The Profiles of Western World Gastronomy

Barrère, Bonnard, Chossat (2014), VDQS-Palermo 2010: 60 years of Parisian gastronomy⇒ turning point of the 90’s: a new profile, no star, Bibed restaurant, 1 F&S, affordable gastronomy, a « democratization » of gastronomy/ elitist tradition

Is it a special case?

The outline

• Are there similar profiles in western world gastronomy?


• The approach: PCA, descriptive statistics, MCA, interpretation

A PCA preview

Descriptive statistics refinement

1 gastronomic weight

2 structure of the supply/ comfort

3 structure of the supply/ quality of cuisine

4 prices
Results

Idiosyncrasy: prices

Similarities: the three other characteristics

Groups:

- B: the specialized in gastronomy cities; Lyons, Barcelona
- C: the middle cities close to traditional gastronomy; Milan, Berlin, Madrid
- D: the small gastronomic cities close to old and luxury gastronomy; Rome, Florence, Turin

The MCA gives us three main answers:

- The apparent diversity of local gastronomies, clearly shown by the descriptive, there are very coherent profiles, which are the basis of gastronomic supplies:
  - (P1) the local restaurant (pubs for London, tapas bar for Barcelona and Madrid, plates for New York), with low prices and low comfort;
  - (P2) the Bib restaurant, without star, a low comfort (1 F & S), no wine list, no amenities;
  - (P3) the no awarded restaurant, with medium comfort (2 F & S), standard quality, no special amenities, no wine list
  - (P4) the one starred restaurant, with medium comfort (3 F & S), high quality, wine list; in some cases these restaurants have too a nice view, in others no
  - (P5) the two starred restaurant, with high comfort (4 F & S), very high quality, wine list; in some cases these restaurants have too a nice view, in others no
  - (P6) the three starred restaurant, with very high comfort (5 F & S), very high quality, wine list, and a nice view.

Different gastronomies make specific combinations of these profiles, according to different factors, mainly their size (the Big Three for instance) and their culinary heritage.
Main results and limits

1. two types of structure.
2. the elitist profile is more frequent in the less developed gastronomic systems than in the most developed. Nevertheless, as the gastronomic weight of these cities is important, their elitist niche is powerful.
3. the most developed gastronomies developed strong low segments and their development is founded on their extension.
4. if we join the three high profiles (P4+P5+P6), the starred restaurants, in modern gastronomies (the Big Three and Lyons) they gather a big number of restaurants but represent a small part of the gastronomic.
5. the results of Lyons and Paris are very similar, and that their real structure is very close to a strict combination of theoretic profiles. That may signal the existence of a « French model » of gastronomic supply, a model that inspired the Red Guide and its system of normalisation and legitimation.
6. Gastronomic supplies, even in different countries, belonging to so different culinary and social cultures, reveal some hidden structures.

Our analysis is only an exploratory analysis on a less-known field. A lot of precisions and refinements are obviously to make.

It's over, it's time to wake up!

For precisions you can read the paper, on the website. For comments christian.barrere@gmail.com

Thanks for your attention!