportunities would have only been a dream to many of their colleagues in previous decades, illustrating the benefits offered to the new generation of professionals as a result of new conditions of Europeanisation and globalisation. As João asserted, his professional horizons were considerably expanded by his Australian experience:

... for instance in Sydney when I got there in 98-99 ... I remember .... Neil Perry, Tetusya Wakuda, Luke Mangan\(^{136}\) ... the celebrity chefs of the time. I lived through that and I know how much those professionals have contributed to my 'thirst' for learning ... I know how much I have been influenced by them .... So my hope is that I can also have some influence on the younger generation of chefs just like they had on me...(João 2010).

Consistently throughout the interviews, the chefs acknowledged how exposure to international cuisines and products was pivotal for their career development and future industry mobility. The newly-acquired culinary competencies enabled them to introduce new technologies and methods of cooking into Portuguese cuisine. Likewise, these individuals gained access to professional network connections and knowledges which granted them cultural capital, legitimacy and the power ‘to name’. This is what makes them cultural intermediaries.

5.3.4 Cultural intermediary as cultural capital richness

Cultural intermediaries are said to be rich in cultural capital. According to Bourdieu (1984), cultural capital stands for the ‘know how’ and the cultural competencies that differentiate those who have it from those “less well culturally endowed” (Bourdieu in Hall 1992 p376). Thus being cultural capital rich validates and legitimates professional expertise. The application of Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital to the study of food and eating practices is pertinent because it highlights the chef’s symbolic role in processes of cultural identification.

\(^{136}\) João is referring to some of the recognised Australian top chefs, who run successful businesses and have extensive media coverage and recognition.
Expanding on Bourdieu’s concept, David Bell (Bell 2002) coined the term ‘culinary cultural capital’ to describe the acquisition of culinary expertise that conveys distinction, taste and classifies the beholders. Bell contends that food and eating practices have become cultural signifiers and markers of difference around which individuals construct identification projects. Thus, not only are chefs holders of culinary cultural capital, but also they can instruct audiences on how to acquire it by means of taste, style, devoted patronage and frequent attendance at expensive celebrity chefs’ restaurants. Cultural capital equates to a body of knowledge, dispositions and cultural competencies that legitimate the maintenance of power and status (Bourdieu 1984). Thus, “culinary cultural capital” (Bell 2002) consolidates the values and meanings of a ‘food culture’ that validate chefs’ role as cultural intermediaries and “taste makers” (Bell 2002 p14) and gives them the power to recognise audiences as connoisseurs able to appreciate the food offered at their establishments. Through the performance of their expertise, restaurant goers feel they can then confidently claim the legitimisation of status as a result of specialised knowledge acquired through frequenting prestigious three star Michelin restaurants. Thus, taste, style and cultural capital can be used for class demarcation and the acquisition of symbolic social power. Being food-literate legitimises cultural capital, validates cultural competencies and individual aesthetic dispositions.

In his interview, João is conscious of the cultural placement of his restaurant Soul in Lisbon’s hub of Santos. He stated:

*Soul has a responsibility in Lisbon ... it represents an experience that is cosmopolitan, modern and trendy...*(João 2010).

João was addressing the brand-name that Soul connotes and the consequent expectations of his customers. Soul’s clientele are not just after an edible experience; they are also looking for the symbolic ‘know-how’ of eating in a restaurant that connotes cultural capital. Soul is more than a place to eat. Soul and João’s food have become a fetishized brand-name (Rousseau 2012 p85). Thus, consuming the food produced by João constitutes a practice where cultural struggles take place and where processes of identification are enacted. In fact, João asserted that going to his restaurant was “a
personal investment” made by his customers and he assumed the responsibility to provide them with more than food (a good); João also delivered symbolic services. This is what makes him a cultural intermediary. João stated:

...going out to eat is part of an experience and when people go out to eat in these spaces they are investing... experiencing the food produced by a certain chef is considered an investment... (João 2010).

The accumulated expertise that these chefs have acquired over their extended overseas professional careers acts as a differentiator for potential success and advantage. For example, João took full advantage of his career experience in Australia by admitting that many of the ingredients that he has integrated into his cooking are the result of his proficiency and the product knowledge he acquired when working in Sydney. João used his expertise to differentiate himself from his colleagues and to validate himself with his audience. Moreover, he confidently claimed that his cooking was innovative because it integrated new practices, ingredients and techniques which other Portuguese chefs are yet to have introduced into their cooking. João deployed his expertise as a trump card that he used to promote his cooking, restaurant, business and brand name. This strategy demarcated him from ‘the rest’ and drew sympathetic audiences into his restaurant Soul because it has been made to represent a site of cultural signification, appealing to those aspiring to identify themselves with signs of innovation, quirkiness and newness.

Innovation, originality and newness have been attributes highly valued in discourses of modernity. In the chapter on Portuguese cookbooks we found a pattern by which chefs were always in a quest for originality in their cooking and publishing. From Rodrigues (seventeenth century) to Rigaud and Plantier (nineteenth century), they all searched for signifiers of difference that would differentiate their cuisine from that of their counterparts. Nothing has changed. In the interviews, all the Portuguese chefs aimed at naming dishes, practices or attributes that would give them the edge over the others. That is, as an individual and as a professional they found it imperative to define markers and attributes that would demarcate them and their work from that of their professional counterpart. The search for signifiers and markers of difference is universal across time and space because they constitute the cornerstone for processes of identification. Without difference there would be no identity (Hodgson in Hall 1997 p59).
The chefs’ relentless search for difference, as demonstrated throughout the interviewing process, has established the emergence of a multi-layered process. At a marketing level, the chefs’ work was underpinned by persistent definition and re-definition of publishing strategies in order to maintain media exposure and audience motivation. At a professional level there was a permanent concern at implementing their own personal cooking brand of cuisine which they have named cozinha d’autor. It is at this level that chefs work towards the legitimisation of their own professional competencies, because it is at this point that they can generate the difference that will distinguish their cuisine from that of others. It is in this way that they work to produce their professional identity.

These are complex processes where multiple components can be identified. The current developments taking place in Portuguese cuisine are partly a consequence of the socio-economic and cultural shifts that followed Portugal’s admission as a permanent member of the European Union in 1986. Porous geographic, social and cultural borders, fluid open markets, higher mobility of people, ideas and goods have had an impact at all levels of social and cultural life. The changes that are relevant to this study are a consequence of Portuguese cuisine’s increased exposure to the inevitable and purportedly destabilising effects of external culinary influences upon the ‘rooted’ classifiers that have thus far anchored the traditional concept of a Portuguese national cuisine.

In this context it is relevant to examine the food that chefs as cultural intermediaries are producing and to which they refer as cozinha d’autor. Thus, I need to evaluate what cozinha d’autor is, what it means, how it articulates with a proclaimed national cuisine and I need to establish if it is inclusive of bacalhau – the Portuguese culinary icon.

5.4 Chefs and cozinha d’autor
In this section I explore the concept of cozinha d’autor. The aim is to examine its meaning and how cozinha d’autor, as a ‘new’ culinary form, articulates with the existent and so-called traditional forms of culinary practices. The question that I will
explore is whether cozinha d’autor constitutes a ‘threat’ to the well-established concepts of national cuisine or whether it creates a platform for the deployment of ‘new routes’ and the ‘invention’ of new culinary ‘traditions’.

**Cozinha d’autor** is a puzzling label. It translates into English as the ‘author’s cuisine’, but as with any translation, its ‘cultural qualities’, meanings and connotations are lost when uttered in a language other than Portuguese. For these reasons I intend to retain the name’s ‘original sound’ by using the Portuguese nomination. **Cozinha d’autor** also gives connotations to food that allow it to straddle the paradigms of cooking and art. Classifying chefs as authors, gives them the consent to claim creativity, authorship and inventiveness that locate them in the realm of romanticised artistry, cultural creativity and glorification, which further enhances their role as cultural intermediaries.

**Cozinha d’autor** was referred to by most interviewees. Although there is evidence of some discrepancies, in particular understandings of the concept, there are mostly commonalities. For example, João explained in his interview that **cozinha d’autor** is a style of cuisine connected to the faces of chefs as media personalities, a recent phenomenon, which he acknowledged has been taking place in Portugal over the last five to six years. According to the interviewees, up until recently a chef’s face and/or name had never constituted a point of interest, relevance or influence over the choices diners made when selecting which restaurant to go to. Yet, all the interviewees concurred that a shift is occurring.

There was general consensus amongst the interviewees that restaurant-goers now make their decisions over which establishment to eat at, based on who the chef/owner is. For these diners going to the restaurant of a celebrity chef and eating his/her **cozinha d’autor** is a cultural practice with meanings and values that surpass the biological act of eating; **Cozinha d’autor** is symbolic and constitutive of processes of cultural identification. To illustrate the argument João asserted:

... in fact, 5 years ago you wouldn’t have thought of having restaurants with chef’s names on the front door... in Lisbon we now have about fifteen (restaurants) and a few
Voicing his views, Daniel a food writer and a newspaper critic, explained:

*cozinha d’autor* ... is a recent phenomenon ... as far as I am concerned ... in the best case scenario it (*cozinha d’autor*) is based on traditional forms of cuisine which have been modernised without losing their basic characteristics .... they (chefs) have transformed it , made it lighter ... the cooking time is shorter .... so that the natural flavours of the products have been preserved ... the aesthetic of the final dish is completely different ... made with a lot of care ... *cozinha d’autor* is only an urban phenomenon ... in the two major cities (Lisbon and Porto) and in the Algarve ...

(Daniel 2011).

Daniel’s views are instructive. His description of *cozinha d’autor* is consistent with that of other interviewees. That is, the meaning given to *cozinha d’autor* has become a way of talking about the food that chefs and food writers/critics alike, produce and reproduce in their writings, public interviews and practices, generating what Michel Foucault described as a body of knowledge constituted by the circulation and operation of certain discourses within a society (Foucault 1972). That is, these individuals who are recognised as experts and cultural intermediaries, have constructed a language that defines the ways *cozinha d’autor* is conceptualised. That is, *cozinha d’autor* is a way of talking (discourse) about a particular style of cuisine produced by a specific cohort of chefs for an explicit purpose: to represent a new breed of chefs, their food and their professional competencies. *Cozinha d’autor* is urban; it has been endowed with aesthetic meanings and values that classifies its producer and consumer. Yet, *Cozinha d’autor* seeks legitimatisation by claiming that its underpinnings are in traditional practices at the same time as it adopts new techniques and aesthetic methodologies giving its *author* (the chef) the opportunity to claim *it* as his/her own invention. Needless to say, these defining parameters for a style of cuisine raise questions of originality and authenticity. How can chefs claim the originality of their *cozinha d’autor*.
if it has been based on recipes and practices that form part of an oral tradition “perfected over generations” (Daniel 2011) by many cooks?

Cooking is the most plagiarised practice (Pilcher 1998). As Chapter 4 established, and some interviews declared (João 2010; Daniel 2011; Zé 2011), the codification, classification and cataloguing of traditional cuisine by authors like Rêgo, Modesto, Bello and da Maia have secured the future of traditional forms of cooking. Yet, as the same chapter also illustrated, the recipes in cookbooks were the result of a comprehensive protocol of traditional dishes collected throughout the national territory and tried out by the authors over a period of time. So who were the authors of these recipes? Were they Modesto, da Maia and Bello? Or were the authors the anonymous and unsung home-cooks (most likely the housewives) to whom the recipes had most likely been orally passed by their mothers and grand-mothers and who then passed them on to cookbook writers? Likewise, how can any of the chefs currently producing cozinha d’autor, make claims to the originality of their own ‘creations’?

Most recipes that form part of an oral tradition never had their authorship claimed, although some of these ‘traditional’ recipes were recognised as part of the family heirloom. However, contemporary chefs, despite using traditional recipes as a source of for their own culinary inspiration, go on ‘interpreting/transforming’ them, and naming the re-invented material as cozinha d’autor. By connecting their cuisine to specific interpretations or transformations of a recipe, they give themselves the right to claim authorship. Although acknowledging that they have been inspired by what ‘has come before’ them, what they do not question is their right to call themselves an author. As Michel Foucault (1972) has argued in The Archaeology of Knowledge, knowledge or meaning does not stand on its own. Instead, it is connected to a larger, over-arching web of related knowledge and ideas. Similarly, no chef, recipe or cuisine can claim originality as they are inserted within a system of other recipes, ideas and practices that

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138 It is worth recalling that Modesto acknowledged that it took twenty years of work to produce Cozinha Traditional Portuguesa.

139 Mennell (1985) contends that the process of ‘authorship’ of recipes was slowly introduced in cooking practices but it only took its full effect in the nineteenth century “…when the cookery book as a work of art and record of personal achievement of the distinguished chef becomes common” (Mennell, 1985 p68).
came before them. No cuisine is ‘pure’ and ‘original’ but rather the result of something always in the process of becoming something else. Thus, although the ‘originality’ of cozinha d’autor could be questioned, in itself it illustrates the pressure put on chefs to generate a professional identity that differentiates them from the others. How then does this relate to the question of national cuisine and bacalhau? As we shall see, what the chefs are doing is to take the tradition of Portuguese cuisine, modernise it and hybridise it, so that cozinha d’autor actually depends on the preceding traditions and integrates bacalhau into it.

Cozinha d’autor is located within the field of “high-cuisine” (Mintz 1996) because it requires culinary and cultural competencies to be appreciated. Cozinha d’autor has been recognised as a medium of professional expression and creativity, highly appreciated by “culinary cultural capital” (Bell 2002) rich audiences. The chefs inspired by traditional cuisine, ‘respectfully’ work on recipes, ‘interpreting’ or ‘transforming’ them into something ‘new’. For example, João described how he ‘transformed’ ‘Leitão de Bairrada’ (young pork on the spit): using the traditional main ingredient – pork – and technique of cooking – spit – he claimed to have ‘transformed the dish’ by using different accompaniments (sweet potato instead of chips and grêlos140).

In turn, Lito in his interview recounted how he created dim-sims with bacalhau filling. He ‘interpreted’ a traditional filling of bacalhau and using the Chinese technique of dim-sim-making, he created a new Portuguese dish. These are two examples of what constitutes cozinha d’autor: João ‘transformed’ leitão de Bairrada, whereas Lito “interpreted with irreverence” (Lito 2010) bacalhau dim-sims.

Another example is what Lito described as “a play of words and culinary practices” (Lito 2010): Lito’s McSilva is an evocation of the McDonalds’ hamburger. This is how he defined it:

I created the McSilva ... a provocation ... why? There is a play on words ... emotions... one is eating a hamburger that reminds people of McDonald’s ... I use a sauce based

140 Grêlos is a type of cabbage.
on mayonnaise ... iceberg lettuce. Then I substituted the hamburger with a patenisca\textsuperscript{141},
the gherkins with radishes ... this is a play ... and provocation if you like ... to show
that Portuguese food can look like fast food (Lito 2010).

The chefs’ choice of words to describe the making of cozinha d’autor did not become
evident until I began transcribing the interviews. Thus, I never questioned the careful
use of words but according to their descriptions, chefs made a direct correspondence
between the word used and the degree of changes from the initial recipe:
‘transformation’ or ‘interpretation’ depending on whether they considered the changes
to be radical or minor, respectively. Nevertheless, and as Lito himself suggested, what
constitutes cozinha d’autor is discursive, a “play of words”\textsuperscript{142} and meanings played-out
in the way dishes can be understood to produce a cuisine. Lito likened cuisine to music,
arguing that two pianists, depending on their own interpretation and style, would play
differently the same classic work by Chopin or Mozart. And he went on to assert that:

\textit{(Like music) cuisine ... is another language ... it can have different interpretations ...
cuisine is like a language it needs to be dynamic ... it is always in constant change and
so we need to be always looking for new ways... (Lito 2010).}

A cuisine is discursive; it is produced through language with an intended purpose. The
traditional Portuguese cuisine to which the interviewees referred is essentialised, static,
embedded in tradition as a secure place where chefs go to look for inspiration. Yet,
cozinha d’autor is dynamic, hybrid, inclusive of change and open to interpretations that
chefs in their professional practice reflexively claim the right to amend. Chefs, as
cultural intermediaries, experts, interpreters, authors, and artists give themselves the
right to define the parameters they find appropriate for their own purposes.

\textit{Cozinha d’autor} is the production of a ‘new’ cuisine using the ‘old’ as a template. The
changes the chefs make go generally unchallenged because as the ‘expert’ they hold the
power to name. Nevertheless a critical evaluation of their practices raises several
questions: Is the chef in fact re-inventing tradition? Is he re-writing the books? – that is,
creating a new codification for what is permissible and what is not? Whatever the
answer to these questions, in practice what chefs are demonstrating is that the values

\textsuperscript{141} Patanisca is a traditional and popular fishcake made with bacalhau.
\textsuperscript{142} Lito’s description brings to mind the Wittgenstein concept of ‘language games’ (Barker 2000).
and meanings underpinning cooking as a cultural practice are far from being static; rather they are dynamic, integrating new aspects as they evolve into something new. No culture is pure but rather an always already (Derrida 1976) hybrid.

Cuisine as a discourse, and cooking as a cultural practice need to evolve and be dynamic or they will wither. So, although chefs seek legitimisation for their work in essentialised conceptualisations of cuisine, in practice their cooking is vibrant, hybrid, progressive and inclusive, articulating the local (leitão da Bairrada) with the non-local (dim-sims), the traditional (bacalhau) with the innovative (dim-sims and McSilva). Furthermore, cozinha d’autor makes use of new techniques, methodologies and ingredients connoting culinary hybridity, one that defies static concepts of national cuisine and instead updates it. Cozinha d’autor and the chefs are dynamically involved in a process of cultural construction whereby a ‘traditional’ national is ‘un-packed’ to produce a new hybrid, one that destabilises and takes apart the traditional, to generate and re-invent a new cuisine which is never static, and essential but rather fragmented and a becoming rather than a being, and yet still part of the national.

Thus, cozinha d’ autor and national cuisines are commensurable entities but which refer to different moments of the cycle of cooking in which the chef as a cultural intermediary plays the pivotal role of naming and momentarily fixing meaning. Cozinha d’ autor arguably equates to what Stuart Hall referred to as a work of translation of the traditional into a hybrid and new form of cuisine (Hall 1992 p310).

Chefs as cultural intermediaries (arbiters of taste and interpreters of values and meaning), and as experts of complex system of knowledge, have an active role in pulling apart a national cuisine to re-construct it as hybrid and de-centred entity where bacalhau is nonetheless integrated.

5.5 Conclusion
In this chapter I argue that the chefs that contributed to this study are cultural intermediaries. The pre-requisites that qualify them as such were based on multiple criteria which included: high media visibility, cultural and culinary capital, integration
into a large professional network, international exposure to training and work environment, and the ability to generate culinary inventiveness. These qualifiers entitle them to professional legitimacy and cultural authority, but more significantly gives them the ‘power to name’.

*Cozinha d’ autor* is a pragmatic manifestation of the chefs’ culinary inventiveness, uniqueness and originality. However, and as the content of the interviews illustrated, in order to give validation and public recognition to their work, the chefs acknowledged the need to go back to ‘origins’, that is to the traditional dishes and customary culinary practices and eating habits. The knowledge and acceptance of the value of the ‘roots’ is as relevant as their international careers, professional network, trendy restaurants, published books and TV programs. They become part of a ‘discursive package’ (discursive formation) that legitimatises their cultural role as producers of meaning and significantly gives them the power to name what constitutes a cuisine.

*Cozinha d’ autor* is a manifestation of the chefs’ capacity to generate new dishes by translating the ‘old’ and traditional into a ‘new’ language that is hybrid, innovative and can still integrate bacalhau.

In the next chapter I continue my analysis of the material gathered in the interviews with chefs and food writers, to further explore the concept of cuisine as a discourse and bacalhau’s role in it.
6 BACALHAU IN PORTUGUESE CUISINE. COZINHA DA TERRA

6.1 Introduction

Thus far I have focused on the analysis of multiple representations of bacalhau across various sites and mediums: from texts in cookbooks, to archives, historical narratives, interviews and styles of cuisine such as cozinha d’autor.

In this chapter I will focus on bacalhau’s representation within the context of the so-called national cuisine and will evaluate two new concepts introduced by the respondents in the interviews – cozinha da terra\textsuperscript{143} and matriz de sabores\textsuperscript{144}. In this discussion, I explore how these concepts contribute to the making of Portuguese cuisine and evaluate what representation they give to bacalhau.

Food is a significant part of Portuguese culture and to illustrate it, in 2000 the Portuguese Government recognised gastronomy and culinary arts as constitutive of the intangible cultural heritage of the nation (Conselho de Ministros 2000). This official recognition by the political caucus and the national political and cultural elites is significant and is in line with the UNESCO’S (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Program ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists’ which aims at “drawing attention to the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage …. as a repository of cultural diversity and creative expression” (UNESCO 2013). Since the establishment of the UNESCO’s program in 2003, French cuisine, Mexican cuisine and the Mediterranean diet were added to the Cultural Heritage List in 2010, when for the first time they met the UNESCO’s selection criteria.

The Portuguese Government’s official recognition in a ministerial direction of the “artes culinárias (culinary arts) and gastronomia” (gastronomy) as constitutive of national cultural heritage is relevant for several reasons. Firstly, it acknowledges the role and place of food in the national ethos, but perhaps more significantly it officially links food with the nation and makes it a signifier of national culture. Secondly, the specific

\textsuperscript{143} Cozinha da terra translates as ‘cuisine of the land’. I will always use the Portuguese referent throughout this work because the term loses its cultural ‘feeling’ in translation.

\textsuperscript{144} Matriz de sabores translates as matrix of flavours. In this case, I use the English referent - matrix of flavours – because I consider it to give an accurate translation of the original meaning, and one in which ‘feeling’ is not lost.
reference to the culinary *arts* and *gastronomy*, clearly excluding the term cooking and cook (in Portuguese *cozinhar*) from the document’s wording, supports a hierarchy of values attributed to practices, whereby culinary arts and gastronomy are acknowledged as high forms of the practice but cooking is not. For these reasons a conceptual clarification between these two terms is required.

In this chapter I will explore how the concept of a Portuguese national cuisine is constructed in language and in practice, particularly focusing on representations of bacalhau. I start by centring the discussion on the concept of cuisine set against that of cooking. This is important because it establishes the conceptual differences between the two terms which enables an understanding of how they mediate dynamic processes of cultural identification. Secondly, based on the material collected in the interviews, I examine and evaluate how chefs and food writers/critics are currently imagining a national cuisine through the terms they introduced to this study – *cozinha da terra* and *matrix of flavours*.

This study takes the view that cuisine is a concept constructed in and by language. Using the material collected in the interviews, I examine cuisine as a site of struggle where meaning is produced and the tension between the contesting fields of practice and theory, innovation and tradition, come to the fore. The aim of this chapter is to ascertain and examine the cultural representations and processes by which Portuguese cuisine, including bacalhau, is discursively produced and pragmatically ‘cooked’ by chefs as cultural intermediaries. I assert that cuisines, and in particular national cuisines, are tools that carry the concreteness of the practice of cooking to the realm of the symbolic where the concept of the nation is located.

### 6.2 Cooking versus Cuisine

*What distinguishes the food of men from that of the other animals? Cooking is the human activity par excellence; it is the act of transforming a product “from nature” into something profoundly different* (Montanari 2006 p29).
Often the concepts of cooking and cuisine are used interchangeably. This study takes a different view and argues that they are conceptually different because they have been given distinct connotations.

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, ‘cooking’ is defined as a “process of preparing food by heating”, whereas ‘cuisine’ is considered to be “a style or method of cooking, especially as characteristic of a particular country, region or establishment” (www.oxfordreference.com 2011). To this definition, Montanari’s (2006) argument cited above, usefully factors the human aspect into a practice that despite its ‘ordinary-ness’ and ‘taken-for-granted-ness’ is nevertheless, a highly complex procedure which, as he argues, has been used to differentiate humans from other animals. Montanari is in fact, expanding on the premise put forward by Lévi-Strauss (1983), who held the view that cooking was a practice that enabled humans to transform raw (nature) into cooked (culture), using fire as the mediator. In this sense cooking represented the human capacity to utilise tools, conceptualise their effect and give symbolic meaning to a practice, thus demonstrating a higher state of development coincident with the idea of civilisation.

The association of fire with food preparation is culturally ingrained and often taken as the solo method of making food palatable and digestible. We need to be alerted to the detrimental effects of such an assumption when used as a classificatory and categorising gage of value against which non-western indigenous populations have been labelled in the past. Thus, despite acknowledging the significance of fire, we need to be culturally sensitive and recognize that there are other successful methods of food preparation. For example, the Japanese sashimi and the Latin-American ceviche, both use different techniques of making raw fish edible without the use of fire – the former utilising highly specialised expertise in fish-handling and the latter by pickling raw fish with the use of an acidic substance – lemon juice. Likewise, Australian indigenous populations’ use of alternative techniques of food preparation and/or unconventional uses of cooking, led them to be classified as ‘uncivilised’ or ‘barbarian’ (Bannerman 2011). When seen through the lense of the ‘normalised’ standards of western cooking, their methods...
(along with their users) were rendered signifiers of ‘inferior’ stages of human development.

For these reasons and for the purposes of this study, cooking is understood as *one* of the several processes of food preparation, which uses heat as a method of transforming products into edible and palatable foodstuffs safe for human consumption. However, I also acknowledge that there are other culturally adapted processes of food preparation just as significant, just as complex and just as efficient that should be considered on a par with cooking. Cooking is a practice and one of the many links in a complex and multi-layered chain of events required to transform an inedible food into a product ready for human consumption.

This introductory discussion is necessary because, as I will demonstrate, the conceptual difference between cooking and cuisine is frequently utilised as a discursive tool for categorisation and classification of the practice and of its practitioners.

Cooking is usually associated with pragmatic and vital practices of everyday life that are conducive to nourishment and human survival. In traditional societies cooking was associated with oral tradition and practices of repetition and imitation. Cooking was a task, a chore that was performed out of necessity rather than enjoyment (Higman 2012). Life depended on it. There was no choice but to prepare and cook food. For most people, the duty of cooking and the tasks associated with it were shared amongst the household (food harvesting, wood collecting, meal preparation) thus making the practice a communal effort, usually gendered-tagged and performed in the private sphere. A paradigmatic shift occurred when, in complex stratified cultures and societies, a minority with prestigious status or economic affluence were spared from participation in the task by engaging others in lieu. Hitherto cooking, an everyday practice vital for human survival, became a means of social stratification based on social rank and/or wealth. According to authors like Michael Freeman (1977) and Stephen Mennell (1985), it is at this point that the concept of cuisine emerges, whereby the process of preparing food and cooking it take on a hierarchical cultural signification.
Freeman (1977) laid the groundwork for the theorisation of cuisines in his essay on Sung cuisine in China. For Freeman (1977), a cuisine “implies the confluence of certain material factors – the availability and abundance of ingredients – with a set of attitudes about food and its place in the life of man” (Freeman 1977 p144). That is, for Freeman these are the pre-requisites that need to be met before a cuisine can emerge. Some of these factors are related to food – quantity, exclusivity, scientific knowledge and access to technologies; others are human-correlated – a “set of attitudes about food and its place in the life of man” (Freeman 1977 p144). Nonetheless, and as Freeman asserted, “a cuisine requires a sizable corps of critical, adventuresome eaters, not bound by the tastes of their native region and willing to try unfamiliar food” (Freeman 1977 p144).

According to these authors, a cuisine can only emerge in complex human conglomerates when elite groups have access to time and economic surplus which allows them to engage with the production of ‘higher’ forms of cultured practices such as a cuisine. As a consequence, they claim for themselves the right to develop aesthetic dispositions of taste and style that can only be read and appreciated by those with the ‘know how’ (Bourdieu 1984), and competencies that enable the ‘reading’ of a codified practice (cuisine) which has been created by a professional elite (chefs as experts) for a social elite. That is, cuisine becomes part of the ‘habitus’ (Bourdieu 1984) – a series of embodied ways of thinking, feeling and acting about food which are historically located and related to class position, status and education. In time, cuisine comes to be recognised as a cultural signifier for group differentiation; in time, it goes through a process of codification, standardisation and categorisation that enables the production of a body of generative normative knowledge. Drawing on the Foucauldian concept of power-knowledge, I argue that cuisine can be understood as a discourse, an enabling tool and a site where signification takes place and knowledge is exercised. Because knowledge is not neutral but rather always associated with questions of power, cuisine becomes a site of struggle over the production of meaning.

I take the stance that cooking and cuisines are cultural practices that aim to produce edible items of food. As such, they both have cultural meanings attached to them – they have been made to signify – and it is at the level of signification that the differentiation
between them occurs. They are constructed in discourses that describe them in different ways. Cooking is usually associated with the practice carried out by amateur unsung house-cooks (mostly female) generally taking place in the domestic sphere. Cooking has been made to signify the ‘natural’ function of nutrition and female labour.

In turn cuisine has been made to connote the practice of cooking, which has been codified by the ‘expert’ and professional (mostly male) chefs within the realm of the public sphere (restaurants); it is associated with the ‘higher’ realm of knowledge, art, style, taste and competencies that ‘classify’ the user (Bourdieu 1984); cuisine has been made to mean a hierarchy of values that signifies the social and cultural exclusivity of the groups that perform it. Cuisine enables the “consciousness of positions and possibilities for social mobility in a circumscribed social space” (Ferguson 1998 p634).

The discourse of cuisine gives specific cultural meanings to a particular practice of cooking. Thus, cuisines are discursive formations (practice, ideas and images), powerful cultural signifiers and sites of struggle where meaning is produced and appropriated by different cultural agents to attain different purposes.

After establishing the differences between cooking and cuisine, I reiterate that this study is only concerned with cuisine and the role of cultural elites, in particular the role of cultural intermediaries working in the public sphere, contributing for the making of a national cuisine and national dishes in order to construct hegemonic narratives of national culture (Hall 2000).

In the next section I will explore how cuisine articulates with nation and notions of national identity, centring the analysis on the specificity of the Portuguese context. Using the material of the interviews, I examine the role that chefs and food writers have in the making of the Portuguese national cuisine.

6.3 The making of national cuisines

The appearance of structural devices for organising a national cuisine is accompanied by the development of a sometimes fairly explicit nationalist and integrationist ideology (Appadurai 1988 p20).
The central questions I now explore are how and in what circumstances national cuisines emerge. Before centring the discussion on this fundamental issue, I want to position this study within the scope of a broad relevant literature.

For authors like Appadurai (1988), Cusack (2000), Helstoski (2003), Howell (2003) and Ferguson (1998), cuisine, and specifically a national cuisine, is a cultural construction. These authors share the view that cookbooks, as cultural artefacts, constitute one of the main mediums for the production of a national cuisine through a narrative centred on recipes, culinary methods, eating habits and geographic descriptions of the national territory. Ultimately, they claim, cookbooks generate an imagined culinary unity – a cuisine – that narrates the nation. For example, Appadurai (1988) examines cookbooks written after Indian Independence. He asserts that with the active collaboration of the urban middle-class female population, it was possible to collect a considerable number of recipes nation-wide, which underwrote a “thinly stitched together national menu” (Ray 2008 p262), contributed to the process of imagining a newly independent territory as a nation and brought a national cuisine into being.

Helstosky (2003) makes a similar claim in her analysis of Italian cuisine. She centres her study on Artusi’s *La Scienza in Cucina* (1891) written in the nineteenth century when Italy was undergoing the process of nation-building (*Risorgimento*). Helstosky argues that Artusi’s work generated a culinary protocol which collated country-wide ingredients, recipes and techniques to construct the “grammar of the Italian cuisine” (Helstosky 2003 p124). Together, they produced a ‘language’ and a national culinary repertoire which assisted the process of Italian nation building by “enable(ing) readers to think of Italy as a nation with unified culinary practice(s), despite variations in region and class” (Helstosky 2003 p124). Both, Appadurai and Helstosky’s arguments are underpinned by Anderson’s (1983) concept of the nation as an “imagined community”, which sitting at the metaphoric table, finds itself united by a common culinary language, practice and tradition.

Other studies have come to similar conclusions. In *African Cuisines: Recipes for Nation-Building?*, Igor Cusack (2000) analyses how African national cuisines have been ‘built’ by non-African writers, who in a process of appropriation, categorisation and
assembly of regional ethnic recipes, created the idea of an ‘African cuisine’ for markets eager to buy cookbooks. Alerted by the rising interest in western societies (especially the USA and UK) in food and cuisines deemed ‘exotic’, book publishers closed the gap by promoting this literary genre. As Cusack (2000) argues, most of the publications were either directed to expatriates living abroad and longing for a taste of home, or to foreigner gourmand audiences (Cusack 2000 p212) willing to experiment or familiarise themselves with foreign cuisine as a means of attaining cultural capital (see discussion in Chapter 5). Based on the general assumption that currently “all nations have national cuisines” (Cusack 2000 p212), Cusack points out the absurdity of some cases in which “…African countries … have had their own cuisine redefined by these restaurants in foreign lands” (Cusack 2000 p212). Cusack’s conclusions confirm my assertions about the discursive character of cuisine, the involvement of elites in its construction and in some cases even a certain alienation from the practice of cooking.

Whereas Cusack’s study explores the market forces contributing to the textual assembling of African national cuisines, Sally Howell’s research (2003) illustrates how other ideological devices and strategies can be utilised for a construction of national culinary unity. Analysing the ‘making’ of the Jordanian national dish, Howell concludes that the promotion made by the Jordanian Tourism Board to elevate Mansaf to the status of a national dish was partly generated to fulfil the nostalgic needs of Jordanian expatriates living abroad.

These studies recognise the role of food as a powerful signifier of nation-building and highlight the diverse strategies and tools utilised for the purpose, ranging from cookbooks, to dishes, recipes, national agencies (Tourism Boards) and national elites. The common thread running through them is the purpose of bringing the nation into view through the language of food in order to produce an ‘imagined’ and unified community, eating from the same culinary resources.

National cuisines as discursive devices are often deployed by hegemonic groups to rekindle strong emotions and manifestations of nationalism. For example, in 2009 the city council of Lucca in Tuscany-Italy banned non-Italian ethnic restaurants from its CBD area in a bid to maintain the integrity of the national Italian cuisine in the
traditionally Italian city of Lucca (Donadio 2009). Likewise, in 2002 after September 11th, the French government’s lack of political support for the USA invasion of Iraq made headlines as French fries were banned in some American eating outlets (Gallagher and Press 2003). These two examples illustrate the power food (cooking and/or cuisine) may have when associated with concepts of nation or processes of cultural identification. In both examples, Italian and American political elites utilised food as the cultural signifier to retaliate against conditions which destabilised national authority and integrity.

6.4 Case study – the making of twenty-first century Portuguese cuisine

In this section I focus on the analysis of the research material collected in my interviews with Portuguese chefs and food writers. I examine the food that these professionals produce and promote within the normative rules and definitions of their own culinary practices.

I reiterate that this study is not concerned with the oral tradition and vernacular body of cooking practices that constitute the everyday meals of the common man and women, even of those that constitute the readership and audiences of the chefs that participated in this study. This study is about the textual, visual and verbal representations produced by elite professionals who, due to their media exposure, are able to make their views reach large audiences. This study is about the language and the content of the constructed messages and teachings that they, as the ‘experts’, deliver and that by circulating in the social fabric become part of the normative discursive formations that define knowledge about cuisine and cooking.

Here I evaluate chefs’ interpretations of Portuguese cuisine in the twenty-first century and the place bacalhau takes in it. Some unexpected outcomes were revealed. Firstly, rather than referring to a ‘national cuisine’ the interviewees mostly referred to a ‘Portuguese cuisine’. I can only speculate on the reason for their choice of words, as I
did not question them about it\textsuperscript{145} at the time of the interviews. Secondly, most of the interviewees introduced a series of concepts with which I was unfamiliar, demonstrating the sometimes unexpected, yet advantageous, contribution that fieldwork can give to a research project, providing it with new material of investigation. The concepts repeatedly used by the interviewees were: \textit{cozinha d’autor, cozinha de terra} and \textit{matrix of flavours}. I have explored the former in Chapter 5 and will now examine the remaining concepts because they constitute a window into the current ‘imagining’ of the ‘national’ in its dialectic articulations with the global and the European Union.

6.4.1 \textit{Cozinha da terra}

\textit{I think that after the big trends in cuisine ... we had fusion cuisine ... then it was the molecular cuisine... now we have had the techno-emotional cuisine... usually after every trend we always return to the same point which is cozinha da terra ... we are at that point again... everyone is turning to cozinha da terra until we find out again where we are heading next...} (Fernando 2010).

\textit{Cozinha da terra} translates to ‘cuisine of the land’. Chef Fernando referred to it as a style of cooking rooted in tradition, routine, and in simple practices and customs that are intertwined with seasonal patterns and the food produced and consumed by those who lived and worked the land. According to Fernando, \textit{cozinha da terra} is part of a binary in which simple cooking practices are counterpointed by those cuisines adulterated by technology and new methodologies (molecular gastronomy and techno-emotional cuisine)\textsuperscript{146} (de Solier 2010), and imposed by cultural trends (fusion cuisine)\textsuperscript{147}. Whereas

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\textsuperscript{145} Reflecting on this issue I consider my lapse to be related to the placement of the researcher within the project. At times, during fieldwork, ‘things’ become too naturalised and taken-for-granted for me to be questioning them. As a Portuguese born individual, speaking about ‘Portuguese food’ is natural because it is the way ‘we’ have always done it. Nonetheless, when I took the role of the observer during the process of transcribing, I disassociated myself from that subjective position. I can only suggest that the preferential use of the qualifier ‘Portuguese’ to ‘national’ is an unconscious strategic move ‘to soften’ the political connotations of labelling a cuisine ‘national’.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{146} Both terms refer to a style of cooking that takes practical advantage of the chemical and physical transformations that occur in food whilst cooking. In professional circles, they have become highly contested in that Molecular Gastronomy (as is usually referred to) is already considered \textit{passé} and replaced instead by the term techno-emotional cuisine. The chefs whose names are more commonly associated with this style of cooking are the Spanish Ferran Adrià and the UK chef Heston Blumenthal.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{147} Fusion cuisine is considered a culinary trend whereby different styles of cuisine are brought together in the production of one dish.
\end{flushright}
the latter styles of cuisine are depicted as those produced in professional high-tech kitchens where new culinary trends and fads are created, in contrast, cozinha da terra embodies what is understood to be authentic, ‘natural’, rooted, unchangeable and familiar, that is, the safe culinary shelter for times of uncertainty and change. For chef Fernando, cozinha da terra is made to signify nature within the nature-culture binary, not taking into account that nature is already constructed within the parameters of culture (a ‘cultured’ nature).

Cozinha de terra has a range of connotations that are worth exploring. In Portuguese ‘terra’ means ‘soil’, ‘earth’, ‘land’ (territory) and ‘the place where one is born’ (homeland). Fernando refers symbolically to cozinha de terra as the point of departure and the point of return, the anchorage that keeps the practice (cooking) and its practitioners (cooks) grounded; the type of cooking which is ‘organically’ embedded in and by tradition and that chefs revisit after the changes produced by new trends, suggesting cozinha de terra is the benchmark, the inspirational source and a point of national reference.

Suggestively, this graphic description of cozinha de terra is reminiscent of similar accounts of nation and its territorial roots that emotionally ground people to places, mooring them to what is represented as safe (Smith 1991). Cozinha da terra articulates food with terra, the place where the nation is located, making food a signifier of cultural and national identity. Cozinha de terra and the food it represents stands for what belongs, what has been endowed with emotional identification and meanings, what is ‘us’ against what is ‘other’. Suggestively, when referring to the flavours and ingredients constitutive of Portuguese cuisine, Fernando claims:

... when tourists come to Portugal ... they don’t come to eat international cuisine...European... Italian or any other... They come to Portugal to eat Portuguese food .... (Fernando 2010).

Fernando seems to associate Portuguese food with the culinary uniqueness of the nation, and thus with cozinha da terra.

But Cozinha da terra is also evocative of the links between the nation and what lies beyond it. It is suggestive of how the universal (earth/global) and the local
(soil/land/nation) articulate and how globalisation and Europeanisation are manifested dialectically between what is universal and what is particular. The global versus local debate would not be taking place if locally produced food was only locally consumed, if the local stayed local and was recognised for being ‘ordinarily’ local.

The local’s current relevance has only been brought into view because food production and consumption practices changed; because environmentalists have drawn the public’s attention towards the supermarket shelves inundated with global products, independent of season or price tag; because as a result of the effects of globalisation there has been a call to re-assert local (and national) food traditions within the European Union in order to demarcate cultural identity and resistance to homogenising trends (DeSoucey 2010; Truninger and Sobral 2011) (see Chapter 8). As Fernando remarked, cozinha da terra would have not been ‘brought into view’ as an idea if the contemporary trends in restaurant cuisine (fusion, molecular, techno-emotion), food politics and a preoccupation for what is local, had not generated the local versus global debate.

Cozinha da terra, as a concept, has the power to articulate different discursive elements previously unconnected. As president of the Portuguese Association for Professional Chefs (ACPP) and a local prominent figure in the hospitality industry, Fernando was engaging in cultural politics when he commented on cozinha da terra. Fernando was using his institutional and personal power, respectively as the president of the ACPP and as chef/cultural intermediary, to produce meaning (knowledge) about cozinha da terra. Arguably Fernando’s aim was to produce a language/discourse that could be channelled into lobbying and mobilising individuals engaged in polemic debates that eventually would re-define new languages and produce cultural change. Fernando was eager to polarise peoples’ minds by discursively using cozinha da terra as a tool with the potential to activate their concerns over a wide array of issues. These could range from general anxieties about current patterns of food production and consumption, as they could be about more specific and local matters. For example, cozinha da terra could be used as ‘a way of speaking’ (about food), with cultural implications because of food’s discursive capacity to link the past (rooted culinary practices) with the unsettling present (fusion cuisine, molecular cuisine), to take it into a more secure future. By
suggesting that “everyone is turning to cozinha da terra until we find out again where we are heading next” (Fernando 2010), Fernando is arguably allocating cozinha da terra the role of drawing linear narratives of nation (Smith 1991). Nonetheless cozinha da terra equally presents the potential to be an empowering tool that can bring about changes in cultural, political and social attitudes which eventually can lead to re-definitions of culinary practices as new signifiers of cultural identification.

Thus cozinha da terra is a discursive tool that defines the nation through its dialectic links with the land, the local and non-local as well as with tradition and innovation.

Cozinha da terra is a way of re-asserting cultural identity which has become a prominent feature of political discourse, particularly in the present context of globalisation and Europeanisation; cozinha da terra represents the current concerns and anxieties over definitions of what it means to be Portuguese. Furthermore, cozinha da terra illustrates the urgency of ‘fixing’ meaning in cultural fields, currently under pressure, as is the case with the national tourist industry eager to define clear signifiers of culinary identity so that competitive campaigns can be launched with the view to grabbing a larger slice of the international tourist market.

Food has always been a significant feature of Portuguese culture. Yet, currently there seems to be an increased emphasis by institutional agencies and chefs alike on bringing Portuguese eating habits ‘into view’, through the language of classification, categorisation, specialisation and ‘localism’. The nomenclature utilised includes cozinha traditional (traditional cuisine) and cozinha regional (regional cuisine) which I asked the interviewees to explain. This is how João described them:

*Traditional (cuisine) for me is something that has been passed down from generation to generation .... whereas regional (cuisine) means that it is related to an area and what grows in it... the region and the climate. The traditional...my grand-mother cooked rice like this ... so I cook it the same way and so will my grand-children ... so, it was passed down from generation to generation becoming traditional... as for the regional it is something that is local ... in the north they prefer to cook pork, in the south they use seafood, in the centre... that is... it is influenced by the soil, the climate, the seasons of the year, the products that are locally available ...*(João 2010).

Whereas the gastronomic critic and food writer Daniel commented:
So... hm... Portuguese cuisine still is the traditional cuisine... the matrix is rural... Still very present... it is a cuisine which respects the traditional techniques and products (Daniel 2011).

And further:

... traditional Portuguese cuisine ... still is very related to a type of life that’s dying off in Portugal.. rural ... seasonal...but that cuisine is still the cuisine that feeds the memory of the country and that people still look for ... in celebratory moments...(Daniel 2011).

I think that the traditional cuisine won’t change ... the nuclei won’t change .... It is very rooted... it has been passed down from generation to generation to generation and it will survive... (Daniel 2011).

Whereas João made a clear demarcation between regional and traditional cuisines, Daniel only referred to traditional cuisine. Further, João referred to regional cuisines as a practice connected with local products and the eating habits of the local people. In turn traditional cuisine, for both João and Daniel, was a practice disseminated orally and inter-generationally, engraved into the memory of people and the “memory of the country” (Daniel 2011). They referred to traditional cuisine as a practice underpinned and constructed through discourses of collective memory, ‘rooted’ in a rural ‘matrix’ and metaphorically attached to the land and the place which is thought of as the ‘national territory’. Although according to the interviewees regional and traditional cuisines were defined against different referents (region and tradition), I argue that they were seemingly concurrent with Fernando’s cozinha de terra. Moreover, according to the interviewees’ descriptions they were anchored in concepts constitutive of a national culture (Hall 1992) and the paradigmatic elements of nation and nationalism (Smith 1991): the re-told myths of origin; the constructed-ness of a common culture and spoken language; common customs and habits – all of which were positioned within the boundaries of the national territory.

The labels, cozinha da terra, cozinha regional and cozinha traditional, are tags attached to discourses of cuisine which organise, classify, and categorise it into a body of knowledge with which elites and ‘experts’ define and describe the way local populations prepare and cook the foods that are locally available using customary methods developed over extended periods of time and reproduced and learnt through
routines and vernacular practices. Whereas the ‘original’ practitioners were not concerned about labelling these practices, elites are. They tag them, name them, normalise them and finally associate these banal practices with the descriptive labels they generate for the purpose of fixing their meaning. Thus, the previously un-labelled everyday practices (of cooking) have been essentialised, normalised and brought into view by discourses promoted by national elites preoccupied with the “… perceived need for national integration…” (Robertson 1992 p155) and a coherent narrative of national history conducive to generating a centred national identity. Through the discourse of cuisine, national elites are making it a signifier of national culture, which as Hall asserts “…are (is) composed not only of cultural institutions, but of symbols and representations” (Hall 1992 p292).

Thus the re-definition of the Portuguese cuisine is taking place from different vantage points. Over the course of the interviews the growing demands made of chefs, their restaurants and the hospitality industry as a whole by the tourist industry became obvious. Professionals found themselves required to re-define Portuguese cuisine to make it an attractive and ‘unique’ marketable product for visiting tourists. With the implementation of the so-called gastro-tourism (Higman 2012), the National Tourist Bureau – Turismo Portugal – sponsored and implemented programs that focused on regional cooking in order to promote local products, enhancing and marketing what ‘naturally’ differentiates ‘us’ from the ‘others’. Local cuisines have become ‘the jewels in the crown’ of contemporary institutional agencies eager to maximise the ‘home-grown’ material and use it as a signifier of nation. Once codified, local cuisines can always be accurately and consistently reproduced. As Daniel asserts:

*... We can say that traditional cuisine ... that is ... methods of cooking ....perfected over generations, not new creations, have been established according to a model, so all they need is to be reproduced with accuracy, because that way the final dish is always good, tasty and always the same...(Daniel 2011).*

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148 The program *Taste Portugal* which I address in Chapter 8 is an example of the strategies implemented by the agency Turismo Portugal for the purpose of promoting Portuguese cuisine as a marketable tourist attraction.
Thus traditional cuisine (and by extension any form of cuisine) has been normalised, stifled under the weight of its own attributes produced by elitist rhetoric. Cuisine as a discursive formation has been romanticised as a ritual in celebratory practices of an idyllic lost world. As Daniel’s comments illustrate, the traditional Portuguese cuisine has become associated with ritualised events – like eating bacalhau on Christmas Eve\textsuperscript{149} – and an undercurrent of nostalgia for “a type of life that is dying off in Portugal … rural … seasonal…that feeds the memory of the country and that people still long for in celebratory moments” (Daniel 2011). Anchored by a romanticised past, cuisine is in peril of being harnessed by the discourse of culinary nationalism that fixes its meaning into a national cuisine.

The essentialisation of cuisine does not stop here. The interviewees expanded their views through the presentation of another symbolically ‘rich’ concept – *matrix of flavours*.

### 6.4.2 Matrix of flavours

*Matrix of flavours* was a concept extensively utilised by the majority of the interviewees. This is a term with no referent in literature or in professional jargon and its use by these chefs is thus significant and original. Hence, it is important to establish what *matrix of flavours* means and how it articulates with the broader notion of national cuisines. Moreover, the results of the present analysis provide information that is of use in later chapters, where I expand and explore how the *matrix of flavours* articulates with the conceptual framework of the local, the national, the global and the pan-national forces that constitute the contemporary European environment. For the moment the focus is on the analysis of a *matrix of flavours*.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) the word ‘matrix’ can be utilized in several contexts. Its application in a cultural-social context is defined as “the

\textsuperscript{149} As noted in Chapter 4, the ‘tradition’ of eating bacalhau on the meal of Christmas Eve is a recent tradition dating from the nineteenth century.
environment in which something develops”. Generically, matrix refers to “a mould in which something, such as a record or printing type, is cast or shaped” (www.oed). When referring to the origin of the word, the OED refers it back to Latin usage where its meaning is related to ‘mother’ (mater) or womb as in the breeding female. According to this definition, matrix relates to the foundation, the source of something that is enabling and generative. Using the content of the interviews, I will analyze the way the chefs deployed the concept and evaluate their attributed meaning.

The interviewees specifically used the term ‘matrix’ when referring to flavours – matrix of flavours – which in their view constituted the foundations upon which the Portuguese cuisine is built. Some of the interviewees gave detailed explanations about specific combinations of local ingredients readily available in accordance with seasonality and micro-climates, thus linking matrix directly to a place. For example, chef Lito (2010) referred to the flavours of Alentejo as those imparted by the mix of garlic and fresh coriander, and the flavours of Minho as that of rojões. In turn, other chefs referred to the matrix of flavours as those given to food according to the techniques used in its preparation, as is the case with the type of marinade and slow-cooking process used with tougher and cheaper cuts of meat. Other examples were associated with special cooking vessels characteristic of a geographic region, as in a dish called arroz de pingo (Carlos 2010) or another named chanfana de cabra, a specialty of the area of Coimbra (Fernando 2010). In this particular dish, according to chef Fernando, what counts is not only the cooking technique, but also the cooking vessel. Made with a dark type of clay specific to the area, the flavours imparted by the vessel to the food become even more ‘original’. As a result of the long cooking process, the clay permeates and enriches the dish, giving it a ‘unique’ flavour, just as in discourses of viniculture whereby wine made with grapes from a certain terroir (soil) acquires a particular

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150 Alentejo – One of the southern regions of Portugal.
151 Minho – One of the northern coastal regions of Portugal.
152 Rojões – A speciality from Minho, based on a pork meat and pork sausages cooked in ‘vinho Verde’ (white wine from Minho made with green grapes) and where the use of cumin is mandatory.
153 Arroz de Pingo is a rice dish made in a deep terracotta dish. The rice is cooked in this container which sits underneath a leg of baby lamb while it is being barbequed on a grill over charcoal. As the lamb cooks it drips (pingo) its juices into the rice enriching its flavour.
154 Chanfana is a slow-roasted dish made with goat’s meat and cooked in red wine using a vessel made with dark clay. This is a speciality of the area of Coimbra, the third largest city of Portugal on the central coast.
specificity.

Whatever the case maybe, when referring to the matrix of flavours, the interviewees always associated them with the unique characteristics of the local ingredients, techniques, culinary habits, and socio-economic factors that in their view had been determinant in the way the local diets were generated. One constant aspect was always manifested by the interviewees – the essentialised and immutable characteristics of the matrix which cut across time and space. They were ingrained in the population’s food preferences, thus constituting their local culinary and cultural identity. This is how Fernando referred to the matrix:

... the tourists ... they come to Portugal to eat Portuguese food .... We need to focus on those flavours, the matrix of our flavours ... I don’t cook regional style of cuisine but I do keep the focus on the matrix of flavours...we need to maintain that matrix, so that it keeps its continuity and is kept alive... (Fernando 2010).

Here, Fernando refers to the matrix of flavours as our flavours, seemingly giving food a connotation that transcends its nutritional attributes. Food and its flavours acquire a sliding meaning connoting something that is conceptual, overarching and ‘imagined’ as collective (Anderson 1983) – Portugal, the nation. Fernando, implicitly associates food and the matrix of flavours with the nation, making it a marker of national identity and a definer of the differences between ‘us’ (the visited-nationals) and the ‘others’ (the visiting-tourists). Drawing from John Urry’s (1990) “object of gaze”\textsuperscript{155}, I suggest that food is seen as the ‘object of taste’ that the visiting tourists choose to savour, eat and integrate within themselves as a means to experience the ‘Portuguese different other’ and the ‘uniqueness’ of ‘its’ food because it is different from the “…International cuisine...European...Italian or any other” (Fernando 2010). Implicitly, Fernando’s argument highlights one fundamental principle in generating processes of identification – the demarcation of difference between ‘us’ and the ‘other’, demonstrating how food so convincingly works as a signifier of cultural identity (Hall 1992).

\textsuperscript{155} John Urry’s Tourist Gaze argues that places, local practices and customs become the “object of the tourist gaze” (Urry 1990 p11), accommodating the expectations of the tourist in search of ‘authenticity’ and a ‘unique experience’.
Fernando went further. He considered the chefs as the gatekeepers of Portuguese food – “we need to maintain that matrix”; resting on their shoulders is the responsibility of maintaining and giving the matrix the “continuity” that “keep(s) it alive” (Fernando 2010). Significantly, Fernando also pointed out the pro-active role that chefs ought to have in the process of making, preserving and giving continuity to a cuisine, which they as responsible citizens and cultural gatekeepers ought to uphold, preserve and reproduce. Clive Seal’s definition of ‘gatekeeper’ as the “sponsors, officials and significant others who have the power to grant or block access to and within a setting” (Seale 1999 p221) highlights the significant role that chefs assume in cultural processes, hence justifying their labelling as cultural intermediaries as I have argued in Chapter 5.

According to the interviewees the matrix of flavours is more than just the ingredients that produce flavours. It is also about the various processes that can influence the final flavour of the food. For example, the cooking techniques utilised in the preparation of food are also relevant as they reflect not just the local conditions, but also the specific local cooking variations that impart particular characteristic and distinctive flavours to the food. Fernando specifically referred to some of the preparatory techniques that in his view are quite unique to the Portuguese cuisine:

We have a well-defined matrix of flavours .... Refogado de tomate\(^{156}\) which is used in different dishes. ... the combination of garlic and fresh coriander, .... Cebolada\(^{157}\) which is widely used in ... different dishes of bacalhau .... these are our matrix of flavours ....massa de pimentão\(^{158}\) which again we use a lot in marinating meats ... all these constitute the Portuguese matrix of flavours that we don’t see anywhere else ... vinha d’alhos\(^{159}\) which is not very common in other cuisines .... All these constitute our matrix of flavours that give our cuisine distinctiveness... and a particular flavour... (Fernando 2010)

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\(^{156}\) **Refogado de tomate** (for the basic *refogado* see Footnote 84) – sautéing diced onion, garlic and bay leaf in olive oil – tomato is added and cooked until the ingredients are soft. New ingredients are then introduced in the pan which can be rice, fish, meat or vegetables.

\(^{157}\) **Cebolada** – another foundational technique in which generous amounts of sliced onion and garlic are sautéed in olive oil. *Cebolada* is used for sauces and as a base for many other bacalhau dishes.

\(^{158}\) **Massa de Pimentão** – a marinade based on garlic, paprika (pimentão) and olive oil. It is usually used in meat and poultry dishes.

\(^{159}\) **Vinha d’alhos** – a marinade based on diced onion, garlic, chopped up parsley, paprika, chilli, olive oil and wine. It is used to flavour and soften up tough cuts of meat. It is also claimed to be the base for the Indian sauce Vindaloo, whose name sounds like an adaption of *vinha d’alhos*. 

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Fernando, in this case, defined the *matrix of flavours* based on the techniques of food preparation. He refers to different basic methods of cooking – *refogado* and *cebolada* – and foundational marinades – *massa de pimentão* and *vinha d’alhos* – as practical culinary techniques that impart food specific flavours that “give our cuisine distinctiveness” (Fernando 2010), making it a signifier of cultural identity. Thus, the *matrix of flavours* works at two levels – in the kitchen, pragmatically, where flavours are put together; and discursively, in the conceptual realm, where cultural identities are generated in accordance with the culinary technique in food preparation.

Chef Vitorino’s (2010) testimony illustrates this claim as he referred to a matrix as an abstract concept defined by codes and rules that are cultural and time-bound:

> *Matrix is made up of the principles that constitute our culture ...it (matrix) is temporal* (Vitorino 2010).

> *The matrix depends on the culture, the techniques, the products and the socio-economic factors.... each country has a matrix. Definitely ... the richer the matrix, the richer the country* (Vitorino 2010).

> *This is our matrix .... even with a contemporary interpretation ... this is our matrix* (Vitorino 2010).

For Vitorino *matrix of flavours* was an overarching and inclusive concept. Matrix was contextual and associated with factors other than the flavours of the ingredients and/or culinary techniques utilised in food preparation. Vitorino clearly articulated matrix with culture and nation, quantifying the relationship between the two – “the richer the matrix, the richer the country” (Vitorino 2010). Just as Fernando did, Vitorino also appropriated the concept by emphatically repeating “our matrix”, one that, although transverse in time, does not change its ‘essence’ despite being influenced by “contemporary interpretations” (Vitorino 2010). As I have analysed elsewhere in this work, the chefs make ample use of the word ‘interpretation’ in the context of contemporary cuisine as a means of keeping it alive, meaningful and relevant to contemporary tastes and audiences’ expectations.

The chefs’ focus on their interpretations of the Portuguese cuisine was highlighted in the analysis of *cozinha d’autor* in Chapter 5. However, this is a recurrent topic in the
interviews, and one that chef Lito also explores when he refers to his understanding of the *matrix of flavours*. Despite considering his cooking “irreverent” and directed to a cosmopolitan audience in Lisbon, Lito still considers it fundamental to integrate the *matrix of flavours* in his cuisine. Giving himself the power to elect the techniques he utilises in his cooking Lito states:

> Obviously I need to be careful in what I do because I know that in Portugal... and the Portuguese are conservative....I can’t be doing things that are too cosmopolitan. This is not New York or London. We have to do things judiciously ...However, the moment I break the boundaries, my focus still is on providing my customers with the matrix of the Portuguese flavours. If I cook dim-sims of bacalhau, the flavour is Alentejo. If I cook something with rojões ...the flavour is Minho....so the matrix of that flavour is there... but the technique ... comes from other places and so does the inspiration. (Lito 2010).

Lito was able to reconcile two seemingly conflicting practices. He chose to keep allegiance to the *matrix* of Portuguese flavours. Yet, at the same time he broke free of the ‘traditional’ Portuguese techniques (what he refers to as “boundaries”), and looked for inspiration elsewhere. As I have illustrated in Chapter 5, his dish of *dim-sim de bacalhau* with flavours of Alentejo, is a good example of a hybrid dish or what the Portuguese chefs also refer to as *cozinha d’autor*. In this dish Lito found inspiration in Chinese cuisine and techniques (dim-sim), yet he adhered to Portuguese ingredients – bacalhau – and *matrix of flavours*, by using the mandatory garlic and fresh coriander. It is worth noting that garlic and fresh coriander are classified by chef Lito as constitutive of the Alentejo’s *matrix of flavours*, yet these ingredients are equally abundant in the Chinese cooking practices, demonstrating that what a *matrix* is depends on the meaning that is arbitrarily attributed to it and not an intrinsic quality or ingredient.

The interviewees’ understanding of *matrix* is complex. They associated *matrix* with place, local products, climate, local food preferences, and micro-social-economic factors, enhancing the matrix’s interconnectedness with a range of factors that constitute the *local*. According to the content of the interviews, the *matrix* is what gives the

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160 Alentejo – see Footnote 150 in this Chapter.
161 Rojões – see Footnote 152 in this Chapter.
162 Minho – see Footnote 151 in this Chapter.
163 See Chapter 5 for discussion of the term.
Portuguese cuisine a unique character that differentiates it from all the other (national) cuisines, making it a culinary signifier of national identification. The matrix refers to the ‘breeding ground’ where a combination of different elements come together to give the Portuguese cuisine its own identity. Vitorino referred to them as the “principles that constitute our culture” (Vitorino 2010): the local ingredients, the local way of combining ingredients, the preparation techniques and methodologies and finally the local socio-economic resources that characterise the local foodways. When ‘cooked’ together they generate a matrix of flavours, a defining ‘essence’ that gives a particular identity to the local (and by extension the national) food. These are the characteristics that give the matrix its rootedness, making it essential and immutable at the same time as it constructs the national through the sum-total of the many locals that constitute the nation. Nonetheless, I also suggest that matrix needs to be looked upon as an enabling path to new ways of generating meaning.

This is not to deny the relevance of local practices, local habits, and local conditions. Instead, my argument is buttressed by the interviewees’ own statements, in that in their own practices the chefs demonstrated that their matrix is not as immutable as they make it to be. As the interviews illustrate, the chefs are the first to ‘break’ the rules and codes that they named as the defining premises of their own inventions: at times as a template for sameness and permanency, at times as an enabling tool that can provide new articulations with otherness and generate innovation. The chefs as gatekeepers hold the power to name, classify, include or exclude. In fact, and despite their own claims to the ‘uniqueness’ of the matrix, they give themselves the unchallenged permission to use it as a node of articulation for new meanings as we noted with Lito’s dim-sim de bacalhau. The matrix of flavours and cozinha da terra are ‘ways of talking’ about what chefs claim constitutes ‘true’ Portuguese cooking; that is, they are discourses that produce Portuguese (national) cuisine as a body of knowledge generative of a language that makes food connote nation.

What we need to question are the reasons for the relentless need to construct concepts that name, classify, normalise and fix meaning. Why do we need a matrix of flavours and a cozinha da terra? How and under what circumstances have these concepts
emerged? Why do cultural gatekeepers produce them and for what purposes? Why are local, regional and national matrices relevant in current discussions of globalisation and Europeanisation? What can we ascertain from the way the interviewees link the concepts of matrix of flavours and cozinha da terra with conceptualisations of national cuisines and processes of cultural identification?

To answer these questions we need to recall the rationale that produces essentialised cultural identities. Hall (1990) referred to ‘the two ways’ of thinking about cultural identities. The ‘first way’ (Hall 1990) refers to the way cultural identities are contextually produced on the basis of shared values:

...which provide us, as ‘one people’, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history .... a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other more superficial or artificial imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common (Hall 1990 p223).

For Hall this represents the ‘oneness’, the ‘truth’ of cultural identifications. Likewise, and translated into the Portuguese case, the matrix and the cozinha da terra equally represent the ‘true essence’ of Portuguese-ness when applied to food. Discursively they represent an essentialised national culinary character that is based on food ‘organically’164 (because it is local) produced, cooked and eaten in the Portuguese territory. This is a discourse that uses food as an identification signifier in which the matrix of (national) flavours represents, as chef Vitorino asserts, “our culture” and ultimately a national identity. In this sense, the chefs and the food critics/writers, as the producers of these discourses, are fulfilling their role as cultural “intelligentsia” (Smith 1990) or cultural intermediaries as I have labelled them. In this capacity they actively participate as cultural agents, maintaining or “rediscovering a ethno-history and vernacular culture” (Smith 1990 p183) that according to discourses of nationalism need to be preserved to secure the continuity of the nation and its identifying (culinary) values.

164 This argument is overarching and could be contested because with the current porosity of the geographic boundaries and the EU free market agreements, the place of origin of food is not always easy to track and in most cases the food eaten is not locally produced.
Processes of cultural production and reproduction are fundamental for cultural integrity and continuity. Contemporary chefs and food writers are prudently protecting the Portuguese culinary shared heritage of their past counterparts. Recalling the conclusions of Chapter 4, just as da Maia (1995), Bello (1994) and Modesto (1982) meticulously collected recipes countrywide to preserve them for posterity as part of the national culinary heritage, so their contemporary colleagues are following their example. Moreover, this is not only an individual project; it is equally a shared and ‘national’ project as illustrated by the 2000 governmental recognition of Portuguese culinary arts and gastronomy as part of the national heritage. However, the chefs as cultural intermediaries with the ‘power to name’, have the discretion to sometimes preserve *it* (cuisine), other times to ‘re-invent’ *it*, discursively linking the ingredients of a land with the practices of a people, re-articulating them as much with innovative practices as with an essentialised matrix that, if maintained and reproduced, will assure the vitality of the nation via its national cuisine.

Returning to Hall’s second “way of thinking about ‘cultural identity’” (Hall 1990 p225): this is a type of ‘cultural identity’ which is produced through the acknowledgement that despite the similarities “…there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitutes ‘what we really are’; or rather – since history has intervened – ‘what we have become’” (Hall 1990 p225). The present analysis enables us to claim that Portuguese chefs, because “history has intervened”, are introducing strategies that help them to contextualise and make sense of their identities, their own professional practices and their own approach to the matrix of flavours. Although recognising and promoting the relevance of a static and ‘root’ed’ matrix of flavours, un-reflexively and in their own practice, chefs are using it as an innovative ‘route’ that is generative, enabling, dynamic and in a state of constant transformation. The introduction of new techniques and aesthetic knowledges that they have acquired over a period of professional training (local and abroad) enables them to practice ‘new’ interpretations that keep a cultural practice alive.

In this sense, chefs and their cuisine represent what Tom Nairn has called the ‘Janus-face’ of nationalism (Hall 1992 p295); on the one hand, they look back to the past and
its vernacular recipes with which they conceptualise a *matrix of flavours* ‘unique’ to Portuguese cuisine. On the other hand, they look to the present (and future) and recognise the need to ‘modernise’ their cuisine by adopting new techniques that they present to an eager ‘cultural capital rich’ urban clientele. Thus chefs as cultural intermediaries and gatekeepers with the power to name, are bricoleurs, generating multiple and fractured self-identities. They are negotiating a maze of meanings, sometimes keeping the ‘old’, other times breaking the boundaries, re-arranging, juxtaposing and creating possibilities for new culinary articulations.

In this context, chefs as cultural gatekeepers and culinary power brokers hold the authority to contribute to the culinary definition of the nation. They begin to symbolically define its signifiers – cuisines (*cozinha d’autor* and *cozinha da terra*) and *matrix* (ingredients, techniques and flavours) – which as discursive formations are contextual and purposely generated in language. We can either look at them through the lense of the imagined sheltered and safe space called nation, or we can look at them as an enabling field for innovation and new re-articulations that nonetheless remain named as ‘national’. In practice, Portuguese chefs are doing both.

### 6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined two concepts that were profusely used by interviewees: *cozinha da terra* and *matrix of flavours*. I have explored these concepts, articulating them with a broader concept of national cuisine, which I argue is a discursive formation generated by cultural elites as a signifier of national cultures.

Unlike the concept that was analysed in the previous chapter – *cozinha d’autor* – which I named as a signifier of innovation and hybridity, *cozinha da terra* and *matrix of flavours* stand for permanency, normalised and rooted values that signify the nation.

I argue that these concepts are associated with an increasing need to re-assert local specificities and claim cultural *difference* within the current contexts of globalisation and Europeanisation. The dynamic that operates between the local and the non-local comes sharply into focus when the content of this chapter is compared with that of the
previous chapter: the former, focusing on the *cozinha da terra* and *matrix of flavours* the latter on *cozinha d’autor.*

Presently, both trends are gathering momentum and bacalhau still remains part of the chefs’ cooking practices and eating habits, demonstrating that bacalhau still holds its place as much in the ‘traditional’ as in the innovative cuisine of the twenty first century. Just like identities, the practice of cooking as an integral part of culture is fragmented, dynamic and in constant change. As both João and Lito asserted, just because some days they feel like eating a traditional dish of bacalhau, this does not mean that other days they will not feel like eating *dim-sims de bacalhau.*

In the next chapter I will examine the museum as a site where the *local* representation of bacalhau also takes place, before undertaking an analysis of the articulation between the *local* and the non-*local* in the final chapter of this work.
7 NARRATIVES OF BACALHAU IN THE MUSEUM OF ILHAVO

7.1 Introduction

...we described exhibitions as political arenas in which definitions of identity and culture are asserted and contested (Karp 1992 p1).

In this chapter I explore cultural representations of bacalhau in the Museum of Ilhavo. Currently classified as a maritime museum – Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo (Maritime Museum of Ilhavo) (MMI)\textsuperscript{165} – the institution is “…a testimony to Ilhavo’s strong links with the sea and the Ria de Aveiro (Aveiro’s Lagoon)” (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012). Despite the MMI’s four permanent exhibitions\textsuperscript{166}, the museum has nonetheless named ‘Faina Maior’ as its iconic exhibit and the “museum’s patrimonial reference” (Museu Maritimo Ilhavo 2011). Faina Maior and dôri are concepts with no English language translation. Faina Maior was coined by the Estado Novo. It refers to the practice of bacalhau line-fishing and constituted a part of the narrative of the Campanha do Bacalhau\textsuperscript{167}. In turn, dôri refers to the one-man boat (daily launched from the mother-boat) where the fisherman – dôriman – caught bacalhau until the boat reached full capacity\textsuperscript{168}.

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the role that museums have in the production of national culture. I explore the MMI’s main exhibit as a window into the museum’s narratives of Faina Maior and of bacalhau, particularly focusing on bacalhau’s symbolic association with the sea, which is a central signifier of Portuguese national culture.

I examine the trajectory the Museum of Ilhavo has taken since its beginnings in 1937 to evaluate the changes that have since taken place and how they reflect the institution’s role in the construction of the local community’ ethos. It is my intention to examine the museum as a site that displays material culture and produces maps of meaning which

\textsuperscript{165} I will mostly refer to the Museum of Ilhavo as MMI.
\textsuperscript{166} The museum has four permanent exhibitions all dedicated to maritime related topics. Sala da Faina Maior (Big Task exhibit) is considered the iconic exhibition of the museum and is given the major space; Sala da Ria (Lagoon exhibit); Sala dos Mares (Sea exhibit) dedicated to maritime objects and instruments; Sala das Conchas (Seashells exhibit).
\textsuperscript{167} See Chapter 3 for details on these concepts.
\textsuperscript{168} For more details on dôri, see Footnote 52.
underpin the shared but contested values of national culture. This makes the museum a site where power struggles are contested and processes of local and national identification are generated.

I consider the museum to be a significant tool of research because it articulates multiple fields of cultural signification, amongst which the powerful industry of the twenty-first century – the tourist industry – is prominent. Within the current context of globalisation and the claimed threat of cultural homogenisation, there has been an increased ideological counter-current that focuses on promoting ‘original’, ‘authentic’ and ‘unique’ local traits (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992). Difference has been highlighted (and discursively exploited) in order to produce identification markers that give the local a label and a brand that can be commodified and marketed for cultural tourism. As I will intend to demonstrate, the MMI owes much of its recent expansion to the rhetoric and marketing strategies implemented by the tourist industry in Ilhavo which has had a marked surge over the last two decades in Ilhavo.

This chapter will demonstrate how the emphasis the MMI has given to Faina Maior is associated with bacalhau’s place in national culture, its role in the construction of local and national identities, and bacalhau’s designation as the Portuguese national dish.

I begin by contextualising the museum in the small coastal town called Ilhavo, to which several subtitles have been given – the Capital of Bacalhau, the Mecca (Ilhavennve 1st November 1994 in Peralta 2008 p225), and Town of Bacalhau (Peralta 2008 p229). I use Capital of Bacalhau as the subheading of the next section because it highlights the centrality of bacalhau to Ilhavo’s identity.

7.2 Ilhavo: the Capital of Bacalhau
Ilhavo is a small municipality on the northern coast of Portugal. Like most of the small towns and cities by the sea, maritime-related activities have been the mainspring of the local economy and markers of local identity. In this context, bacalhau-fishing and associated industries were, until their gradual dismantling after 1974, the main, but not the only, source of local employment. Other major economic activities have also
contributed to the development of Ilhavo and adjacent areas, for example, *Vista Alegre*169 (Vista Alegre 2013) – the highly regarded fine china that has been produced in the region since 1824. Nonetheless, the role of bacalhau-processing industries has always been officially and rhetorically represented as the major local activity with the most significant key social and cultural impact in Ilhavo.

It is generally acknowledged that in the decades between 1930 and 1960, there was not a single family in Ilhavo without at least one relative associated with the bacalhau-fishing industry (Peralta 2008 p129). Thus, despite the abrupt end of the practice after the 1974 Carnation Revolution170, the common belief that bacalhau was ‘ingrained’ in the cultural consciousness of the residents of Ilhavo was maintained (Peralta 2008).

Ilhavo, and the closest and larger city of Aveiro, have always been large maritime ports, with a substantial labour force devoted to the fishing industry. However, in spite of evidence showing the long-standing relationship between bacalhau-fishing and these two coastal towns, this association is far from being exclusive to them. On the contrary, many other coastal locations have also been associated with the practice. For example, Viana do Castelo, Varzim, Figueira da Foz, Porto and Lisbon have always been maritime ports linked to the fishing industry and the processing of bacalhau (Moutinho 1985). Yet, none of these cities has ever claimed such an association as forcefully as Ilhavo has, which might be related to several factors. Firstly, the high representation of men from Ilhavo who held powerful positions in the shipping industry (Peralta 2008; Garrido 2010). There is evidence that most of the officers – *capitães* 171 – on board the bacalhau-fishing boats were from Ilhavo. Moreover, there is also evidence that in the early years of the 1930s, when Salazar and the Estado Novo were about to launch the *Campanha do Bacalhau*, there were owners of shipyards in Aveiro and Ilhavo with financial vested interests in promoting and securing contracts for the construction of the

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169 *Vista Alegre* is the most renowned quality porcelain brand in Portugal. Founded in 1824, to date it still holds a high reputation, being always the brand chosen for official meals of the government and President of the Republic. *Vista Alegre* could be comparable in quality and reputation to the British brands Royal Doulton and Wedgewood.

170 The 1974 Revolution of the Carnations put an end to the fascist regime in Portugal. Accompanying it, most of the practices associated with the regime came to a sudden halt. *Faina Maior* was one of them.

171 The highest rank was called *capitão* (captain) and Ilhavo still shows great reverence for its *capitães* (captains) (Peralta, 2008 p130).
fishing flotilla required for the planned Campanha (Moutinho 1985; Peralta 2008; Garrido 2010). For this reason, Ilhavo and its capitães, have always represented themselves and their town – the Capital of Bacalhau – through a hierarchy of values (Peralta, 2008) which politically, socially and culturally located them in a position of power that they utilised to their own advantage.

The so called Avenida dos Capitães (Captains’ Avenue), in the exclusive suburb that housed most, if not all of Ilhavo’s naval officers, is a testimony to the high veneration, respectability and even substantial status, prestige and economic power the capitães once held in this small coastal town. These factors are evidence of the power that the Ilhavo economic and political elite held, particularly their high stakes and vested interests in the development of the local bacalhau industry (Peralta 2008). However, these events also begin to indicate a certain constructed image of Ilhavo as a place with a ‘natural’ and ‘essential’ association with maritime activities, which rhetorically has always underpinned the arguments supporting the development of a local powerful economic fishing industry. That is, Ilhavo’s ‘natural’ association with the bacalhau-fishing industry is as much related to representational values and meanings that work at the symbolic level of culture as it is connected with Ilhavo’s coastal location and influential economic local interests.

The narratives that have always heightened the close association between Ilhavo and bacalhau-fishing have lent the town a special aura that no other place holds, and justify the diverse subtitles the town has acquired over the years. Ilhavo’s naming as Capital of Bacalhau, Town of Bacalhau and Mecca of Bacalhau is partly the work of the local media, especially the local newspaper O Ilhavense172, which has always been a loud voice in support of the industry as an important source of local economic development and employment (Peralta 2008).

172 Peralta (2008) draws attention to this long standing influential newspaper, in circulation since 1921. In its statute the newspaper claims to be “a publication regional in character … the mirror of the local way of life and a passionate lobbyist for the local issues and sponsor of the names and work of the most relevant sons of this town” (Peralta, 2008 p158).
To the media’s endorsement of the industry, we need to add the work of an influential local character. In 1922 Ilhavo’s City Council wanted to create a new coat of arms for the town (Peralta 2008) and selected Rocha Madaíl, a recognised librarian at the University of Coimbra with a Bachelor’s degree in Romanic philology, to assist them. Madaíl proposed a Phoenician fishing-boat as the town’s insignia, claiming the previous Phoenician’s presence in Ilhavo as the ‘origin’ for the town’s immemorial link with the sea and the ‘natural’ and mythical predisposition of its people for maritime practices. Madaíl’s work and in particular his proposition to the town’s Council, were criticised by his academic peers who contested the credibility of his claims (Peralta 2008). Nonetheless, his proposals were accepted and implemented. Ilhavo gained a new coat of arms and a new ‘tradition was invented’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Ilhavo’s link with the sea became naturalised, making what was a culturally constructed association into a “… natural and eternal justification … a statement of fact” (Barthes 1993 p143). Madaíl, in seeking legitimisation of his new coat of arms by associating it with unproved claims of Phoenician ancestry, illustrates the point made by Anthony Smith who asserts that “[it] is possible to ‘invent’, even manufacture, traditions as commodities to serve particular class or ethnic interests (Smith 1990 p178).

This is not to say that Ilhavo did not have a strong maritime and fishing industry, nor is it to deny the existence of practices and habits that the local population acquired as a result of that association. My argument is that the connotations that have been produced and given to that relationship have been culturally generated to fulfil a purpose. That is, Ilhavo’s connection with the sea and bacalhau has been economically and discursively promoted as a strategic marker of Ilhavo’s local identity because they give the town exclusive characteristics that make it different and thus marketable. Ilhavo’s attributes as The Capital of Bacalhau, the Mecca of Bacalhau and the Town of Bacalhau are marketable attributes that no other place can now claim. Moreover, as markers of local identities they also become enmeshed in questions of cultural, local and national identities.

The role of the MMI in the process of the Ilhavo’s constructed image as the Capital of Bacalhau is significant in making this strategy work.
7.3 The Museum of Ilhavo: struggle over meaning and representation

The museum and the nation-state are products of modernity (Benton 2010 p169). The ‘museum idea’ as we know it today, did not eventuate till the end of the eighteenth century in Europe. Without giving a detailed account of its history, it is nevertheless useful to contextualise its emergence to enable a better appreciation of the museum’s social, cultural and political role in the modern nation-state and its participation in the production of national identities. I will begin by examining the development of the Museum of Ilhavo within the Portuguese context with two aims in mind. Firstly, to evaluate the power the institution and its curator have in selecting and naming the content of an “exhibitionary complex” (Bennett 1988), and to explore the questions about who they represent (or claim to) and whose community’ interests the objects and activities in the museum serve. Secondly, and more significantly, I want to determine how the institution’s narratives of bacalhau have contributed to the production of national culture and generated signifiers of local and national identities.

The Museum of Ilhavo was founded in 1937. In its seventy-five years of existence the museum-institution has experienced several stages of development. For the purpose of analysis I have separated them into two distinct époques: the 1930s’ museum, as the Museum Etnográfico de Ilhavo (MEI) (Ilhavo’s Ethnographic Museum), and the 1980s-90s when the institution was re-classified as a maritime museum and consequently re-named as Museu Marítimo de Ilhavo (MMI) (Ilhavo’s Maritime Museum). These changes coincide with significant periods of national ideological, political, social and cultural changes.

7.4 MEI- The Museum of Ilhavo in the 1930s

The 1937 Ilhavo’s Ethnographic Museum (MEI) needs to be contextualised within a turbulent period of Portugal’s history. The first Republic (1910-1926) had failed to deliver the promises heralded by the end of the Portuguese monarchy in 1910 (Cunha
After sixteen years of relentless political instability and social unrest\textsuperscript{173}, the country was eager to find a leader and a government able to reestablish peace and order (Wheeler 1978). Salazar came to power in 1932, and amongst the many tasks of national reconstruction and Empire building, two were at the top of the dictator’s priorities: re-creating a national culture – thus rekindling the sense of national identity – and re-structuring the national economy. Ilhavo and its future museum intersected with Salazar’s strategy (Peralta 2008; Garrido 2010).

From its onset, Salazar’s grand plan found enthusiastic support amidst Ilhavo’s bourgeoisie and business community. Economically, the \textit{Campanha do Bacalhau} was at the centre of policy-making, with Ilhavo and Aveiro’s shipyard magnates persuasively lobbying Lisbon to attain the contracts for the construction of a robust fishing fleet. This would create jobs and the opportunity to revitalise the local and national economy. Ilhavo’s push towards economic expansion was accompanied by the efforts of Ilhavo’s pro-active intellectual elite who were enthusiastically committed to the ideological changes implemented by the regime and willing to contribute to the project of national ideological revitalisation. The launching of a local ethnographic museum found eager support.

The 1930s was a period in which the disciplines of Anthropology and Ethnography were in full expansion (Bennett 1995). This was also a time of exacerbated nationalisms, and in Portugal Salazar’s fascist regime, with the assistance of a conservative bourgeoisie, was actively implementing policies and programs that promoted regionalism (Peralta 2003). The aim was to re-define and regenerate national culture and signifiers of national identity underpinned by ideologies based on a worldview that predominantly endorsed the return to the land—\textit{ruralidade}\textsuperscript{174}—(Rosas 2001) and convincingly condemned modernisation. In this context the ethnographic

\footnote{During these sixteen years there were eight elected parliaments, eight elected presidents and forty five elected governments (Wheeler, 1978 p865).}

\footnote{Rosas argues that ‘\textit{ruralidade}’ (attachment to the land), constituted one of the main ideological pillars of the \textit{Estado Novo} (Rosas, 2001). In 1936 in a speech delivered by Salazar, the dictator names the pillars of the \textit{Estado Novo}’s ideology: God, Nation and its heroes, Family, Authority and Work (Mayor Ferrão, N.S.M. 2010).}
museum\textsuperscript{175} was recognised as the ideological tool required, by both the local bourgeoisie and the Estado Novo, to generate homogenising cultural markers and the necessary national unity conducive to economic and national reconstruction (Peralta 2008).

From its inception, the MEI became a powerful tool utilised by the State and the local middle-class for nation-building. Local elites, with direct access to positions of decision-making, assumed the role of guardians of high-culture. Autocratically they gave themselves the power to name and select values and meanings they considered ‘worthy’ of being integrated in national culture (Safran 2010 p17). By exhibiting signifiers of local stories, practices, landscapes and habits, the museum would become a reliable representation of a unified and static local way of life; a system of cultural signification whereby the \textit{local} is “…subsumed beneath what Gellner calls the ‘political roof of the nation-state’” (Hall 1992 p106). The ultimate aim was to produce stable signifiers of national culture that would be indispensable to the generation of “…a sense of identity and allegiance” (Schwartz in Hall 1992 p292) required for nation-building.

The strategies utilised by Ilhavo’s elite equates with what Anthony Smith has referred to as “vernacular mobilization” (Smith 1990 p183). Ready to join Salazar’s nation-building campaign, the local middle-class launched a plan of re-discovery and recovery of regional artefacts of popular culture to give the local community a museum to which they could feel they belonged. By displaying familiar objects that had been voluntarily donated by the locals\textsuperscript{176} and contextualising them into a broader narrative of \textit{local} ways of life and \textit{local} practices, the elites sought to attain popular validation of their nationalistic aspirations. That is, Ilhavo’s “populist” (Smith 1990 p183) intelligentsia, by rekindling, Ilhavo’s history and vernacular culture, produced a discourse of the \textit{local}. By discursively articulating \textit{local} culture with national values, the elites mobilised Ilhavo’s community to imagine themselves as members of a space that transcended the local – the nation. Their objective was to make the MEI an active participant in the

\textsuperscript{175} For a detailed study on the function of the ethnographic museum see Hall (1997).

\textsuperscript{176} Some of these objects also included paintings donated to the museum by local artists (Peralta, 2008).
process of nation-building because it was a place symbolically invested with meanings and values that discursively integrated the local and the national.

Resembling the ‘cabinet of curiosities’ of previous centuries, the 1937 MEI was a reliable illustration of the role played by the museum-institution at the time. The objects on display constituted an ad hoc exhibit with no coherent classification, systematisation or articulation amongst them, other than to represent local particularities (Peralta, 2008). The MEI exhibit created a strong sense of belonging and local identity because it claimed to be a manifestation of the cultural activities and economic practices carried out by the peoples of Ilhavo (Peralta, 2008).

The exhibit portrayed as much the “maritime psychological inclination of the area” (Peralta, 2008 p189), as it represented the practices carried out in the Aveiro Lagoon, or the economically significant porcelain industry of Vista Alegre. All these cultural, social and economic activities were equally and equitably represented in the museum as relevant contributors to the local economy and Ilhavo’s way of life. In the MEI, the local material culture was valued because it represented local identities and underpinned national culture.

Ilhavo became a stronghold for the Estado Novo’s commitment to nation-building. Ilhavo’s elites, its capitães, and the powerful shipyard and fishing industries, collectively held the key to the regeneration of a much needed economic recovery. Conversely, by enacting hegemonic processes of representation, the MEI contributed to the production of a robust local ethos which discursively endorsed Ilhavo’s links with the sea and the fishing industry.

In this context the local heroes who participated in the Campanha do Bacalhau – the dórimen – were given a significant role in the Estado Novo’s symbolic and political propaganda strategy. Despite fishermen coming from all over the country, Ilhavo, its capitães and its dórimen, made claims to the role as no one else did. They gave

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177 The ‘cabinet of curiosities’ is considered the precursor of the museum. It connoted simultaneously a hobby and a place where aristocrats collected items of value (Bennett, 1995, 1996).

178 It is relevant to recall that the dórimen were also called heróis do mar (heroes of the sea) by the Estado Novo.
themselves the right to a ‘hierarchy of values’ and to claims of ‘specific’ and ‘natural’ qualities that seemingly nobody else had. The offshoot of this process was a politically motivated work of cultural signification and the production of a symbolic narrative that centred Ilhavo and bacalhau-fishing at the heart of the Portuguese nation.

The MEI had to wait another fifty years to be named a maritime museum and the repository of memories of a disappeared practice. When it did so, the museum reasserted its significant role in the production of signifiers of national culture.

7.5 MMI- The Museum of Ilhavo in the 1980-90s

Half a century after its establishment, the museum of Ilhavo experienced a paradigmatic shift. Bacalhau-fishing, an economic practice that had been integral to the local economy and to the identities of the people of Ilhavo, came to a halt in 1974 after the end of the fascist dictatorship that had sponsored Faina Maior. The dismantling of the industry precipitated an economic, as well as an identity, crisis for the town and its people. Ilhavo was forced to re-invent itself and the museum came to its rescue.

Not much changed in the MEI until the late 1980s, yet this decade proved to be of enormous local significance. Following the post-1974 establishment of democracy, another major national event took place in 1986: Portugal was endorsed with full membership to the European Economic Community (EEC). These local and national events coincided with the noticeable activism of two new participants in the museum’s circuit – Ana Maria Lopes and capitão Francisco Marques. Lopes was a school teacher in Ilhavo, and Marques a retired bacalhau-fishing ship’s capitão. By the late 1980s when the Faina Maior became part of a recent past, Lopes and Marques became active lobbyists committed to preventing the erasure of the practice from the local and national memory.
Lopes’ total commitment to the cause finally paid-off when in 1990 she was elected the museum’s director\textsuperscript{179}; she made the focus of her directorship a “more enhanced representation of bacalhau-fishing in the museum’s exhibit” (Peralta 2003 p215). The museum, thus far classified as ‘ethnographic’, was re-classified (maritime) and re-named – Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo (MMI). The museum became a place of memory and of homage to an extinct practice and its practitioners, and \textit{Faina Maior} was now the main exhibit.

Under Lopes’ active and aggressive curatorial leadership, the building was soon in need of expansion. In 2001, and now under Marques’\textsuperscript{180} directorship, the MMI found itself transferred to a new building “… a modern temple of public art” \textsuperscript{181} (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012) (my translation). In 2012, eleven years on, MMI was commemorating its seventy-fifth anniversary with new projects taking place. The most recent undertaking has been the construction of an aquarium for bacalhaus, which despite being programmed to be inaugurated in December 2012 “as the corollary to the seventy-fifth commemorations” (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012) (my translation) was not in fact launched until the 13\textsuperscript{th} of January 2013\textsuperscript{182}.

In 1998, under Lopes’ direction and at the height of the museum’s major re-structuring process, the movie \textit{À Glória desta Faina} (Glorifying this Trade) was released. A project funded by Ilhavo’s City Council, the local media and the powerful bacalhau processing industry (itself going through a process of re-invention), the movie was an epic narration of the \textit{Faina Maior}. Ex-capitão Francisco Marques’ speech which prefaced the screening speaks for itself:

\begin{quote}
Ex-capitão Francisco Marques’ speech which prefaced the screening speaks for itself:
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{179} The MMI’s documents that I examined did not refer to a museum curator (conservador). Instead, documents always referred to the ‘director’. This lead me to conclude that in this institution the same individual assumes a dual role. The museum’s current statute, available on-line, names Alvaro Garrido as director and the position of curator (conservador) is expressed as n/e (non-existent), confirming my initial suggestion that the present director (Garrido) and the previous Directors (Lopes and Marques) assumed the dual role. For this reason I refer to the position interchangeably, despite acknowledging that the functions of the curator and director are not the same.

\textsuperscript{180} Lopes’ director/curatorship (1990-1999) was followed by capitão Marques’ term (1999-2002). Álvaro Garrido, the current director, took the chair in 2002.

\textsuperscript{181} According to the MMI’s website the 2002 building has received a series of architect and design awards.

\textsuperscript{182} The initial inauguration of the aquarium was organised for the 16\textsuperscript{th} December 2012. A few days prior to the date, juvenile bacalhaus were flown in to Ilhavo from Norway. Packed in boxes under regulated temperature, to everyone’s surprise when the boxes were opened in Ilhavo the fish were all frozen. A technical mistake kept the temperature too low and all the fish died in transit.
Our intent is to perpetuate, to pass on to the younger generations the vivid memories ... to pass on the knowledge to the younger ones so that nothing gets lost. Bacalhau fishing hasn’t taken place since 1974, the fishing boats have become obsolete ... we need to draw public attention to the museum so that these memories are not lost for good. We need to know who we were, to find out who we are and who we will become.... The museum will preserve our past (Francisco Marques in Peralta, 2008 p214) (my translation).

Marques’ words significantly illustrate the role of the museum’s curatorial work as a site for the cultural production of meaning and the repository of memories too valuable to be “lost for good”; it unmistakably frames the museum’s role as a producer and reproducer of knowledge that needs to be “passed on to the younger ones”. Further, it recognises the museum as the tool that enables “us” to “know who we were…are…and will become”, thus connecting the collective past, present and future in a linear, progressive and historical sequential logic. That is, sixty years after its opening the MMI is given the role of making sense of the nation’s placement in the world.

By the end of the twentieth century Ilhavo and its museum became, once again, a significant component of the economic, social and cultural nexus. If in the 1930s, Ilhavo had claimed a major role in the economic recovery via the Campanha do Bacalhau, in the 1980-90s Ilhavo was reclaiming for itself a ‘unique’ and ‘authentic’ cultural destination for tourists. The development of this industry was pivotal, as much for Ilhavo’s as for the nation’s economic development. As addressed later in this chapter, after its integration in the EU, Portugal began to vie for an important stake in Europe’s tourist market, dominated by discourses that favour ‘uniqueness’, ‘originality’ and ‘authenticity’ as a marketing tool for tourist niche audiences.

For the moment, however I will continue with the analysis of the MMI’s exhibit to further examine its role in the making of national culture. Based on the concept of the poetics and politics of exhibiting (Hall 1997), the next section (poetics of exhibiting) produces a semiotic analysis of the exhibit which enables us to analyse the meanings given to signs/objects in the exhibit. In turn, the politics of exhibiting examines the museum and its exhibits as a producer of social knowledge and power relations.
7.6 The poetics of exhibiting

As a visitor to the MMI, I was struck by the dimensions and the architectural style of the building. The monumentality of the multi-awarded structure constitutes a landmark. Its size and shape seems to be out of context in this small\textsuperscript{183} (Instituto Nacional de Estatisticas INE 2013), unremarkable coastal town. The main entrance faces a large square where a monument to the Family of the Sea (see Chapter 3) takes centre stage. The statue is a representation of the dórman ‘at sea’ pulling a bacalhau out of the water and being looked over by the figure of a women holding a child\textsuperscript{184}. This is the family unity that the Estado Novo proclaimed as one of the pillars of Pâtria\textsuperscript{185}.

![Figure 9- Family of the sea (source: authors’ document).](image)

The museum’s foyer directs the visitor to the main permanent exhibition – the Sala da Faina Maior (Faina Maior’s exhibit). Despite the MMI’s additional permanent exhibits dedicated to other local economic activities taking place in the nearby Aveiro Lagoon (Ria de Aveiro), the Sala da Faina Maior is the exhibit to which visitors are directed the moment they enter the building. The space is carefully described in the museum’s website as a “large triptych” embedded in a dim atmosphere where the play of lights intentionally produces the sense of “gloom, mysticism and danger” (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012) that allegedly accompanied the practice of bacalhau-fishing. The

\textsuperscript{183} In 2011 Ilhavo had a total population of 35,598 people (www.ine.pt).
\textsuperscript{184} The female figure is also holding a letter. This statue could possibly be interpreted as an attempt to represent the two spheres: the man ‘at work’ and the woman ‘at home’ reading the letter that her husband could have sent to her in the rare occasions that fishermen visited land whilst at sea.
\textsuperscript{185} Refer to Footnote 176 for details on Salazar’s speech.
continuous screening of black and white films, representing the dórimen’s life on board ship, adds audio impact to the visitors’ experience\(^{186}\), heightening the sensory impact and capturing the visitors’ attention (Museu Marítimo Ilhavo 2011; Confraria Gastronómica do Bacalhau 2013).

The centrepiece of the triptych exhibit sits in the middle of the room. It is a full-size replica of the upper deck of a twentieth century bacalhau-fishing ship, built by naval craftsmen in 2001. The ‘ship’ is named *Faina Maior*. The attention to detail attempts to re-create an ‘accurate’ representation of the boat and the practice by displaying ‘original’ fishing instruments which the visitor is allowed to touch and handle. Displaced from the environment where their initial utilisation was meant to take place, exhibited objects enact the current stage of their:

\(\ldots\textit{cultural biography}\ldots\) (having) become appropriated by particular historical agendas, by particular ideologies of preservation, by specific versions of public history, and by particular values about exhibition, design and display (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992 p36).

Figure 10- Faina Maior. MMI (source: author’s document).

\(^{186}\) The 1967 movie *The Lonely Dorymen: Portugal’s Men of the Sea*, produced by George Sluzer for the National Geographic, is dedicated to the dórimen. Some of these movies can be accessed in The Confraria do Bacalhau website. [http://www.confrariabacalhuaIlhavo.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=38](http://www.confrariabacalhuaIlhavo.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=38) There are two other movies portraying the dórimen. One is the 1937 *Wolves of the Sea* by Victor Fleming with Spencer Tracy as the main male character. The other is the 1949 movie *Heróis do Mar* by the Portuguese director Fernando Garcia (Moutinho, 1988, Abel & Consiglieri, 1998).
In the exhibit of *Sala da Faina Maior* the objects are meant to give the exhibition credibility because, purportedly, they are a representation of their ‘original’ use, thus making the display seemingly “transhistorical, innocent and factual”, (Hall 1997 p182).

Most of these artefacts had been appropriated by the museum via a campaign launched by Lopes during her directorship (Peralta 2008 p218). Individuals and institutions were requested and encouraged to donate objects that had been part of everyday life on board ship so that they could become part of the museum estate. Lopes’ final aim was to collect a substantial number of objects that would become part of a permanent exhibition and a representation of *Faina Maior*’s “golden age”\(^\text{187}\) (Peralta 2008 p216). Eventually the museum would become a memoire of *Faina Maior*, acting as a witness of a practice that no longer existed.

On the upper-deck of the ‘ship’, *dóris* are stacked, as they once would have been in any of the fishing boats. Piled up on a single stack to maximise space, the *dóris* are the showpiece representing the myth of the *dórimen*. Through narratives, memories and the use of the curator’s preferential selection of exhibit content, including signifiers which had been utilised fifty years earlier by the Estado Novo, the exhibit illustrates a conscious determination to make the current display ‘truthful’. The MMI’s iconic exhibition – *Faina Maior* – is centred on the Portuguese long-standing association with the *sea*, which along with the *dóriman* – the brave hero of the *sea* – embody and perpetuate the narration of the nation (Bhabha 1990).

The emblematic figure of the *dóriman*, which had been captured in a series of photographs, is on display and constitutes the second component of the exhibit triptych. The visual representation of the *dóriman* in his *dóri* had already been the focus of previous exhibitions in the old museum. In 1991, under Lopes’ directorship and in a series of fund raising initiatives, a collection of black & white postcards and stamps was released with enormous success. They were based on photos depicting the *dóriman*,\(^\text{187}\) Note Lopes’ use of the wording “golden age” by which she creates symbolic associations between the practice and the ‘golden age’ of the nation, represented by the Seafaring Voyages of Discovery.
which had been taken by Alan Villiers\textsuperscript{188} when travelling to Newfoundland aboard the fishing boat \textit{Argus}. The visual impact of these photos never ceases to impress their viewers.

![Image of Dóriman in Newfoundland](source: Museu Marítimo de Ilhavo’s archive).

The image of the calm \textit{dóriman} standing on his boat in a tranquil glass-like sea, masks the risks and hazards that these men were expected to undertake. There is a morbid beauty in these images that catch the eye and the imagination of the viewer, who for a moment is transfixed by the stillness of the image. This portrayed tranquillity is in stark contrast to the daily risks these men confronted, risks that were rarely prevented and only referred to in order to highlight the \textit{dóriman}’s bravery as a national hero. The photos represented a practice taking place in a hazardous space which embodied the struggle between nature and men: the solitary fisherman standing on his one-man boat, surrounded by a sea of tranquillity and apparent silence that could any moment be broken by the imminent risks lurking in unforeseeable weather that could turn nasty at any moment.

Finally, the last component of the triptych is constituted by the reconstruction of the ship’s under-deck sections. Laid beside the longest wall of the \textit{Sala da Faina Maior}, one finds cross-cut reconstructions of the main spaces where men spent their time on

\textsuperscript{188} Allan Villiers was an Australian maritime-writer and photographer who at the invitation of the Portuguese ambassador in Canada was given the opportunity to travel to Newfoundland in order to document the trip. The book \textit{A Campanha do Argus} released in 1951 by Villiers provided the storyline for the movie \textit{The Lonely Dóriman} (Adamopoulos, 2008).
board, including the kitchen with its equipment, utensils and the long refectory table where fishermen ate their meals\(^{189}\) (Cole 1990 p11). Adjacent to the kitchen is the fishermen’s sleeping quarters, followed by the capitão’s bedroom and the officers’ dining room, the two latter rooms located at the stern of the ship\(^{190}\). Finally comes the sala da salga (the salting room), the compartment in the ship’s hull where the fish was salted, stacked up and stored throughout the trip. The detail in the replica *Faina Maior* is intended to give the exhibition credibility and legitimisation that validates the museum curator’s work.

![Dórimen’s bunk bed in the kitchen](source: author’s document).  
![Capitão’s bedroom](source: author’s document).

The function of the museum’s curator is pivotal in constructing a coherent storyline based on the meaning inscribed in the exhibited artefacts (Hall 1997). In this case, the curator has re-created an overarching narrative which uses some of the same elements that constitute the well-worn signifiers of local and national identity. The seamless flow between these two elements – narrative and signifiers – effectively maximises the exhibit’s narrative and subtly reminds the visitors of their school syllabus in national history and culture. The sea seems to have become a metaphorical and ‘natural’ extension of the national territory (Pina 2003), the stage upon which the dórimen performed the same historical role once played by their forebears. By embodying the narratives of national culture, the curatorial work of the MMI naturalises the symbolic association of Portugal with the sea and situates the small town of Ilhavo at the centre

\(^{189}\) It was explained by one of the museum’s librarians that the fishermen quarters were located in the kitchen to keep them warm.  
\(^{190}\) In nautical architecture, the stern of the ship has a higher hierarchy of location.
of the nation’s ethos, demonstrating how the local can produce and reproduce the nation.

As Barthes (1993) asserts, ‘naturalisation’ makes what is a motivated cultural construction into something that seems to be highly natural, innocent and apolitical. By ‘naturalising’ its ethos – the life-long association of Ilhavo with the sea and bacalhau-fishing practices – the MMI makes it unquestionably and indisputably matter-of-fact. Yet, as I have argued in previous chapters, the practice of fishing-bacalhau in non-territorial and hazardous waters by Portuguese fishing boats is more the result of economic and social conditions than a ‘natural’ fact. That is, despite the ‘naturalness’ and taken-for-grantedness with which the exhibit conveys the practice, a critical analysis that questions it begins to appreciate a deliberately constructed cultural meaning.

This is what makes the museum’s curator a cultural producer (Hall 1997). He/she has been given the legitimate authority – “(the) symbolic power” (Hall 1997 p183) – to construct a narrative – “(a) poetics of exhibiting” (Benton 2010 p184) – that gives a preferential reading of the exhibited objects. By endorsing Ilhavo’s ‘natural’ association with the sea (a territorial extension of the nation), with bacalhau (the bread of the seas) and with the dóriman (the hero of the seas), the curator is embedding stories of bacalhau within broader maps of meaning that narrate the nation, and generate a web of meanings (du Gay’s “semantic networks”) that by association collate a range of new ones (meanings). Moreover, through these symbolic associations the curator is generating a “second level of signification” (Hall 1997 p39), that Barthes (1993) called myth. As Brooker asserts, myth “…designates a level of symbolic or cultural connotation, active in a visual image or social narrative” (Brooker 1999 p146).

As Smith (1991) argues, one of the fundamental aspects that sustains the conceptualisation of nation is the idea of stability, permanency and strong continuity between the past, the present and the future. By reproducing the signifiers of nation, the exhibit is a narrative of continuity which actively promotes the values underpinning Portuguese national culture. Significantly in this case, the MMI uses the particularities of Ilhavo, the local experiences, memories and narratives, to bolster the values that go
as much into the construction of the local as of the national culture and identities. This is how the local story of bacalhau contributes to the making of a signifier of national dimension.

Moreover, the exhibit also conveys a stable narrative that does not overtly address asymmetries of power. The display conceals power struggles, the authoritarian regimes that through fear, low education levels and lack of life-options, kept men, women and children voiceless. Instead, the exhibition stages order, a pre-determined place for everyone and everything, offering a preferential world-view of the past within the context of the present (Hall, 1997). The upper-deck is the central stage for the dórís, the buckets, the ropes and all other objects of daily usage by the ship’s crew. The lower deck displays side-by-side the hierarchies of class (fishermen and officers) as if they peacefully and ‘naturally’ co-existed within the space of the ship. Yet, underneath a façade of ordered harmony, the exhibit cannot disguise the gulf between the two sections of the ship: on the one hand the fishermen’s basic amenities near the kitchen, only providing a basic level of indispensable comfort, whilst at the rear of the ship, the capitão’s bedroom and the officers’ dining area offered the greater comfort that only they were entitled to have. Within the MMI’s fishing-ship, spaces were demarcated, in a pre-determined and unquestionable way that conveyed predictability and an idealised struggle-free ‘natural order’.

The power asymmetries that can be detected in this “exhibitionary complex” (Bennett 1988) are scarcely given a voice and are not addressed by the exhibit. They can be detected but not spoken about. Yet, a critical examination can begin to provide some pointers to the hidden and voiceless power struggles that a Foucaudian framework highlights. Thus, if recognizing the museum as a system of representation enables a semiotic reading of the “poetics of exhibiting” (Hall 1997 p168), the use of the Foucaudian framework of power/knowledge identifies the museum as a site of “institutional power” where the exhibit articulates discourses that enact the “politics of exhibiting” (Hall 1997 p184).
7.7 The politics of exhibiting

Stuart Hall referred to the Politics of Exhibiting as “…the role of exhibitions/museums in the production of social knowledge” (Hall 1997 p184). Knowledge is not value free, but “strategic” and inseparable from relations of power (Foucault in Hall 1997 p185). The meanings generated by the exhibition (as a “signifying structure”) (Hall 1997 p43) do not exist in a social and cultural vacuum. Rather, the meanings of the exhibit are contextual, contingent and constituted by discourses produced by “particular relations of power” (Hall 1997 p185), thus making the objects in a museum collection an “historical, social and a political event” (Hall 1997 p185). As such, the exhibit needs to be studied within a broader historical context where meaning is constructed to convey certain types of power-knowledge combinations. For example, the objects exhibited in both the 1930s MEI and the 2000s MMI, served different purposes. Collected and displayed in politically and historically diverse contexts, they articulated different relationships of power-knowledge: the MEI’s exhibit signified a local, essentialised and unified identity required for nation-building. In turn, the MMI exhibited a practice that no longer existed but that narrated, re-invested and re-produced the signifiers that would keep the nation alive in a globalised world. Lopes expressed this in a public interview:

“...the museum should be a reflection of a culture and an identity predominately maritime, giving the museum the solemn mission to preserve the vestiges of a practice that, due to political decisions, is condemned to disappearing” (Peralta 2008 p216) (my translation).

As the director/curator of the MMI, Lopes utilised her institutional power to shift the museum’s focus towards a maritime theme, giving herself the symbolic power to name and select the museum’s maps of meaning. The moment Lopes selected the preservation of any “vestiges” of the Faina Maior as the “museum’s solemn mission”, she extended her institutional power into the representational and symbolic realms. As Appadurai (1992) and Karp (1992) remind us, museums act as a repository, or a “memory box”, for artefacts that are no longer used and which are associated with practices that no longer exist. Similarly, as Collardelle asserts “(t)he consciousness of heritage … is

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191 This is a reference to the 1994 Moratorium that banned Portugal from fishing in the Canadian territorial waters.
192 In 2012 the MMI organised an exhibition based on oral history, which was named Caixa da Memória (memory box).
generated by a trauma of rupture; it is a reaction against disappearance (Peralta 2008 Collardelle in Peralta p102).

The museum’s significant role in civil society has, in recent years, given rise to strong critiques and challenges to its assumed authority. Recent theoretical mappings in museology have started questioning the extraordinary powers that museums and their curators have been ascribed, calling for institutional changes that would make the museum a site of cultural inclusiveness where power is not unidirectional (up-down) but rather circulatory and enabling. A major contribution to this new approach in museology results from voices demanding an increased participatory role for communities in the ‘making’ and managing of the institutions claiming to represent them (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988; Karp 1992). The once autocratic museum, alienated from its grassroots, is now expected to become more representative, democratic and dialogical with its local communities’ needs and aspirations. These are complex topics that are beyond the analysis of this study but which should be acknowledged.

Applied to the MMI, these new readings of museology require the institution’s greater level of engagement and dialogue with the people of Ilhavo, in particular with the communities that feel they have been alienated from the MMI’s curatorial directions (Peralta, 2008). These are issues that are particularly pertinent in regards to the MMI’s pedagogic functions, because it is in this domain that struggles over the production of meaning and the power-knowledge nexus determine the way the museum articulates with its communities. In the following section I will examine the Museum of Ilhavo as an institution that has taken great care in structuring its pedagogical role.

7.8 The museum and education
From the outset, the museum’s pedagogical function has been considered central to the institution (Karp 1992; Bennett, Trotter et al. 1996; Witcomb 2003). From adult education to the formation of children – the “citizens in the making” (Bennett, 1996), the museum, a site where cultural meaning is produced and institutional power is
practiced, has always had a pivotal role in articulating preferential ways of seeing the world.

From the moment Lopes took up office in 1990, she announced the two major objectives of her directorship. Firstly, and reflecting her previous teaching background, Lopes asserted her commitment to develop and focus on the pedagogic functions of the museum by promoting exhibitions, tours and research programs. Secondly, she envisaged the museum as an institution liaising with other social, cultural and political bodies. Recognising the museum’s pivotal role in working with and for the community, Lopes asserted in 1991, in an interview for the local newspaper *O Ilhavense*, that “the museum’s dynamics and development will determine and also promote a more energetic vision for the local municipality” (Lopes in Peralta 2008 p216) (my translation). This statement clearly illustrates the museum’s role as a site of articulation with other local institutions, powers and policies. As I examine later in the chapter, the museum’s integrated work with the local Council and Tourist Board was pivotal in the lead-up to the launching of an aggressive program of tourist development by the Ilhavo City Council.

Examining the museum’s website highlights the investment of the institution in its pedagogical role, which deserves some scrutiny. It is not my intention to make an exhaustive analysis of the museum’s education program. Rather, my purpose is to bring to this work the material that contributes to the appreciation of the MMI’s strong commitment to providing its junior audiences with material that contributes to making them ‘informed’ citizens, who will acknowledge and validate the role of the institution and the State (Peralta, 2008). By learning about the ‘epic’ practice of *Faina Maior* children receive civic lessons on Portugueseness and the values that constitute national culture. To facilitate the learning process, different pedagogic techniques are utilised, including for younger audiences the friendly bacalhau-mascot who tells stories about the bravery and heroism of their ancestors.

The Museum has a comprehensive program put into place that addresses four different age groups. The educational programs provide 50 minute visits to each one of the different exhibitions, offering a plethora of hands-on-activities to the young visitors. For
example, on the *Faina Maior* exhibit the program provides for pre-school-age children a series of practical ‘touch and play’ activities ‘on board’ the replica ship, giving the children the opportunity to dress up and handle the equipment once used by the dórimen whilst fishing (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012). For older children in the age group 10-12, the program’s narrative is presented within the context of the Portuguese Seafaring Voyages whereby the “…analogies between the practice of bacalhau-fishing and the Portuguese Seafaring Voyages of Discovery is highlighted” (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012).

In turn, the program for older students (equivalent to Year 9 and 10 of secondary education), explores bacalhau fishing using two different educational methodologies. The first module – *Bacalhau from the Atlantic Ocean: A Human and Natural History* – gives an historical account of the association between Portugal and bacalhau at the same time as it examines bacalhau as a nutritional and environmental resource. The second module explores the practice of bacalhau-fishing from a literary viewpoint. It highlights the analogies in the stories of the dórimen and Hans, the main character in the children’s book by Sophia de Mello Breyner Andersen, *Histórias da Terra e do Mar* (stories from the land and the sea) (Museu Maritimo de Ilhavo 2012). This module raises some points worth exploring.

The MMI’s pedagogic program, which I have been following over the last two years, has undergone frequent updates on its literary course content. For example, earlier in 2012, the program’s syllabus was based on the analysis of the epic work *Os Lusíadas* by Luis de Camões, the most renowned sixteenth-century Portuguese writer, turned national hero (by the Republicans) in the later stages of the nineteenth century (Vakil 1996). As the MMI’s website at the time stated, the study of *Os Lusíadas* aimed at drawing parallels between some of the passages of Camões’ epic narrative and the symbolically charged yearly event – *The Benção dos Bacalhoeiros*. The recent shift to the work of a popular contemporary youth writer is arguably a strategy to increase

193 Sophia de Mello Breyner Andersen (1919-2004) is recognised as one of the major contemporary Portuguese writers. She was the first female writer to be awarded with the literary prize *Camões* in 1999. The sea is a recurrent theme in Andersen’s writing.

194 For more details on this event see Chapter 3.
younger audiences’ engagement with a subject-matter that they might otherwise feel alienated from. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that the pedagogic central theme is still maintained – the sea and its epic place in the Portuguese imaginary.

Finally, for the older age group (equivalent to Year 11 and 12), the program is directed to environmental issues related to over-fishing and the management of maritime natural resources.

This succinct analysis of the MMI’s education program draws our attention to several issues. Firstly, it highlights the civic role that Ilhavo’s City Council takes upon itself as a pro-active participant in the education of the municipality’s young “citizens-in-the-making” (Bennett, Trotter et al. 1996). This is a form of governmentality (Foucault) by which institutions (City Council and museum) use technologies of power as forms of discipline which promote the development of individuals’ self-regulation, an essential requirement for the making of a responsible citizen195 (Bennett 1988).

This points us to the second important function of the museum as an institution with pedagogical powers. After contributing to the formation of future responsible and disciplined citizens, the museum needs to ensure that they are able to reproduce the knowledge and values of national culture and world citizenship as demonstrated by the museum’s concern over the environmental management of maritime resources.

The Museum’s education program produces a seamless narrative of the nation’s past, present and future. As this case study illustrates, the narrative of national culture as a discursive formation (Foucault’s episteme), has consistently been maintained with Romantic narratives of nation dating from the nineteenth century still circulating. The focus is still on the historicity of the nation and its ‘natural’ association with the sea, the bravery of the fishermen (the role of women is missing or subaltern), and the myth of the nation’s epic ‘golden age’ of Seafaring Voyages of Discoveries. That is, the

195 In the nineteenth century, at the height of the industrialisation process and the social and cultural shifts that accompanied it, the museum was given the pedagogical mandate of educating citizens, especially men. The objective was to produce good citizens (in this case men), good workmen, husbands and fathers by providing them with alternative spaces for education in their leisure time. This was the preferred solution to the increasing social problems caused by the habit of working-men spending most of their idle time in hotels and pubs (Bennett, 1988).
narratives of nation and national culture are still firmly grounded on the continuity between the epic and heroic 1500s and the stories that the nation in 2012 still recounts in order to create a place for itself in the world. The unchanging characteristics of what constitutes the signifiers of national culture, demonstrate how the nation is discursively brought into view. It further illustrates how institutional/hegemonic power generates subject-positions and regulates ways of talking about Portugueseness, with which individuals become identified and emotionally invested.

The essential elements that narrate the nation remain, despite Portugal’s twenty-first century aspirations to Europeanness. In fact, under conditions of globalisation and Europeanisation, the emphasis given to the specificities of the local has gained momentum. As I have stated the museum as an institution and a system of representation does not stand in isolation. The museum is integrated within a network of other institutions and powers. In the next section I will analyse the MMI’s association with the powerful industry of the twenty-first century – tourism.

### 7.9 The museum and the economic factor: tourism

The once profitable and dynamic bacalhau industry that brought prosperity to Ilhavo started unwinding post-1974, and came to a total standstill by the late 1980s. With the total abandonment of the Faina Maior since 1974, only a vestigial small-scale bacalhau-fishing industry survived; the dórí and the dóriman were replaced by the use of trawlers equipped with systems of refrigeration. When the practice ceased to exist, and dóriman were no longer required, Ilhavo’s community leaders felt the need not only to perpetuate the memory of Faina Maior, but also to find viable economic alternatives for a town in economic and social strife.

Eager to find strategies to ‘re-invent’ Ilhavo, the local authorities acted swiftly (Peralta 2003). Based on research conducted by the University of Aveiro, innovative programs of economic recovery were implemented and cultural tourism was promoted as the

196 See Chapter 3.
panacea for the towns’ demise. Tourism would replace fishing as the local economically sustainable activity, whilst Ilhavo’s already existent cultural icons – the sea and bacalhau – would be flagged as the signifiers underpinning it. Using – Mar por Tradição (Sea as Tradition) – Ilhavo was branded with signifiers that would entitle it to claims of ‘uniqueness’, ‘originality’ and ‘authenticity’ that no other city could assert. The tradition of bacalhau-fishing would validate such claims and be descriptive of a unique way of life that tourist niche markets were eager to explore and exploit.

As I have previously argued, Ilhavo’s maritime affiliations have been described as an historical outcome of a ‘natural’ link of its people with the sea, yet these associations have been profoundly sponsored by economic and political policies. There is continuity between Rocha Madail’s 1922 coat of arms (as analysed in this Chapter), the 1930s Campanha do Bacalhau and its dórimen, and the more recent lobbying for a maritime museum and the development of cultural tourism, in which one can appreciate the integrated work of cultural signification and power relations.

This rhetorical continuity is underpinned by the articulation between cultural and economic practices. Bacalhau-eating, which had been the sixteenth century’s response to cultural and religious dietary requirements, later became a way of life and a symbolically charged economic practice of nation-building. By the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, when the viability of the fishing industry came to a halt, bacalhau became par excellence a cultural representation, a signifier of national culture embodied in the MMI. Presently, the memory of the practice of bacalhau-fishing has regained economic strength but this time through its embodiment in the powerful industries of the twenty first century – cultural tourism and heritage industries. This cyclic pattern of cultural and economic practices equate to Hall and du Gay’s Circuit of Culture (du Gay, Hall et al. 1997) in which processes of identification, representation, consumption, regulation and production are articulated together.

In its persistent pursuit of progress and economic development, Ilhavo keeps claiming to be able to offer more to its visitors. Expanding on discourses that endorse its ‘unique’ links to bacalhau, the town presently promotes the ‘originality’ of two other of its cultural manifestations – the Confraria do Bacalhau and the Festival do Bacalhau. Both
are ‘newly invented’ cultural representations, which the town asserts constitute its gastronomic heritage.

7.10 Confraria and Festival do Bacalhau – Ilhavo’s gastronomic heritage

A comprehensive analysis of the Confraria Gastronómica do Bacalhau (Gastronomic Brotherhood of Bacalhau) and the Festival do Bacalhau (Festival of bacalhau) is beyond the limitations imposed by this study. Nevertheless, a brief analysis will illustrate significant aspects related to the practice of eating bacalhau, which has been skilfully marketed in ways that reproduce the practice, ensures its maintenance and adds to the specificities of Ilhavo.

The Confraria do Bacalhau and the Festival do Bacalhau’s popular Tasquinhas do Bacalhau¹⁹⁷ (Bacalhau stalls), are Ilhavo’s culinary representations of its icon. The Festival takes place in August during the summer holidays and is considered a tourist attraction, with the Jornal Notícias on the 14th of August 2012 forecasting 150,000 visitors to Ilhavo¹⁹⁸ over the following four days (Jornal de Noticias de Aveiro 2012).

The Confraria Gastronómica do Bacalhau is a small community organisation with its own statutes and code of conduct (Confraria Gastronómica do Bacalhau 2012). According to its website, the Confraria was launched “in January 1999 in Ilhavo – the Capital of Bacalhau” (my translation) (Confraria Gastronomica do Bacalhau 2013), a time of heightened activity in Ilhavo and the MMI. The Confraria’s mission-statement is the gastronomic promotion of bacalhau and the endorsement of the Faina Maior to ensure that “such a rich gastronomic tradition persists (não morre - does not die) … because the ‘fiel amigo’ (faithful friend) has always been the food for everyone, rich and poor” (Confraria Gastronomica do Bacalhau 2013) (my translation). The Confraria’s online site provides valuable information. It informs virtual readers that its thirty members include the City Council’s president, retired capitães, engineers, teachers and other community leaders. The Confraria’s membership mirrors that of the

¹⁹⁷ Tasquinhas is a temporary food stall installed for the duration of the Festival.
¹⁹⁸ This is four-fold Ilhavo’s population – 35,598 people (see Footnote 183).
1930s MEI, which also included the town’s cultural and professional elite, suggesting continuity in patterns of community organisation where cultural elites always occupied positions of leadership.

Both the Tasquinhas do Bacalhau and the Festival do Bacalhau are credited to the Confraria do Bacalhau. The former has been organised by the Confraria since its inception in 1999; the latter has been taking place since 2008. Currently the Tasquinhas have become one of the main attraction of the Festival do Bacalhau with the Confraria website stating that during the five days of the Festival more than nine tonnes of bacalhau are cooked and consumed by the 120,000 visitors to the Tasquinhas (Confraria Gastronómica do Bacalhau 2012).

On my visit to the Festival of Bacalhau in 2010, I ate a meal at the Tasquinh do Bacalhau, sponsored and run by the Confraria. Tasquinhas could be described as temporary food stalls. They serve two meals a day –lunches and dinners, throughout the five days of the Festival. I counted about ten to fifteen Tasquinhas, varying in size and in the complexity of the food they served. Some sold only take-away meals, others had space to cater for over 100 seated customers. One factor was common: they all sold exclusively bacalhau dishes from the most popular to the less common that only aficionados would eat. From the loin of bacalhau to tongues, cheeks, tripe, all were included in the menus offered at the Tasquinhas. The aim was, as I was informed by my meal companion (an Ilhavo resident), to make sure that the “tradition of eating bacalhau wouldn’t die”. Curiously, I verified that my host expressed the same preoccupation as the Confraria, that is, the concern and even anxiety over the possible extinction of the habit of eating bacalhau – the habit with which Ilhavo identifies itself.

The success of these public events illustrate the active role that the Confraria do Bacalhau is playing in ‘keeping a tradition alive’ at the same time as is generating new associated events – the Festival do Bacalhau and the Tasquinhas do Bacalhau. The success of these events, might in time become themselves the ‘new traditions’ associated with Ilhavo and bacalhau. Furthermore, they also illustrate the significant role that organisations of the public sphere can have in promoting the “invention of
traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and reproducing signifiers of national identity.

7.11 Conclusion
Museums have long been considered a “… repository of knowledge and objects” (Karp 1992 p31). But, museums are also a fundamental and active component of civil society that have a broader role to play through their articulation with other institutions of the public sphere (Karp 1992). Museums and their curators define hierarchies of value and taste because they grant visibility to some components of material culture whilst denying access to others. This is what makes museums active participants in the production of social and cultural identities.

MMI has played a significant role in the definition of what constitutes being Ilhavense and Portuguese. Its participation in reproducing and naming central cultural meanings and values has given MMI a central role in maintaining the cultural centrality of the sea, which has been played out as one of the dominant signifiers that defines Portugueseness. That is, MMI has been an active enunciator and reproducer of signifiers of local and national culture and identities, illustrating how the local contributes to the making of the national.

Asserting its significant cultural role, and its articulation with other institutions, the MMI has demonstrated great ability to market itself effectively. It has been successful in integrating spectacular and innovative additions to the museum, as is the case with the recently launched bacalhau aquarium to commemorate the museum’s seventy-fifth anniversary. It has also been able to endorse and participate in aggressive initiatives that promote Ilhavo as a tourist destination by asserting itself as the site that narrates the Faina Maior. MMI’s continuous pledge to offer its visitors the ‘unique’, ‘authentic’ experience of the Faina Maior and of the heroic dóriman, is made with the expectation and hope that Ilhavo will remain a tourist destination. They are still played out as the local identifying narratives that need to be constantly remade if they are to remain meaningful to the peoples of Ilhavo and the museum’s visitors.
As Bennett (1995) argues, the visitor to a museum is “confronted with a set of textually organised meaning whose determinations must be sought in the present” (Bennett 1995 p130) as much as in the meanings that the present wants to give to the past (Bennett 1995; Hall 1997). They represent the preferentially generated discursive formations that current hegemonic groups and a discipline called History intend to give to the exhibition, promoting a certain view of the past, projected through the reading of what is relevant in the present and in accordance with the ideological preferences of the hegemonic groups for the present and future.

This is what makes the stories of bacalhau survive, at least for the time being. Yet, like any narrative, they will go through a process of re-making every time they are told: some aspects will be forgotten, some will be understated and some will be retold and embellished. Faina Maior is no longer a practice; instead it has become a museum display and the stories that currently narrate the culinary icon have found a new voice, which in time can become a new tradition – the Tasquinhas do Bacalhau and the Festival do Bacalhau.

The Museum of Ilhavo has demonstrated how the local contributes to the imagining of the national. In the following chapter I will explore further how bacalhau takes part in the dialectic between the local and the non-local.
8 THE LOCAL, THE GLOBAL AND BACALHAU IN THE MIDDLE

8.1 Introduction
In this chapter I will analyse the local-global nexus. My purpose is to position bacalhau as a signifier of national culture within fields where cultural representations of the local take place, an issue that is made even more relevant since bacalhau – the national dish, is not a Portuguese native species.

The analysis of previous chapters has emphasised the relevance given to the local by the respondents interviewed for this study. They frequently referred to the current conceptualisation of Portuguese cuisine through the articulation between the local and the non-local, demonstrating their relevance as sites of cultural representation where struggles over meaning are fought and identities produced. Consequently in this concluding chapter I evaluate the cultural construction of what it means to be local, who names it and for what purpose. In particular I focus on how the local is brought into view through discourses of difference; I explore how the local is produced either as a reaction to the ‘threatening’ global or as a marketing strategy that promotes it within a global environment. Based on two case studies – the experience of diaspora and tourism – I explore the role of bacalhau in the interface between the local and the non-local (global).

8.2 Framing the local
8.2.1 The local-global nexus

...homogenisation went hand in hand with heterogenisation. They made each other possible” (Robertson 1995 p36).

The increasing relevance of the local is related to “… the depth and the scope of consciousness of the world as a single place” (Robertson 1992 p183). Under the current conditions of globalisation, one cannot address the construction of the local without taking the global into account, because as Roland Robertson contends, “[t]he local is integral to the discourse of globalisation” (Robertson, 1992). I begin this discussion by
addressing some of the key issues underpinning the current local-global debate relevant to this study.

Globalisation is a complex process which cuts across national geographic boundaries and cultural frontiers, “integrating and connecting communities and organisations in new space-time combinations” (Hall, 1992 p299). Under the conditions of globalisation our perceptions of the time-space correlation have changed and as a result the world seems to have shrunk. These are defining conditions of modernity referred to as “separation of time and space” by Giddens,(1991), and “time-space compression” by David Harvey (1989). As a consequence, “globalisation compresses time and space so that today people experience phenomenon of great diversity, occurring in widely separated time-space locales” (Giddens in Penna, O'Brien et al. 1999 p13).

Globalisation is not new. As argued in the relevant literature, globalisation might indeed be seen as “…a very old process” (Hall 1992 298; Bell and Valentine 1997 p298), and the views as to when it might have been initiated are many199 (Pieterse 1995). For Giddens the process of globalisation is intrinsically related to Modernity, industrialism, capitalism and the rise of the nation-state – “Modernity is inherently globalising” (Giddens 1990 p93) and “globalisation is the corollary of Modernity” (Giddens, 1990).

In turn, Roland Robertson asserts that globalisation is a process that “refers both to the compression of the world and to the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (Robertson 1992 p8). Furthermore, Robertson contends that debates on contemporary globalisation should integrate questions of culture, and is of the view that “… globalisation does not simply refer to the objectiveness of increasing interconnectedness. It also refers to cultural and subjective matters” (Robertson 1992 p183).

In the context of this study, the cultural aspects of globalisation are of paramount relevance, particularly those related to the articulation between the global and the local and how it (articulation) impacts on the production of cultural identities. As Robertson

199 For further development on this topic see Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1995 p47).
(1995) argues, the two complementary tendencies in globalisation – homogenization and heterogenization – are part of a continuum in that:

*It is not a question of either homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth century world* (Robertson 1995 p27).

The dialectic between homogenization and heterogenization is grounded in the dynamic between the *local* and the global. It endorses the *local*, asserts *difference* and promotes uniqueness, authenticity and particularity in a globalised world (Robertson, 1995 p28).

The results from research carried out for this study are coincident with the views put forward by Robertson: there are numerous examples suggesting the physicality of culinary intersection, intermingling and crossing-over, in both contemporary and historical accounts of food history; there is also evidence of cultural hybridisation and integration of food, peoples and places with subsequent impact on local eating habits, food preferences, and peoples’ acculturation and emotional attachment to particular foods.

In fact, Portuguese foodways are evidence of the effects of cultural and culinary hybridisation. For example, chillies are widely utilised in Portuguese cooking under the name of piri-piri, yet, they were an unknown ingredient until the sixteenth century when the Portuguese transported them from South America and made them available in Portugal and India (Tannahill 1973 p117). Likewise, many of the ingredients (tomatoes, potatoes, turkey, corn, chocolate) that were introduced into Europe via the Columbian Exchange have since become staples worldwide (Tannahill 1973; Armesto 2002). Similarly bacalhau, which despite not being widely available in Europe until the 1500s, has nevertheless become a symbolic food for the Portuguese people and their national culinary practices. These are just some of multiple examples to illustrate that food-exchange, which has been better documented since the sixteenth century, has always been part of human activities.

Food exchange connotes culinary hybridisation. That is, it is indicative of processes whereby ingredients, methods and techniques of cooking are ‘lifted out’ or disembedded from their habitual context to be later re-embedded (Giddens 1990) into
new environments where, through processes of culinary and cultural translation, (Robins 1991 p33; Hall 1992) they are appropriated and re-interpreted by the new users. Moreover, these examples also illustrate that even foods that have become associated with particular nation-states or cuisines have not necessarily always been part of local food resources but are, rather, introduced foodstuffs. Thus, and as I have previously argued, no cultural practice (or cuisine) is pure but rather the result of cultural syncretism. In this context it seems reasonable to argue that foodways, like cultures “…are not pure, authentic and locally bound; rather, they are to be thought of as syncretic and hybridised products of interactions across space” (Barker 2002 p76).

Foodstuffs and culinary practices are neither global nor local but rather the result of articulations between a globalised local and a localised global (Robertson 1992; Pieterse 1995).

8.2.2 The cultural construction of the local

But what is the local and what defines it? What makes us feel part of a local community? Benedict Anderson (1983) reflecting on this question asserts that what makes us feel part of a community is the way we imagine it and ‘make sense’ of it. He refers to a nation as an “imagined community” – a shared symbolic place to which individuals feel they belong in a quasi-religious sense of comradeship and membership.

As a result of the influential work of Foucault (Foucault in Soja 1995 p14), attention has also been drawn to the conceptualisation of place as a site or a location made meaningful through the values and emotional attachment that social agents give to it. Likewise, and as Doreen Massey (1994) asserts, space is not ‘empty’ but rather brought into view and discursively produced by social and cultural relations of power and the meanings given to it by those that inhabit it (Massey 1994). That is, a space becomes a place when encoded with cultural meaning and invested with emotional attachment and personal commitment (Massey 1994; 1997). As Brooker (1999) asserts, “[p]lace is therefore an inevitable cultural condition…which grounds our sense of IDENTITY in sets of symbolic and psychical associations (what – or where – we mean by ‘home’”)
(Brooker 1999 p163) (original emphasis). Similarly, attention has been drawn to the 
*local* through debates of the global-*local* nexus; the *local* has been made to signify, 
particularly when there is emotional investment, with a *local-place* called nation.

In this context, the *local* is determined by our emotional connection to it; what it means 
to us; the memories that we have of it and that we share with those relevant others with 
whom we have experienced them. This is particularly significant in the 
conceptualisation of nation, as the *local* where local national identities are produced 
because of our emotional investment in it. For these reasons the *local* (the national 
*local*) is particularly relevant to this study.

I will now examine two case studies in which I analyse representations of bacalhau in 
relation to the Portuguese diaspora and the tourism industry. I will do so by arguing that 
both construct the *local* through the language of *difference*. By examining their 
representations of bacalhau I will establish how they bring the *local* into view and 
discursively produce signifiers of national/cultural identification: the former (diaspora) 
through the production of *difference* using essentialised signifiers of national culture; 
the latter (tourism industry) by producing and reproducing *difference* by asserting and 
commodifying the *local* while celebrating its uniqueness and authenticity.

### 8.3 Portugueseness, the *local* and diaspora

#### 8.3.1 How Portugueseness has been defined

Thus far I have addressed some of the cultural signifiers by which Portuguese cultural 
identities have been discursively generated. I have argued that the *sea* has taken central 
stage because of its association with the nation’s *Golden Age* – the Sea Voyages of 
Discovery. In this chapter, I will expand further on the topic, to better appreciate the 
way Portugueseness has been discursively produced, in particular under the conditions 
of diaspora.

Portuguese cultural identities have been discursively articulated through two key 
processes. One underpinned by the ‘fixed’ signifiers that have been embedded in the
social and cultural fabric and reproduced through acculturation and socialisation; the other produced through processes of homogenisation and heterogenisation. The outcome is a field of continuing struggle between the ingrained and essentialised signifiers of national culture and a progressive, innovative and syncretic approach that produces new hybrid identities.

As Stuart Hall (1990) has demonstrated, cultural identities develop, or are ‘framed’, by the tension between two axes working simultaneously – the vector of similarity and continuity and the vector of difference and rupture. Cultural identities are to be thought of in terms of the tension and dialogue between these two fields of representation (Hall 1990 p226). The former gives a grounding and is based on the continuity between the past personal and collective experiences; the latter is based on discontinuities – ruptures produced by encounters with difference and by the realisation that processes of identification are evolving and a “matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’” (Hall 1990 p225).

I begin by analysing the way Portugueseness has been discursively produced against hegemonic values based on what Featherstone refers to as the “ethnic core” (Featherstone 1995 p112). Featherstone further elaborates on the emphasis the ideology of nationalism gives to the ‘age’ of a nation because it is made to signify some of its underpinning values – continuity and rootness.

Portugal is portrayed in literature as an ‘old nation’ (Modesto 1982; Pina 2003; Sobral 2003). Yet, like others European nations, the process of nation-building in Portugal started taking place at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Pina 2003). As I have demonstrated in Chapters 1 and 3, the role of the intellectual elite was pivotal, as was the ideological participation of the Portuguese Romantic movement. Nation formation depended as much on a national culture, a common language and ethnicity, and the need to produce citizens with a unified national identity, as it depended on a national territory (Smith 1991; Hall 1992). The role of an integrated system of symbols (culture) and narratives underscores the centrality of a national “ethno-history” (Smith 1990 p180) in nation-building. Two major nineteenth century historians were largely responsible for the production of the ‘body of knowledge’ called História de Portugal (Portuguese
History): Oliveira Martins (1845-1894) and Alexandre Herculano (1810-1877) (Pina 2003 p753). In turn, the iconic figure of the writer Eça de Queiroz (1845-1900) (to this date still part of the school curriculum) left deep marks on the way Portugueseness was defined amongst the middle-class elites (Pina 2003 p753), as illustrated in de Queiroz’s culinary representation of bacalhau in Chapter 3.

As Pina asserts, the “definitions of Portugueseness that claimed and gained authority were essentialised and conservative” (Pina 2003 p753). They promoted the view that the Portuguese were “… a people whose historical role was by essence that of the navigator whose mission was to embrace the Earth and come into contact with all the races” (Pina 2003 p754). The nineteenth-century defining narratives of Portugueseness have become ingrained in the way Portuguese national identity has been produced to date. The symbols of the navigator (hence the sea), whose civilisation and evangelic mission was one of cultural exchange, found prolific grounds for development during the period of Estado Novo’s nation-building as I have documented in Chapters 3 and 7. The symbolic meaning given to the sea as a signifier of nation cannot be overemphasised because, as I have argued, it has been pivotal for the relevance of bacalhau in Portuguese culture.

Another conservative aspect of Portugueseness was underpinned by the nation’s arrogant rejection of the project of modernity by turning its back on Europe. Instead, the emphasis was on encouraging the links with the land at the same time the nation embraced the Atlantic Ocean and further explored the paths to a colonizing mission in the overseas territories of Africa and Asia (Pina, 2003). As Eça de Queiroz asserted in one of his most read novels, A Cidade e as Serra (The City and the Mountains), Portugal “rejected civilized Europe and imagined the rebirth of the historical, organic, authentic Portugal in the Douro mountains” (Pina 2003 p757), coincidently where Port wine is produced.

The signifiers upon which Portugueseness has been produced have lasted throughout the twentieth century, partly as a consequence of the deeply ingrained effects of the

200 See Chapter 7 where I address the return to the land as ruralidade (Footnote 174).
201 By the end of the nineteenth century, when most European nations were scrambling in the race for possession of African territories, Portugal ensured a strong hold on its African colonised territories until post-1974.

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dictatorial and nationalist regime of Salazar. The Estado Novo ideologically adopted them and reproduced them through a rigid education system, a tightly bounded national culture and a repressive ideological propaganda. This was a centred and unified Portugueseness that never acknowledged centuries of colonisation and diasporic encounters with the other.

The nation isolated itself politically from a democratic Europe. Economically lagging behind as a result of rudimentary industrial development, underdeveloped agriculture, a draining colonial war, and a fishing industry rapidly moving towards collapse, by the 1970s the country and its citizens had little hope for the future. Many migrated thus constituting a world-wide diaspora, others waited in silence for a change that only came in 1974. Either way, they had been stamped by the experience of growing up under the straitjacket of a dictatorship and a national identity based on essentialised signifiers of Portugueseness.

The peaceful democratic revolution of April 1974 (Revolution of the Carnations) gave the small nation an impetus for change and hope for development under a new democratic government. The euphoria and enthusiasm was further enhanced with Portugal’s admission as a full member to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986. After a long period of political repression, the Portuguese people finally regained their hope for a better future and reclaimed for themselves the individual and collective ability to control their own lives. By this time, being Portuguese was not just about a unified sense of Portugueseness; it was also about being European and a citizen of the world. How the negotiation between a centred Portugueseness and a fragmented and de-centred Europeanness was to take effect, is part of a continuous project of identification-making that Portuguese people are engaged with. In the second decade of the twentieth-first century, Portuguese cultural identity is now being re-negotiated through the new experiences of the current place Portugal claims for itself in Europe and the world.

This dialectic process manifests itself in cuisine. As identified in Chapter 6, *cozinha da terra* and the *matrix of flavours* are representations of ritualised and traditional ‘ways of cooking’ whereas *cozinha d’autor* has been made to signify the hybrid, innovative, de-
centred and fragmented culinary practices that take into account processes of cultural and culinary mélange. Through the analysis of interviews I will expand further on how these processes intersect with culinary and symbolic representation of bacalhau. Although the deteriorating effects of the current EuroZone crisis might have polarised some of the interviewees’ positions, I consider them nonetheless indicative of the role currently played by food/bacalhau in the interplay between the local and the non-local in the construction of cultural identities. Thus, I will particularly focus on my interview with a representative of the Academia do Bacalhau, to examine the role of bacalhau in the production of processes of identification in diasporic communities. Likewise, using the content of my interview with two spokesmen for the agency Turismo Portugal, I intend to bring to the fore how they imagine the construction of the Portuguese local and how they envisage the role of food and bacalhau in that process. The aim is to explore and counterpoint

...the diaspora experience...defined, not by essence and purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity (Hall 1990 p235).

The next section explores the “two different ways of thinking about” (Hall 1990) bacalhau. The static way, imagined by the “diaspora experience ... of essence and purity...” (Hall 1990 p235), which does not take into account the struggles of displacement and is depicted in the popular saying ‘to be Portuguese is to eat bacalhau’. The other way of looking at bacalhau, which is hybrid and open to innovation and change, acknowledges that any cultural form ‘is already a hybrid’202.

8.3.2 The comfort of food

The movement of individuals across national boundaries has consistently facilitated and promoted the spread of customs and ways of life. When travelling or migrating, individuals carry and vigorously preserve a cultural luggage, which constitutes the

symbolic bridge that keeps them connected to ‘home’ and the cultural ‘roots’ they left behind. This phenomenon is particularly relevant in diasporic communities for whom the preservation of traditional food practices signifies the safeguarding of a core sense of self and group identity, which they usually try to rekindle and preserve in the new environment. As Kalcic argues, “[f]ood links people across space and time, so that it helps create a bond with past members of the group as well as between the living ones” (cited in Bell and Valentine 1997 p204).

The role of food in diaspora has been the focus of several studies. For example, Regina Fiss’ 2001 study of Portuguese migrant communities living in Brazil illustrated the role food played in their lives. According to Fiss (2001), one of the strategies used by Portuguese migrants to stay connected with their birthplace is the preservation of their eating habits and foodways, which they consider to be ‘traditional’, meaningful and reminds them of ‘home’. Significantly, the use of bacalhau in their dietary practices has assisted migrants to maintain their sense of national identity. As Fiss’ study highlights, the migrants’ use of bacalhau and in particular some of the most common recipes illustrate the special meaning they attribute to the dish. Special reference was made to ‘bacalhau à Gomes de Sá’, which they specifically cook during cultural festivities associated with ‘nation’ or ‘pátria’ (Fiss 2001 p15), suggestively associating bacalhau with the symbolism of ritual practices.

The role of food when ‘away from home’ was also made clear in some of my interviews. For example, chef Nuno (2010), responsible for the meals and nutritional well-being of the Portuguese national football team, declared his awareness of the significant role of food to the emotional wellbeing of the players when on tour. Nuno claimed that when the team is touring overseas he, as the chef in charge, always takes great care in carrying “special foods” which he referred to as the “bagagem da saúdade”\(^{203}\) (saúdade’s luggage) (Nuno 2010). Taking seriously the responsibility of looking after the nutritional and general wellbeing of the team, Nuno ensures he always

\(^{203}\) Saúdade is a Portuguese word that is difficult to translate. It means the longing for home and its symbolism is illustrated by Nuno’s association of saúdade with the food he considers of value to the players’ emotional and nutritional wellbeing.
carries with him the food that he recognises will keep the players grounded and task-focused because it reminds them of home. Port wine, bacalhau, chouriço, cheese (Serra da Estrela)\textsuperscript{204} and marmelada\textsuperscript{205} were fundamental ingredients in Nuno’s food-box. As he explained, all these foods were emotionally charged and after a long stay away from home (sometimes over fifty days), eating and sharing them with their team-mates was crucial for the players’ emotional wellbeing. These foods “remind us of our family...where we come from … of our common heritage to which we belong” (Nuno 2010). That is, even the Portuguese soccer players and the team of experts that accompany them on tour, recognise the importance of the food that reminds them of home and keeps them emotionally connected and focused. According to chef Nuno, these foods motivate the team to perform to the required standards, enabling them to represent the nation and (hopefully) bring victory home. Yet, these men would very likely, once the game was over, go out to commemorate (or commiserate) in a local bar and probably eat the local food of the country they were in.

Other interviewees also highlighted the significant role of food in diasporic communities. The interview with the president of the Academia do Bacalhau documented not only the relevance of eating “certain” foods when away from home, but also the “need” to maintain emotional links with the “motherland” (President 2011).

8.3.3 Bacalhau in diaspora: Academia do Bacalhau

Lusofonia is a concept coined fairly recently and in reference to the existing eight Lusophone countries, along with other Portuguese-speaking groups, such as the Portuguese communities abroad, otherwise known as the Portuguese Diaspora (Almeida 2005 p.1) (my translation).

Exploring the role of bacalhau in the foodways of the Portuguese diaspora was enriched by an interview with the spokesperson (the President) of the Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa (President 2011). Academias do Bacalhau (Bacalhau Academy) are non-profit

\begin{footnotes}
\item[204] Cheese Serra da Estrela is a soft sheep’s milk, with equivalent gastronomic significance to Portugal to that of Brie to France.
\item[205] Marmelada is quince jam. Marmelada, because it is made with marmelo, Portuguese for quince.
\end{footnotes}
community organisations first created in 1968 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Since their inception, the Academias’ main goal has been to create an organisation which could provide migrants with support, comradeship and solidarity, which according to the organisation’s President were essential to diasporic communities. This social and cultural network was understood to be even more crucial amongst cohorts of migrants of lower social economic background, for whom the lack of language skills further hindered cultural integration in the host country. Their social and cultural isolation and tendency to ghettoization was one of the key issues the Academia addressed. The Academia’s initial activities were socially orientated. Meetings always took place on Fridays after work, because it was the last day of the working week and the gatherings were always accompanied by a meal, illustrating the communitarian and commensalism of food.

Most of the attendees (if not all) were Catholic, thus committed to keeping the prescribed dietary prescription of not eating red meat on Friday. For these reasons, and to bolster and preserve their cultural traditions and a sense of sharing and belonging, these men always ate bacalhau. Thus, according to the President, when it came to naming the organisation, the choice was obvious and incontestable – Academia do Bacalhau. The Academia’s President asserts:

...bacalhau.... because bacalhau is a traditional dish...because it is rooted and ingrained in our culture and also because it (Academia) is an association that promotes solidarity and friendship .... and bacalhau is the fiel amigo (faithful friend) (President 2011) (my translation).

The idea that food provides emotional comfort to diasporic communities is a theme that was repeatedly addressed by interviewees. For example, the food writer Zé specifically referred to bacalhau as constitutive of ‘our genetic heritage’ (Zé 2011). Bacalhau, Zé

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206 In the 1960s-70s there was a large Portuguese community in South Africa due to its vicinity to Mozambique.
207 Presently there are 55 branches of Academias do Bacalhau over the five continents. There is a branch in Australia located in Perth; it was founded in March 2011 (http://www.academiamae.com/academias-mundo-oceania.php?academia=oceania).
208 Academia do Bacalhau have been men-only organisations. The right of women to membership has only been recognised since 2008.
209 According to the statutes, the organisation was called ‘academia’ to highlight the sense of unity and togetherness amongst the members. The choice of naming was also meant to acknowledge the hospitality given to the migrant community by the host country (http://www.academiamae.com/academia-mae.php).
claimed, is the type of food that migrants have a yearning for when they return home; “what they (migrants) want to eat is what they can’t get there…what their grandmothers and mothers used to cook back home…. It is as if it has been inscribed in our DNA” (Zé 2011).

Zé goes as far as claiming, “bacalhau is the most important laço de ligação (emotional connection) between the Portuguese migrant and his homeland (terra)”. He further commented that the president of the CPLP (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa CPLP 2013) had publically acknowledged bacalhau’s fundamental role as a common cultural signifier amongst the countries belonging to the Lusophone world – “…from Angola to Cabo Verde to Brazil everyone eats and loves bacalhau”, Zé (2011) echoed. This powerful statement illustrates food’s capacity (and bacalhau’s) as a tool of inclusiveness and (imagined) unity.

The President of the Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa proceeded to elaborate on the aims of the organisation:

> It (the Academia) promotes Portugalidade, the Portuguese principles (princípios Portugueses) and nationality which can easily be lost in migrant communities where, especially the younger generations easily dismiss any bond with the motherland (nossa terra) …. (President 2011) (my translation).

The Academia’s concern over the possible loss of “Portuguese principles” by the migrant communities is informative. It highlights the Academia’s essentialised static conceptualisation of national identity and national culture, thus its members’ apprehension and decisive resolution to ensure and prevent “…social and cultural values from being lost in the migrant communities” (President 2011). That is, the Academia’s President (a non-governmental entity) declared his vested social and cultural responsibility in guaranteeing the preservation of national culture in diasporic

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210 CPLP (Community of Countries of Portuguese Language) is an organisation that was started in July 1996 and is constituted by all the countries where Portuguese is recognised as the official language – Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guiné-Bissau, S. Tomé e Príncipe, Cabo-Verde and Timor-Leste. CPLP has been likened to the English Commonwealth.

211 To my knowledge there is no direct translation of the term Portugalidade. It refers to representing and belonging to Portugal and I suggest that the closest translation would be Portugueseness.
communities, possibly in a more orthodox way than similar institutions based in Portugal. The *Academia* and its members were acting as cultural gatekeepers. Their emotional investment and attachment to the principles of a faraway *local* called ‘motherland’ prompted them to take upon themselves the responsibility to preserve what they considered to be its core values. In their view, losing them would be detrimental to the individual and the community “especially now that Portugal is part of the EU”, the President added. And he continued:

...although we (Portugal) are in an economic union with the EU, there are aspects that we cannot lose...our independence, our language, our ‘manaira de ser’ (character), our values...so I think that now it is even more important to defend these principles because they are what makes us different, what ‘brands’ us anywhere in the world (President 2011) (my translation).

The *Academia do Bacalhau*’s President forcefully made the point that “…it is our culture that tells us who we are and it is our culture that differentiates us from the others….now (present context) more than ever difference is fundamental” (President 2011).

The concern expressed by the *Academia*’s President in regard to the need to preserve and maintain ‘our’ signifiers of Portugueseness, especially *now* that Portugal is a EU member, was conveyed at different points of the interview. His apprehension was suggestive of a high level of anxiety felt by some sections of the community who regard the European influence over the national culture as a ‘threat’ that could jeopardise the ‘essential’ values of the nation, its culture and signifiers of national identity. The *Academia*’s president also highlighted what in his view ought to be an increased urgency to re-assert local allegiances to counterpoint the ‘threats’ that the non-*local* constitutes to the (national)-*local*. As Featherstone (1995 p110-111) contends, local identities are ignited when conflict arises, creating a sense of unity amongst the ‘us’ against the ‘others’. It does not necessarily mean that the internal contradictions that might have existed within the ‘us’ have disappeared; it only signifies a brief respite from other contentious issues that are temporarily put aside for the benefit of mutual security.
The interview with the *Academia do Bacalhau* documented cultural politics in-the-making. A conversation that started about bacalhau and its role in Portuguese culture and the diaspora provided unexpected results. On the one hand, it established the polarisation within some cultural groups who, under the cover of group solidarity, promote essentialised views of nation and national identity. On the other hand, it also illustrated the significant role and awareness with which the *Academia* and its members endorse the concept of *difference* as a tool for the construction of cultural identities. The *Academia do Bacalhau* as a community of individuals of different socio-economic backgrounds sees itself unified by the sense of *Portugalidade* (Portugueseness), a unity that cuts across class and gender dividers, but joins them in an imaginary “deep horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 1983 p15) under the banner of individual camaraderie and national culture. Empowered by personal investment in the subject position of ‘being Portuguese’, the *Academia do Bacalhau*’s members defiantly face up to any challenges that might disturb their imagined bond to the homeland, understood as:

...a link to something that we left behind... a meal...bacalhau... what attaches us to the land, the memory ....the things that go from generation to generation (President 2011) (my translation).

The content of this interview further illustrated the role that diasporic community organisations have had, and still have, as gatekeepers of a national culture that despite being left behind is vigorously and orthodoxy held on to by their members as if it were a lifesaver system. We need to note that most of these diasporic communities were constituted by individuals that either escaped Salazar’s dictatorship by migrating to Europe and the USA, or individuals that found life in ‘Portuguese’ Africa more ‘bearable’ than in Portugal. Thus, under these conditions, these individuals made Portuguese diaspora “…more than a vogueish synonym for wandering or nomadism” (Gilroy 1995 p318). They had been dispersed by political persecution and economic hardship.

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212 To enhance the sense of ‘class-less-ness’ members always address each other as ‘compadre’ (fellow). “…in the *Academia* we leave our social and professional titles at the door” the President claimed (President, 2011).
Perhaps not surprisingly, the *Academia’s* President did not refer to the extended cultural repertoires that the experience of diaspora would have given to these migrants. Neither did he mention the complex and diverse range of experiences that would have produced new fragmented, shifting and de-centred cultural identities. Nor did he acknowledge the hybrid dishes that had been introduced to the eating habits of the Portuguese in the diaspora. Instead, he opted to represent their food choices as if they had been preserved unaltered by their experiences with the host *other*. Moreover, the *Academia’s* spokesperson resisted the changes that always occur as a result of displacement, unrealistically asserting the need to preserve the signifiers of an (imagined) unified national culture which obstinately defied any cultural and societal shifts resulting from displacement. For the President of the *Academia do Bacalhau* and other members, the focus was on the “reconstitution of the symbolic repertoires with which the community [could] think and formulate a unified image of its difference from the opposite party” (the host country) (Cohen in Featherstone 1995 p110).

The interview with the organisation that represents Portuguese diaspora highlighted the need to preserve cultural mores. Reproducing them and giving them continuity is a strategy to ensure the individual’s and the nation’s survival by providing them “with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning…” (Hall 1990 p223). It does not take into account contemporary shifts operating in a globalising world, nor does it take into account the dialectics between the discourses of the nation and the global. The tourism industry, on which Portugal’s economy currently depends, is a site where these contradictions come to the fore as the next section reveals.

### 8.4 Tourism and the local – identities through the eyes of the other

*One of the ‘proper objects’ of study here is the phenomenon of ‘experts’ who specialize in the ‘instrumentally rational’ promotion of intercultural communication. These ‘experts’ have in fact a vested interest in the promotion and protection of variety and diversity.* (Robertson 1995 p31)

Ronald Robertson’s citation needs to be analysed within the context of what he refers to as “a growing number of professionals” whose “jobs depend upon the expansion and reproduction of heterogeneity” (Robertson 1995 p31). It is in this context that this
section is developed because it explores the content of the interview with two ‘experts’, acting as officers of the governmental agency Turismo Portugal (TP) (Tourism Portugal).

The inclusion of this interview in this study requires some clarification. Throughout the interviewing process with chefs and food writers, there were frequent references to the work developed at a governmental level by the Department of National Tourism, in particular the recently launched program called Prove Portugal\textsuperscript{213} (Prove Portugal 2013). This program, as well as all of the TP’s activities, was, according to the interviewees, inserted within a broader economic strategy first implemented in 2007 that endeavoured to promote the tourism industry, and is known as PENT (Plano Estratégico Nacional de Turismo – National Strategic Plan for Tourism)\textsuperscript{214}. As the Minister for Economy and Innovation asserted when PENT was first launched, “[t]ourism has great strategic importance for the Portuguese economy due to its capacity for generation of wealth and job-creation” (Ministry for Economy and Innovation 2007).

Without going into details about PENT, because they are beyond the range of this study, I nevertheless consider it appropriate to explore one of the main programs developed by PENT directly related to the promotion of Portuguese cuisine – Taste Portugal. To my surprise, the request for an interview with Turismo Portugal in order to attain information related to Taste Portugal was readily granted\textsuperscript{215}. I interviewed two senior officers, whose views represented that of the department. I will therefore refer to them as TP rather than as individuals. I also consider the content of the interview of great significance because of the institutional validity and legitimacy that these official and

\textsuperscript{213} Prove Portugal translated as ‘Taste Portugal’. I will refer to Taste Portugal as it is an accurate translation of the intended meaning.

\textsuperscript{214} In 2007, when first released, PENT projected that by 2015 the industry’s contribution to the national economy would represent 15% of GDP and national employment (Ministry for Economy and Innovation 2007). Despite the current European economic crisis these values still hold as illustrated by the 2013 report released by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The organisation analysed the impact of the industry in Portugal and concluded that in 2012 tourism contributed for to 15.9% of GDP and 18.5% of total employment (WTTC 2013).

\textsuperscript{215} In my experience the bureaucratic processes in Portugal usually require a lot of “red tape”, sometimes making requests drawn-out processes with long waiting periods. Thus the welcoming and promptness with which this interview was granted was not only surprising but suggestive of the interest Turismo Portugal has in promoting their programs to interested parties.
programmatic statements have, since they were voiced by two policy-makers speaking from a position of governmental power.

I was particularly interested in exploring how TP and *Taste Portugal* promoted Portuguese cuisine as a marketable resource and in evaluating the role played by bacalhau as the alleged national dish. I also intended to assess the ways by which the official tourist agency implemented and promoted the concept of *local* in their programmatic and operational strategies, and how they conceptually and pragmatically articulated *local* with *national*. I soon realised how well informed, well read and eloquent the TP officers were in their arguments. A conversation that started by focusing on general points of *Taste Portugal* soon veered to the specific principles currently underpinning the tourism industry.

TP officers started by contextualising PENT as an economic strategy based on ten *‘national strategic products’*\(^{216}\) to ensure positive outcomes from the currently most successful national industry – tourism. They claimed the aim of PENT was “to change the face of the Portuguese tourism industry through its liberalisation and democratisation” (TP 2011). TP proceeded by stating that Portuguese gastronomy and wines had been identified as two of the national products that could be marketed as iconic because they were specifically *different* from that of other European tourist markets. Aware of the global and pan-national impact on the tourism industry, TP officers argued:

\[...we\ live\ in\ a\ global\ world\ and\ globalisation\ has\ advantages\ and\ disadvantages...\ one\ of\ the\ disadvantages\ is\ homogenisation...\ (padronização)\ of\ cultures,\ attitudes\ and\ the\ effacing\ of\ tradition\ and\ local\ products...\ (TP\ 2011)\ (my\ translation).\]

To counterpoint the effects of homogenisation, TP’s spokesmen explicitly acknowledged the key roles played by *difference*, authenticity and uniqueness. As the previous discussion of globalisation highlighted, despite globalisation’s initial and more concerning tendency to homogenisation and standardisation “in reality it is not possible to eradicate or transcend difference” (Robins 1991 p30). In fact, as the TP officers

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\(^{216}\) I am using the direct translation from the Portuguese nomination ‘produtos nacionais’: sun, sea, gastronomy and wines, golf, city-breaks, touring, business, tourism, health and wellbeing.
demonstrated, the tourism industry relies heavily on *difference* for its expansion. Moreover, the official recognition of Portuguese gastronomy as an identification icon illustrates the official validation of the role of food and foodways in national culture (see Chapter 6).

TP’s officers were well versed on the underpinnings of *Taste Portugal*. They spoke freely about the urgency and strategic need to explore the particularities of *local difference* to satisfy niche and cosmopolitan markets eager to underscore the role of *difference* as a signifier of cultural capital and cultural identity. The efforts seen elsewhere through the development of niche markets for world music, ethnic food, ethnic arts and local fashion, were echoed by TP’s emphasis on sponsoring Portugal’s *local* particularisms. Like any other institution keen to support a powerful tourism industry\(^\text{217}\), TP also eagerly claimed *difference* and *authenticity* as fundamental characteristics that were integral to the promotion of Portugal’s riches. For example, the correlation between *local* diversity and alleged authenticity within a limited geographic space was referred to by TP as ‘diversidade concentrada’ (concentrated diversity). Portugal being a small country could offer the topographic, regional, local diversity within the small bounded space of the nation. Thus, the tourist did not need to travel far to be ‘surprised’ by *difference*, diversity and authenticity. Asked about the significance of these key issues TP claimed:

... *difference is important exactly because it is different ... it is not just difference ... it is also authenticity from within... for better or worse, we have been able to preserve authenticity, culturally and gastronomically... gastronomy is part of culture...* (TP 2011) (my translation).

The culinary and gastronomic authenticity to which TP referred, addressed the official recognition in 2000 of Portuguese Gastronomy as part of the cultural national heritage

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The institutionalised safeguard and official acknowledgment of certain foods and cuisine as part of a national legacy, validated the claim that there was a significant relationship between food and place, which is what the TP spokesperson was referring to when he stated “authenticity from within”, that is, what is ‘organically rooted’ and inherent to a place, and which is being utilised as a tool to promote the specificities of the *locale*. In fact, the food-place nexus has been theoretically addressed through the term *Gastronationalism*, coined by Swart (2000) and developed by Michaela DeSoucey (2010).

Gastronationalism has become a significant tool to claim authenticity, based on the geographical origin of food products (DeSoucey 2010). The EU institutionalised a system of labelling[^218] which recognises the authenticity and uniqueness of accredited products at the same time as it protects them from imitation. This system of classification not only validates the product’s claim to authenticity but also facilitates product promotion to niche markets, eager to cater for alleged local differences. This European pan-national regime, which recognises and endorses gastronomic difference amongst the EU members’ national products, has intensified national producers’ interest in promoting the ‘originality’ of their ‘traditional’ products as they simultaneously lobby their local institutions for financial and logistic support of their marketing strategies[^219].

According to DeSoucey’s study, in 2007 Portugal had 105 registered labels, with Spain (114), France (156) and Italy (166) heading the statistics (DeSoucey 2010 p440). Based on these figures it does not come as a surprise to see food, cuisine and Portuguese Gastronomy occupying a high profile in the Portuguese tourist agency’s agenda. Nor does it come as a surprise to see the marketing and commodification of food’s uniqueness, authenticity and difference as a tourist attraction[^220]. As the interviewees

[^218]: The EU-sponsored labelling system has developed three categories: PDO (Protected designation of Origin); PGI (Protected Geographic Indication); TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed) (DeSOurcey, 2010 p437).

[^219]: Chef Vitorino (2010) in his interview explicitly recognised the obligation Portuguese embassies abroad ought to have in promoting national cuisine and products for niche markets.

[^220]: Robertson makes the argument that whereas in the nineteenth century the tourist industry was grounded by discourses promoting the interest in the exotic outsider ‘other’, currently its discourse is underpinned by the promotion of the exotic ‘other from within’ (Robertson, 1995).
expressed it, by ‘tasting Portugal’, eating Portuguese food and living through “staged authenticity” (Mac Cannell 1973), the tourist has the privilege of experiencing meals that “…are made with original and local products ... using authentic recipes so people are able to appreciate ... the absence of adulteration” (TP 2011). The agency Turismo Portugal (TP) can then legitimately market Portugal as an exclusive brand – “Vender o que é nosso, e que é autêntico” (TP 2011) (we can sell what is ours and is authentic).

Authenticity is a problematic concept. Describing Portuguese cuisine and food as authentic is an overarching statement that does not take into account the integration of products that despite not being native Portuguese resources, have nevertheless been incorporated into the cooking practices and eating habits. As I have previously argued, cuisine is not unique or ‘pure’ but rather ‘already’ a hybrid form of previous cuisines and cooking practices. Saying that something is authentic is to endorse it with symbolic cultural signifiers that make it essential, stable and unified; it is to consider cooking to be a static practice, alienated from the social agents that live it and produce it in their everyday practices of food preparation. Thus saying that food, a practice or a place is authentic, is to give it essentialised markers and characteristics as if it had always been there, rather than recognising that those same attributes were produced in language by a cultural agent and for a specific purpose. In the case of the tourist industry the purpose is to commodify difference.

Despite the emphasis that TP placed in highlighting culinary markers as a marketable strategy, TP also acknowledged the past integration of new products in the Portuguese cuisine as a particularity of national culture. Referring to the sixteenth-century Voyages of Discovery as an illustration of the nation’s past involvement in the initial stages of the globalising process, TP fell short of acknowledging that the integration of the foods of the exotic ‘other’ had rendered the Portuguese cuisine hybrid, not ‘pure’. In fact, they did not recognise that its particularities might rather result from the cuisine’s ‘unique form’ of hybridity and culinary re-articulations with other ingredients, rather than from its ‘purity’ or even ‘authenticity’. Food a “marvellous plastic kind of collective

221 In ‘Taste Portugal’ TP defines several products as authentic. To mention but a few – Portuguese extra virgin olive oil, arroz carolino (a type of short-grain rice), sea salt, fresh fish and seafood caught off the Portuguese coast.
representation…” (Appadurai 1988 p494) can metaphorically hold the discursive ambivalences between particularity and universality.

But it is not just food that TP is interested in marketing as different. Places have also been commodified, branded and marketed as such:

...places are different because they have their own characteristics...these places are different, unique, authentic and genuine to a certain area...what we have to offer is based on diversity and based on the authenticity of the place and culture ... and this is what we consider to be the added-value of what we can offer (the tourist) (TP 2011) (my translation).

The tourism industry strategically plays out the tensions inherent to the global-local nexus. By rhetorically endorsing the local and highlighting its particularities, the industry generates nodes of struggle against the other globalised competing locales as they all eagerly bid for the attention of niche markets in search of difference. This is part of what Anthony Smith refers to as the “cultural wars” (Smith 1990 p185) by which nation-states and communities try to promote their particularities by drawing on their cultural resources in order to make a mark in competitive inter-national environments. It is in this context that particularities of the local come into play, justifying its increased significance and power to assert, thus, the increased prominence given to the concept of glocalisation.

Originally a marketing concept, glocalisation, as developed by Roland Roberston (1992), emphasises the mounting pressures the local is now placing on the global, tempering the latter’s initial supremacy. The local has become a commodity for the global tourist and the local-global nexus a platform of negotiation where power struggles are played out; as Kevin Robins reflects, “[h]ierarchical orders of identity will not quickly disappear. Indeed the very celebration and recognition of ‘difference’ and ‘otherness’ may itself conceal more subtle and insidious relations of power” (Robins 1991p33).

In this case TP’s agents and the agency itself are demonstrating the power to name the local, to classify it and draw the defining imaginary lines between who and what constitutes it. Noticing that the TP agents were evading focus on the role of bacalhau in
the definition of *local* I pressed the point. I framed the question around the role of bacalhau in the dynamics of *local* and how TP and *Taste Portugal* integrated (or not) bacalhau in its strategies for industry expansion.

TP acknowledged the place of bacalhau in Portuguese cuisine and eating habits. However, TP also argued that bacalhau is not a native product therefore TP did not endorse it in its strategic plan. TP explicitly declared the agency’s emphasis on promoting *local* products, *local* techniques and *local* dishes. Bacalhau is not *local*. Thus, although acknowledging its place in Portuguese cuisine and eating habits, TP has shifted its promotional focus on to the *local* fresh seafood:

*...we have nothing against bacalhau ... but what we are doing is try to emphasise what is really OURS... is it (bacalhau) a dish that Portuguese people appreciate? YES, Can we eat bacalhau from the north to the south (of the country) and cook it in different ways? YES we can. BUT, is is our product? NO, it is not...* (TP 2011) (capital letters express emphasis given by the interviewee) (my translation).

Despite admitting that “bacalhau is most likely the seafood with the highest consumption rates in Portugal” (TP 2011), TP and its strategic plan for the tourism industry and the overseas marketing of Portuguese cuisine did not include bacalhau. As TP asserted, this official position is not just about the promotion of *local* products, it is also a bid for the anticipated extension of Portugal’s Exclusive Economic Zone. TP explained that if Portugal’s application to the Law of the Sea Convention is successful, it would substantially increase maritime national resources and the export market of its fresh seafood to the world. The assertive way in which the argument was made, demonstrated the impact that markets and economic strategies have on definitions of what is *local* and Portuguese. As TP affirmed:

*We are not de-valuing or de-promoting the importance of bacalhau in terms of gastronomy or even national history... however what we need to do, is to promote Portuguese products... produced in Portugal so that they ... become a 'tourist attraction' (atracção turística) (TP 2011) (my translation).*

222 TP explained that the Exclusive Economic Zone is defined by the Law of the Sea Convention as the 200 nautical miles that countries can have exclusive access to offshore. Countries need to make a submission for this right to be conferred. At the time of the interviews, Portugal was still waiting for the results of their application which TP did not date.
The interview with the two officers of Turismo Portugal is informative for various reasons. Firstly, it has legitimacy because it constitutes an official statement and not simply personal views. Secondly, the content of the interview illustrates the role of the TP’s agents as cultural intermediaries and experts. In this function they give themselves the right and power to fix meaning, thus ‘naming’, ‘classifying’ and give hierarchy of value to products, labelling them as ‘unique’ and ‘genuinely’ Portuguese, rendering them marketable under the exclusive label of being a “tourist attraction”. As Robertson argues, the vested professional interests of these individuals and the agencies they represent lies in “invent(ing) … promot(ing) and protect(ing) variety and diversity” (Robertson 1995 p31). By endorsing local products, local techniques and local innovative chefs, TP is promoting practices and values that might become the ‘new invented’ traditions upon which the Portuguese gastronomic culture is now being constructed. These might become the new ‘authentic’ traditions that will be ‘made to stick’.

Finally, TP’s disclosure of non-endorsement of bacalhau as the national dish was unexpected. I assert that TP’s argument borders on a quasi-total disregard for cultural values that regardless of how they originated, are, and have been, culturally meaningful. As discussed in Chapter 1, the account given by tourist guides, tourist pamphlets and internet websites unanimously named bacalhau as the Portuguese culinary icon. Yet, the Portuguese tourism agency justifies its non-endorsement of bacalhau by claiming that it is not a local natural resource, thus not commendable as a marketable cultural signifier of Portugueseness. Instead, TP actively promotes the Portuguese fishing industry and bets on the expected granting of the Exclusive Economic Zone which will exponentially increase the national seafood export market. Alienating itself from the prolonged and manifested culinary presence of bacalhau in foodways and from its conclusive cultural integration, the policy makers are prioritising market and political decisions, arrogantly downplaying ingrained eating habits, thus disregarding the cultural implications of such economic decision-making. The elites in Turismo Portugal are now formulating a reverse fishing policy to that institutionalised in 1930s by the Estado Novo; while the former are betting on the local product, the latter wagered on bacalhau from
Newfoundland, thus demonstrating the power of elites in manipulating the naming and making of foodways.

These findings were unpredictable and might place bacalhau, the Portuguese culinary icon, into the unchartered waters of an uncertain future. Will the withdrawal of institutional recognition change bacalhau’s popular support, consumption patterns and eating habits and preferences? Or will the TP’s strategies never filter through, thus rendering them obsolete and with no impact on the everyday practices of eating and cooking bacalhau in Portugal?

At this point it is difficult to predict what the outcome will be. Nonetheless, what this case study demonstrates is that the 1930s Estado Novo’s promotion of bacalhau eating and the 2011 Tourism Portugal’s sponsoring of new culinary signifiers, reiterate the arbitrariness, contextual and contingent characteristics of what is named to be a cultural signifier.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter’s main objective has been to explore the role of the local within the context of the global. Beginning from the assertion that “…the local and the global go hand in hand. They make each other possible” (Robertson 1992), I have focused the discussion on the increased discursive significance that the local has gained in discourses of the global-local nexus.

I have explored the content of interviews with the President from the Academia do Bacalhau de Lisboa and two officers from the governmental agency Turismo Portugal (TP), and I have analysed how these two institutions discursively use food as a signifier of cultural identity and articulate it with the concept of local. Their purposes are different.

The interview with the Academia do Bacalhau demonstrates the cultural role of bacalhau in diaspora as a signifier of a local (nation) which was left behind. The interview further highlights the emotional investment in what is named as local in the
production of national cultures and performance of identities. Under conditions of diaspora and Europeanisation, the Academia fostered cultural identities which are anchored and emotionally attached to memories of an idealised place (Portugal).

In turn, the interview with Turismo Portugal emphasises how the cultural and the local are discursively manipulated for economic purposes. The interview further reinforces the current relevance given to discourses of local, endorsing the claim made by Robertson who contends that globalisation “…involves the ‘invention’ of locality in the same general sense as the idea of the invention of tradition” (Robertson 1995 p35). TP’s re-interpretation and re-articulation of the local, has produced new cultural culinary signifiers which exclude bacalhau and instead promote and name new ‘national products’, demonstrating the discursive constructedness of bacalhau as a signifier of national culture and of the values that are discursively attached to a space to construct it as a (national)-local.
CONCLUSION

The central purpose of this research project has been to explore what constitutes a national dish and how bacalhau came to play this role in Portugal. I have asked why, how, who and for what purposes bacalhau has persisted across time and space as such a predominant aspect of Portuguese life. I have argued that bacalhau’s sustained cultural and culinary embeddedness is underpinned by the symbolic meanings that have been attributed to it and that have made it a signifier of national culture.

Further I contend that bacalhau can be usefully investigated as a cultural signifier encoded with values and meanings that surpass its nutritional and economic functions. By looking at bacalhau through these lenses, not only am I expanding on the ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz 1973) of its cultural value, but more significantly I am contributing to a better assessment of the role of food in culture, particularly through the processes of symbolic identification.

In this thesis I have explored cultural representations of bacalhau across multiple historical contexts and sites where meaning is produced. Furthermore, by focusing on the impact of globalisation in contemporary culture, I have evaluated how food produces the local through discursive demarcations of difference.

The use of bacalhau as a case study illustrates the symbolically ‘plastic’ qualities of food (Appadurai 1988). It demonstrates that not despite, but because food has a utilitarian function and a use-value it can also be endowed with cultural dimensions (sign-value), making it a cultural signifier. Thus, this dissertation bridges the gap between the concreteness of food as a material/nutritional good and the abstract notions of identification, nation and culture, showing that the persistent embeddedness of bacalhau in Portuguese ethos can only be understood if we take into account the work of representation which has accompanied its consumption as an artefact of material culture.

Bacalhau has been part of Portuguese foodways since the sixteenth century as a consequence of two key factors: Catholic dietary prescriptions which shaped the populations’ eating habits by banning the consumption of red-meat for extended periods
of the calendar year; and the subsequent economic benefits generated by the increased consumption of a commodity – Atlantic cod – which was plentiful but could only be harvested in the North Atlantic off the Canadian coast. European Catholic countries became large consumers of the fish but none took bacalhau to heart as much as Portugal, where it became recognised as the national dish.

Despite the impact that religious dietary restrictions had on the initial introduction of the fish into Portuguese eating habits, its maintenance over centuries is puzzling. Bacalhau was not and has never been a native commodity for any of the communities that took it into their eating habits so wholeheartedly. On the contrary, its supply was dependent on long and difficult trips to the icy waters of Newfoundland at a time when travelling conditions were difficult, risky and devoid of the technological advances that could have lessened the impact of a harsh environment on the crew.

Yet, against all the odds, bacalhau’s consumption endured and increased. Why then did bacalhau persist as a valuable product?

I argue that the answer to this question lies in bacalhaus’s value as a cultural signifier. It has been my contention that the Campanha do Bacalhau was the catalyst that endowed the fish with cultural signification. Starting as a program of economic recovery, the Campanha do Bacalhau ensured the nation’s self-sufficiency with a staple food. As my analysis of cookbooks of the time illustrates, there was a clear institutional effort to encourage the consumption of bacalhau to the point of making the practice a quasi ‘patriotic’ routine, as suggested by the popular saying: “there are 365 ways of eating bacalhau – one for each day of the year”.

But the Campanha do Bacalhau did much more than that. Through the consistent work of cultural representation, the Estado Novo recycled the Romantic Tradition of the Sea (Vakil 1996; Garrido 2010), associated it with the Campanha, endowed it with symbolism and elevated it to new cultural heights. The sea, the heroes of the sea and the bread of the seas became the key markers that buttressed the Campanha and made bacalhau a national culinary icon. That is, the Campanha do Bacalhau was never solely a program of economic revitalisation and nation-building; it was also a carefully
planned economic strategy that piggybacked on the pre-existent cultural value of a staple food, gave it new symbolic dimensions and made it connote the nation. I argue further that without the symbolic power with which the program was embedded, the Campanha do Bacalhau would have never been able to last for over thirty years.

The Campanha do Bacalhau’s success resulted from its ideological, pragmatic and symbolic association with the Jornal dos Pescadores and the Benção dos Bacalhoeiros. Synergistically they constituted powerful tools of cultural signification, utilised by the Estado Novo to make the practice of bacalhau-fishing constitutive of national culture. Jornal dos Pescadores, the regime’s propaganda tool, promoted codes of work ethics, social conduct and behaviour; it heralded robust educational and welfare policies with which the State enticed the ‘class’ (fishermen) and the Great Family of the Sea to participate in nation-building. Targeted at the economically and socially vulnerable fishing communities, with few resources or bargaining power other than their own labour, the policies were activated and the results imprinted on their ‘way of life’.

I make the further claim that bacalhau still holds a significant role in Portuguese culture. Whereas in the early twentieth century bacalhau was at the centre of an extensive program of political, ideological and economic strategy of nation-building devised by the Estado Novo, the emphasis in the twenty-first century has shifted. Bacalhau has been reutilised, symbolically and economically, but this time the focus is rather on local-building. Currently the Museum of Ilhavo is actively working at re-building a town (the local) and a community once dependent on bacalhau industry for survival. The key signifiers have been maintained and Ilhavo is today the Capital of Bacalhau and its logo is “The Sea as Tradition”. Ilhavo is still using the same symbols that keep reminding the locals, its visitors and the diasporic communities of the role of the sea in Portugal’s national history and ethos. Concurrently, Ilhavo has re-worked bacalhau’s representation in its museum to promote economic revitalisation via the twenty-first century industries – tourism and heritage industries.

At the museum, Ilhavo is “digging up” memories, re-enacting past events and re-inventing tradition. In its main exhibit – Sala da Faina Maior – the memory and material vestiges of the practice of bacalhau-fishing are reproduced daily in the
imagination of every visitor. It is a way of giving the museum legitimacy not only for present projects but also for future ones. The institution is determined to actively engage in promoting the *Capital of Bacalhau* as a tourist destination through the use of multiple tactics. Combining tradition and innovation, the museum is committed to the revitalisation of the ‘bacalhau tradition’ by using cutting edge technology in marine biology to launch the new bacalhau aquarium as an innovative attraction that exhibits live specimens flown-in from Norway. Likewise, the *Festival do Bacalhau* and *Tasquinhas do Bacalhau*, have ensured the tradition of eating it is maintained. Thus bacalhau has become a sign with multiple meanings attached to it, making it the “plastic signifier” that Appadurai (1988) has argued food to be.

The role of bacalhau as a marker of cultural *difference* has been illustrated throughout this thesis. As the interviews with chefs and food-writers demonstrate, bacalhau still plays a significant role in contemporary culinary practices and in the way it (bacalhau) is utilised to assert cultural identification. Furthermore, as the interviews also highlight these professionals, as cultural intermediaries, use their culinary expertise and ‘know how’ (Bourdieu 1984) to produce meaning and assert symbolic power. The terms they introduced – *cozinha d’autor*, *cozinha de terra* and *matrix of flavours* – are relevant for various reasons. Firstly, they constitute original data which has been analysed in this thesis, and that to my knowledge, is yet to be described in the relevant literature. Secondly, these concepts, I have argued, are ‘ways of talking’ about the practice of cooking; that is, they are discursive formations constitutive of a body of knowledge produced by ‘experts’ to name *difference*. Thirdly, these terms work as culinary labels which illustrate the point at which Portuguese cuisine is currently located: on the one hand in a process of re-inventing itself through new technologies, methods and the use of new ingredients to become the hybrid – *cozinha d’autor*; on the other hand looking back to tradition in *cozinha de terra* and *matrix of flavours* as a source of inspiration and legitimacy. These apparently contradictory processes of looking forward and back, go hand-in-hand in a dynamic cultural process to produce a new hybridised culinary language.
Finally, the analysis of these concepts brings into focus the dynamics between the *local* and the *non-local*. I have suggested that the chefs, as cultural producers, needed to imagine *cozinha d’autor, cozinha de terra* and *matrix of flavours* as a prerequisite to re-assert *local* specificities and claim cultural *difference*. Furthermore, I have also contended that these new forms of cuisine are discursive formations that can only exist within the current context – a milieu determined by globalisation and Europeanisation where notions of cultural *difference* are paramount. Borrowing from Paul Gilroy (1993), I argue that ultimately, these new forms of cuisine come to constitute nodes of articulation between the ‘roots’ of a culinary national culture and the ‘routes’ to new hybrid cuisine and cultural spaces where de-centred processes of identification are produced. Significantly, bacalhau is represented across the board as the constant sign that defines *difference*, thus justifying its function as a cultural signifier.

But for how much longer can bacalhau be used as a signifier of culinary and cultural Portugueseness? This question raises potential forms of future research as much into the role of bacalhau in Portuguese ethos and cuisine as into the broader role of food in culture.

Any future research needs to take into account bacalhau’s availability because of concerns about the species’ future sustainability. The depletion of Atlantic cod’s natural stocks is of major concern. According to the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (2013) the stocks of Atlantic cod are yet to recover from the low rates of the 1980s for which reason the 1994 Moratorium was established. So far, both Canadian and Norwegian fishing industries’ efforts to develop Atlantic cod aquaculture have been discouraging. What will happen in the future is hard to anticipate. If stocks drop dramatically, market values will jump and consumption will become elitist, as occurred in the nineteenth century.

Thus, expanding on the present study, future research can pertinently assess the consequences that shifts in the supply chain can have on the everyday practices of eating bacalhau and more particularly, on the cultural role the fish plays in Portuguese life. What will happen to the national dish if the incentive to consume bacalhau in
Portugal decreases, or when the focus swings away to promote and encourage the consumption of local produce?

Despite the almost total dependence on Norwegian imports, some sectors of the Portuguese elites continue to work hard at maintaining bacalhau as an integral part of the national ethos. The production of cookbooks, the Museum of Ilhavo, the *Festival do Bacalhau*, *Tasquinhas do Bacalhau* and bacalhau’s culinary representation by Portuguese chefs in *cozinha d’autor* and *cozinha de terra* are all evidence of this. Furthermore, at grassroots level, bacalhau still maintains its place as a favourite in people’s eating habits as illustrated by the commodity’s levels of consumption. Despite a population of ten million, Portugal still leads the way as the first world consumer of bacalhau, followed by Brazil and Italy with populations of 199 million and 60 million respectively.

In addition, and according Ove Johansen of the Norwegian Seafood Council, in 2012 “[e]xports to Portugal…were up by twenty-nine percent in July compared to the same month last year”, and Johansen concluded: “[b]acalhau remains a popular national dish in Portugal despite the turbulent economic situation” (Norwegian Seafood Council 2012). One year on, and in a recent press release (August 2013) the same institution admitted the maintenance of a similar trend – that the value of Norwegian bacalhau’s exports to Portugal had increased in the order of “…NOK 3,4 million compared to August last year” (Norge Norway Exports 2013).

Thus far, bacalhau is yet to be considered an endangered species; nonetheless its future availability needs to be approached with caution. In that context, what will happen to bacalhau and the practice of eating it? For how much longer will bacalhau remain as a Portuguese cultural signifier? Perhaps, and as this study has documented, with an eye on the future, the central agency Turismo Portugal is moving to deploy new ‘traditions’ through its program *Taste Portugal* and by sponsoring local seafood rather than bacalhau. Likewise, the yearly Lisbon’s Festival *Peixe em Lisboa* (Fish in Lisbon) is now promoting the quality of locally caught fish. With the slogan “The sea returns to Lisbon” (Peixe em Lisboa 2013), the Festival and its promoters keep one foot ‘rooted’ in the past as they signal the sea in their logo and the other foot ‘en route’ to a future
where they re-invent new ‘traditions’ but ‘realistically’ drop bacalhau. This time the tourism central agencies are committed to promoting what they have classified as local products; they are ‘naming’ and opting for new culinary markers of Portugueseness to assert difference, through the endorsement of local seafood.

Whether bacalhau remains the culinary signifier of Portugueseness in times to come is impossible to foresee because cultural contingency makes predictions risky. Nonetheless, what I have established in this thesis is the pivotal and ever-present role of food in culture and in processes of identification. Moreover, I have also demonstrated the significance of bacalhau as a cultural marker that gives membership to an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983), sitting at the table sharing a sense of belonging and unified by the tradition of eating bacalhau. As Elsa Peralta asserts:

*Of all the Portuguese traditional dishes bacalhau is without a doubt the most emblematic of them all. Bacalhau is as much an everyday meal as it is associated with celebrations and festivities; bacalhau is recognized by the Portuguese people as ‘something’ linked to their origins. (Peralta 2003 p93).*
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Maria, R. (n.d.). *Como se Janta por 3$00: 100 Jantares Diferentes*. Emp. Literária Universal, Lisboa.


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http://www.museumaritimo.cm-ilhavo.pt/pages/4

http://www.museumaritimo.cm-ilhavo.pt/pages/15

http://www.museumaritimo.cm-ilhavo.pt/pages/23


## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) LB</td>
<td>Lito</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; October 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Statement Santos – Lisboa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) HL</td>
<td>Nuno</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Tripa Porto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) LP</td>
<td>Eloi</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Vista Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) HSP</td>
<td>João</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Soul Santos – Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) VS</td>
<td>Vitorino</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Tasca Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) FA</td>
<td>Fernando</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November 2010</td>
<td>Restaurant Lugar Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) DC</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>Food writer/critic</td>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Turismo Lisboa Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) MCS</td>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>Chef</td>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Restaurant Chiado – Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) DLR</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Journalist - Food writer/critic</td>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Diário de Noticias office – Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) JQ</td>
<td>Zé</td>
<td>Food writer and journalist</td>
<td>14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>At a small eatery Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Academia do Bacalhau</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>President Academia do Bacalhau</td>
<td>20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Hotel Império - Lisbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) JP</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Officer for Turismo Portugal</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Turismo Portugal Headquarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) MS</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Officer for Turismo</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
<td>Turismo Portugal Headquarter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample questions

1- Summary of interviewee’s professional career.
2- How do you think Portuguese eating habits and cuisine has evolved since you have started working in hospitality/writing as a food writer?
3- How do you reflect on the media aspects of your career/ how has it impacted on the food, ingredients and techniques you use.
4- Please comment on how you see your cultural/social role as a food writer.
5- How do you see your experience overseas has impacted on your style and professional proficiency.
6- How do you create the menus for your restaurant?
7- Through readings and contact with other professionals I have come to hear a lot about cozinha d’autor. What does it mean to you?
8- Also the concepts cozinha regional and cozinha traditional. Could you elaborate on what they mean to you and your professional practices?
9- What place does bacalhau have in your cooking practices?
10- What are your views about the naming of bacalhau as the Portuguese national dish?
11- What does the term national cuisine mean to you?
12- In your view what impact has the EU had in Portuguese eating habits?
13- How do you see the role of the Portuguese chef in today’s environment?
14- Why do you think bacalhau has acquired such a relevant role in Portuguese culture?
15- What is the future of bacalhau in Portuguese eating habits?
16- In your view how has the role of the chef change (if it has) as a result of their presence in the media.
17- What is the role of the chef in 2010? Is it any different from what it would have been 20 or 30 years ago?
APPENDIX B
COOKBOOKS

CLUSTER 1

1500s

1680

1785

1800s


CLUSTER 2
Early twentieth century


Maria, R. (n.d.). Como se Janta por 3$00: 100 Jantares Diferentes. Empresa Literária Universal, Lisboa.

Maria, R. (1933) Como se Almoça por 1$50. Empresa Literária Universal, Lisboa.


Late twentieth century – publications on bacalhau


