

MAKING SENSE OF CUISINE: FROM CULINARY TRIANGLE TO
PYRAMID USING LEHRER'S TETRAHEDRON AS A STEPPING STONE

Alan F. Harrison
Canterbury College of Technology

Abstract. Lévi-Strauss' Culinary Triangle is well known but suffers certain inadequacies which Lehrer's tetrahedron attempted to rectify. Considering the amount of time both models have been identified it is surprising that there has been no further debate within these pages.

The present paper reveals that if such models are to have any bearing upon explaining culinary semantic space they should be able to cope with *haute cuisine*, the most advanced of the systems. Others, then, may adapt the present proposition to analyse *cuisine chinois* or whatever.

Introduction. Inevitably the conjunction *cuisine-triangle* conjures the name Lévi-Strauss. Perhaps Lehrer's (1972:169) tetrahedron is a step in the right direction in describing the raw and the cooked and the numerous stages in between. This treatment will involve a practical approach in order to provide anthropologists and sundry sociologists with greater detail relating to the divisions within *haute cuisine*. (If it helps them to produce better models of cuisine, so much the better.) We shall quickly refresh our memory concerning Lévi-Strauss' ([1968]1978:490) triangle and consider from time-to-time whether it needs the dimensions of "rotten" and "smoked." Within the advanced culinary system *haute cuisine*, rotten does not have a place as the actors within the situation will initially proclaim.

The *rôtisseur* is not concerned with the rotten although he might appreciate that the *râble de chevreuil* may soon become so if left in the marinade for too long. He is one of many specialists in the five-star kitchen associated in Lévi-Straussian terms, at least, with aristocratic ideals as opposed to the plebian *entremettier* responsible for the vegetables. There is no association in either mind between boiled and rotten in the sense portrayed by Lévi-Strauss and both would logically equate *raw-smoked*, *cooked-roast* as opposed to his conjunctions *raw-roast*, *cooked-smoked*. Thus the practitioners within *haute cuisine* from the *maître chef des cuisines* through *chef saucier* and *pâtissier* right down to *troisiemme commis plongeur washer up* have their own approach to cookery. While able to accommodate fine distinctions between garnishes and cookery methods they would not be en place to accept the anthropologically subtle tuning differentiating raw, cooked, smoked and rotten. To them if it is raw and cannot be eaten, it has to be cooked, but the fact that it will be accompanied by *foie gras*, truffles and cognac should not distract us.

Within the division of labour of the classical (but operational) cuisine there is at least one person, however, who has some concern for the rotten. (It goes without saying that everyone must be concerned and eliminate putrified food from the kitchen.) The chef gardemanger looking after the raw meats and fish will be the judge and jury on the matter of how long to leave items hanging around, with a view to the breaking down of fibrous material within flesh. Here it is a question of how long the delay is, but he also has charge of that item which will become homard Thermidor, and if it is not despatched to the plat à sauter within seconds of death it will be the consumer who may soon join it! Thus, consideration of the rotten is dichotomous — use it (not rotten) or lose it!

The slightly less disputatious smoked requires discussion, but we can come to that in due course. In the meantime we had better look at the term "cuisine" in more detail. In his preface to *Cookery, Cuisine and Class*, Goody (1982:5) outlines his use of the word cuisine "in three distinct ways: in the general sense of the products of the kitchen, more specifically . . . for a culturally differentiated cuisine — the high and the low — and finally societies such as China, the Middle East and post-Renaissance France." This discussion incorporates a long look at the highly elaborated forms of cooking in use within up-market catering establishments in Britain which use the methods and approaches subsumed in the term haute cuisine.

Moving from cuisine we can consider culinary dimensions. Something said by Goody (1982:20), almost en passant, requires clarification. In discussing the culinary triangle proposed by Lévi-Strauss, he remarked that ". . . the units on which it is based are no longer 'gustemes', units of taste, but the basic types of operation [technemes?] for transferring food from raw to cooked. There is a shift from consumption (*cuisine*) to preparation (*cooking*)," (my italics). This is precisely where the practitioners divide from the theorists since the former regard cuisine as *cooking*. The whole point of the present discussion is to provide the theorists with a practical interpretation of some elements of haute cuisine rather than explain convoluted theory to those who handle convoluted pastry cutters.

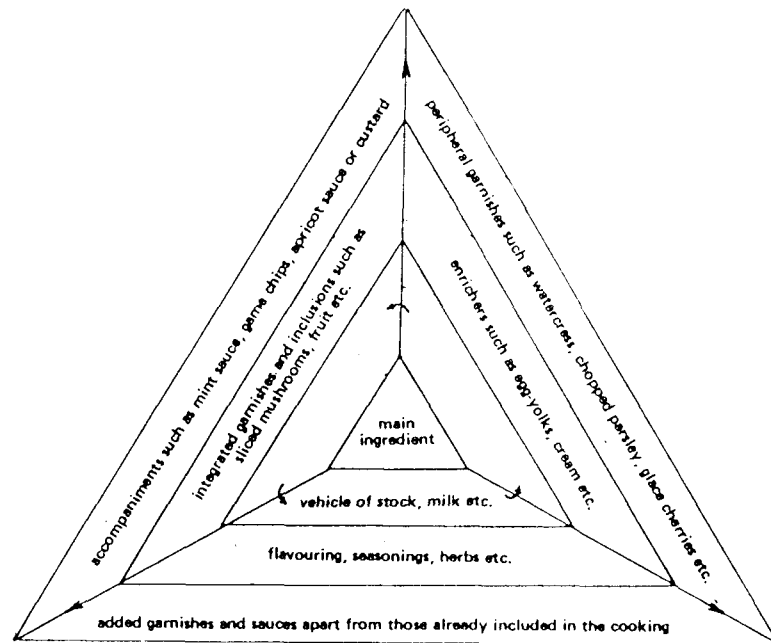
But Goody is on to something with technemes and this title may come to serve the whole family of complicated operations within classical cookery.

As an hors d'oeuvre to a detailed but nevertheless (ideally) realistic discussion of a model relating to haute cuisine, let us see one that has been devised for the cuisinier. This is intended to show the general position relating to the completed dish within European cooking, and not necessarily at the haute levels (see Figure 1). Without having to elaborate in terms of roast, sauter, etc., the model displays the typical dish, and some specific variations might be as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Elaboration of the Process Approach in the Context of Haute Cuisine

Name of Dish	Main Ingredient	Vehicle	Flavouring	Enricher	Integrated garnish	Peripheral Garnish	Accompaniments	Added garnish or Sauce	COMMENT (terms will be explained)
FILET DE SOLE BONNE FEMME	fillet of sole	fish stock	white wine	egg yolks	sliced mushroom chopped onion	border of duchesse potatoes			'Monté' au beurre
FILET DE SOLE GALLIA			lemon juice 'fumet' (essence)	meat glaze	thin strips of truffle lettuce	fleurons (crescents of puff pastry)			'mounted' with cream
FRICASSE DE VOLAILLE A L'ANCIENNE	chicken	chicken stock stock and roux		egg yolk cream	button onions and mushrooms	heart-shaped croûtons		sauce is cooked with the meat	An 'up market' blanquette (see COFD fricasser = to squander)
BLANQUETTE D'AGNEAU	veal	veal stock						sauce is made after meat is cooked	op cit stew with white sauce
PECHE MELBA	peach	ice cream	raspberry						
COUPE JACQUES	fruit cocktail		cream	Melba sauce	cream	Melba sauce	pipéd cream	if you are given wafers don't eat them	'added' Melba Sauce in the sense that it is 'last minute'

Figure 1. The Process Approach of Cookery



Source: Harrison 1982 p. 81

The "Process Approach to Cookery" summarised in Figure 1, and the immediately foregoing analysis of dishes (Harrison 1982:76-81) is an attempt to steer those in the (British) kitchen away from the recipe book where each recipe is a specific entity existing apart from perhaps dozens of similar dishes where there are very few differences in the ingredients. This discussion cannot embody the detail, but the approach is included here to show anthropologists and sociologists that they have no monopoly over the use of triangular models!

From Table 1 we gain an introduction to some of the complications of what might be termed "Anglo-French haute cuisine." Before going deeper into that subject we ought to unravel some of the complications arising from (normal) British cooking terminology and see where these overlap with the rather specialised dimension of "high-class cookery." Lehrer of the University of Rochester seems interested and interesting, and apparently leads the field.

Lehrer has discussed "The field of culinary terms in English" where "The set of verbs" is as follows:

Cook, boil, simmer, stew, poach, braise, parboil, steam, reduce, fry, saute, pan-fry, French fry, deep-fry, broil, grill, barbecue, charcoal (or charcoal-broil), plank, bake, roast, shirr, scallop, brown, rissoler, sear, parch, toast, burn (unhappily) and flamber (Lehrer 1969:40).

Within British haute cuisine the following would be recognised as cooking methods:

cook, boil, stew, poach, braise, steam, sauté [fry-sauté seems tautological], (broil), grill, bake, roast, rissoler and flamber.

The following are processes within the activities just given:

simmer, parboil, reduce, scallop, brown, sear, toast.

There are some which are not recognised:

fry-sauté, pan-fry [= sauté or meunière; to be discussed], barbecue, charcoal/charcoal broil [= grill?], plank [some may serve plank steaks, steak planké bien cuit?], shirr, sear, parch, and, needless to say, burn!

There are some which are subsumed in the name of the dish:

French-fry [pommes frites, mignonettes, gaufrettes], deep-fry [filet de plie a l'Orly: (in batter)].

Lehrer (1972:157) has also summarized "the most important cooking words in English" and Figure 2 repeats the information. This may well provide a good summary for her discussion, but in analysing the most important cooking words in use within haute cuisine in Britain we are required to appraise Lehrer's structuring of French terminology. She progresses to give an account of "The Structure of French Cooking Process Words" which are acknowledged as being difficult to diagram (see Figure 3).

Figure 2

COOK						
BOIL ₁			FRY		BROIL	BAKE
Simmer		full boil ₂		saute	French fry deep fry	grill
barbecue charcoal	roast					
poach	stew	parboil	stewing			
braise						

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Figure 3

CUIRE							
frire ₁			bouillir ₁			rôtir	griller
frire ₂	sauter	rissoler	bouillir ₂	mijoter	fremir	gratiner	
fricasser?			pocher				
		étuver					
		braiser?		braiser			

Some comments are necessary in the context of a debate concerning cooking methods which are taken to mean those which summarise the process and appear on the menu or are subsumed in the menu description. While poulet rôti can appear there "shivered sole" *fremir*, *simmer* is as unlikely as boeuf mijoté (a further alternative to simmer — perhaps more involved). If we accept fricasser, then its bastard half-sister "blanquetter" (no such verb) would have to be legitimised. (Both are white stews, the former being a superior form.) Both, however, are hyponyms of *étuver*.

The remaining terms can stay, but not necessarily in the same relationship to each other. Before looking at the relationships it is necessary to elaborate upon Lehrer's bouillir₁, bouillir₂; frire₁, frire₂ (1969:50). Bouillir₁ is the general term involving water and stock, while bouillir₂ gives "full boil: (+ water), (+ vigorous cooking action)." Even boiled beef and carrots do not suffer this treatment which seems more appropriate to waterproof baby pants.

Frire₁, the general term for cooking in oil, extends in frire₂ to deep fry in Lehrer's description (1969:160). Within haute cuisine processes are specific to the dishes (no synonymy) and a fair degree of precision of meaning is achieved between practicing chefs (de cuisine).

In order to derive a model of this advanced culinary system we will maintain the "water, air, oil" approach and scale according to temperature. In practice, we progress from just under boiling point, through oven to grill, and on to frying at the other extreme of temperature. Figure 4 represents such a progression including the major, and samples of the minor cooking methods.

Figure 4. Methods of Cookery Within Haute Cuisine (Technemes?)

PRINCIPAL METHOD	MAJOR DIVISIONS	SUB-DIVISION
<p>(WATER)</p> <p>BOUILLER to boil</p>	<p>POCHER to poach</p> <p>CUIRE EN VAPEUR to steam</p> <p>ETURER to stew</p> <p>BRAISER to braise</p>	<p>long poaching (eg large fish, eggs)</p> <p>short poaching (eg sole bonne femme)</p> <p>ragout, fricassée, blanquette, and many more</p>
<p>(AIR)</p> <p>RÔTIR to roast</p> <p>(i) à la broche (on a spit)</p> <p>(ii) au four (in the oven)</p>	<p>POELER (to pot roast)</p> <p>CUIRE AU FOUR (to bake)</p> <p>GRILLER to grill</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>CUIRE EN PAPILOTTE (to cook in paper)</p> <p>Gratiner</p>
<p>(OIL)</p> <p>FRIRE (to fry)</p>	<p>FRIRE EN FRITURE (to deep fry)</p> <p>FRIRE À LA POËLE (to shallow fry)</p>	<p>RISSOLER (sauter and then finish in oven)</p> <p>SAUTER (to shallow fry in very hot fat)</p> <p>CUIRE À LA MEUNIÈRE (to shallow fry fish in clarified butter)</p>

Braising appears midway between stewing and poeler as it is like a stew cooked in the oven in many cases. Poeler requires some elaboration. Fuller and Renold ([1963]1966:167) state "The process of poeler [sic] resembles that of a pot roasting." (*The Concise Oxford French Dictionary* (COFD) (1977) does not give a verb here.) The technique stems from the idea of poêle (literally, *frying pan*, but in practice it is an oval braising pan with lid) being placed in the oven. Some way through the process the lid is removed in order to brown the food. However, no discussion of the advanced culinary system would be complete without a contribution from Escoffier ([1907] 1957:105-107) who states that "Poêlings are, practically speaking, roasts, . . ." and proceeds to describe their history and derivative techniques.

The explanations of the remaining items mentioned in Figure 4 will suffer from the lack of space and the need to look at what can only be a snapshot of other words and terms used within haute cuisine is more pressing.

Hering (1972:768-73) provides a detailed glossary of culinary terms from which only a small selection can be made (my bracketed additions):

apricoter	<i>to coat with strained and reduced apricot jam</i>
barder	<i>to bard: to cover poultry or feathered game with thin slices of fat bacon</i>
brider	<i>to truss poultry or feathered game</i>
chemiser	<i>to line a mould with jelly, ice cream, forcemeat, etc.</i>
ciseler	<i>to score . . . small fish</i>
degraiser	<i>to degrease, to skim off fat on stocks, soups, sauces, etc.</i>
etuver	<i>to stew or steam in very little liquid</i>
flamber	<i>to flame: to singe poultry or game or to pour spirits . . . over a dish and serve it burning [sic] [surely "flaming"]</i>
macerer	<i>to macerate: to soak or steep in sugar and spirits or liqueur; to pickle briefly</i>
monter	<i>to whip eggs or egg whites, to whip butter in a sauce, etc. [The etc. subsumes a complicated technique involving a fistful of butter and the sauce at a critical temperature: more strictly this is known in British haute cuisine as "mounting" a sauce although all speak of "monter au beurre".]</i>

More culinary terms (but with less explanation) are provided by Ceserani and Kinton (1962:8-13), and several are given here (my bracketed additions):

arroser	<i>to baste as in roasting</i>
concasse	<i>coarsely chopped . . . [from "concasser"]</i>
deglace	<i>to swill out a pan . . . with wine, . . . stock or water . . . ["deglacer" is what is meant in the infinitive]</i>

napper *to coat or mask with sauce*
 persillé *garnished with chopped parsley [giving persiller
 to parsley]*

Fuller and Renold ([1963]1966:321-26) provide a similar list from which some are given below:

chaud-froider *to coat with chaud-froid sauce*
 clouter *to pierce and stick with, for example, cloves or
 truffle fragments*
 concasser *to chop . . .*
 contiser *to incise (meat, fish or poultry, . . .)*
 depouiller *to remove scum and fat by skimming during slow
 braising to boil, and during cooking*
 mijoter *to simmer slowly*
 suer *to sweat (qv)*
 sweat, sweat on *to cook in fat without colouring (usually with a
 lid)*

Finally, Leto and Bode ([1969]1975:221-27) render a list of French terms used in cold larder work, and those with any relevance to the debate are reproduced here:

chau-froiter *to coat with chaud-froid sauce*
 faisander *to ripen game*
 monter *to emulsify a sauce [cf. Hering 1972]*
 mortifier *to hang meat or game, tenderize*

Thus we have presented nearly thirty terms from a probable total of many dozens in the texts quoted. Some are included here to demonstrate the precision of the French culinary terminology: if there is a verb deriving from *apricot* when an item is coated with reduced jam, presumably something else might be *moutardé*. If small fish require to be slashed, then perhaps larger items of meat require to be *contisé* (cf. Hering's (1972:769) "ciseler" and Fullerton and Renold's (1963:321) "contiser"). We can leave the linguist to fight over "chaud-froider" (Fuller and Renold 1963:321), and "chau-froiter" (Leto and Bode 1969:221; see also Saulnier [1923]1970:x), after explaining that it is a sauce much used as a covering for cold meat and fish prior to being decorated with slices of truffle, etc. It might be *chemisé* in a mould already so decorated.

You and I would hang various joints for different times but Leto and Bode's (1969) *mortifier* and *faisander* are but differences in time and object in the kitchen and also in the non-technical language of the normal dictionary. COFD distinguishes the two terms where one means to make meat tender and the other "to keep (game) until it is high" *à la* pheasant (beg his pardon, *au faisan!*). Other terms are included to illustrate the complexity of the different processes (as if putting a shirt of aspic jelly of the right thickness in a mould is not difficult enough!). To mount a sauce is a job not left to the commis, but even he has to be able to differentiate between removing scum and fat in the Fullerian sense (*depouiller*), and perhaps the more simple *degraiser* (Hering 1972:769).

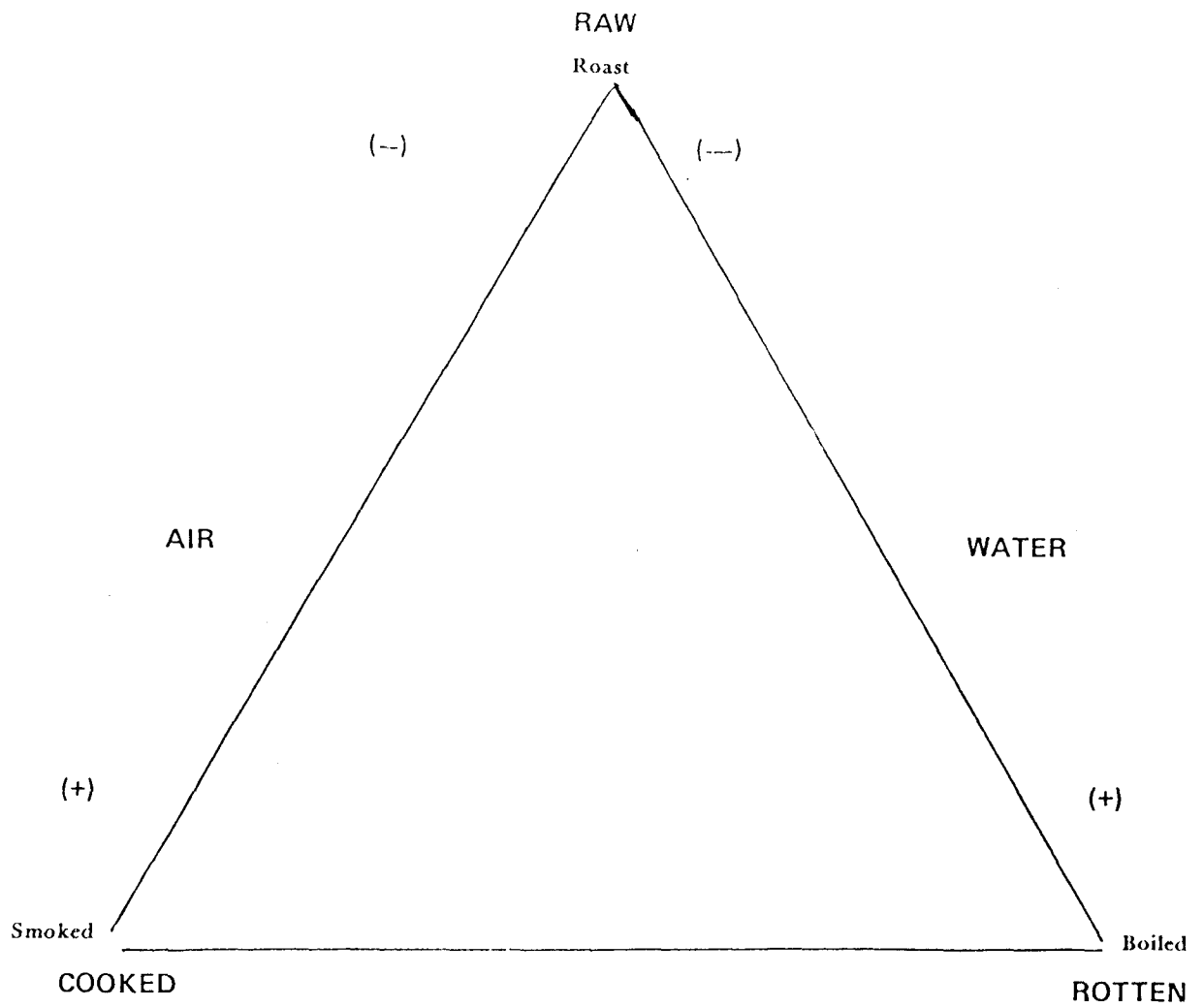
The discussion relating to the greater and lesser culinary terms will serve as a warning to those who hope to provide a deeper analysis of either haute cuisine à la française or haute cuisine en Grand Bretagne. There are limitations to the ethnographic approach to obtaining the necessary detail, and not least of these is the heat in the kitchen. It may be more appropriate to contemplate the overall system in abstract terms. Prominence within the abstract approaches has been achieved by Lévi-Strauss. (Leach (1970:32) wondered whether his "whole argument was some elaborate joke.") Recognising that Lévi-Strauss was concerned with deriving a model to serve numerous cultures, we can consider his comments on cooking.

"Cooking is a mediatory process of the first order between [natural] meat and [cultural] fire, whereas cultivated plants — which are already in their raw state the result of a mediation between nature and culture — are subjected by cooking only to derivative and partial mediation" (Lévi-Strauss [1966]1973:303). For clarification of "mediation" we need to turn to his other work (Lévi-Strauss [1968]1978:479-80) where he remarks: "Roasted food, being directly exposed to fire is in a relationship of *non-mediatised conjunction*, whereas boiled food is the product of a two-fold process of mediation: it is immersed in water and both food and water are contained in a receptacle." Devotees of Lévi-Strauss will recognise that this later discussion is part of the logic behind his "culinary triangle" where the roast can be placed on the side of nature, and the boiled on the side of culture due to the use of a receptacle. This kind of logic rests upon culture being defined in metallic terms, but if an iron bar (still less, a piece of hard wood) is used to hold the meat near the fire, it still counts as "nature." According to this approach those who may have suspended a joint in hot spring water until cooked cannot ask for this to rank for consideration as a *cultural* technique.

But the basic approach within the culinary triangle is a useful one and we can discard what is irrelevant to an advanced cooking system, replace it with what is, and, if necessary, build up into a third dimension.

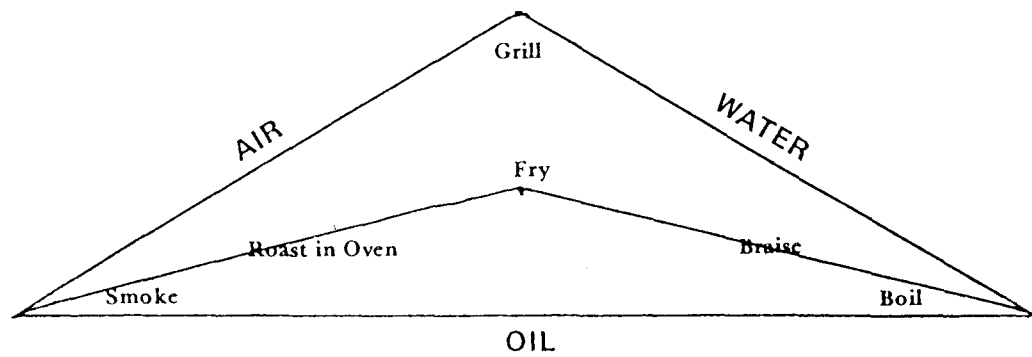
At this stage it is appropriate to briefly remind ourselves about the original culinary triangle proposed by Lévi-Strauss ([1968]1978:490). (See Figure 5.) He did not assert that "all cooking systems conform to this model" but dissatisfaction with its inability to reflect "one [any?] aspect of the system current in our own society" has motivated some to propose alternatives. Of these Lehrer (1972:169) (see Figure 6) comes nearest to what will later be propounded as a more practical model. If we are to use Lehrer's proposal as a stepping stone, we had better see how firm it is.

Figure 5. The Culinary Triangle (Lévi-Strauss)



Source: Lévi-Strauss, 1968, translation 1978, p. 490.

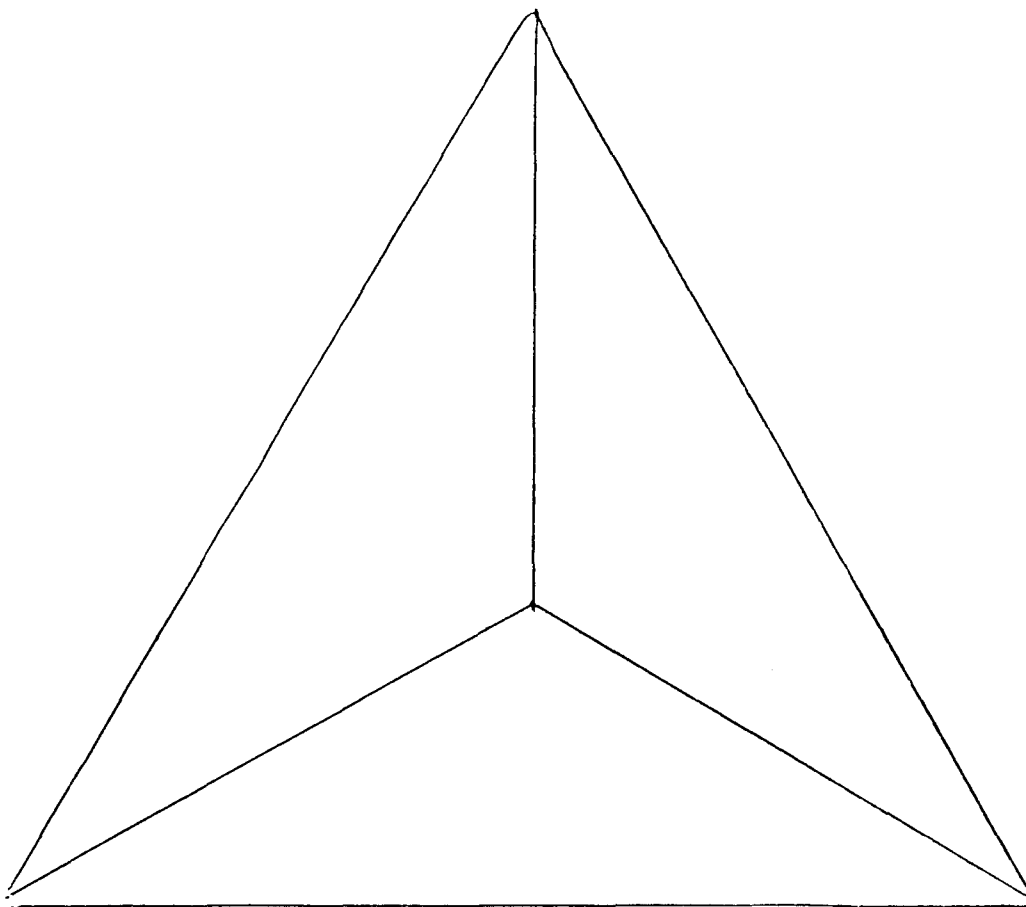
Figure 6. Lehrer's Tetrahedron



Source: Lehrer 1972, p. 169

Lehrer's tetrahedron — is it one? This model of the culinary process (see Figure 6) requires some comment. The plan (bird's-eye view) of any tetrahedron will surely be similar to the basic outline of Figure 7 even if it is not equal-sided. Thus Lehrer has presented a geometric figure impossible to construct from her blueprint! Goody (1982:219) reproduced Lehrer's model with slightly more equality to the base dimensions, but it still looks like a folded napkin, or perhaps like some kind of tent!

Figure 7. Plan (Bird's Eye View) of any Equal-sided Tetrahedron



The first point that needs to be made concerns the significance of the various dimensions. If the bases of the three triangles derived from differential perspectives from side elevation are intended to be longer than their sides, there ought to be some reasons given if the scales:

fry — boil
 fry — smoke
 fry — grill

are meant to be shorter than the bases we need to know why. These bases are:

OIL smoke: boil
 WATER grill: boil
 AIR smoke: grill

We will need to appraise their collocation with "fry."

From a strictly operational view there remains in Lehrer's model the prime cause of discontent felt by any thinking *gros-bonnet* which has not been eliminated from that of Lévi-Strauss. Those items requiring to be *smoked* are processed prior to their arrival in the kitchen and represent a small, almost insignificant proportion of the *mets* produced. The main reason for excluding smoking from the major axes of any model of culinary processes is that it is a method of food preservation akin to pickling, sousing, and parallel with brining. As with selecting *frying* versus other cooking techniques as a third dimension of a larger model, there has to be considerable justification for its inclusion.

This writer is content to incorporate air, oil, and water within a two-dimensional representation of the culinary system and welcomes the exclusion of *the rotten* from Lehrer's account of it. For the purpose of the present discussion of an advanced culinary system it is inappropriate to base reasoning on the statement by Lévi-Strauss ([1968]1978:478) that "Food presents itself to man in three main states: it may be raw, cooked or rotten." In European kitchens the rotten receives no consideration, and we would be wasting time to explain why here. Far better, then, to come to grips with explanations of what exists.

The anomaly within Lehrer's model, *vis-à-vis* air, oil, and water, is *fry*, and in two respects. The parent methods of cookery are roasting, frying, and boiling; hence air, oil, and water. If one selects *fry* as the component to provide a third dimension, there has to be justification, which has not been satisfactorily elaborated. The logical alternative has to be temperature since to select a single cookery method above all others, and any other alternatives, is to be awry.

Towards a new model. Accepting that Lehrer's diagram (Figure 6) actually represents a somewhat flat pyramid, it would be as well to pursue this approach. However, some clarification is necessary of her locations of specific cookery techniques.

Due to the limitations of two dimensions as a maximum in the graphic illustration we will need to consider each side separately and in relation to its specific adjacent sides. In terms of Lehrer's model we ought to relocate the methods given. It is accepted that Lehrer has devised a model to cover a variety of (cooking) languages; and we are devising one for the European (cookery) languages (very generally), British (generally) and *Franglais*. (Specifically: this is taken to mean the British interpretation of *haute cuisine*!)

Looking at Figure 8(A), the oil side of Lehrer's model, we find that "roast in oven" is to the air side of "fry" if the interpretation is correct. This seems acceptable, and we look to see if "grill" is at the same height and on the oil side of Figure 8(B). As it turns out it is located at the base (along with roast and smoke), but on the water side. Thus the base does not reflect temperature if roast and smoke are collocated

there, but "roast in oven" was quite near to "fry" at the apex, and you cannot fry effectively in cold oil. Does this imply that fry is not heat specific?

There is a further brace of anomalies when the water side (Figure 8(C)) is considered. "Braise" is higher than steam (hotter?), but it must be oily according to this location. "Steam" is a little nearer to the air side as opposed to being located in the centre, but it could be level with braise, and well over to the right. A new model is therefore required which does not assume that one specific cookery method (in Lehrer's case, fry) is common to all dimensions considered. It seems appropriate to continue Lehrer's general approach, but to ensure that distance between concepts reflects the relationship between them as well as their general positioning. Thus, an equilateral tetrahedron (it would be so much easier to refer to it as a pyramid) can represent the framework for the three dimensional model whereby the sides conform to the pattern outlined so far (air, oil and water); and where each of the sides represents an equilateral triangle with high temperatures at apex, and normal, cold temperatures at base. Figure 9 provides a view of two sides of the pyramid while Figure 10 provides the plan, or bird's eye view.

Seeing that most of the terms have been explained, or are taken as being understood, we can position them on the ordinary pyramid for the purpose of deriving a model of British haute cuisine. In order to provide for a later debate of the wider culinary considerations it will be seen that smoked items can be accommodated, but rotten and raw are not featured for reasons discussed elsewhere in this paper. As a bonus some other primary processes, such as brining, are included in square brackets and should not be taken as cookery methods.

Keeping to the continuum barely boiling to saute, we need to consider the WATER side of the pyramid (Figure 11). The positioning of any word is vital within this approach, and boil is higher than poach. "Poeler" is bracketed on the AIR side of the triangle (and is hotter than braise) as the lid is removed, as previously identified, and cooking liquids are then basted over the item. In Figure 12 poeler is on the water side of AIR as the process is carried out in an oven using stock.

Figure 12 considers AIR where the hottest technique is grilling placed towards the OIL side, as a lubricant is required to prevent searing, and later, burning. "Gratination" is somewhat a subsidiary technique, but as cheese is more oil than it is water, it is located accordingly. "Papillotte" demands a greaseproof paper envelope containing moist ingredients, e.g., *duxelles chopped mushroom, etc.*, and is thus placed on the WATER side of the triangle.

It is evident from Figure 13 that the use of OIL demands high temperatures and none of the heat treatments conjoins with WATER. Those using the open pan are, of course, on the AIR side.

Figure 8. Lehrer's Tetrahedron Analysed

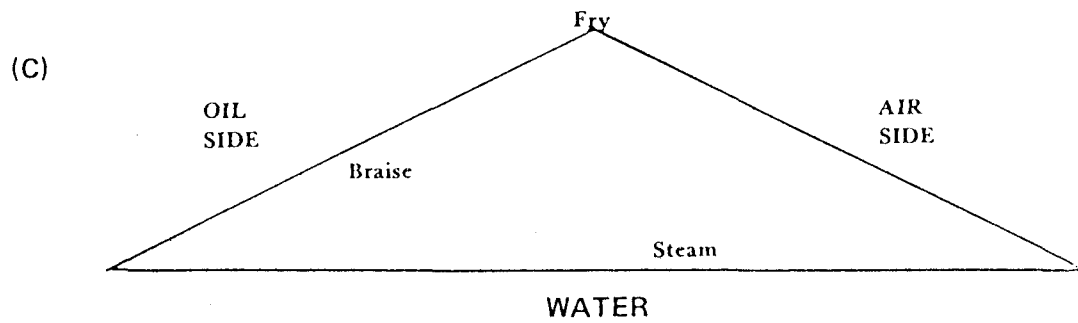
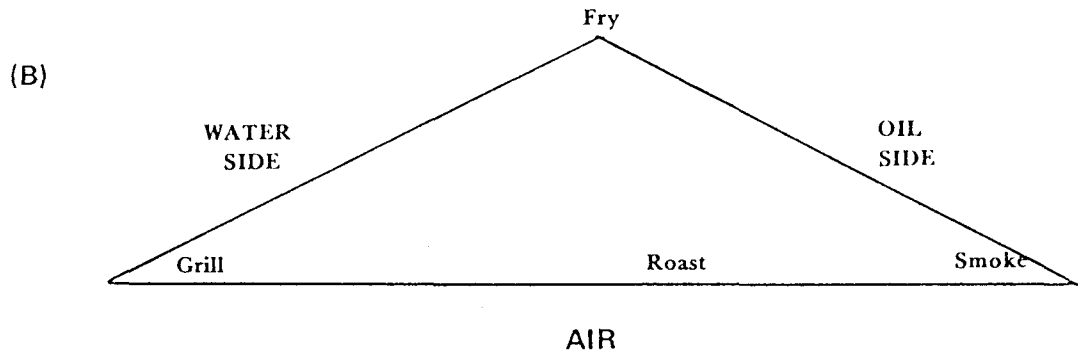
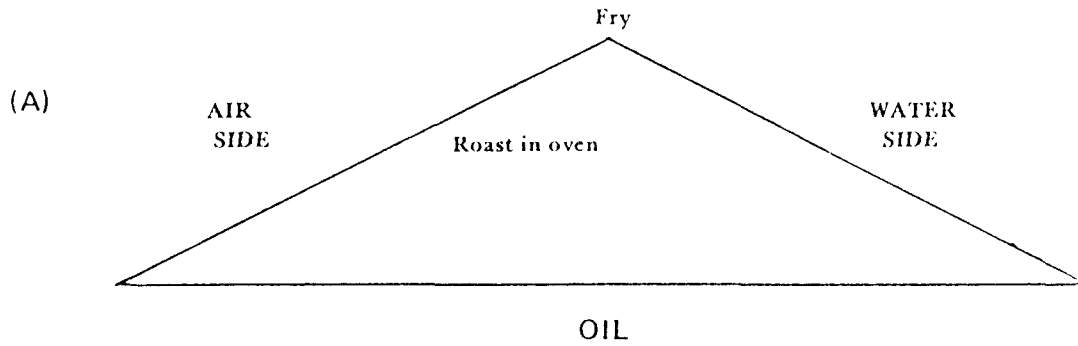


Figure 9. The Culinary Pyramid

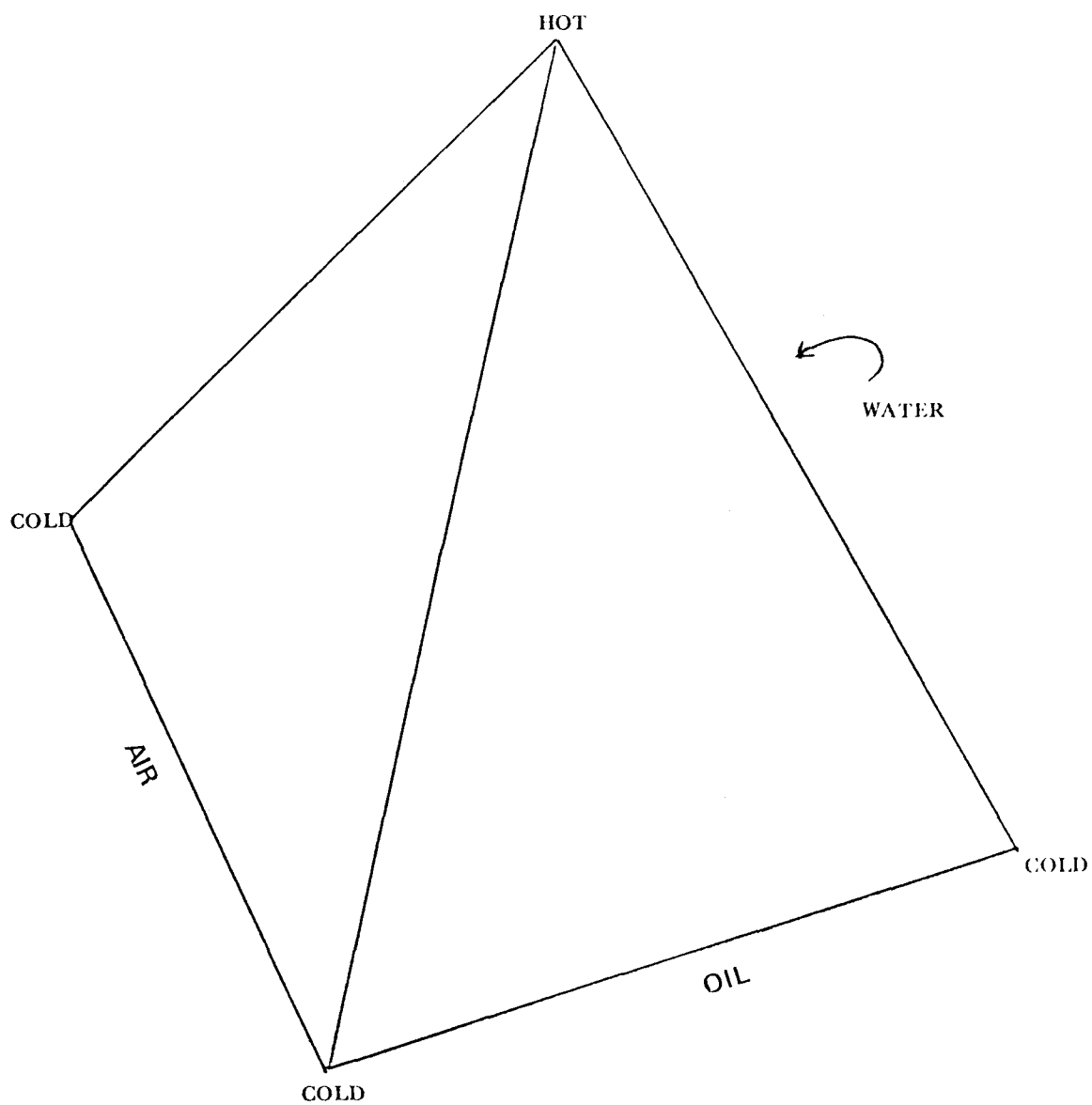
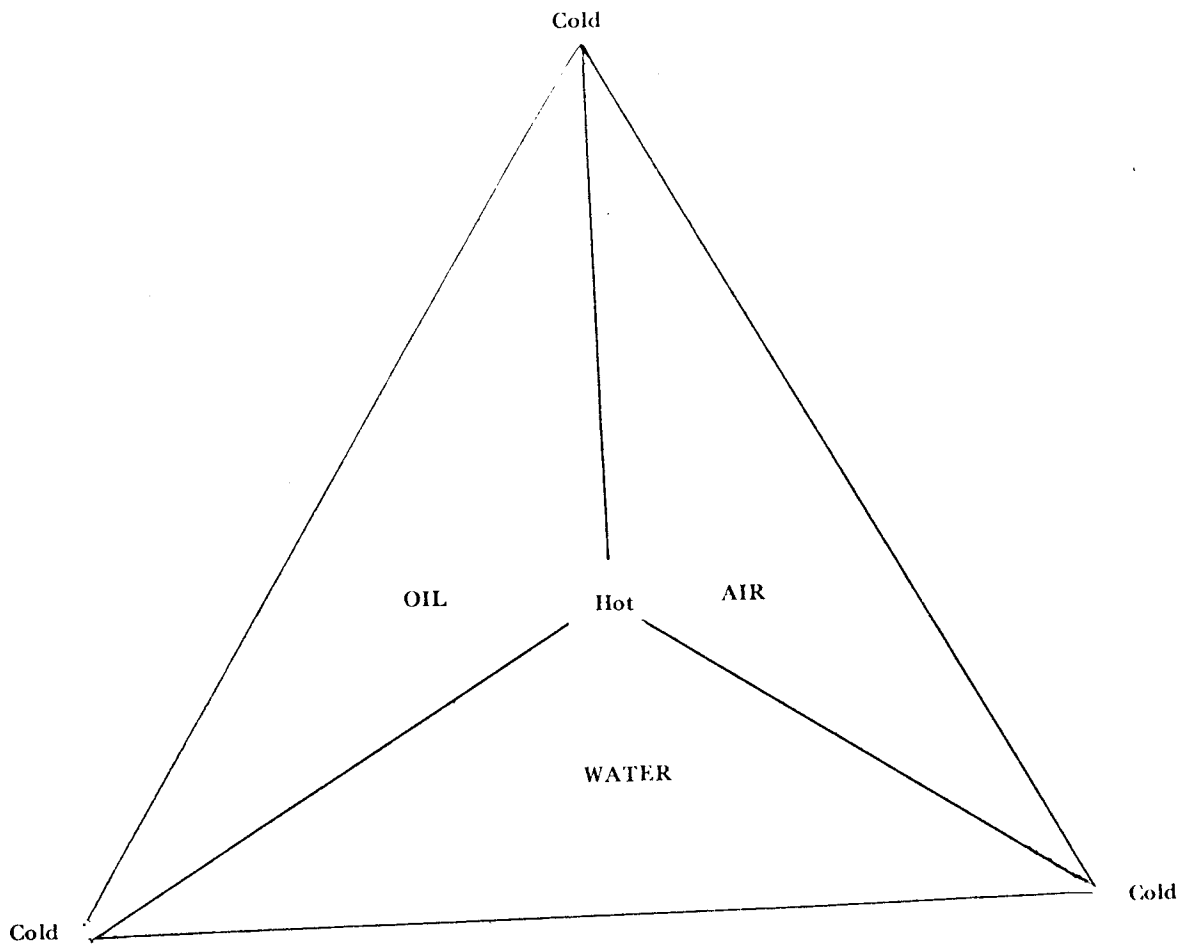


Figure 10. The Culinary Pyramid (Plan)



Equal-sided Tetrahedral model where base indicates (Normal) COLD and apex indicates HOT

Figure 11. The Water Side of the Culinary Pyramid

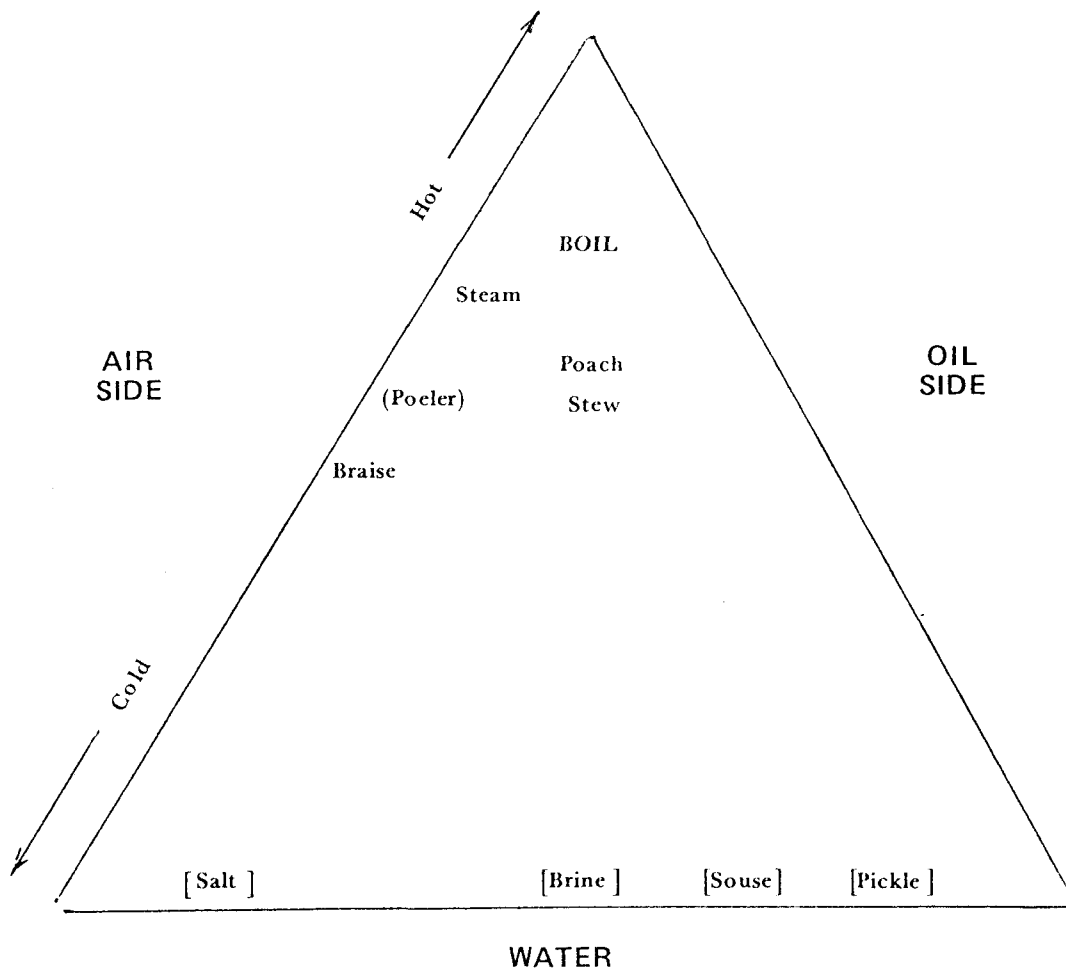


Figure 12. The Air Side of the Culinary Pyramid

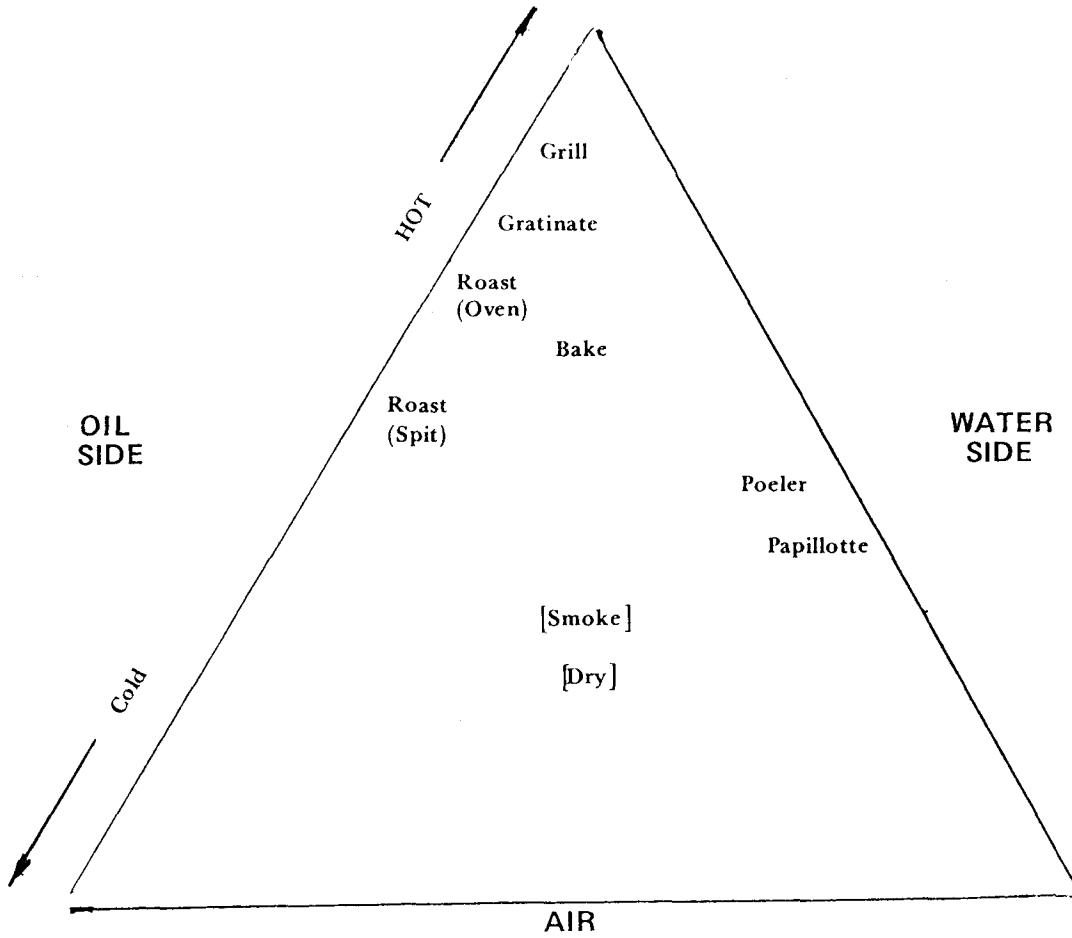
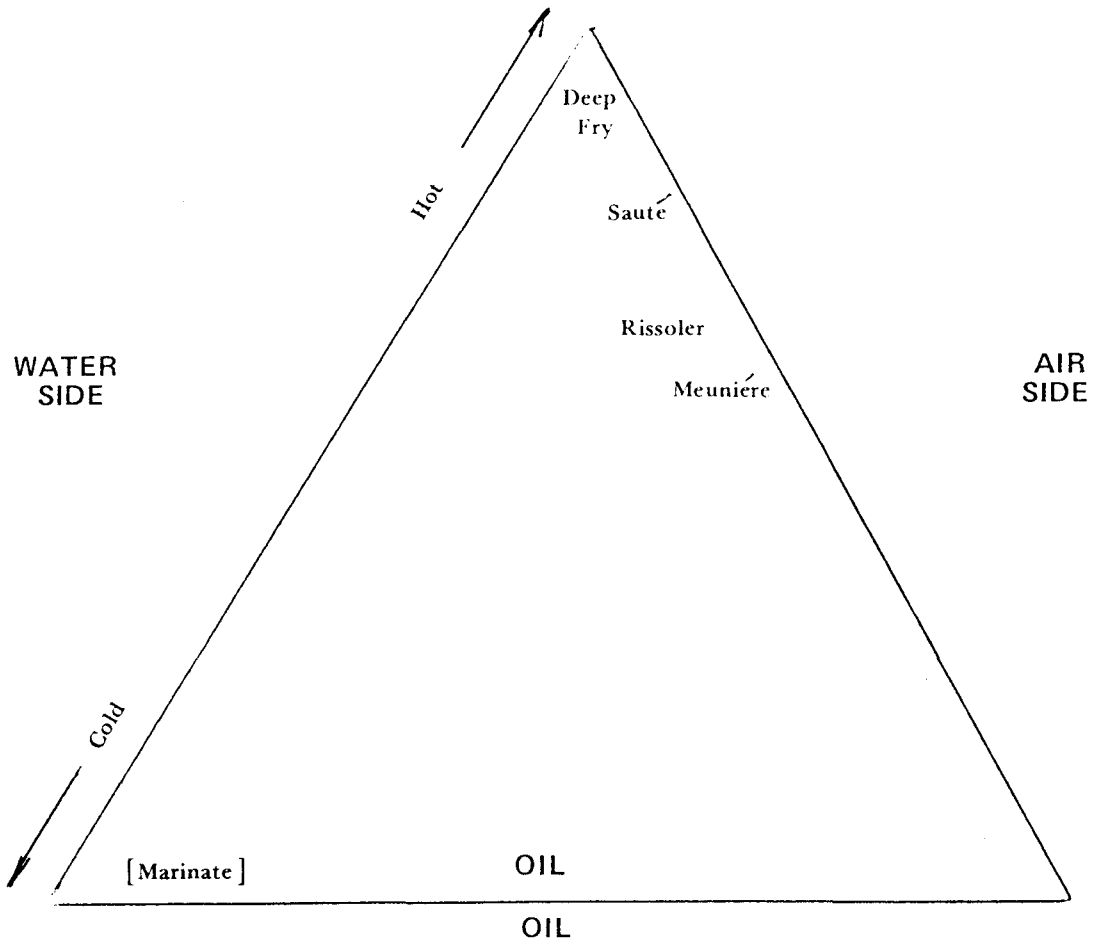


Figure 13. The Oil Side of the Culinary Pyramid



The three components of this model fall towards each other to form a culinary pyramid which, in the absence of a photograph, will have to be imagined. It represents the basis for further models of specific cuisines and may confirm that water, air, and oil are universal, and each has to be considered in terms of temperature. Where raw foods (in the European sense) are prominent they can be placed towards the base of the pyramid and in the context of their treatment (are soused herrings raw? — the fact that they are not cooked does not make them raw): sousing makes the inedible become edible but edibility, as has been identified, is culturally determined.

Conclusion. We have considered *the rotten* and have done justice to *the cooked*. *The raw*, in the context of haute cuisine, has to be considered in terms of the market demand which itself can be appraised using anthropological approaches. The raw within haute cuisine has but a single representative in steak tartar *chopped fillet steak, seasoning, etc.*, while Chateaubriand au bleu *double fillet steak, in this case served very rare*, cannot be far from being raw. Which foods, and in what sense they are accepted as being edible in the raw state, are culturally determined. Roast beef is a further candidate for consideration. To include the raw as an important aspect of British haute cuisine would be erroneous.

In a wide-ranging discussion we have considered the theorist and the practitioners and ideally have reached a point midway between their view points. The complexities of the haute cuisine on its own side of the English Channel have only been hinted at by looking briefly at the advanced culinary system adopted by the British. A three-dimensional model has been proposed, and until some computer can help us with the fourth dimension we may have to remain content with the pyramide culinaire. The only potential remaining in the meantime might be the Rubik crouton!

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