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# Managing exogenous factors to foster individual creativity in french gastronomy

Mathilde Jost

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**THÈSE** présentée par :

**Mathilde JOST**

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Discipline/ Spécialité : Sciences de Gestion

**Managing exogenous factors to foster  
individual creativity in French gastronomy**

**THÈSE dirigée par :**

[Mme BOUTINOT Amélie]  
[M. POINT Sébastien]

Associate Professor HDR, EM Strasbourg Université de Strasbourg  
Professeur des Universités, EM Strasbourg Université de Strasbourg

**RAPPORTEURS :**

[Mme SVEJENOVA VELIKOVA Silviya]  
[Mme SZOSTAK Bérandère Lauren]

Professor, Copenhagen Business School  
Professeur des Universités, ISM-IAE Versailles Saint Quentin-en-Yvelines  
Université Paris-Saclay

---

**AUTRES MEMBRES DU JURY :**

[M. CHABAUD Didier]  
[Mme EISENMAN Micki]

Professeur des Universités, IAE Paris – Sorbonne Business School  
Senior Lecturer, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem



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# Communications and publications

Communications	
July 2023	<b>EGOS Colloquium 2023, Cagliari</b> <i>"It Takes Two to Tango": How Social Interactions Support Individual Creativity. Evidence from Upcoming French Chefs."</i>
July 2023	<b>EGOS PhD Workshop 2023, Cagliari</b>
June 2023	<b>PhD Workshop "Doctoriales HuManiS" (EM Strasbourg)</b> PhD thesis presentation (updated)
December 2022	<b>Publicoaching Seminar HuManiS (EM Strasbourg)</b> <i>"A Show of Good Taste': How Creative Individuals Can Influence Their Reputation Among Experts through Signals Observability Strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy"</i> (in <i>Revise &amp; Resubmit in European Management Journal</i> at that time)
December 2022	<b>Centre imagine.. Creative Industries and Institutions Seminar (Copenhagen Business School)</b> <i>"A Show of Good Taste": How Creative Individuals Influence Their Experts' Reputation through Signals' Observability Strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy"</i>
July 2022	<b>EGOS Colloquium 2022, Vienna</b> <i>"Quality Justifies the Bill ?": Uncovering the Path from Legitimacy to Experts' Reputation in Creative Industries."</i> Evidence from French gastronomy.
June 2022	<b>PhD Workshop "Doctoriales HuManiS" (EM Strasbourg)</b> PhD thesis presentation (updated)
October 2021	<b>HuManiS Seminar (EM Strasbourg), with Amélie Boutinot</b> <i>"Coping with Institutional Complexity in the French gastronomy: How Creative Practices Transform Environmental Constraints into Opportunities for a More Sustainable Future."</i>
July 2021	<b>EGOS Colloquium 2022, Amsterdam (online)</b> <i>"Coping with Institutional Complexity in the French gastronomy: How Creative Practices Transform Environmental Constraints into Opportunities for a More Sustainable Future."</i>
June 2021	<b>PhD Workshop "Doctoriales HuManiS" (EM Strasbourg)</b> PhD thesis presentation

Publications	
May 2023  Accepted for publication	<b>European Management Journal</b> <i>“A Show of Good Taste”: How Creative Individuals Can Employ Signal Observability Strategies to Influence their Reputation Among Experts.” Evidence from French gastronomy.”</i>
March 2023  August 2023 : Revise & Resubmit, Major Revisions	<b>International Journal of Arts Management</b> Co-authored with Amélie Boutinot <i>“How do Grand Challenges Impact Individual Creativity? Evidence from French Gastronomy.”</i>
August 2022	<b>The Conversation</b> , with Chloé Bour-Lang <i>“Gastronomie: quand les chefs mettent du care en cuisine.”</i>
March 2021	<b>The Conversation</b> , with Amélie Boutinot <i>“Comment la solidarité se réinvente en temps de crise”</i>

# Introduction

# Interest of the Subject

## I. **Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs): A Sector with Exponential Growth and Avenues for Future Research Perspectives**

“Creative industries are cultures of development, playing a significant role in how both the social and economic life of nation states develop and change (Pratt, 2015: 4)”, making them central actors in the economic system of a state. According to Eurostat figures, cultural and creative industries employ 8.7 million people in the EU, equivalent to 3.8% of its total workforce and representing 1.2 million enterprises in 2018 (Source: Eurostat). In the UK, creative industries “contributed £115.9bn in GVA [gross value added] to the economy in 2019, which is greater than the aerospace, automotive, life sciences and oil and gas sectors combined” (Source: Creative UK). According to BPI France, in 2015, the ten sectors of activity that made up the French creative industries, such as the visual arts, gastronomy, advertising or film industries, represented 104 billion euros of added value, or 5.3% of national gross domestic product (GDP). They employed 1.7 million people in 2015, i.e. 6.3% of salaried employment, and included a wide range of professionals and sectors. The CCIs have therefore been achieving strong growth (+6.7% in revenues between 2013 and 2018), although this should be put into perspective for those sectors that cannot benefit from the digitalization of content. At the heart of contemporary challenges, creative industries have been damaged by the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. Khlystova et al., 2022; Prokúpek et al., 2022) but “provisional data shows a positive trend in the economic contribution of the UK creative industries in 2021, bouncing back from the fall in Gross Value Added during the first year of the pandemic.”<sup>1</sup>

Recent studies on the creative industries show that the creative sector offers many avenues for future research. Table 1 summarizes some of the latest overviews of the future research perspectives for the creative industries that particularly caught our attention.

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<sup>1</sup> *Positive trend in economic recovery of UK creative industries from pandemic.* (2022, May 4). The Creative Industries. Retrieved April 24, 2023, from <https://www.thecreativeindustries.co.uk/facts-figures/positive-trend-in-gva-of-uk-creative-industries-from-pandemic>

**Table 1. Brief Summary: Assessing Some of the Latest Insights for Future Perspectives in Creative Industries**

References	Sample	Main conclusions	Future Research Perspectives
<p>Khlystova, O., Kalyuzhnova, Y., &amp; Belitski, M. (2022). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the creative industries: A literature review and future research agenda. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>, 139, 1192-1210.</p>	<p>Web of Science Database and Scopus as a robustness check, with a combination of the keywords “creative industries” and their direct associations (e.g. “creative industry”; “creative sector”; “culture”; “art”; “heritage”; “circus”; “museum”) and “impact”. Other filters were added such as: “state support” or “government support”. Publications were only in English language and included the following areas: business economics, computer science, telecommunications, film, radio, television. The screening process enabled us to select a unique sample of 59 papers published between November 2019 and April 2021 from 28</p>	<p>Creative and cultural industries were severely impacted by Covid-19 in several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultural workers were not able to work as usual</li> <li>- Cultural events were canceled</li> <li>- Cultural places were closed.</li> </ul> <p>But the sector was able to develop resilience mostly through digitalization: software development, online streaming, online events, digital library, social media interactions. However, resilience was not sufficient to ensure the survival of every firm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying new opportunities from resilience strategies developed by creative industries during the pandemic</li> <li>- How to ensure the economic and social recovery of cultural workers</li> <li>- How digital tools and digital competencies can help with adapting to new market conditions</li> <li>- How does the audience engage with these new tools?</li> <li>- What is the role of social media in uniting communities?</li> <li>- Avenues for new business models with social media</li> <li>- How Covid-19 restrictions affect(ed) the physical and online demand for events.</li> </ul>

	different journals and 22 different countries		
Cunningham, S., & Flew, T. (2019). Introduction to a research agenda for creative industries. <i>A Research Agenda for Creative Industries</i> , 1-20.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public institution reports on creative and cultural industries such as United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) or Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) reports from 1998 to 2019 in the United Kingdom and Australia.</li> <li>- 49 major publications on culture and the creative economy, cultural policy, cultural valuation, creative class, from 1987 to 2019.</li> </ul>	<p>2018 marked the 20th birthday of the Creative Industries Mapping Document from the UK's DCMS. Since then, the scope of creative and cultural industries has been constantly changing. However, most studies focus on the contribution of CCIs to the creative economy or their wider impact on other sectors of the economy in a dynamic of "legitimizing culture" to public policy makers.</p> <p>New trends such as "platformization" or "digitalization", as well as integrating social and cultural aspects to the economic one, offer new research perspectives such as on copyright policies or distributional dimensions of capitalist growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Studying barriers to effective participation in the creative industries such as those based on class, gender, race and disability</li> <li>- Unveiling the quality of creative work</li> <li>- Tackling the difficulties in capturing the value and significance of voluntary and non-market activities in CCIs</li> <li>- Taking account of the "participative turn" in cultural policy</li> <li>- Jobs growth in the digital creative services and the future of work debate</li> <li>- How to incorporate creative industries into higher education?</li> </ul>
Dharmani, P., Das, S., & Prashar, S. (2021). A bibliometric	792 publications from the Scopus Database with the search string "creative industries" and	<p>Main topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On "heritage": work aspect; innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigating heritage, as it is the least researched area, as well as under-</li> </ul>

<p>analysis of creative industries: Current trends and future directions. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>, 135, 252-267.</p>	<p>the following filters: “articles, reviews, editorial and notes”; “journals”; “English”; “business management and accounting decision sciences, and economics, econometrics and finance”. 267 publications from the FT50 Journals with the search string “creative industries” filtered to remove passive remarks or in bio-description of the authors. Period: 2010-2018</p>	<p>- On “arts”: human capital; competitive dynamics; organization aspects; entrepreneurship; property rights; corporate governance - On “media”: social networks; organizational aspects; human capital; performance; entrepreneurship - On “functional creations”: innovation; managing tensions; organizational aspects; ethics and corporate social responsibility; human capital; social networks; performance; competitive dynamics; entrepreneurship; corporate governance  Major authors: Godart, Svejenova, Jones, Hennekam  Major Journals: <i>Human Relations; Organization Studies; Creative Industries Journal</i></p>	<p>studied themes such as economic geography and marketing - Taking a broader perspective and employing ideas from different themes - Assessing the scope for more international collaborations</p>
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Overall, CCIIs raise increasing awareness from the development of creative business management in business schools to the generalization of what Florida (2002a) calls “the creative class” which operates in creative cities (Florida, 2003). According to him, “human

creativity has replaced raw materials, physical labor and even flows of capital as the primary generator of economic value, and a new class structure is emerging as a result of that basic economic transformation” (Florida, in Lang and Danielsen, 2005: 218). Thus, creativity is increasingly being recognized as a new asset for organizations that is worth exploring and developing. CCIs are therefore the subject of a growing number of studies in management sciences which consider the different industries they comprise. These industries include: cinema (e.g. Lobato, 2010; Luo et al., 2021; Trabucchi & Magistretti, 2020), painting (e.g. Delacour & Leca, 2017; Sgourev, 2013), design (e.g. Miles & Green, 2008; Stigliani & Ravasi, 2012), theater (e.g. Shymko & Roulet, 2017), architecture (e.g. Jones et al. 2012; Jones & Massa, 2013), music (e.g. Hracs, 2012; Tschmuck, 2003), perfumery (e.g. Paris & Lang, 2015), fashion (e.g. Khaire, 2014), and cultural festivals (e.g. Morean & Pedersen, 2011) etc., the characteristics and interests of which are worth unpacking in this dissertation. Furthermore, the creative industries are constantly being challenged by the emergence of new fields, such as the recent inclusion of haute cuisine in studies by creative scholars (e.g. Stierand et al., 2014; Svejenova et al., 2007; Svejenova et al., 2010), and by being at the confluence of new societal challenges such as global warming or fair working conditions for creatives.

Tackling new issues and insights in the creative industries calls for an overview of what makes the creative industries specific. The following sections therefore seek to characterize the creative industries around key elements that structure creative and managerial choices. First, this introduction outlines the parameters for the study by presenting the main definitions of creative industries used by management scholars and public institutions and by describing the context in which they have emerged and attracted interest. We then explain why the creative industries are an appropriate area to study and discuss the inherent paradoxical tensions between their artistic and economic logics and their main asset, i.e. creativity. We subsequently discuss the specificities of creative production, the creative actors who produce them and how this production is structured by reputational challenges. We then anchor these understandings in the context of global economic and societal challenges.

### *1. Defining and Exploring Cultural and Creative Industries*

In this dissertation, the terms “creative industries”, “cultural industries” and “creative and cultural industries” are used interchangeably. Indeed “cultural economists often use the

terms cultural and creative industries interchangeably, as their primary focus is upon the mix of product qualities and consumer needs that renders a particular commodity, activity, or service to be deemed cultural” (Towse, 2003: 4). We therefore align with Jones, Lorenzen and Sapsed (2015) who consider that “research on the arts (Frey, 2000; Ginsburg & Throsby, 2006) and the cultural industries (Hirsch, 2000; Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944; Throsby, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2013) can be seen as subsets of creative industries because they depend on creativity and derive value from this creativity.” (p. 5).

The particularities of artistic and cultural activities have already been studied through the lens of the sociology of the arts (Becker, 1982; Bourdieu, 1992; Moulin, 1983) or the notion of “cultural industry” (Hirsch, 1972; Horkheimer & Adorno, 1947; Peterson & Berger, 1971) anchored in the process of cultural industrialization. However, the “creative industry” notion emerged in the Anglo-Saxon world at the end of the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s, at a time when public institutions had a growing interest in the subject. For example, in 1998 and 2001, the UK’s DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) defined the creative industries as “activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through generation and exploitation of intellectual property.”

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2006: 2) defines creative industries as “any industry that originates from individual creativity, skill and talent and has the potential to generate wealth and employment through the creation and exploitation of intellectual property.” Therefore, “the creative industries are not about meeting basic consumer needs, needs that change little, but about providing high value-added products in which novelty is an important characteristic” (Vincent & Wunderle, 2012: 39).

As creativity became the 21st century’s most important economic resource (Florida, 2002), several international and economic institutions dived into the growing development of the creative industries by listing the types of activities that could be classified as belonging to the Creative and Cultural Industries. The main institutions were UNESCO (1986), DCMS (2001, 2013, 2014), World Intellectual Property Organization (2003), Americans for the Arts (2005), KEA European Affairs (2007) and UNCTAD (2008). According to the UNCTAD (2018: 13), CCIs are characterized by: a) cycles of creation, production and distribution of

goods and services that use creativity and intellectual capital as primary inputs; b) a set of knowledge-based activities, focused on but not limited to the arts, that potentially generate revenues from trade and intellectual property rights; c) tangible products and intangible intellectual or artistic services with creative content, economic value and market objectives; d) being at the intersection of the artisan, services and industrial sectors; and e) comprising a new dynamic sector in world trade.

On the managerial side, Richard E. Caves (2000) defines the creative industries as “contracts between art and commerce”. With the aim of distinguishing the creative industries from other non-creative industries, Caves suggests seven economic properties that are exclusively specific to them: 1) uncertain demand – as the reactions of consumers before and after consumption are difficult to evaluate; 2) attachment of creative workers to their product; 3) the requirement for particular skills to produce certain creative products; 4) differentiated and unique types of productions; 5) vertically differentiated skills; 6) time as the essence when coordinating complex projects with diversely skilled inputs ; and 7) the durability of products and returns (Caves, 2000). While these criteria offer a first approach to and framework for the creative industries, they can be nuanced depending on the field involved (Sigurdardottir, 2010).

The creative industries, such as the cinema, music, photography and design industries, therefore form a particular area of study, and it is already possible to distinguish the tensions that can emerge from their singularity. The following sections discuss and provide insights on their specificities such as the tension between “art and commerce” (Caves, 2000), the centrality of creativity, specific creative actors who produce symbolic and aesthetic creative products, and the importance of reputation.

## 2. *Creative Industries: “A Contract Between Art and Commerce”*

In the creative industries, work practices are shaped both by artistic and economic logics of practice, which may appear conflicting (Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007). On the one hand, the artistic or creative has “a desire to make art for art” (Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007: 526), based on the “denial of any social justification of art and the artist” (Bourdieu, 1992:193, personal translation) and invoking the image of the creator who is dedicated to aesthetic, non-commercial and symbolic art works. Central to the notion of “art for art’s sake” are the characteristics of

non-measurability and non-comparability, in other words, ones that are inherently contradictory to economic notions of profitability, competition and competitiveness (Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007). On the other hand, the economic logic is market oriented whereby “the trade of cultural goods is a trade like any other, giving priority to diffusion, to immediate and temporary success, measured for example by the number of copies printed, and being content to adjust to the pre-existing demand of the customers” (Bourdieu, 1992: 202, personal translation). However, “since it is commonly acknowledged that professional artists experience an economic necessity to market their artistic capabilities and credibility, a certain level of market-orientation will not spoil an artist’s credibility within the occupational community” (Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007: 534), both logics are inherent to the creative industries and are co-dependent. Creative industry actors therefore face “paradoxical challenges or dilemmas, whose resolutions require a balancing act between seemingly contradictory practices” (Lampel et al., 2000, in Defillipi, et al., 2007: 515) and the inherent tensions of the creative industries make them complex to manage. Indeed, “it is by managing a healthy balance between the dual aspects of identity that cultural institutions create and maximize value” (Lampel et al., 2006: 57). In creative industries, it is necessary to juggle the interests and ideologies of each stakeholder to ensure that the organization has a certain synergy that allows it to remain sustainable and viable as a creative industry (Lampel et al., 2006). In their article, Lampel et al. (2000) identify five issues that creative industry managers face in balancing creative practices and economic requirements:

“First, managers must reconcile expression of artistic values with the economics of mass entertainment. Second, they must seek novelty that differentiates their products without making them fundamentally different in nature from others in the same category. Third, they must analyse and address existing demand while at the same time using their imagination to extend and transform the market. Fourth, they must balance the advantages of vertically integrating diverse activities under one roof against the need to maintain creative vitality through flexible specialization. And finally, they must build creative systems to support and market cultural products but not allow the system to suppress individual inspiration, which is ultimately at the root of creating value in cultural industries.”

(Lampel et al., 2000: 263)

When artistic activity becomes professionalized, it runs the risk of being dominated by the economic logic of the market and profitability (Bourdieu, 1992). However, the creative and

aesthetic mission is essential for belonging to this field because creative industries are judged on their ability to be creative and to offer content that falls within what is considered artistic in the creative field to which they belong. Indeed, “systems of aesthetics help to anchor said art in its artistic tradition, upon which the resources to which the artist has access depend” (Becker, 1982: 148). In the film industry, the award of an Oscar brings in significant funds. In haute-cuisine, being recognized by a guidebook leads to a certain reputation which has a direct influence on chefs’ access to resources. In music, having a good reputation makes it easier for an artist to sign with a major label. Simultaneously, the creative mission of creative industries echoes the tension between familiarity and novelty (Caves, 2000; Lampel et al., 2000; Peltoniemi, 2015). Indeed, to be affiliated to a certain creative tradition, to be understood and to resonate with the public, the creative work must have familiar characteristics. At the same time, however, to stand out, the work must have a degree of novelty that allows it to embrace its uniqueness. As the “difficult-to-articulate familiar experiences” (Islam et al., 2016) can be a challenge for creative industries (Jones et al., 2016), the importance and plurality of the creative missions in these industries makes creativity a crucial issue to master.

### 3. *Creativity: The Cornerstone of Creative Industries*

Creativity in the creative industries has been debated at different levels, as “talent, creativity, and innovation are the resources that are crucial to success” (Lampel et al., 2000: 264) in creative industries, and “the long-term survival of firms in cultural industries depends heavily on replenishing their creative resources” (Lampel et al., 2000: 265). However, creativity is not exclusive to creative industries and discussion about the definition of creativity in general can inform understanding of the concept in creative industries in particular.

Several attempts have been made to define what is and what is not creativity, based on the outcomes, the inputs and the goals of the creative process. Creativity is usually described through three criteria: it must be novel (which means that creative ideas must represent something different), and it must be of good quality and relevant, i.e. appropriate to the task at hand (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2015). Generally speaking, creativity can therefore be defined as “the production of new ideas” (Guilford, 1950), “the generation of something that is both novel and useful towards accomplishing desired goals” (Amabile, 1996; Weisberg, 1993) or “the ability to produce new ideas which are novel to the idea producers themselves” (Drabkin, 1996:

78). Mumford, Hester & Robledo (2012) identify five characteristics of creativity as follows: a) it is a form of performance; b) it is a product of the human condition; c) it demands a high level of cognition; d) it requires a conscious decision as to whether people are willing to invest scarce resources in generating a solution to a creative problem; and e) it can occur at the individual, group or organizational level. Some authors discuss how creativity solves problems (e.g. Besemer & O'Quin, 1999; Christaans, 2002; Ghiselin, 1963; Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Unsworth, 2001) such as Mumford & Gustafson's (2007: 4) view that "creative thought is called for by problems that are novel, complex and ill-defined, in the sense that they can be construed and solved in multiple ways". However, problem-solving is not the main interest of creativity in creative industries; it is generally regarded as "the most important resource contributing to the creative output of firms (Althuizen, 2012; Kabanoff & Rossiter, 1994, in Stierand et al., 2014: 22).

There are many definitions of creativity and these are rather complex, leaving space for studies (e.g. Cromwell, 2018; Fillis & Rentschler, 2010; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010; Unsworth, 2001) to demonstrate the plurality of "creativities" and suggest typologies. For example, Unsworth (2001) developed four types of creativity: 1) "responsive creativity", which corresponds to "the externally-driven, closed-problem field (...) in which the participant responds to the requirements of the situation and to the presented problem" (Unsworth, 2001: 291); 2) "expected creativity", which is "brought about via an external expectation but with a self-discovered problem" (Unsworth, 2001: 292); 3) "contributory creativity", which is "self-determined and based upon a clearly formulated problem" (Unsworth, 2001: 292); and 4) "proactive creativity", which occurs "when individuals, driven by internal motivators, actively search for problems to solve" (Unsworth, 2001: 292). Hennessey and Amabile (2010) suggest a typology comprising: 1) "Big C", which corresponds to eminent creativity – relatively rare displays of creativity that have a major impact on others; 2) "Little C", which corresponds to daily creative problem-solving and the ability to adapt to change; and 3) "Mini C", which corresponds to the creative process involved in the construction of personal knowledge and understanding.

A better way to understand creativity is therefore to consider it as a socio-cultural model (Amabile, 1983, 1988; Csikszentmihályi, 1999) where creativity is the maximization of the interplay between creative skills, domain-relevant skills and motivation (Amabile, 1988). It can further be considered that "a product of response is creative to the extent that appropriate

observers independently agree it is creative” and appropriate observers are those who are “familiar with the domain in which the product was created or the response articulated” (Amabile, 1982: 1001). According to Csikszentmihályi (1999), “creativity emerges in a system with three components: the domain, the field and the individual. The interaction of the three systemic components decides that a given contribution is in fact creative” (in Simonton, 2012). He identifies two types of creativity: 1) personal creativity, which is “creativity with a small c”; and b) “Creativity” with a capital C, which “represents the outside environment that consists of the domain, with its specific rules, knowledge, tools, practices and values, in which the individual has chosen to work, and the field that consists of the persons and institutions that judge the creative quality of the individual’s work” (Csikszentmihályi, 1997, in Stierand et al., 2014: 20).

It is worth mentioning that a common tension is to associate creativity and innovation. However, while creativity and innovation have similarities, they are also different with opposing characteristics. Attempts have been made to differentiate the two notions but they do not demonstrate a strong and clear boundary between the two concepts. However, it is possible to make some salient points.

First, creativity finds its origins in individuals, whereas innovation is mostly organization driven and institutionalized. Indeed, Perry-Smith (2006: 85) suggests that “the study of creativity (...) is typically an effort to understand why some individuals are more creative than others and focuses on the cognitive and motivational processes that might help explain this discrepancy. In contrast, innovation research (...) has been conducted at the organization level (e.g., Coleman, Katz & Menzel, 1977; Rogers, 1983), with a focus on understanding the adoption or diffusion of certain innovations (cf. Burkhardt, 1994).”

The two concepts also differ in terms of outputs, as creativity can lead to successful innovation, but not necessarily, whereas innovation aims at being implemented successfully. Indeed, “creativity (idea generation) and innovation (implementation) are different constructs that arise as the result of distinct processes and lead to different outcomes” (Hughes et al., 2018: 551). Whereas “creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain (...) innovation is the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization” (Amabile et al. 1996: 1155).

They also differ in terms of process as creativity focuses on production and idea generation, while innovation is based more on the consumption side as it is driven by market logics and commercialization. Therefore, “workplace creativity concerns the cognitive and

behavioral processes applied when attempting to generate novel ideas. Workplace innovation concerns the processes applied when attempting to implement new ideas. Specifically, innovation involves some combination of problem/opportunity identification, the introduction, adoption or modification of new ideas germane to organizational needs, the promotion of these ideas, and the practical implementation of these ideas” (Hughes et al., 2018: 551). Whereas innovation is directed through the production of new objects or services that find a new market, creativity is about studying the inductive process that might lead (or not) to new ideas. This is in line with the idea that “creativity focuses attention within the dimension of production, whereas innovation focuses attention on consumption” (Wilson & Stokes, 2005: 372). According to Bouty and Gomez (2013), “creativity and innovation are different because they refer to distinct processes: generating new and useful ideas (creativity) vs. intentionally introducing and successfully implementing ideas within the organization (innovation)”. This therefore justifies the study of creativity as a singular and specific topic of inquiry, despite the blurriness in differentiating the two concepts.

Finally, while innovation can be fed by creativity, it also needs other intermediaries – financial, human or technological – to be effective. Amabile states that “creativity by individuals and teams is a starting point for innovation; it is a necessary but not sufficient condition. Successful innovation depends on other factors, as well, and it can stem not only from creative ideas that originate within the organization but also from ideas that originate elsewhere (as in technology transfer)” (Amabile, 1996: 1).

Creativity is particularly undertaken in relation to the creative industries. The study of creativity therefore entails studying a continuous flow of new and useful ideas which contribute to competitive advantage and how this continuous flow is managed and generated by creative individuals (Presenza et al., 2018), particularly in those creative industries where creativity is the cornerstone of organizations’ sustainability (e.g. Lampel et al., 2000).

Above all, creativity in the creative industries comprises a set of skills and competencies that characterize the actors operating in these fields (which we discuss further in Part 5). Creativity therefore has a strong individual feature whereas innovation is institutionalized in the organization. The study of creativity requires understanding what makes someone creative, how individuals can manage the personal skills that lead to their creative behaviors and the extent to which what is created can be considered creative, i.e. novel and useful.

Furthermore, studying creativity also entails unveiling the specificities of creative productions that encompass a mix of aesthetics and symbolic features, (which we develop

further in Section 4 below). Finally, as we apply the subject of creativity in the context of arts and cultural production, it should be noted that “while scientific creativity involves existing knowledge to sustain and advance a new idea, artistic creativity can reinterpret ideas with non-existent knowledge and present them in a new way” (Peng et al., 2013, in Ekincek & Günay, 2023: 2). Studying creativity in the context of the creative industries is therefore the purpose of this dissertation.

As creativity is one of the main assets of the creative industries, it structures the production of goods and services in this sector. Creativity in the creative industries therefore leads to the production of cultural or creative goods and services that derive from the production and the consumption of traditional goods.

#### *4. The Specificities of Creative Products*

Cultural goods or creative works are defined as “non material goods directed at a public of consumers for whom they generally serve as an aesthetic or expressive rather than clearly utilitarian function” (Hirsch, 1972: 641-642). They encompass “symbolic, experiential goods of non-utilitarian value”, dealing with “expressive or aesthetic tastes rather than utilitarian needs”, for which “meaning and significance [are] determined by the consumer’s coding and decoding of value” (p. 940).

Creative or cultural goods have two dimensions. First, they possess semiotic codes through which “artists give meaning to their work and shape how audiences interpret it” (Jones, Lorenzen & Sapsed, 2015: 5), meaning that they have “distinctive aesthetic properties with symbolic functions that enable meaning making” (Jones et al., 2016: 752).

Second, they have a material base which “includes not only materials that give form to creative products, but also technologies and socio-technical systems that enable the production and consumption of creative products” (Jones et al., 2015: 6). Therefore, because of their specificities, notably the importance of their aesthetic and symbolic dimension, these goods are hard to value (Gemser et al., 2008; Priem, 2007). Indeed, “the value of most cultural products is generally hard to ascertain, in part because the standards to be used for this purpose are seldom clear and rarely obvious” (Wijnberg and Gemser, 2000: 323) and “value is never an inherent property of objects, but arises from a judgment made about those objects by artistic creators, producers or cultural market intermediaries whose whole lives consist in experiencing

and judging values” (Simmel, 1978 in Jones et al., 2016: 762). The issue of the valuation of creative products is omnipresent in the creative industries and is the subject of Section 6. *Reputation issues or the centrality of the valuation process of creative goods and services.*

Aesthetic properties are a central feature of creative works. Indeed, “aesthetic choices have a symbolic function that influences how a product is perceived and evaluated” (Cattani et al., 2020: 2), and they encompass elements which refer to the beauty of experiences and arousal of emotions (Bloch, 1995; Veryzer, 1993). Aesthetic responses are therefore “a state of intense enjoyment characterized by feelings of personal wholeness, a sense of discovery, and a sense of human connectedness” (Csikszentmihályi & Robinson, 1990: 178). As aesthetics, which are largely found in creative activities, have been the subject of recent debates in management sciences and strategy, we assume that they are a relevant subject for investigation in these fields (Bazin & Korica, 2021; Cattani et al., 2020; Eisenman, 2013; Eisenman et al., 2016; Godart, 2018; Louisgrand & Islam, 2021). Although we discuss creatives who create products and services that incorporate aesthetic features, studying aesthetics calls for deeper analysis of the material and symbolic features of creative works, which is not a theoretical door that this dissertation seeks to open.

Furthermore, to be produced, creative works and services need specific actors and institutions who operate in particular situations. Referred to as artists, technicians or creative workers, creative actors play a key role in the production of creative goods. At the same time, these actors operate in particular contexts, such as in organizations or networks, which influence their creative abilities.

##### *5. Making Creativity Happen: Who Creates and How?*

Caves (2000: 5) uses the term “motley crew” to describe the “diverse skilled and specialized workers, each bringing personal tastes with regard to the quality or configuration of the product”. Thus, creative production depends on a vast array of people, such as creative artists (artists, musicians, actors, writers); brokers acting on their behalf (agents, managers, promoters); technical craft workers (sound engineers, camera operators); producers (publishers, studios, record companies); owners and executives; distributors and media outlets (broadcasters) (Caves, 2000).

Studies on the arts, culture and the creative industries were initially conducted at the level of the individual, notably from the perspectives of the figure of the artist in the sociology of art (Becker, 1982; Bourdieu, 1992) and of the “creative individual, “creative entrepreneur”, “cultural entrepreneur” or the “artist-entrepreneur” in management sciences (e.g. Svejenova et al., 2007; Svejenova et al., 2015; Swedberg, 2006). Studies of creative individuals who lead creative organizations often come under the umbrella of entrepreneurship (e.g. Svejenova et al., 2007; Swedberg, 2006; Wilson & Stokes, 2005), where creative individuals are referred to as entrepreneurs because they develop business models based on business ownership and invest in extensive managerial activities to make their art profitable. However, and despite Swedberg’s (2006) call for nuanced views on the theoretical definitions of cultural entrepreneurs, it is worth noting that the creative entrepreneurs depicted in such studies are mostly extraordinary artists who brought about considerable change, for example through institutional work (Svejenova et al., 2007) and who introduced innovations to their field (Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019).

The study of entrepreneurship also involves studying the characteristics that make a good entrepreneur or a business model profitable (e.g. Svejenova et al., 2010; Wilson & Stokes, 2005), whereas we focus on understanding what fosters individual creativity. Although creativity and its characteristics can be fruitful for pursuing an entrepreneurial career (Batchelor & Burch, 2012), it is not a condition for doing so. As creative entrepreneurs are entrepreneurs like any others, we are concerned with understanding the context in which they, i.e. the creative industries, operate (Dutraive et al., 2018). Therefore, in this dissertation, we do not intend to tackle the issue of entrepreneurship. Indeed, many studies on the creative industries do not evoke the entrepreneurship notion when studying the specificities of creative activities within creative industries (e.g. Lampel et al., 2000; Sgourev, 2013; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016;). For the purpose of this study and in line with the semantic choices of other creative scholars (Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Sgourev, 2015; Svejenova, 2005), we consider artists and creatives to be “creative individuals” (or “persons” or “people”), whose specific features are developed below, and who are considered to be central to this project.

In this framework, creative individuals owe their creativity to their own attributes and traits. Far from the outdated image of the “lone genius” (Montuori, 2003), artists and creative individuals have characteristics that enable them to maximize their creativity, considering that “individual creativity is a function of antecedents conditions, cognitive styles and abilities, personality, motivational factors and knowledge” (Woodman et al., 1993: 301). Several of these characteristics have been widely developed in the study of individual creativity management.

Many studies emphasize the traits and personal attributes that can favor creativity and creative thinking (Amabile, 1988; James et al., 1992; McCrae and Costa, 1997; Mumford et al., 2012; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). These include, for example, open-mindedness, inventiveness and risk-taking. Scholars have also identified features that foster creativity, such as those related to domain expertise and technical skills (Amabile, 1988; Amabile, 2001; Baer, 2015; Sternberg, 2009), which refers to the knowledge that individuals can master about the specificities of their field. Finally, individual creativity has been studied in relation to motivation, understood as individuals' interpretation of their reasons for doing a task in a given situation (Amabile, 1988; Benedek et al., 2020; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998). Presented as a cornerstone of creative work (Bilton et al., 2021), this encompasses personal qualities such as being self-driven, enthusiastic and excited by the work itself.

However, and as suggested by Mumford, Hester and Robledo (2012), creativity can occur at the individual level as well as at the group and organizational levels. Indeed, "while there is a high degree of self-managed creativity in the production of creative work, access to resources and influencing the market are controlled by a variety of managerial decisions" (Townley et al., 2009: 943). The management sciences literature is therefore increasingly concerned with broadening the creative spectrum by considering the organization (e.g. Alencar & Bruno-Faria, 1997; Amabile et al., 1996; Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Parmentier et al., 2017; Tesluk et al., 1997; Woodman et al., 1993), the collective (e.g. Parjanen, 2012; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004), the network (e.g. Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Perry-Smith, 2006), the team (e.g. Agars et al., 2012; Kozlowski & Bell, 2008; Reiter-Palmon et al., 2012; West, 1996), and inclusion in creative territories (Cohendet et al., 2011; Dechamp & Szostak, 2016), which is thus in an interactional and systemic study of creativity.

For example, Amabile et al. (1996) and others (e.g. Parjanen, 2012; Ford, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993) assess the importance of the work environment in fostering or inhibiting creativity. These studies state that specific management practices, such as autonomy, can foster creativity, while others, such as pressures, can reduce it. Team creativity and group-level phenomena have also been widely studied, with scholars assessing the team characteristics that encourage team creativity, such as demographic diversity, communication and team collaboration (Pirola-Merlo, 2004; Reiter-Palmon et al., 2012).

## 6. *Reputation Issues or the Centrality of the Valuation Process of Creative Goods and Services*

Although they do not have the same meaning, reputation, recognition and renown are often considered simultaneously in valuation processes. Recognition refers to “the esteem in which others in the same “art world” (Becker, 1982: 354) hold the artist” (Lang & Lang, 1988: 84). Renown “signifies a more cosmopolitan form of recognition beyond the esoteric circles in which the artist moves” (Lang & Lang, 1988: 84), whereas reputation “is an objective social fact, a prevailing collective definition based on what the relevant public ‘knows’ about the artist” (Lang & Lang, 1988: 84) and “stakeholders’ perceptions about an organization’s ability to create value relative to competitors” (Rindova et al., 2005: 1033). Therefore, while reputation structures consumer expectations, it also plays a role in the opportunities that (creative) individuals can have access to (Delmestri et al., 2005). “Reputation is important also at the individual level, as the higher an individual’s reputation is, the more valuable he/she becomes in both the external or internal labor market” (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994, in Delmestri et al., 2005: 978). We therefore believe that every value assessment process in the creative industries falls under the scope of reputation building.

Reputation is a prevalent issue in the creative industries. The majority of the work of creators is now built around it (e.g. Boutinot & Delacour, 2019; Delmestri et al., 2005; Lin, 2017) because it is from this reputation that their production abilities derive. If creative processes are mostly individual, the “industries are based on creativity and the recognition of personal works” (Boutinot & Delacour, 2019). Production within the creative industries is also particular to them because the creative product has both “its own aesthetic characteristics and symbolic functions, making it possible to make sense of the works created” (Boutinot & Delacour, 2019), a symbolic dimension that takes precedence in the evaluation framework of the work. Furthermore, creative products are characterized by their “inherent unknowability” (Caves, 2000); because of their particularities and their highly symbolic attributes, the creative industries are classified as being “hard to value” (e.g. De Vany & Walls, 1999; Gemser et al., 2008; Lampel et al., 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Priem, 2007).

Wijnberg and Gemser (2000) developed “selection system theory” to counteract value assessment issues. Under this theory, actors are “competing with each other for recognition” and “the selectors consist of actors whose decisions will influence the outcome of the process” (p. 324). They distinguish the following three types of selection systems. *Market selection* refers

to the product's confrontation with the market, i.e. the consumers are the selectors. *Peer selection* refers to the selection that operates between people who produce a similar good or product and who are "part of the same group" (p. 324). *Expert selection* refers to selectors who "are neither producers nor consumers, but have the power to shape selection by virtue of specialized knowledge and distinctive abilities" (p. 324). If the classification here is, by definition, theoretical, the selection is mostly the result of the interplay between different selection systems. However, one system usually remains dominant depending on the context.

"In order to deal with the problem of evaluating intangible, experiential and highly subjective products and services, a variety of devices and ways of performing evaluative practices have been invented" (Gemser et al., 2008, in Jones et al.: 762), one of which is critics and ranking systems. The specificities of the creative industries and the highly qualitative and symbolic degree that is associated with them make the study of their valuation by experts particularly interesting. Indeed, critics, journalists and guides – which we call "experts" – are necessary to provide a better understanding of quality and value assessment in hard-to-value industries. When conferred by experts, reputation assessments are "not conferred by fellow producers, or clients, but by third parties whose opinions are important in determining who is successful" (Boutinot et al., 2017: 1401). Experts are usually considered to have had a great deal of experience, either aesthetic or specialized knowledge, which gives them credibility (Lane, 2013). They are therefore judged to be more legitimate than other stakeholders in assessing reputation because they "reduce ignorance by being unrelated to actors' intentions" (Karpik, 1996: 530, personal translation).

The reputations conferred by experts are particularly relevant in the creative industries. Indeed, "since creative industries deal heavily with symbolic, sensory and aesthetic attributes that make a product's quality inherently difficult to evaluate (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000), critics play a key role in assessing, interpreting and understanding creative workers' artistic offering (e.g. Foster et al., 2011; Gemser & Wijnberg, 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Rao et al., 2003). By validating creative professionals' work (Kirschbaum, 2007), critics influence consumers' choices through their reviews (Hirsch, 1972; Hsu, 2006a) and act as first evaluators of the professional's balancing act" (Slavich & Castelluci, 2016: 824). Some experts, such as *Le Guide Michelin* in gastronomy, the Angoulême Prize for comedians, and the Oscars in the movie industry, are well known by the public.

## 7. *The Creative Industries in the Light of Grand Challenges*

As the creative industries are an interesting and current topic, it makes sense to further untangle the challenges they face. These industries lie at the confluence of several societal and contemporary challenges, particularly grand challenges, i.e. global problems such as climate change, poverty and exploitative labor that need to be addressed to improve general societal well-being (Ferraro et al., 2015).

Some articles already examine the links between the creative industries, creativity, grand challenges and sustainable economy (Abisuga Oyekunle & Mziwoxolo Sirayi, 2018; Curtis et al., 2014; Parreira, 2020). In 2021, the World Bank published a report entitled “Cities, Culture, Creativity, Leveraging Culture and Creativity for Sustainable Urban Development and Inclusive Growth”<sup>2</sup>, which considers that “cultural and creative industries are key drivers of the creative economy and represent important sources of employment, economic growth, and innovation, thus contributing to city competitiveness and sustainability”. Creativity and sustainability are increasingly being studied by creative scholars who consider artists and artistic productions to be able to change social and economic structures toward more sustainable practices (Dieleman, 2007; Hoffman, 2013; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012). Finally, some artists and creatives are particularly concerned by exploitative labor and unfair working conditions (e.g. Wijngaarden, & Loots, 2020). As George (in Bouquillion, 2012: 267) states, “it seems legitimate to wonder whether the activity of creation will not be at the heart of the new forms of management and thereby at the heart of work exploitation” (personal translation).

To conclude, in this first part we discussed the main characteristics of the creative industries. Situated at the heart of managerial, economic and global issues, the creative industries are an interesting area to study because of the specificities of their actors, who oscillate between artistic and economic logics, their creative works, which are symbolic, aesthetic and non-utilitarian, and their evaluation system, which gives a central place to experts.

In the second part, we return to these specificities by applying them to the creative industry of gastronomy and unveiling its particular characteristics. The creative industry of

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<sup>2</sup> World Bank & UNESCO. (2021). Cities, Culture, Creativity: Leveraging Culture and Creativity for Sustainable Urban Development and Inclusive Growth. In *World Bank eLibrary*. Retrieved April 16, 2023, from <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/35621>

gastronomy is an interesting subject for studying the challenges around creativity and their consequences. As chefs are considered to be creatives, sometimes even artists, this makes them appropriate subject for the study of individual creativity. Moreover, reputation issues are the cornerstone of gastronomy and creative gastronomic offerings, especially through the selection system operated by experts such as guides or critics. Finally, as gastronomy is also facing new challenges such as those related to waste management and alternative food systems, the next section focuses on identifying the main challenges facing gastronomy in France and highlights unresolved and under-studied issues related to individual creativity.

## **II. Unveiling a Creative Industry in Context: The Case of Gastronomy in France**

As mentioned earlier, gastronomy is considered to be a creative industry which can increase the awareness and interest of creative scholars in management studies (e.g. Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Svejenova et al., 2007; Stierand, 2015). The purpose of this section is to identify what makes gastronomy a particular creative industry by unveiling the issues it faces and its main actors. We chose to anchor this work in the context of France, a major gastronomic location in the world<sup>3</sup>. Although we set this dissertation in a geographical context, most of the gastronomy-related issues discussed apply to all gastronomic contexts. These issues include the centrality of creativity, chefs as creative individuals and their interactions with other actors such as their “brigade” or peers, the context of the restaurant and the nature of the creative offerings, the high degree of codification and the major role experts play in reputation-building strategies. This section aims to unveil these concerns while adding some historical and sociological specificities related to the French context.

### *1. The Origins of French Gastronomy*

In France today, haute cuisine, or gastronomy, is the product of years of codification, regulation, evaluation and diffusion of both material and symbolic norms (e.g. Ferguson, 1998;

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. (2010). *UNESCO - Gastronomic meal of the French*. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/gastronomic-meal-of-the-french-00437>

Durand, et al., 2007; Rao, et al., 2003). At the beginning of the Renaissance, no national cuisine was superior to any other. However, it was during this period that the idea of French culinary superiority emerged and that the “national culinary identity” was gradually constructed in France (Rambourg, 2013). The French “culinary model” then became a reference which enjoyed a certain level of hegemony from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Its main principles, later found in the “Nouvelle Cuisine” of the 1970s, included preservation of the natural taste of food, balanced seasoning and a more accurate control of cooking. From the outset, cuisine was cultural, as it was intrinsically linked to its geographical (“local cuisine”) and social (“bourgeois cuisine”, “popular cuisine”) roots (Rambourg, 2013).

Gastronomy emerged in the first half of the 19th century, when food journalists and chefs made dining out a formalized and codified art (Ferguson, 1998). The term “gastronomy” was popularized in 1801 by the work of Joseph Berchoux and was recognized by the *Académie Française* dictionary in 1835 (Rambourg, 2013). The notion of gastronomy thus establishes codes and rules for how to consume and appreciate a dish. It refers to “the art of good food” and contributes to the written codification of this art. According to Rambourg (2013: 14) “like the painter, the cook must know a set of rules, pre-established codifications, methods defined in advance to create a work”. As gastronomy gradually became more professional and more formal, it represented the beginning of the great French tradition of haute cuisine, created by all its actors: chefs, gastronomic articles, guides and guests.

This codification of haute cuisine accelerated quickly with the advent of restaurants. Although taverns and inns already existed in the *Ancien Régime*, and the streets of the Middle Ages had a good number of professionals who offered cooked dishes (Rambourg, 2013; Louisgrand, 2021), it was after the French Revolution that cooks, who had previously worked for noble families, left their homes to set up restaurants in towns and villages that were open to the general public. Beyond the simple heritage of the French Revolution, it was the revolution of these trades (roasters, wine merchants, pastry cooks) who wished to receive the world and to organize themselves in real establishments. Thus, Patrick Rambourg writes that “the great cuisine came out of the private aristocratic salons and went out into the street”. The arrival of restaurants and service establishments also marked the beginning of direct interaction between professionals in the food industry and their customers. Thus, “restaurant owners established a new type of relationship between the cook and the guest, who was now a customer. (...)

Reputation depends (then) on a clientele that will gradually constitute a public opinion” (Rambourg, 2013).

Culinary critics and haute-cuisine professionals, such as Grimod de la Reynière and his *Almanach des Gourmands* (1803) and Antonin Carême, had already sought to determine the main principles and philosophy of this cuisine which was developing in a split from the *Ancien Régime* (Rambourg, 2013). The high point of this formalization and codification was reached in 1903 when Escoffier published his famous *Guide Culinaire*, which established the ten commandments of what was later called “classical” cuisine in France. In his guide, he sets out all the rules and practices that every chef must respect. These include the power of the restaurateur, the length of the menus, which required a lot of stocks and a few fresh products, ritualized tasting spaces, flambéed preparations and a long tasting process (Rao et al., 2003). These criteria were then disseminated to and institutionalized in professional organizations and cooking schools such as *Le Cordon Bleu*. The predominance of the Escoffier rules continued until the end of the 1960s.

In the early 1970s, under the impetus of Michelin-starred chefs and *Meilleurs Ouvriers de France* (MOFs) such as Paul Bocuse, Michel Guérard, the Troisgros brothers and Alain Chapel, and following the French social events of May 1968, Escoffier’s principles were progressively called into question, giving way to a new ideology: nouvelle cuisine. Some chefs advocated breaking with classical cuisine by asking for more freshness and creativity and by transgressing the principles established by Escoffier, which they considered too limiting. This gave chefs more autonomy to express their creativity and to elaborate innovative proposals. It was no longer enough to interpret pre-established principles in a guide; it was time to let the chef’s imagination run free. However, formalization and codification quickly took over. The public’s acceptance of this new way of “cooking” was facilitated by the publication in 1972 of the monthly periodical *Vive La Nouvelle Cuisine Française* by culinary critics Henri Gault and Christian Millau, now known as the *Gault&Millau* guide, a competitor to the *Michelin Guide* but with less scope and influence. They established the structure of nouvelle cuisine, in the form, once again, of ten commandments based on the four values of truth, lightness, simplicity and imagination. Nouvelle cuisine continued until around 1997, when it gradually gave way to other principles such as “contract cooking” and “reassuring cooking” (Rao et al., 2003). It should be noted that codification remains relatively strong in gastronomy generally and not just

in the French context, as shown in recent contributions on creativity management (Capdevila et al., 2015; Slavich et al., 2014).

### *1. Gastronomy as a Creative industry: Toward a Definition of Membership Criteria*

Beyond the classical and historical arts such as painting, visual arts or music, which have long been labeled creative and cultural activities, the classification of creative and cultural industries is constantly evolving and differs between countries. For example, in 1997, LEG-Culture-Eurostat<sup>4</sup> considered cultural activities to include architecture, archives and multimedia production. In 2001, the DCMS added fashion, television and video games to its list of creative industries. Gastronomy is a recent addition to the scope of creative and cultural industries, particularly in management sciences. In 2015, BPI France published a report entitled “Routed or Augmented Creativity: How Digital Technology is Transforming the French Touch Industries”<sup>5</sup>, which identifies gastronomy as a creative industry with 3.5 billion euros of added value and 60,000 jobs. Indeed, management scholars were slow to acknowledge that gastronomy encompasses creative features, sometimes referred to as “culinary arts” (Harper, 2019; Neuwirth, 2014). However, “as with someone working in sculpting or in dance, the culinary arts involve understanding some science (in this case the science of food and in the case of sculpting the science of materials; and in dance, the science of the human body) and as well the imaginative art of gastronomy itself” (Harper, 2019: 1). Like classical arts, some scholars believe that “the culinary arts can be considered as actions with aesthetic values that not only reveal the flavors of food, but also affect the visuality and the guest’s eye pleasure, serve for self-expression, contain a social meaning, and affect people’s emotions, as well as appealing to their senses” (Ekincek & Günay, 2023). Thus, gastronomy is a particular form of art because, unlike other artworks such as paintings, pieces of music or designed objects, it affects all five senses including taste.

Creativity management scholars gradually started to investigate gastronomy as a topic of interest for studying creative roots and practices (e.g. Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castellucci,

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<sup>4</sup> Eurostat (1997) : “Les statistiques culturelles dans l’UE”, LEG Final Report “Population et conditions sociales” 3/2000/E/N°1, Eurostat Working Papers, European Commission.

<sup>5</sup> Industries culturelles et créatives : la French Touch en mouvement. (2015). BPI France. Retrieved April 24, 2023, from <https://www.bpifrance.fr/nos-actualites/industries-culturelles-et-creatives-la-french-touch-en-mouvement>

2016; Stierand et al., 2014; Svejenova et al., 2007; Svejenova et al., 2010). The terms “gastronomy” and “haute cuisine” are used interchangeably in the literature, both referring to “the systematic pursuit of culinary creativity and excellence” (Ferguson, 1998, in Svejenova, et al., 2007: 543). In this dissertation, we apply theories and studies of gastronomy in the context of France, including restaurants in France, and call it “French gastronomy”. French gastronomy encompasses high quality restaurants led by creative chefs, based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand, 2015).

Despite France’s rich cultural heritage in gastronomy and the fact that UNESCO registered the “French Gastronomic Dish” as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010, with few exceptions (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Bouty, et al., 2013; Clauzel et al., 2019; Durand et al., 2007; Gomez, et al., 2016; Rao, et al., 2003, 2005), management sciences have not explored gastronomy and haute cuisine in the French context to any great extent. Furthermore, most of the articles that do exist focus on reputation patterns among experts and institutional maintenance of the *Michelin Guide* (Bouty et al., 2013; Clauzel et al., 2019; Karpik, 2000) or codification (Durand et al., 2007). To our knowledge, very few study the creativity and creative processes of chefs (Bouty & Gomez, 2013) and we therefore believe there is still room for further investigation of the structure of the individual creativity of chefs in French haute cuisine.

Although the criteria to be met to be classified as a gastronomic chef remain unclear, a first definition would encompass combining creativity and technique, and we discuss these characteristics further in the next section.

## 2. *Typology of Actors*

### a. The Main Actor: The Chef as a Creative Actor

Chefs are considered the main actors in gastronomy as they are the cornerstone of their restaurants’ creative orientations (e.g. Messeni & Petruzzelli, 2019; Stierand et al., 2014; Svejenova et al., 2007) by performing culinary creativity in the form of “the production of new dishes and ideas” (Peng et al., 2013). Creative chefs are mostly depicted as “extraordinary” or elite cooks (e.g. Abbate et al., 2019; Stierand & Dörfler, 2012; Stierand et al., 2014) with particular abilities, i.e. creative thinking and strong technical skills anchored in the craft roots of cuisine.

This double requirement is apparent to French gastronomy actors and helps to determine whether a chef belongs to the field. For most chefs, their careers begin with technical training in specialist schools (public hotel schools, private schools such as the Ferrandi school, and institutions created by chefs, such as the *Institut Paul Bocuse*). It is through this training that chefs first acquire the basic techniques that are necessary for the elaboration of French cuisine. At the end of their training they get an apprenticeship with chefs with various reputations, who help them to further their technical training in a restaurant setting through the master–apprentice relationship (Slavich & Castellucci, 2016).

Whether chefs are deemed to be members of French gastronomy is influenced by the reputation they have among experts in the field. Stierand (2015) explains that chefs who are recognized by experts are de facto considered to be creative. Although it only makes a brief and opaque reference to creativity, the *Michelin Guide* also includes it in its selection criteria. At the same time, prestigious competitions such as the *Prix Paul Bocuse* and the MOF help to consecrate the technical abilities of chefs. Since its creation, the MOF competition has distinguished the work of the greatest chefs, such as Paul Bocuse, Joël Robuchon or Eric Frechon. Born from Lucien Klotz’s desire to celebrate manual and artisanal trades, the MOF competition aims to reward the mastery of know-how, knowledge and technical abilities, characteristic of French excellence. While it brings together more than 230 trades, it is particularly well known and recognized by chefs, where winners wear the recognizable blue/white/red collar.

i. The Brigade: Chef’s Workers and Future Chefs-in-the-Making

Although chefs are considered the main gatekeepers of the creative choices in their restaurants and are the main recipients of awards and distinctions (e.g. Bouty et al., 2018; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Traynor et al., 2022; Stierand, 2015), they do not usually work alone. As well as working with producers and suppliers, their main collaborative work is based on their relationship with members of their brigade. The brigade comprises a group of sous-chefs and young cooks who are chefs-in-the-making, who work with the chefs and are chosen by them based on their previous working experiences or them having a similar cooking philosophy. The chefs give the instructions and lead the creative direction of their restaurants and the brigade members execute the chefs’ orders.

Being a member of a brigade is constitutive of the career of a chef, which is mostly embodied through the apprenticeship experience (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Stierand et al., 2008). Therefore, “apprenticeships have been traditionally viewed, especially in crafts and creative industries, as a well-established and legitimate way for individuals not only to learn new skills and knowledge, but also to ‘signal’ (Jones, 2002) proximity to the master’s offering”. They are also considered “an avenue for an apprentice to show continuity with the master’s creative arena as well as to develop a personal signature style (Elsbach, 2009) that differentiates the apprentice as a creative professional” (Slavich & Castellucci, 2016: 824). Working with and for a chef provides an apprenticeship of the norms, rules, values, techniques and know-how that are essential for a career in the field. It is also within the kitchen that aspiring chefs build relationships and a network. The relationship between brigade members and chefs depends on the attitude of the chefs. While some involve brigade members in the creative decisions, giving them more autonomy, others can be more rigorous and limit the involvement of brigade members to executing repetitive tasks.

ii. Peers: Friends or Foes?

One of the strongest links that can be initially developed between peers is the relationship between the apprentice and their master (Slavich & Castellucci, 2016, 2020). Peers can subsequently interact with each other through temporary collaborations around a project or a special dinner. They can participate in networks and communities of interests (Rao et al., 2003) such as the *Collège Culinaire de France*<sup>6</sup>, which is an independent collective of chefs and recognized producers and suppliers who organize fairs and meetings between their professional members. Collaborations also take place between similar peers who wish to challenge the existing order and disrupt the codes and practices in gastronomy (Rao et al., 2003).

As selection system theory (Winjberg & Gemser, 2000) shows, reputation can also be conferred by peers. However, few studies concretely demonstrate the impact of peer recognition in gastronomy (e.g. Svejenova et al., 2007).

Peers can also offer passive or active inspiration to other chefs. This can happen when they visit others’ restaurants and can be the result of the peers’ own communication strategies. For example, some share their knowledge by publishing cookery books (Svejenova et al., 2007),

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<sup>6</sup> <https://college-culinaire-de-france.fr/presentation>

as in the case of the 3-starred chef Ferran Adria or *The Noma Guide to Fermentation*<sup>7</sup> from Noma's 3-starred chef René Redzepi. Therefore, by interacting with their peers in gastronomy, chefs can tackle the issue of imitation and the thin lines between being inspired, paying tribute and copying, particularly because "chefs normally struggle, however, to assert property rights over creative dishes, which are often keys to the restaurant's goodwill and success" (Presenza et al., 2017: 81). Overall, the goal is to achieve "optimal distinctiveness" (Brewer, 1991; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016), which is a constant quest for creatives to find balance between inclusion and differentiation.

#### b. Experts and Critics: Assessing Value of Chefs' Creativity

As discussed earlier, the valuation of art works is complex and is not based on clear and straightforward criteria. It therefore necessitates the use of intermediaries who are considered to be legitimate for assessing value of creative production. These intermediaries are usually referred to as experts. French gastronomy is highly codified with many traditional rules and work ethics which shape the rules of the game to be followed by chefs (Rao et al., 2003). Reputation is of major importance and is embodied in famous rankings (Stierand et al., 2014) such as Michelin stars or the grades out of 20 awarded by the *Gault&Millau*. Experts play a key role in assessing the value of the creative products developed by chefs, and reputation is central to the profitability and value creation of restaurants (e.g. Surlemont & Johnson, 2005; Rao et al., 2005; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). Although reputation is quite central and crucial for chefs, French gastronomy still suffers from the blurriness of its valuation process (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). This requires further investigation and understanding, which we seek to address in this dissertation.

We next provide some historical context to the rise of the *Michelin Guide* and the importance of guides and critics in French gastronomy.

The *Michelin Guide* is the institutional embodiment of the extreme codification of French gastronomy. In this highly codified universe, chefs understand that conforming to the high standards in force is a sine qua none condition for them to work and be recognized. This

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<sup>7</sup> Redzepi, R., & Zilber, D. (2018). *The Noma Guide to Fermentation: Including koji, kombuchas, shoyus, misos, vinegars, garums, lacto-ferments, and black fruits and vegetables (Foundations of Flavor)* (1st ed.). Artisan.

requirement to conform has always been overseen by the evaluation of the famous *Michelin Guide*. The guide is the figurehead of French gastronomy and was created in 1900 by two brothers who founded the Michelin tire factory. Initially intended for motorists, it was distributed free of charge as a practical guide to accompany travelers on their journeys around France. At the end of the 1920s, it awarded its first star “*de la bonne table*” and its success story began in 1933 when the job of inspector was created. From that moment on, the *Guide Rouge* became the specialist guide for the French hotel and restaurant industry. Since then, it has been the supreme overseer of the evaluation and reputation of gastronomic restaurants in France, at times holding the power of life or death over the survival of restaurants. An example of its power was when, in 1996) Bernard Collon, who refused to abandon the principles of classical cuisine in the middle of the Nouvelle Cuisine boom, lost a star (Rao et al., 2003). This supremacy of the *Michelin Guide* is also demonstrated in relation to the chefs who instigated Nouvelle Cuisine, as it was only because they had already been distinguished by the famous *Guide Rouge* that they were considered to legitimately question the principles of classical cuisine in operation at the time. If they had not been recognized by the *Michelin Guide*, they would not have been so effective in their culinary revolution and may even have been completely marginalized (Rao et al., 2003).

Since its creation, the *Michelin Guide* has had the paradoxical mission of “suppressing the unforeseen in the discovery of the unknown” (Karpik, 2000: 377). Insofar as “all guides are knowledge devices” and “all claim a form of authority without which they would be devoid of the slightest influence” (Karpik, 2000: 369), the *Michelin Guide* was quickly able to impose itself in France, and then abroad, because it was rapidly recognized as the ultimate authority. Thus, by responding to the double requirement that quality devices “create conditions for judgment and guarantees of the promise” (Karpik, 2000: 370), it established a relationship of trust with its readers which allowed it to perpetuate its hegemonic position over time.

The *Michelin Guide* has seen its sales numbers drop considerably, from 150,000 copies in 2007 to 44,000 in 2018. However, its managers are not worried as the digital format is now taking over from the paper format. This is not the first economic obstacle that the guide has had to face. As early as 1960, the context suggests that its quasi-monopolistic position was being challenged with the arrival of several competing guides, notably *Gault&Millau* (Karpik, 2000). However, it is the parallel growth of tourism and gastronomy that has counterbalanced this trend and ensures that the *Michelin Guide* will continue to enjoy great success. It is clear that the guide’s judging criteria have remained the same since its creation, with one star meaning “a good table in its category”, two stars meaning “excellent cuisine, worth a detour” and three stars

rewarding “one of the best tables in France, worth the trip”. However, above all, the guide’s philosophy has not changed: for the *Guide Rouge*, consistency is the cornerstone of its judgment. After more than a century of existence, the *Michelin Guide* continues to contribute to the continuity of the quality market by acting as a “symbolic construction that dissipates opacity” (Karpik, 2000: 388), thus favoring the essential and irremediable interaction between the customer and the restaurant.

Another more contemporary approach to gastronomy opposes traditional bourgeois cuisine, to which classic French cuisine and Nouvelle Cuisine belong, and emerging gourmet, creative cuisine (Rao et al., 2003). Traditional bourgeois cuisine meets the clear criteria established by the *Michelin Guide*.

Depicted in the shape of a pyramid, the Michelin stars indicate the path that chefs must follow by first obtaining one or two stars before they can reach the holy grail of three stars (Dollase, 2017). Conversely, gourmet, creative cuisine emphasizes an openness to the world and a space for unlimited creativity that has been developing for the last twenty years. It is clear that this creative cuisine has gradually been gaining a place within the conformist and traditional *Michelin Guide*. This is evidenced by the creation in 2008 of the *Michelin Guide Tokyo*, which marked the beginning of its internationalization. By awarding macaroons to Japanese street food and sushi restaurants, the guide completely challenged what everyone considered legitimate haute cuisine (Dollase, 2017). A few years later, in 2017, its association with the “trendy” and anti-conformist guide “*Le Fooding*” upset the codes of French gastronomy. On its creation in 2000, Alexandre Cammas, creator of *Le Fooding*, positioned himself as a fervent detractor of the *Michelin Guide*, which he considered to be responsible for the decadence of French gastronomy, notably because it prevented young chefs from showcasing their creativity.

A further evolution of the *Michelin Guide* is also evidenced by it being open to more vegetal, less luxurious and even molecular cuisines. Finally, the climax of its evolution was reached in 2020 when Michelin decided to remove a star from the legendary Paul Bocuse, leader of the “nouvelle cuisine” in France. However, their open-mindedness is not yet dominant in France and old habits die hard. What is possible today in Japan is not, for the moment, possible in France. The traditionalist pressure exerted there is still prevalent. This is evidenced, for example, by the English *Restaurant Magazine*’s ranking of “The World’s 50 Best Restaurants”. While otherwise renowned French restaurants are only ranked in minor positions, the first place has been awarded for several years in a row to the chef René Redzepi for his “NOMA” restaurant in Copenhagen, despite him only being awarded two Michelin stars (Dollase, 2017).

Although criticized, sometimes because it does not evolve enough and sometimes because it evolves too much, the *Michelin Guide* remains the figurehead through which all the values, beliefs and symbolism associated with culinary culture in France are transmitted. In reality, the issue goes beyond the simple pressure that Michelin puts on French chefs. Pressure is also exerted by the public, who, nourished by years of culinary criteria and highly codified classifications, naturally and almost unconsciously, impose their expectations on chefs. When asked about the controversies that the guide has been experiencing, its international director G. Poullennec explains that “the *Michelin Guide* is made for people” and that they make “recommendations that they want to be current, (...) fair and also reliable”. One only has to hear comments such as “this is not a 3-star meal” to understand how ingrained these classifications are in the minds of customers. This recognition is all the more important because haute cuisine is a creative industry that is mostly self-financed and does not benefit from any subsidies, unlike music or cinema, for example. In a sense, chefs are financially dependent on the satisfaction of their public, a dependence which requires them not to neglect their expectations and aspirations.

Alongside the *Michelin Guide*, the *Gault&Millau* continues to occupy a leading position, although it now focuses more on professionals in the sector. In addition, the judging team includes some gastronomic journalists from the major national press, notably Figaroscope from *Figaro*, and a few independent journalists.

### c. Clients: Actors in their Own Right?

As discussed at the beginning of this section, haute cuisine is a particular type of artwork, which involves the five senses. What also makes this artwork particular is its reception process: the receivers (i.e. the clients) consume the work directly without intermediaries, in the presence of the artists themselves (i.e. the chefs). For example, chefs often go to talk with their clients at the end of service and gather their impressions through indirect comments reported back to them by the waiters. Thus, clients are an integral part of the chefs’ production, and client satisfaction is crucial to chefs because they expect quality (Surlemont et al., 2005). Clients and general consumers are also increasingly significant as a result of the rise of food-blogging, social media critiques and online ranking platforms such as Yelp and TripAdvisor, the latter of which was recently bought by the *Michelin Guide*.

However, the relationships between clients and chefs are multiple and uncertain. Chefs assume that client satisfaction is compulsory for the profitability of restaurants. As Glăveanu

and Lubart (2014) state, the so-called “general public” are receivers of artworks that are made to be “seen” or “used”. However, they also note that they can have an “ambivalent attitude” toward them, as is the case, for example, when artists and composers say they do not make music for the public but do so for themselves and their art. According to the chefs, clients play a very minor role in their creative decisions because of their relative lack of knowledge of how creativity works in haute cuisine. Thus, chefs tend not to take account of some of the clients’ advice or remarks in their creative process. However, client visits and satisfaction are favored by expert reports which define what quality and creativity should be, making the direct study of experts more relevant. Finally, clients are sometimes biased, with varying degrees of knowledge and insights on the subject, which makes it difficult to understand them and their influence on chefs

Based on selection system theory (Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000; Priem, 2007), we believe that experts are the most relevant actors for assessing the reputation of chefs in gastronomy (Bouty et al., 2013; Karpik, 2000). Gastronomy is entrenched in a “quality market” characterized by opacity and quality uncertainty, where traditional factors such as price, offer and demand (i.e. from the clients themselves) are not sufficient to ensure its sustainability (Karpik, 2000). “[I]t can therefore only exist and last through the active presence of mechanisms which, rather than representing obstacles to competition, establish the sustainable functioning of the market” (Karpik, 2000: 370, personal translation). Such mechanisms include experts, labels and rankings.

Therefore, as clients are neither experts nor producers, and based on the relationships with their clients that the chefs described, our analysis of experts, selection system theory and quality market theory, we decided that the role of clients and the general public falls outside of the scope of this study as they do not have a direct, relevant influence on the creativity of chefs. However, we do not consider them to be neutral and completely without relevance when studying the creativity of chefs as they intrinsically influence them through various channels, particularly because they embody general social trends.

### *3. Current Dynamics and New Challenges*

Gastronomy follows new societal dynamics, particularly those related to ecological concerns. At the heart of the debates on sustainable food systems (Beacham, 2018; Eakin et al.,

2017), haute cuisine echoes United Nations Sustainable Development Goal No. 12 for 2023<sup>8</sup> on responsible consumption and production, particularly regarding food waste, fair food supply and organic food production.

These concerns are also consecrated in the field. For example, in 2020, the *Michelin Guide* introduced its “Green Star”, which rewards chefs who develop sustainable practices in their cooking activities and philosophy. In 2020, the *Michelin Guide* gave an award for the first time to a French vegan restaurant, called “ONA”. At the same time, dominant voices emerged in the field, criticizing the current system and its inability to meet sustainability standards. For example, René Redzepi, the famous 3-starred chef at Noma (Copenhagen), which had been awarded the title of best restaurant in the world, said on Noma’s Instagram account that “to continue being NOMA, we must change”, thereby invoking the paradox between the restaurant’s ecological engagement and the fact that the current organizational structure is not at all sustainable.

Recognized by *Le Fooding* at the beginning of the 2000s, and rewarded by new eco-labels such as Ecotable, a younger generation of chefs, mostly millennials, are embracing these new challenges and incorporating them into their daily cooking activities in the form of food waste management, alternative and local supply chains, and vegetable-dominant dishes (e.g. Gössling & Hall, 2021; Yamane & Kaneko, 2021). Examples of such chefs are Florent Layden and Victor Mercier. This therefore leaves space for new research and inquiries on alternative food systems in gastronomy and the link between creativity and sustainability.

At the same time, the reputation process is also being questioned, particularly because of the opacity of the *Michelin Guide*’s star system and its tendency to arbitrariness (Clauzel et al., 2019), which is often criticized in the mass media. However, alongside other guides that emerged in the 2000s such as *Le Fooding* and other prizes awarded to young, promising chefs such as “the Great Chef of Tomorrow” (*Gault&Millau*), the reputation conferred by experts is still crucial for chefs, especially for those in the process of constructing their career and their identity (e.g. Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Koch et al., 2018). According to a study by Olivier Gergaud in 2017 (Kedge Business School, *Laboratoire interdisciplinaire d’évaluation des politiques publiques* Sciences Po Paris), losing a star equates to a reduction in profitability from 3% to an average loss of -2%.

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations. *THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development*. Retrieved April 24, 2023, from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

To conclude this part, the background of the creative industries in general and gastronomy in particular led us to consider several structuring tensions and challenges. Understanding the individual creativity of the artist or creator, from its origins to its implementation, is one of the major debates around these creative industries. Reputation issues are also a cornerstone of creative activities. The production of cultural and creative goods and services requires actors who are able to produce symbolic and aesthetic goods that are different from traditional and utilitarian goods. At the heart of a flourishing economy, the “creative class” (Florida, 2002) is also subject to major issues of the time, such as sustainability. At the same time, the specificities of each industry, here gastronomy, lead us to question other challenges that these creative individuals face. These include the over-preponderant role in haute cuisine of the reputation chefs have among experts, the particular structure of the restaurants and the brigade’s mode of production, the reception of artistic works directly by the customer, and a food sector anchored in the constraints of alternative food systems and food waste management. This then leads us to consider the individual creativity of chefs, particularly young and upcoming chefs, and how it is articulated within the framework of French gastronomy. In studying this relationship, these structuring tensions lead us to theorize gastronomy as a field with the parameters outlined in the following section, where we also present the theoretical concepts in greater detail.

# Theoretical Background

## I. Key-concepts: State of the Art and Research Perspectives

### 1. *Introducing the Notion of the Field*

The notion of the field has been studied in various contexts. These include: “scientific fields” (Bourdieu, 1975; Crane, 1987; Landström & Harirchi, 2018), which refer to “all work being done on a particular cognitive problem” (Cole 1983: 130); “organizational fields” in neo-institutional theory, where they are defined as “those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 148); and “field issues”, where individuals converge around common debates (Hoffman, 1999) such as protection of the environment.

The structure of French gastronomy with its particular rules, agents and power relationships calls for the introduction of this notion of the “field”. We believe that the theory of the field developed by Bourdieu (1992, 1993, 1996) is suited to this subject for several reasons. First, Bourdieu applied the theory to the cultural production and art worlds (Bourdieu, 1993, 1996), making it particularly suited to the study of tensions in creative industries. This also echoes the views of creative scholars who theorize creative field studies using Bourdieu’s concept of the field (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2011; Jones et al., 2016) and of other scholars whose work about art is similar to Bourdieu’s first attempts to theorize the art world (e.g. Becker, 1982). In line with Jones et al. (2016), this theorization enables deep exploration of the dynamics of power and Bourdieu’s notion of “symbolic capital”, which is particularly relevant for creative fields given the prominent role that reputation challenges play in the creative industries. According to Jones et al. (2016: 19), “Bourdieu’s work, however, not only presents an integrated overview of how a field functions, but also makes the important contribution of making power relations explicit”. While neo-institutional theory defines “field issues” as fields where individuals, sometimes from different backgrounds, gather around a common issue and are aware that they share common debates (Hoffman, 1999), Bourdieu’s theory allows us to think about a more integrated field in which similar individuals gather in an autonomous socially organized space to compete with each other while producing their own artworks. In the view of Bouty and Gomez (2011), “it questions the traditional dichotomy between micro and

macro levels: practice, as the doings of agents, is conceptualized as the encounter between both social and personal elements” (922). Finally, Bourdieu’s theory of the field calls for a focus on producers, whereas neo-institutional theory also includes clients and consumers.

Thus, according to Bourdieu, a field is a set of its own rules of the game, agents who deal with them and institutions that structure them (Bourdieu, 1992). Field agents are “all who have ties with art; who live for art and, to varying degrees, from it” (Bourdieu, 1993: 205). Such agents include producers, critics, collectors, middlemen, curators, etc. (Jones et al., 2016). A field is autonomous and holds specific issues that are unique to the field (Lafaye, 1996: 97-98).

Each new entrant must follow “the established order of the field” (Bourdieu, 1992: 375). Bourdieu defines the rules of the game as the “*habitus*” (e.g. Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970), i.e. a “system of incorporated dispositions which makes implicit rules of the game formerly more or less integrated by the actors in the field” (Debaene, s.d.). At the same time, agent behaviors are shaped by *illusio*, which means that they know the rules of the game and consider these rules to be worthy and credible (Bourdieu, 1997).

A field is also a place of constant competition for positions of power and status. Positions in the field depend on a relational system based on the balance of power, which is mostly determined by the level of symbolic capital held by the actors. This symbolic capital confers a level of legitimacy in the form of recognition and is intended to be specific to the field (Bourdieu, 1992; Lafaye, 1996: 97-98). It can be defined as the “volume of recognition, legitimacy and consecration accumulated by a social agent within its field of belonging” (Durand, s.d., personal translation) and is therefore crucial for understanding the behaviors and decisions of different actors in the field. *Habitus* and symbolic capital are structured by dominant institutions (Bourdieu, 1970, 1992) which diffuse legitimate codes and conduct. The rules are multiple and evolving because of constant internal battles to define the rules by individuals who hold positions of power (Bourdieu, 1992).

In a cultural field, art producers hold different positions in the field. To characterize these positions, we can use the typology developed by Becker (1982), who completed Bourdieu’s work on the cultural field, and which was enriched by Jones et al. (2016: 9):

“*Mainstreams* are what Becker (1982) calls ‘integrated professionals’. They are trained within the industry, perform with conventions and use existing art worlds.

*Mavericks* are creative actors, who may or may not be trained within the industry, but feel constrained in their work by existing conventions and embark on challenging some

of them, while keeping others, in order to avoid incomprehensibility and lack of collaboration (Becker, 1982).

*Misfits* are outsiders who are unable to mobilize collaborators from extant art worlds. They break or do not abide by social rules (Becker, 1963), and may, thereby, have more freedom in the creation of new forms and conventions, deviating from expectations and embarking on path creation (Garud & Karnoe, 2001).

*Amphibians* can transit across core and periphery, art and commerce, and other dichotomies; they provide a lot more mobility to the playing field as well as diffuse practices across domains (Powell & Sandholtz, 2012). Similarly, they are able to move between insider and outsider roles and positions.”

(Jones et al., 2016)

How agents invest in the field depends on the sum of the positions they have already occupied in their trajectory (Dirkx, s.d.). Therefore, the more dominant and consecrated *mainstream* agents are more likely to impose change and be innovative because of their dominant positions and the support they gain from these positions (Jones et al., 2016). Individuals can also move between positions. For example, *mavericks* can be former *mainstreams* who want to get rid of certain constraining conventions (Becker, 1982). Finally, “elites may remain central by sponsoring misfits or mavericks and enabling them to acquire new competences and update and preserve their central position” (Jones et al., 2016:9).

Lastly, a field constructs itself in an autonomous way around unique rules independent of external struggles and interests (Bourdieu, 1992). However, a field is never totally open to external battles (Bourdieu, 1992: 184), whether economic, sociological or political. Thus, the influence of exogenous factors is still constitutive of changes and evolutions in a field.

## 2. *Toward a Theorization of Gastronomy as a Field*

For a number of reasons, our earlier presentation of gastronomy in the context of France led us to theorize gastronomy as a field with its own norms, rules and tensions.

First, there are several types of chefs – the main producers – based on the different positions they occupy in the field. To characterize their positions in the field, we use the typology developed by Becker (1982) and enriched by Jones et al. (2016). Occupying a central part of the field, chefs, especially *mainstream* ones, are embedded in the field’s structure, roles

and codes of conduct. This means that these chefs, as creative individuals, see their individual creativity challenged by the structures of power and the rules of the game that exist in the field. As mainstreams, chefs are central to the field, and their behaviors are shaped by *illusio* and the field's *habitus*.

Based on the definition of agents in a field, we can say that critics and experts, particularly the *Michelin Guide*, are institutions that help to structure the rules of the game by being the most legitimate value assessors in the field (Becker, 1982; Rao, et al., 2003). Therefore, the reputation that experts confer on chefs increases their symbolic capital and is crucial for assessing their position in the field based on the dominant/dominated dichotomy (Debaene, s.d.). *Habitus* is also structured by other institutions such as training schools and the apprenticeship system, which are central to the integration of rules and know-how in French gastronomy. As mentioned before, the rules are multiple and evolving because of constant internal battles to define the rules by individuals in positions of power (Bourdieu, 1992). However, we can identify some of the rules that compose the *habitus* of French gastronomic chefs. These include the central rule that they must have creative skills. Other rules relate to them working in brigades, the restaurant as the place where the chefs' artworks are created, the guide ranking systems, specific techniques and integrated traditions, etc. As these rules are accepted by chefs as a *sine qua non* condition to exist and have a reputation in the field, they naturally influence how they behave in their daily work and how they develop their creative processes. Internalization of the *habitus* and conforming to the rules of the game help to increase the chefs' symbolic capital. As *mainstreams*, chefs learn how to behave according to the values of those who assess their reputation, such as guides and critics. Therefore, these institutions have a key influence on the behavior and creative choices of chefs.

Indeed, to exist and have a good reputation in the field requires chefs to constantly learn about and integrate legitimate rules. Most chefs are trained in public or private culinary schools (*Ecole Ferrandi*, *Institut Paul Bocuse*, etc.), which can lead to them getting an apprenticeship with a consecrated chef (e.g. Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). It is through these experiences that they begin to learn the *habitus* of the field. Further on in their career, they are also influenced by consecrated institutions which legitimately value the chefs' artworks and creative offerings (e.g. Bouty et al., 2013; Rao et al., 2003; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). Examples in France include *Le Guide Michelin*, *Gault&Millau*, *Le Fooding* and mass media journalists at publications such as *Le Figaroscope*. These institutions also play a part in structuring the *habitus* of chefs and shape what the chefs believe is expected from their creative offerings. In

the end, this influences their position in the field on a domination spectrum and their ability to change the rules of the game (Jones et al., 2016).

Although fields evolve in an autonomous way, they are not porous to external tensions. For example, increasing awareness of ecological concerns is a general sociological issue rather than being particular to the field. However, and as discussed in previous and following sections, it has become central to the creative orientations of chefs. Furthermore, dominant institutions which structure the field have helped to consecrate environmental issues as the cornerstone of chefs' creative offerings and reputation. This has been the case since 2020 when the *Michelin Guide* created its Green Star, awarding the star to chefs who provide sustainable food systems and eco-friendly managerial improvements in their restaurant. In this way, it has led to the definition of "sustainability" as a new rule of the game in the field of gastronomy.

Figure 1 gives an overview of French gastronomy as a field. The field is shown in light gray. At the heart of the field, we find **chefs**, including peers and brigades who are chefs-in-the-making. They are considered to be the central actors in the field, navigating between the core and the periphery based on their positions in the field (as *mainstreams*, *mavericks*, *amphibians* and *misfits*) and relationships with the rules of the game. Chefs follow the rules of the game, i.e. the *habitus*, and are creative actors, embracing the world of art. *Habitus* is also shaped by **consecrating institutions** which help to structure the field. The two main institutions are culinary schools and experts. As discussed previously, **symbolic capital** is another important element of a field's structure. In the field of gastronomy, symbolic capital is conferred by value assessors in the shape of experts in the field such as guides and critics. It is they who confer reputation. This is particularly relevant for *mainstreams* who follow the rules of the game, i.e. *habitus*, and seek to build a reputation among experts in their own quest for symbolic capital in order to increase their dominant position in the field.

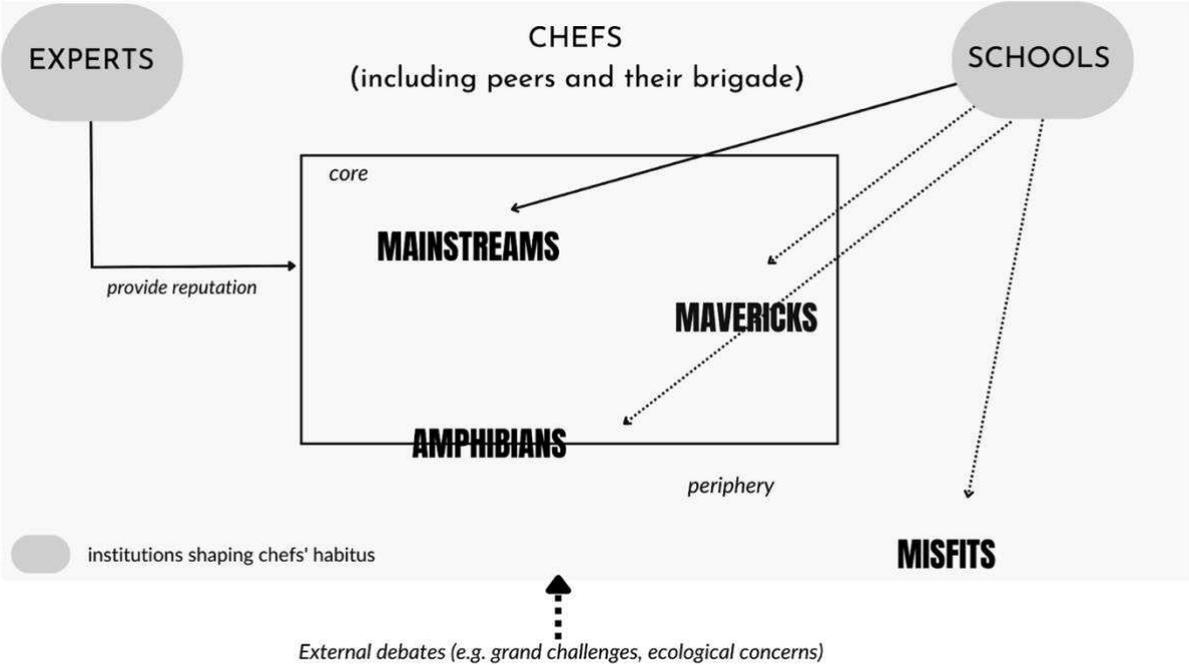
However, how structuring institutions impact *misfits*, *mavericks* and *amphibians* is less clear. They may have been trained in culinary schools but subsequently chose to leave the industry, or they may have undertaken their own way of training. As they are not the actors under study in this dissertation, we use a dotted arrow to draw the line between them and culinary schools, thereby leaving the door open to inquiries related to this in future research. As *misfits* do not abide by social rules, we consider that they are not interested in symbolic capital and the reputation conferred by experts.

Finally, as previously discussed, a field is also influenced by **external battles** and exogenous debates. Here, we choose to focus on sustainability as it is one of the main concerns

in society in general and in food systems in particular. Thus, chefs and the gastronomic field are porous to external concerns such as grand challenges (Kaufmann & Danner-Schröder, 2022; Pereira et al., 2019; Stephanidis et al., 2019) and ecological issues. Figure 1 summarizes three requirements of the main field that can impact the creative activities of chefs: the *habitus*, i.e. rules of the game; reputation and symbolic capital; and porosity to external debates.

Because of the criteria for belonging to a field, i.e. “agents who have ties with art; who live for art and, to varying degrees, from it” (Bourdieu, 1993: 205), and the idea that haute cuisine is a “quality market” which requires intermediaries in the form of experts (Karpik, 2000), clients do not appear in this figure. While they are certainly recipients of the artworks and of the critiques of experts, we believe that the theoretical developments discussed earlier prevent us from considering them as institutions that structure the *habitus* of the chefs in the field.

**Figure 1. The field of French gastronomy**



As French gastronomy can be considered to be a field, and as creative chefs are central actors in this field and creativity is part of their *habitus*, we believe it is worth examining the individual creativity of chefs in their interactions with the various requirements, factors and dynamics of the field.

### 3. *Unveiling Individual Creativity*

In gastronomy, chefs are the main characters involved in the restaurant's creative orientations. They receive the awards and prizes, and their artworks are highly personified (Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Mainemelis et al., 2015). Most of the literature on haute cuisine in particular focuses on individual creativity to investigate how chefs develop their creative offerings (e.g. Bouty et al., 2018; Leone, 2020; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007; Rao et al., 2003). However, as Stierand (2015) suggests, and because the literature on haute cuisine as a creative industry is relatively young, there is still room to investigate the structure of individual creativity, particularly in haute cuisine. We therefore believe that there is merit in investigating the individual creativity of chefs in the context of haute cuisine.

Individual creativity has been defined as the “production of novel and useful ideas by an individual” (Amabile, 1988: 126). As seen previously, individual creativity is the interplay between individuals' creative traits and attributes (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Woodman et al., 1993), motivational factors (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Benedek et al., 2020; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998), and specialized knowledge and expertise in a specific domain (e.g. Amabile, 1988, 2001; Baer, 2015; Sternberg, 2009). While the literature has eliminated the “lone genius” concept of creativity, where an extraordinary individual is able to create on their own due to their amazing talent and characteristics (Montuori, 2003), much of the literature on individual creativity focuses on its intrinsic individual aspect. Indeed, most of the components of individual creativity are considered endogenous, focusing on individuals' personal traits, motivation and expertise. To tackle this over-focus on individuals, creative scholars have attempted to broaden the spectrum by studying organizational (Amabile et al., 1996; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993) or collective creativity, for example through the study of teams (e.g. Chen, 2006; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004). This encompasses studies which demonstrate organizational performance due to the constitution of creative teamwork through collaborative creation projects between artists (e.g. Harrison & Rouse, 2014) or managerial initiatives that foster the creativity of employees (Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004).

The literature on organizational creativity (e.g. Amabile et al., 1996; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993) focuses on the working environment characteristics that can foster or inhibit individual creativity within an organization. This is mostly aimed at boosting organizational performance, and the main focus of inquiry is on fostering employees'

creativity (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). We do not intend to delve into the realm of organizational creativity as we believe that the creative industry working environment is *de facto* dedicated to fostering creativity. Furthermore, in haute cuisine, the main creative actors are also managers, i.e. chefs, which by definition makes them less porous to debates on managerial decisions aimed at fostering creativity. The literature on team and group creativity (e.g. Chen, 2006; Harrison & Rouse, 2014; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004) studies how individuals in groups or teams, mostly in specific organizations, can best organize themselves in order to achieve collective performance or innovations. This means that the creative outcomes examined are collective and organization based.

Finally, the literature on networks and social ties (e.g. Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Perry-Smith, 2006) offers an alternative view which enriches understanding of how external factors influence individual creativity. Such studies aim to show how different social network parameters can influence individual creativity. They can do so positively or negatively depending on the strength of the ties that link individuals and groups both inside and outside organizations. Cattani & Ferriani (2008) also show how the position individuals hold in a network can influence their access to resources that foster individual creativity. However, these studies on networks and social interactions, albeit crucial for understanding the external factors that influence individual creativity, lack several aspects which would make them fit with our study.

First, these studies define relationships independently of the creative task, while we believe that the creative relationships in the creative industries exist because of the task. Furthermore, they do not characterize the links and do not identify others, calling for deeper analysis of the nature of the relationships as well as the strength of the ties (weak/strong ties). Furthermore, we have no wish to delve further into network theories related to core/peripheric positions (e.g. Cattani & Ferriani, 2008) as we assume that the chefs under study are *mainstream* actors, i.e. at the core of the field, and we do not want to study their possible transfers into the field. The scopes of the main theories on creativity are summarized in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Brief Summary of Major Scopes in Creative Studies**

	<b>Individual creativity</b>	<b>Organizational creativity</b>	<b>Group or team creativity</b>	<b>Network theory</b>

<b>Selected references</b>	e.g. Amabile, 1988; Ford, 1996; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Woodman et al., 1993	e.g. Amabile et al., 1996; Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Ford, 1996; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; West, 1990; Woodman et al., 1993	e.g. Harrison & Rouse, 2014; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004	e.g. Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Perry-Smith, 2006
<b>Focus of inquiry</b>	Individuals Individuals in organizations	Organizations	Groups or teams within organizations	Individuals and their social ties inside and outside work
<b>Aims of the study in terms of creativity</b>	Unveiling individual characteristics and traits that favor creativity among individuals	Understanding how the work environment influences (i.e. favors or inhibits) individual creativity within the organization in order to achieve innovation, organizational creativity or collective performance	Studying the best way to organize teams in order to achieve collective creativity, collective creative performance or innovation	Understanding how individual creativity could be favored or inhibited by their social ties and relationships strength inside and outside the organizations they belong to.  Understanding factors in social networks that could favor access to resources fostering one's creativity.
<b>Nature of outcomes</b>	Individual creative outcomes	Collective and organizational outcomes	Collective creative outcomes	Individual creativity  Organizational performance

		Organizational performance	Collective creative performance	
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While Bissola and Imperatori (2011) state that “creative theory seems to reinforce the central role of the individual level of creativity within the organization, despite the fact that the collective level is more crucial in modern organization (Hargadon & Bechky, 2006; George, 2007)” (2011: 80), we believe that this assumption does not serve current issues in creative industries such as haute cuisine. Therefore, while these collective perspectives enrich understanding of the multiple sources of creative performance, they fail to address new insights on individual creativity by broadening the scope rather than investigating other aspects of individual creativity more deeply.

## **II. Theoretical and Empirical Gaps: Unveiling Individual Creativity in Light of the Field of French Gastronomy**

### *1. General Theoretical Gap: Tensions Between Individual Creativity and Requirements of the Field*

Until now, the literature on creativity in haute cuisine has mostly focused on the individual traits and attributes of chefs (e.g. Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007; Bouty et al., 2018), such as intuition (Stierand & Dörfler, 2016) and personal influences (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013), and does not offer a further understanding of individual creativity beyond these personal areas.

Factors external to the chef have been examined, for example, through the study of teamwork and, more briefly, through organizational creativity (e.g. Koch et al., 2018; Lane & Lup, 2015), where chefs and managers are the same person, thereby making the study mostly focused on the individual. However, while the literature on gastronomy rarely evoked the idea of “teamwork”, where it does so, it mainly considers the issue from the point of view that coworkers are inspiration for chefs’ ideas (Albors-Garrigos et al., 2013) or executors of their creative orders (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007). Teams have also been studied through the lens of leadership and how chefs can manage their coworkers effectively (Bouty et al., 2018).

However, for several reasons, we do not believe that the issue of teamwork and, by extension, leadership, is of great relevance when conducting an in-depth study of individual creativity.

First, as our work focuses on individual creativity and what influences it, we do not aim to study how teams are built, what makes them effective and how precisely chefs need to manage them. Second, the configuration of haute cuisine makes teams and groups porous and volatile and does not closely follow the path of a dedicated team project, particularly in haute cuisine where production is highly individualized (Bouty & Gomez, 2013). If we were to focus on teams, we would miss other relevant actors, such as suppliers or temporary invited peers. To our knowledge, and with the exception of Paris and Lang (2015), no studies aim to unveil the links between social interactions and the individual creativity of chefs and how the “others” can shape individual creativity. Indeed, the literature generally lacks insights on the exogenous factors that influence the individual creativity of chefs. Following previous but relatively scarce work on the matter (Paris & Lang, 2015), we believe that the issue of social interactions is better suited for understanding how others can influence the individual creativity of chefs.

As explained in the previous section, we do not believe that the organizational perspective is suitable for broadening our understanding of the individual creativity of chefs. When it comes to networks, we do align with Cattani & Ferriani (2008) who call for an expansion of the application of interactions and social embeddedness studies to individual creative processes (not just individual creative outcomes and performance). Therefore, while the literature on creativity offers inspiration and detailed knowledge on the matter, which we can build on, it still fails to provide alternative studies that would broaden understanding of the individual creativity of chefs. As the structure of creativity in haute cuisine is closely linked to the creative talent of chefs, and answering Stierand’s (2015) call to better understand the micro-structures of individual creativity, we believe it is still worth untangling individual creativity in a deeper and alternative way. We therefore believe that examining the requirements of the field can offer new perspectives on this matter.

In line with the fact that creativity is socially embedded (Wilson, 2010) and based on the idea that gastronomy is a field, we believe that social embeddedness can offer new perspectives for more detailed study of individual creativity in haute cuisine by broadening its scope to the requirements of the field. Indeed, “creativity is a social practice: something that chefs and their teams do, before engaging innovation processes, in the specific context of their restaurants (their style, localization, the team’s skills, and the kitchen appliances) and haute cuisine (client expectations, guidebooks and critics)” (Bouty & Gomez, 2013: 81). The context

of the field therefore enables us to balance studies on individual creativity which focus on endogenous factors (e.g. Stierand & Dörfler, 2018) by considering that the individual creativity of chefs is also embedded in a field. This means that, as well as depending on the chefs' own endogenous characteristics or the characteristics of an organization, the individual creativity of chefs also depends on the structure of the field they belong to and the requirements associated with field membership. Therefore, instead of broadening understanding of chefs' individual creativity by considering voluntarily constituted networks or organizational management choices on creativity, we believe that examining how individuals operate in a specific field is more helpful to untangle the exogenous factors that impact individual creativity. This allows us to stay focus on the individuals themselves and how they handle these constraining factors. This dissertation therefore aims to broaden understanding of individual creativity by studying individuals operating with or against challenges in their field. Furthermore, as the field is part of chefs' core structure, this allows us to offer insights on individual creativity in routine, everyday courses of action, rather than considering relative breakthrough innovations (e.g. Sgourev, 2013; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019) or creative individuals who strongly engage in fields' mutation (e.g. Jones et al., 2016; Rao et al., 2003). This calls for us to unveil the chefs' everyday creative processes and how they handle the requirements of their field on a daily basis to manage their own creative requirements. This approach is also motivated by the empirical choices we made in this dissertation, which we further develop below when discussing the empirical gap.

Based on the tensions identified earlier in the operations of creative chefs in the field of French gastronomy, we believe that the literature still lacks insights on some issues that are worthy of deeper analysis. We believe there is a requirement for more detailed analysis of individual creativity from an interactive and field-embedded perspective and that the literature still lacks insights on exogenous factors that influence individual creativity in creative fields that are highly structured and organized. This dissertation therefore aims to fill this gap by focusing on individual creativity from new angles, and thereby balancing the latest studies which circumvent the overly represented individual perspective with studies on organizational, collective or collaborative creativity. We therefore call for a new focus on individual studies by offering new perspectives on micro-structures and the exogenous influences on individual creativity from the perspective of field embeddedness. We therefore ask: *To what extent can chefs' individual creativity be shaped by the requirements of their field?*

To answer this research question and to untangle the tensions between chefs' individual creativity and the requirements of the field of French gastronomy, this dissertation is structured around three articles which investigate different requirements of the field and their impact on the individual creativity of chefs. More precisely, the interactions between the requirements of the field of French gastronomy (porosity to external concerns, habitus and reputation) and the creative individuals, i.e. chefs, operating in it, help us to identify three field tensions that can influence the individual creativity of chefs:

- The porosity of factors external to the field leads French gastronomy to consider sustainable practices and ecological concerns as the cornerstone of chefs' creativity. Thus, their individual creativity can be directly influenced by the integration of these new concerns into their businesses.
- One of the main features of the chefs' *habitus* is the context of creation. Chefs operate in a specific space (the restaurant) where they work to a limited timescale (for example, the menu has to be delivered every day at the same time) and with a specific number of people, who constitute a brigade. This structure supports the chefs' creative choices. We therefore believe it is worth understanding how individual creativity emerges in this interactional and temporally restricted setting.
- Finally, reputation among experts contributes to the structure of the chefs' *habitus* and consecrates their symbolic capital, which is crucial for belonging to the field and accessing dominant positions. We therefore believe it is worth understanding how creative chefs manage their individual creative outcomes in their relationships with experts in order to gain a reputation among them.

The aims of these articles are described below and summarized in Table 3. (They will be further discussed in Section 3).

**Table 3. Summary of the Three Projects**

	<b>Gap</b>	<b>Research question</b>	<b>Theoretical background</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	Influence of the <b>porosity of the</b>	How can grand	Individual creativity (e.g.	We identified 3 creative activities: <i>creative</i>

<p><i>How do grand challenges impact individual creativity? Evidence from French Gastronomy.</i></p>	<p><b>field to external factors:</b> example of the impact of the integration of grand challenges into chefs' individual creativity.</p>	<p>challenges impact individual creativity in creative industries?</p>	<p>Amabile, 1988; Stierand, 2015); Grand challenges (e.g. de Rond &amp; Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016)</p>	<p><i>routine, search for newness and commitment and, accordingly, 3 ways chefs can integrate ecological concerns through the interplay of individual creativity: internalized, addressed as temporary but fruitful constraints, or mediated.</i></p>
<p><b>Chapter 2</b> <i>“It takes two to tango”: How social interactions support individual creativity. Evidence from upcoming French chefs.</i></p>	<p>Understanding how chefs' individual creativity materializes in a specific setting shaped by the <b>field's habitus.</b></p>	<p>How can chefs' individual creativity be supported by social interactions?</p>	<p>Individual creativity in gastronomy (e.g. Albors-Garrigors et al., 2013; Bouty &amp; Gomez, 2013; Stierand et al., 2014 ); Social interactions (Glăveanu &amp; Lubart, 2014; Paris &amp; Lang, 2015)</p>	<p>Our findings suggest a typology of the different interactive creative stages that can compose the chef's individual creativity in his everyday course of action, based on time (<i>over the long term before service and during service</i>) and the nature of the social interactions at stake (<i>integration, association and collaboration.</i>). These interactive creative stages are <i>planification; inspiration; experimentation and improvisation.</i></p>
<p><b>Chapter 3</b> <i>“A show of good taste”: How creative individuals can</i></p>	<p>Understanding how creative chefs can manage their individual creative outcomes</p>	<p>How can creative individuals enhance the observability</p>	<p>Selection system theory in creative industries (e.g. Wijnberg &amp;</p>	<p>Our findings offer alternative strategies that creative chefs can employ to enhance their reputation among</p>

<p><i>influence their reputation among experts through signal observability strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy.</i></p>	<p>with regard to the importance of reputation among experts, which is consecrated by the field to achieve <b>symbolic capital</b> and certain <b>positions in the field.</b></p>	<p>of their signals to influence their reputation among experts?</p>	<p>Gemser, 2000); valuation process and experts' reputation in creative industries and gastronomy (e.g. Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005; Surlemont &amp; Johnson, 2005); signaling theories (e.g. Jones, 2001)</p>	<p>experts. Individual creative outcomes should be supported by signaling strategies to reach the reputation required by field membership. We identified four managerial tools that can help chefs to be seen by experts: <i>self-branding; network building; location selection; and authentic storytelling creation</i>, which is the first step in reputation building.</p>
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## 2. General Empirical Gap: Studying Mainstreams with a Lower Reputation Level in the French context

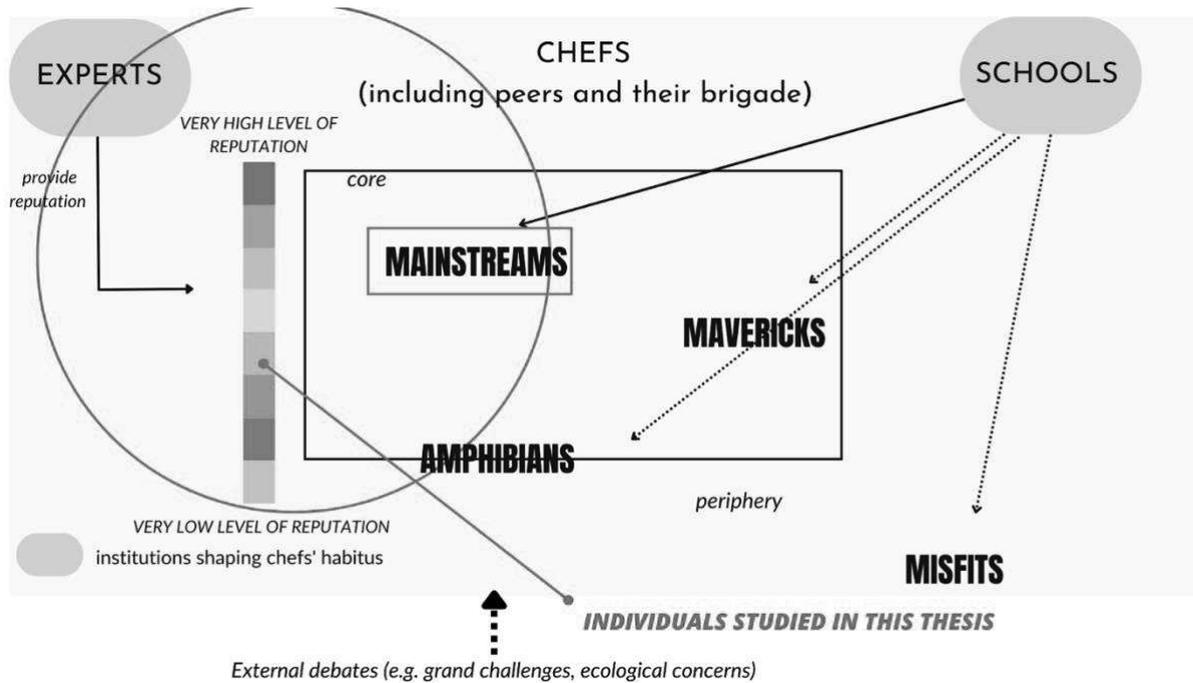
Along with theoretical tensions, this dissertation also suggests an empirical gap which further motivates our study. Most of the studies on chefs and creativity in gastronomy focus on highly reputed *mainstream* chefs who own three-starred restaurants and are internationally recognized superstars (e.g. Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007). However, as mainstream actors can be characterized by having different reputation levels, we believe it is also worth studying other *mainstream* actors who are also trained in the field and adhere to the rules of the game, but who have still not been accorded a high reputation by experts. These young, upcoming chefs are usually in the first stages of their career, dedicated to their creative project, receiving early recognition from experts (for example, by being given one Michelin star or being mentioned in articles in the mass media and specialist guides such as *Le Fooding*), and are anchored in new dynamics such as eco-responsible consumption, production and fair working conditions. The study of such chefs offers new insights on the topic because they deal

with different personal and managerial issues to highly reputed chefs. These include the need to be more flexible because of their sustainable commitments, construction of the reputation they have among experts as a work in progress, and management of their first restaurant or holding an executive position in a restaurant with all the associated financial and managerial constraints. We therefore believe that the study of such chefs is not anecdotal and is relevant to a large part of the field of French gastronomy. Indeed, there were 522 one-starred restaurants in 2022 in France (out of a total of 627 restaurants with stars). Therefore, 'Therefore, the characteristics of this sample of chefs represent an empirical gap which this dissertation aims to fill.

For this dissertation and based on our chosen definition of *mainstreams*, i.e. ““integrated professionals”” [who are] trained within the industry, perform with conventions and use existing art worlds” (Becker, 1982, in Jones et al., 2016: 9), the chefs under study are *mainstream* chefs. The chefs in our sample, whom we present further in the methodology and data collection section, were trained in institutionalized culinary schools or had apprenticeships with renowned chefs in French gastronomy, are willing to follow the recognized path for gaining a reputation (Michelin stars, recognized guide or press articles), and accept the rules of the game by embracing the structure of the restaurants in French gastronomy. Although they want to improve their position in the field, they do not aim to change it significantly or exclude themselves from it.

Figure 2 focuses on the different types of *mainstreams*, based on the level of their reputation, to give a more precise overview of the individuals that we chose to study in this dissertation. They are indicated in red in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. The plurality of *Mainstreams* in the Field of French Gastronomy, Based on Reputation Level**



Management sciences literature on haute cuisine in France is still scarce despite the centrality of gastronomy to the country (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Bouty et al., 2013; Clauzel et al., 2019; Durand et al., 2007; Gomez et al., 2016; Rao et al., 2003, 2005) and only a few studies examine the creative processes of chefs (Bouty & Gomez, 2013). This dissertation therefore aims to enrich the existing literature by offering new perspectives on chefs who operate within the rules and codes in France, thereby broadening the current focus on reputation patterns among experts and institutional maintenance of the *Michelin Guide* (Bouty et al., 2013; Clauzel et al., 2019; Karpik, 2000) and codification (Durand et al., 2007).

This dissertation is therefore structured around three sub-projects which unveil each of the tensions identified, with an empirical setting focused on *mainstream* chefs with lower reputation levels. Each chapter aims to answer the general research question identified earlier: *To what extent can chefs' individual creativity be shaped by the requirements of their field?*

The next section presents the three sub-projects, their theoretical background and research questions, and the main results.

### 3. Presentation of the Three Projects

To answer our research question and to untangle the tensions between chefs' individual creativity and the requirements of the field of French gastronomy, this dissertation is structured around three articles which investigate different requirements of the field, i.e. its porosity to external issues, the need to operate within the field's *habitus*, and the quest for reputation and symbolic capital. It also examines how these requirements impact and influence the individual creativity of chefs. Each chapter investigates individual creativity in the realm of each of the field's requirements separately. We next provide more detail on the aims of these three chapters.

a. Chapter 1: Individual Creativity and Grand Challenges

i. Research Question and Summary

As discussed previously, even if fields are characterized by a high degree of autonomy (Bourdieu, 1991), they are porous to external battles and tensions. We have seen increasing awareness of environmental concerns, including issues related to waste management, sustainable supply chains, meat-free dishes and eco-responsible consumption, within haute cuisine (e.g. Mrusek et al., 2022) and the field of French gastronomy (Bour-Lang & Jost, 2022; Feuvre<sup>9</sup>, 2023; Labro, 2018<sup>10</sup>). As central actors in the field, chefs cannot neglect these new challenges and it is worth understanding how these issues can impact their everyday courses of action, i.e. their individual creativity.

The first chapter of this dissertation is therefore entitled "*How do grand challenges impact individual creativity? Evidence from French gastronomy*". It aims to explore new tensions in the field in the shape of grand challenges (e.g. de Rond & Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016) and how, as creative individuals (e.g. Becker, 1982; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Stierand, 2015), chefs can be of great help in tackling these external debates which are entering French gastronomy. This article explores the introduction of grand challenges, particularly those related to the environment, into chefs' kitchens and their impact on their individual creativity.

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<sup>9</sup> Feuvre, D. L. (2023, 4 janvier). *Gastronomie durable : comment les chefs français mettent-ils l'écoresponsabilité au menu ?* Geo.fr. URL : <https://www.geo.fr/environnement/gastronomie-durable-comment-les-chefs-francais-mettent-leco-responsabilite-au-menu-206110>. Consulté le 1er mars 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Labro, C. (2018, 26 décembre). *Les restaurants se mettent à la cuisine écoresponsable*. Le Monde.fr. URL : [https://www.lemonde.fr/m-gastronomie/article/2018/12/26/les-restaurants-se-mettent-a-la-cuisine-ecoresponsable\\_5402382\\_4497540.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/m-gastronomie/article/2018/12/26/les-restaurants-se-mettent-a-la-cuisine-ecoresponsable_5402382_4497540.html). Consulté le 1er mars 2023.

By identifying a number of exogenous issues that are impacting French gastronomy, such as waste management or eco-responsible production and consumption, this article seeks to understand how ecological concerns can impact the individual creativity of chefs and how creative individuals' management of them can help them to be successfully integrated so that they generate business opportunities.

Thus, answering the call for a better understanding of the micro-foundations of actions to address grand challenges (de Rond & Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016) and taking account of the interesting specificities of creatives in tackling new and transgressive issues (Dieleman, 2007; Hoffman, 2013; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012), we address the following research question: *How can grand challenges impact individual creativity in creative industries?*

To answer this question, we conducted a multiple case study (Yin, 2017) which shows how four gastronomic French chefs react to specific grand challenges, and how these challenges influence the individual creativity of the chefs. To do so, we collected a variety of primary and secondary data to enable the use of triangulation techniques (Eisenhardt, 1991) and analyzed the data following a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

## ii. Major Results on How to Manage Individual Creativity with Exogenous Debates

Our investigation enabled us to develop several new insights and knowledge about individual creativity in the field of French gastronomy.

First, our study allowed us to think about integrating grand challenges and sustainable practices into creative businesses through the interplay of individual creativity. This sheds some light on the management of individual creativity in the context of exogenous debates that have been entering the field of French gastronomy. To do so, we first conducted a deeper analysis of the components of individual creativity (i.e. creative skills, domain-based skills and motivation), as suggested in the literature (Stierand, 2015). Through this, we identified three creative activities that characterize the individual creativity of chefs: *creative routine*, *search for newness* and *commitment*. *Creative routine* refers to the daily creative routine of chefs, enhanced by strong technical bases, pleasure at work and a free creative spirit. The *search for newness* refers to the willingness of chefs to approach novelty in their creative practices. It is fostered by the desire of chefs to avoid repetitiveness, 'being in the habit of constantly learning, and being motivated to follow a progress loop. *Commitment* refers to a situation where chefs choose to incorporate challenges, such as eco-responsible production, into their business

activities. It is characterized by a deep knowledge of products and a strong work ethic, creativity based on alternative ways of thinking and the motivation to seek meaningful activities. This then led us to identify three ways in which creative businesses can take account of grand challenges, specifically environmental challenges. These challenges can be *internalized*, *addressed as temporary but fruitful constraints*, or *mediated*.

*Internalized* grand challenges appear during *creative routine*. In this case, some ecological concerns are taken for granted, i.e. the chefs do not question them and simply integrate them into their daily activities.

*Addressed as temporary but fruitful constraints* refers to the fact that ecological concerns can be constraining and can impact the willingness of chefs to *search for newness* because of their dependence on natural cycles. However, this constraint can trigger their creative dynamic and can be considered temporary, meaning that it fades when it has been managed by the chef.

*Mediated* grand challenges are part of *commitment* activities and refer to how chefs can use their creative philosophy to raise awareness of a particular subject, thereby guiding ecological awakening, for example by sensitizing clients to the consumption of vegetables.

## b. Chapter 2: Individual Creativity, Social Interactions and Time

### i. Research Question and Summary

As explained previously, the *habitus* of French gastronomic chefs encompasses rules such as those related to the structure of the creative process and the organization of the restaurant where this process takes place. This leads the chefs to work with a specific, chosen brigade and suppliers, with whom they interact on a daily basis, in a particular place (i.e. the restaurant) and within a limited timescale. Apart from articles which briefly tackle collective or team creativity (e.g. Albors-Garrigors et al., 2013; Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007; Stierand et al., 2014), and in the knowledge that chefs are the main creative directors, few studies investigate how these interactions directly impact chefs' individual creative processes (Paris & Lang, 2015).

This second article, entitled “‘*It takes two to tango*’: *How social interactions support individual creativity. Evidence from upcoming French chefs*” follows the latest attempts by some scholars (Paris & Lang, 2015; Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014) to refocus inquiry on creativity as a social and interactive process. To our knowledge, these articles are the only ones on the creative industries in general or haute cuisine in particular that take account of the inputs of

what they call “others” into chefs’ or creative individuals’ creative processes. However, they say little about the specificities of these interactions and their impact on the individual creativity of chefs. Indeed, the level of integration of the different actors and the extent to which it can change what each actor is able to offer is worthy of deeper analysis. However, this article investigates how the social interactions that shape chefs’ everyday creative processes can influence their creative initiatives by answering the following question: “*How can chefs’ individual creativity be supported by social interactions?*”

To answer this research question, our analysis focuses on a single case study (Yin, 2017) of the creative process of a promising one-starred gastronomic French chef in the South of France. This choice is justified by the desire for an in-depth understanding of a chef’s creative process in the context of interactional and temporally structured creativity. The chef studied represents a promising and relevant example which offers a broad, enriched perspective of the creative process in the context of a one-starred chef who is a forerunner of his generation and driven by a strong eco-responsible commitment. The case was defined as a set of primary and secondary data, combining data sources on French gastronomy, the chef, his team, the restaurant environment, and how creativity takes place. The data was coded using grounded theory (Glaser et al., 1968) and an inductive approach based on extensive readings and interpretations from raw data. The raw data was coded following a data-reduction approach (Glaser, 1998).

## ii. Main Results: How Can Individual Creativity Be Shaped by an Interactive and Time-Restricted Environment

This chapter gives insights on individual creative outputs in interaction with time and people. We identify the different types of social interactions that are important to the chef in his everyday activity. These include three main actors: the brigade, guest peers in the restaurant and major suppliers. Our findings suggest a typology of the different interactive creative stages that can compose the chef’s individual creativity in his everyday course of action, based on time (*over the long term, before service and during service*) and the nature of the social interactions involved (*integration, association and collaboration*). The interactive creative stages are *planification, inspiration, experimentation and improvisation*.

Our results enrich theoretical debates about individual creativity and creative processes in an interactive and time-restricted setting in haute cuisine. The study of creative processes has mainly been conducted from the perspective of the individual (e.g. Abbate et al., 2019;

Petruzzelli & Savino, 2014; Stierand & Dörfler, 2018; Svejenova et al., 2007) based on chefs' personal traits or creative choices. This chapter gives new insights on specific aspects of the creative process by showing how social interactions can support chefs' individual creativity, while remaining focused on individual perspectives.

The chapter also gives new perspectives on who the “others” are by giving them space and characterizing them through a more detailed definition of their relationships with the chef. This provides a finer-grained understanding of how others can be incorporated into practices to support individual creativity.

Finally, this paper also re-anchors social processes in restricted time settings in order to better understand creative flows and intensity based on the chronological organization of creative processes in haute cuisine.

### c. Chapter 3: Chefs' Individual Creativity and Reputation Requirements

#### i. Research Question and Summary

Finally, one of the main tensions in the field of French gastronomy is found in the impact the field's experts, such as guides and critics, have on the reputation and value assessment of chefs (Dubois, 2012; Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). More precisely, the study of *mainstream* actors with lower reputation levels discussed in this dissertation justifies this inquiry because they are at the heart of their own reputation construction process. Taking account of the blurriness of this crucial valuation process in French gastronomy (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005) and the lack of clarity around the criteria necessary to succeed, the final article is entitled “*A show of good taste*”: *how creative individuals can influence their reputation among experts through signal observability strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy*”. This article proposes an original treatment of this topic by investigating the strategies that chefs can develop to increase the visibility of their creative offerings among experts. It provides insights on how creative chefs can increase their chances of gaining a consecrated reputation among experts, which will in turn influence their symbolic capital and their relative position in the field.

This article identifies the main issues that impact the relationship between valuation assessors, i.e. experts, and the creative individuals submitted to valuation, i.e. chefs. We consider the existence of information asymmetries between experts and chefs' creative offerings (e.g. Bonnet, 2004; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005), which give the chefs low levels of

leverage and mean that they first need to be seen by the experts in order to valorize their creative outcomes. This article therefore aims to fill the gap related to the agency chefs have in their own reputation-building process. It does so by introducing a theoretical intermediary (i.e. signaling theory (Jones, 2002)) to tackle these information asymmetries, as signals are “observable characteristics attached to the individual that are subject to manipulation by him” (Spence, 1973: 357), and by introducing “observability strategies”, which refer to “the extent to which outsiders are able to notice the signal” (Connelly et al., 2011: 45).

This article therefore addresses the following question: *How can creative individuals enhance the observability of their signals to influence their reputation among experts?*

To answer the research question, this work focuses on five case studies of French chefs (Yin, 2017) following the storytelling methodology (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau et al., 2010; Sanséau, 2005) applied to management sciences. The aim of this methodology is to study the socio-historical reality of a phenomenon or an individual in order to understand how it transforms (Sanséau, 2005). Simultaneously, to get an expert’s point of view on the subject, we conducted three semi-guided interviews with the experts. We coded the data following the Strauss and Corbin (1998) data-reduction approach. Raw data collected from the interviews and archives was computed using open-coding to identify the main criteria on which the chefs, and simultaneously the experts, focus when they are thinking about the reputation development process.

ii. Major results: How to Manage Experts’ Reputation Requirements for Creative Individuals

Finally, this study enriches the literature on reputation in the creative industries and questions the relationship between creative chefs and the institutions that evaluate them in the field, i.e. experts. To begin with, we found that the blurriness of the valuation process in French gastronomy and the information asymmetries that coexist between chefs and experts call for a deeper understanding of what can trigger reputation and positive value assessment. We therefore acknowledge that creative offerings on their own are not the only reason for gaining a higher reputation level, and that chefs first need to be seen by experts, especially when they are mainstream chefs with a lower reputation level. Thus, our analysis allowed us to explore signaling strategies (Jones, 2002; Spence, 1974) as an alternative solution to counteract these information asymmetries.

Our study enriches understanding of what makes a signal noticeable by developing four strategies that chefs can employ to increase their signal observability among experts: *self-branding*, *network building*, *location selection* and *authentic storytelling creation*. *Self-branding* refers to the tools that chefs can use to present themselves and construct their image for the public. *Network building* refers to the constitution of a strong pool of people that the chefs have a relationship with while being known for participating in a particular network. *Location selection* refers to the ability to choose a strategic location for the restaurant and to take advantage of it. Finally, *authentic storytelling creation* refers to ways to convey positive and meaningful information to the public and, therefore, to experts. In this way, the article shows that individual creative outcomes should be supported by signaling strategies to achieve the reputation that field membership requires.

At the same time, the research design, which combined chefs' discourses and data collection based on them as well as interviews with representative experts, enabled us to offer insights on the credibility of these observability strategies. Our main finding is that the first step is to make signals observable, but not all strategies are suitable for attracting experts. For example, signals must be made observable in a proper way (i.e. they should be credible, authentic and true) so that the right experts with the right audience are able to understand them and be attracted to the chefs giving the signals. Finally, this calls for deeper analysis of signal construction as a second step in strengthening chefs' reputations among experts.

#### d. General Contributions

By untangling some of the major tensions in the field of French gastronomy, this dissertation makes several contributions to the literature on individual creativity both within and outside of French gastronomy. It also enriches intermediary debates about Grand Challenges, social interactions and reputation in the context of the creative industries.

First, it offers an alternative perspective on integrating grand challenges by broadening the scope of grand challenge management beyond its previously exclusive, collective aspect (e.g. Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016; Williams & Shepherd, 2016) to a more micro level, led by the initiatives of individuals in the context of the creative industries. In doing so, we identify how specific grand challenges can be integrated into creative businesses through the interplay of individual creativity. We also refine our understanding of individual creativity (e.g. Stierand, 2015) by highlighting various creative activities that enable the integration of new challenges such as ecological concerns, and we identify creative individual

skills that are suitable for tackling them. This gives new insights on the integration of grand challenges and the role of creativity in their management, offering a spectrum for successful business practices while taking account of ecological emergencies, notably through creative initiatives and thinking.

Second, as the organization of creativity in the everyday life of a restaurant is part of the *habitus* of chefs, we believe it is helpful to understand how the individual creativity of chefs can be impacted by this setting. Our study therefore sheds light on the micro-structures of chefs' creative processes in their daily creative activities by untangling the interactions involved and their impact on the chefs' individual creativity. This dissertation thus offers new insights on the creative process of chefs in their relationships with others and how social interactions can shape their creative outputs. By giving a more detailed characterization of the others and their relationships with the chef, we are able to better understand how they can support chefs' creative choices and individual perspectives. It therefore challenges the common idea that chefs mostly create on their own (Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015) and supports an alternative view that individual creativity is interactive. This dissertation also introduces the idea of time in the creative process and how individual creative pushes are shaped by time, enabling us to propose interactive creative stages that compose the chef's individual creative processes.

Third, taking account of the importance of symbolic capital, particularly through the reputation that experts confer on chefs in the field of French gastronomy, we try to enrich debates about the relationship between creative individuals and the value assessment of their creative offerings. More precisely and based on discourses in our data, our study balances the over-focus on creative distinctions by identifying alternative strategies that chefs can use to improve their position in the field. To do so, we make new use of signaling theories by linking signal observability and reputation strategies, based on identification of the existence of asymmetric information between chefs and experts. This leads us to acknowledge the importance for creatives of developing signals and making them observable to enhance their signal observability among third parties. In other words, it proposes new insights on the evaluation of individual creativity by showing that individual creative outcomes should be supported by signaling strategies to achieve the reputation required by field membership. We believe this can enrich the literature on the role of experts in reputation building in the creative industries by acknowledging the information asymmetries between them and the creative individuals they evaluate. Finally, this study offers new insights on the relationships between experts and creative chefs by examining the active role that the latter can play to influence their reputation process among experts, and thus impact their relative position in the field.

Finally, this dissertation aims to analyze individual creativity in a daily and routine dynamic, without pursuing innovation (Jones et al., 2016; Messeni & Petruzzelli, 2019) or major field transformation goals (e.g. Rao et al., 2003; Sgourev, 2013), by understanding how creative individuals manage their creativity on a daily basis through the structures that shape their behavior and expectations. Thus, this calls for new insights on the influence of interactions and temporality on individual creativity, notably in the literature on haute cuisine, in line with previous studies that focus on more daily practices (e.g. Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Leone, 2020; Louisgrand & Islam, 2020).

### **III. Research Design**

#### *1. Specific Insights on the Research Design*

This dissertation follows qualitative methodology approaches, based on a single case study (second chapter) or multiple case studies (first and last chapter) (Ozcan & Eisenhardt, 2009: 249; Yin, 2017). The data was collected through interviews, observations and archives and is presented in greater detail in Section 2. Data Collection. The data was coded using inductive methods based on the Strauss & Corbin data-reduction approach (1998), with added triangulation work (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). The detailed design methods and the data collection processes are further developed in each paper. However, here, we focus on two specificities of the methodologies employed.

As we believe that understanding the individual creativity of chefs relies on detailed transcription of their discourse, interviews form part of each article. However, we employed a variety of methods to conduct these interviews. First, most of the interviews took the form of semi-structured interviews (Glaser & Strauss, 1999), following guidelines with written questions and subjects that were not accessible to the interviewees. This allowed us to explore specific subjects and topics, while allowing the interviewees to introduce other ideas that we had not considered. We complemented this data with “conversational interviews” (Golden-Biddle, 2020). Finally, one of the main specificities is the use of storytelling methodology (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau et al., 2010; Sanséau, 2005) in the final article, which we chose to apply to management sciences. Although quite common in sociology, “storytelling methodology” is under-used in management sciences and organization theory. We try to fill this gap by using it

to study the socio-historical reality of a phenomenon or an individual in order to understand how it transforms (Sanséau, 2005). Furthermore, “in management sciences, the organization is at the heart of the preoccupations (...), therefore, the storytelling approach involves the analysis and understanding of a situation through individuals’ lived experience (...) which is not entirely linked to the organization” (Sanséau, 2005: 42, personal translation).

Therefore, based on a single question at the beginning of the interview and after explaining the goal of the research (understanding how they developed their reputation in the industry), the chefs were invited to talk about their experiences, their career trajectories and how they perceived them, initially without any intervention from the researcher.

As we believe this methodology was of great help in tackling each chef’s personal experience while talking about their quest for reputation and their past experiences in the field, we call for greater use of it in management sciences. It allowed greater freedom of speech, leading to identification of key moments for the chefs related to the subject of reputation. It also enabled them to engage in self-exploration and speak their truth without the involvement of the researcher or written, fixed question. Although the discourse material was completed by the researcher subsequently asking questions and face-to-face interviews are never totally free of biases and problematic imposition (e.g. Bourdieu, 1993), this methodology prevented us from imposing unrelated subjects or problems linked to the issue of reputation, as can be the case when using methodology such as semi-structured interviews. As a first hypothesis, we strongly believed that reputation was directly linked to creativity. However, the chefs’ discourses showed us that creativity is not necessarily the main factor that influences experts’ value assessment. Indeed, “Mattingly (1991, p. 237) pointed out that narratives not only give meaningful form to experiences we have already lived through but also provide us with a forward glance, helping us to anticipate situations even before we encounter them, allowing us to envision alternative futures” (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 240).

A second specificity of this thesis is the decision to write one of the articles on the basis of a single case study (Yin, 2017). This is justified by the desire for an in-depth understanding of the creative process of a chef in the context of interactional and temporally structured creativity. The chef studied represents a promising and relevant example through which we were able to gain a broad and enriched perspective of the creative process in the context of a one-starred chef, who is a forerunner of his generation and driven by a strong commitment to eco-responsibility. Because he met all the criteria of chefs in the same position as him in the

field, which we want to study in this dissertation, he can therefore be seen as a “paradigmatic case” (Flyvbjerg, 2006), i.e. “cases that highlight more general characteristics of the societies in question” (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 232), which justifies the use of a single case study. This therefore enabled us to conduct an in-depth study with strong collection of data including observations, semi-structured interviews, conversational interviews and archives. We can therefore conclude that “the advantage of this case study is that it can “close in” on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice” (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 235) while believing that “there are more discoveries stemming from the type of intense observation made possible by the case study than from statistics applied to large groups” (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 236).

2. *Summary of Data Collection*

Following our chosen methodology (see A. Specific Insights on the Research Design), the data is defined as a set of primary and secondary data from different types of media. Some were specific to the chefs studied (interviews, menus, social media), while others (press releases, podcasts, audiovisual documentaries, books) were cross-disciplinary and completed our understanding of the context for each article in particular and this dissertation in general. More specifically, this transcendental data was helpful for understanding the issues of French gastronomy and the chefs under study.

The tables below summarize the data collection process for each article as well as the general data collection process, and how the data is used in the analysis.

**Table 4. Data collection for “How do grand challenges impact individual creativity? Evidence from French gastronomy”**

<b>Data source</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Use in the analysis</b>
	Press releases (total: 47) Mass media (paper and digital) Regional/local media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and dynamics of the industry’s evolution.  More specific and specialized information on the chefs under study.

<i>Secondary data</i>	Professional/trade media (paper and digital)	
	Books	Elements of contextualization and details about the “classical cuisine”.
	Cookbook	Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Audiovisual content (total: 440 minutes) Podcasts Documentaries Videos	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and dynamics of the industry’s evolution.  Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Internal documents (reports, menus...)	Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Social media	Detailed information about the chefs under study.
<i>Interviews</i>	Semi-structured interviews (total duration: 250 minutes/70 pages)	Information on how chefs perceive French gastronomy rules and codes, how they manage their creativity, how they respect the environment in their daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.

**Table 5. Data collection for “*It takes two to tango*’: How social interactions support individual creativity. Evidence from upcoming French chefs”**

<b>Data source</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Use in the analysis</b>
	Press releases (total: 50) Mass media (paper and digital) Regional/local media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and dynamics of the industry’s evolution.

	Professional/trade media (paper and digital)	Specific and specialized information on the chef under study, particularly the construction of his signature dishes.
<i>Secondary data</i>	Audiovisual content (total: 500 minutes) Podcasts Documentary Video	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy and the dynamics of industry evolution.  Detailed information about the chef under study.
	Semi-structured interviews (total duration: 250 minutes/70 pages)	Information on how selected young, upcoming chefs perceive French gastronomy, how they manage their creativity, how they respect the environment in their daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.
	Internal documents (reports, menus...)	Detailed information on the chef under study.
	Social media (Instagram account)	Detailed information on the chef under study from social media posts, particularly pictures and stories.
<i>Interviews</i>	Semi-structured interviews with the chef under study	Information on how the chef perceives French gastronomy, how he manages his creativity, his team, how he respects the environment in his daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.
	Unstructured interview with a guest chef (peer) and the chef himself	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with another chef.

	Unstructured interview with a member of the brigade	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with the chef.
	Unstructured interview with the sous-chef	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with the chef.
	Unstructured interview with the chef	Information on his creative process based on the proposed menu.
	Semi-structured interview with a member of the brigade	Complementary information on the idea generation process from the brigade
<i>Participant observation (1 week)</i>	<p>A full week of observation in the restaurant's kitchen:</p> <p><i>Field notes</i></p> <p><i>Informal unstructured discussions with several members of the team (chef, brigade, sous-chef, an invited chef (peer), chef's wife)</i></p> <p>During and between rush hours (service).</p>	<p>Information on how the relationships take place in the chef's environment.</p> <p>Investigation of how creativity is managed in the chef's kitchen and how the creative interactions are managed.</p> <p>Perspectives of both the chef and his team.</p>

**Table 6. Data collection for “A show of good taste’: How creative individuals can influence their reputation among experts through signal observability strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy”**

<b>Data source</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Use in the analysis</b>
<i>Secondary data</i>	Mass media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides

		<p>and the dynamics of the industry's evolution.</p> <p>Perception in the mass media of the public's disapproval or approval of critics' reviews.</p> <p>Detailed information about the chefs under study from a mass media point of view.</p>
<p>Professional/trade media and culinary guides (online)</p> <p><i>Le Guide Michelin; Gault&amp;Millau; Le Fooding; Food&amp;Sens; Les Nouvelles Gastronomiques; Le Figaroscope; Le blog de Gilles Pudlowski; Omnivore; Fine Dining Lovers; 180°...</i></p>	<p>Read critiques to see how they are structured, the information they provide and what they mostly focus on.</p> <p>Detailed information about the chefs under study from a critic's point of view.</p>	
<p>Chefs' social media and websites</p>	<p>See how they communicate about themselves on social media, especially their Instagram accounts and their websites.</p>	
<p>Internal documents</p>	<p>Menus</p>	
<p>YouTube video: Interview with Christian Millau, founder of the Gault&amp;Millau guide</p>	<p>Learn more about his view of what makes a good critic or a good guide.</p>	
<p>Specialist podcasts</p> <p><i>Casseroles (Binge Audio) with François Simon; Travail Soigné (Slate Audio) with François Simon; Chefs (Slate Audio) with Emmanuel Rubin; Sur le Grill d'Ecotable with Aitor Alfonso,</i> and documentaries : <i>Etoilé.e.s (Canal +);</i></p>	<p>Gather further information on critics through specialist podcasts in the cooking industry (interviews with critics).</p>	

	<i>Auguste Escoffier ou la naissance de la gastronomie moderne (Arte)</i>	
<i>Interviews</i>	Semi-structured interviews with guides and critics	Information on how critics perceive creativity, the role of critics in the industry, the relationship between the chefs and the critics, and a critical perspective on the profession.
	Storytelling interviews with chefs	Detailed information on the reputational trajectories of the chefs.

To tackle issues on the current state of French gastronomy, we collected transversal data to obtain a more detailed understanding of our chosen context. This encompasses data on the current challenges in French gastronomy as well as some historical background that contributes to our understanding of the field for each chapter.

**Table 7. Additional data collection for the context of the dissertation**

Type of data	
<i>Audiovisual content</i>	The Chefs' Table France, Netflix (2016): 4 episodes, each 45 minutes long
	“Complément d’Enquête: L’inaccessible étoile” (France 2, 2019) – 30 minutes
	“Au cœur d’AM”, Nicolas Issenjou (2020) : <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fI7fjNXQ-WY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fI7fjNXQ-WY</a> (40 minutes)
<i>Press</i>	Press releases on the <i>Michelin Guide</i> between 2000 and 2021 (50 articles)
	Le guide culinaire : aide-mémoire de cuisine pratique, A. Escoffier ; avec la collab. de MM. Philéas Gilbert, E. Fétu, A. Suzanne... [et al.] (1903)

<i>Specialized books</i>	“Le Mangeur Hypermoderne”, François Ascher (2005)
	“Histoire de la cuisine et de la gastronomie française”, Patrick Rambourg (2013)
<i>Events and fairs</i>	Omnivore (September 2021)
	Musée de l’Homme (Paris): Exhibition Summer 2020 “Je mange donc je suis”

#### **IV. Epistemological Posture**

As a young researcher and a future creator and transmitter of knowledge, this work calls for introspection of my own position toward management sciences. More precisely, it raises questions about the methodology that I used, the biases and the possible limits of this research project.

##### *1. Posture Toward Qualitative Methodology*

I chose to anchor this whole project in qualitative methodology, encompassing a vast array of data such as various types of interviews, observations and secondary data. I genuinely believe that this choice of methodology was suitable for the goal I wanted to achieve, i.e. obtaining a deeper understanding of the roots and micro-structures of individual creativity in a specific creative field. While it has been acknowledged that social sciences, and qualitative methodology more specifically, are not suitable for generalization, it can be argued that qualitative methodology and inductive research using small samples do not add relevant inputs to science. However, I find it useful and relevant when trying to obtain a deeper, accurate understanding of a phenomenon without wishing to use it to generate a general theory.

More specifically, my choice of this methodology, mainly based on discourse, was motivated by a sense of curiosity to understand the vast and plural notion of “creativity”. Anchored in debates in sociology, psychology, neurosciences and, later, management sciences, “creativity” is a general, pluridisciplinary subject without a single, unique definition.

Furthermore, as creativity is socially embedded and highly context-dependent, it is difficult to compute strong and quantitative data on it. Therefore, “creativity” can be considered to be a “boundary object”, i.e. “an ‘object’ whose structure is sufficiently common to several social worlds to ensure a minimum of identity at the intersection level, while being sufficiently flexible to adapt to the specific needs and constraints of each of these worlds” (Trompette & Vinck, 2009).

That being said, and given that creativity is a volatile characteristic entrenched in human beings as complex social beings, I do believe that enabling creative people to put forward their own experiences and definitions of creativity is the most suitable technique for obtaining a more accurate understanding of this concept. My analysis of the chefs’ discourses and observations provided me with rich data which helped me to nuance and deepen my understanding of creativity. This data included the words they used to describe their work, the activities they illustrated, their self-reflections on their own work, the narration of their past experiences, and the emotions linked to those experiences. This was further enriched by the use of storytelling methodology (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau et al., 2010; Sanséau, 2005) in Chapter 3, which I suggest should be used more intensively in management sciences.

## *2. Posture Toward Field Selection*

The field of French gastronomy is highly challenging and sometimes paradoxical. Getting access to the field was a rather complicated task, as I had to navigate with busy individuals unaccustomed to academic inquiries. This was made even harder by the temporality of the projects, which coincided with the Covid-19 crisis and restaurants being closed. As a researcher, I found it very difficult to impose myself on chefs’ tight schedules and feared that I was being disconnected from the reality of their work. My passion for haute cuisine was undoubtedly combined with great ignorance of what it is to be a creative and gastronomic chef. In the end, however, this strengthened my curiosity and helped me to avoid biases linked to imposing problems or definitions (Bourdieu, 1993) that are not true to the reality of the field. I thus found that I aligned with grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as a “theory arising inductively from the study of the phenomenon it represents”. One could also argue that studying highly skilled, practical work such as haute cuisine is unsuitable for academic theorization. Initially, this dichotomy was complicated to manage and I found myself asking questions such as: “Am I making this up or is it the intuition that the interviewees’ discourses are giving me?”.

However, my interactions with the chefs I met confirmed that it is possible and relevant to study creativity in gastronomy from an academic and theoretical perspective and that this aligns with the fact that “management sciences are characterized by a major empirical dimension” (Pesqueux, 2020).

The challenges of the field and the business of chefs resulted in a limited number of interviews and observations. However, I had the opportunity to meet engaged, passionate chefs who were willing to share a great deal of information and views, which were useful and relevant. I genuinely believe that the data I had access to along with the archives that I collected were sufficiently rich and deep to generate knowledge on the topic without, again, wishing to approach generalization.

The data collection context was also prompted by the general public’s increasing interest in gastronomy and haute cuisine chefs on TV and on social media. This data was directly accessible, but it required careful analysis because, unlike raw data, it was highly scripted. My observations of social media from the beginning of this thesis provided me with intuitions and grounded knowledge on the field and its current dynamics, which strengthened my understanding of the chefs’ discourses and positioning.

### *3. Posture Toward Individual-Based Inquiries*

In a post-modernist era where the individual as a person is first studied and then criticized, and with increasing awareness of individuals as socially constructed and embedded persons, a great deal of research has been computing individual-based studies with the characteristics of the organizations or institutions they belong to. Without questioning the relativity of individuals’ beliefs in organizations, I believe that positioning the individual at the center of research and focusing on what individuals themselves have to say can provide a deeper understanding of the systemic functioning of a specific field or organization. In management sciences, particularly in the work of creative scholars, the studies on creativity which began in the 1980s by focusing on individual traits (e.g. Amabile, 1988) gradually turned to integrate the individual into a given organization with its rules, standards and constraints. As they are “organised and organising” (Martinet & Pesqueux, 2013) organizations, institutions and social structures undoubtedly shape individuals and how they behave in society more generally. However, I believe that it is worth combining the two perspectives by giving a voice to individuals themselves and observing how they personally construct their sense and view of the

world, even if we need to take account of the fact that they are socialized and integrate codes and conduct linked to a specific society. By saying that “the organization is a contingent social construction that takes into account the objectives, the environmental conditions and the mentality of the agents who belong to it” (Martinet & Pesqueux, 2013), I believe that we should not underestimate the importance of the focus on agents. Critics of the over-emphasis on the individual fail to recognize the need to understand what it means to be an individual in a structured system, the agency that this relative position allows, and how individuals perceive their relationship with the organization they belong to. This aligns with the view of H. Dumez, and my own view on the role of management sciences, which says that “management studies the way in which actors manage or fail to realize their choices by elaborating devices. These choices can be freely calculated and made, or imposed by structures or circumstances, and are most likely a mixture of all of these” (Dumez, 2014: 65).

Therefore, without wishing to develop a general theorization, I believe that this work sheds light on the role of individual discourses, words, practices and social habits in understanding the concept of creativity and that it offers contributions to other research on the importance of creativity inside and outside of the creative industries. I also believe that it opens the door to the study of more mainstream individuals, and I call for a focus on more average individuals, which has been lacking in the study of creative individuals as it has mainly studied “extraordinary” individuals (e.g. Stierand, 2015). Finally, I also call for continual improvement of qualitative methodologies which can be employed as strong, rigorous methods for understanding psychologically and socially embedded concepts that rely on strong individual roots and micro-structures.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **How Do Grand Challenges Impact Individual Creativity? Evidence from French Gastronomy.**

## Introduction

Grand challenges are considered as formulations of global problems which, if removed, will improve society in general (Ferraro et al., 2015). Climate change (Ansari et al., 2013; Wright & Nyberg, 2017), poverty (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) and exploitative labour (Bartley, 2007) are all examples of grand challenges. The United Nations' list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>) provides more details of the grand challenges facing the world.

The complex nature of grand challenges, which involve multiple disciplines, actors and interactions (Ferraro et al., 2015), means that cooperation and collaboration are required to overcome them. Previous studies have highlighted the collective side of developmental solutions for grand challenges (e.g. Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016; Williams & Shepherd, 2016) but, so far, only a few have addressed how individuals react to these global societal issues (e.g. de Rond & Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016). While collective and widespread efforts are required to address grand challenges, it may be insightful to better understand how such challenges can impact individuals in their daily activities and how they react to them. We believe that addressing the micro foundations of reactions to grand challenges may be useful in identifying the roots for collective action.

Creative industries, whose “main purpose is the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion, dissemination or marketing of goods, services and activities that have a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content” (UNESCO, 2006: 2), are a relevant area of study for refining our understanding of the micro reactions to grand challenges. Indeed, scholars of the creative industries have highlighted the importance of individuals and their creativity in these fields (e.g. Becker, 1982; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Inversini et al., 2014). This also applies to individuals who work, for example, in the restaurant or architecture industries, where their creativity is crucial and often considered as a cornerstone (DCMS, 1998; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Negus & Pichering, 2000; Tang, 2020).

According to the literature, creativity is a multifaceted concept at both the collective and the individual levels (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Cohendet & Simon, 2007; Mejia et al., 2021; Mérindol & Versailles, 2017; Paris & Ben Mahmoud-Jouini, 2019; Stierand, 2015; Unsworth, 2001; Woodman et al., 1993). Building on the importance of individuals in the creative industries, this paper focuses on individual creativity, which can be defined as the “production of novel and useful ideas by an individual” (Amabile, 1988: 126). More specifically, this paper

intends to highlight how individual creativity can be impacted by grand challenges. As some scholars have shown (Dieleman, 2007; Hoffman, 2013; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012), the specificities of individual artistic interventions can help to change social and economic structures in ways that make them more sustainable. However, we believe that our understanding of individual creativity and how it is impacted by grand challenges deserves more work. Indeed, while some studies on grand challenges have addressed how they impact collective and organizational actions (e.g. Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016; Williams & Shepherd, 2016), we still need a better understanding of how they impact individuals. Moreover, as Cho, Liu and Ho (2018) and Tang (2020) showed, little attention has been paid so far to micro creativity activities. We therefore address the following research question: *How can grand challenges impact individual creativity in creative industries?*

To answer this question, we focus on the creative industry of French gastronomy, (Ferguson, 1998; Rao et al., 2003; UNESCO, 2006). French gastronomy is an interesting creative industry because chefs' creativity focuses on the exploration of new culinary combinations in order to offer delicious meals to their clients. Echoing recent studies on alternative food systems (e.g. Richardson & Fernqvist, 2022), their creativity can be impacted by at least one global challenge which is also a United Nation Sustainable Development Goal, i.e. responsible consumption and production. We take a multiple case study approach (Yin, 2017) to show how four French gastronomic chefs react to specific grand challenges, and how such challenges influence the individual creativity of these chefs. To do so, we collected a variety of primary and secondary data to enable the use of triangulation techniques (Eisenhardt, 1991) and analysed the data following a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Our findings highlight three ways in which grand challenges can be integrated into individual creativity: *internalization*, addressing them as *temporary but fruitful constraints* and *mediation*. Identifying these enabled us to suggest a model for the integration of grand challenges into individual creative activities.

We believe this study can contribute to the debates about grand challenges and individual creativity. First, complementing previous research on grand challenges which highlighted the collective and cooperative imperatives to overcome grand challenges (e.g. Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016; Williams & Shepherd, 2016), our study sheds new light on the micro foundations of actions that can be taken to overcome them. Second, by identifying three ways to integrate grand challenges into individual creative practices, our findings complement the few studies that consider how individuals react to grand challenges (de Rond & Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016) by providing insights on how they can

integrate such challenges into their practices. Finally, our study answers recent calls to develop a finer-grained understanding of the vast concept of individual creativity (e.g. Stierand, 2015) by highlighting a variety of creative activities that appear important for understanding how creative individuals react to global challenges, depending on their technical, creative and motivational skills.

## **Literature review**

### *1. Perspectives on Grand Challenges*

By their nature, grand challenges call for collective action and, potentially, multidisciplinary collaboration. Previous studies have addressed how organizations can develop strategies to confront such challenges. For instance, Battilana and Dorado (2010) examined how hybrid organizations address poverty issues. Likewise, Ansari, Wijen and Gray (2013) considered how a variety of organizations (the European Union, non-governmental organizations etc.) developed strategies to combat climate change at the transnational level. Other studies, such as that by Berrone and colleagues (2016), have also addressed the community level. In a more pluridisciplinary way, Ferraro and colleagues (2015) presented three strategies that companies can employ to tackle grand challenges: participatory architecture (“structure and rules of engagement that allow diverse and heterogeneous actors to interact constructively over prolonged timespans”, p.373); multivocal inscriptions (“discursive and material activity that sustains different interpretations among various audiences with different evaluative criteria, in a manner that promotes coordination without requiring explicit consensus”, p.373); and distributed experimentation (“iterative action that generates small wins, promotes evolutionary learning, and increases engagement while allowing unsuccessful efforts to be abandoned”, p.373).

Nevertheless, there is still a lack of research into the micro foundations of reactions to grand challenges. Two examples of the research that has been undertaken are the study by Kulik, Perera & Cregan (2016), who explored the impact of decent work and diversity issues on the engagement of older workers, and the study related to the challenge of psychological issues at work in the specific context of war by de Rond & Lok (2016), who explored how war medics react to this context. We suggest that these few studies can be complemented by better identifying and understanding the individual roots that can serve for collective actions. We

suggest elaborating on this by focusing on individual creativity in the context of creative industries.

## 2. *Individual Creativity and Grand Challenges*

The creative industries are art-based sectors whose “main purpose is the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion, dissemination or marketing of goods, services and activities that have a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content” (UNESCO, 2006: 2). They are hybrid industries (Albert et al., 1985) as they mix artistic and creative vision with the need to stay profitable and comply with their economic obligations, enabling continuation of the creative activity. In these industries, creativity is at the heart of the artists’ daily activities (e.g. Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007) and the individual artist is considered the cornerstone of every creative activity and organization (e.g. Becker, 1982; Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Uzzi & Spiro, 2005).

Global concerns and pressures about sustainability are of growing interest in academia and in society more broadly (e.g. Ferraro et al., 2015; George et al., 2016: 1881). The creative industries are not immune to these and the environmental challenge is one of many other challenges which they face and which make them question their short-term business choices and artistic explorations. One example of this is the movie industry, where the Green Screen project supported by the European Union (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/greenscreen/>) aims to “inspire and educate the nomadic world of filming by creating sustainable working practices”. Supported by their transcendent look on the world (Dieleman, 2007), creative individuals can employ their individual creativity to deal with grand challenges.

To approach this, we suggest focusing on the components of individual creativity, particularly on the three complementary and non-exclusive components that have been studied in the literature. First, individual creativity has been studied in how it relates to an individual’s creative personality (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Stierand, 2015). This approach is based on creative skills such as curiosity, intuition, risk-taking and open-mindedness (Barron, 1963; Mumford et al., 1993; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999) which should foster an individual's engagement in creative thinking and production. Creative skills are “a cognitive style favorable to taking new perspectives on problems, an application of heuristics for the exploration of new cognitive pathways, and a working style conducive to persistent, energetic pursuit of one’s work” (Amabile, 1988: 131).

Second, individual creativity has been studied in how that it relates to technical and domain-related skills. Indeed, to flourish, such creativity needs a high degree of expertise to master specific technical and domain-based skills (e.g. Amabile, 1988, 2001; Baer, 2015; Sternberg, 2009). Haute-cuisine (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Gomez et al., 2003; Latilla et al., 2019) and music (Ruthsatz et al., 2008) are examples of industries that require a high level of technical expertise.

Finally, individual creativity has been studied in how it relates to motivation, understood as an individual's interpretation of their reasons for undertaking a task in a given situation (Amabile, 1988; Benedek et al., 2020; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998). Presented as a cornerstone of creative work (Bilton et al., 2021), this encompasses personal qualities such as being self-driven, enthusiastic or excited by the work itself. More specifically, Amabile and Pratt (2016: 170) highlighted meaningful work as “the ability to provide a compelling account”, i.e. “a justification of why one's work is worth doing”. Being meaningful does not necessarily mean that the work should be pleasant or fun, but it must be significant. Motivation can also be impacted by a progress loop, which refers to the extra motivation an individual has when they are aware that they are making progress (Amabile & Pratt, 2016).

While the literature on grand challenges has dealt with how collectives react to these challenges, there is still a paucity of work that addresses their influence on individuals and, more specifically, on creative individuals and their creative practices. We therefore address the following research question: *How do grand challenges impact individual creativity in creative industries?*

## **Methodology**

To answer our research question, we take a multiple case study approach (Ozcan & Eisenhardt, 2009: 249; Yin, 2017) based on four cases of French chefs.

### *1. Presentation of French gastronomy and the Research Design*

French gastronomy is a creative industry (UNESCO, 2006) which emerged during the second half of the 19th century when it became an art codified by journalists and chefs. As there is no single definition of gastronomy, for the purpose of this paper, we consider that French

gastronomy encompasses high-quality restaurants led by creative chefs, based on culinary creativity (Ferguson, 1998).

French gastronomy is a highly codified industry in terms of its norms and values and is therefore subject to many formal and informal rules. As creative individuals, chefs must ensure that their restaurants are profitable while remaining creative. Furthermore, recognition is omnipresent in the field as it ensures the quality and the credibility of the chefs' creative offers.

French gastronomy has been impacted by ecological concerns for some time. Indeed, several scholars have shown how artistic interventions can help with developing greater sustainability (Dieleman, 2007; Hoffman, 2013; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012). Improving how humans produce and consume vegetables and animals, respecting the seasonality of products, mitigating the carbon footprint of transport and reducing food waste are common issues in developing a more sustainable economic system. These ecological issues that have recently emerged are having an influence on gastronomic chefs and can be seen to relate to UN Sustainable Development Goal n° 12 (responsible consumption and production). Indeed, to help address this grand challenge, gastronomy needs to ensure sustainable consumption and production to reduce climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution issues. Chefs and their restaurants therefore need to develop sustainable management practices and make efficient use of natural resources in preparing their meals. They also need to reduce the amount of food that is wasted in their production processes, waste less through recycling, help create awareness of sustainable development and lifestyle in harmony with nature and promote local culture and products.

While previous studies mostly focused on renowned chefs (e.g. Balazs, 2002; Rao et al., 2003; Svejenova et al., 2007; Slavich et al., 2014), we decided to study younger, promising chefs with strong ecological concerns about and connections to grand challenges (Gössling & Hall, 2021; Yamane & Kaneko, 2021). In addition, we focus on chefs who have been recognized by one of the four important French gastronomy awards which value young, promising and creative chefs and which take account of the importance and diversity of their culinary creativity and technicity as well as their environmental concerns. These awards are the *Michelin Guide's* One-star; the *Etoile Verte* (Green Star, created in 2020 to reward sustainable gastronomy); the *Assiette Michelin* (for promising chefs – one step before the One-star award); and the title of *Meilleur Ouvrier de France* (Best Craftsperson in France).

The *Michelin Guide* is the most famous guide and the oldest in France. Created in 1900, it began to rank restaurants in the 1920s, presenting them with awards through the famous “star system”. One star designates “a good table in its category”, two stars designate “an excellent

cuisine, worth the detour” and three stars designate “one of the best tables in France, worth the journey”. In France in 2020, there were 628 Michelin-starred restaurants: 29 three-starred, 86 two-starred and 513 one-starred. More recently, in 2020 the *Michelin Guide* created the Green Star (*Etoile Verte*) to recognize the eco-responsible commitment of restaurants. Regardless of their level of service and creative offering, restaurants that adopt a sustainable and environmental way of cooking are now awarded a Michelin Green Star. The *Assiette Michelin* is awarded to restaurants that provide a good meal and it values the chef’s skills. It is considered as a first step towards obtaining the first Michelin star. Finally, the *Meilleur Ouvrier de France* is a competition for various trade categories (not just related to cuisine), which in the hospitality category recognizes chefs’ mastery of technical know-how and gestures that are characteristic of a certain French culinary excellence. Winners are entitled to wear a blue/white/red collar that symbolizes the colours of the French national flag.

Each case in our study considers how a promising young chef practices creativity and takes account environmental challenges. For the purpose of clarity, the information related to each case is associated with the chef it is based on, whom we have anonymized. For instance, the label “Chef1” represents the chef who is associated with case 1. The four chefs share some common characteristics: they are all aged in their thirties and they chose to locate their restaurants away from Paris in different regions of France where the natural environment echoes their strong environmental concerns. They respect nature and the environment in their cooking and demonstrate their ability to play with the environmental features. They also promote ideas and practices based on culinary creativity.

## 2. *Data Collection and Analysis*

In our in-depth study of the four cases, we used several sources of primary and secondary data to approach French gastronomy, the chefs, their restaurant’s environment, how individual creativity takes place, and how it is influenced by responsible consumption and production and by climate actions.

First, we conducted semi-guided interviews with the chefs. The interviews lasted between 30 and 75 minutes and were fully transcribed. They enabled us to understand how the chefs perceive the grand challenges that are of particular importance for French gastronomy, how they manage their creativity, how they respect the environment in their daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the links between these topics. The interviews were supplemented by “conversational interviews” (Golden-Biddle, 2020).

Second, we collected extensive archival documents about the chefs, their restaurants and about French gastronomy in general. Press articles were collected both in paper and digital formats from national media (such as *Le Monde*, *L'Express*), local or regional press (such as *Les Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*) and professional/trade media (such as *Les Nouvelles Gastronomiques*). We complemented the data collection with audiovisual content from television, the internet and radio interviews, and from documentaries about the chefs and their restaurants. In order to refine our understanding of French culinary creativity, its components and evolution over time, we also consulted culinary guides and books (such as, Escoffier's (1903) book *Le guide culinaire: Aide-mémoire de cuisine pratique*). In addition, we collected internal documents from the chefs' restaurants (reports, menus, websites, etc.) to trace their inception and evolution over time, their current context and values, along with other elements related to our topic of inquiry. We systematically collected sources from the beginning of the chefs' professional careers. Table 8 presents an overview of the data collected and how it was used in our analysis, which we detail below.

**Table 8. Data collection and use in the analysis**

<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Use in the analysis</b>
	Press releases (total amount: 47) Mass media (paper and digital) Regional / local media (paper and digital) Professional / trade media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues of French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and the dynamics of industry evolution. More specific and specialized information on the chefs under study
	Books	Elements of contextualization and precision of the "classical cuisine".
<i>Secondary data</i>	Cookbook	Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Audiovisual content (total amount: 440mn) Podcasts Documentaries Video	Information on the current issues of French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and the dynamics of industry evolution. Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Internal documents (reports, menus...)	Detailed information about the chefs under study.
	Social media	Detailed information about the chefs under study.

<i>Interviews</i>	Semi-structured interviews (total duration: 250mn/70 pages)	Information on how chefs perceive French gastronomy rules and codes, how they manage their creativity, how they respect the environment in their daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.
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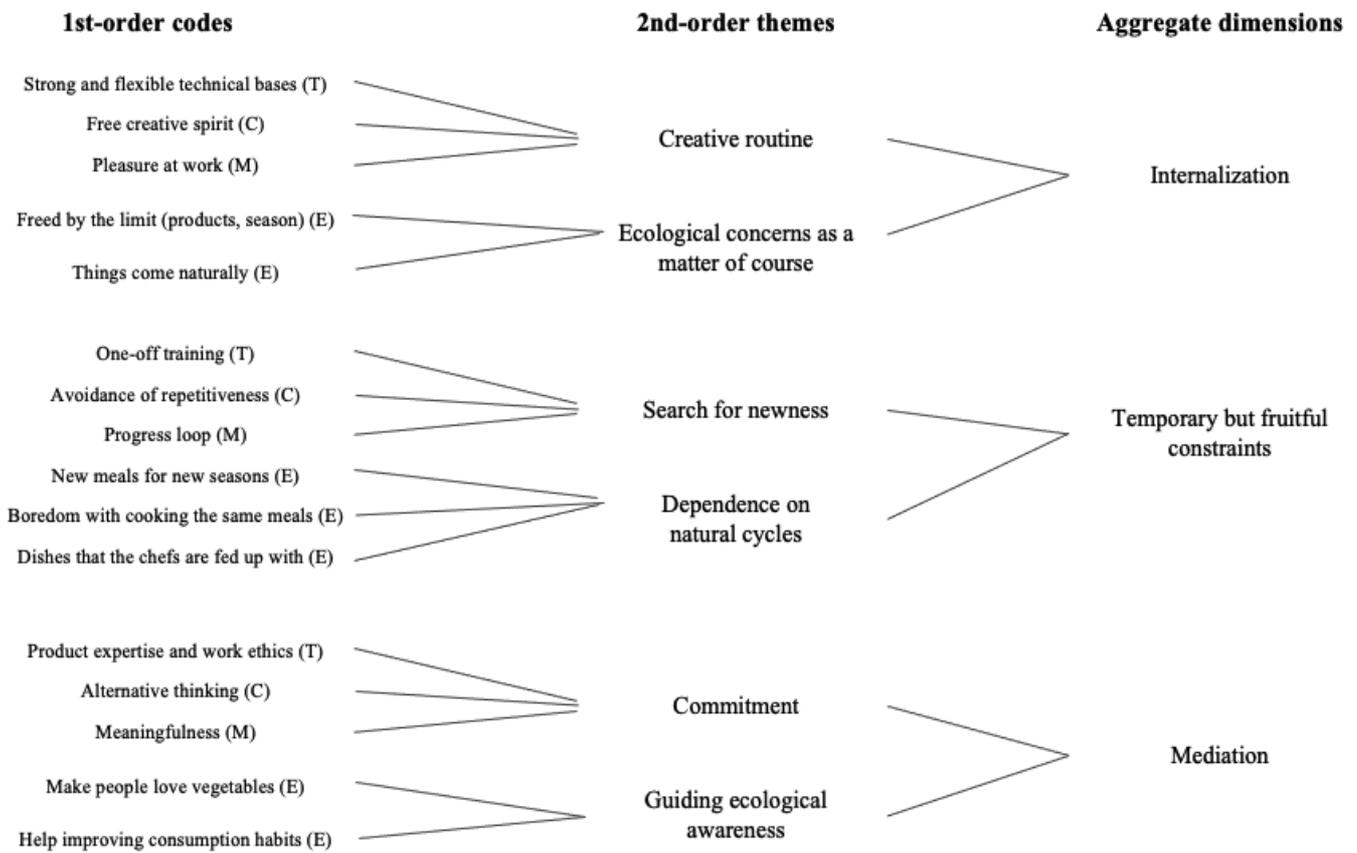
We coded the data following the data reduction approach of Strauss and Corbin (1998). We first analysed raw data from the interviews and archives using the terminology that we had transcribed, which included terms such as “free creative spirit”, “things come naturally”, “boredom with cooking the same meals”. We computed and coded these into first-order codes reflecting characterized and more specified components of individual creativity, based on the three approaches that we found out in the literature review. Thus, for clarity, technical and domain-related skills are denoted by (T), creative skills are denoted by (C) and work motivation is denoted by (M). For example, we computed the first-order code “strong and flexible technical bases” (T) based on chefs’ verbatims and discourse extracts such as “there are years of work behind that”, “broad range of material in the head” and “mechanisms”, and on archives showcasing each chef’s training, diplomas and apprenticeship.

From these codes, we created second-order themes which illustrate creative activities and environmental concerns. Related to the creative activities, we created second-order themes that highlight different activities served by creativity in the course of the chefs’ daily creative process such as *creative routine*, *search for newness* and *commitment*. Each of these second-order themes is the result of the computation of the identification of specific first-order codes related to technical skills, creative skills and work motivation. We found that computing various components of individual creativity can lead to the identification of more characterized creative activities. Moreover, based on the four chefs' own experiences, we also identified and highlighted environmental issues specifically linked to responsible production and consumption challenges. These are denoted as (E).

We then created three aggregate dimensions to illustrate how grand challenges are specifically integrated into the chefs’ individual creativity activities. These integration processes are: *internalization*, addressing grand challenges as *temporary but fruitful constraints* and *mediation*.

Finally, based on our data structure, we developed a model which suggests how the integration of grand challenges can impact individual creativity. Figure 3 presents the data structure.

**Figure 3. Data structure**



## Findings

The precise characterization of the different components of individual creativity (technical and domain-related skills, creative thinking and motivation) led us to divide the chefs' creativity into three creative activities: *creative routine*, *search for newness* and *commitment*. Our analysis revealed that the chefs also face specific environmental challenges in each of their creative practices. Therefore, having said that creative activities are infused and influenced by environmental challenges, we aimed to characterize more precisely how the chefs integrate them into their activities: through *internalization*, addressing them as *temporary but fruitful constraints* and considering them as driving forces for *mediation*.

## 1. Internalization

Internalization of grand challenges results from a combination of routine creative activities and the fact that creative individuals do not feel that they need to take particular account of grand challenges in their daily activities; they simply accept them as a matter of course. Routine activities are regular activities through which creative individuals develop creative outcomes. They encompass the daily creative activities that ensure the profitability of the restaurants.

*Creative routine.* Here, creativity is routinized in daily activities. It is nourished by “strong and flexible technical bases” which help the chefs to develop technical skills to deal with all types of situations and, particularly, to make them flexible in dealing with the unexpected, for example when they quickly have to come up with an idea for using a specific vegetable: “*I know how asparagus works*” (Chef 1). Culinary activities have strong craft roots, which means that chefs master many techniques and follow specific guidelines. As Chef 3 said: “*I need people who have strong technical backgrounds*”. This entails, for example, knowing the specific cooking time for each type of meat, being familiar with the taste of different spices and knowing how a product will react in an emulsion. Such techniques act as a toolbox for the chefs in their daily work.

Second, the creative routine is nourished by the chefs’ “free creative spirit”, which refers to their curiosity and ability to spontaneously find inspiration everywhere: “*An idea comes from the product, sometimes it comes from a colour, a shape (...), a feeling, a container...*”; “*Creativity can actually come from a lot of things*” (Chef 4). Whereas technical base refers to the craft part of cooking, free creative spirit relates more to the art of cooking. The chefs we interviewed find inspiration in their daily lives – at work, riding their bike, talking with their team, travelling – and they incorporate these ideas into the dishes they create.

Finally, as having a career as a chef demands many sacrifices and can be considered a passion, the chefs’ daily motivations are derived from their pleasure at work. They never engage in activities that go against their cooking philosophy or what they promote. What they truly want is “*to please themselves*” (Chef 3) and to be satisfied with what they produce. Having pleasure at work is an intrinsic motivation for the chefs, which enhances their daily creative capacities: “*I’m creating the restaurant where I would like to eat*” (Chef 2).

*Integrating ecological concerns as a matter of course.* The chefs’ routine creative activities echo the fact that they do not question the environmental challenges they face but

choose to integrate them into their daily activities as a matter of course. They consider seasonal and local supply, waste management and reduction of their environmental footprint to be important, and these considerations resonate with the chefs' technical, creative and motivational components. Indeed, in terms of using their "strong and flexible technical bases", the four chefs are limited by what their suppliers can offer them every week. Most of the time, they do not choose their products but work with the ones that are available locally. If they do not want to use products from far away, this means there are ones that they cannot use in their cooking. In this situation, they rely on their strong technical base to support their philosophy. For example, Chef 3 forbids the use of citrus because it is not produced locally. This enhances his creativity as he has to think of alternative ways to get the sour taste into his dishes. Similarly, the chefs' "free creative spirit" is a trait that helps them to benefit from the environmental challenges they face. As Chef 1 said, local supply is a "driving force stimulating [his] creativity". Finally, resonating with the "pleasure at work" dimension of the creative routine, it is extremely important that they take account of the seasons. Local supply and reduction of their environmental footprint come naturally to the four chefs and are entrenched in their work ethic; they do not think about them on a daily basis: "Things come naturally when you follow the season" (Chef 2).

## *2. Temporary but fruitful constraints*

The chefs see grand challenges as temporary constraints in their search for newness while having to cope with the cycle of nature. Nature regenerates each year, following the same routine; every year, the products of each season are similar and grow at the same time. Furthermore, because of their geographic location, the four chefs may never have access to certain products. Being respectful of the natural order means that the chefs see nature as being beyond their control and independent, which in turn means that their creative activities are dependent on what nature chooses to offer. Nevertheless, as temporary constraints, grand challenges can refresh the creative activities of the chefs and can be fruitful when their creativity appears to have run out of steam.

*The search for newness.* As gastronomy is a creative industry, chefs want to avoid being outdated or being ostracized by their peers or critics. They therefore try to avoid being repetitive by creating newness in their activities and deliveries, and they may seek new practices or meals to develop through inspiration and creativity: "*it is creativity that helps (them) to enjoy what*

*(they) are doing and to overcome repetitiveness”* (Chef 3). This can happen, for example, in a team meeting where everyone discusses new ideas or when the chefs themselves decide to disrupt their old pattern and develop a new strategy. However, this feeling of repetitiveness is temporary and can be a trigger for the chefs to re-dynamize their creative process and willingness to try new techniques and know-how. As Chef 1 explained, *“sometimes it is laziness that wakes me up and makes me tell myself ‘I can’t stand this dish anymore!’”*.

To avoid being repetitive and to help them in their search for newness, the four chefs occasionally strengthen and update their skills through one-off training, which can lead them to change their products and techniques. Such training might entail learning new cooking or preservation techniques, how to use unfamiliar vegetables and new ways to upcycle leftovers. As Chef 2 explained, *“the goal when you renew yourself, you stimulate the people you work with, who tend to fall asleep as well (...). Then you realize that the more you do something, the worse you are actually doing it”*.

By avoiding repetitiveness and undertaking one-off training, the interviewees also avoid falling into the vicious circle of boredom, which can cause them to lose their motivation and pleasure. To justify this renewing strategy, Chef 2 quoted Pierre Gagnaire: *“when a dish is perfect, you need to take it off the menu”*, and added that *“he is right, because while you are repeating it, you are realizing that you are doing it wrong”*. Indeed, the chefs’ motivation lies in their feelings of making “progress”, always wanting to do better and follow an upward path. Feeling that they are moving forward triggers positive intrinsic motivation and helps the chefs to be more creative. Progress can lie in finding new ways to present a dish, but it can also be derived from gaining a new type of recognition (for example, being awarded a first Michelin star) or having more clients. Progress is a personal achievement for the chefs because they have immersed themselves in their restaurant’s project, both personally and financially. It is proof that what they are doing is worthy, and this motivates them to keep going. As Chef 4 suggested, *“one star is nice, two are better (...). Having high objectives helps us to follow an ascending path (...) the risk is always to rely on our achievements and to fall down”*.

*Dependence on natural cycles.* The chefs’ search for newness echoes their dependence on the cycles of nature and therefore relates to some grand challenges. Such challenges can influence their creative practices and goals because they can make the chefs feel fatigued and lose their creative dynamic as they are stuck with using what nature has to offer each year. Trying to deal with these grand challenges can lead to boredom, for example in March when the chefs are fed up with winter vegetables and would prefer to cook spring vegetables. As Chef

3 commented: “*you cook your dish, you put it on the menu for three months because it is summer, and you do the same thing for three months. Frankly speaking, I can’t do this anymore, it bores me*”. Likewise, some chefs can feel restrained by the products they have access to, which can lead to stagnancy and is detrimental to their feelings of progress. For example, because citrus does not grow locally to his restaurant, Chef 3 does not use it despite it being an interesting and unique seasoning ingredient.

However, our data also shows that this feeling of boredom can be transitory and can lead to new dynamics and add complexity to the chefs’ creative processes. For example, instead of using citrus, Chef 3 had to develop new techniques to create acidity in his dishes.

### 3. *Mediation*

In our study, mediation acts as a driver for the chefs to communicate with and sensitize their clients to external events or dimensions through an aesthetic and multi-sensorial channel. As members of civil society and as creative individuals, the chefs, through their creative activities and engagement, can help their clients to become more aware of environmental challenges. Our analysis suggests that mediation is built on a combination of commitment and guiding ecological awareness.

*Commitment.* Commitment is how the chefs choose to incorporate responsible production and consumption challenges into their business activities. In doing so, they benefit from their great expertise and knowledge of the products they use as well as their strong work ethic. The knowledge the chefs have about their products has a significant impact on their commitment. They know their suppliers very well, they choose them carefully based on their values and their quality standards, and they therefore create a human bond with them. The respect the chefs have for the quality of the products they use and their overall work ethic can make them feel they have a duty to pass this on. As Chef 1 said “*I’m working with people who work well, I trust humankind (...) You need to go meet the people you are working with*” to ensure the quality and the meaningfulness of your offer. The same chef also demonstrated the importance of work ethics by stating: “*I admire my [vegetable] producer; I have selected her because she farms the old-fashioned way and respects the Earth*”.

The commitment of the four chefs is also driven by their alternative way of thinking. As creatives, the chefs can use their different ways of thinking to create unconventional offers which disrupt the usual codes and make people think differently. As Chef 2 mentioned, “*I don’t*

*do it the classic way, so it bothers [my clients] a little bit, and I like it*". Such initiatives are possible because they are supported by the chefs' expertise about their products, which makes it easier for them to gain their clients' approval and satisfaction. For instance, Chef 2 found himself serving red mullet and blood sausage at the same time, which at first sight might seem very daring. He had to think in a different way to find a solution for using both products, which were available at the same time, as he did not want to waste any of them.

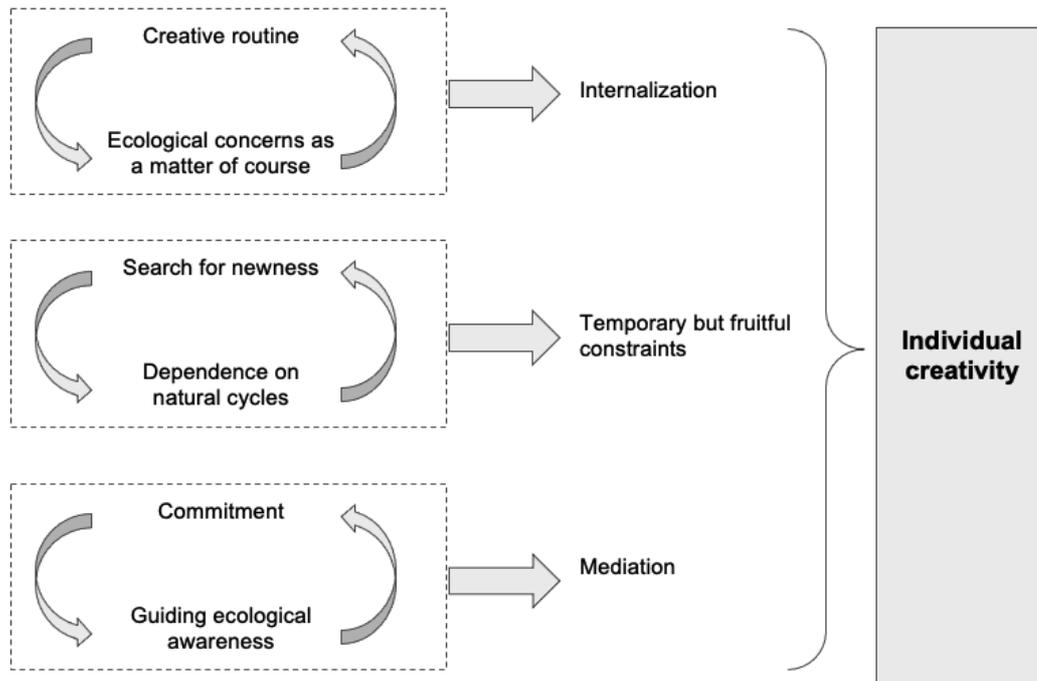
Finally, meaningfulness appears to be an important parameter for commitment. What keeps them motivated is the feeling that they are doing something that makes sense for them and that is worthy and useful. In this case, it is about showing people that there are different ways to do this. Chef 2 explained that he had created his own vegetable garden and that it had had a major impact on his cooking and relationship with his clients. It is important for him to tell his customers a story that is consistent with the restaurant and its countryside location (the story would be different if the restaurant was on the waterfront).

*Guiding ecological awareness.* Echoing the chefs' commitment, grand challenges take the form of environmental drivers to increase awareness of responsible production and consumption. The chefs can sensitize their clients about their consumption of vegetables and help them appreciate these products even more. For instance, Chef 1 said that *"If I can make people love eating vegetables (...) I feel very proud"*. The four chefs also feel committed to influencing their clients to be more responsible in their consumption and to change their habits. To do so, they cook heritage vegetables or remove meat from the menu. For example, Chef 2 explained: *"I have been serving a vegetarian alternative menu for 2 years now, and it is actually the menu we serve the most. It is incredible!"*. This echoes the importance of meaningfulness in the chefs' motivation and creativity more generally.

#### 4. Model

We encapsulate the insights from our case and the theoretical issues they raise in a model which illustrates the ways in which grand challenges can be integrated into creative individuals' creativity (figure 4).

**Figure 4. Model of the integration of grand challenges within individual creativity**



The first way for creative individuals to integrate grand challenges into their creativity is through *internalization*. Creative individuals deal with grand challenges as a matter of course and do not have to think actively about how to address them on a daily basis. They deal with them in their daily activity almost as if they are merely a part of their initial creative process. This may be because of the chefs' strong technical base, free creative spirit and the motivation they derive from their pleasure in their work. These characteristics give them freedom of action and great flexibility, enabling internalization of challenging environmental issues as such interplay is essential for internalization to happen.

The second way that creative individuals deal with grand challenges is to view them as *temporary but fruitful constraints*. Their creative activities can be characterized by the strong desire to seek newness and develop new ways of cooking and new recipes. Some environmental challenges can trigger this way of thinking and can make creative individuals feel they are stuck in a stagnant situation, counteracting their desire for novelty. However, in this case, the feeling of constraint is usually transitory, as it stimulates them to re-think and re-engage in the search for newness, try new associations and discover new techniques. When creative individuals are stimulated once again, the temporary constraint fades away.

We suggest that the third way to integrate grand challenges into individual creativity is through *mediation*, which means that creative individuals choose to incorporate the responsible production and consumption challenge into their activities by sensitizing their clients or public

to the issue through their creativity. This helps them to distinguish their offer from that of others while developing their clients' awareness of ecological challenges. It echoes the fact that creative individuals see this mission as a personal challenge; if it fails, it will not necessarily result in their business being unviable. They can also choose to invest in this mission to varying degrees.

## **Discussion**

Our study sheds light on how individual creativity is influenced by grand challenges. We suggest three ways in which grand challenges can be integrated into individual creativity in the French gastronomy creative industries: *internalization*, as *temporary but fruitful constraints* and through *mediation*. We believe our findings can contribute to the theoretical debates about grand challenges and individual creativity in the creative industries.

First, our study complements previous research on grand challenges by providing a better understanding of some of the micro foundations for trying to overcome such challenges. Previous research on grand challenges highlighted the collective and cooperative imperatives for overcoming them (e.g. Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016; Williams & Shepherd, 2016). We suggest complementing these studies by focusing, at the micro level, on individuals to understand how they are impacted by grand challenges. Indeed, our findings show that major global challenges such as responsible production and consumption influence individual creative activities. By doing so, our study suggests that it is also important to address grand challenges at the individual level, as individuals can present micro foundations for actions to overcome grand challenges.

Second, and more specifically, we believe our findings demonstrate some of the ways in which individuals can incorporate such challenges into their daily practices. Our findings complement the few studies that consider how individuals react to grand challenges (e.g. de Rond & Lok, 2016; Kulik et al., 2016) by providing insights on how they can integrate such challenges into their activities in practice. We highlight three ways in which grand challenges can be integrated into creative activities: *internalization* of grand challenges, addressing them as *temporary but fruitful constraints*, and considering them as driving forces for *mediation*. We therefore believe that our study sheds light on how individual creativity can be considered as a way to take account of and address grand challenges. Individual creativity appears to be a relevant ingredient for developing a more sustainable business and highlights the role individuals play in tackling these grand challenges. For example, the three mechanisms we

suggest could help individuals, through creative activities, to manage the ecological challenges they face so that their organizations can be more sustainable.

Related to the individual creativity literature, our findings offer a refined understanding of the components of individual creativity and how it is impacted by grand challenges. By considering the creative industries, our study answers recent calls to develop a finer-grained understanding of the vast concept of individual creativity (e.g. Stierand, 2015) and its multifaceted nature. More specifically, our study highlights various creative activities that appear to be important for understanding how creative individuals react to global challenges, depending on their technical, creative and motivational skills. Complementing previous work on individual creativity (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010), our model presents the specificities of these roots of individual creativity and suggests that, depending on their variations, they can lead to a specific creative activity. In addition, our findings suggest that, to understand individual creativity, it is important to consider the external challenges that can happen and impact creative individuals. Building on the idea that “information is not simply transmitted from the environment and passively received without any alteration” (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007: 73), our study highlights the importance of individuals’ technical, creative and motivational skills and how they interact with external challenges to nourish their individual creativity. By taking account of the different characteristics and values of individuals, our study highlights the various ways that grand challenges are integrated into creative practices in order to develop a more sustainable business.

Our study also has several managerial implications. First, our findings reveal three ways in which grand challenges can be integrated into individual creative actions and these may be relevant for individuals and organizations in more actively developing a sustainable business. In addition, depending on the business implications they want to develop, companies could target a specific creative activity, such as creative routine, if they want to expand their qualitative offer to their clients. This could enable better day-to-day stock and cost management and ensure stable and sustainable running of the business, for example, while the search for newness could ensure that chefs and their teams constantly evolve, that capabilities are developed and that high standards are maintained. In this way, individuals within organizations can be valued more for their ability to take action to reduce the effects of grand challenges; indeed, such micro-level actions can be important roots for collective action to deal with grand challenges.

To conclude, this paper provides a more granular understanding of how individual creativity can be influenced by grand challenges. We therefore believe that our study opens several avenues for further research. First, the findings and model could be refined if scholars were to elaborate it in other creative industries, such as the wine industry, where passion, art and technique are crucial. Future research could also tackle how grand challenges can be managed through creative activities in organizations in fields other than the creative industries. Second, as a qualitative and exploratory study, this paper provides a first step towards a fine-grained understanding of how components of individual creativity can lead to different creative activities. Future research could study more explicitly whether there may be other types of creativity in contexts outside of the creative industries where the role and degree of individual creativity may differ. Finally, our study calls for greater consideration of how individual creative activities can be transferred to more collective actions in addressing grand challenges. This could provide a better understanding of how individual and collective actions can be bridged to address and overcome grand challenges.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **“It Takes Two to Tango”: How Social Interactions Support Individual Creativity. Evidence from Upcoming French Chefs.**

## Introduction

Creative individuals have been depicted as lone geniuses whose creative process is characterized by individual attributes, such as flexibility, tolerance and expertise, which make creativity flourish (e.g. Cho et al., 2018; DCMS, 2001: 5). This is the case in gastronomy where chefs are considered to be the leaders of their restaurants' creative offerings (e.g. ; Leone, 2020; Stierand & Dörfler, 2016). Gastronomy is one of the creative industries, i.e. industries whose "main purpose is the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion, dissemination or marketing of goods, services and activities that have a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content" (UNESCO and Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, 2006: 2). While there is no single definition of gastronomy, it is generally considered to encompass three main criteria: that it comprises high-quality restaurants which are managed by creative chefs based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand et al., 2014). The terms "gastronomy" or "haute cuisine" are used interchangeably in the literature, where they both refer to "the systematic pursuit of culinary creativity and excellence" (Ferguson, 1998, in Svejenova et al., 2007: 543). They therefore encompass high-quality restaurants led by creative chefs, based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2018; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand et al., 2014).

Acknowledging the crucial role that creativity plays in the work of gastronomic chefs, gastronomic creative processes have been studied from several perspectives. These include understanding the different steps involved in creating a dish (Leone, 2020), identifying key factors that stimulate behaviours toward a continuous creative flow (Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019) and focusing on chefs' individual characteristics such as intuition (Stierand & Dörfler, 2016). However, as the majority of studies focus on the individual chef, their creative attributes and individual creative choices (e.g. Bouty et al., 2018; Leone, 2020; Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007), they lack a deeper understanding of exogenous factors that can influence individual creativity.

To address this over-emphasis on individuals, the literature has explored other perspectives such as team (Chen, 2006; Perry-Smith, 2006; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004), collective (e.g. Bissola & Imperatori, 2011) and organizational (e.g. Amabile et al., 1996; Amabile, 1997; Nayak, 2008; Parjanen, 2012; Woodman et al., 1993) creativity. As such studies have shifted the focus of inquiry from the individual to multiple actors and from individual creative outcomes to collective creative performance, these perspectives still fall short in offering new insights on individual creativity. We believe that studying the gastronomic context

provides the opportunity to re-think the emphasis on the individual attributes of chefs. We therefore believe that it would be helpful to develop a different understanding of what makes chefs creative by taking account of exogenous factors that can influence their individual creativity. As chefs do not work on their own, their creativity inputs are also porous to diverse interactions. As well as being surrounded by collaborators (Stierand et al., 2014) or mentors (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020), they are also supported, for example, by a brigade, considered as chefs in the making, with whom they work every day. We therefore believe that individual creativity is worth investigating through the lens of social interactions.

Only a few scholars (Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014; Paris & Lang, 2015) have considered the need to refocus the analysis of creativity as a social process. To our knowledge, these are the only articles on the creative industries in general or on haute cuisine specifically that take account of the inputs of what these authors call “others” into the chefs’ creative processes. They explain which “others” interact in the creative process (Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014) as well as the different phases in a nonlinear creative process and how each of these is characterized by the involvement of “others” (Paris & Lang, 2015). However, they say little about the specificities of these interactions, how they are shaping dedicated creative stages, and their impact on a chef’s individual creativity. Indeed, the level of integration of the different actors, and the extent to which this can change what each actor is able to offer, deserves deeper analysis. More globally, few is said on which particular stages are concerned by the inputs of dedicated others, i.e. interactive, and the mechanisms linking chefs’ individual creativity and social interactions. To address this, and in line with Stierand (2015), who calls for further understanding of the micro-structures of individual creativity, in this paper we seek to fill this important gap by asking the following question: *How can chefs’ individual creativity be supported by social interactions?*

To address this research question, we examine the case of a young, upcoming chef in the context of French gastronomy. The creative processes of chefs such as the one in our case study offer a relevant context for several reasons. First, they are managing the first project under their own name. Second, their creative offerings are almost exclusively organized around their social and ecological engagements (seasonality, local products, waste management). This has a major impact on how they organize their creativity and relationships with their co-workers, where working conditions are of great value to them in a field where extra hours and rest previously tended to be neglected. Our analysis therefore focuses on a single, in-depth case study (Yin, 2017) of the creative process of a promising one-starred gastronomic French chef in the South of France.

Our data analysis led us to identify the different types of social interactions the chef has, including those with three main actors: the brigade, peer guests in the restaurant, and suppliers. Our findings suggest a typology of the various interactive, creative stages that can compose the chef's individual creativity in his everyday course of action. These stages occur at different points in time (the *longer term*, *before service* and *during service*) and are based on the nature of the social interactions that take place (*integration*, *association* and *collaboration*). The interactive, creative stages are *planification*, *inspiration*, *experimentation* and *improvization*.

We believe that this paper can deepen understanding of the chef's creative process in relation to "others" and of how social interactions can support the individual creativity of chefs by investigating parts of the creative process that are interactive. Our results also offer clearer insights on who these "others" are and call for a more detailed description of their characteristics and the nature of their social interactions with the creative individual. Finally, this paper can further enrich developments on creative activities and time by showing how it can shape the creative push.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 1 reviews existing theories about creativity as a social interaction in general and its application in gastronomy in particular. Section 2 explains the methodology used, including the research design, data collection and how it was coded and analysed. Section 3 develops the findings from the coding process according to the research question. It identifies the relevant actors and particular social interactions, which enabled us to unveil interactive stages in the creative process. Sections 4, 5 and 6 discuss relevant studies on the topic, the managerial implications, and some limitations and future research perspectives.

## **Literature review**

### *1. Creativity as a Social Interaction*

Creativity was initially studied from the perspective of the individual, based on the study of individual creative characteristics and attributes such as open-mindedness or inventiveness (Amabile, 1988; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). In addition to creative skills, domain expertise, technical skills (Amabile, 1988, 2001; Baer, 2015; Sternberg, 2009) and motivation, understood as one's interpretation of one's reasons for doing a task in a given situation (Amabile, 1988; Benedek et al., 2020; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998), were also identified as individual characteristics that foster creativity. However, because individual characteristics on their own

are not sufficient to study creativity, many management science studies have tried to widen the scope by understanding creativity from the organizational perspective (e.g. Amabile et al., 1996; Amabile, 1997; Nayak, 2008; Parjanen, 2012; Woodman et al., 1993). They do so by identifying organizational factors that inhibit or foster creativity or collective factors such as teams (Chen, 2006; Perry-Smith, 2006; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004). They consider that “individual creativity can provide the raw material of novel and useful ideas, but team member interactions and team processes play an important role in determining how this raw material is developed into group-level creativity” (Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004: 239).

Based on the idea that creativity is the result of a social interaction, and answering the call of Agars, Kaufman, Diene and Smiths (2012), we believe that the framework of social interactions is of particular interest in further understanding the micro-processes of creative outcomes, particularly in creative industries where it is a central feature (e.g. Caves, 2000; Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007; Lampel et al., 2000).

To tackle the over-emphasis on individual creativity in the literature, some studies (Chen, 2006; Perry-Smith, 2006; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004; West & Sacramento, 2006) investigate interactions by explaining how the management of different social interactions (e.g. communication or trust) can have a positive or negative impact on creativity, particularly in organized teams and mostly in the context of the organization. Furthermore, group-level creativity and interactions in the creative industries are examined through the lens of constraints and autonomy (Harrison & Rouse, 2014). However, little has been said about how these social interactions between co-workers and their creative managers materialize in specific creative contexts such as the creative industries, and how these can impact the creative process of the creative individuals themselves (and not only the impact on the overall group or team creativity which is mostly targeted in team creativity).

The literature on networks and social ties (e.g. Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Perry-Smith, 2006) offers an alternative view which enriches understanding of the external factors that influence individual creativity. Such studies aim to show how different social network parameters can influence individual creativity. These parameters can do so positively or negatively depending on the strength of the ties linking individuals and groups both inside and outside the organization. Cattani & Ferriani (2008) also show how the position an individual holds in a network can influence their access to resources that foster individual creativity. However, these studies on networks and social interactions, albeit crucial for understanding the external factors that influence individual creativity, lack several aspects that fit with our study. While they define relationships as being independent of the creative task, we believe that

creative relationships in the creative industries exist because of the task. Furthermore, as they do not fully characterize the links and may not identify others, this calls for deeper analysis of the nature of the relationships rather than their strength (weak/strong links).

We therefore aim to answer the call of Cattani & Ferriani (2008) to expand the application of interactions from individual creative performance and outcomes to individual creative processes. The notion of the team and groups does not offer a detailed understanding of the people that are involved in the creative processes of an individual, particularly in the creative industries, because they mainly focus on employees' inputs (Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Parjanen, 2012). Moreover, the focus of this paper is not primarily on understanding how fixed and self-organized groups co-create (Harrison & Rouse, 2014) but on the interactions between creative actors and their co-workers, and the introduction of others into the daily creative process. The main aim of many studies on networks and teams is to describe the development of breakthrough innovations (e.g. Rao et al., 2003; Sgourev, 2013, 2015) or an organized collaborative pool of creativity to support organizational or collective creativity (Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Chaharbaghi & Cripps, 2007; Nayak, 2008; Parjanen, 2012). Such studies neglect relevant debates on the micro-interactions in the everyday course of creative processes and lack deeper understanding of the micro-structures of individual creativity, as suggested by Stierand (2015). Indeed, rather than studying individuals, the focus of their study is on groups, teams or organizational features and they mainly aim to improve collective and organizational performance or innovation.

In line with Paris and Lang (2015), we believe that “although research has deepened the understanding of both the collective dimension of creativity and the individual creative process from a socio psychological perspective, few researchers have focused on the link between the two” (p. 67). We therefore believe that it is still worth investigating the self, particularly by applying social interactions to the study of individual creativity. By doing so, we believe these approaches may be of help in reconsidering individuals and how they can manage their creativity, particularly in the creative industries where creativity is a central feature (e.g. Caves, 2000; Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007; Lampel et al., 2000) and creative production and idea work are usually individualized (Bouty & Gomez, 2013). More specifically, for the reasons developed in the next section, we believe that the gastronomy context is appropriate for tackling this issue.

## *2. Unveiling Creative Processes Through Social Interactions in Gastronomy*

For this study, we chose to focus on the context of a specific creative industry, i.e. gastronomy. As a creative industry characterized by many stakeholders (brigades, peers, suppliers) and driven by the creative personality of the individual chef (Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Svejenova, Planellas & Vives, 2010), gastronomy is an interesting area for unveiling individual creative processes in the everyday life of a creative organization through the lens of social interactions.

While there is no single definition of gastronomy, it is generally acknowledged that it encompasses three main criteria: that is comprises high-quality restaurants which are managed by creative chefs based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand et al., 2014). Creative processes have been studied in gastronomy from several perspectives, such as understanding the different steps in creating a dish (Leone, 2020), identifying key factors that stimulate behaviors toward a continuous creative flow (Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019) or focusing on chefs' individual characteristics such as intuition (Stierand & Dörfler, 2016). However, and with a few exceptions (Paris & Lang, 2015; Stierand et al., 2014), as most studies focus on the individual chef (e.g. Bouty et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007), their creative attributes (e.g. Abbate et al., 2019; Stierand & Dörfler, 2016) and individual creative choices (e.g. Petruzzelli & Savino, 2014; Svejenova et al., 2007), they lack a deeper understanding of exogenous factors that can influence individual creativity.

Furthermore, we believe that the specificities of gastronomy call for alternative understandings in the study of chefs' individual creativity. Indeed, "leaders are primary creators who have a personal creative vision and need other professionals to help them materialize it" (Mainemelis et al., 2015, p. 438). Therefore, chefs do not work on their own (Paris & Lang, 2015), which makes their creativity inputs open to diverse interactions. They are surrounded by collaborators (Stierand et al., 2014), mentors (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020), and even by a brigade, considered as chefs in the making, with whom they work every day. Thus, we agree with Bouty and Gomez (2013: 81) that "creativity is a social practice: something that chefs and their teams do, before engaging innovation processes, in the specific context of their restaurants (their style, localization, the team's skills, and the kitchen appliances) and of haute cuisine (expectations of the clients, the guidebooks and critics)". We therefore call for renewed understanding of the role of social interactions in a field where the chef leads the creative idea work.

Interactions and exchanges of practice have been studied from the perspective of the apprenticeship–master relationship and identity construction (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020), and the study of creative teamwork (e.g. Albers-Garrigors et al., 2013; Bouty & Gomez, 2013;

Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007). However, teams are mostly depicted as inspiration for chefs' individual creativity (Albors-Garrigos et al., 2013) or as executors of the chef's ideas (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007). Considering time, space and socially embedded creativity, they unveil creative processes while focusing on sole idea work and neglecting other creative work (Gomez & Bouty, 2009) or on the chefs and their own creative inspirations and decisions (Bouty & Gomez, 2013). Interactions have also been suggested in the study of leadership (Bouty et al., 2018) by understanding how chefs manage creative teamwork. However, we have a different focus as we seek to understand how others can influence the individual creativity of chefs. Some scholars integrate the idea of "others" through networks (Cattani et al., 2014), social ties (Aubke, 2014) or collaborators (Stierand et al., 2014) but fail to study how the social interactions in the immediate working environment can interfere with the chef's creative process. Therefore, few studies tackle how chefs deal with social interactions in their workplace, and how the nature and the characteristics of those interactions can impact their creative outcomes.

Few scholars take account of the major inputs of others and depict creativity as an interactive process in the creative industries in general and gastronomy in particular. Glăveanu and Lubart (2014) emphasize the need for "recentering (creativity) in a social space of action and interaction" to understand why "others are an integral part in the creative process" (p. 29). They explain which "others" interact and what they do to support or influence the creative outcomes of the creator, based on their characteristics and the closeness of their relationship with the creator. However, that article does not delve deeper into the different steps in the creative process and lacks clear theorization of the impact of "others". While the article's findings apply to certain creative industries (music, art design, science and scriptwriting) outside of haute cuisine, these industries have similar features to haute cuisine and its idea of "others" could therefore be applied to gastronomy. Along similar lines, in a comparative study of haute cuisine and perfumery, Paris and Lang (2015) study the different phases of a nonlinear creative process and how different actors are involved in each of them. The authors identify a nonlinear creative process which takes place in the following four phases: *inspiration*, *framing*, *formulation* and *validation* phases. However, this creative process is oriented towards the different steps that lead to the creation of a particular final product. Furthermore, the level of integration of the different actors and the extent to which it can change what each actor is able to offer in the creative process is worthy of deeper analysis. Therefore, to our knowledge, no article in the literature on creativity in gastronomy offers a deeper investigation of the

interactions that appear in the everyday course of a restaurant's activity, particularly those between chefs and their direct and daily co-workers.

Taking the view that creativity is not the work of a lone genius but is socially embedded (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Wilson, 2010), we aim to change the focus of inquiry by unveiling the impact of social interactions and actors on the individual creativity of chefs. To do so, we investigate how the interactions between chefs and others materialize in the workplace, and how these can shape the outcomes of creativity by trying to assess more deeply the creative stages that incorporate a relevant social interaction. We therefore ask: *How can chefs' individual creativity be supported by social interactions?*

## **Methodology**

To answer the research question, this work focuses on a single case study (Yin, 2017) which is part of a wider study on creativity and young, upcoming chefs in French gastronomy. This case examines the creative process of a gastronomic French chef with one Michelin star in the South of France. A former apprentice and sous-chef of renowned chefs in France, the chef under study is a young, upcoming chef, who is considered to be one of the most promising and creative of his generation. He is also known for his engagement with sustainable gastronomy, as demonstrated by his Michelin Green Star awarded in 2021. He was given "Great Chef of Tomorrow" status by Gault&Millau and he won the Revelation Prize from Omnivore in 2021.

This choice of case study is justified by the desire to gain a deep understanding of a chef's creative process in the context of interactional and temporally structured creativity. The chef studied constitutes a promising and relevant example which offers the opportunity to obtain a broad and enriched perspective of the creative process of a one-starred chef who is a forerunner of his generation and driven by his strong eco-responsible commitment. As he matched all the criteria of chefs in the same position as him in the field, he can be considered a "paradigmatic case" (Flyvbjerg, 2006), i.e. "cases that highlight more general characteristics of the societies in question" (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 232), which justifies the use of a single case study.

### *1. Presentation of French Gastronomy*

French gastronomy is a creative industry (UNESCO and the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, 2006) that emerged during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it became an art codified by journalists and chefs. It encompasses high-quality restaurants led by creative chefs, and based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand et al., 2014).

In addition, French gastronomy is known for its gatekeepers, i.e. culinary critics who assess the quality of restaurants and the creative abilities of chefs (e.g. Bonnet, 2004; Clauzel, Delacour & Liarte, 2019; Lane, 2013; Stierand et al., 2014). The most famous guide is the *Michelin Guide*, which started to rank restaurants in the 1920s, rating them according to the well-known “star system”. Critiques of restaurants can also be found in the mass media and in other guides such as *Le Fooding* or *Le Gault&Millau*.

Several studies have already examined the sources of the creative processes and/or the leadership management of highly renowned chefs (e.g. Balazs, 2002; Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Gomez et al., 2003; Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007). However, we consider that it is also relevant to study young, upcoming chefs who are strongly engaged in sustainable cuisine. Indeed, these characteristics have a strong impact on creativity as their relatively young businesses and work-in-progress reputations prevent them from closing their restaurants for research and development purposes for months at a time. Furthermore, their clear investment in ecological practices (waste management, sustainable supply chain) makes them more flexible in their creativity and reduces their ability to plan in advance. With 526 restaurants awarded one Michelin star in 2023, we believe this dominant part of the field is worthy of deeper analysis. We therefore believe that it would be interesting to analyze the interactions between chefs and their co-workers in order to obtain a better understanding of how social interactions can influence the micro-processes behind chefs’ everyday personal creativity and, thus, challenge the often-conceptualized idea of the relatively lone genius in the creative industries and haute cuisine.

## 2. *Data Collection*

For the purpose of the study, the case was defined as a set of primary and secondary data, combining data sources on French gastronomy, the chef, his team, the restaurant environment, and how creativity takes place.

First, we conducted a semi-structured interview with the chef to understand his motivation and his cooking philosophy. The interview was fully recorded and transcribed. The

core of the data collection consisted of an intensive *participant observation* at the restaurant over a week in May 2022. Four unstructured interviews with the chef and his brigade were conducted and informal discussions were held during the observation. Our chef's collaborative dinner with another chef on the first night of the observation helped us to collect information on the interactions between the chef and a peer and led to an unstructured interview with them both. The observations took place mainly in the kitchen during and between services and in the hours before service with all the staff. They are summarized and detailed in the field notes, which were complemented by two semi-structured exchanges with a member of the brigade to obtain missing information.

Second, we collected internal and external documents about the chef. We collected 50 press articles from the national mass media and professional trade media (such as *Les Nouvelles Gastronomiques* and *Food & Sense*). These were complemented by 500 minutes of audio-visual content related to the chef, including documentaries about him and French gastronomy more generally. In order to collect more information about his cooking philosophy, we analysed his social media accounts and internal documents such as the restaurant's menus and website. The case study also forms part of a wider project on similar young, upcoming chefs from French gastronomy, for which we had already gathered 250 minutes of semi-structured interviews with the chefs. The data collection is summarized in Table 9 below.

**Table 9. Data collection and use in the analysis**

<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Use in the analysis</b>
	Press releases (total: 50) Mass media (paper and digital) Regional / local media (paper and digital) Professional / trade media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and the dynamics of industry evolution.  Specific and specialized information on the chef under study, particularly the construction of his signature dishes.
<i>Secondary data</i>	Audio-visual content (total: 500 minutes) Podcasts Documentary	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy and the dynamics of industry evolution.  Detailed information about the chef under study.

	Video	
	Semi-structured interviews (total duration: 250 minutes / 70 pages)	Information on how selected young, upcoming chefs perceive French gastronomy, how they manage their creativity, how they respect the environment in their daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.
	Internal documents (reports, menus...)	Detailed information on the chef under study.
	Social media (Instagram account)	Detailed information on the chef under study from social media posts, particularly pictures and stories.
<i>Interviews</i>	Semi-structured interviews with the chef under study	Information on how the chef perceives French gastronomy, how he manages his creativity, his team, how he respects the environment in his daily culinary tasks, and the nature of the connections between these topics.
	Unstructured interview with a guest chef (peer) and the chef himself	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with another chef.
	Unstructured interview with a member of the brigade	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with the chef.
	Unstructured interview with the sous-chef	Information on the creative process and how he interacts with the chef.
	Unstructured interview with the chef	Information on his creative process based on the proposed menu.
	Semi-structured interview with a member of the brigade	Complementary information on the idea generation process from the brigade
<i>Participant observation</i> (1 week)	A full week of observation in the restaurant's kitchen: <i>Field notes</i> <i>Informal unstructured discussions with several members of the team (chef,</i>	Information on how the relationships take place in the chef's environment. Investigation of how creativity is managed in the chef's kitchen and how the creative interactions are managed. Perspectives of both the chef and his team.

	<i>brigade, sous-chef, an invited chef (peer), chef's wife</i>	
	During and between rush hours (service).	

### 3. Data Analysis

We coded the data using the grounded theory approach, “arising inductively from the study of the phenomenon it represents” (Glaser et al., 1968) and thus followed an inductive approach based on extensive readings and interpretations from raw data. This enables deeper insights when studying social phenomena (Mello & Flint, 2009) by finding patterns that come directly from a vast amount of collected data. The starting point of our inductive methodology was based on observing and gathering the chef’s discourses about his creative activities, the people that interact with him during his creative process and how these interactions can shape his own creativity.

We therefore coded the raw data following a data reduction approach (Glaser, 1998). Raw data collected from interviews and archives was computed using open coding in order to identify the kind of interactions that take place during the chef’s creative process, with whom, and how these interactions are linked to the chef’s creative outcomes.

We began by gathering information on each creative activity that the chef and his co-workers engaged in. These included “trying a new dish”, “mixing ingredients for fermentation” or “discovering a new type of citrus fruit”. Then, to study the impact of interactions in the chef’s creative process, we considered each piece of data that suggested an interaction between the chef and all those he considered relevant for his creative process. In our case, we found these individuals to be brigade members, specific peers and major suppliers. The interactions encompassed informal discussions, idea suggestions, food tastings and group meetings.

To begin with, we organized the data into two categories: the ideas generated and those who generated them. Some were generated by co-workers, some were the property of the chef himself and others were mixed. By examining how the ideas were expressed by brigade members, suppliers or guest peers and filtered by the chef, as well as the creative outcomes they led to, we were able to group these interactions according to three factors: 1) the point in the

creative process when the interaction occurred (over the longer term, before service and during service); 2) which individuals were involved with the chef; and 3) the creative goals behind the interactions. Information that came directly from the data made us consider adding a temporal variable, as each action occurred at different points in the life of the restaurant. Simultaneously, we triangulated the data sources to strengthen the respondents' experiences (Glaser et al., 1968). We found many detailed interviews and short stories in the newspapers, on social media and in websites. This helped to broaden our understanding of the chef's signature dishes and how they were created by him and his co-workers and gave further information on his creative processes and visions.

The first part of the analysis focused on the people involved. We analyzed the nature of the interactions that occurred during the chef's creative process and organized them into sub-groups to specify the links between the chef and his co-workers. At this stage, and having identified the main actors in the chef's creative process, we were able to identify three types of social interactions: *integration*, *association* and *collaboration*. These were based on three characteristics: 1) the frequency of the actors' encounters; 2) the degree to which they assimilated the chef's creative decisions; and 3) the interests they followed (personal or chef oriented). The second part of the analysis focused on the creative outcomes. We studied the different creative activities undertaken by the chef and his co-workers and identified the importance of time in the chef's creative process. Then, computed with the characteristics of the social interactions we had previously identified, we developed four creative stages that invoked an interaction – *improvisation*, *experimentation*, *inspiration* and *planification* – which involved different creative activities with varying creative intensities and different actors.

Through our analysis, we identified some creative activities in which the chef alone engaged. However, while we acknowledge that the chef sometimes creatively operated on his own (for example, when he investigated the creation of a new sauce), the focus of this study is on the creative activities that are considered interactive, i.e. those that involve the engagement of other actors.

## **Findings**

Our inductive analysis led to several findings which helped us to understand how social interactions supported the chef's individual creativity. Based on the idea that the chef was the main creative manager and leader of his restaurant, our study of his interactions with his co-

workers provided a finer-grained understanding of some of the micro-structures of his creative process.

First, we identified the relevant actors and classified their relationship with the chef into three types of social interactions. We then computed these interactions with the temporal organization of the restaurant and the creative activities that the chef and others engaged in to identify four interactive creative stages in the chef's creative process and how each actor was able to engage in one or more of these stages.

### *1. Identifying the nature of the social interactions*

Our data analysis initially enabled us to identify three main types of actor who were involved in the chef's creative process (as identified by the chef himself): his brigade, guest peer(s) in the restaurant and main suppliers. The chef considered these actors to be the most relevant and meaningful in his daily creative activities, for his creative offerings and for his restaurant's success.

This allowed us to identify three types of social interactions that occurred in the chef's daily creative process. We differentiated these interactions based on three criteria: 1) the frequency of the actors' encounters with the chef; 2) the degree to which they assimilated to the chef's creative practices and decisions; and 3) the personal interest of each actor, whether chef driven or personally driven.

**Integration** refers to how a social group assimilates to its environment by learning its core values and rules. For example, we consider the brigade members to be integrated. Each brigade member is selected based on their skills. The chef highly values working with people who inspire him and who fit with the restaurant's philosophy. Each member has the right to propose a new dish or a new technique, which can be validated by the chef and put on the menu. Thus: 1) the brigade members interact with the chef on a daily basis; 2) they are closely assimilated to the chef's creative practices; and 3) their main interest is in working to contribute to the success of the chef and his restaurant. As one member of the brigade explained, "the chef is very open and he selects you based on your culinary identity and your skills". He added that "you can do it your own way, and if the chef likes it, he might follow your technique".

However, a type of integration can also be found in the chef's interactions with rigorously selected suppliers when working on a single project. These interactions are based on knowledge sharing and take place over a specific and unique period of time. We consider such suppliers,

who are very close to the chefs, to be partially integrated because they meet with the chef regularly over this period of time, they are assimilated to the chef's creative practice and are motivated by the creation of a unique dish for the restaurant. For example, the chef worked closely over many months with his fruit suppliers and a local distillery to develop his signature "black pear" dessert.

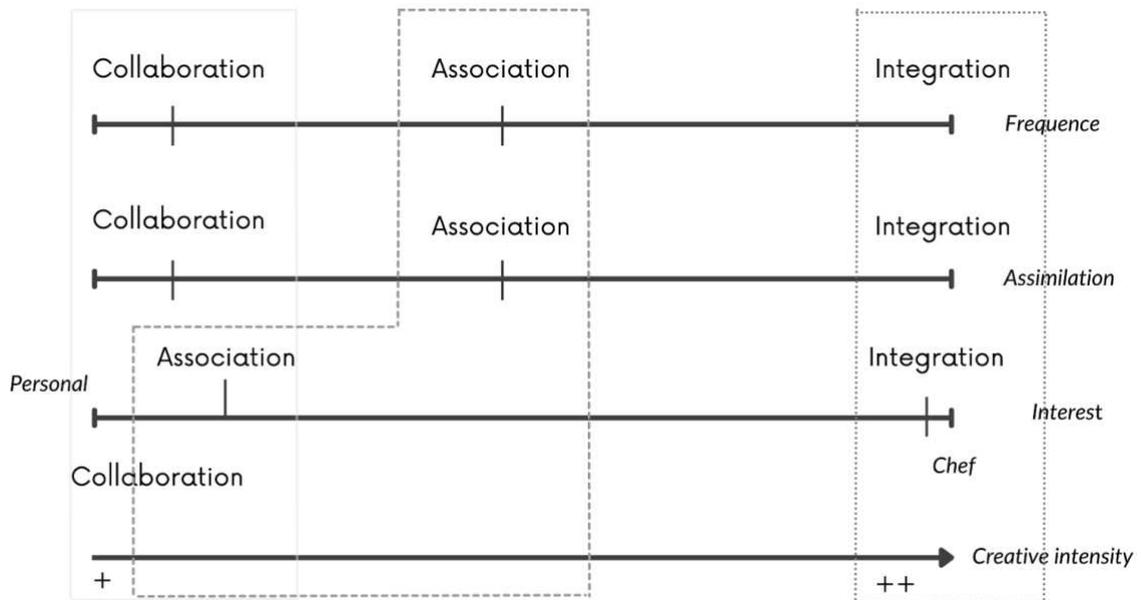
**Association** refers to the pooling of detailed knowledge to co-create projects that will last and/or that support the chef's projects over the long term. This is the case when the chef regularly meets with suppliers, co-organizes the supply chain, and co-creates dishes that are served in the restaurant. For example, the chef worked with a meat supplier to reintroduce the rare and prestigious pork "mangalitza" breed to the region. Thus: 1) the main suppliers meet the chef sporadically for specific purposes and in line with the restaurant's time schedule; 2) they are not integrated to the chef's creative decisions but they help to nourish his creative thinking and suggest new ideas that may be fruitful for him; and 3) they are driven by building a strong commercial relationship and achieving client satisfaction while maintaining their own businesses.

**Collaboration** refers to the sharing of knowledge and working together on a single project that is limited in time. This was the case when the chef invited a guest peer to his restaurant to co-organize a special dinner menu with him and his brigade in order to "be more creative with terroirs that look alike". Thus, peers who the chef invites to work with him for special dinners 1) meet with him only on special occasions – sometimes once, sometimes periodically; 2) are not assimilated to the chefs' daily creative practices although their own creative practices can indirectly give the chef ideas or inspiration; and 3) are driven by a desire to share experiences and knowledge and to be introduced to a new customer base. According to the chef, the goal of collaboration is to "compute two brigades in order to meet together, discover each other's techniques and show our clients another type of terroir during a special dinner". In this context, the chefs work side by side but not directly together. During our observation, they each created one part of the menu and brought all the dishes together into a single menu, which they named the "Carnet de Printemps" (Spring Menu). For example, the appetizers comprised a mixture of the Alsatian chef's specialties, such as "Celery Cheese, Potato, Chlorophyll, Oxalis and Morning Picked Leaves", and Provençal ones, such as "Smoked trout from Isle-sur-la-Sorgue and Blood Sausage".

This first stage of the analysis helped us to establish a link between the three characteristics of each social interaction and the degree of creativity that resulted from them.

This link is summarized in Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5. Link between the degree of creative intensity and the three characteristics of social interactions**



## 2. From social interactions to different creative stages

Following identification of the three different and meaningful actors and the social interactions that linked them to the chef, which were computed with the creative activities of the chef himself and his co-workers, we identified four *creative stages* in the chef's creative process. Each creative stage presented varying degrees of creative intensity and involved different actors, i.e. invoked a different type of social interaction. In other words, the characteristics of the social interaction led to different types of involvement in the chef's creative process. Simultaneously, through our inductive approach, we identified the important dimension of *time*, enabling us to identify three periods or points of time which were crucial to the chef's creative activity. These are: 1) the longer term, 2) before service, and 3) during service.

These three creative stages are a computation of the chef's interactive creative activities, various social interactions and the structure of the timespan within which the restaurant operates. In other words, the actors operate in a variety of ways based on their interactions with

the chef and at different points of time in the chef's creative process, which has an impact on the type of creative practices undertaken. However, this timespan leads the chef to mobilize different actors at different times based on the needs of his creative practice.

The creative stages are based around 1) the nature of the social interactions involved; 2) the degree of creative intensity; and 3) the point in time when they appear.

**Improvisation** refers to the ability to implement new ideas quickly, for example at busy periods. It requires a good understanding of the chef's cooking philosophy and values. Therefore, improvisation entails a high degree of creative intensity and occurs in the very short term, i.e. during service. Improvisation is crucial because each service has its own unforeseen issues, such as running out of an ingredient, having difficulty cooking the meat as intended, and specific client demands due to allergies, etc. It entails being able to adapt creatively over a very short time to ensure the quality of the chef's creative offering.

As brigade members are trained in the chef's cooking philosophy, we consider them to be *integrated*. Thus, the nature of the social interactions that link the chef and his brigade members enables them to improvise. In addition, because improvisation occurs during service, they are the only actors who are allowed to enter the chef's kitchen at that time. The chef therefore needs highly integrated brigade members to help him deal with service uncertainty. An example of this was when the sous-chef proposed changing the meat seasoning before serving the dish and the chef agreed, saying "it is taste that we guarantee, not regularity". As the sous-chef said, "The chef's kitchen is wherever the spoon falls". During service, brigade members go with the flow: "Do you think it would be nice to put some wild garlic in it?" (chef to the sous-chef). Finally, the sous-chef explained that "we do the dish as it is, if something is missing, we just have to deal with it".

Improvisation is facilitated by the ability of the chefs to ad-lib. For example, the seasoning can change on a daily basis depending on the preparations, such as jars of fermented fruits, his own chutneys, etc., that the chef has at his disposal.

**Experimentation** refers to the generation of ideas and tasting, deep thinking, and trial and error. It represents a high degree of creative intensity and is the cornerstone of the chef's creative offerings. It can take place at two different points in time: over the longer term, when the chef is trying to create new dishes for a future menu, and before service, when he is adapting his current menu to changes in the supply chain or because of his own boredom with the dishes.

Experimentation can happen randomly before preparing the service and always takes place in the kitchen, in the presence of everyone else. This testing freedom is facilitated by the relative autonomy of the brigade. An example was when the chef experimented with new fermentation techniques to produce his own miso paste, choosing local ingredients such as Camargue rice and original seasonings. Overall, experimentation is crucial to the chef himself. Indeed, the development of new, unique ideas, such as creating their own garum, XO sauce, linden flour, kimchi, katsuobushi, etc., all require a great deal of testing and experimentation. The time and place that these experimentations occur, i.e. before service, in the presence of all brigade members, create an interactive space for sharing knowledge and gathering thoughts about the experimentation process.

Over the longer term, both the brigade members and suppliers who are *integrated* can participate in the experimentation process. For example, the creation of the “black pear” signature dish was the result of a major experimentation process involving the chef, the brigade and some of the suppliers, which took place over many months before it was offered on the menu. “Black pear” is a signature liquor that was created with the help of a distillery near to the restaurant. The liquor is based on the Spanish “black garlic” process where the pear is fermented at 70 degrees for two months and turns black. The chef had the idea of distilling it to create a unique desert. Experimentation driven by suppliers is based on their deep knowledge of their products and their specificities, i.e. how they can behave and be modified, and their willingness to expand their own business by valorising this knowledge. For example, creation of the “black pear” required distilling expertise. Thus, experimentation is enhanced by the particular skills of the suppliers. Another example of experimentation was the restaurant’s development of its own cold cuts. During the first Covid-19 lockdown, they had leftover pork. As the sous-chef had mastered smoking techniques, he and the chef decided to develop their own stock of cold cuts, which is now served on top of one of the dishes.

At the point just before service, it is only the brigade members who can participate in experimentation because they have the necessary skills to reduce the risk of failure in such a short timescale and because the chef trusts and encourages them to suggest new ideas on a daily basis. As they are in touch with the chef regularly, their ideas can be tested in the restaurant’s kitchen with immediate feedback on the contrary to suppliers who have their own business agenda which will not exclusively match the chef’s agenda.

Experimentation is also motivated by intense tasting experiences: the chef encourages his team members to taste everything in order to have a better understanding of the flavours, the textures and the synergies of each ingredient. This allows them to develop new and

interesting ideas that match the chef's cooking philosophy and increases their chance of being validated by him.

Experimentation cannot take place during service because of time constraints, as the priority at that time is to execute the chef's menu and be able to adapt to short-term challenges.

**Inspiration** is a more passive way of getting new ideas and sharing good practice with actors. It occurs when the chef comes across something he was previously unaware of or does not do in his restaurant. Inspiration entails a medium degree of creative intensity because it is relatively passive and indirect.

Inspiration occurred, for example, when the chef in our study invited a peer to work with him in his restaurant. The goal of such *collaboration* was to enable both chefs to develop their own ideas and cooking philosophy without changing them. This did not mean that they adapted or changed their own cooking habits; rather, they juxtaposed them to create a menu. The final menu therefore comprised dishes created separately by the guest chef and the host chef. This was shown by the menu being printed on two superimposed sheets, one of which was transparent and corresponded to the guest chef's dishes, in order to show the sequence of dishes prepared by each chef individually.

Inspiration therefore occurred before service, when the peer arrived at the restaurant, demonstrated his products and talked about his own creations, as well as during service, when the peer cooked and created his contributions to the menu.

The chef in our study invited a peer to his restaurant to work with him to create a special dinner for a few selected customers. The peer brought his own creations and dishes that he usually served in his own restaurant. When the peer was cooking with our chef for an event in the latter's restaurant, he watched the local chef work with his products, discussed some of his own techniques with him and considered trying them in his own restaurant in the future. The two chefs worked side by side to ensure the coherence of the overall menu but they prepared their own dishes rather than preparing any dishes together. For example, the guest chef said: "We're going to reduce the quantity a little bit, I will suggest it to him later".

Inspiration is a subtle and indirect part of the chef's creative process. It can influence his ideas by giving him suggestions and alternative ways of thinking, particularly because guest peers have common values with the chef. However, the effects are rather blurry and uncertain. Indeed, when talking about the collaborative dinner, the chef said that "the goal is to get inspired, but it takes a lot of time before some ideas are actually on the table". The organization

of the event was quite relaxed and the local chef did not over-adapt to the visit: “We do it the usual way!” (Chef).

**Planification** refers to planning the resources that will nourish the chef’s creative offering. Planification occurs over the longer term without the need for quick creative reflexes. It is less engaging in terms of the creative push as it mostly entails choosing the next products without changing or reinterpreting them. However, it still nourishes the chef’s creative thinking and can be crucial to the resources he will obtain, notably for successful *experimentation* stages. Planification is also linked to the chef’s own ecological sensibility as it requires him to be relatively flexible and it is therefore impossible to plan everything in advance.

Planification is based on the chef’s *association* with suppliers who support him and whom he trusts. It is of vital importance to the chef’s creative practices because it gives him a framework of available resources. He needs his associated suppliers who can give him information about resource availability and the supply of new products. For example, on one occasion, he and his supplier decided to introduce a new vegetable to the region because he did not want to import it from further away. Together, they introduced specific types of carrot (bowl carrots) or new products, such as “la poire de terre” (pear of the earth, similar to “pomme de terre” - potato), which are produced on French soil using their own techniques rather than being imported, as is usually the case.

Such planification gives the chef new insights and enriches his creative identity.

**Table 10. Degree of creative intensity for each creative stage**

Planification	Inspiration	Experimentation	Improvisation
+	+	++	++

3. *Towards a Typology of Interactive Creative Stages*

In conclusion, through our inductive approach we were able to identify the actors and the social interactions that characterize their relationship with the chef. This enabled us to develop a typology of interactive creative stages that compose the chef’s individual creativity in his

everyday course of action. By also noting the importance of time in the chef's creative process and the creative activities involving actors other than the chef himself, this analysis enabled us to identify four interactive creative stages that were part of the chef's individual creative process and how various social interactions helped to support these processes and his individual creativity. We found that integrating meaningful actors into the study of the individual creativity of chefs provides a better understanding of how creative processes are constructed and of how chefs' creative ideas can be supported by the existence of specific social interactions. It also enabled us to unveil the micro-structures of social interactions and to develop a nuanced view of the role of each actor in the chef's creative process. We therefore concluded from this study that social interactions support the chef's individual creativity in three ways.

First, we were able to identify different interactive dimensions of the creative process through four creative stages (improvisation, experimentation, inspiration and planification), each of which involves different social interactions. Thus, based on their specific relationship with the chef, each actor plays a key role in one or more of these stages by influencing the chef's ideas, helping him to deal with unexpected events or by giving him new resource suggestions.

Second, we found that each creative stage was characterized by different creative intensities which coincided with the characteristics of each social interaction. These were: 1) the frequency of their encounters with the chef; 2) the degree of assimilation to the chef's creative practices and decisions; and 3) the personal interest of each actor. For example, major suppliers whom we considered to be *associated* because they were not creative thinkers and met with the chef once a year were engaged in planification. This was less creatively intense than improvisation, which was engaged in by the brigade members, who were *integrated* creative workers and frequently in touch with the chef and his core values. This helped us to nuance the involvement of the different actors by showing that they played different creative roles based on the characteristics of their interactions with the chef.

Third, as we found that social interactions are time influenced, this allows us to state that meaningful actors can support the chef at each stage of the creative process. This means that they give him a continuous and useful creative push, even though the creative intensity fluctuates.

As a conclusion, our analysis led us to create Table 11 below, which describes the interactive stages in a chef's creative process based on the interactive creative activities involved, the nature of the social interactions at each stage and the point in time when they appear. Blank spaces do not mean that no identified creative stage is involved in this time space,

nor that there is no creative activity. Rather, to our knowledge and based on this study, there are no identified and characterized creative stages where an identified social interaction occurs in this time space.

**Table 11. Typology of the chef’s interactive creative stages, based on time and nature of social interactions**

Creative stage  Time	Planification	Inspiration	Experimentation	Improvisation
Over the long term	Association		(Total or partial) Integration	
Before service		Collaboration	(Total) Integration	
During service		Collaboration		Integration

**Discussion**

We believe this study can contribute to the literature on creativity management and that it expands the literature on the creative processes in haute cuisine. It can enrich the current perspectives by adding interactive dynamics and identifying how interactive insights can support individual creativity and enrich the understanding of its micro-structures.

First, this study can deepen understanding of chefs’ creative processes by enriching previous perspectives through the addition of interactive insights. The creative processes in gastronomy have been studied from several perspectives, which all focus on the chef and his own creative decisions and inspirations (Leone, 2020; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019). While some scholars discuss the work with teams, referring to brigades (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013;

Leone, 2020), overall, most studies of gastronomy focus on the individual chef (e.g. Bouty et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejenova et al., 2007). We believe this study is in line with such studies but it goes further by taking account of the presence of “others” and by focusing on the creative activities that occur through interactions. We therefore offer new insights on how social interactions can shape and enrich the creative output of chefs and deepen understanding of creative processes by explaining how some of their steps can be supported by interactions with others. It therefore challenges the common idea that chefs create mostly on their own (Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015) as it demonstrates the importance of the people they work with. At the same time, although the focus of our study is on “others” and interactions, this perspective still gives new insights on individual creativity and therefore answers the call of Stierand (2015) for a better understanding of the micro-structures of individual creativity by showing that individual creativity can be supported by factors that are exogenous to chefs’ personal attributes.

Second, and in line with other scholars such as Glăveanu and Lubart (2014) and Paris and Lang (2015) on haute cuisine, who investigate the impact of “others” in creative processes, our study delves deeper into the study of the impact that “others” have on the creativity of chefs. We aim to characterize the “others”, providing insights on who they are, how they behave and the precise relationships they develop with the chef. This identification offers a more tangible understanding of their impact on the creative process. While previous studies (Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014; Paris & Lang, 2015) discuss the notion of “others” and consider their impact in various steps of the creative process in the creative industries, they fail to identify the characteristics of each type of actor, the nature of the social interactions involved and the degree of creativity they can bring to the creative. By characterizing social interactions according to three types (integration, association and collaboration) based on the three identified criteria (frequency of encounters, assimilation to the chef’s creative decisions, and their interest), we provide a better understanding of who the “others” are and how they can support chefs’ individual creativity according to the characteristics we identified. Rather than only considering them as external actors who are involved in the chef’s individual creativity at various stages, our perspective shows how they may behave, when, and which creative outcomes they are best suited to be involved in, thereby linking the nature of the social interactions and the intensity of the creative push they can bring to the chef. Furthermore, our social interactions criteria show that actors do not engage exclusively in one particular type of interaction. For example, although suppliers are generally considered to be *associated*, in specific situations they can be considered to be *integrated*. This means that “others” have a nonlinear impact on chefs’

creativity and that their impact can vary across time and situations, a factor that should be taken into account.

Third, we believe this paper can enrich the study of creative activities and time. Indeed, our inductive analysis enabled us to introduce the idea of time in the creative process and to show how it shapes the creative push. This could help to address questions about whether there is a particular time for creativity to take place, as some scholars have shown (e.g. Slavich et al., 2014) or whether there is a “continuous creative flow”, even if the creativity is not equally intense. Therefore, following previous articles (e.g. Leone, 2020; Paris & Lang, 2015), this paper aims to show that creativity is a nonlinear process but comprises different stages that encompass various creative intensities and involves different actors. However, whereas the study by the aforementioned scholars aimed to unveil the process that leads to a final product or service, we try to give insights on the routine creative activities which occur in the daily life of a restaurant, therefore anchoring it in the analysis of everyday creativity. The aim of our study therefore differs from the aim of that by Paris & Lang (2015) and it has a different starting point – ours is related to interactions whereas theirs relates to the creative stages. This explains the nuanced difference in the definition of “inspiration” in our study and “inspiration” in the study by Paris and Lang (2015). For them, inspiration is the starting point for idea generation, whereas we understand inspiration to be a soft creative phase where the chef can be exposed to fruitful or unfruitful external ideas arising from interaction with others. Furthermore, inspiration in our study is linked to the social interaction at stake and we believe that time constraints are also relevant when studying chefs with strong ecological values such as the chef studied in this paper.

## **Managerial Implications**

Our study enabled us to formulate some suggestions for managers who lead creative businesses and projects with versatile actors, and how they can adopt them.

First, we found that it is important to understand the social interactions that flow naturally so that they can be adapted to what is expected of them in order to better enrich the creative process at stake. The key role that each type of actor plays should be identified and acknowledged in order to maximize their positive impact on creativity. For example, the role of suppliers and the specificity of their relationship with the chef means they can give him insights about resources that will ultimately shape his creative possibilities. The creative manager should therefore consider this when meeting and organising their relationship with

suppliers in order to benefit from their particular creative input. In other words, the social interaction characteristics identified could help managers to identify which actors can be mobilized and to what extent, with a view to choosing them to suit the task at hand.

On the other hand, this study draws a link between the nature of social interactions and creative intensities. We found that integration is the best way to achieve a very high degree of creative push. Therefore, if there is a willingness to intensively dynamize the creative process, it will be helpful for managers to think about integrating more relevant actors for a specific project or creative process in order to maximize their creative input. This means they should choose relevant actors who should meet with them regularly, be highly assimilated to their creative decisions and whose interests are oriented towards their creative success.

## **Limitation and Future Research**

This case study focused on a young, upcoming chef who was willing to integrate and encourage the development of ideas in his brigade, which naturally influenced the structure of his relationship with them. Furthermore, the chef's ecological engagement influenced his relationships with his suppliers and the timing of his creative decisions and planification. His results were therefore influenced by the structure of the relationships that the chef nurtured with relevant "others". However, overall, this study calls for a deeper understanding of relevant timescales and specific actors in order to better establish and unveil the characteristics of the interactions that are relevant for individual creativity. It shows that it is necessary to ask creatives about which actors matter to them and how they work with and integrate them into their creative tasks. Thus, we encourage researchers to adopt interactive perspectives and conduct studies that identify relevant actors as evoked by the creatives themselves in order to unveil social interactions at stake, thereby obtaining a deeper understanding of the creative processes in creative industries.

Although the scope of this study is focused on gastronomy and creative chefs, we believe it opens the door for further inquiries about other creative activities. We therefore call on researchers to deepen understanding of individual creativity in creative contexts, such as the performing arts, which encompass social interactions and are constructed around specific timescales.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

**“A Show of Good Taste”: How Creative  
Individuals Can Employ Signal  
Observability Strategies to Influence Their  
Reputation Among Experts.  
Evidence from French Gastronomy.**

## Introduction

*“I write about my own work because I want to speak for myself. I might not be the only authority, nor the best authority, but I want to participate in the writing of my own history. Why should artists be validated by outside authorities.”*

— Marlene Dumas, artist

*“There are two sorts of beauty; one is the result of instinct, the other of study. A combination of the two, with the resulting modifications, brings with it a very complicated richness, which the art critic ought to try to discover.”*

— Paul Gauguin, painter

*“Criticism is the windows and chandeliers of art: it illuminates the enveloping darkness in which art might otherwise rest only vaguely discernible, and perhaps altogether unseen.”*

— George Jean Nathan, drama critic

Whether they are feared or admired, mistrusted or boring, critics are undoubtedly a cornerstone of the creative industries. As the quotes above demonstrate, art without critics can lead to oblivion. Yet one might ask how third parties are more able than the artists themselves to critique a work of art. Their interdependence, although omnipresent, is somewhat blurred. How artists interact with their critics and how critics assess the value of their work raise issues which are worth unpacking.

The creative industries are those industries whose “main purpose is the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion, dissemination or marketing of goods, services and activities that have a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content” (UNESCO, 2006: 2). In their daily activities, they face the paradoxical challenge of presenting highly creative content while also being profitable (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007). They are characterized by the presence of gatekeepers in the shape of experts in the field, such as journalists, guides or specialist media, who judge and evaluate them (Cattani et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2016; Karpik, 2000). As creative industries are industries “where products are always associated with the author’s name, relations between creators and their products individualize production” (Leschziner, 2007: 78). Thus, the valuation process and the reputation of those in creative industries is usually associated with one or a group of creative individuals.

As the creative industries are hard-to-value industries in which “quality is difficult to ascertain prior to purchase” (Reinsten & Snyder, 2005 in Gemser, Van Oostrum and Leenders,

2007), this means that the valuation process is not always based on obvious criteria. We therefore believe that it is relevant to examine the opacity of value assessments in the creative industries to better understand the valuation trajectory of creative individuals.

As “the perceived value or worth of a good is the result of broadly shared and accepted cognitive constructs (...) disseminated by social actors” (Khaire, 2014: 42), we tend to consider that the value assessment of cultural and creative goods is mostly linked to individual creative choices (Jones et al., 2016; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016; Stamkou et al., 2018; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). Indeed, “talent, creativity, and innovation are the resources that are crucial to success” (Lampel et al., 2000: 264) in the creative industries, and “the long-term survival of firms in cultural industries depends heavily on replenishing their creative resources” (Lampel et al., 2000: 265).

The reputation that creative industries have among experts is of crucial importance to them (e.g. Dubois, 2012; Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016). Indeed, “awards [by experts] signal a high level of competence and provide legitimacy by one’s industry or professional peers” (Rao, 1994, in Jones, 2002: 217). While several studies identify the characteristics of experts and how they assess positive evaluations which enhance the reputations of creative individuals (e.g. Abbate et al., 2019; Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016), few consider the active role that those who are evaluated can play in developing their reputation (Jones, 2002; Zafirau, 2008). Because of the hierarchy of the field and the intersubjectivity in the relationships between those who are evaluated and their evaluators, it is generally considered that creative individuals have no power over the assessment of their reputation and therefore that they are submitted to the decisions of experts. However, these studies show that creative individuals can increase awareness of their skills, competences and values in ways that enable these characteristics to be judged positively by third parties.

One way to reduce information asymmetries in the creative industries is to use signaling (Dubois, 2012; Jones, 2002; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000). Signals are “observable characteristics attached to the individual that are subject to manipulation by him” (Spence, 1973: 357) and are part of overall signaling strategies (e.g. Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Jones, 2002; Taj, 2016). More specifically, in the creative industries, “signaling content provides clues about a player’s identity, competency and relationships” (Jones, 2002: 214), such as their creative skills, personality, affiliation and philosophy, etc. However, to be effective, the signal must be observable (Connelly et al., 2011), which relates to “the extent to which outsiders are able to

notice the signal” (Connelly et al., 2011: 45). Therefore, although the importance of signals in the creative industries has been acknowledged (Dubois, 2012; Jones, 2002; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Zafirau, 2008), little has been said about how to enhance the observability of signals so that they can be captured by third parties, particularly experts in a specific creative field. Indeed, Jones (2002) studies signals in relation to project matching and career building and finds that stakeholders need signals to reduce the asymmetry of information around a project and its leading individual to better understand whether the project is worth the effort. Thus, reputation is one of the signals for assessing the credibility of a project. In the quest for reputation, the relationship between experts and the creative individual relies on the same issue: reducing asymmetry of information. It therefore seems relevant to study signals to analyze how to counteract this information barrier. However, if reputation constitutes a signal in itself (Jones, 2002) and “addresses not only the validity of signals but also their content” (p. 218), there should be more in-depth study of how experts can actually access signals, i.e. information about those being evaluated.

This can be applied to various creative industries. Gastronomy, as a specific type of creative industry (e.g. Cattani et al., 2014; Petruzzelli & Savino, 2015; Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Svejenova et al., 2007) and because of the blurriness of its valuation process (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005), may be of assistance in unpacking this signaling process, particularly if we consider its main creative actors – the chefs. Indeed, if experts aim to reduce information asymmetries between the public and the chef, we lack insights on the information asymmetries between chefs and experts, particularly regarding how chefs can manage this relationship. Furthermore, as signaling occurs in a particular institutional context (Jones, 2002), greater attention should be paid to the specificity of each creative industry’s rules, issues, organization and hierarchies in order to understand exactly how value is conveyed. We believe that the reputational circumstances in gastronomy can give us a better understanding of how signals are best communicated to specific third parties, i.e. experts. We therefore consider the following question: *How can creative individuals enhance the observability of their signals to influence their reputation among experts?*

To answer this question, we focus on the creative industry of French gastronomy (Ferguson, 1998; Rao et al., 2003; UNESCO, 2006). While there is no single definition of gastronomy, it is generally acknowledged that gastronomy has three main criteria: high-quality restaurants, managed by creative chefs and based on culinary creativity (Abbate al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand et al., 2014). Furthermore, as recognition by experts ensures that chefs

demonstrate creativity (Stierand et al., 2014), we assume that the chefs selected by such experts are *de facto* creative and therefore a part of French gastronomy. Our study focuses on five case studies of gastronomic French chefs (Ozcan & Eisenhardt, 2009: 249; Yin, 2017).

We believe this study can contribute to a finer-grained understanding of signaling theories by drawing a link between signal observability and reputation strategies through the identification of leverages that can enhance signal observability among third parties. It can also enrich the literature on the role of experts in reputation building in the creative industries by acknowledging information asymmetries between them and the creative individuals they evaluate. Thus, this study offers new insights on the relationships between experts and chefs by assessing the active role that the latter can play to influence steps in building their reputation among experts.

The paper is structured as follows. To begin, we review existing theory about the role of experts in building reputation in creative industries, in general, and issues around this evaluation process in haute-cuisine and French gastronomy, in particular. Then, we give detailed insights on the methodology used, including the research design and data collection, and how it was coded and analyzed. Thirdly, we develop the findings that arose from the coding process according to the research question, identifying four types of managerial leverage. To conclude, we discuss studies that are relevant to the topic, managerial implications, and some limitations and future research perspectives.

## **Literature Review**

### *1. Reputation in Hard-to-value Industries*

Hard-to-value industries are industries in which “quality is difficult to ascertain prior to purchase” (Reinsten & Snyder, 2005 in Gemser et al., 2007). As the valuation process is not always based on obvious criteria, this justifies broader study of the process in specific industries. A focus on particular third parties is therefore necessary to obtain a finer-grained understanding of quality and, more generally, value assessment in hard-to-value industries. To do so, studies have used selection system theory to answer the call for a better understanding of the evaluation processes of hard-to-value industries (e.g. Gemser et al., 2008; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). According to this theory, reputation can emanate from different social actors: experts, peers and the market (Gemser et al., 2008). Market selection refers to a situation where

“consumers select among the products available based on their own judgments”, peer selection refers to “the evaluations of competing producers” and experts refer to specific knowledge owners such as professional art critics (Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000: 26).

Creative industries whose “main purpose is the creation, development, production, reproduction, promotion, dissemination or marketing of goods, services and activities that have a cultural, artistic and/or heritage content” (UNESCO, 2006: 2) are usually considered hard-to value industries (e.g. Gemser et al., 2008; De Vany & Walls, 1999; Lampel et al., 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000). In fact, standards and criteria to value cultural and creative goods and services are often blurry and unclear so that “the actual quality of products is often difficult to determine prior to consumption” (Gemser et al., 2008: 26). Creative industries therefore face many challenges, including difficulty in precisely ascertaining the value of cultural, artistic or experiential goods (De Vany & Walls, 1999; Gemser et al., 2008; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000; Lampel et al., 2000; Priem, 2007; Reinstein & Snyder, 2005) mainly because their assessment in the creative industries is challenged by the existence of information asymmetries between buyers and sellers (Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Lampel et al., 2000).

For this reason, creative industries, as hard-to-value industries, are often characterized by the presence of gatekeepers in the shape of experts in the field, such as journalists, critics, guides or specialists, who judge and evaluate them (Cattani et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2016; Karpik, 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Reinstein & Snyder, 2005). As reputation can emanate from different social actors, experts, peers and the market (Gemser et al., 2008), the particular features of the creative industries led us to focus on experts’ recognition of creative actors (in our case chefs), which we discuss in the sections below.

## *2. The Importance of Expert Recognition in Creative Industries*

Expert recognition “is not conferred by fellow producers, or clients, but by third parties whose opinions are important in determining who is successful” (Boutinot et al., 2017: 1401). Experts are usually known to have a great deal of experience and aesthetic or specialist knowledge which gives them credibility (Lane, 2013). They are therefore judged to be more legitimate than other stakeholders in assessing reputation because they “reduce ignorance by being unrelated to actors’ intentions” (Karpik, 1996: 530, personal translation).

Experts act as “first evaluators of the professional’s balancing act” (Slavich & Castelluci, 2016: 824). Their recognition process, and the impact it has on the reputation of creatives, is particularly relevant in the creative industries (e.g. Foster et al., 2011; Lampel

& Shamsie, 2000; Rao et al., 2003; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000) because they “deal heavily with symbolic, sensory and aesthetic attributes that make a product’s quality inherently difficult to evaluate” (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000). Some experts, such as those involved in *Le Guide Michelin* for gastronomy, the Angoulême Prize for comics and the Oscar Academy in the movie industry, are well known among the public.

The reputation of actors in the creative industries is commonly linked to their creativity and their ability to approach newness (e.g. Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000; Presenza & Petruzzeli, 2019). Thus, scholars consider that the value assessment of cultural and creative goods is mostly based on individual creative choices (Jones et al., 2016; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016; Stamkou et al., 2018; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). This means that the profitability and success of creative firms lies mostly on the ability to ensure the talent, creativity and innovation capacities and resources of the creative actors operating in it (Lampel et al., 2000).

However, the blurriness of the valuation process previously referred to and the failed experiences of creative artists call for a more nuanced definition of this paradigm. Some scholars therefore emphasize other criteria related to reward and consecration in the creative industries. In line with other scholars, Accominotti (2021) studies how, in the creative industries, some “individual characteristics and contextual factors make certain candidates more likely to be picked by consecrating institutions” (p. 11). According to Cattani et al. (2014), “the outcome of this process of evaluation in any cultural field, whether in art or science, is a function of (1) candidates’ embeddedness within the field, and (2) the type of audience” (p. 1). Thus, as “in cultural fields, social judgments are only marginally a function of the quality of a cultural product” (Shymko & Roulet, 2017), it is worth understanding which other factors may intervene between chefs and experts in the valuation process.

### 3. *The role of signaling in mediating the relationship between evaluators and those being evaluated*

As shown above, as hard-to-value industries, the creative industries face a great deal of blurriness and information asymmetries in their valuation assessment. If experts act as third parties who aim to reduce information asymmetries between creative individuals and their public, the relationship between experts and creative individuals also remains unclear. These information asymmetries can be addressed through signaling strategies (e.g. Dubois, 2012; Jones, 2002; Zafirau, 2008) which are “shaped by the dynamics of uncertainty” (Jones,

2002: 213). We have also seen that reputation is of crucial importance in the creative industries, as it can lead to new business opportunities and status enhancement (Jones, 2002), symbolic affiliation and financial returns (Dubois, 2012) or greater public appeal (Lampel & Shamsie, 2000). Signals are acknowledged to be useful for giving information to the public, in the design industry, where design innovativeness is considered a signal of quality for consumers (Micheli & Gemser, 2016), or in the theater industry, where strong ties with corporate donors is perceived as a violation of peer's expectations, i.e. a negative signal for peers' valuation of the cultural product (Shymko & Roulet, 2017). Therefore, as "Zuckerman (2012) has observed that social evaluation mostly relies on signals rather than on concrete cues" (Shymko & Roulet, 2017) and as reputation "addresses not only the validity of signals but also their content" (Jones, 2002: 218), it merits in-depth study of how it can be enhanced through the use of signaling strategies.

Signals refer to "observable characteristics attached to the individual that are subject to manipulation by him" (Spence, 1973: 357). "[A]s activities and attributes [they] convey information to others and as such are a form of strategic action, taking place under conflicts of interests and an eye toward consequences of decisions" (Feldman & March, 1981, in Jones, 2002: 209). Signal theory focuses mainly on the "actions insiders take to intentionally communicate positive, imperceptible qualities of the insider" (Connelly et al., 2011: 45).

Therefore, as information providers, signals should be able to counteract the blurriness of the valuation process between experts and creative individuals. However, few studies seek to describe precisely how, by developing signaling strategies, creative individuals can influence the relationships between them and the experts who evaluate them (e.g. Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Zafirau, 2008). Most importantly, the development of signals is not sufficient on its own: to be efficient, signals must also be observable (Connelly, et al., 2011), which means that, in order to analyze them, experts should be able to access the information provided by creative individuals. Thus, although important, the observability of signals has not really been tackled in the literature on signals, especially in relation to reputation. Therefore, as signaling tactics and efficiency are context and industry dependant and require knowledge and experience in order for concerned individuals to better understand and apprehend them (Jones, 2002), the specificities of the valuation process in the creative industries and the high degree of competition are relevant for studying how to make signals observable by experts. This context may help us to obtain a deeper understanding of how creative individuals create signals and how signals are best conveyed to specific third parties, i.e., experts. We thus answer the call for better inquiry into "how parties develop their signaling strategies" (Jones, 2002: 224) by

trying to understand how creative individuals can enhance the observability of signals to influence their reputation among experts.

#### *4. The Role of Signaling in the Relationship Between Chefs and Experts in Gastronomy*

Gastronomy is a relevant area for studying the issue of signal observability. It is a creative industry (UNESCO, 2006) where gatekeepers (culinary critics, guides, journalists) play a key role in assessing the value of the creative products developed by chefs and where reputation is the cornerstone of restaurants' profitability and value creation (e.g. Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019; Rao et al., 2005; Surlémont & Johnson, 2005; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). Many studies acknowledge the role of critics in assessing the quality of restaurants and their chef's creative abilities, and therefore their institutional reputation (Abbate et al., 2019; Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Bonnet, 2004; Clauzel et al., 2019; Lane, 2013; Durand et al., 2007; Stierand et al., 2014). In other words, "arbiters of taste, by attributing value to cultural goods, exert symbolic and material power" (Lane, 2013: 343).

These critics counteract the uncertainty of quality (Karpik, 1996) linked to the value opacity of hard-to-value industries. What distinguishes experts from consumers in gastronomy is their level of expertise, which is acquired mainly through experience and a detailed knowledge of taste. While consumers can say whether they find a meal tasty or not, experts are able to analyze the taste and give an objective opinion of the chef's cuisine. Furthermore, critics must deliver "a high quality of writing to represent the atmosphere, the setting, the environment" (Bonnet, 2004: 140, personal translation). Finally, critics define what must and must not be done (Bonnet, 2004). Thus, as experts, these gatekeepers assess the reputations of chefs in French gastronomy. While these reputations and their evaluation by critics have been studied as signals of quality to consumers before they visit a restaurant, these studies mostly focus on the experts' strategies (Surlémont & Johnson, 2005).

However, to be effective for customers, the reputation system lacks two important elements. First, it must be less opaque. There is a great deal of opacity in how experts make their assessments, the criteria they apply and the reputational process itself (Bonnet, 2004; Surlémont & Johnson, 2005). For example, the guides can be criticized for selecting too many restaurants located in capital cities, such as Paris (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999) or because the inspectors or journalists are mostly employed in closed social circles (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999). Furthermore, highly renowned chefs sometimes appear to secretly evade the reputational process (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999). As Schücking (1966: 50) points out: "guardians at the entry

of the temple sometimes do not select the most talented artist (chefs) but choose one who harmonizes with their own concerns.” Writing a critique is therefore a balance between “a kind of submission to the desire of the majority” and the desire to “realize a more objective work, less subject to external laws” (Bonnet, 2004: 24, personal translation). Furthermore, this process is imposed on chefs, who appear to have no agency to intervene in it.

Second, for reputation to be a signal of quality for consumers, chefs must first be noticed by experts in order to be evaluated by them. As previously shown, signals are “observable characteristics attached to the individual that are subject to manipulation by him” (Spence, 1973: 357). While signals such as reputation are useful for customers, experts develop their own judgment based on the signals the chefs give to them. Despite being important, few studies show how chefs can best convey specific information (i.e. signals) about themselves to the experts who assess their reputation. In other words, we know from the literature that experts can reduce the information asymmetry between chefs and clients (e.g. Lane, 2013; Surlmont & Johnson, 2005; Stierand et al., 2014) but as yet, we know little about how experts can access signals that will help them to evaluate chefs. Based on the previous section, unpacking how chefs manage their signal observability could enable us to understand how the information asymmetries between chefs and experts can be reduced.

Thus, the blurriness of the valuation process, the information asymmetries between chefs and experts, and the importance of reputation in gastronomy make it crucial for chefs to be able to be noticed by gatekeepers. As explained earlier, one of the tactics that chefs can employ is developing effective signaling strategies that encompass information such as food quality, the chef’s cooking philosophy, values, etc. However, as signaling strategies must be tailored to institutional differences between the fields (Jones, 2002), actors should consider how they can better convey relevant and distinguishable information to experts in the most efficient way. As signaling strategies incorporate a capacity for active agency by those being evaluated, and building on the importance and less-studied notion of observability (Connelly et al., 2011), we ask the question: *How can creative individuals enhance the observability of their signals to influence their reputation among experts?*

## Methodology

For the purpose of this study, we chose to anchor this analysis on gastronomy in the French context. Gastronomy is a cornerstone in French society (see “Gastronomic meal of French”, UNESCO, 2010), and French chefs have already been studied by creative scholars in management sciences (e.g. Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Clauzel et al., 2019; Rao et al., 2003). Thus, French gastronomy in particular is also porous to the reputation debates in gastronomy in general. To answer our research question, this work takes a multiple case study approach (Ozcan & Eisenhardt, 2009: 249; Yin, 2017) based on five case studies of the reputational trajectories of creative chefs in French gastronomy. The case studies are complemented by interviews with three experts.

### 1. *Young, Upcoming Chefs in French Gastronomy*

French gastronomy is a creative industry (UNESCO, 2006) which emerged during the second half of the 19th century, when it became an art codified by journalists and chefs. While there is no single definition of gastronomy, it is acknowledged that gastronomy is characterized by high-quality restaurants led by creative chefs and based on culinary creativity (Abbate et al., 2019; Ferguson, 1998; Stierand, 2015).

French gastronomy is mainly known for its gatekeepers (e.g. Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Bonnet, 2004; Rao et al., 2007). In other words, “arbiters of taste, by attributing value to cultural goods, exert symbolic and material power” (Lane, 2013: 343). The most famous gastronomic guide is the *Michelin Guide*, but other actors are also involved in the evaluation and reputation development process. These include *Le Gault&Millau*, *Le Fooding* – an alternative, mostly Parisian guide created in the 2000s (100% owned by the *Michelin Guide* since 2020) – and culinary articles in the media such as *Le Figaroscope*. Although the reputation of chefs among experts is of great importance in French gastronomy (e.g. Surlemont & Johnson, 2005; Rao et al., 2005; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016), the valuation process remains blurry. Furthermore, the links between the two seem to be described as a one-way relationship, where the chefs are submitted to the judgment of the experts.

Several studies examine the sources of the creative process and/or the leadership of highly renowned chefs whose fame is based on an acknowledged reputation (Balazs, 2002; Rao et al., 2003; Stierand, 2015; Svejnova et al., 2007). As shown in the literature review,

reputation requirements and the blurriness of the valuation process concern gastronomic chefs in general. However, we believe that it is also relevant to examine young and upcoming chefs for whom the quest for reputation building is central and omnipresent. Indeed, many chefs benefit from having a lower level of recognition (having one Michelin Star, being selected in *Le Fooding*, having highly rated articles about them in the media) and face consequences and benefits from gaining a reputation among experts. If the reputation is firstly associated with the restaurant, the spotlight always focuses on the chefs themselves. Indeed, “in fields, where products are always associated with the author’s name, relations between creators and their products individualize production” (Leschziner, 2007: 78).

By focusing on creative chefs with a lower level of recognition and including discussions with experts, we can analyze the actions that creative individuals can take to enhance their reputation among experts. Indeed, the opacity of social judgments in French gastronomy calls for a clearer understanding of the relationship between chefs and critics, particularly the influence that the chefs themselves can have on this relatively unclear and unbalanced process. A deeper understanding of their reputational trajectories offers insights into the strategies they develop to make important information about their work available to and readable by experts.

## 2. *Research Design*

To answer the research question, this work focuses on five case studies of French chefs (Yin, 2017). We also approached three experts. Each case was defined as a set of primary and secondary data about a chef and their restaurant. We contacted the chefs and experts through social media (Instagram and LinkedIn) and conducted interviews between July 2021 and April 2022.

To begin with, we interviewed five chefs following the storytelling methodology (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau, Robert-Demontrond & Schmidt, 2010; Sanséau, 2005) applied to management sciences. The aim of this methodology is to study the socio-historical reality of a phenomenon or an individual in order to understand how it transforms (Sanséau, 2005). Furthermore, “in management sciences, the organization is at the heart of the preoccupations (...), therefore, the storytelling approach involves the analysis and understanding of a situation through individuals’ lived experience (...) which is not entirely linked to the organization” (Sanséau, 2005: 42, personal translation). Each individual therefore

presents different perceptions of their own experiences, even if they follow a similar path or work in the same industry.

Based on a single question at the beginning of the interview and after explaining the goal of the research (understanding how they developed their reputation in the industry), the chefs were invited to talk about their experiences, their trajectories and how they perceived them, initially without any intervention from the researcher. The storytelling was then completed by questions that arose from the researcher during the interview. We believe this methodology, which is less used in management sciences, is suitable for understanding the structure of key moments and the choices made by individuals in developing their reputation.

We used various criteria to select the chefs for our sample. We wanted to study young, upcoming chefs who were engaging in the first personal project of their career, i.e. who owned their first restaurant or had become an executive chef for renowned chefs or restaurants. Being an executive chef can be the first step in a chef's career because it allows them to have their cuisine recognized and to be associated with it. It shows that someone selected them to be responsible for the creativity of the menu. We collected the data following a snowball effect, whereby each chef suggested a friend or someone they considered relevant for our case study. They all had experience in starred restaurants and were aged between 30 and 40 years. Some worked in Paris, both in busy and less busy neighborhoods, others in cities such as Strasbourg and Avignon, and one in the countryside. Our sample comprised one woman and four men.

To obtain an expert's view of the subject, we conducted three semi-guided interviews with experts, which lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. The interviews were structured around two main topics: their assessment of creativity and their relationship with the chefs. The interviews were fully recorded and transcribed. We selected experts who represented the main media and sources of critiques of gastronomy: a traditional guide, gastronomic pages in the mass media, an alternative guide and specialized media.

We then collected documents about the five chefs, the experts and critics and more specifically about French gastronomy. For the external documents, we collected 50 press releases from national media (such as *Le Monde*), professional/trade media (such as *180°* or *Le Fooding*) and reviews by critics in main guides (in *Le Figaroscope* or *Le Guide Michelin*), in order to understand how critics perceive these chefs, how chefs personally present themselves, and the current issues related to French gastronomy and its recent evolution.

To collect more information about each chef, their cooking philosophy and how they diffuse it (through photographs, discourse etc.), we examined their social media accounts and internal documents such as their menus or websites. More precisely, for each of them, we collected and analyzed the critics written in 3 to 4 main guides (*Figaroscope*, *Le Guide Michelin*, *Gault&Millau* and *Le Fooding*, if relevant) as well as dedicated articles and interviews in professional media such as *Food&Sens*, *Les Nouvelles Gastronomiques* or *Le blog de Gilles Pudlowski*. We also carefully read the menu available on their websites to see relevant patterns and evolutions through seasons and trends approximately once a month during the timespan of the study. Regarding social media, we followed them on Instagram on their public account and gathered information available in captions on photographs and on several topics such as the people they are working with, which values they try to convey to their followers and creative choices regarding their menu or the restaurant in general. For example, in a photograph, one chef poses with his local producer which can convey the message that he cares about local consumption and fair supply chain. This data collection was completed by audiovisual documents such as the 30-minute masterclass about one of the chefs at the Omnivore Fair of 2021.

Furthermore, we complemented press releases and written critics with audiovisual content related to the experts, including documentaries and podcasts with and about them. More precisely, we listened carefully to 4 one-hour long podcasts dedicated to the role of the critics in gastronomy with notorious interviewees such as François Simon, one of the most famous critics in France. We also did an in depth analysis of the 20-minute interview of the founder of the Gault&Millau, Christian Millau, who offers personal stories and relevant insights on what makes a good critic.

Tables 12 and 13 below summarize the data collection process.

**Table 12. Data collection and use in the analysis**

Data source	Type of data	Use in the analysis
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Secondary data	Mass media (paper and digital)	Information on the current issues in French gastronomy, the place of culinary guides and the dynamics of the industry's evolution. Perception in the mass media of the public's disapproval or approval of critics' reviews. Detailed information about the chefs under study from a mass media point of view.
	Professional/trade media and culinary guides (online): <i>Le Guide Michelin; Gault&amp;Millau; Le Fooding; Food&amp;Sens; Les Nouvelles Gastronomiques; Le Figaroscope; Le blog de Gilles Pudlowski; Omnivore; Fine Dining Lovers; 180°...</i>	Read critiques to see how they are structured, the information they provide and what they mostly focus on. Detailed information about the chefs under study from a critic's point of view.
	Chefs' social media and websites	See how they communicate about themselves on social media, especially their Instagram accounts and their websites.
	Internal documents	Menus
	YouTube video: Interview with Christian Millau, founder of the Gault&Millau guide	Learn more about his view of what makes a good critic or a good guide.
	Specialist podcasts <i>Casseroles (Binge Audio) with François Simon; Travail Soigné (Slate Audio) with François Simon; Chefs (Slate Audio) with Emmanuel Rubin; Sur le Grill d'Ecotable with Aitor Alfonso, and documentaries : Etoilé.e.s (Canal +); Auguste Escoffier ou la naissance de la gastronomie moderne (Arte)</i>	Gather further information on critics through specialist podcasts in the cooking industry (interviews with critics).
Interviews	Semi-structured interviews with guides and critics	Information on how critics perceive creativity, the role of critics in the industry, the relationship between the chefs and the critics, and a critical perspective on the profession.

	Storytelling interviews with chefs	Detailed information on the reputational trajectories of the chefs.
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**Table 13. Panel of chefs and experts interviewed**

	Referred to as	Functions	Professional background	Current reputation status
<i>Experts</i>	Expert 1	Former editor in chief of one of the most renowned French culinary guides.		
	Expert 2	One of the most famous culinary journalists in mass media, co-creator of one of the most renowned French culinary guides.		
	Expert 3	Editor in chief of specialist journal on gastronomy, mass media journalist and for the Michelin guide's website		
<i>Chefs</i>	Chef 1	Owner and chef of her restaurant in Paris 18 (at the time of the interview)	Apprenticeship with Cyril Lignac and Michel Rostang (2 stars)	Bib Gourmand (Michelin Guide) The Fooding's selection Articles in mass media
	Chef 2	Owner and chef of his restaurant in Alsace (countryside)	Following apprenticeships in gastronomic restaurants, he took over the ownership of the restaurant from his parents	1 Michelin star, Michelin green star (prize for durable gastronomy) "3 Toques" in the Gault&Millau Articles in local and specialist media
	Chef 3	Executive chef in a restaurant in Paris (2) and former chef	Past experiences in grand hotels in Paris (Ritz, Plaza Athénée) and gastronomic restaurants (Hélène Darroze, 1 star) Former chef of a gastronomic bistro in Paris	Bib Gourmand (Michelin Guide) The Fooding's selection Press releases in specialist and mass media "1 Toque" in the Gault&Millau

	Chef 4	Executive chef in a restaurant in Strasbourg	Formerly Joël Robuchon's executive chef for 10 years (2 stars) in Paris and London	1 Michelin star "3 Toques" in the Gault&Millau "Grand de Demain" (2021, Gault&Millau)
	Chef 5	Executive chef in a restaurant in Avignon	Apprenticeship at Thuriès (1 star). Experience at restaurants of Roland Reichrath (avant-garde in organic and sustainable cuisine), Jean-Luc Rabanel (1 star), Joël Robuchon (2 stars) and Pierre Gagnaire (3 stars)	1 Michelin star, Michelin green star (prize for durable gastronomy) "3 Toques" in the Gault&Millau "Grand de Demain" (2022, Gault & Millau) "Revelation Prize" (Omnivore) "Revelation Prize (La liste)

### 3. Data Analysis

We coded the data following the Strauss and Corbin (1998) data-reduction approach. Raw data collected from the interviews and archives were computed using open-coding to identify the main criteria on which the chefs and the experts focus when they are thinking about the reputation development process. Data has been coded using the Nvivo 14 software.

More precisely, we first identified codes in the form of key elements that the respondents used to narrate their story about their reputational trajectories (e.g. "work," "professional and personal background," "social media," "service," "passion"); concepts (e.g. "trends," "image," "network," "sustainability," "story," "art of sharing," "freedom"); relevant moments (e.g. "gaining a Michelin Star," "opening a restaurant," "experiences in former restaurants," "meeting with chefs," "critics visiting the restaurant"); and significant words (e.g. "pride," "trust," "name," "uniqueness," "expert", "pressure"). We then grouped them into themes which gave first hints of a more global strategy that could be employed to enhance their reputation among experts, taking account of how they felt about the critics, the issues they faced in their daily activities and their overall work ethic and philosophy. These themes included, for example, "choice of apprentice chef," "use of social media" and "hiring of a press officer." This first discourse analysis was divided into two dimensions: identification of the tools the chefs developed and why they developed them.

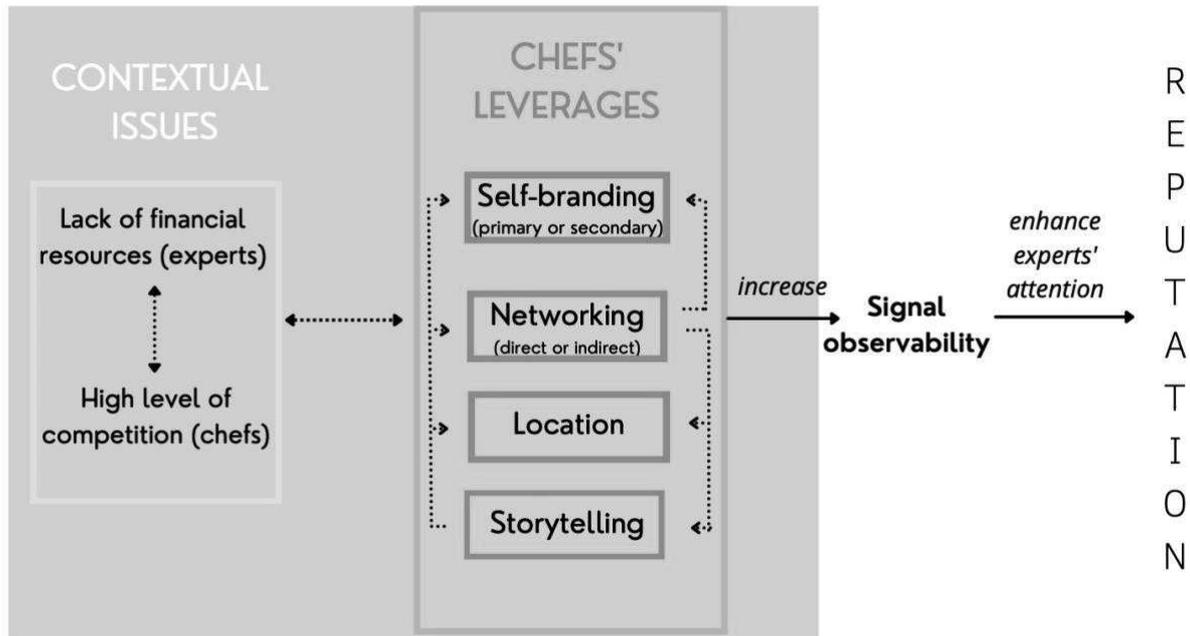
Simultaneously, we triangulated the data sources to strengthen the respondents' reported experiences (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). We found many detailed interviews, presentations by chefs, photographs and short stories in newspapers, social media and websites. This helped to broaden our understanding of the chefs' philosophy toward their cuisine and how they wanted to diffuse it.

At this stage, we gathered the previously identified themes which pursued the same goal and were based on similar tools in order to identify a more general typology of leverages that could influence the chef's reputational trajectory. Examples included "being visible in newspapers or online" and "being well known among peers." We identified and named the concepts based on the congruence between the empirical definition collected through the data and the theoretical definitions found in organization theories. Thus, we highlighted four types of leverage based on the goals the chefs pursue and the means they put in place to pursue them: a) their self-branding; b) their network building; c) their location; and d) their storytelling. The specific features of each type of leverage and the interactions between them were refined and tempered by the singularity of each chef's experience and reasoning, particularly in relation to how they perceived their role in each leverage.

To ensure the validity of these leverages and their direct impact on the evaluation of the chefs by experts, we complemented the data collected from the chefs by interviews with and archival documentation about three experts in the field. To do so, we examined the discourse about how chefs were managing their reputation according to what they knew about experts (for example, that experts tend to more regularly visit restaurants located close to their headquarters) and the actual information that experts give about themselves and the aims of their mission.

## **Findings**

**Figure 6. Types of leverage chefs can employ to enhance signaling observability of their reputation by experts**



Our analysis highlighted two major issues which affect the experts and the chefs: a lack of financial resources of the media (press, guides) which the experts represent and the high degree of competition in French gastronomy. This is in line with the idea that signaling strategies are specific to the context (Dubois, 2012; Jones, 2002). The two issues are particularly relevant because to develop a reputation the chefs need the experts, but the constrained resources of the experts' media limit their ability to visit every chef. These issues therefore play a key role in the interaction between chefs and experts, emphasizing the requirement to study both together as an interactive dialogue. We therefore collected data from the chefs and the critics particularly through personal discourse. Both the chefs and the critics were aware of these major issues, which naturally led them to develop strategies to mitigate them. Here, we focus on the leverages that are accessible to and used by the chefs.

As creative entrepreneurs, the chefs manage organizations, usually their restaurants. Thus, as managers, they can employ an array of well-known strategic leverages to develop their organization's reputation among experts. The theoretical definition and characteristics of these leverages are not discussed in this paper and are not part of our academic debate. Indeed, we identified the concepts based on the congruence between the empirical definitions collected through the data and the theoretical definitions in organization theory.

In response to the two issues outlined above and the data that we collected, we identified the four types of managerial leverage discussed below, i.e. self-branding, network building,

location and storytelling. The chefs can develop these to support and diffuse their signals, i.e. to provide relevant and positive information about themselves to experts, thereby increasing their signal observability, attracting greater attention from experts and, thus, enhancing their reputation among them.

The goal of these leverages is to counteract the two issues referred to above in order to receive a positive evaluation by experts through the enhancement of signal observability. In other words, as experts have limited financial resources and their valuation criteria are not clearly identifiable, these leverages offer an alternative strategy for chefs to increase their chance of being seen by experts (i.e. drawing more attention from experts). This gives chefs the best chance (which they sometimes do not have because of the specific issues faced by experts) of being awarded a rating and consecrated by them. Thus, rather than addressing which signals are best suited to achieving positive appreciation by experts, the goal of this study is to understand the first step in the valuation process, i.e. getting noticed by experts in order to convey information to them. By seeking to understand what makes a signal more observable and focusing on their own managerial scope, chefs can have concrete tools they can use to better attract volatile experts. Thus, the following subsections explain why each type of leverage can enhance their visibility among experts and how chefs can understand them better. Although the main focus is on the scope of chefs' abilities to use these leverages, it also considers the downsides from misuse of each strategy, which could have a negative effect on the experts' perceptions.

### *1. Organizing your self-branding*

*“Rather than promoting one’s skills and abilities, individuals construct and promote a consistent, marketable, and ostensibly authentic self-image in order to develop relationships that can be leveraged for economic opportunities.”*

(Whitmer, 2019: 2)

Self-branding refers to the tools chefs can use to construct their image and present themselves to the public. It is what the chefs want to be recognized for and it conveys specific and detailed information about their personal history. As chefs control their social media accounts, they can diffuse the information they want to and hide what seems meaningless or negative for their own image. Thus, chefs can develop a variety of ways to self-

brand themselves. Self-branding strategy can increase the chance of being seen by experts because it multiplies the places where chefs are present and noticeable, and it provides a space, beyond the restaurant, where they can diffuse useful information that can serve as a basis for appreciation by experts.

*Primary self-branding* is handled by the chefs themselves. The goal here is to *be seen*. The first step is to mobilize their social media accounts by posting photos of their restaurant or the dishes they serve. This serves as a tool to convey information about how the dishes are constructed, with photos of the creative process giving clues to the relationship between the chefs and their co-workers, etc. As Chef 3 explained, there is “an intimate dimension to it, but it allows everyone to know about the restaurant.” They can also use it to diffuse information about who they are: for example, many chefs list their reputation awards in their biographies. The second possibility is for the chefs to contact journalists or “influencers” to invite them to their restaurant. As Chef 2 said, “being on social media gives us visibility.” “Instagram really puts us out there” (Chef 5). According to Chef 5, they have many interactions on Instagram, especially with the public and journalists. Being on social media is the first step and it is sometimes enough for some chefs as they believe that it confers authenticity. However, some go further in self-branding.

*Secondary self-branding* involves the employment of an intermediary between the chefs and their public. An increasing number of chefs hire press officers who are responsible for their communications. Through their expertise and networks, they invite journalists to the restaurants, organize press conferences or enroll the chefs in culinary events such as “Taste of Paris” and “Omnivore.” As Chef 3 said: “it is hard to survive in Paris without a press officer.” This is what influenced Chef 1 to work with her own press officer. As she explained, “the more you inundate the media, the more chance you will have of being visited.” Furthermore, “it helps you save time, because critics do not have the time to visit every restaurant.” The goal here is to *make critics come* to the restaurant.

Appearing in well-known TV shows such as Top Chef (Chef 5) can also be an intermediary for chefs. However, not all gastronomic chefs are able to benefit from this opportunity as those who participate are usually approached and selected by the TV producers themselves. Indeed, some chefs shun this kind of exposure as they see it as an easy way to attract attention but without putting in the necessary work to achieve a deserved reputation in the industry'. (Chef 4).

However, self-branders face two main challenges. First, their self-branding needs to match the aesthetic of the field, the current trends, the values and cooking philosophy: for example, with increased interest in sustainability, it would be wrong to brag about using products that are not in season. It is more relevant to go with the current flow, as Chef 5 does when he introduces his producers on his social media and talks about their ecological labels. Each type of self-branding should match the “*Sociologie de l’époque*” (the “sociological logics of the time”) in order to be credible in the field (Expert 2). To do so, chefs also need to post information regularly and follow editorial guidelines to strengthen their social media accounts and their visibility. As Chef 3 said, “I quickly post pictures on Instagram, but I don’t follow any editorial guidelines, I don’t post regularly, I don’t get into analytics. But I should do.” At the same time, critics are not all sensitive to the same content as this will depend on the editorial policy of their guide or publication: newer guides such as *Le Fooding* are more likely to be sensitive to young and dynamic creative offerings (linked to their main audience of younger people living in cities), whereas *Le Guide Michelin* might be more interested in the technicalities of cuisine and the regularity of the food quality and service. Therefore, chefs must be careful about which critics they want to attract and target their communications accordingly. One of the goals of critics is to talk about “chefs who look like their clients” (Expert 2), who share common interests and values and are the spokespeople of the era because “the plate is the mirror of society” (Expert 2). It is therefore important for chefs to create coherence between how they present themselves and who they want to target.

Self-branding increases their probability of being seen by people and of people talking about them (Expert 3), but this also means that if they communicate without a strategy, they will be seen randomly by anyone and not necessarily by the professional experts. This is exacerbated by financial inequalities: chefs with more money to invest in press officers are more likely to target the most appropriate critics and, thus, positively influence the reputation they have among them (Expert 3).

## 2. *Network building*

“*Social network is the set of actors and the ties among them.*”

(Wasserman and Faust, 1994)

As being part of a network of renowned chefs helps chefs to gain access to suppliers and to be known, particularly when they open a new business, it therefore constitutes a signal (Jones, 2002). However, for chefs to benefit fully from being part of a network, the network should be strategically built so that experts will convey positive evaluations based on the chefs' membership in the network. If chefs have a strong network but no one knows the others in the network and who they work with, then being part of that network will be less useful in developing their reputation among experts. In other words, building a particular type of network helps experts to identify chefs as being part of a more general group with its own values and identity.

Being part of a network also increases chefs' chances of being noticed by experts because the frequency of their presence is multiplied by the number of their ties. As Chef 1 explained, building a strong network is part of the process: "what matters is what you do now, but also what you did before." Indeed, as an autodidact, she did not have time to build her own network before opening her restaurant, which might have limited experts' awareness of her existence. However, she had worked in Michelin-starred restaurants during her apprenticeship and when the *Michelin Guide* visited her restaurant, she thought it did so possibly because "it took a shortcut as I had worked in certain houses." Finally, she said that her network helped her to "have a voice" and "save time." Thus, the *Michelin Guide* talks about the "heritage of their experiences."

Network building can be direct or indirect and based on various intermediaries. Therefore the observability of a network depends on the suitability of the intermediaries selected:

- *Apprentices (direct)*: experts are more likely to hear about chefs who were previously apprentices in renowned restaurants. They are also more inclined to visit chefs who are supported by "big" names in the profession. As Chef 4 said, "when you have a name, it's already done." Chefs, such as Chef 4 and Chef 5, who previously worked with highly renowned chefs are awaited by the critics. Indeed, the relationship between chefs and their apprentices is very specific: "the chefs put energy in for you, and you must give it back."<sup>11</sup> Thus, chefs can strategically choose their mentors and even keep the relationship going.

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<sup>11</sup> Jeremy Page, Executive Chef, L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon London. (n.d.). The Staff Canteen. Retrieved July 6, 2023, from [https://www.thestaffcanteen.com/Heroes-of-the-Hotplate/jeremy-page-executive-chef-latelier-de-joel-robuchon-london#//](https://www.thestaffcanteen.com/Heroes-of-the-Hotplate/jeremy-page-executive-chef-latelier-de-joel-robuchon-london#/)

- *Professional events (direct)*: meeting other chefs or gastronomy professionals at events such as fairs, festivals or conferences. For example, the Omnivore Fair<sup>12</sup> aims to “put a spotlight on the work and trajectory of thousands of chefs (...) and reveal them to the world.” This helps experts to notice who chefs know as they are also present at such fairs.
- *Word of mouth (indirect)*: community of journalists, clients, peers.

Network building is enhanced by self-branding (see section 4.5. on leverage interactions) through which chefs can convey a vast array of information about the make-up of their network, for example by posting photos with the people they work with. However, networking also has its downsides. For example, Expert 3 deplored the phenomenon of what he called “name-dropping,” which is, according to him, the tendency for the same chefs to be repeatedly selected and invited to appear at fairs and events, giving them a high level of exposure.

In the end, if experts want to be unique and be distinguishable, they will also need to discover chefs that are not already under the spotlight. Thus, chefs who receive too much exposure run the risk that people will become tired of hearing about them. As Expert 3 explained, it is not because everyone talks about it that the quality is necessarily high. Therefore, having exposure in a network and being seen at professional events is vital, but what chefs have to offer must be relevant and they must not have a strategy that gives them aggressive exposure.

### 3. *Location selection*

*“Firm location is not randomly determined, nor is it based on simple economic calculations of direct costs.”*

(Christensen & Drejer, 2005: 811)

As experts have limited budgets for traveling, they mostly visit restaurants close to their headquarters, only visiting a few that are further away. Most of the restaurants outside Paris lie beyond the scope of the experts. As Chef 2 said, “what takes one year to rise in Paris, takes 20 years in the countryside.” However, the competition in Paris is also high. Chef 1 explained that

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<sup>12</sup> Qui sommes-nous | Sirha Omnivore. Retrieved July 6, 2023, from <https://www.omnivore.com/fr/page/omnivore>

she had not even been familiar with the street where she had founded her restaurant, even though she had lived in that neighborhood almost her whole life. Chefs can mitigate against having a poor location through *self-branding* and *networking*. Indeed, Chef 3 explained that when a chef's restaurant is in a relatively hidden location, their press officer can mitigate it by talking about the chef to journalists. Expert 3 talked about one chef who was completely ignored by critics because other chefs in the same street had press officers who monopolized the critics. However, this changed when he created a strong self-branding strategy on social media and when his network started to talk about him.

While Chef 4 considered that a bad location (in a non-tourist area, too close to a residential area, too far from the target clients) cannot be mitigated, others acknowledged that it was possible to create a story around your location (*storytelling*). For example Chef 1's restaurant has become known as "the Greek restaurant in the middle of a hidden little street."

Overall, location can still be a challenge because being seen and being accessible makes it easier to build a reputation, as having a great location makes it more likely that experts will visit the restaurant. However, this also depends on the clients' consumption habits. Indeed, as Chef 4 explained, people in London will be willing to drive a maximum of 15 minutes to a restaurant, whereas in Paris it is closer to 30 minutes, which is something that experts need to take into account when they want to write about a restaurant.

#### 4. *Authentic storytelling creation*

*"Sharing of knowledge and experiences through narrative and anecdotes in order to communicate lessons, complex ideas, concepts, and causal connections"*

(Sole and Gray Wilson, 1999: 6, in Mora & Livat, 2013)

Storytelling is a way to convey positive and meaningful information to the public and, therefore, to experts. It enables chefs to share some of their identity in a more narrative and embellished way by creating a feeling of authenticity and symbolism. As Chef 3 said, "you need to have things to tell about yourself." "The guide says whether the story is beautiful, I guess" (Chef 5). For chefs, this means creating a story around themselves, their career and their cooking philosophy. It can also encompass labelization around a country or a value that they present in their cuisine. For example, Chef 1 unwittingly became Greece's

gastronomic ambassador, and this drew people to her as she had created “a little place in her own image<sup>13</sup>.” Thus, the art of storytelling is an interesting type of leverage that can be employed by chefs to increase their chance of getting noticed by experts because it is more appealing, less descriptive and requires less investigation for them to capture the essence of their work.

For storytelling to work, it must be understood by experts. It can be conveyed through symbols, discourses, values, keywords and personal stories. In our case, the cornerstone of storytelling is culinary identity: “there are experiences you had before, your travels, where you grew up, where you came from, what you saw during your career, when you put everything together, you construct your identity” (Chef 4). At the same time, it must match the current trends and be relevant. Experts follow editorial guidelines and talk to specific audiences: not every story is relevant. For example, creating a story around imported products when the critic is looking for chefs with an ecological outlook will not be credible (Expert 3). As Expert 2 said, gastronomy is becoming “more and more an art of discourse and concepts.” However, this discourse needs to be clear and understandable. Finally, for the chef to benefit from it, the story should generate emotion and trigger joyful moments or memories. If the story is unrelated to what the restaurant offers, cognitive dissonance can occur and this will negatively affect the experts’ perceptions and expectations. Furthermore, storytelling does not match every chef’s personality and practices, and how they perceive their work.

##### *5. Interaction between leverages*

Our findings also show that, as well as acting autonomously, the four leverages can interact with each other. These interactions can create synergies which managers can use to enhance their signal observability. Self-branding is closely linked to storytelling as the chefs and their press officers can use elements of the chefs’ stories to construct their image on social media and in press releases. Networking can enhance self-branding as meeting journalists can help to build a privileged relationship with potential reviewers. It can also ease issues related to the chefs’ choice of location as a result of peers’ experiences visiting the restaurant, or by benefiting from privileged access to places or former restaurants. Finally, storytelling is linked to all the other types of leverage. Building a strong network helps chefs to define what kind of chef they

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<sup>13</sup> Fanie. (2019, August 22). A la découverte du restaurant Etsi& de sa cheffe Mikaela Liaroutsos. Numéro Une. <https://www.numero-une.com/couleur-bleu-electrique/etsi-mikaela-liaroutsos/>

are (communities) and where they come from (their apprenticeship, former restaurants), which enriches their personal story. Chef 3 said that when he was hired by his current restaurant, his press officer created a story around the different restaurants he had worked for, and this helped to identify him as a serious and talented chef. Furthermore, self-branding is a medium, beyond their restaurant, for chefs to diffuse their story. Chef 1 explained that she had begun to work with a press officer when she realized that she was ready to “open up,” and “tell her story.” As Chef 5 explained, “speaking up for ourselves is a great opportunity to tell our story.” Where chefs are located can contribute to the storytelling about their restaurant. As mentioned above, Chef 1’s restaurant became “the Greek restaurant located in the middle of a hidden little street.”

Although chefs do not need to invest in every type of managerial leverage to develop their reputation, the aforementioned leverages can enhance the observability of their signals by experts and, thus, their potential reputation. It should be noted that the chefs do not necessarily actively pursue these leverages. They adopt different postures toward them, which we call “active” or “passive” postures. Chefs with an active posture are heavily involved in the reputation development process, whether they invest actively in every type of leverage or just in some. For example, such chefs may contact journalists, engage press officers and willingly go to professional events, etc. However, some chefs are more passive, meaning that they do not particularly want to get involved in the conscious quest for a reputation. This was the case, for example, for Chef 2, who chose not to hire a press officer.

## **Discussion**

As suggested by previous theoretical debates, reputation issues are at the cornerstone of creative activities in gastronomy (e.g. Clauzel et al., 2019; Rao et al., 2005; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). Thus, the French context of gastronomy elected in this study for empirical purposes can offer broader insights on reputation mechanisms in gastronomy in general. We believe this study can contribute to debates on signaling theories by applying it to reputation-building strategies and by offering a deeper understanding of what can make signals more observable by specific third parties, in this case experts. It can also enrich the literature on the role of experts in building reputations in the creative industries by assessing the key role that chefs, as creative individuals, can play in their relationship with experts.

First, we believe this study can contribute to debates on signaling theories through our deeper analysis of how chefs construct their signaling strategies. While some studies acknowledge the role that signals in the creative industries play in conveying positive information about creative individuals and products (e.g. Dubois, 2012; Jones, 2002; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005; Zafirau, 2008), few call for the specific use of signals to experts in the reputation-building process. Furthermore, the specificity of the evaluation process in the creative industries (e.g. De Vany & Walls, 1999; Gemser et al., 2008; Lampel et al., 2000; Priem, 2007; Reinstein & Snyder, 2005; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000) enables us to enrich the literature on signal observability by taking account of the information asymmetries that exist in an industry where the relationships between the evaluated (chefs) and the evaluators (experts) are particularly at stake. We therefore propose a renewal of signaling strategies in the situation where experts assess the reputation of those they evaluate, and we call for a better understanding of signaling strategies based on the specificities of both the creators and the receivers of signals. To do this, we focused on a specific, and less-studied, way that chefs can use to improve the efficiency of their signaling strategy, i.e. enhancing their observability. To be efficient, a signal must be observable (Connelly et al., 2011).

Answering the call for a better inquiry into “how parties develop their signaling strategies” (Jones, 2002: 224), this study identified four types of leverage that chefs can employ to enhance this observability and ultimately improve their signaling strategy. These are: a) self-branding, b) network building, c) location and d) storytelling. By considering the importance of signals to positively present the creative offer, we show that engaging in one or more of these types of leverage can enhance the observability of these signals among experts. As the signals are more observable, experts are more able to notice them (i.e. they increase their attention), which can contribute to the development of a positive reputation for the creator of the signal. Thus, it is crucial to enhance the observability of signals because of the structure of the gastronomy valuation process.

The financial crisis that the culinary press and critics are currently facing is having a major impact on the strategies that experts are deploying and, thus, on their ability to acknowledge the existence of some chefs. However, the enormous competition in the field between chefs and the requirement for younger chefs to build a strong reputation among experts mean that chefs must deploy a strategy in order to be seen by them. Thus, the experts in our sample confirmed that being invited to restaurants by chefs, having access to press releases, having access to chefs’ developed social media, and meeting them at fairs are of great

importance because this helps them to save the time and money required to investigate the field to look for new and creative chefs who merit awards. If young chefs are particularly prone to reputation building strategies, the reputation requirements that structure the field of gastronomy overall also makes this study suitable for senior chefs. In fact, they are engaging in reputation building strategies in multiple settings, such as developing a new project, opening a new restaurant or wanting to enhance their current reputation status (for example competing for a new award, or going from 2 to 3 Michelin Stars). The managerial tools identified in this study could help them identify leverages that are best fitted to their reputation goal, or which one of them is currently misused in their strategy.

However, the link between enhancing signal observability and the reputation attributed by experts is not automatic, and each type of leverage has downsides associated with the experts' expectations and editorial guidelines. For example, as experts are facing major financial issues, they need to be unique and original in their critiques in order to keep their business profitable and attract new audiences. Thus, a chef with too much exposure as a result of having a large, active *networking* strategy could put off an expert who is targeting newness. At the same time, the content of each leverage strategy should match experts' expectations at a given time, based on both societal trends and the habits of a critic's audience. This is particularly relevant for *self-branding* and *storytelling* where being seen is the first step, but it can easily fall short if the content does not appeal to the expert's taste. Thus, increasing the chance of being seen helps chefs to earn a reputation they would not necessarily have achieved without the help of signal observability strategies. The second step is to ensure that the quality of the content, i.e. the signals themselves, that is developed through observability strategies still matters.

This study helps us to identify some preliminary recommendations such as matching sociological trends or the habits of a particular audience. However, as the main focus of the study was on the strategies of chefs (rather than of experts), its first goal was to find ways for chefs to counteract the issues of the valuation process by employing other strategies such as enhancing signal observability. While the study focused on ways to improve observability, it also calls for deeper understanding of how creative individuals who are seeking to build a reputation among experts can choose and develop their signal material and the quality of this material. However, this would require better access to what it is that experts specifically look for when they evaluate chefs, which is information they do not always convey.

Second, our paper can contribute to the literature on expert evaluation in the creative industries and on the trajectories of creative reputations (Accominotti, 2021; Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Cattani et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2016; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Stamkou et al., 2018; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). Some studies consider reputation to be entrenched in successful creative choices (e.g. Jones et al., 2016; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Stamkou et al., 2018), for example by investigating how deviant artistic styles can lead artists to make a greater impact (Stamkou et al., 2018) or by comparing how the degree of novelty and familiarity that co-exist between the artistic offer of apprentices and their former masters can lead to recognition (Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). However, how experts assess reputation still remains sometimes blurry and based on unclear criteria (e.g. Bonnet, 2004; Schücking, 1966; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005), despite reputation in creative fields being so important (e.g. Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019; Rao et al., 2005; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000).

We believe that our study offers a better understanding of why some creative individuals gain a positive reputation by highlighting other factors that can support their cooking philosophy, their identity, the choices they make etc., and making that information more observable by those who evaluate them, i.e. experts. Thus, this study offers new ideas about how chefs can approach their reputation-building process both by developing new creative products and investing in a less-studied strategy – signal observability strategy. While most studies (e.g. Rao et al., 2003; Svejenova et al., 2007) focus on the discourse of either chefs or critics, by taking simultaneous account of the specific issues of the evaluated (chefs) and the evaluators (experts), our study can help with better understanding of the evaluation process in other creative fields.

Finally, reputation tends to be considered as being conferred by a third party (e.g. Clauzel et al., 2019; Gemser et al., 2007; Lane, 2013). However, in contrast to the idea that chefs are subject to the arbitrariness of the valuation criteria of experts, this study suggests that chefs can counteract and mitigate this by investing in strategic leverages that can facilitate their observability among experts and impact their reputation. Even though some are more passive in their reputation development process, this paper contributes to the idea that chefs themselves are actors in this process. It thus reverses the paradigm which posits that experts are the only masters in the reputation process, while chefs have to wait for them to approach them. This paper also offers a dynamic model for the exploitation of synergies as the leverages are linked to each other.

## **Managerial Implications**

This study may help individuals to develop their reputational strategy through a deeper understanding of the issues that affect evaluators, i.e. experts, and may help them to develop their signaling strategies. Highlighting the active role chefs can play in their reputation development process may encourage them and their counterparts to give greater consideration to how their restaurants can be targeted by experts. This dynamic model suggests that chefs who already employ some of these leverages can develop or identify new ones which accord with their existing strategies by benefiting from their synergic possibilities. For example, when Chef 1 realized that she was ready to tell her story, she hired a press officer to manage her communication and self-branding strategy. At the same time, she benefited from past professional relationships, which helped her to be visible to critics. Finally, her existing social network and her press officer labeled her as an ambassador of Greek cuisine in Paris, which strengthened her story and mitigated the disadvantages of her rather hidden location.

## **Limitations and Future Research**

This paper has several limitations which could be addressed in future research. First, the four leverages identified could be better understood through an impact study which measured how one leverage might quantitatively influence and interact with another. It would also be interesting to understand the degree to which one leverage could have an impact on signaling observability, and thus on reputation or on other leverages too. Future research could go deeper by emphasizing the role that each leverage plays in the reputation development process and could also investigate the differences that may result from an active or a more passive strategy. Future research could be conducted to understand the reasons for and the direct consequences of adopting one posture or another. While this paper studied reputation through success stories, it calls for a better examination of how creative individuals can survive without gaining a positive reputation as a result of recognition by experts.

Second, while this paper examined the importance of observability in signaling strategies, it did not consider the impact of the costs of such strategies. Future research could enrich understanding of these signal observability leverages by measuring the costs associated with each type of leverage and how they might impact the choice of leverages and, therefore, the reputation of the chefs among experts. Furthermore, and as developed earlier

in the discussion, this paper mostly focused on chefs' perceptions of experts' valuation strategies. Thus, rather than providing information about which signals might have a greater impact on experts, the intention was to show how chefs can counteract the blurriness of the valuation criteria by employing other strategies such as enhancing observability. While the paper makes some suggestions based on the congruence between the discourse of chefs and experts, greater access to the criteria used by experts could provide a better understanding of the best suited signals. However, this remains complex as experts do not usually convey precise and clear valuation criteria.

This study also gives insights into the different leverages that chefs can employ to enhance their reputation among experts. It is intended to offer a strong introduction to a first typology that describes how chefs are strategically able to play a role in their reputation development process. Our results are closely linked to the financial, cognitive and status specificities of our sample, which comprises less-renowned chefs whose reputation building is a work in progress. Future research could therefore deepen understanding of the reputation development process in other areas of French gastronomy such as for chefs with three Michelin stars.

Finally, this paper calls for greater use of storytelling methodology in management sciences, particularly for studying individual creativity, as a method to better appreciate and understand the uniqueness of each reality.

# General Conclusion

The objective of this thesis was to study how exogenous factors can shape the individual creativity of chefs in the field of haute cuisine, with a focus on upcoming chefs. Alongside recent studies on organizational creativity, team creativity and creativity in networks, we chose to conduct a deeper investigation of individual creativity by focusing on the factors that it can be structured and influenced by. We assumed that, in addition to being explained by individual traits, some creative choices can be explained by requirements of the field and that these can influence the individual creative behaviors of chefs. This project therefore aimed to unveil further structures of individual creativity by identifying various tensions in the field and how they can impact chefs' creativity.

This thesis addressed the following research question: *To what extent can chefs' individual creativity be shaped by the requirements of their field?* In doing so, it offers new insights on creative studies, haute cuisine and the creative industries.

To answer our research question, we adopted an in-depth inductive and qualitative methodology based on collection of various types of data – mainly semi-guided interviews, observations and archives.

This conclusion is structured as follows. The first section summarizes the main results of each chapter and suggests general contributions related to theories on haute cuisine, creativity and the creative industries. The second section offers managerial perspectives for creative managers, particularly those working in the haute cuisine and hospitality fields but also those in the creative industries in general. Finally, we discuss the limitations of this project and possible future research perspectives.

# Theoretical and Empirical Contributions

By examining individual creativity through the lens of the issues raised from studying gastronomy as a field, we were able to identify the following tensions: porosity to tensions that are external to the field; the creative *habitus* of chefs, i.e. chefs' specific settings and social interactions; and the importance of their reputation among experts.

We studied each of these in detail in the three chapters of the thesis to examine their relationship with the individual creativity of chefs in French gastronomy.

## I. Main Results

### 1. Results Regarding Porosity to External Tensions

We identified that fields are porous to external tensions (Bourdieu, 1992), which means that external issues can also intrude into the field and influence its agents and their behaviors. We found grand challenges (Stephanidis et al., 2019; Pereira et al., 2019; Kaufmann, & Danner-Schröder, 2022), particularly environmental issues, to be among the external factors that influence the creativity of chefs in haute cuisine. We therefore asked how the creativity of the chefs we interviewed can be influenced by their porosity to issues that are external to the field. In the first chapter, we therefore asked *How can grand challenges impact individual creativity in creative industries?*

We identified three creative activities: creative routine, search for newness, and commitment. In addition, we identified three ways for chefs to integrate ecological concerns into their activities through the interplay of individual creativity: internalizing them, addressing as temporary but fruitful constraints, or mediating them. This chapter therefore shows us that chefs can integrate external environmental concerns into their creative activity in different ways through their individual creativity.

### 2. Results Regarding the Creative Habitus in Haute Cuisine

The second tension we identified in the field relates to the centrality of the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1970) which structures the behaviors of chefs in the field of gastronomy. The *habitus*, a set of rules and norms followed by agents in the field, leads to a particular creative context which is pursued by the chefs we interviewed. This *habitus* of French gastronomic chefs encompasses rules related, for example, to the structure of the creative process and the organization of the restaurant where this process takes place. This leads to the chefs working with a dedicated, chosen brigade and suppliers with whom the chefs interact on a daily basis, in a specific place (i.e. the restaurant), and within a limited timescale. In this chapter we therefore asked the following question: *How can chefs' individual creativity be supported by social interactions?*

Our findings suggest a typology of interactive creative stages that compose the individual creativity of chefs in their everyday activities, based on time (*over the long term, before service and during service*) and the nature of their social interactions (*integration, association and collaboration*). The interactive creative stages are *planification, inspiration, experimentation and improvisation*. Our results enabled us to study how the individual creativity of chefs can be supported by social interactions in their daily creative life. This chapter also sheds light on how temporality structures and influences the creativity of chefs.

### 3. Results Regarding Reputation and Symbolic Capital

The final tension identified relates to the crucial importance of the reputation that chefs have among experts. Indeed, the reputation-building process is central to enhancing the chefs' creativity. This chapter explores a number of issues inherent in the reputation-building process in gastronomy with the aim of understanding the relationship that upcoming creative chefs have with the reputational requirements of the field. In this chapter we asked the following question: *How can creative individuals enhance the observability of their signals to influence their reputation among experts?*

We studied a number of information asymmetries between chefs and experts that can jeopardize the proper conduct of expert evaluation of creative goods. As a result, our findings offer alternative strategies that creative chefs can employ to enhance their reputation among experts. To build the reputation required by field membership, the individual creative outcomes of chefs should be supported by signaling strategies. We identified four managerial tools that chefs can employ to help them be seen by experts: self-branding, network building, location

selection and authentic storytelling. These represent the first step in reputation-building. This study sheds light on how chefs manage their individual creativity with regard to the reputational requirements of the field.

## II. General Contributions

The results in this thesis are specific to the angles studied in each chapter. In this section, we discuss the main theoretical and empirical contributions these can make and explore its contributions to theories on a) haute cuisine and gastronomy, b) creativity, and c) the creative industries.

### 1. Contributions Related to Gastronomy and Haute Cuisine

First, the considerations related to gastronomy can be applied to various contexts and present common criteria and logics, as evidenced by management science papers that study similar mechanisms in different contexts (e.g. Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003; Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016; Stierand, 2015). In this paper, we chose to study the French context. France is renowned for gastronomy and was the birthplace of culinary critics with the creation in the 1920s of the *Michelin Guide*. However, as stated in the introduction to this thesis, the management science research on gastronomy in France is relatively scarce and mainly focuses on the study of critics and reputation. We therefore sought to enrich this research by offering perspectives on a broader treatment of creativity in haute cuisine as viewed through the lens of grand challenges and social interactions.

It should be noted that these contributions are not limited to the French context and that it would be interesting to apply our results to other national contexts such as elsewhere in Europe. Indeed, the *Michelin Guide* operates in countries across the world, awarding stars in Italy, in the Nordic countries, in the UK and in Japan. Some European countries also have their own local guides, such as the *Gambero Rosso* in Italy. Our discussion of reputation therefore seems to be at least partly applicable to all reputation-building cases where leaders and experts face asymmetric information. Moreover, by definition, environmental issues are global and are evoked by chefs in other countries, such as René Redzepi in Copenhagen (NOMA) and Massimo Bottura in Italy. Finally, while the brigade and restaurant dynamics are also specific

to gastronomy in general, some aspects, such as the training of chefs or the management culture, may differ. In line with the second chapter, it would therefore be interesting to transpose the study of creative social interactions to another country, taking account of the specificities of that country, particularly the impact of the chefs' management practices and the place they give to their co-workers on their creative opportunities and the influence the latter have on the individual creativity of chefs.

Second, the empirical setting of this dissertation is based on the study of mainstream chefs, i.e. central actors who adhere to the rules and principles of the field but have lower reputation levels. Such chefs also have fewer financial resources, which makes their creative choices a particularly interesting topic. As mentioned in the introduction, these chefs tend to be studied less than renowned chefs (e.g. Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Balasz, 2002; Stierand, 2015) such as those with three stars. This angle allowed us to address central topics such as the reputation-building process of chefs for whom this is a major issue, and enabled us to develop managerial inputs that might also be useful for more senior chefs. By including environmental constraints in the study of the creative practices of these young chefs, we were also able to take account of the financial and managerial opportunities that the integration of environmental issues represents, particularly in the context of chefs with limited resources. This shows that, for some managers, taking account of environmental issues is a deliberate choice that they can manage through their creativity. This offers perspectives to better understand why they wish to integrate them into their activities even though they present financial risks. Finally, as the study of these chefs was partly based on discourses with individuals who are not used to theorizing and conceptualizing their creative work, this provided new perspectives for theorizing and required a level of open-mindedness and analytical work to capture their reality. For example, although the chefs rarely mentioned creativity directly, the activities they described often reflected creative practice or reflection.

Third, this thesis also offers a reading of the daily practices of chefs in line with previous studies on the everyday lives of chefs. We believe that this work shows there is a need to study average practices not necessarily driven by extraordinary (Stierand, 2015), disruptive innovations (e.g. Sgourev, 2013; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019) or changes in the field (e.g. Jones et al., 2016; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003). It therefore studies more mundane creative activities in the daily lives of creative individuals and calls for further studies on everyday practices.

Finally, this work offers new insights on the study of experts and reputation in gastronomy, notably on the relationship between creative individuals and value assessment of their creative offerings (Surlmont & Johnson, 2005; Dubois, 2012; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016). We tried to balance the blurry relationship between chefs and experts and the over-focus on creative distinctions by identifying alternative strategies that chefs can employ to improve their position in the field. To do so, we first acknowledged the previously identified existence of asymmetric information between chefs and experts, which we believe is crucial for understanding the issue of reputation in haute cuisine. We chose to make new use of signaling theories by considering the relevance of linking signal observability and reputation strategies. This led us to acknowledge that it is important for creatives to develop signals and make them observable in order to enhance their signal observability among third parties. In other words, we propose new insights on valorizing individual creativity by showing that individual creative outcomes should be supported by signaling strategies to achieve the reputation required by field membership. Simultaneously, we offer new insights on the relationships between experts and creative chefs by assessing the active role that the latter can play to influence their reputation-building among experts and thereby impact their relative position in the field.

## *2. Contributions on Creativity Theories*

### *Finding alternative theories to understand individual creativity*

Creativity has been studied in the literature from a number of management science perspectives. Early studies focused on individual creativity and how personal traits and attributes can shape creative individuals and foster their creative thinking and practices (e.g. Amabile, 1988; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998; Benedek, Bruckdorfer, & Jauk, 2020). Subsequent research introduced the study of individuals in organizations and how managerial structures can shape the creative behaviors that lead to increased organizational creativity and performance (e.g. Parmentier & Szostak, 2015). Other studies broadened the focus to groups, teams and networks. These new perspectives mostly aimed to shift the focus from the single individual to consider creativity more holistically by taking account of structured groups of people.

However, these perspectives fail to provide further insights on individual creativity, which we believe is still worthy of investigation, particularly in the creative industries where the creative individual (or the “artist”) is at the cornerstone of creative choices (Lampel, Lant & Shamsie, 2000; Stierand & Dörfler, 2018; Abbate, Presenza, Cesaroni, Meleddu & Sheehan, 2019; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Petruzzelli & Savino, 2014). Although these previous studies enrich our understanding of the multiple sources of creative performance, we believe they lack a number of insights on individual creativity because they broaden the scope rather than conducting deeper investigation of other aspects of individual creativity. This therefore leaves space for alternative studies on individual creativity. Indeed, by digging into interstitial theories, we found that studying individual creativity from the perspective of field embeddedness could offer alternative and fresh insights on how individual creativity can be structured as well as the factors that can influence it. The context of the field in this thesis allowed us to balance studies on individual creativity that focus on endogenous factors (e.g. Stierand, 2015; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Bouty, Gomez & Stierand, 2018) by considering that the individual creativity of chefs is also embedded in a field and structured by other factors, i.e. the requirements of the field. In line with scholars who investigate factors that are exogenous to organizational creativity (Dechamp & Szostak, 2016), we offer perspectives on factors that are exogenous to individual creativity.

#### *Role of social interactions and time in creative outputs*

Aligned with finding alternative ways that nurture individual creativity, the study of social interactions offers interesting insights. The studies on group, organizational and network creativity mostly focus on collective creative outputs (e.g. Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004; Harrison & House, 2014). However, we believe it is worth understanding how specific social interactions shaped by field embeddedness can foster or support individual creativity and produce individual outputs. More precisely, our deeper study of the structure of social interactions offers a better understanding of how they can actually support individual creativity.

We also introduced the notion of time and how temporality can affect creative outputs. Some creative practices and activities are constrained by operating within a specific timeframe, with specific objectives and requirements and the involvement of various actors. We show that different time frames can lead to different degrees of creativity, involving different creative actors with different creative outputs. This raises questions about whether there is a particular time for creativity to take place, as some scholars have shown (e.g. Slavich, Cappetta &

Salvemini, 2014), or whether there is a “continuous creative flow”, even if the creativity is not equally intense. Therefore, following previous articles (e.g. Leone, 2020; Paris & Lang, 2015), our results show that creativity is a nonlinear process and can comprise different stages with various creative intensities and actors. However, while the aforementioned studies aimed to unveil the process that leads to a final product or service, we give insights on the creative activities that occur in the daily life of a restaurant, therefore anchoring it in the analysis of everyday creativity.

### *Creativity and grand challenges: towards business opportunities*

Finally, we suggest the role that creativity can play in mitigating and integrating grand challenges into businesses. This echoes the previous research that considers creative individuals as transgressive actors (Dieleman, 2007; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012; Hoffman, 2013). Indeed, the study of environmental challenges shows us how the structure of individual creativity can lead to grand challenges being incorporated into daily creative practices and offers interesting insights on the different ways that these grand challenges can be addressed, with creatives being able to select the most suitable way for them to do so.

### *3. Contributions on Creative Industries Theories*

#### *Reputation and agency of creatives*

As suggested in the literature, creative industries are hard-to-value industries. This means that their value is difficult to assess prior to consumption (e.g. De Vany & Walls, 1999; Lampel et al., 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Priem, 2007; Gemser et al., 2008). As a consequence, experts, in the shape of guides and critics, are considered to be legitimate intermediary actors with the knowledge, skills and expertise to give value to creative goods (Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Gemser & Wijnberg, 2000; Rao et al., 2003; Foster, Borgatti & Jones, 2011) in an economy driven by quality (Karpik, 2000). However, most of the literature considers this to be a passive relationship where experts assess value based on blurry and sometimes unclear criteria, especially in the field of haute cuisine (Karpik, 1996; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). We believe our study helps us to reconsider the agency that creative individuals can deploy in building their own reputation. As a result of our study of asymmetric information and our use of signaling theory in the subject of reputation-building in the creative industries,

we suggest that managerial tools can help creative individuals to be more visible to experts, which can ultimately enable them to improve their reputation. Therefore, by giving creative individuals tools that they can use to influence experts or make it easier for them to assess value, this counteracts the assumption that creative individuals submit to the arbitrary choices of experts.

### *Creative industries as fields: central actors and how they handle change*

In this thesis, we consider a creative industry to be a field with its own rules, norms and requirements that shape the creativity of the creative individuals who operate within it. More precisely, we focus on *mainstream* agents who are central actors and adhere to the rules of the game (Becker, 1982). In a sense, *mainstream* agents benefit from the current dynamics of the field and are not necessarily driven by a desire to change it (Becker, 1982 in Jones et al. 2016), particularly because they hold precious symbolic capital conferred by experts. However, in the creative industries, they may paradoxically be expected to be creative and come up with new and useful ideas (Jones et al., 2016; Lampel, Lant & Shamsie, 2000). Indeed, the *habitus*, i.e. the rules of the field, of creative industries lies in the need to be creative. This thesis therefore offers an interesting perspective whereby central actors may actually wish to lead change and develop newness for the purpose of their creative requirements while trying to maintain their own central position in the field. This offers further research perspectives on who is best suited to lead change in a creative field and how different positions in the field can influence the propensity for and the ways to instigate change.

### *Contribution of storytelling methodology in creative industries*

With regard to empirical choices, we believe that this project could foster the adoption of storytelling methodology from social sciences (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau, Robert-Demontrond & Schmidt, 2010; Sanséau, 2005) as the best method for conveying the discourses of creative individuals in the creative industries. Because of the openness and freedom of speech it permits, we believe this methodology is particularly suited for enabling creative individuals to talk about their art and how they perceive their creations. This is in line with the idea that “in management sciences, the organization is at the heart of the preoccupations (...), therefore, the storytelling approach involves the analysis and understanding of a situation through individuals’ lived

experience (...) which is not entirely linked to the organization” (Sanséau, 2005: 42, personal translation).

As creativity takes multiple forms and encompasses various realities and personal conceptions, storytelling methodology is helpful for demonstrating the plurality of the ideas of creativity. Indeed, it encompasses a wide array of activities, philosophies and mindsets which interviewees will not necessarily label as such but which can still be understood as creative. Unlike semi-guided interviews (e.g. Yin, 2014), where the interviewer introduces ideas and issues for the interviewees to discuss, storytelling helps us to make better sense of individuals’ discourses without the researcher intervening. In semi-structured interviews, interviewers can ask questions such as “when are you most creative?”, which already suggests that they are creative and that there are indeed stages when they show creativity. Storytelling, however, allows creatives to talk about their activities in a freer and more open way, for example by suggesting activities that they might not have labeled as “creative” if they had been asked a more specific question. Our use of storytelling therefore allowed the chefs to stay closer to their own perception of their creative activities. As suggested in Chapter 3, storytelling was also particularly helpful in getting the chefs to talk about their own reputation-building journey and identifying what they considered to be the key moments without imposing preconceived ideas on them. As the individual is a preferred focus of inquiry in organization theory and management sciences, we call for further use of storytelling in the design of research to better understand the complexity and authenticity of the discourses of interviewees in management sciences.

# Managerial Implications

As this project is anchored in management sciences, we have tried to make suggestions and provide tools for managers working in creative settings and in the haute cuisine sector specifically. This section is therefore structured around four managerial areas where this could offer more practical insights, based on and adapted from the suggestions of Besseyre des Horts (2020). We exclude implications for organizational models as we do not tackle organizational structures in this paper.

## **I. Managerial Implications on Culture: Fostering Creative Culture and Proactivity for Creatives**

### *1. Insights on the Development of a Creative Culture*

This project acknowledges the importance of the creative culture in businesses (e.g. Amabile, 1996; Andriopoulos & Gotsi, 2002) led by creative individuals and how giving creative leaders and their co-workers creative freedom can nourish their own individual creativity and enrich creative outputs. This calls for global understanding of what it is that makes a culture suitable for fostering creativity. A well-structured creative culture should therefore intend to develop creative determinants, such as techniques and motivation, rather than just creative skills and thinking. Creative managers should emphasize the need for expertise in particular areas, for example by improving the recruitment process or regularly organizing training sessions. They should also ensure that motivation is driven by the desire to succeed and improve the current creative offer.

An environment that favors creativity should also ensure consistency and avoid chaos and uncertainty. For example, restaurants with two separate teams of staff (e.g. one for lunch service and one for dinner service) needs to be particularly well coordinated to ensure consistent quality. This calls for deeper thinking about how meals are structured in order to master “time and fire”. One solution might be to prepare some elements in advance. For example, they could use fermented vegetables and other pre-cooked preparations, avoid using red meat as it requires precise cooking times, or ensure that the dishes are constructed in a consistent way, etc.

## *2. Fostering the Proactivity and Agency of Creatives*

This project also calls for increasing the agency and proactivity of creatives in situations where they are in a submissive position, for example in relation to critics. Creative individuals should focus both on being creative and on knowing how to promote and valorize their creative production. A creative culture should also foster the development of self-branding and storytelling skills to enable creatives to talk, narrate, contextualize and emphasize their own creative production. However, there is a managerial issue related to how to maintain authenticity and coherence between the creative production and the discourse associated with it. Therefore, managers and creatives should ensure that they tell their own story, which should be correlated to what they produce and how they produce it.

When it comes to critics, managers should develop reputation management tools to identify the valuation criteria employed by guides that are relevant to their creative offering. It is important to develop a visibility strategy that aligns with the guides and public being targeted. This is different to the passive strategy which tends to be depicted when discussing valuation by experts.

## **II. Managerial Implication on the Mission: Towards a More Societal Mission for Creative Businesses**

This project is anchored in the increasing global interest in grand challenges, particularly environmental challenges. As discussed earlier, chefs are able to integrate environmental issues into their businesses through the interplay of their creative skills. This led us to consider that creatives can play a role in climate change initiatives because of their specific creative abilities and alternative ways of thinking. From a managerial perspective, this allows us to consider environmental issues both as constraints to be managed and as business opportunities that can influence creative thinking and new, alternative offerings. However, although we observe a greater commitment to tackle climate change and global warming issues, particularly in haute cuisine, managers need to think more about the coherence of this strategy in order to avoid greenwashing. This means that commitment should be theorized in relation to local territories, soil and cultures while also being anchored in sense-making initiatives.

This therefore calls for deeper managerial perspectives on integrating grand challenges into creative businesses in smart and relevant ways.

### **III. Managerial Implications on Value Creation: Social Interactions as Value Opportunities for Chefs**

While creative offerings are usually associated with the individual creativity of chefs, this study suggests that, to foster value creation, managers should think about the study of social interactions. Indeed, we showed that by characterizing the social interactions chefs have with co-workers, whether these are closed (brigade) or more sporadic encounters (suppliers), this can help to substantiate the influence they can have on the chefs' creative outputs. Alongside the study of time, we suggest that managers and creatives should organize their creative processes around the people involved in and the schedule of the creative activities. This could offer new creative perspectives, for example by including individuals who are less creative (e.g. suppliers) in different creative timespans (e.g. experimentation). To do so, managers should evaluate the creative intensity of each potential actor and think about how to create links and synergies between the various actors and creative objectives in order to boost value creation.

### **IV. Managerial Implications on People and Human Capital: Managing Creatives and the Development of New Skills**

Finally, this dissertation gives significant space to human capital and the development of new skills.

#### *1. Protecting Employees' Working Conditions*

First, we believe it is worth acknowledging once more the importance of employees' working conditions, particularly in a field which tends not to be respectful of rest periods. Alongside the commitment to environmental issues, the importance of a creative culture and the increasing interest in social interactions led us to emphasize the importance of protecting human capital and encouraging the consistent development of new skills. As Amabile (1988) suggested, alongside creative abilities, motivation and techniques are at the cornerstone of creativity. This means that well-trained individuals operating in a progress-oriented, respectful and supportive atmosphere are more likely to embrace a creative mindset. This therefore calls

for specific recruitment methods and continuous training. Employees should be hired with a view to meeting a particular creative objective and based on their experience and techniques, as well as on how they can align with the chef's creative views and culture. At the same time, decent working conditions and a supportive managerial culture are crucial for ensuring that employees are motivated and are given opportunities to experience creative outbursts. This can take place, for example, in sessions where brigade members have the opportunity to make creative propositions to the chef but can also be found in cultures that encourage creative rest.

## *2. New Challenges Call for New Skills*

Overall, this dissertation's findings led us to identify new skills that creatives can master to optimize their creative opportunities and valorization of them. Environmental challenges, for example, require skills such as resilience, transgressive and alternative ways of thinking, and open-mindedness. Promotion strategies require digital expertise and mastery of digital tools such as social media, as well as the ability of creative individuals to narrate their creativity and elaborate a discourse which involves self-reflection and self-awareness. Integrating social interactions reenact the role of chefs as managers. In fact, they should master time and people while also identifying creative synergies and avoid discrepancies between actors and their different creative inputs.

# Limitations and Future Research Perspectives

This final section presents some of the theoretical and empirical limitations of this study along with the future research perspectives they can offer.

## **I. Limitations and Research Perspectives Regarding the Choice of Industry**

As well as focusing on the specificities of one creative industry with its own rules, structures and organization, we sought to offer additional perspectives on creative industries in general rather than just on gastronomy. Therefore, a limitation is that we focus on one creative industry and our findings could therefore also be applied to creative industries with common structures, values and creative contexts. For example, consideration could be given to the performing arts, where creatives, such as the *metteur en scène*, interact on a daily basis with various agents and actors who demonstrate different degrees of creativity, such as sound engineers and camera operators interacting with performing actors. Furthermore, in the performing arts, creativity is structured within a specific time setting, where the objective is to perform to the public in a similar way to chefs when delivering high quality, creative meals to their clients. We therefore emphasize the need for deeper study of the creative context and the creative agents involved in other creative industries in order to obtain a better understanding of how individual creativity can be structured and managed.

An additional limitation lies in the focus of the study being on the French context. While we believe our contributions can provide an understanding of creative and reputational issues in gastronomy in general, it calls for further studies on the structure of different national contexts. Future research perspectives could also ask: What are the societal trends and values of haute cuisine in other countries? How do chefs perceive critics perceived in other settings? How do people in other countries perceive and take account of ecology? How does this impact creative agents and their willingness to act?

## II. Limitations and Research Perspectives Regarding the Choice of Population

Another limitation relates to the scope of the study, particularly the choice of *mainstream* agents with lower reputation levels. Studying young, upcoming chefs constitutes a major contribution of this research project because, despite making up a large part of the overall population of chefs (522 one-starred restaurants in 2022), they are studied less in the literature. Furthermore, they represent future chefs in the making. Finally, this population is particularly suited to deeper study of the issues that concern the field in general. This is because such issues, for example those related to reputation-building or environmental commitment, are easier to identify in this upcoming population. Therefore, while this perspective offers new, alternative insights on the field of gastronomy, it could be argued that it raises questions about the applicability of the results to actors who occupy different positions in the field. As explained earlier, we believe the insights we developed from the study of young chefs provide understanding and managerial tools that can also be employed by senior chefs to enhance their creative strategies. It would therefore be interesting to see how our results could translate to other populations such as *mainstream* actors with higher reputation levels as well as less central actors. It would also be interesting to examine the differences and similarities between them.

## III. Limitations and Research Perspectives Regarding Creative Culture

In Chapter 2 in particular, we focus on chefs who aim to create and nurture an atmosphere that benefits the development of creativity among their brigade members. Indeed, the discourse of the chef studied in Chapter 2 demonstrated his intention to value creative inputs and thinking among his brigade members and co-workers. Thus, this work is anchored in the study of a working atmosphere *de facto* intentionally creative.

However, we could examine how individuals who lead the creative orientation of their business (in our case chefs) go from being creative individuals driving the creative side of their organization to successfully implementing a creative culture within their restaurant and with their co-workers, especially the brigade. This also raises questions about how best to organize the transmission and the diffusion of individual creativity to co-workers and how this transmission can materialize in major creative outputs.

In other words, having said in Chapter 2 that social interactions can influence the individual creativity of chefs in an atmosphere that already drives creative flow, future research could investigate what makes a working environment prone to creativity in creative industries. We therefore call for researchers to investigate the determinants of a creative culture by identifying its drivers in a specific work environment led by creative individuals.

#### **IV. Limitations and Research Perspectives Regarding Grand Challenges**

We include a final limitation and future research perspective, which relates to grand challenges. Grand challenges are important contemporary challenges in today's economic and social system. This paper offers insights on how creative activities and individuals can integrate certain grand challenges, i.e. environmental issues, into their daily practices through their creativity. Consideration of environmental challenges is particularly suited to gastronomy as it is an industry that uses many natural resources and has to manage waste and non-reusable resources. However, further perspectives could examine how other grand challenges, such as social rights in the labor market, could also be mitigated through creativity and in what ways.

At the same time, analysis is required of the motivation for creatives to be transgressive and the extent to which they are willing to be, especially if they are central actors who wish to maintain their privileged position. Indeed, if grand challenges require transgressive behavior, in the sense that they call for disruption to the equilibrium of the current system, this could counteract the maintenance strategies of central actors. We could therefore ask which issues they are willing to transgress and disrupt, and which issues they are not. We assume that the porosity of the field to external tensions offers business opportunities for creatives through the integration of ecological issues. However, future research could deepen understanding of the balance of power when chefs dive into a very strong commitment strategy and determine whether a commitment that is too strong could pose a threat to creative activities and, above all, to the established order and positions of power.

To conclude, the results, general contributions and limits of this dissertation lead us to consider gastronomy as fertile ground for future research in management sciences, both regarding the actors involved (chefs with high or low reputation levels, brigade members,

producers, critics, etc.) and future challenges. By extending our focus to the field and its inherent tensions, we were able to broaden the issues and perspectives that chefs deal with regarding the management of individual creativity. This scope enabled us to view gastronomy as a field that crystallizes a number of topical managerial issues, which could be the subject of an array of future research. For example, this dissertation also questions external evaluation systems and the arbitrariness of evaluation decisions in the dominant economies of service and quality. Moreover, in the light of increasing criticism of violent managerial practices within kitchen brigades, the figure of the chef as a creative and responsible manager raises questions about the boundary between authoritarian management and harassment, and therefore raises questions about good managerial practices that lead to decent working conditions and benefit creative behaviors in the creative industries. Finally, new issues include the integration of grand challenges and the potential role that creativity can play in transgressing and challenging the established system both from an environmental point of view and to provide greater social justice.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. A propos – Guide Michelin

L' aventure du Guide MICHELIN commence en 1900. Avant de devenir la référence internationale des guides gastronomiques, il est, à sa naissance, un livret publicitaire de 400 pages, distribué gratuitement. Retour sur une folle épopée.

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Né de l'imagination d'André et d'Edouard Michelin, les deux frères fondateurs de la manufacture de pneumatiques MICHELIN, le guide originel (rouge, déjà !) se propose de "donner tous les renseignements qui peuvent être utiles à un chauffeur voyageant en France, pour approvisionner son automobile, pour la réparer, pour lui permettre de se loger et de se nourrir, de correspondre par la poste, télégraphe ou téléphone".

Tiré à 35 000 exemplaires, "offert gracieusement aux chauffeurs" avec l'achat de pneumatiques, le Guide MICHELIN illustre le pari visionnaire des frères Michelin : miser sur le développement de l'automobile, et donc favoriser celui du groupe, en améliorant la mobilité des automobilistes. À une époque où le voyage relève de l'épopée - en 1900, les routes étant souvent mal indiquées voire dangereuses, les temps de trajets longs -, le Guide MICHELIN veut faciliter la vie des voyageurs. Il propose une liste de garagistes ou de médecins, des cartes routières et des plans de ville, des informations touristiques et des conseils pratiques (comment changer un pneu ou faire son plein d'essence, comment entretenir son véhicule...).

Avec la création en 1933 du métier d'inspecteur, le Guide MICHELIN se spécialise vraiment dans l'expertise du milieu de l'hôtellerie-restauration. Sillonnant les routes du monde entier à la recherche des meilleures adresses, les inspecteurs MICHELIN, salariés du Groupe, proposent une sélection annuelle inédite, organisée en catégories de confort et de prix. Auberges typiques ou palaces luxueux, petits bistrot ou tables d'exception, les établissements présents dans le guide constituent un répertoire capable de satisfaire toutes les envies et de s'adapter aux budgets les plus exigeants. Cette expertise de nos inspecteurs, leur indépendance vis-à-vis des adresses visitées et leur anonymat sont devenus au fil du temps la marque de fabrique des guides MICHELIN et un élément de différenciation par rapport aux autres guides.

## Appendix 2. A propos – Le Fooding

### **À propos**

Le Fooding est un guide indépendant de restaurants, chambres, bars, caves et commerces qui font et défont le « goût de l'époque ». Mais pas que ! C'est aussi un magazine où food et société s'installent à la même table, un palmarès annuel toujours très attendu, des événements gastronomiques, une agence événementielle, consulting et contenus qui a plus d'un tour dans son sac de courses... Bref, tout pour faire son intéressant !

Fooding® est une marque déposée.

## Appendix 3. A propos – Gault & Millau

**Gault & Millau**  
*L'expert gourmand*

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# Notre mission

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### **Sélectionner & recommander**

Offrir à notre communauté de lecteurs épicuriens et épicurieux la garantie de découvrir, à travers nos sélections et recommandations, le meilleur de ce qu'ont à offrir les professionnels de la restauration, de l'hospitalité, et des artisans des métiers de bouche.



### **Labelliser & auditer**

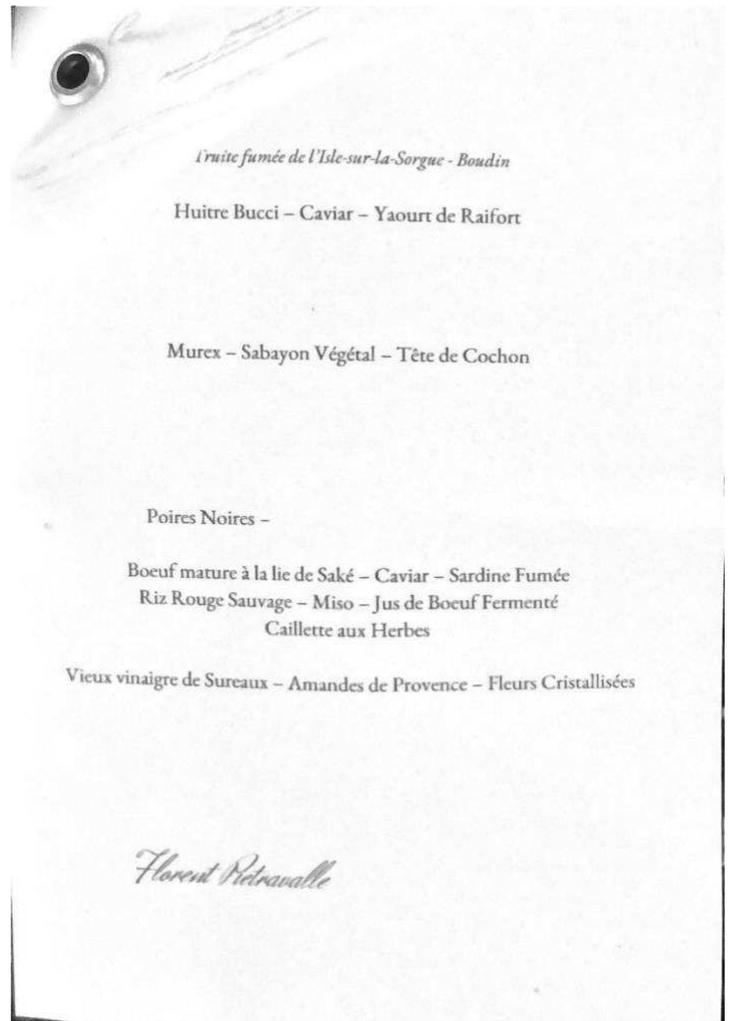
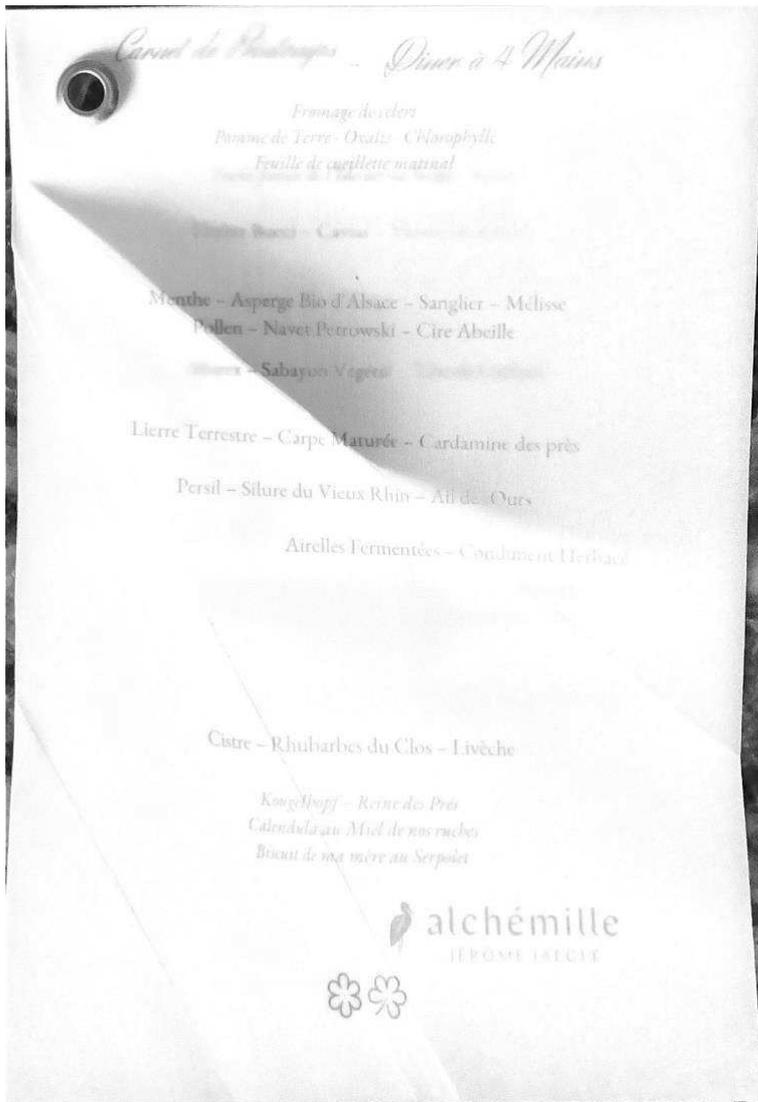
Par son expertise, Gault&Millau est une référence incontournable, une caution pour les professionnels comme pour les amateurs. Une expertise et un savoir-faire qui nous ont conduit au métier de l'audit afin de labelliser tous types d'établissements en rapport avec la restauration et l'hospitalité ; de labelliser et de recommander les meilleurs produits.



### **Dénicher & accompagner**

Découvrir des talents, les mettre en avant et les promouvoir ; accompagner les chefs vers toujours plus d'excellence et créer des liens justes et bienveillants avec une communauté de chefs et d'acteurs de la restauration et de l'hospitalité.

## Appendix 4. Example of “à 4 mains” dinner (Chapter 2): Menu



## Appendix 5. Interview guide Chapter 1

### **Guide d'entretien**

#### ***Projet 1***

**Thématiques à aborder** : Codes de la cuisine traditionnelle, problématique environnementale, processus créatif, approvisionnement local/saisonnier, ressources disponibles, motivation du chef, adaptation aux nouvelles problématiques, freins/obstacles à la créativité, pression professionnelle (public & institution dominante du champ)

**Question globale : Comment le chef cuisinier crée au quotidien ? Quel est le processus créatif du chef cuisinier derrière la réalisation d'un menu ? Comment le chef cuisinier élabore son assiette ? Quelles sont les différentes étapes de création ?**

#### **Objectif :**

L'objectif de cette étude est de déterminer dans quelle mesure le chef s'empare des contraintes et des réalités (en termes de respect de certaines valeurs et des ressources disponibles) de son environnement pour créer une offre qui lui ressemble.

Quelle place tiennent les contraintes présentes dans son environnement dans le processus créatif du chef cuisinier ?

Comment crée-t-il son assiette et quels éléments sont déterminants dans la composition de son menu ?

Quels sont les critères qui entrent en compte dans la réalisation d'une assiette ? Y-a-t-il des compositions que le chef ne se permet pas ? Pourquoi ?

Après création, quelle est la recevabilité du menu ? Qu'est-ce qui détermine la pérennité d'une offre ou l'échec de celle-ci, s'il y a échec ?

Axes	Questionnements
<p><b>Exigences professionnelles</b></p> <p><i>Recevabilité par le 1/ Le public, 2/ Les pairs, 3/ Le Guide Michelin</i></p>	<p>Créativité et pression du Guide Michelin ?</p> <p>Innover en respectant les codes traditionnels de la gastronomie française ?</p> <p>Comment imposer sa propre signature, tout en conservant la reconnaissance du milieu ?</p> <p>Peut-on assimiler reconnaissance par les pairs/le Guide Michelin/le public et la volonté de proposer une offre innovante ?</p> <p>Qu'est-ce qu'une cuisine d'avenir ?</p>
<p><b>Contrainte environnementale</b></p> <p><i>Circuit-court</i></p> <p><i>Saisonnalité</i></p> <p><i>Valorisation du produit dans son intégralité, zéro déchet</i></p> <p><i>Valorisation du végétal</i></p>	<p>Comment agencer les contraintes environnementales avec la nécessité de créer quelque chose d'original et de marquant pour le public ?</p> <p>Quelle est la recevabilité de la valorisation du produit par le public ?</p> <p>Quel lien entre processus créatif et respect de l'environnement ?</p>
<p><b>Valeurs et personnalité du chef</b></p>	<p>Comment créer en accord avec ses valeurs ?</p> <p>Les valeurs viennent-elles dicter le processus créatif ?</p> <p>Quelles places tiennent les valeurs du chef cuisinier dans son processus créatif ?</p> <p>En fonction de ses valeurs, le chef est-il investi d'une mission auprès de ses pairs et auprès du public ?</p>

English version:

**Themes:** Traditional cooking codes, environmental issues, creative process, local/seasonal sourcing, available resources, chef's motivation, adapting to new issues, obstacles/barriers to creativity, professional pressure (public & dominant institutions in the field).

**Global questions: How does the chef create on a daily basis? What is the chef's creative process behind the creation of a menu? How does the chef create his plate? What are the different stages of creation?**

**Aims of the study:**

The aim of this study is to determine the extent to which the chef takes into account the constraints and realities (in terms of respect for certain values and available resources) of his environment in order to create a creative offering that reflects him.

What role do the constraints of his environment play in the chef's creative process?

How does he create his plate and what are the determining factors in the composition of his menu?

What criteria are taken into account when creating a dish? Are there any compositions that the chef does not allow himself? Why or why not?

Once a menu has been created, how acceptable is it? What determines the durability of an offer, or its failure if it fails?

Axes	Questions
<p><b>Professional requirements</b></p> <p>Approved by 1/ The public, 2/ Peers, 3/ The Michelin Guide</p>	<p>Creativity and pressure from the Michelin Guide?</p> <p>Innovating while respecting the traditional codes of French gastronomy?</p> <p>How do you impose your own signature while maintaining the recognition of the industry?</p> <p>Is it possible to combine recognition by peers/Michelin Guide/public with a desire to offer innovative cuisine?</p> <p>What is the cuisine of the future?</p>
<p><b>Environmental constraints</b></p> <p><i>Short circuit</i></p> <p><i>Seasonality</i></p> <p><i>Making the most of the whole product, zero waste</i></p> <p><i>Making the most of vegetables</i></p>	<p>How can environmental constraints be reconciled with the need to create something original and memorable for the public?</p> <p>How acceptable is it for the public to value the product?</p> <p>What is the link between the creative process and respect for the environment?</p>

<b>Values and personality of the chef</b>	<p>How can you create in line with your values? Do values dictate the creative process?</p> <p>What role do the chef's values play in the creative process?</p> <p>Based on their values, do chefs have a mission for their peers and the public?</p>
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## Appendix 6. Example of an interview guide, Chapter 3:

### Experts

#### **Guide d'entretien** *Journaliste culinaire*

Bonjour, et merci de m'accorder votre temps. **Présentation de la thèse du projet par rapport aux guides.**

Je m'adresse aujourd'hui à vous notamment pour votre connaissance détaillée de la gastronomie française, mais aussi et surtout pour votre positionnement critique dans le champ qui peut être très intéressant, notamment si on prend en compte la co-création du Fooding que vous avez entrepris avec Alexandre Cammas.

A ce titre, si vous êtes d'accord, j'ai un certain nombre de questions relatives à la place des guides et de la presse culinaire dans le champ de la gastronomie en France et leur rapport à la créativité.

- 1) Selon vous, quel est le ou les rôles d'un guide culinaire ou d'une presse culinaire ? En quelque sorte, quel est votre positionnement dans le champ de la gastronomie française ? Dit plus trivialement, à quoi vous servez dans le champ ?
- 2) Pourquoi avoir créé le Fooding au début des années 2000 ? Est-ce que les motivations liées à sa création sont aujourd'hui assouvies ?
- 3) J'étudie particulièrement les chefs qui sont entre guillemets moins reconnus, qui font partie d'une nouvelle génération, qui ont une étoile, une note de 12-13-14/20 au Gault&Millau, des chefs propulsés par la génération « Fooding » ou Omnivore, entre guillemets : quel est l'intérêt pour ces chefs d'être reconnus par un guide ? Est-ce qu'il y a un intérêt différent en fonction de qui les reconnaît ?
- 4) Qu'est-ce que la créativité dans la gastronomie française pour vous ? Quel lien vous faites entre guide et créativité ?
- 5) Avez-vous relevé des évolutions dans le monde de la gastronomie depuis le début des années 2000 ? Si oui lesquelles ?
- 6) Si vous deviez décrire la gastronomie de demain, qu'elle serait-elle ?

English version:

Good morning, and thank you for your time. **Presentation of the thesis of the project in relation to critics.**

I'm contacting to you today mainly because of your detailed knowledge of French gastronomy, but also and above all because of your critical stance in the field, which can be very interesting, especially if we take into account the co-creation of Fooding that you undertook with Alexandre Cammas.

So, if you agree, I have a number of questions about the place of culinary guides and the culinary press in the field of gastronomy in France and their relationship to creativity.

- 1) In your opinion, what is the role or roles of a culinary guide or a culinary press? In a way, what is your position in the field of French gastronomy? Put more trivially, what purpose do you serve in the field?
- 2) Why did you create the Fooding in the early 2000s? Are the reasons behind its creation still valid today?
- 3) I'm particularly interested in chefs who are less well known, who are part of a new generation, who have a star, a 12-13-14/20 rating in Gault&Millau, chefs propelled by the 'Fooding' or Omnivore generation: what is the point of these chefs being recognised by a guide? Is there a different interest depending on who recognizes them?
- 4) What do you mean by creativity in French gastronomy? What link do you see between the guide and creativity?
- 5) Have you noticed any changes in the world of gastronomy since the early 2000s? If so, which ones?
- 6) If you had to describe the gastronomy of tomorrow, what would it be?

## Appendix 7. Words associated with the Michelin guide in the French press, 2000-2021

Année	Termes	Source
2000	"ouvrage au look actuel" ; "tradition de qualité à long terme" ; "accompagne pour la première fois son langage de signes par des textes concis et circonstanciés"	Michelin France (par Serge Tonneau), 1 mars 2000 TRENDS/TENDANCES 2000
2000	"rien de révolutionnaire" ; "le fameux Guide Michelin a cent ans et il commence sincèrement à les porter" ; "nettement moins attendue par un public soucieux d'une autre gastronomie et copieusement gavé de guides en tout genre" ; "court encore après sa "révolution culturelle" ; "ventre mou" ; "n'a plus grand chose à révéler" ; "perfection" ; "même toques confortablement lovées dans le moelleux de leur firmament" ;	Un Bibendum à plat ! Par Emmanuel RUBIN, 1er mars 2000 Le FIGARO
2000	"fait la part belle aux jeunes talents" ; "cuisine dans l'air du temps, à base de produits frais et respectant les saveurs" ; (l'étoile) est une "consécration" ; "grande inventivité" ; "Michelin sait aussi vivre avec son temps"	La nouvelle édition du Guide Michelin fait la part belle aux jeunes talents. Par L'Agéfi le Quotidien Suisse des Affaires et de la Finance. 28 février 2000
2000	"bourré d'informations" ; "bardé de sigles" ; "semant espoir et désolation" ; "bouscule allégrement les valeurs établies" ; "surprenante" ;	Guerre des étoiles. Par Serge Tonneau. TRENDS/TENDANCES 2000. 1er février 2000
2001	"défenseur de l'art de vivre à la française" ; "raz de marée annuel provoqué par la sortie du Guide Michelin dans les librairies" ; "en parfaite osmose avec le troisième millénaire" ; "un dynamisme hors-pair" ; "une assurance commerciale pour les restaurateurs, une assurance de qualité pour les amoureux de la gastronomie "Made in France"	Les nouvelles étoiles filantes du Michelin. Entreprendre. 1er avril 2001
2001	"travail régulier" ; "retour au terroir" ; "recherche du bon produit avant tout"	L'Anglais du "Guide Rouge", par Jean-Louis Galesne et Jean-Claude Hazera. Les Echos. 30 mars 2001.
2001	"L'éditeur entend faire voisiner des restaurants de pur classicisme et récompenser les tables qui défrichent des univers inconnus du goût" ; "recherche de modernité"	France/Le Guide Michelin consacre Marc Veyrat. REUTERS. 24 février 2001.

2002	"Tous les trois étoiles glorifiés par le Guide Rouge devraient se valoir. Ce n'est pas le cas !" ;	Rue de Varenne, à Paris, le coup de génie d'Alain Passard, Maurice Beaudoin. 27 avril 2002.
2002	"Encore une fois pas de révolution" ; "menu consensuel" "mélange habituel d'audaces calculées, de gentilles prises de risques et de mauvaise foi sincère" ; "le fabuleux train-train de l'ami Michelin" ;	Gastronomie. Par Emmanuel Rubin. 20 février 2002. Le Figaro
2003	"guide gastronomique le plus réputé et aussi le plus redouté par les chefs" ; "gain ou perte d'un macaron a une influence directe sur le chiffre d'affaires, environ 25%"	Le Français Jean-Luc Naret, futur patron du guide Michelin courant 2004. 5 décembre 2003. AFP
2003	"menace d'une homogénéisation de la gastronomie française", "la cuisine française reste la référence" ;	Les chefs étoilés vantent la cuisine populaire, au service du goût. APF. 30 novembre 2003.
2003	"la pression vient des chefs eux-mêmes" ; ref au "manque de transparence du Michelin dans son système de notation" ; "engagement inscrit dans la durée"	"La pression vient des chefs", selon le patron du Guide Michelin". Par Dominique AGEORGES. AFP. 23 juin 2003
2003	"distinction suprême" ; "raisonnablement sélectif" ; "manque d'audace ?"	Guide Michelin 2003 - l'année des palaces. Par Jean-François Pecresse. Les Echos. 10 février 2003.
2003	"édition un peu mollassonne" ; "dérochant lentement avec la réalité gourmande" ; "démarche imprégnée de marketing" ; "grand déballage médiatique" ; "société politique de la gastronomie" ; "esprit de tradition cimente cet univers", "gastronomie datée" ; "freinant la modernité" ; "l'institution Michelin n'est plus aussi impérieuse qu'elle l'était"	Révélations sur le Michelin 2003. Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 7 février 2003
2004	"faire avancer la gastronomie" ; "accepter une part de mystère autour du guide Michelin" ; "une approche trop normée avec des critères précis, transformerait le rôle de catalyseur du guide en rôle de prescripteur ; ce qui deviendrait un frein à la créativité"	Edouard Michelin réaffirme les valeurs du guide gastronomique. AFP. 26 octobre 2004.
2004	"Pour les étoiles, seule l'assiette compte" ; "La France subit le poids de la tradition" ; "il faut que l'on s'habitue à des plats installés dans des décors hors norme, par simplificté, épure ou décalage" ; "une distinction reconnaissant une maison" ; "sont analysés la qualité du produit, la maîtrise des cuissons et des saveurs, la créativité, la régularité et le rapport qualité/prix"	Jean-Luc Naret : "Pour les étoiles, seule l'assiette compte". Par Thierry Bogaty et Alexandra Michot. Le Figaro. 25 septembre 2004.

2004	"indépendance" ; "rigueur" ; "savoir-faire"	Le Rouge interroge les établissements. Le Figaro. 25 septembre 2004.
2004	"multiplie les surprises"	Michelin France 2004. Trends/TENDANCES 2004. 11 mars 2004.
2004	"guide Michelin contesté"	Les symboles gastronomiques français en péril. Par Laurent Wolf. 28 février 2004. Le Temps
2004	"la Bible (le guide Michelin) ne se fait plus respecter" "elle nomme au gré des frimousses et des régions en dépit des talents nouveaux" ; "elle passe lorsque la messe est dite"	Etes-vous slow-food ou fooding? Par Sébastien Le Fol, François Simon et Nicolas Ungemuth. 21 février 2004. Le Figaro.
2004	"copie propre, cohérente et reflétant bien toutes les tendances de la cuisine française d'aujourd'hui"	Sous une pluie d'étoiles. Par Jean-François Mesplède. Le Progrès. 6 février 2004.
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2005	"désacraliser la gastronomie" ; le Guide Michelin = bible rouge, "à la fois crainte, critiquée et courtisée"	Hussards et grognards aux fourneaux : les cuisines françaises en ébullition. AFP. 3 octobre 2005.
2005	"le Michelin n'en sortirait pas amoindri s'il révisait sa doctrine et sa grille d'évaluation"	Le Michelin est nu. Par Jacques Ballarin. Sud Ouest Dimanche. 12 juin 2005.
2005	"plus que jamais les grands étoilés et leurs satellites demeurent intouchables"	Les faux pas du Guide. Par Maurice Beaudoin. 5 mars 2005. Le Figaro
2005	"sans trop de surprise" ; "même critiqué il reste une référence"	Le Guide Michelin distribue ses lauriers. AFP. 23 février 2005.
<hr/>		
2006	"on reproche son conformisme, au pis ses injustices" ; "sans nappes sur les tables, aucune chance d'obtenir la troisième"	La vérité sur...les petites cuisines du Michelin. Par Francine Rivaud, Challenges. 2 mars 2006.
2006	"qu'on s'en félicite ou qu'on le déplore, le célèbre guide rouge fait aujourd'hui autorité dans le petit monde de la gastronomie"	Michelin : le verdict des étoiles. Par Romain Bonfillon. Le Progrès. 23 février 2006.
2006	"Le nombre de serveurs ou la qualité des équipements n'entrent pas en compte pour l'attribution des étoiles." ; "ambition, exigence, excellence" ; "signe de qualité"	Avec le Guide Michelin "Les étoiles sont dans l'assiette !" Le progrès. 20 février 2006.

<b>2007</b>	"les critères sont les mêmes"	Les étoiles du Michelin pleuvent sur Tokyo. La Croix. 11 décembre 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Le guide rouge suscite de l'intérêt autant que de la méfiance"	Pluie d'étoiles Michelin sur Tokyo. Par Michel de Grandi. Les Echos. 23 novembre 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Son travail de fond est énorme, même s'il est parasité par une lecture datée de la gastronomie française"	Encore et toujours...Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 27 octobre 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Le secret est une marque de fabrique" ; "une référence" que tous les pays nous envient"	Pour étoiler un restaurant, les inspecteurs dégustent. Ouest France. 31 mars 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Jusqu'à la dernière minute, le secret aura été précieusement gardé"	Guide rouge Michelin : A l'assaut de l'Asie. Par G. Colonna d'Istria. Le Progrès. 21 mars 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Cette information sort au même moment que la publication du Guide Michelin et nous rappelle, à sa façon, que la gastronomie vit une double vie. D'un côté, la société politique avec ses guides, ses mentors, ses chefs et ses médailles en chocolat. De l'autre, une société civile vivant sa vie, le nez en l'air, l'esprit ailleurs et les coudes sur la table. Ce n'est pas plus mal comme ça, on ne mélange pas les torchons et les serviettes. Deux sociétés coexistent donc, l'une vivant dans une douce fiction et dans des salles (hélas) pas toujours remplies, l'autre s'entassant, heureuse et joyeuse, dans des adresses parfois survolées par les guides."	Les guides ont du plomb dans l'aile. Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 24 février 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"consécration familiale"	Enfin trois étoiles décernées à une femme ! Par Alain Giroud. 24 heures. 23 février 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Depuis quelques années, le Guide rouge fait de gros efforts pour revenir au niveau de sa réputation, mais il peine encore à intégrer, dans sa vision de la gastronomie, cette douce et irrésistible vague de bistrotts gourmands qui font les beaux jours de la France, et notamment de Paris." ; "le Michelin aborde les cuisines "étrangères" avec toujours la même pince à linge sur le nez, confortant ceux pour qui n'existe qu'une seule cuisine au monde, la française."	Michelin 2007, un cru de transition. Par François Simon. 22 février 2007. Le Figaro.
<b>2007</b>	"Une étoile dans le guide reste une vraie récompense" ; "dans le petit monde de la restauration haut de gamme, la sortie du Guide Michelin demeure un événement suivi";	Les étoiles se font rares. Par Thomas Brosset. Sud Ouest. 22 février 2007.
<b>2007</b>	"Entre l'affaire Loiseau, qui remettait en cause la pression liée aux étoiles, et un de ses ex-critiques qui dénonçait ses pratiques, le guide rouge à la discrétion légendaire s'est vu obligé d'en dire plus sur ses méthodes."	Michelin : la guerre des étoiles. Centre Presse. 22 février 2007.

2007	"mystère" ; "le guide a voulu signifier qu'il recollait au terrain"	Fuites au Michelin : la valse des étoiles. Par François Simon. 18 janvier 2007.
2007	"Le Michelin et ses macarons auraient-ils fait leur temps ? La question mérite d'être posée à un moment où les flèches fusent de toutes parts. La réponse, elle, semble tendre vers un "oui" sonore, à moins que le célèbre guide (...) n'envisage rapidement de faire évoluer les principes qui ont été les siens jusqu'ici." ; "Le Guide Michelin est un monarque absolu de droit divin" ; "critères de luxe du Guide sont passéistes et ostentatoires" ; "fracture gastronomique" ; "impossibilité de formuler la moindre critique sans prendre le risque de représailles" ; "le consensus qui règne en surface n'empêche pas que beaucoup s'interrogent sur la pertinence du guide" ; "le Michelin balance ses distinctions comme la Pythie de Delphes rend ses oracles." ; "absence de justification frustrée, cache bien plus qu'elle ne dévoile" ; "arbitraire" ; "apparence d'objectivité" ; "le problème du Michelin, c'est son côté normatif"	Faut-il brûler le Guide Michelin ? La bible des voyageurs gastronomes de plus en plus critiquée. Par Michel Verlinden. TRENDS/Tendances 2007. 18 janvier 2007.
2008		
2008	"rend ses trois étoiles pour profiter de la vie"	Un chef rend ses trois étoiles Michelin pour profiter de la vie. Reuters. 8 novembre 2008.
2008	"l'arrivée d'une étoile, c'est le soleil qui brille jour et nuit. Mais après, il s'agit de tenir. Et surtout de ne pas la perdre. Pour elle, les chefs ont sacrifié leur vie familiale, leurs économies, leur temps libre. Tout. Aussi, lorsque celle-ci disparaît, la tragédie est bien réelle."	Olivier Roellinger renonce aux étoiles. Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 8 novembre 2008.
2008	"rechercher l'excellence en permanence"	Etoile au Michelin : un "esclavage". L'indépendant. 22 septembre 2008.
2008	"L'édition 2008 souligne une montée en puissance d'une nouvelle vague de jeunes chefs qui misent sur la qualité des produits tout en exprimant leur propre personnalité dans les plats proposés à leurs clients." ; "verdict sévère" ;	Aucune étoile : le fait du jour. Par Pascal Chevillot. L'Est Républicain. 4 mars 2008.
2008	"une vitrine de la richesse de nos terroirs" ; "l'illustration d'une montée en puissance des jeunes chefs"	Coup de pompe pour la gastronomie parisienne. Par Christophe Palierse. Les Echos. 4 mars 2008.

2008	"une dynastie de chefs" ; "coup de pouce aux jeunes chefs" ; "reconnaissance d'une nouvelle génération de chefs" ; "l'ancienne génération" est encore là"	Michelin 2008 : un coup de pouce aux jeunes chefs. La Charente libre. 4 mars 2008.
2008	"les émotions"	Grand Véfour : "toujours une bonne rasion" pour la perte d'une étoile. AFP. 3 mars 2008.
2008	"la référence en matière de guide gastronomique" ; "comme à égarer un public qui ne sait plus vers quel astre se tourner" ; "jamais le Michelin n'a été aussi discuté, voire remis en question" ; "depuis une dizaine d'années, les choix du Guide Rouge sont beaucoup plus motivés par des décisions de marketing que par une approche purement gastronomique" ; "la gastronomie va beaucoup plus vite qu'on ne l'imagine"	Profusion d'étoiles : qui les mérite ? Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 23 février 2008.
2009	"élite de la gastronomie" ; "critères de qualité et de créativité" ; "neutralité" ; "honnêteté"	Si convoitées, les étoiles font jaser. 24 heures. 30 novembre 2009.
2009	"désuet"	Joël Robuchon dégonfle le guide Michelin. Le Matin. 23 septembre 2009.
2009	"célèbre et souvent controversé"	Le Guide Michelin a distribué ses bons points. Par Olivier Raynaud. 12 mars 2009. Midi libre.
2009	"Le Michelin est toujours le patron" ; "rattrapé par le phénomène de la baisse d'audience des guides gastronomiques" ; "ni plus ni moins question que de marketing"	Le Michelin, un centenaire qui fait jaser. SUD OUEST. 3 mars 2009.
2009	"le plus redouté et le plus attendu des guides gastronomiques français" ; "une domination sans égal, ignorant les critiques" ; "critères de notation opaques" ; "franco-centrée" ; "un appareil de mesure qui peine à souligner la diversité des établissements"	Le Michelin fête sa centième édition. Presse Océan. 2 mars 2009.
2009	"vieille institution nationale", "incontournable" ; "gloire" ; "longévité" ; "le guide à abattre pour tout un nouveau courant de la gastronomie française qui le juge trop ringard, trop ampoulé, peu transparent" ; "une forme vieillote qui s'arrache"	Gastronomie - Pas si ringard, le guide Michelin. Par Florence Deguen. Le Parisien. 2 mars 2009.
2009	"secret de fabrication du guide" ; "confidentialité" ; "attendue"	Un secret très bien gardé. Par Didier Thomas-Radux. Midi libre. 1 mars 2009.
2009	"être généreux, simple, surtout ne rien changer" ; "la légion d'honneur"	Générosité, émotion, simplicité. Ouest France. 26 février 2009.
2009	"critères d'excellence" ; "la grille du Michelin ne fonctionne plus"	Le Michelin est-il cuit ? Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 14 février 2009.

2010	"Se fend de dossiers de presse pleins d'infos, sauf de l'essentielle, celle portant sur les motifs de l'octroi ou du retrait des étoiles." ; "occulte" ; "secret"	Que "le Guide Michelin" s'explique ! Serait-il en manque d'arguments valables ? Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 16 mars 2010.
2010	"les choix et les orientations du guide répondent d'abord à des considérations marketing et non à des réalités" ; "nul ne sait pourquoi et comment les étoiles sont attribuées ou retirées, ni sur quels critères, ni selon quels principes" ; "missel du bling-bling"	Torpeur et décadence du "Guide Michelin 2010". Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 16 mars 2010.
2010	"faible niveau de connaissance culinaire des inspecteurs Michelin" ; "nauffrage mental et professionnel"	La haine de la cuisine française; Guide Michelin. Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 6 mars 2010.
2010	"à qualité égale un chef indépendant (est) plus longtemps mis à l'épreuve" ; "contradiction"	Les nouveaux étoilés. Par Jacques Ballarin. Sud Ouest. 2 mars 2010.
2010	"retour au terroir" ; "retour aux produits de saison" ; "menu unique" ; "se réinventer" ; "indétrônable malgré les critiques" "opportunisme marketing" ; "critères de sélection opaques"....	Le guide Michelin 2010 des meilleures tables paraît lundi sur fond de crise. Par Sandra Lacut. AFP. 26 février 2010.
2010	"cuisine valeureuse mais datée" ; "belle cuisine" ; "cuisine qui ressemble à celle du siècle dernier" ; "n'ouvre pas les yeux sur la réalité gastronomique" ; "aveugle" ; "gastronomiquement correct"	Ce que nous mitonne le Michelin 2010. Par François Simon. Le Figaro. 20 février 2010.
2011	"une vague de fébrilité" ; "chefs déchus"	Ah, la belle étoile. Par Jean-Pierre Marie. Ouest France Dimanche. 6 mars 2011.
2011	"au firmament de la gastronomie" ; "une pression tous les jours" ; "une épée de Damociès" ; "exigeant"	Cette étoile qui leur est si chère. Le Populaire du Centre. 4 mars 2011.
2011	"punir" ; "il est sans doute plus facile de faire parler de soi en démolissant qu'en construisant"	Le guide Michelin France 2011 calme le jeu. La Tribune de Genève. 4 mars 2011.
2011	"entre espoirs et désillusions" ; "la science du guide rouge" ; "c'est un peu de la magouille" ; "critères d'attribution plus ou moins obscurs" ; "système de réseaux" "bonne ou mauvaise situation géographique"	"Il n'y a qu'une reconnaissance, c'est celle des clients". La Nouvelle République du Centre Ouest. 3 mars 2011.
2011	"reste la référence en matière de gastronomie" ; "mystère" ; "contestation" ; "émotions"	Michelin : Aucun nouveau restaurant ne gagne la 3ème étoile ; une édition sobre. Par Jean-Charles Verguet. L'est Républicain. 1er mars 2011.
2011	"édition un peu morne" ; "un nombre record de petites tables savoureuses et peu chères"	Michelin : c'est l'année des petites tables. Par Christophe Colinet. La Nouvelle République

		du Centre-Ouest. 1er mars 2011.
<b>2011</b>	perte d'une étoile = "douleur profonde" ; "panthéon des macarons"	2011 - Michelin, la valse des étoiles. Le Point. 28 février 2011.
<b>2011</b>	"perte d'influence du Guide Michelin" ; "caractère daté" ; "difficulté à coller à l'actualité"	La crise des guides. Par Jacques Ballarin. Sud Ouest. 6 février 2011.
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<b>2012</b>	"bastion centenaire de la cuisine" ; "rétive à vivre avec son temps"	Et si Michelin bradait sa bonne étoile ? Le guide rouge, bible des gastronomes, s'ouvre aux avis des internautes. Coup de chaud en cuisine : les chefs s'interrogent sur la crédibilité de ce nouveau portail interactif. Par Véronique Zbinden. Le Temps. 18 mai 2012.
<b>2012</b>	"pilier centenaire et incontournable de la critique gastronomique"	Le Guide Michelin s'ouvre aux internautes. Ouest France. 19 avril 2012.
<b>2012</b>	"travail secret" ; "petite équipe extrêmement formée" ; "la bible des gourmets" ; "marque de prestige"	Les internautes, critiques du "Guide Michelin" : tollé dans les cuisines. Par Liza Fabbian. Rue 98. 12 avril 2012.
<b>2012</b>	"référence incontournable" ; "de loin le plus fiable"	Le guide Michelin inaugure son site Web et alimente la polémique. La Tribune de Genève. 9 mars 2012.
<b>2012</b>	"véritable institution" ; "le malaise"	Le Guide Michelin : une institution. L'indépendant. 3 mars 2012.
<b>2012</b>	"politique" ; "raisonnable" ; "prude" ; "en perte de vitesse"	Le Guide Michelin vend-il son âme ? Par François Simon et Emmanuel Rubin. Le Figaro. 12 janvier 2012.
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<b>2013</b>	"cuisine irréprochable" ; "épée de damoclès" ; "distinction" ; "une valeur sûre" ; "aboutissement d'une carrière"	Etoiles et Bibs du Michelin : un combat perpétuel. Par Estelle Devic. Midi Libre. 10 mars 2013.
<b>2013</b>	"boulet" de la gastronomie	La gastronomie a son boulet Michelin. Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 9 mars 2013.
<b>2013</b>	"dispersion de l'image" ; "dilution de la crédibilité" ; "platitudes de l'édition 2013" ; "essoufflement de la publication" ; "ni l'imagination ni l'initiative n'auront bousculé cette édition 2013"	Le boulet Michelin ; un guide qui ne fait plus rêver. Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 2 mars 2013.

<b>2013</b>	"une vitrine de l'excellence française" "reflet fidèle du savoir-faire à la française et de sa maîtrise unique de l'art culinaire" ; "toujours à la recherche de nouvelles adresses et de perles rares" ; "professionnels" ; "authenticité" ; "sobriété dans leurs création" ; "cuisine traditionnelle mais résolument moderne"	Le guide Michelin France 2013 : la gastronomie française, une valeur sûre qui s'exporte bien ! News Press. 20 février 2013.
<b>2013</b>	"peu de surprises"	Un "Michelin" attendu. Sud Ouest. 18 février 2013.
<b>2014</b>	"polémique" ; "il ne représente plus grand chose" ; "un goût de déjà-vu" ; "il est complètement à côté de la plaque" ;	Le Michelin définitivement à côté de la plaque. Courrier International 27 février 2014
<b>2014</b>		Pudlowski : le Michelin a perdu sa boussole. Par Gilles Pudlowski. 17 février 2014. Le Point.
<b>2014</b>	"une Bible"; "don de l'observation" ; "savoir-faire" ; "une reconnaissance personnelle et de la qualité du travail d'équipe" ; "un stress permanent du macaron"	Le Guide Michelin, c'est une bible. Nord Littoral. 26 février 2014.
<b>2014</b>	"inégalités", "aucune règle" ; "entrer dans une case" ; "système qui attire une clientèle très sélecte" ; "beaucoup de pression" ; "une bible" ; "la course à l'étoile, c'est épuisant"	Qu'en pensent les restaurateurs ? La dépêche du Midi. 26 février 2014.
<b>2014</b>	"ambiance plus décontractée" ; "petites structures"	Le Michelin 2104 récompense la tradition et l'innovation. Par Zoé Cadiot. L'indépendant. 25 février 2014.
<b>2015</b>	"top secret" ; "dispositif de sécurité"	Le Guide Michelin, un palmarès "secret défense" ? Par Gaétan Supertino. Europe 1. 30 janvier 2015.
<b>2015</b>	"la grand-messe du lancement du guide" ; "très attendu" ; "le suspens" ; "un rendez-vous majeur" ; "critiques et controverses"	Le palmarès du guide Michelin révélé demain. La Dépêche du Midi. 1er février 2015.
<b>2015</b>	"une référence sans équivalent" ; "un tremplin économique" ; "bien plus qu'une institution" ; "la fameuse bible rouge"	Les chefs étoilés poussent les feux pour se diversifier. Les Echos. 2 février 2015.
<b>2015</b>	"très attendu" ; "le célébrissime guide Michelin" ; "régularité récompensée"	Guide Michelin 2015 : on reprend les mêmes...Par Julien Marion. L'Indépendant. 3 février 2015.
<b>2015</b>	"événement d'ordinaire très franco-français" ; "c'est la référence mondiale"	La diplomatie de la bonne table Cuisine diplomatique. L'Est Républicain. 3 février 2015.

2015	"ex-héraut de la gastronomie française" ; caricature et bling-bling" ; "a troqué son ADN contre un marketing aux antipodes des aspirations culinaires de la société d'aujourd'hui" ; "arbitre de la cuisine planétaire" ; "la fumisterie du système des étoiles" ; "renier (l'ADN) de la cuisine française"	Guide Michelin : la vieillesse est un naufrage. Par Périco Légasse. 21 février 2015. Marianne.
2016	"aussi attendu que redouté"	Le verdict du Michelin. Par Julien Coquet. 1er février 2016. La Nouvelle République.
2016	"aussi attendu qu'il est redouté" ; "véritable bible de la gastronomie" ; "façonne des chemins de respectabilité autant qu'il leste les réputations" ; "un système construit autour de la distinction" ; "mesure incontournable de la santé de la gastronomie"	Gastronomie : Le goût amer des étoiles. Par Paule Masson. L'Humanité. 2 février 2016.
2016	"une nouvelle génération" ; "rafraîcher la gastronomie française" ; "pression est immense pour conserver sa place"	Michelin : prime à la jeunesse ; restauration. Par Philippe Rioux. 2 février 2016. La nouvelle république des Pyrénées.
2016	"impatience" ; "angoisse" ; "bible de la gastronomie française"	Guide Michelin : la bonne étoile du chef. Ouest France. 2 février 2016.
2016	"héritier de la collection des terroirs, de la mosaïque des paysages, des produits et donc des savoir-faire" ; "un outil commercial au service de la diplomatie" ; "éthique" ; "pression pensant sur les étoilés"	Le guide est-il fidèle ? Par Bernard Stéphan. La Montagne. 2 février 2016.
2016	"place ultra dominante du fait de son ancienneté, de son prestige mais aussi de son tirage" ; "objet de nombreuses critiques" ; "on lui reproche d'être partiel, partial, de préférer la tradition à l'innovation, de privilégier les valeurs sûres du passé par rapport aux talents prometteurs, de défendre une vision figée de la grande cuisine" ; "mouvement de contestation (...) reste marginal" ; "marqueur gastronomique d'un territoire" ; "indicateur d'attractivité de toute une filière"	La guerre des étoiles. La république des Pyrénées. 6 février 2016.
2016	"marketing" ; "paillettes" ; "mépris total du patrimoine culinaire" ; "dépassés par les enjeux du moment" ; "ne justifie jamais ses choix"	Guide Michelin 2016 : mais où est passée la cuisine française ? Par Périco Légasse. 20 février 2016. Marianne.
2017	"toujours très attendu palmarès du guide rouge"	Le guide Michelin dévoile son palmères aujourd'hui. L'Indépendant. 9 février 2017.
2017	"confrérie très secrète" ; "affolent le monde" ; "incorruptibles et incognito" ; "obéissent à un code, à un règlement ?"	Guide Michelin : qui sont ses mystérieuses inspecteurs, faiseurs d'étoiles ? Par Jean-

		Michel Gradt. Les Echos. 9 février 2017.
2017	"secret" ; "équilibrée" ; "cohérente dans ses choix" ; "sans faute de goût mais sans prisque de risque"	Le Michelin 2017 : sans prisque de risque ni faute de goût. Par Colette Monsat. 10 février 2017. Le Figaro.
2017	"à contre-courant de la civilisation" ; "capacité d'autopréservation" ; "rituel médiatique (...) bien plus que la valeur de la cuisine ou le talent du chef" ; "trop de tabous"	Le guide de la finance gastronomique : "Michelin 2017". Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 24 février 2017.
2018	"un problème avec l'évaluation du Michelin" ; "cadre un peu stressant" ; "rigueur de tous les instants" ; "pas le droit à l'erreur" ; "ils ne progresseront pas dans la hiérarchie du guide Michelin sans respecter un certain nombre de critères comme les tables repassées, la vaisselle assez luxueuse, l'utilisation de produits fins coûteux (...) ce qui nécessite des investissements colossaux" ;	Pourquoi le guide Michelin doit se réinventer ? Par Laure Croiset. 5 février 2018. Challenges.
2018	"exigence" ; "pression" ; "prestige" ; "influence importante dans la gastronomie"	Une étoile au guide Michelin est-elle toujours le Graal ? Dordogne Libre. 5 février 2018.
2019	"une offense profonde" ; "pire qu'une blessure" ; "irréparable" ; "deshonoré"	Le Guide Michelin répond à Marc Veyrat. Le Figaro. 24 septembre 2019.
2019	"relation schizophrénique" qu'entretiennent les chefs avec le plus célèbre guide gastronomique" ; "pression de la course aux étoiles" ; "crainte" ; "obsession"	Les chefs et le guide Michelin : une relation "schizophrénique". Lepopulaire.fr. 12 juillet 2019.
2019	"vaste opération de nettoyage (...) médiatique" ; "situation du guide dramatique" ; "couper des têtes pour faire du buzz"	Le guide Michelin se refait une santé sur le dos de la cuisine française. Par Périco Légasse. Marianne. 20 janvier 2019.
2019	"une pincée de Fooding, une louche de jeunisme, une poignée de femmes chefs, une réduction de têtes longtemps étoilées et un zeste de toques étrangères : "un vent nouveau souffle sur le Guide Michelin" ; "un pas en avant vers le modernisme"	Un Michelin 2019 épicé à la sauce Fooding, selon Gilles Pudlowski. Par Nicolas Pratviel. AFP. 21 janvier 2019.
2019	"petite révolution" ; "un vent nouveau" ; "quelques rétrogradations frappantes"	Le Michelin coiffe et décoiffe. L'Avenir. 22 janvier 2019.
2020	"avec le renouvellement des générations, le guide distingue de jeunes chefs qui ne portent plus cette cuisine classique, traditionnelle" ; "chefs créateurs" et chef "interprète" ; "celle qui "prend le pouvoir" elle celle des chefs dits créateurs" ; "les clients veulent vivre une "expérience", souhaitent être surpris" ; "la surprise et la nouveauté"	Les chefs créateurs s'installent. L'Est Républicain. 27 janvier 2020.

2020	"accélérateur de changement" ; "vitrine de bonnes pratiques"	Le guide Michelin se met au vert et distingue des chefs durables. AFP. 27 janvier 2020.
2021	"régulièrement attaqué à propos de son fonctionnement" ; "opacité de la méthode" ; "suspicion de passe-droits" ; "une occasion manquée"	Emmanuel Rubin : "Le Guide Michelin devait-il décerner des étoiles cette année ? Le Figaro. 15 janvier 2021.
2021	"manque d'élégance" ; "injustice féroce" ; "entacher une sélection vendue avec un slogan qui s'avère faussement bienveillant"	L'étrange palmarès du Michelin 2021. Par Stéphane Durand-Souffland. Le Figaro. 18 janvier 2021.

# Résumé en français

## Introduction

### I. Le cadre général : les industries créatives

Cette thèse s'inscrit dans un premier temps dans l'étude des industries créatives. Les industries créatives, définies par l'UNESCO en 2002 comme « toute industrie issue de la créativité, des compétences et du talent individuels et susceptible de générer de la richesse et de l'emploi grâce à la création et à l'exploitation de la propriété intellectuelle » (traduction personnelle), ont fait l'objet de nombreuses études en sciences de gestion, notamment depuis l'article fondateur de Caves (2000) intitulé « Industries créatives : un contrat entre l'art et le commerce ». Elles prennent également une place prépondérante dans le monde économique, si bien que Florida parle déjà en 2002 de « la classe créative ». Le spectre des industries créatives varie selon les périodes, les classements et les institutions structurantes. En effet, un certain nombre d'institutions et d'organismes privés ont procédé à l'élaboration de nomenclatures permettant d'identifier quelles sont les industries créatives et de les classer en sous-groupes. Parmi ces nomenclatures, nous pouvons par exemple citer celle du DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) en 1998 et 2001 pour la Grande-Bretagne, ou l'étude de BPI France intitulée « Créativité déroutée ou augmentée : comment le numérique transforme les industries de la French Touch » pour la France en 2015. A l'aide de ces nomenclatures, il est possible d'identifier un certain nombre d'industries considérées créatives parmi lesquelles le cinéma, le spectacle vivant, la peinture, l'industrie du livre, l'architecture, la danse, ou encore la gastronomie. Tantôt nommées « industries créatives » ou « industries créatives et culturelles », celles-ci regroupent des caractéristiques qui leur sont propres et qu'il conviendra de décliner dans cette introduction.

#### 1) Un arbitrage entre « art et commerce » (Caves, 2000)

Les industries créatives se caractérisent par un double versant artistique et économique qui peut parfois sembler paradoxal (Eikhof & Hauschild, 2007). Les individus opérants dans des organisations appartenant aux industries créatives se doivent d'assurer la profitabilité de

leur organisation. Dans un même temps, la créativité est au cœur de leur création de valeur. Il s'agit donc d'un arbitrage constant entre ces deux logiques.

## 2) Au cœur des industries créatives : le rôle de la créativité

Cet arbitrage fait ainsi de la créativité le corollaire de l'activité des individus créatifs dans les industries créatives. En effet, « la survie à long terme des entreprises appartenant aux industries culturelles dépend majoritairement du renouvellement de leurs ressources créatives » (Lampel et al., 2000: 265, traduction personnelle).

Différentes approches permettent de définir la créativité, tantôt en vertu des résultats, de la production ou des objectifs du processus créatif. Globalement, la créativité se décrit par le prisme de trois composantes : elle doit être nouvelle, ce qui signifie que les idées créatives doivent incarner quelque chose de différent, de bonne qualité, et pertinente, c'est-à-dire adaptée à la tâche à accomplir (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2015). Ainsi, de manière générale, la créativité peut être définie comme « la production d'idées nouvelles » (Guilford, 1950, traduction personnelle), « la génération de quelque chose qui est à la fois nouveau et utile pour atteindre des objectifs souhaités » (Amabile, 1996; Weisberg, 1993, traduction personnelle) ou « la capacité à produire de nouvelles idées qui sont nouvelles pour les producteurs d'idées eux-mêmes » (Drabkin, 1996, traduction personnelle). Ainsi, Mumford, Hester & Robledo (2012) identifient cinq implications de la créativité : il s'agit d'une a) forme de performance, b) un produit de la condition humaine, c) elle exige une cognition de haut niveau et d) une décision consciente pour savoir si les gens sont prêts à investir des ressources limitées dans la génération d'une solution créative à un problème et e) elle peut se produire au niveau de l'individu, du groupe ou de l'organisation. La créativité a également été décrite comme une solution à la résolution de problèmes (Ghiselin, 1963; Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Besemer & O'Quin, 1999; Christaans, 2002; Unsworth, 2001). Cependant, la résolution de problèmes n'est pas l'intérêt principal de la créativité dans les industries créatives, mais est plus généralement considérée comme « la ressource la plus importante contribuant à la production créative des entreprises » (Althuizen, 2012; Kabanoff & Rossiter, 1994, dans Stierand et al., 2014 : 22, traduction personnelle). Les définitions de la créativité sont multiples et complexes. Ainsi, certaines études (Unsworth, 2001; Fillis & Rentschler, 2010; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010; Cromwell, 2018) démontrent la pluralité des « créativités » et en proposent ainsi une lecture typologique (Unsworth, 2001; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010).

Toutefois, une façon plus holistique d'appréhender la créativité est de la considérer comme un modèle socioculturel (Amabile, 1983, 1988; Csikszentmihályi, 1999) où la créativité est la maximisation de l'interaction entre les compétences créatives, l'expertise liée au domaine et la motivation (Amabile, 1988), et de considérer qu'un produit est créatif « dans la mesure où les observateurs appropriés conviennent indépendamment qu'il est créatif » et que les observateurs appropriés sont ceux qui sont « familiers avec le domaine dans lequel le produit a été créé ou la réponse articulée » (Amabile, 1982 : 1001, traduction personnelle), ou, comme pour Csikszentmihályi, (1999) que « la créativité émerge dans un système composé de trois éléments : le domaine, le champ et l'individu. L'interaction des trois composantes systémiques détermine si la contribution donnée est en fait créative » (dans Simonton, 2012, traduction personnelle).

La part cruciale portée à la créativité dans les industries créatives fait des produits issus de ces industries des produits aux caractéristiques particulières. En effet, les biens créatifs sont définis comme des « biens non matériels destinés à un public de consommateurs pour lesquels ils ont généralement une fonction esthétique ou expressive plutôt qu'une fonction clairement utilitaire » (Hirsch, 1972 : 641-642, traduction personnelle). Ils englobent des « biens symboliques et expérientiels de valeur non utilitaire », qui répondent à des « goûts expressifs ou esthétiques plutôt qu'à des besoins utilitaires », et dont « le sens et la signification (sont) déterminés par le codage et le décodage de la valeur par le consommateur. » (p. 940)

### 3) Qui sont les individus créatifs ?

Dans les industries créatives, la créativité est opérée par des individus créatifs aux caractéristiques particulières. Caves (2000 : 5) utilise notamment l'expression « motley crew » pour décrire les « divers travailleurs qualifiés et spécialisés, chacun apportant ses goûts au regard de la qualité ou de la configuration du produit » (traduction personnelle). Ainsi, la production créative dépend d'un large éventail de personnes, telles que les artistes ou les créatifs (artistes, musiciens, acteurs, écrivains), les intermédiaires agissant en leur nom (agents, managers, promoteurs), les artisans techniques (ingénieurs du son, caméramans), les producteurs (éditeurs, studios, maisons de disques), les propriétaires et les cadres, les distributeurs et les médias (Caves, 2000).

Les études sur les arts, la culture et les industries créatives s'attachent dans un premier temps à l'étude de l'individu, notamment à travers la figure de l'artiste dans la sociologie de l'art

(Becker, 1982; Bourdieu, 1992), mais également en sciences de gestion avec « l'individu créatif », « l'entrepreneur créatif », « l'entrepreneur culturel » ou « l'artiste-entrepreneur » (Swedberg, 2006; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Svejenova, Slavich, & Abdel Gawad, 2015).

Dans ce cadre, la créativité de l'individu créatif trouve son origine dans ses propres attributs et traits personnels. Loin de l'image du « génie solitaire », devenu progressivement obsolète (Montuori, 2003), les artistes ou les individus créatifs possèdent des caractéristiques qui leur permettent de maximiser leur créativité, en considérant que « la créativité individuelle est une fonction des antécédents, des styles et des capacités cognitives, ainsi que de la personnalité, des facteurs de motivation et des connaissances » (Woodman et al., 1993 : 301, traduction personnelle). Ces caractéristiques, largement développées dans l'étude de la gestion de la créativité individuelle, sont multiples. Ainsi, de nombreuses études mettent l'accent sur les traits et les attributs personnels susceptibles de favoriser la créativité et la pensée créative (Amabile, 1988; Goldberg, 1992; McCrae et Costa, 1997; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Hoff et al., 2012), tels que l'ouverture d'esprit, l'inventivité ou encore la prise de risque. Outre les compétences créatives, les chercheurs ont également identifié des caractéristiques favorisant la créativité liées à l'expertise dans le domaine et aux compétences techniques (Amabile, 1988; Amabile, 2001; Sternberg, 2009; Baer, 2015), qui renvoient aux connaissances qu'une personne peut maîtriser dans les spécificités de son domaine. Enfin, la créativité individuelle a été étudiée en lien avec la motivation, entendue comme l'interprétation par chacun des raisons qui les poussent à accomplir une tâche dans une situation donnée (Amabile, 1988; Hennessey & Amabile, 1998; Benedek et al., 2020). Présentée comme la pierre angulaire du travail créatif (Bilton et al., 2021), elle englobe des qualités personnelles telles que le fait d'être motivé, enthousiaste ou excité par le travail qui est conféré.

Toutefois, comme le suggèrent Mumford, Hester et Robledo (2012), la créativité peut se manifester au niveau individuel, mais aussi au niveau du groupe ou de l'organisation. En fait, « s'il existe un degré élevé de créativité autogérée dans la production de travaux créatifs, l'accès aux ressources et l'influence sur le marché sont contrôlés par une variété de décisions managériales » (Townley, 2009 : 943, traduction personnelle). Ainsi, la littérature en sciences de gestion s'intéresse de plus en plus à l'élargissement du spectre créatif en prenant en compte l'organisation (Amabile et al., 1996; Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Woodman et al., 1993; Alencar & Bruno-Faria, 1997; Tesluk et al., 1997; Parmentier et al., 2017), le collectif (Parjanen, 2012; Pirola-Merlo & Mann, 2004), le réseau (Cattani & Ferriani, 2008; Perry-Smith, 2006), l'équipe

(Agars et al., 2012; Kozlowski & Bell, 2008; Reiter-Palmon et al., 2012; West, 1996), ainsi que l'inclusion dans des territoires créatifs (Cohendet et al., 2011; Dechamp & Szostak, 2016). La créativité est donc ancrée dans une étude interactionnelle et systémique.

Par exemple, Amabile et al. (1996), puis d'autres à sa suite (Parjanen, 2012; Woodman et al., 1993; Ford, 1996) ont évalué l'importance de l'environnement de travail dans la promotion ou l'inhibition de la créativité. Ces études indiquent que des pratiques gestionnaires spécifiques peuvent favoriser la créativité, comme l'encouragement à l'autonomie, tandis que d'autres, comme les pressions, peuvent la diminuer. La créativité des équipes et les phénomènes de groupe sont également très étudiés, les chercheurs évaluant les caractéristiques des équipes qui favorisent la créativité, telles que la diversité démographique, la communication ou la collaboration (Pirola-Merlo, 2004; Reiter-Palmon et al., 2012).

#### 4) Enjeux de réputation ou le rôle de l'évaluation dans les industries créatives

La réputation est un enjeu prévalent dans les industries créatives et une part importante du travail des créateurs se construit autour d'elle (Boutinot & Delacour, 2019; Delmestri & Montanari, 2005; Lin, 2017) car c'est de cette réputation que découlent ses capacités de production. Si les processus créatifs sont majoritairement individuels, les « industries sont fondées sur la créativité et la reconnaissance des œuvres personnelles » (Boutinot & Delacour, 2019). Le cas de la production au sein des industries créatives est également particulier car le produit créatif possède à la fois « des caractéristiques esthétiques propres et des fonctions symboliques, permettant de donner du sens aux œuvres créées » (Boutinot & Delacour, 2019), dimension symbolique qui primera d'ailleurs dans le cadre de l'évaluation de l'œuvre" ainsi que le fait d'être caractérisé par une « inconnaitance inhérente » (Caves, 2000). En effet, en raison de leurs particularités et de leurs attributs hautement symboliques, les industries créatives sont difficiles à évaluer (De Vany & Walls, 1999; Lampel et al., 2000; Lampel & Shamsie, 2000; Priem, 2007; Gemser et al., 2008).

Afin de traiter le problème de l'évaluation des produits et services intangibles, expérientiels et hautement symboliques, une variété de dispositifs d'évaluation ont été développés (Gemser et al., 2008, dans Jones et al., 2016 : 762), l'un d'entre eux étant les critiques et les systèmes de classement. Ainsi, les spécificités des industries créatives et notamment l'inhérence de leur nature hautement qualitative et symbolique rendent la sélection par les

experts particulièrement adaptée. En effet, les critiques, les journalistes ou les guides - que nous appellerons « experts » - sont nécessaires pour élaborer une appréciation plus fine de la qualité et plus généralement de l'évaluation de la valeur des produits créatifs. La réputation octroyée par les experts « n'est pas conférée par des collègues producteurs ou des clients, mais par des tiers dont les opinions sont importantes pour déterminer qui est en mesure de réussir » (Boutinot et al., 2017 : 1401, traduction personnelle). Un expert dispose d'expériences significatives ainsi que des connaissances spécialisées, qui lui confèrent de la crédibilité (Lane, 2013). Ils sont jugés plus légitimes pour évaluer les produits créatifs que les autres parties prenantes car ils réduisent l'ignorance en n'étant pas liés aux intentions de l'auteur de l'œuvre (Karpik, 1996). Certains experts sont bien connus du public : par exemple, le Guide Michelin pour la gastronomie, le Prix d'Angoulême pour la bande dessinée ou l'Académie des Oscars pour le cinéma.

#### 5) Les industries créatives à la confluence des enjeux globaux

Pour finir, les industries créatives représentent un sujet d'études particulièrement actuel et il est intéressant d'approfondir les défis globaux auxquels elles sont confrontées. En effet, les industries créatives sont à la confluence de plusieurs défis sociétaux et contemporains, en particulier les grands challenges. Ces derniers englobent les problèmes mondiaux amenant à un questionnement sur l'amélioration du bien-être de la société en général (Ferraro et al., 2015), tels que le changement climatique, la pauvreté ou l'exploitation éthique de la main-d'œuvre.

En outre, la créativité et la durabilité sont des sujets de plus en plus abordés par les spécialistes de la création, qui considèrent que les artistes et les productions artistiques sont capables de modifier les structures sociales et économiques en faveur de pratiques plus durables (Dieleman, 2007; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012; Hoffman, 2013). Enfin, certains artistes et créatifs sont particulièrement préoccupés par l'exploitation des travailleurs et les conditions de travail injustes (Wijngaarden, & Loots, 2020), comme l'affirme George (dans Bouquillion, 2012 : 267) qu' « il semble légitime de se demander si l'activité de création ne serait pas au cœur des nouvelles formes de management et par là même, au cœur de l'exploitation du travail. »

Ainsi, cette première partie nous a permis de développer les principales caractéristiques des industries créatives. Au cœur d'enjeux managériaux, économiques et globaux, les industries créatives sont intéressantes à étudier en raison des spécificités de leurs acteurs oscillant entre

logiques artistique et économique, de leurs œuvres créatives symboliques, esthétiques et non utilitaires, et de leur système d'évaluation qui accorde une place centrale aux experts.

Dans une seconde partie, nous reviendrons sur ces spécificités en l'appliquant à une industrie créative particulière, la gastronomie, tout en dévoilant ses caractéristiques propres. La gastronomie en tant qu'industrie créative est particulièrement intéressante pour relever les défis de la créativité et de ses conséquences. En effet, les chefs cuisiniers sont considérés comme des créatifs, parfois même comme des artistes, ce qui les rend propices à illustrer des études sur la créativité individuelle. De plus, les questions de réputation sont la pierre angulaire de la gastronomie, notamment à travers le système de sélection opéré par des experts tels que les guides ou les critiques. Enfin, la gastronomie est également confrontée à de nouveaux défis concernant la gestion des déchets et les systèmes alimentaires alternatifs. La section suivante est ainsi consacrée à l'analyse des principaux défis de la gastronomie dans le contexte de la France et à l'examen de questions non résolues et sous-étudiées concernant la créativité individuelle.

## II. Étudier une industrie créative en contexte : le cas de la gastronomie française

Cette thèse s'inscrit dans l'étude d'une industrie créative en particulier : la gastronomie. La gastronomie a fait l'objet d'un certain nombre de traitements en sciences de gestion (Svejenova et al., 2007; Stierand, 2015; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016) et est considérée comme une industrie créative et culturelle (BPI France, 2015). En tant qu'industrie créative, la gastronomie s'inscrit dans les enjeux et les caractéristiques de ces dernières, notamment au regard de la prépondérance de la créativité de ses divers acteurs, notamment les chefs. Elle recoupe également des enjeux liés à la réputation et s'inscrit dans les dynamiques sociétales de son époque. S'il n'y a pas de définition consensuelle de la gastronomie, il conviendra de la définir comme « la poursuite systématique de la créativité et de l'excellence culinaire » (Ferguson, 1998, dans Svejenova et al., 2007: 543, traduction personnelle), et d'en donner quelques caractéristiques structurantes ci-après.

Notre étude s'inscrit plus particulièrement dans le contexte français de la gastronomie, mais l'approche par l'identification de caractéristiques propres permet de dresser des contours qui peuvent s'appliquer à d'autres contextes nationaux.

### 1) Les acteurs de la gastronomie : bref aperçu

a) Les chefs comme individus créatifs

Les chefs sont considérés comme les principaux acteurs de la gastronomie, étant à l'origine des orientations créatives de leurs restaurants (Svejenova et al., 2007; Stierand et al., 2014; Messeni & Petruzzelli, 2019). Ils sont au cœur de la créativité culinaire par la production de nouveaux plats et idées (Peng et al., 2013). Les chefs créatifs sont majoritairement décrits comme des cuisiniers « extraordinaires » ou d'élite (Stierand, Dörfler & McBryde, 2014; Stierand & Dörfler, 2012; Abbate et al., 2019) déployant des capacités spécifiques telles qu'une pensée créative développée ainsi que de solides compétences techniques ancrées dans les racines artisanales de la cuisine. Ils sont également au prisme des enjeux de réputation puisque, même si les étoiles du Guide Michelin sont adressées à un restaurant, ce sont généralement les chefs qui incarnent leur distinction.

b) La brigade : l'équipe des chefs et futurs chefs en devenir

Même si les chefs sont considérés comme les principaux décideurs des choix créatifs dans leurs restaurants et les principaux récipiendaires de prix et de distinctions (Bouty et al., 2018; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Traynor et al., 2022; Stierand, 2015), ils ne travaillent généralement pas seuls. Outre les producteurs et les fournisseurs, le principal travail de collaboration est ancré dans la relation entre les chefs et les membres de leur brigade. La brigade est constituée d'un groupe de sous-chefs et de jeunes cuisiniers qui sont des chefs en devenir travaillant avec leurs chefs et choisis par eux sur la base de leurs expériences professionnelles antérieures ou d'une philosophie culinaire similaire. En général, les chefs donnent des instructions et dirigent la créativité de leur restaurant. Les membres des brigades exécutent les ordres des chefs. L'appartenance à une brigade est constitutive de la carrière des chefs, qui s'incarne principalement dans l'expérience de l'apprentissage (Stierand et al., 2008; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016, Castellucci & Slavich, 2020).

c) Experts et critiques : évaluer l'offre créative des chefs

Dans la lignée des travaux sur la réputation propre aux industries créatives, la gastronomie n'échappe pas aux enjeux réputationnels notamment conférés par les experts. Ainsi, la gastronomie française est très codifiée par de nombreuses règles ancestrales et une éthique du travail qui façonnent les règles du jeu intégrées par les chefs (Rao et al., 2003). La

réputation est particulièrement en jeu et s'incarne dans des classements célèbres (Stierand et al., 2014) tels que les étoiles du Guide Michelin ou les notes sur 20 attribuées par le Gault & Millau. Les experts jouent un rôle clé dans l'évaluation de la valeur des produits créatifs élaborés par les chefs et la réputation est la pierre angulaire de la rentabilité et de la création de valeur des restaurants (Surlmont & Johnson, 2005; Rao et al., 2005; Presenza & Petruzzelli, 2019; Slavich & Castellucci, 2016). Bien que centrale et cruciale, la gastronomie française souffre encore du flou de son processus de valorisation (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005; Surlmont & Johnson, 2005), ce qui appelle à une investigation plus approfondie qui va être abordée dans cette thèse.

#### d) Dynamiques et enjeux actuels de la gastronomie

La gastronomie obéit à de nouvelles dynamiques sociétales, notamment les préoccupations écologiques. Au cœur des débats sur les systèmes alimentaires durables (Eakin et al., 2017; Beacham, 2018) la haute-cuisine fait écho aux 17 Objectifs de développement durable de l'ONU pour 2030 et notamment le volet n°12 sur la consommation et la production responsables, particulièrement en ce qui concerne le gaspillage alimentaire, l'approvisionnement alimentaire équitable et la production d'aliments biologiques.

Ces préoccupations tendent à se retrouver également sur le terrain. Par exemple, le Guide Michelin a créé en 2020 l'Étoile verte récompensant les chefs qui développent des pratiques durables dans leur cuisine. En 2020, le Guide Michelin a récompensé le tout premier restaurant végétalien de France, baptisé « ONA ». Parallèlement, des voix dominantes ont émergé, critiquant le système actuel et son incapacité à répondre aux normes de durabilité. Par exemple, René Redzepi, célèbre chef 3 étoiles du NOMA (Copenhague), anciennement « Meilleur restaurant du monde », a déclaré sur le compte Instagram du NOMA que "pour continuer à être noma, nous devons changer », invoquant le paradoxe entre l'engagement écologique du restaurant et le fait que la structure organisationnelle actuelle ne soit pas durable.

Primée par le Fooding au début des années 2000, et récompensée par de nouveaux labels écologiques tels qu'Ecotable, une jeune génération de chefs, principalement des *millennials*, embrasse ces nouveaux défis et les intègre dans leurs activités culinaires quotidiennes sous la forme d'une gestion spécifique des déchets alimentaires, de chaînes d'approvisionnement alternatives et locales et de plats à dominante végétale (Gössling et al., 2021). Parmi eux, on peut citer par exemple Florent Layden ou Victor Mercier. Cela offre ainsi des perspectives pour

de nouvelles recherches sur les systèmes alimentaires alternatifs dans la gastronomie et sur le lien entre créativité et durabilité.

Parallèlement, le processus de réputation est remis en question, notamment en raison de l'opacité du système d'étoiles du Guide Michelin et de sa tendance à l'arbitraire (Clauzel et al., 2019), souvent critiquée dans la presse. Cependant, à côté d'autres guides apparus dans les années 2000 comme Le Fooding et d'autres prix dédiés aux jeunes chefs prometteurs comme le prix "Grand de Demain" (Gault&Millau), la réputation auprès des experts reste toujours cruciale pour les chefs, notamment ceux qui construisent leur carrière et leur identité (Koch et al., 2018; Castellucci & Slavich, 2020). Selon une étude menée par Olivier Gergaud en 2017 (Kedge Business School, Laboratoire interdisciplinaire d'évaluation des politiques publiques (Sciences Po Paris), perdre une étoile équivaut à une diminution de sa rentabilité de 3% de bénéfice à une perte moyenne de -2%.

Pour conclure, le contexte des industries créatives en général et de la gastronomie en particulier nous a permis d'aborder plusieurs de leurs tensions et défis structurants. La compréhension de la créativité individuelle de l'artiste ou des créateurs, de son origine à sa mise en œuvre, est l'un des principaux débats de ces industries créatives. Les questions de réputation sont également une pierre angulaire des activités créatives. La production de biens et de services culturels et créatifs nécessite des acteurs capables de produire des biens symboliques et esthétiques différents des biens traditionnels et utilitaires. Au cœur d'une économie florissante, la « classe créative » (Florida, 2002) est également en proie aux grands enjeux du siècle tels que la durabilité. Dans le même temps, les spécificités de chaque industrie, ici la gastronomie, nous amènent à nous interroger sur d'autres défis inhérents à ces individus créatifs, parmi lesquels le rôle ultra prépondérant dans la haute-cuisine de la réputation auprès des experts, la structure particulière du restaurant et le mode de production en brigade, la réception des œuvres artistiques directement par les clients et un secteur alimentaire ancré dans les contraintes des systèmes alimentaires alternatifs et de la gestion des déchets alimentaires. Ainsi, cette première approche nous amène à considérer la créativité individuelle des chefs, notamment jeunes et en devenir, et la manière dont elle s'articule dans le cadre de la gastronomie française. Pour étudier cette relation, l'ensemble de ces tensions structurantes nous enjoint à théoriser la gastronomie comme un champ dont les contours sont dessinés dans la section suivante consacrée à la présentation plus détaillée des concepts théoriques.

## Ancrage théorique

### I. Vers une théorisation de la gastronomie comme champ

Dans un premier temps, l'étude des caractéristiques de la gastronomie nous a progressivement amené à considérer la gastronomie comme un champ au sens de Bourdieu (1992). Un champ dispose d'un certain nombre de caractéristiques qui le structurent et qui vont avoir un impact sur les agents opérants à l'intérieur de ce champ. Tout d'abord, un champ est constitué d'un certain nombre de normes, codes et règles du jeu : c'est l'*habitus* (Bourdieu, 1970). Ces normes sont supposées internalisées et acceptées par les membres du champ. Les agents agissent selon le principe de l'*illusio* selon lequel ils considèrent que ces règles sont crédibles et légitimes d'être suivies.

Un champ est également une compétition constante pour les positions de pouvoir et de statut. Les positions dans le champ dépendent d'un système relationnel basé sur un rapport de force qui est principalement déterminé par le niveau de capital symbolique détenu par les acteurs. Ce capital symbolique confère un certain niveau de légitimité sous forme de reconnaissance et est censé être spécifique au champ (Bourdieu, 1992; Lafaye, 1996 : 97-98). Il peut être défini comme le « volume de reconnaissance, de légitimité et de consécration accumulé par un agent social dans son champ d'appartenance » (Durand, s.d.) et est donc crucial pour comprendre les comportements et les décisions des différents acteurs du champ. L'*habitus* et le capital symbolique sont structurés par des institutions dominantes (Bourdieu, 1970, 1992) qui diffusent des codes et des conduites légitimes. Les règles sont multiples et évolutives en raison des luttes internes constantes pour la définition des règles par les individus occupant des positions de pouvoir (Bourdieu, 1992).

Enfin, un champ se construit de manière autonome autour de règles uniques indépendantes des luttes et des enjeux extérieurs (Bourdieu, 1992). Cependant, un champ n'est jamais totalement poreux aux luttes externes (Bourdieu, 1992 : 184), qu'elles soient économiques, sociologiques ou politiques. Ainsi, l'influence des facteurs exogènes reste constitutive des changements et des évolutions d'un champ.

Ainsi, sur la base de ces caractéristiques et suite à l'analyse de la gastronomie française par le prisme de la notion de champ, nous y avons identifié trois caractéristiques

particulièrement prégnantes, et souhaitons développer leur impact sur la créativité des principaux agents du champ, à savoir les chefs. Ces dernières sont les suivantes.

Tout d'abord, la porosité aux facteurs externes au champ font des pratiques durables et des préoccupations écologiques une influence majeure du champ de la gastronomie et par extension de la créativité des chefs. En parallèle, le contexte de création constitue l'*habitus* des chefs : ils opèrent dans un espace dédié (le restaurant) où ils travaillent dans un temps limité (par exemple, le menu doit être livré tous les jours à la même heure) et avec un nombre dédié de personnes, notamment la constitution d'une brigade. Enfin, la conquête du capital symbolique se rattache à la réputation auprès des experts. Les critiques et les experts, en particulier le Guide Michelin, sont des institutions qui participent à la structuration des règles du jeu en étant les évaluateurs les plus légitimes dans le champ (Becker, 1982; Rao et al., 2003). Ces derniers, en tant qu'institutions structurantes, participent à la construction de l'*habitus* des chefs et consacrent leur capital symbolique, crucial pour l'appartenance au champ et l'accès aux positions dominantes.

## II. Vers une théorisation des influences de la créativité individuelle : des facteurs endogènes aux facteurs exogènes

Dans la gastronomie, les chefs sont les leaders des orientations créatives du restaurant. Ils reçoivent les récompenses et les prix, et leurs productions créatives sont fortement personnifiées (Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Mainemelis et al., 2015). La plupart des publications sur les industries créatives et la haute cuisine se concentrent sur la créativité individuelle afin d'étudier comment les chefs proposent des offres créatives (Leone, 2020; Stierand, 2015; Rao et al., 2003; Svejenova et al., 2007; Bouty et al., 2018). Plus précisément, ces travaux se concentrent surtout sur les traits et attributs individuels du chef (Stierand, 2015; Rao et al., 2003; Svejenova et al., 2007; Bouty et al., 2018) tels que l'intuition (Stierand & Dörfler, 2016) ou les influences personnelles (Bouty & Gomez, 2013) et offrent peu de développement supplémentaire sur la créativité individuelle en dehors de ces champs d'application personnels. Cependant, comme le suggère Stierand (2015) et parce que la littérature sur la haute-cuisine en tant qu'industrie créative est relativement jeune, il est intéressant de poursuivre l'investigation des micro-structures de la créativité individuelle, en particulier dans la haute-cuisine. Il est donc intéressant d'étudier la créativité individuelle des chefs et leurs influences dans ce contexte.

Outre l'aspect endogène, les facteurs externes au chef ont été abordés, par exemple, dans le cadre de l'étude du travail d'équipe ou, plus brièvement, de la créativité organisationnelle (par

exemple, Koch et al., 2018; Lane & Lup, 2015), où les chefs et les managers ne font qu'un, ce qui fait que l'étude est principalement axée sur l'individu. Cependant, si la littérature sur la gastronomie évoque l'idée de « travail d'équipe », c'est principalement par le prisme de l'influence des membres de la brigade dans les idées du chef (Albors-Garrigos et al., 2013) ou car ils exécutent ses ordres créatifs (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007). Les équipes ont également été étudiées sous l'angle du leadership et de la manière dont un chef peut gérer efficacement ses collaborateurs (Bouty, Gomez & Stierand, 2018). Cependant, nous ne pensons pas que la portée du travail en équipe et, par extension, du leadership, soit très pertinente pour étudier plus en profondeur la créativité individuelle, et ce pour plusieurs raisons. Premièrement, notre travail se concentre sur la créativité individuelle et sur ce qui pourrait l'influencer ; nous ne visons donc pas à étudier comment une équipe est constituée, ce qui la rend efficace et avec quelle précision un chef doit la gérer. Deuxièmement, la configuration de la haute-cuisine rend les équipes et les groupes poreux et volatiles, et ne suit pas exactement la trajectoire d'un projet d'équipe dédié, en particulier dans la haute-cuisine où la production est hautement individualisée (Bouty & Gomez, 2013). Se concentrer sur les équipes nous ferait passer à côté d'autres acteurs pertinents tels que les fournisseurs ou les pairs invités temporairement. A notre connaissance, et à l'exception de Paris & Lang (2015), aucune étude n'a exploré davantage le lien entre les interactions sociales et la créativité individuelle des chefs et comment les « autres » peuvent façonner la créativité individuelle et nourrir les étapes créatives des processus créatifs. En résumé, la littérature manque de travaux étudiant les facteurs exogènes influençant la créativité individuelle des chefs. Dans la lignée de quelques précédents travaux plutôt éparses sur le sujet (Paris & Lang, 2015), nous pensons que le champ des interactions sociales serait mieux adapté pour comprendre comment les « autres » peuvent influencer la créativité individuelle des chefs.

De plus, nous ne pensons pas que le champ d'application de l'organisation puisse être particulièrement adapté pour élargir la compréhension de la créativité individuelle des chefs. En ce qui concerne les réseaux, nous nous alignons avec Cattani & Ferriani (2008) qui appellent à une extension de l'application des études sur les interactions et l'intégration sociale aux processus créatifs individuels (et pas seulement aux résultats créatifs individuels et à la performance). Ainsi, la littérature sur la créativité offre des inspirations et des connaissances précises sur le sujet sur lesquelles nous pouvons nous appuyer, mais il manque encore des études alternatives pour élargir sa compréhension dans le cas de la créativité individuelle des chefs. La structure de la créativité dans la haute-cuisine étant étroitement liée au talent créatif des chefs et répondant à l'appel de Stierand (2015) de mieux comprendre les micro-structures

de la créativité individuelle, nous pensons qu'il serait pertinent d'étudier la créativité individuelle de manière plus approfondie et alternative, en adoptant le prisme des influences exogènes.

### III. Gap théorique : penser la créativité individuelle par le prisme de l'appartenance à un champ

En se fondant sur le postulat que la créativité est socialement ancrée (Wilson, 2010), et sur l'idée que la gastronomie est un champ, nous pensons ainsi que l'ancrage social pourrait offrir de nouvelles perspectives pour étudier plus profondément la créativité individuelle dans la haute-cuisine en élargissant le champ d'application aux tensions existantes dans le champ. Ainsi, le contexte du champ nous permet de contrebalancer les études sur la créativité individuelle axées sur les facteurs endogènes (Stierand & Dörfler, 2018) en considérant que la créativité individuelle des chefs est également ancrée dans un champ donné. Cela signifie que la créativité individuelle des chefs ne dépend pas seulement de leurs propres caractéristiques endogènes, ni des caractéristiques d'une organisation, mais aussi de la structure du champ auquel ils appartiennent et des exigences qui en découlent. Ainsi, nous pensons que le champ d'action des individus opérant dans un champ spécifique nous amène à identifier des facteurs exogènes ayant un impact sur la créativité individuelle tout en maintenant la focale individuelle. Cette thèse vise donc à élargir la compréhension de la créativité individuelle en étudiant l'individu opérant avec ou contre les défis du champ et appelle à un recentrage sur les études individuelles en offrant de nouvelles perspectives sur les micro-structures et les influences exogènes sur la créativité individuelle à travers le prisme de l'appartenance à un champ codifié. Faire se rejoindre les caractéristiques du champ et la prépondérance de la créativité individuelle nous amène ainsi à nous poser la question de recherche suivante : dans quelle mesure la créativité individuelle des chefs peut-elle être structurée par les tensions du champ ?

Pour répondre à cette question, l'interaction entre les tensions et caractéristiques identifiées du champ de la gastronomie française et les individus créatifs opérant dans ce champ, c'est-à-dire les chefs, nous a permis d'identifier trois tensions du champ susceptibles d'influencer la créativité individuelle des chefs. Dans un premier temps, la porosité du champ aux tensions externes conduit la gastronomie française à considérer les pratiques durables et les préoccupations écologiques comme la pierre angulaire de la créativité des chefs. Ainsi, la créativité individuelle des chefs pourrait être directement influencée par l'intégration de ces

nouvelles préoccupations dans leurs entreprises. En parallèle, l'une des principales caractéristiques de l'*habitus* des chefs est le contexte de création. En effet, les chefs opèrent dans un espace dédié (le restaurant) où ils travaillent dans un temps limité (par exemple, le menu doit être livré tous les jours à la même heure) et avec un nombre limité de personnes, notamment la constitution d'une brigade. Cette structure a un impact sur les choix créatifs des chefs. Nous pensons donc qu'il est intéressant de comprendre comment la créativité individuelle émerge dans ce cadre interactionnel et temporellement restreint. Enfin, la réputation auprès des experts participe à la structure de l'*habitus* des cuisiniers et consacre leur capital symbolique qui est crucial pour l'appartenance au champ et l'accès aux positions dominantes. Nous pensons qu'il est intéressant de comprendre comment les chefs créatifs gèrent leur réputation. Ainsi, nous suggérons la pertinence de comprendre comment les chefs créatifs gèrent leurs productions créatives individuelles dans leurs relations avec les experts afin d'acquérir une réputation auprès d'eux.

#### IV. Précisions sur la population étudiée

Dans un champ culturel, les producteurs d'art occupent différentes positions dans le champ. Pour caractériser leurs positions, nous pouvons utiliser la typologie développée par Becker (1982), qui complète les travaux de Bourdieu sur le champ culturel, et enrichie par Jones et al. (2016: 9). Selon ces auteurs, « les *mainstreams* sont ce que Becker (1982) appelle des « professionnels intégrés ». Ils sont formés au sein de l'industrie, se conforment aux conventions et utilisent les mondes de l'art existants. Les *mavericks* sont des acteurs créatifs, qui peuvent ou non être formés au sein de l'industrie, mais qui se sentent limités dans leur travail par les conventions existantes et se lancent dans la remise en question de certaines d'entre elles, tout en en conservant d'autres, afin d'éviter l'incompréhensibilité et l'absence de collaboration (Becker, 1982). Les *misfits* sont des outsiders qui ne parviennent pas à mobiliser les collaborateurs des mondes artistiques existants. Ils enfreignent ou ne respectent pas les règles sociales (Becker, 1963) et peuvent donc avoir plus de liberté dans la création de nouvelles formes et conventions en s'écartant des attentes. (Garud & Karnoe, 2001). Les *amphibians* peuvent osciller entre le centre et la périphérie, l'art et le commerce, et d'autres dichotomies ; ils offrent beaucoup plus de mobilité au terrain de jeu ainsi que des pratiques diffuses à travers les domaines (Powell & Sandholtz, 2012). De même, ils sont capables de passer d'un rôle et d'une position d'initié à un rôle et une position d'outsider. » (Jones et al., 2016, traduction personnelle).

Dans le cadre de cette thèse, nous avons décidé de nous focaliser sur les acteurs centraux que sont les *mainstreams*. Toutefois, outre les tensions théoriques, cette thèse suggère également un gap empirique qui renforce notre étude. En effet, la plupart des études sur les chefs et la créativité dans la gastronomie se concentrent sur les chefs très réputés, propriétaires de restaurants trois étoiles et/ou des super stars internationalement reconnues (Svejenova et al., 2007; Stierand, 2015). Toutefois, les acteurs centraux peuvent également se caractériser par différents niveaux de réputation. Nous pensons donc qu'il vaut la peine d'étudier également d'autres acteurs *mainstream* qui sont également formés dans le domaine et respectent les règles du jeu, mais qui ne jouissent pas encore d'une réputation conséquente parmi les experts. Ces jeunes chefs en devenir sont généralement dans la première partie de leur carrière, dédiés à leur projet créatif, brièvement reconnus par des experts tels qu'une étoile Michelin ou des articles dans les médias et les guides spécialisés tels que Le Fooding, et ancrés dans de nouvelles dynamiques telles que la consommation éco-responsable, la production et les conditions de travail équitables. Cela offre un nouvel éclairage sur le sujet car ils sont confrontés à des enjeux personnels et managériaux différents de ceux des chefs très réputés, tels que la nécessité de faire preuve d'une grande flexibilité en raison de leurs engagements durables, la construction de leur réputation auprès des experts et la gestion de leur premier restaurant ou des postes exécutifs dans la restauration avec les contraintes financières et managériales qui s'y rattachent. Ainsi, nous pensons que l'étude de ces chefs en particulier n'est pas anecdotique et concerne un large éventail du champ actuel de la gastronomie française. En effet, il y a 522 restaurants une étoile en 2022 en France (sur 627 restaurants étoilés au total). Ce choix d'échantillon constitue ainsi une réponse à un gap empirique que cette thèse vise à enrichir.

Ainsi, sur la base des définitions présentées précédemment, les chefs étudiés dans cette thèse sont considérés comme des *mainstreams* disposant une réputation modérée auprès des experts. En effet, les chefs sélectionnés ont été formés dans des écoles culinaires institutionnalisées ou ont fait leur apprentissage auprès de chefs renommés de la gastronomie française, sont prêts à suivre la voie de la réputation reconnue (étoiles Michelin, guide consacré ou communiqués de presse), et acceptent les règles du jeu en adoptant l'*habitus* de création de la gastronomie française. S'ils veulent améliorer leur position dans le champ, ils n'ont pas l'intention de l'inverser ou de s'en exclure.

## V. Déroulement des trois projets

Pour répondre à notre question de recherche et démêler les tensions entre la créativité individuelle des chefs et les tensions existantes dans le champ de la gastronomie française, cette thèse est structurée autour de trois articles qui étudient les tensions, respectivement la porosité aux enjeux externes, le contexte de création qui fonde l'*habitus* spécifique des chefs et les enjeux de réputation liés au capital symbolique. Chaque chapitre explore comment ces tensions influencent la créativité individuelle des chefs. Ces différents chapitres sont développés ci-après. Nous exposons notamment les méthodologies employées dans chacun des chapitres ainsi que leurs principaux résultats.

## 1) Chapitre 1 : créativité individuelle et grands challenges

### a) Résumé et question de recherche

Comme vu précédemment, même si les champs se caractérisent par un degré élevé d'autonomie (Bourdieu, 1991), ils sont également poreux aux luttes et aux tensions extérieures. Dernièrement, nous avons constaté une prise de conscience croissante au regard des préoccupations environnementales dans la haute-cuisine (Mrusek et al., 2022) et dans le domaine de la gastronomie française plus particulièrement (Feuvre, 2023; Labro, 2018; Bour-Lang & Jost, 2022), notamment en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets, la chaîne d'approvisionnement durable, les plats non carnés ou la consommation éco-responsable. En tant qu'acteurs centraux du secteur, les chefs ne peuvent pas manquer ces nouveaux défis et il est intéressant de comprendre comment ces questions émergentes peuvent avoir un impact sur leur activité quotidienne, c'est-à-dire sur leur créativité individuelle.

Ainsi, le premier chapitre de cette thèse, intitulé « How do grand challenges impact individual creativity ? Evidence from French gastronomy » vise à explorer comment les chefs, en tant qu'individus créatifs (Becker, 1982; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Stierand, 2015) font face aux nouvelles tensions du champ que sont les grand challenges (Kulik et al., 2016; de Rond & Lok, 2016). Cet article explore l'introduction des grands challenges, notamment environnementaux, dans les cuisines des chefs et leur impact sur leur créativité individuelle.

En identifiant plusieurs contraintes exogènes ayant un impact sur la gastronomie française, telles que la gestion des déchets ou la production et la consommation éco-responsables, cet article vise à comprendre comment, d'une part, les préoccupations écologiques peuvent avoir un impact sur la créativité individuelle des chefs et, d'autre part, comment leur

gestion par des individus créatifs peut conduire à leur intégration et, à terme, générer des opportunités.

Dans l'optique d'une meilleure compréhension des micro-fondations d'actions visant à relever les grands challenges (Kulik et al., 2016; de Rond & Lok, 2016) et prenant en compte les caractéristiques des créatif.ves pour relever des défis nouveaux et transgressifs (Dieleman, 2007; Stucker & Bozuwa, 2012; Hoffman, 2013), cet article nous amène à nous poser la question de recherche suivante : dans quelle mesure les grands challenges peuvent-ils influencer la créativité individuelle dans les industries créatives ?

Pour répondre à cette question, nous avons mené une étude de cas multiples (Yin, 2017) afin de démontrer comment quatre chefs gastronomiques français réagissent à des grands challenges spécifiques, et comment ceux-ci influencent leur créativité individuelle. Pour ce faire, nous avons collecté des données primaires et secondaires dans le cadre d'une méthode de triangulation (Eisenhardt, 1991) et analysé les données en suivant la théorie ancrée de Strauss et Corbin (1998).

#### b) Principaux résultats : gérer la créativité individuelle au prisme des grands enjeux globaux

Nos résultats nous permettent d'enrichir la compréhension de la créativité individuelle sous plusieurs angles dans la gastronomie.

Tout d'abord, notre étude nous a permis de réfléchir à l'intégration des grands challenges et des pratiques durables dans les entreprises créatives à travers le prisme de la créativité individuelle. Cela permet d'éclairer partiellement la gestion de la créativité individuelle à la lumière des débats exogènes qui gravitent au sein du champ de la gastronomie française. Pour ce faire, nous avons d'abord procédé à une analyse approfondie des composantes de la créativité individuelle, à savoir les compétences créatives, les compétences liées au domaine et la motivation, comme le suggère la littérature (Stierand, 2015), afin d'identifier trois activités créatives caractérisant la créativité individuelle des chefs : la routine créative, la recherche de nouveauté et l'engagement. La routine créative fait référence à l'activité créative quotidienne des chefs, renforcée par des bases techniques solides, le plaisir au travail et un esprit créatif libéré. La recherche de nouveauté fait référence à la volonté des chefs d'aborder la nouveauté dans leurs pratiques créatives. Elle est favorisée par la sensibilité des chefs à éviter la répétitivité, l'habitude d'être dans une dynamique constante de formation et la motivation à progresser. L'engagement fait référence à une situation dans laquelle les chefs choisissent

d'intégrer des défis engageants, telle que la production éco-responsable, dans leurs activités professionnelles. Il se caractérise par une connaissance approfondie des produits et une éthique de travail, une créativité basée sur une pensée alternative et une motivation dédiée à la quête de sens.

L'identification de ces pratiques créatives nous a ensuite conduits à proposer trois façons de prendre en compte les grands challenges dans les industries créatives. Ainsi, les défis environnementaux peuvent être intériorisés, abordés comme des contraintes temporaires mais, à terme, fructueuses, ou jouer un rôle de médiation. L'intériorisation apparaît au cours de la routine créative et repose sur le fait que les préoccupations écologiques peuvent être considérées comme allant de soi, c'est-à-dire que les chefs ne remettent pas en question certains défis environnementaux et décident plutôt de les inclure dans leurs activités quotidiennes. Les contraintes temporaires mais fructueuses, à terme, font référence au fait que les préoccupations écologiques peuvent parfois être contraignantes et mettre en péril la volonté des chefs de rechercher la nouveauté en raison de leur dépendance à l'égard des cycles naturels. Toutefois, cette contrainte peut déclencher la dynamique créative des chefs et peut être considérée comme temporaire, c'est-à-dire qu'elle s'estompera lorsque le chef l'aura prise en compte. La médiation repose sur les activités considérées engageantes et se réfère au fait que les grands challenges peuvent être intégrés dans la philosophie créative des chefs pour sensibiliser à un sujet particulier, en l'occurrence guider l'éveil écologique, par exemple en enjoignant les clients à la consommation de certains végétaux.

## 2) Chapitre 2 : créativité individuelle, interactions sociales et temporalité

### a) Question de recherche et résumé

Comme développé précédemment, l'*habitus* des chefs gastronomiques français comprend des règles intégrées telles que la structure des processus créatifs et l'organisation du restaurant dans lequel ces processus se déroulent. Ainsi, les chefs travaillent avec une brigade sélectionnée, ainsi qu'avec des fournisseurs avec lesquels ils interagissent quotidiennement, dans un lieu dédié, à savoir le restaurant, et dans un laps de temps limité. Outre les articles abordant très brièvement la créativité collective ou d'équipe (par exemple Bouty & Gomez, 2013; Albors-Garrigors et al., 2013; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007; Stierand et al., 2014), et sachant que les chefs sont les principaux dirigeants de l'horizon créatif du restaurant, très peu

d'études examinent comment ces interactions choisies ont un impact direct sur les processus créatifs individuels des chefs (Paris & Lang, 2015).

Ainsi, ce deuxième article intitulé « It takes two to tango » : How social interactions support individual creativity. Evidence from upcoming French chefs » s'inscrit dans la lignée des travaux de certains chercheurs (Paris & Lang, 2015; Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014) qui s'appliquent à recentrer l'étude de la créativité comme processus social et interactif. Ces articles sont, à notre connaissance, les seuls articles sur les industries créatives en général ou la haute-cuisine en particulier qui prennent en compte les apports des « autres », selon leurs termes, dans le processus créatif des chefs ou des individus créatifs. Néanmoins, les spécificités de ces interactions et leur impact sur la créativité individuelle des chefs y sont peu développés. En effet, le niveau d'intégration des différents acteurs et la mesure dans laquelle ces derniers peuvent être vecteurs d'influence créative mérite une analyse plus approfondie. Ainsi, cet article étudie comment les interactions sociales qui façonnent les processus créatifs quotidiens des chefs pourraient influencer leurs initiatives créatives et répond à la question suivante : comment la créativité individuelle des chefs peut-elle être soutenue par les interactions sociales ?

Pour répondre à cette question de recherche, notre analyse se concentre sur une étude de cas unique (Yin, 2017), fondée sur une étude approfondie du processus créatif d'un chef gastronomique français prometteur, décoré d'une étoile au Guide Michelin, dans le Sud de la France. Ce choix se justifie par le désir d'acquérir une compréhension approfondie du processus créatif d'un chef dans le contexte d'une créativité interactionnelle et structurée dans le temps. Le chef étudié est un exemple significatif qui a permis d'élargir et d'enrichir la perspective du processus créatif dans le contexte d'un chef une étoile, précurseur de sa génération et animé d'un fort engagement éco-responsable. Le cas a été défini comme un ensemble de données primaires et secondaires, combinant des sources de données sur la gastronomie française, le chef, son équipe, l'environnement du restaurant et la manière dont la créativité se déroule. Les données ont été codées suivant les principes de la théorie ancrée (Glaser et al., 1968) et repose ainsi sur une approche inductive fondée sur des lectures et interprétations approfondies des données brutes. Les données brutes ont été réduites puis codées (Glaser, 1998).

b) Principaux résultats : comment les interactions sociales et la temporalité façonnent la créativité individuelle

Ce chapitre propose de nouveaux apports sur l'influence des interactions sociales et du temps sur la créativité individuelle. En effet, nos résultats nous ont permis d'identifier différents

types d'interactions sociales qui participent à la structuration des pratiques du chef cuisinier étudié dans son activité quotidienne. Parmi celles-ci, trois acteurs principaux ont été identifiés : la brigade, les pairs invités dans le restaurant et les principaux fournisseurs. Nos résultats suggèrent une typologie des différentes étapes créatives interactives qui peuvent influencer la créativité individuelle du chef dans son activité quotidienne. Ces différentes étapes créatives ont été définies en fonction du temps (sur le long terme ; avant le service et pendant le service) et de la nature des interactions sociales en jeu (intégration, association et collaboration). Chaque interaction sociale a été identifiée en fonction de trois critères que sont la fréquence d'interaction avec le chef, le degré de participation aux décisions créatives et l'orientation de l'intérêt vers l'activité du chef ou vers son activité personnelle. Les étapes créatives interactives identifiées sont les suivantes : la planification, l'inspiration, l'expérimentation et l'improvisation. Ces résultats nous permettent ainsi d'enrichir les débats théoriques sur la créativité individuelle et les processus créatifs individuels dans la gastronomie, dans un contexte interactif et limité dans le temps. Jusqu'alors, les processus créatifs ont été principalement étudiés dans une perspective individuelle (Stierand & Dörfler, 2018; Abbate et al., 2019; Svejenova et al., 2007; Petruzzelli & Savino, 2014) en se fondant sur les traits de caractère ou attributs créatifs des chefs. Ce chapitre apporte de nouvelles perspectives sur le processus créatif individuel des chefs en montrant comment les interactions sociales pourraient soutenir leur créativité individuelle tout en maintenant l'ancrage sur les approches individuelles. Ce chapitre offre également de nouvelles perspectives sur l'identité des « autres » en les caractérisant sur la base d'une définition plus approfondie des relations qu'ils partagent avec le chef. Cela permet une compréhension plus fine de la manière dont les « autres » peuvent être intégrés pour soutenir au mieux la créativité individuelle. Enfin, cet article a également ré-ancré les processus sociaux dans des cadres temporels restreints afin de mieux appréhender les dynamiques et l'intensité créatives sur la base de la chronologie des processus créatifs dans la haute-cuisine.

### 3) Chapitre 3 : créativité individuelle des chefs et réputation auprès des experts

#### a) Résumé et question de recherche

L'une des principales tensions du champ de la gastronomie française est incarnée par l'importance majeure de la réputation et de l'évaluation des chefs par les experts du champ que sont les guides et les critiques (Surlémond & Johnson, 2005; Dubois, 2012; Rao et al., 2003; Slavich & Castelluci, 2016). Plus précisément, les acteurs *mainstream* de réputation modérée,

que nous étudions dans cette thèse, justifient d'autant plus cette approche qu'ils sont au cœur de leur propre processus de construction de réputation. En prenant en compte le flou de ce processus d'évaluation, pourtant crucial dans la gastronomie française (Bonnet & Quemin, 1999; Karpik, 2000; Rao et al., 2005) et le manque de clarté des critères impliqués pour obtenir une consécration, le dernier chapitre de cette thèse, intitulé « A show of good taste » : *how creative individuals can influence their reputation among experts through signal observability strategies. Evidence from French gastronomy* » propose un traitement alternatif de ce sujet en étudiant les stratégies que les chefs peuvent développer afin d'améliorer la visibilité de leurs offres créatives auprès des experts. A terme, ce chapitre propose de nouvelles perspectives sur la manière dont les chefs créatifs peuvent amplifier leurs chances d'augmenter leur réputation consacrée auprès des experts, ce qui influencera en retour leur capital symbolique et leur position relative dans le champ.

Cet article identifie les principaux enjeux qui influencent la relation entre les évaluateurs, les experts, et les individus créatifs soumis à leur évaluation, les chefs. Ainsi, nous constatons l'existence d'asymétries d'information entre les experts et les offres créatives des chefs (Bonnet, 2004; Surlemont & Johnson, 2005). En outre, ce déséquilibre conduit les chefs, a priori, à disposer d'une faible marge de manœuvre auprès des évaluations extérieures, et les enjoint à développer des stratégies qui rendraient leur production créative davantage visibles aux yeux des experts. Par conséquent, cet article vise à enrichir la littérature existante concernant l'agence dont disposent les chefs dans leur propre processus de réputation. Pour ce faire, nous choisissons d'introduire un intermédiaire théorique pour contrecarrer les effets négatifs des asymétries d'information, à savoir la théorie de la signalisation (Jones, 2002), les signaux étant des « caractéristiques observables attachées à l'individu et susceptibles d'être manipulées par lui » (Spence, 1973: 357, traduction personnelle), et plus spécifiquement les « stratégies d'observabilité » qui se réfèrent à « la mesure dans laquelle les acteurs externes sont en mesure de remarquer le signal » (Connelly et al., 2011 : 45, traduction personnelle). Cet article répond ainsi à la question suivante : dans quelle mesure les individus créatifs peuvent-ils améliorer l'observabilité de leurs signaux afin d'influencer leur réputation auprès des experts ?

Pour répondre à la question de recherche, ce travail se concentre sur cinq études de cas de chefs français (Yin, 2017) en suivant la méthodologie du récit de vie (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau, Robert-Demontrond & Schmidt, 2010; Sanséau, 2005) appliquée aux sciences de gestion. L'objectif de cette méthodologie est d'étudier la réalité socio-historique d'un phénomène ou d'un individu afin de comprendre comment il se transforme (Sanséau, 2005). Simultanément, pour

obtenir un point de vue d'expert sur le sujet, nous avons réalisé trois entretiens semi-structurés avec les experts. Nous avons codé les données en suivant l'approche de réduction des données de Strauss et Corbin (1998). Les données brutes recueillies lors des entretiens et dans les archives ont été analysées à l'aide d'un codage ouvert afin d'identifier les principaux critères sur lesquels les chefs, et simultanément les experts, se concentrent lorsqu'ils réfléchissent au processus réputationnel.

b) Principaux résultats : comment les individus créatifs peuvent gérer leur processus réputationnel auprès des experts

Cette étude enrichit la littérature sur la réputation dans les industries créatives et interroge la relation entre les chefs créatifs et les experts qui les valorisent sur le terrain. Par conséquent, ce chapitre nous permet de constater que, premièrement, le flou du processus d'évaluation dans la gastronomie française et les asymétries d'information coexistant entre les chefs et les experts appellent à une compréhension plus approfondie des structures qui peuvent déclencher une évaluation positive et donc, à terme, la réputation. Ainsi, force est de constater que, tout d'abord, les offres créatives ne sont pas en elles-mêmes le seul critère qui conférerait une réputation, et que les chefs ont avant tout besoin d'être vus par les experts, en particulier lorsqu'il s'agit de chefs *mainstream* dont la réputation est modérée. Notre analyse nous a donc permis de considérer les stratégies de signalisation (Jones, 2002; Spence, 1974) comme une solution alternative visant à contrecarrer ces asymétries d'information. Plus précisément, notre étude enrichit la compréhension de ce qui rend un signal perceptible, c'est-à-dire observable, par les experts en développant quatre outils managériaux que les chefs peuvent déployer pour accroître l'observabilité de leurs signaux auprès des experts : le self-branding, la construction d'un réseau, le choix de la localisation du restaurant, et la création d'un récit et d'une histoire authentiques. Le self-branding fait référence aux outils que les chefs peuvent mobiliser pour se présenter et construire leur image auprès du public; la construction et l'ancrage dans un réseau se réfère à la constitution d'un groupe de personnes avec lesquelles les chefs sont liés tout en marquant leur appartenance à un réseau spécifique; la sélection de la localisation fait référence à la capacité de choisir un emplacement stratégique pour le restaurant et d'en tirer profit ; et la création d'un récit authentique fait référence aux moyens de transmettre des informations positives et significatives au public et, par conséquent, aux experts sous la forme d'histoire de vie. Ces résultats démontrent ainsi que les productions créatives des individus créatifs doivent être soutenues par des stratégies de signalisation, et notamment d'observabilité, afin

d'augmenter leurs chances d'être vus par les experts et de briguer un certain niveau de réputation. Dans le champ, ce niveau de réputation se rapporte ainsi au capital symbolique et joue un rôle dans les positions que les chefs sont amenés à occuper.

Parallèlement, la co-construction du modèle de recherche avec, d'une part, le discours des chefs et la collecte de données sur la base de ce discours et, d'autre part, des entretiens avec des experts représentatifs, nous a permis de nous faire une idée de la crédibilité de ces stratégies d'observabilité. Force est de constater que rendre les signaux observables est une première étape, mais que toutes les stratégies ne sont pas nécessairement adaptées pour attirer les experts. En effet, l'observabilité doit se faire de manière adéquate et sensée, c'est-à-dire crédible, authentique, vraie, afin que les experts et le public adéquats soient en mesure de les comprendre et d'être attirés par les chefs qui génèrent le signal. Enfin, dans un second temps, il conviendra également d'approfondir l'analyse de la construction des signaux dans le cadre d'un renforcement de la réputation des chefs auprès des experts.

## **Conclusion**

### **I. Contributions principales**

En identifiant plusieurs tensions majeures existant dans le champ de la gastronomie française, cette thèse offre plusieurs contributions à la littérature sur la créativité individuelle dans et hors de la gastronomie française, et enrichit des débats annexes sur les grands challenges, le rôle des interactions sociales et la réputation dans le contexte des industries créatives.

Dans un premier temps, cette thèse offre une perspective alternative pour intégrer les grands challenges en élargissant la portée de leur gestion dans une perspective exclusivement collective (Berrone et al., 2016; Cobb et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016 ; Williams & Shepherd, 2016) à un niveau plus micro mené par des initiatives individuelles dans le contexte des industries créatives. Ce faisant, nous identifions les moyens par lesquels certains grands challenges peuvent être intégrés dans les industries créatives grâce au truchement de la créativité individuelle. En outre, nous affinons notre compréhension de la créativité individuelle (Stierand, 2015) en mettant en évidence une variété d'activités créatives qui permettent l'intégration de nouveaux challenges, dans notre cas les enjeux environnementaux, en identifiant les compétences spécifiques aux individus créatifs qui leur permettraient de les

relever. Nous offrons ainsi de nouvelles perspectives sur l'intégration des grands challenges et le rôle de la créativité dans leur gestion. En parallèle, nos résultats suggèrent également l'intérêt d'un point de vue managérial et financier que les créatifs et leurs organisations peuvent retirer d'une intégration réussie et sensée des contraintes environnementales, par le biais des initiatives et de la pensée créatives.

Dans un second temps, dans la mesure où le contexte de création au quotidien est structurant de *l'habitus* des chefs, nous pensons qu'il est intéressant de comprendre comment la créativité individuelle d'un chef peut être influencée par ce cadre spécifique. Ainsi, notre étude met en lumière les micro-structures des processus créatifs des chefs dans leurs activités créatives en identifiant plus spécifiquement les interactions en jeu et comment celles-ci peuvent influencer leur créativité individuelle. Ainsi, cette thèse offre de nouvelles perspectives sur le processus créatif des chefs en relation avec les autres et sur la manière dont les interactions sociales peuvent façonner leurs productions créatives. En caractérisant plus précisément les autres et la relation qu'ils partagent avec les chefs, nous avons pu mieux appréhender comment ils peuvent soutenir leurs choix créatifs individuels. Nous contrecarrons ainsi l'idée commune selon laquelle les chefs créent principalement seuls (Stierand, 2015; Rao et al., 2003) en soutenant une autre vision de la créativité individuelle qui est interactive. En outre, cette thèse introduit l'idée du temps au cours du processus créatif et la manière dont il façonne les intensités créatives. Cela nous permet ainsi de théoriser des étapes créatives interactives qui composent le processus créatif individuel des chefs.

Troisièmement, compte tenu de l'importance du capital symbolique, notamment incarné par la réputation conférée par les experts dans le domaine de la gastronomie française, nous avons, au travers de ce troisième chapitre, enrichi les débats concernant la relation entre les individus créatifs et l'évaluation de leurs offres créatives. Plus précisément, et en se fondant sur les discours des chefs et des experts, notre étude contrecarre la focalisation excessive sur les distinctions créatives en identifiant des stratégies alternatives qui pourraient être mobilisées par les chefs pour accroître leur position dans le champ. Pour ce faire, nous renouvelons l'utilisation des théories de la signalisation en établissant un nouveau lien entre l'observabilité des signaux et les stratégies de réputation, sur la base de l'identification de l'existence d'asymétries d'information entre les chefs et les experts. Nous reconnaissons ainsi l'importance pour les créatifs de développer des signaux et de les rendre observables afin d'améliorer leur réputation auprès des évaluateurs extérieurs. En d'autres termes, nous proposons de nouvelles perspectives sur la valorisation de la créativité individuelle en montrant que les résultats créatifs individuels doivent être soutenus par des stratégies de signalisation et notamment d'observabilité. Ce

faisant, nous proposons d'enrichir la littérature sur le rôle des experts dans la construction de la réputation dans les industries créatives en reconnaissant les asymétries d'information entre eux et les individus créatifs qu'ils évaluent. Enfin, cette étude offre de nouvelles perspectives sur les relations entre les experts et les chefs créatifs en évaluant le rôle actif que ces derniers peuvent jouer pour influencer leur processus de réputation parmi les experts, et ainsi avoir un impact sur leur position relative dans le champ.

Enfin, cette thèse vise à analyser la créativité individuelle dans une dynamique quotidienne et routinière, sans poursuivre des objectifs d'innovation (Messeni & Petruzzelli, 2019; Jones et al., 2016) ou de transformation majeure du champ (Sgourev, 2013; Rao et al., 2003) en comprenant comment les individus créatifs gèrent leur créativité au quotidien à travers les structures qui façonnent leurs comportements et leurs attentes. Cela appelle ainsi des perspectives nouvelles et renouvelées sur l'influence des interactions et de la temporalité sur la créativité individuelle, notamment dans la littérature sur la haute-cuisine, en lien avec des études antérieures déjà axées sur l'étude des pratiques quotidiennes (Castellucci & Slavich, 2020; Leone, 2020; Louisgrand & Islam, 2020).

D'un point de vue méthodologique, cette thèse contribue également à renouveler l'intérêt de l'utilisation des méthodologies de récit de vie (Bertaux, 1980; Joyeau, Robert-Demontrond & Schmidt, 2010; Sanséau, 2005), issue des sciences sociales et plus faiblement utilisées en sciences de gestion, notamment dans le cadre de des discours sur la créativité et des trajectoires des individus créatifs.

## II. Suggestion de recommandations managériales

- 1) Implications managériales sur la culture : favoriser la culture créative et la proactivité des créatifs

### *Perspectives de développement d'une culture créative*

Ce projet reconnaît l'importance d'une culture créative dans les entreprises dirigées par des personnes créatives et la manière dont le fait d'accorder une liberté créative aux dirigeants créatifs et à leurs collaborateurs peut nourrir leur propre créativité individuelle et favoriser les résultats créatifs. Ce projet appelle également à une compréhension globale de ce qui fait qu'une culture est apte à favoriser la créativité. Cela signifie qu'une culture créative bien structurée devrait également travailler sur le développement de déterminants créatifs tels que les

techniques et la motivation, et pas seulement sur les compétences et la pensée créatives. Ainsi, les responsables de la création devraient mettre l'accent sur la nécessité d'une expertise dans un domaine spécifique, par exemple en améliorant le processus de recrutement ou en organisant régulièrement des sessions de formation. Parallèlement, ils doivent veiller à ce que la motivation soit dirigée par la volonté de réussir et d'améliorer l'offre créative actuelle.

### *Favoriser la pro-activité et l'agence des créatifs*

Ce projet appelle également à renforcer l'action et la proactivité des créateurs dans des situations où ils pourraient se trouver dans une position de soumission, par exemple face aux critiques. Ainsi, les personnes créatives ne devraient pas se contenter d'être créatives, mais devraient également savoir comment promouvoir et valoriser leur production créative. Ainsi, une culture créative devrait également favoriser le développement du self-branding et de compétences en matière de storytelling afin que les créatifs soient capables de parler, de raconter, de contextualiser et de mettre en valeur leur propre production créative. Cependant, l'enjeu managérial réside dans le maintien de l'authenticité et de la cohérence entre la production créative et le discours qui lui est associé. Ainsi, les managers et les créatifs doivent s'assurer qu'ils racontent leur propre histoire, qui doit être corrélée à ce qu'ils produisent et à la manière dont ils le font.

Concernant les critiques, les gestionnaires devraient être en mesure de développer des outils de gestion de la réputation afin d'identifier les critères d'évaluation des guides qui sont pertinents pour leur offre créative.

#### 2) Implication managériale sur la mission : vers une mission plus sociétale pour les entreprises créatives

Ce projet est ancré dans l'attention croissante portée aux grands challenges, en particulier les défis environnementaux. Comme nous l'avons suggéré, les chefs cuisiniers sont capables d'intégrer les questions environnementales dans leurs entreprises grâce à l'interaction de leurs compétences créatives. Plus précisément, cela nous amène à penser que les créatifs peuvent jouer un rôle dans les initiatives de lutte contre le changement climatique grâce à leurs capacités créatives spécifiques et à leur pensée alternative. D'un point de vue managérial, cela nous permet également de considérer les questions environnementales non seulement comme des contraintes à gérer, mais aussi comme des opportunités qui pourraient influencer la pensée

créative et générer des offres alternatives et nouvelles. Cependant, même si nous constatons une démocratisation de l'engagement envers les questions de changement climatique et de réchauffement climatique, en particulier dans la haute-cuisine, il est nécessaire que les managers réfléchissent plus profondément à la cohérence de cette stratégie afin d'éviter le *greenwashing*. En d'autres termes, cela signifie que l'engagement doit être particulièrement pensé par rapport aux terroirs, aux sols et aux cultures locales, tout en étant ancré dans des initiatives de création de sens.

3) Implications managériales sur la création de valeur : les interactions sociales comme opportunités de création de valeur pour les chefs cuisiniers

Bien que les offres créatives soient généralement associées à la créativité individuelle des chefs, ce projet invite les managers à réfléchir à comment l'intégration des interactions sociales pourrait favoriser la création de valeur. En effet, nous montrons que la caractérisation de chaque interaction sociale avec les collègues, qu'il s'agisse d'interactions régulières (brigade) ou de rencontres plus sporadiques (fournisseurs), aide à mieux justifier l'impact qu'elles peuvent jouer en influençant les productions créatives des chefs. Pour ce faire, les gestionnaires doivent évaluer l'intensité créative de chaque acteur potentiel et réfléchir à la manière de créer des liens et des synergies entre les différents acteurs et les objectifs créatifs afin de stimuler la création de valeur.

4) Implications managériales sur les personnes et le capital humain : gestion des créatifs et développement de nouvelles compétences

*Protéger les conditions de travail des employés*

Tout d'abord, il nous semble utile de rappeler l'importance des conditions de travail des salariés, notamment dans un champ où les conditions de travail sont souvent pointées du doigt. Outre l'engagement en faveur des questions environnementales, nous pensons que l'importance d'une culture créative et l'intérêt croissant pour les interactions sociales nous ont également amenés à réaffirmer l'importance de protéger le capital humain et d'encourager le développement constant de nouvelles compétences. Comme le suggère Amabile (1988), outre les capacités créatives, la motivation et les techniques sont la pierre angulaire de la créativité.

Cela signifie que des personnes bien formées travaillant dans une atmosphère orientée vers le progrès, le respect et le soutien sont plus susceptibles d'adopter un état d'esprit créatif. Il est donc nécessaire de mettre en place des méthodes de recrutement spécifiques et une formation constante. Les employés doivent être embauchés en fonction d'un objectif créatif spécifique, de leur expérience et de leurs techniques, mais aussi de la manière dont ils pourraient s'intégrer dans l'horizon créatif et la culture des chefs. Parallèlement, des conditions de travail décentes et une culture managériale favorable sont essentielles pour garantir la motivation des employés et leur donner l'occasion de faire preuve de créativité. Cela peut par exemple se matérialiser par des sessions dédiées où les membres de la brigade peuvent présenter des propositions créatives aux chefs, mais cela peut aussi résider dans une culture encourageant le repos créatif.

### *De nouveaux défis exigent de nouvelles compétences*

Dans l'ensemble, les résultats de cette thèse nous conduisent à identifier un vaste éventail de nouvelles compétences que les créatifs devraient maîtriser pour rester à la hauteur de leurs opportunités créatives et de leur valorisation. Ces nouvelles compétences concernent les domaines suivants. Les défis environnementaux requièrent des compétences telles que la résilience, la pensée transgressive et alternative et l'ouverture d'esprit. Les stratégies de promotion requièrent une expertise numérique et la maîtrise d'outils digitaux tels que les réseaux sociaux, ainsi que la capacité de raconter sa créativité et d'élaborer un discours autour de soi, ce qui implique une réflexion et une conscience de soi. L'intégration des interactions sociales réactualise le rôle des chefs en tant que gestionnaires qui doivent maîtriser le temps et les personnes, identifier les synergies créatives et éviter les divergences entre les acteurs et leurs différentes contributions créatives.

### III. Limites et futures recherches

Cette dernière section présente plusieurs limites théoriques et empiriques de cette étude ainsi que les perspectives de recherche que ces limites pourraient offrir à l'avenir.

#### 1) Limites et perspectives de recherche concernant le choix de l'industrie

Bien que ce manuscrit se soit concentré sur les spécificités d'une industrie créative spécifique avec ses propres règles, structures et organisation, nous avons également cherché à en élargir ses perspectives aux industries créatives en général. La limite réside ainsi dans la concentration sur une seule industrie créative, mais nous pensons qu'elle pourrait également s'appliquer aux industries créatives qui partagent des structures, des valeurs et des contextes de création communs. Par exemple, nous pouvons penser aux arts du spectacle où un créateur, par exemple le metteur en scène, interagit quotidiennement avec plusieurs agents ou acteurs qui font preuve de différents degrés de créativité, tels que l'ingénieur du son ou le caméraman par rapport aux acteurs. En outre, dans les arts du spectacle, la créativité est structurée dans un cadre temporel spécifique, avec l'objectif de se produire devant le public, comme les chefs cuisiniers qui livrent un repas créatif de haute qualité à leur clientèle. Nous réaffirmons donc la nécessité d'étudier plus en profondeur le contexte créatif et les agents créatifs impliqués dans chaque industrie créative afin d'avoir une compréhension plus fine de la manière dont la créativité individuelle peut être structurée et gérée.

Par ailleurs, une autre limite réside dans le fait que l'étude se concentre sur le contexte français. Même si nous pensons que ces contributions pourraient favoriser la compréhension des questions de créativité et de réputation dans la gastronomie en général, elles appellent des études plus approfondies sur la structure de chaque contexte national. Les perspectives de recherche futures pourraient également interroger les questions suivantes : quelles sont les tendances et les valeurs sociétales concernant la haute-cuisine dans d'autres pays ? Comment les critiques sont-elles perçues par les chefs dans d'autres contextes ? Comment l'écologie est-elle perçue et intégrée par les chefs et les sociétés des pays étrangers ? Quel est l'impact de cette préoccupation sur les agents créatifs et leur volonté d'agir ?

## 2) Limites et perspectives de recherche concernant le choix de la population

Une autre limite réside dans la portée de l'étude et plus particulièrement dans le choix de chefs *mainstream* de réputation modérée. L'étude des jeunes et futurs chefs constitue une contribution majeure de ce projet de recherche, principalement parce qu'ils représentent une part importante de la population globale des chefs (522 restaurants 1 étoile en 2022) tout en ayant été paradoxalement moins étudiés dans la littérature. De plus, ils représentent les futurs chefs en devenir. Enfin, cette population est particulièrement adaptée pour étudier plus en profondeur des questions qui concernent le champ en général, mais qui sont plus faciles à observer de manière significative dans cette population en devenir, par exemple en termes de

construction de réputation ou d'engagement environnemental. Ainsi, si cette perspective offre des perspectives nouvelles et alternatives sur le champ de la gastronomie, elle soulève également des questions quant à l'applicabilité des résultats sur des acteurs occupant des positions différentes. Comme nous l'avons expliqué précédemment, nous pensons que les observations sur les jeunes chefs offrent des outils de compréhension et de gestion qui pourraient également favoriser les stratégies créatives des chefs plus expérimentés. Il serait donc intéressant de voir plus précisément comment les résultats de ce manuscrit pourraient s'appliquer à d'autres populations, telles que les *mainstreams* jouissant d'une plus grande réputation, ainsi qu'à des acteurs moins centraux, et d'en approfondir les différences et les similitudes.

### 3) Limites et perspectives de recherche concernant la culture créative

Nous nous concentrons, en particulier dans le chapitre 2, sur les chefs qui cherchent à développer et à entretenir une atmosphère propice au développement de la créativité parmi les membres de la brigade. En effet, le chef étudié dans le chapitre 2 a un discours qui montre son intention de valoriser les apports et la pensée créatifs parmi les membres de sa brigade et ses collègues. Ainsi, ce travail réside dans l'étude d'une atmosphère de travail de facto proactivement créative.

Cependant, on peut se demander comment les individus créatifs qui dirigent l'orientation créative de leur entreprise, dans notre cas les chefs cuisiniers, passent du statut d'individus créatifs qui dirigent l'horizon créatif de leur organisation, à la mise en œuvre réussie d'une culture créative au sein de leur restaurant, en particulier la brigade. Cela soulève également des questions sur la manière d'organiser la transmission et la diffusion de la créativité individuelle à ses collaborateurs et sur la manière dont cette transmission peut se matérialiser par des productions créatives. Ainsi, de futures recherches pourraient ainsi étudier ce qui rend un environnement de travail propice à la créativité dans les industries créatives. Nous appelons donc les chercheurs à étudier les déterminants qui pourraient conduire à une culture créative en identifiant ses moteurs dans un environnement de travail dédié et dirigé par des individus créatifs.

### 4) Limites et perspectives de recherche concernant les grands challenges

Les grands challenges sont des défis contemporains et cruciaux dans le système économique et social. Ce manuscrit a permis de comprendre comment les activités créatives et les individus pouvaient intégrer certains d'entre eux, à savoir les questions environnementales, dans leurs pratiques quotidiennes grâce à la créativité. Les défis environnementaux étaient particulièrement pertinents dans le cadre de la gastronomie puisqu'il s'agit d'une industrie qui mobilise beaucoup de ressources naturelles tout en gérant des déchets et des ressources non réutilisables. Toutefois, d'autres perspectives pourraient permettre d'examiner comment d'autres de ces défis, par exemple les droits sociaux sur le marché du travail, pourraient également être temporisés grâce à la créativité.

En parallèle, il convient d'analyser la motivation des créatifs à être transgressifs et jusqu'à quel point ils sont prêts à l'être, en particulier s'il s'agit d'acteurs centraux qui souhaitent maintenir leur position privilégiée. En effet, si les grands challenges impliquent des comportements transgressifs, dans le sens où ils appellent à renverser l'équilibre actuel du système, cela pourrait contrecarrer les stratégies de maintien des acteurs centraux dans des positions dominantes. Ainsi, nous nous demandons sur quels points les créatifs sont prêts à transgresser, et sur quels points ils ne le sont pas. Nous avons supposé que la porosité du champ aux tensions externes offrait des opportunités aux créatifs grâce à l'intégration de questions écologiques. Cependant, de futures recherches pourraient également approfondir la compréhension de l'équilibre des pouvoirs dans le cadre d'un engagement transgressif afin de déterminer si envisager un engagement radical pourrait en fait menacer les activités créatives et, surtout, l'ordre établi et les positions de pouvoir.

## Managing exogenous factors to foster individual creativity in French gastronomy

### Résumé

En tant qu'individus créatifs, la créativité individuelle est au cœur de l'activité des chefs cuisiniers français. En parallèle, la gastronomie française, considérée comme un champ spécifique, se caractérise par un ensemble de règles et de tensions qui façonnent la façon dont ses membres, ici les chefs, doivent agir, notamment en vertu de leurs activités créatives. Toutefois, si les facteurs endogènes à la créativité individuelle tels que les traits et attributs personnels ont fait l'objet de nombreuses études, peu de travaux explorent comment les facteurs exogènes, tels que les tensions liés à l'appartenance à un champ, peuvent également influencer la créativité individuelle des chefs. Ainsi, dans la lignée des travaux appelant à approfondir la compréhension des micro-structures à l'origine de la créativité individuelle, et considérant la créativité comme une construction sociale, cette thèse explore comment les facteurs exogènes émanant ici des tensions du champ de la gastronomie française façonnent la créativité individuelle de ses membres et comment les chefs la managent au prisme de ces tensions.

Mots-clés : Créativité individuelle ; Industries créatives ; Gastronomie française ; Gastronomie ; Théorie des organisations ; Réputation ; Grand challenges ; Interactions sociales

### Résumé en anglais

As creative individuals, French gastronomy chefs embrace individual creativity as the cornerstone of their daily activities. At the same time, French gastronomy as a specific field encompasses several rules and tensions that shape how agents, i.e. chefs, may and should behave, especially regarding their creative activities. Therefore, if endogenous factors such as personality traits or personal attributes have already been tackled to explore individual creativity, few is said on how exogenous factors, such as field requirements, could shape and influence chefs' individual creativity. Thus, answering the call to further understand the micro-structures of individual creativity, and anchoring this work on creativity as a social construct, this paper-based dissertation explore how exogenous factors stemming from field embeddedness can shape chefs' individual creativity and how they manage it in light of fields' tensions.

Key-words: Individual creativity; Creative industries; French gastronomy; Gastronomy; Organization theory; Reputation; Grand challenges; Social interactions