

Spring 5-18-2012

The Food Court in the Magic Kingdom: Globalization, Cuisine and Attitudes in Saudi Arabia

Klaus Heyer
University of New Orleans, kheyer@uno.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>



Part of the [Politics and Social Change Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Heyer, Klaus, "The Food Court in the Magic Kingdom: Globalization, Cuisine and Attitudes in Saudi Arabia" (2012). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 1442.
<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/1442>

This Dissertation is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by ScholarWorks@UNO with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Dissertation in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Dissertation has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uno.edu.

The Food Court in the Magic Kingdom: Globalization, Cuisine and Attitudes in Saudi Arabia

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
In
Urban Studies

by

Klaus Heyer

B.A. Rhode Island College, 1994
M.A. San Jose State University, 1996
M.S. University of Rhode Island, 1999

May, 2012

Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee, David Gladstone, David Beriss, Claire Thoreson, and Patrick Haughey. Each of them provided their valuable time and guidance throughout the dissertation process. Special thanks go out to David Gladstone, my committee chair, who encouraged and motivated me from our first meeting.

I would not have been able to complete this dissertation without the assistance of Sara Al-Dahir and Holly Al-Dahir, whose knowledge of both Arab and American culture provided keen insight and inspiration. I am forever grateful to them. Finally I would like to extend thanks to Alaa Khalil for assisting me in the translation process and Ahmed Bashi, who provided insight and direction.

Table of Contents

List of figures	iv
List of tables	v
Abstract	vi
Preface	1
Chapter 1 Introduction	4
<i>Questions</i>	11
<i>Why Saudi Arabia</i>	12
<i>Chapter Outline</i>	14
Chapter 2 Culture	16
<i>Gulf Arab Culture</i>	23
<i>Americanization as a Second Culture</i>	28
<i>Culture and Globalization</i>	30
<i>Food as a Political Statement</i>	34
Chapter 3 National Cuisine	37
<i>Cuisine and Colonization</i>	42
<i>Cuisine and Identity</i>	44
<i>Gulf Arab Cuisine</i>	48
Chapter 4 Globalization	53
<i>Today's Globalization</i>	55
<i>Homogenization</i>	57
<i>Glocalization</i>	60
<i>The Global Food market and Diet</i>	63
<i>McDonald's as a Symbol of Globalization</i>	67
<i>Saudi Views of Globalization</i>	68
Chapter 5 Methodology	72
<i>Quantitative Data</i>	73
<i>Sample Size</i>	81
<i>Surveys</i>	83
<i>Validity and Generalizability</i>	85
<i>Qualitative Data</i>	88
Chapter 6 Findings	93
<i>Quantitative Findings</i>	93
<i>Descriptive Data</i>	94
<i>Independent Variables</i>	98
<i>Qualitative findings</i>	109
Chapter 7 Conclusion	127
<i>Limitations and Difficulties</i>	132
<i>Future Research</i>	134
References	135
Appendices	147
<i>Appendix A- Survey</i>	148
<i>Appendix B- Sample Survey in Arabic</i>	150
Vita	152

List of Figures

Figure 1.1, McDonald's, Riyadh.....	10
Figure 1.2, Residential Street in Al-Aqrabiyyah, Khobar	13
Figure 2.2, Saudi National Emblem.....	21
Figure 2.2, Saudi Burger	30
Figure 2.3, Protest against Danish Cheese.....	36
Figure 3.1, End Cap at Panda Hypermarket, Khobar	47
Figure 3.2, Saudi Breakfast.....	50
Figure 3.3, Light Saudi Dinner	51
Figure 4.1, Popeyes.....	58
Figure 4.2, McArabia.....	62
Figure 5.1, Burger King.....	74
Figure 5.2, Traditional Restaurant	75
Figure 5.3, Bukhari Restaurant	76
Figure 5.4, Vegetable Stall.....	77
Figure 5.5, Fruit Section, Carrefour Hypermarket.....	78
Figure 5.6, Saudi Arabian Top Five Import Partners in 2008	81
Figure 6.1, Safeway	110
Figure 6.2, Traditional Vegetable Market.....	111
Figure 6.3, Traditional Meat Market.....	115
Figure 6.4, Doux Chicken.....	116
Figure 6.5, Corner Vegetable Market	119
Figure 6.6, Rashid Mall	120
Figure 6.7, Shwaiat Al-khalij.....	122
Figure 7.1, Gulf Fried Chicken	131

List of Tables

Table 6.1, Summary of Variables	95
Table 6.2, Summary of Variable Averages.....	96
Table 6.3, Summary of Odds Ratios.....	97
Table 6.4, Favorite Restaurant with Time Spent on Internet, Television	98
Table 6.5, Second-Favorite Restaurant with Time Spent on Internet, Television.....	98
Table 6.6, Purchasing Vegetables in a Traditional Market on Internet, Television	98
Table 6.7, Purchasing Meat in a Traditional Market on Internet, Television.....	98
Table 6.8, Favorite Restaurant with Time Spent in Select Countries.....	100
Table 6.9, Second-Favorite Restaurant with Time Spent in Select Countries.....	100
Table 6.10, Purchasing Vegetables in Trad. Mkt. with Time Spent in Select Countries	101
Table 6.11, Purchasing Meat in Trad. Mkt. with Time Spent in Select Countries	101
Table 6.12, Favorite Restaurant with Feelings towards Select Countries	102
Table 6.13, Second-Favorite Restaurant with Feelings towards Select Countries	102
Table 6.14, Purchasing Meat in Trad. Mkt. with Feelings towards Select Countries	103
Table 6.15, Purchasing Veg. in Trad. Mkt. with Feelings towards Select Countries	103
Table 6.16, Favorite Restaurant with What One Listens to in the Car	104
Table 6.17, Second-Favorite Restaurant with What One Listens to in the Car	104
Table 6.18, Purchasing Meat in Trad. Mkt. with What One Listens to in the Car	104
Table 6.19, Purchasing Veg. in Trad. Mkt. with What One Listens to in the Car.....	104
Table 6.20, Favorite Restaurant with Age	105
Table 6.21, Second-Favorite Restaurant with Age	105
Table 6.22, Purchasing Meat in a Traditional Market with Age	105
Table 6.23, Purchasing Vegetables in a Traditional Market with Age.....	105
Table 6.24, Favorite Restaurant with Education.....	105
Table 6.25, Second-Favorite Restaurant with Education.....	105
Table 6.26, Purchasing Meat in a Traditional Market with Education	106
Table 6.27, Purchasing Vegetables in a Traditional Market with Education	106
Table 6.28, Favorite Restaurant with Price, Taste, and Cleanliness.....	107
Table 6.29, Second Favorite Restaurant with Price, Taste, and Cleanliness	107

Abstract

In the last twenty years, Saudi Arabia has been modernizing much faster and in a shorter period than the majority of the world's countries. This study seeks to examine factors that influence the diet of Saudi Arabians. Aside from language, one of the principal manifestations of culture is a country's cuisine.

I sought to determine whether factors, such as exposure to other countries, an income increase, or simply the desire to diversify the palette have led to a change in diet.

This mixed-methods study employed 148 surveys looking at attitudes towards the United States and other countries, travel abroad, age, religiousness, and the influence of television and the Internet. These variables were correlated against where food is bought and dining preference. Fifteen in-depth interviews examined longitudinal changes in traditional vegetable and meat markets since the arrival of the hypermarket.

Findings indicate that the recent introduction of a multitude of foreign restaurants and foods into Saudi Arabia is not a new story, but only a new chapter in a book written by Saudi merchants. The Gulf Arabs are known, and have been known for millennia, as traders. I put forward that Saudi businessmen are the agents of change not multinational corporations. The presence of these restaurants and hypermarkets is due largely to pull, not push factors. If their culture is dramatically changing, then it is at the behest of Saudi Arabians themselves.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, Globalization, Cuisine, Culture, Restaurants

Preface

Throughout my childhood, the rich and diverse patchwork of the Middle East was only known to me as a homogenous area somewhere “east.” My education of the geographical and sociological underpinnings of the Middle East was refracted through the lens of various conflicts as reported by Tom Brokaw on the nightly news.

As I write this, a vastly different type of news, but not necessarily better, involves the country and the personality which first sparked my interest in the region—Libya. The country whose uncomplicated all-green flag allowed me to demonstrate my lethargy for my high-school social studies assignment by simply tearing out a green sheet of construction paper and taping it to the classroom wall. It turned out that the “mad man of the east,” as U.S. President Ronald Reagan called Moammar Qadhafi, authored a “green book.” I was curious how “mad men” become leaders of countries, so I wrote the Libyan U.N mission in New York asking where I can find this book. Many months later I came home to find the book waiting for me on my doorstep with a signed card inside.¹

I read the Green Book and a couple of others Qadhafi wrote. I found those essays quite insightful at the time. The book is meant as a universal, all-encompassing guide to every matter governing society. I guess if you are going to compete with Chairman Mao's Red Book, it should be comprehensive. I have long forgotten the content of that book but it was my first look through the mind of “the other” and from that point on I wondered what “the other” thought of Tom Brokaw, or of me for that matter.

¹ Although signed by Qadhafi, I assume it was signed on his behalf by the embassy.

I have been traveling to the Middle East for about twelve years now. In that time I have visited Arab countries such as Morocco, Kuwait, and Bahrain. I have been to Egypt more than once; I have lived in both Saudi Arabia and Qatar in both a western compound and a typical lower-income apartment. I often spend extended periods in Amman, Jordan and I am as comfortable there as I am in my own home.

My journeys to the Arab world began with a desire for a change. Having finished graduate school I was looking to do something different for a year and was offered a job teaching English in Saudi Arabia. Having no experience teaching English but the right passport (that being American or British) and a native American accent, I was quickly offered a job and within two weeks I was living in Saudi Arabia; a place so surreal that expats call it the “magic kingdom” because sometimes you don't know quite where you are.

Since that time I have learned to read and write Arabic and can speak enough to navigate society. The local butcher where I stay in Amman tells me that he has never heard someone speak such bad Arabic so fluently. I have spent many nights with dear friends in their homes, at their desert camps, their weddings and funerals. I have experienced their quick tempers and their remarkable patience. I have seen their cruelty and their warm hospitality. I learned that the Arabs, as a people, cannot be cast into any mold. Their customs can often seem confusing. They live in walled-off houses yet one of their children might eat off your plate in a restaurant. Many are quick to count pennies but give you a dollar. Saudis tolerate nothing less than the coldest rooms and beverages but relish the fresh air of the 110-degree desert on the weekends.

The anthropologist Raphael Pitai wrote a book in 1973 called *The Arab Mind*. Among his characterizations of Arabs: they are motivated by shame, preoccupied by sex, and predisposed to violence. It is still considered a “must read” by those interested in Arab culture and I still find

students and researchers discussing this book at lectures, universities, or even at a recent embassy dinner.² Yet if those discussing the book went out into the Arab societies in which they studied, they would find a fundamental flaw in Pitai's work—that the Arab people, spread from Iraq to Morocco, are not so easily generalized. Even if we take such generalizations at face value, they could be characteristic of many societies. A visitor to the Arab world would find Arab society tribal, but extremely diverse, and more importantly, a fluid society. An Omani is as different from an Egyptian as an American is to a Zimbabwean. Both share the same language, but are different peoples with vastly different cultures. It is these differences and interactions between Saudis and other Arabs or Saudis and westerners that continuously grab my attention and pull me back to this region to witness the predictably unpredictable and rapidly changing country of Saudi Arabia.

² This particular occasion was at the American embassy in Doha, Qatar.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The sweeping sand dunes of the Arabian Peninsula bring to the American imagination images of women wrapped in black shrouds and men draped in desert robes, their *ghutras* wound around their noses and mouths, as they lead caravans through the endless, trackless desert. The image is romantic, compelling and dated. Saudi Arabia is currently struggling with a heritage and tradition whose origin dates to the first humans who left Africa and trekked across its vast landscape to settle the world's continents. The ancient culture of this peninsula later gave rise to the world's second most populous religion, Islam. Islam propelled the Arabian Peninsula to the forefront of an expansionist empire that encompassed both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. It is this heritage, the source of prideful prejudice, which propels the kingdom into the modern age, yet this country finds its roots tightly coiled around the ancient culture that first glorified this land.

Since independence in 1932, Saudi Arabia projected its importance to the non Islamic world from its globally coveted natural resource, light crude. Saudi Arabia possesses 20% of the earth's proven oil reserves. The oil bonanza attracted the Western Oil conglomerates who established their hold on the kingdom's oil fields by placing in power local tribal leaders who were willing to grant exclusive production rights in exchange for armed support and a cut of company profits. The companies maintained friendly ties with their protégées but did little to project a positive public image of their hosts in their home countries. Western opinion remained uninformed and biased. As wealth accumulated in the pockets of the local Western backed leaders, images of a dissolute, bigoted, backward country soaked in oil wealth, which promoted religious and gender intolerances, leaked into the Western Media. This image gained new

negative implications when the country unwittingly grabbed the attention of many countries in the West due to perceived involvement in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The United States now finds its precarious and confusing relationship with Saudi Arabia brought more into the light of public opinion.

U.S. presidents have had close friendships with the Saudi monarchy (the Saudi ambassador is the only one with Secret Service protection). Saudi students attend American institutions of higher learning. The privileged Saudi male elite, rich princes and businessmen, spend exorbitant sums of money in the casinos of Las Vegas and the shopping malls of New York City. Religious police roam the streets in Toyota trucks enforcing dress codes and gender segregation, while ignoring the hired males who must chauffeur the driver's license-deprived females.

The relationship of Saudi Arabia to the West may appear confusing. Saudi Arabia seems to be simultaneously a friend, trade partner, investor, promoter of Islamic extremism, and financier of terrorism. Some argue that Saudi actions and attitudes lean toward the side of anti-Western interests. Some assert that the country is evolving, albeit slowly, on a Western influenced model. Others argue that the country intends to socially stagnate in millennia old principles that will eventually stunt Western progress in the peninsula. The identity of the Saudi nation and the course of its future are being questioned by the Saudis themselves. These are the questions with which the Saudi people are dealing and the questions that have sparked the interest of many social scientists.

When one first visits the country, one notices the lack of Western attire usually associated with non-Western third world countries interested in attaining first world status. Men dressed in their *thobes* and *ghutras* prominently parade on the sidewalks, while women anxious to remain

unnoticed, scurry from store to store in their black *abayas* and face covering *niqabs*. A very rare public execution may draw a crowd of curious men to a public square. The streets are crowded with late model autos whose owners are convinced that the most critical implement for guiding a vehicle is the car horn. Amid this flurry of automobiles, a herd of camels might leisurely cross a highway, ignoring the urgings of the automobiles they have halted. As for the routine of the business day, all businesses, government offices, and other buildings close and lock for 20 minutes before and 10 minutes after each of the five daily prayers.

The Saudi scene is unlike that of other Arab countries. For example, one would not find Arab street vendors selling food like in Casablanca or any other Moroccan city. The traditional coffee shops of Damascus or the lively theaters of Cairo are absent in Saudi Arabian cities. Although Islam plays a role in many Arab governments and societies, it is in Saudi Arabia that the *mutawa* (religious police) roam the streets and shopping centers looking for the Saudi version of religious offenders: couples holding hands, men with long hair, or any practice they deem as un-Islamic.³ However, on closer inspection one would begin to see subtle changes in the appearance and actions of some Saudis. Some men are not wearing the white dress-like thobe and headdress that most Saudi males wear. Some sport western style suits. It is not uncommon to hear the musical disharmony of Lady Gaga from their I-Pods or catch them viewing Oprah Winfrey and Baywatch reruns on satellite television. Yet, in the markets, a cadre of government employees painstakingly blackens out the faces of women in all the magazines. The Internet is widely available, but closely monitored and censored. Hospitals are equipped with more updated

³ Some actions worthy of their attention I have witnessed: playing music too loudly, not going to the mosque in time for prayer, and selling clown wigs at the mall. The mutaween (plural for mutawa) are employed by the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

technology than found in most American health care facilities. Nevertheless, bureaucrats still require the archaic system of stamping a photograph stapled to a handwritten form on many government documents.

Such is the caught-between-two-worlds condition in which Saudi Arabia finds itself. It is one of the most insular societies in the world, but must find a culturally acceptable means to invest its vast revenues created by the oil boom. The country must modernize, as would be the quest of any country awash in oil wealth, yet retain intact the culture and heritage which allows it to be uniquely Saudi as well as connected with its traditions and history. Globalization cannot be an effective means of bringing the country into the world market and modern society if it is viewed as a new form of western imperialism with its Trojan horse satellite dishes and retail outlets. Some like Henry (2003) and Hutchings (2004) do not question whether Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf⁴ are changing with globalization, but how the region will deal with this inevitability.

Saudi Arabia has been experiencing rapid economic growth since the 1970s while at the same time decreasing its manufactured exports (i.e. petrochemicals, plastics) and direct investment (Marcus and Pack 2008). Although little else than oil leaves Saudi Arabia, an estimated six million foreign workers reside in the country to do the jobs Saudis are unable or unwilling to do (Freeman 2006). Consequently, millions of Indian and Filipino laborers live crammed in the back alleys of Riyadh while American and British oil workers live in walled developments imported, down to the toilet seat, from America.⁵

⁴ The term Gulf Arab, or the (Arabian) Gulf (al-Khaleej) is not only used to describe the Persian Gulf, but the countries of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

⁵ The prime example is the Aramco compound in Dhahran. This exact replica of a Californian city was created by importing everything needed to make the guest worker feel at home.

In many ways, outside influences had already been arriving in Saudi Arabia long before this current phase. Supermarkets, restaurants, and western bookstores were all brought in to accommodate western oil workers. The educated among the Saudis began to learn English in hopes of landing a lucrative oil-field job. Indian, Bengali, and other laborers brought their customs, language, and cuisine and helped to create a style of English and Arabic understood only in the Arabian Gulf.⁶ Oil wealth has allowed many ordinary Saudis to vacation in Britain, the United States, and many other parts of the world.

However, interviews conducted with many Saudis on the streets reveal that real change began in the 1980s with satellite television and, more recently, with the availability of the Internet. The combination of petrol currency and foreign advertising created an appetite for foreign products. These cravings have been satisfied by enormous and elaborate shopping malls rivaled by only the largest in the United States. This was the beginning of the Saudi experience with this latest wave of globalization. Friedman (2005) refers to globalization as a “flat world” (his way of saying the world is smaller) and attributes such flattening to the global diffusion fiber optic cables, the Internet, telephones, and satellite television. Many Saudis would agree. In the last twenty years, Saudi Arabia has modernized at a more rapid pace and in a shorter period of time than did the West. This modernization has brought technologies like computers and mobile phones, which have benefited the population. At the same time, many Saudis find globalization⁷ an affront to their culture. A common saying amongst the people there is “we used

⁶ Foreign workers arrive with no knowledge of Arabic while most Saudis speak only Arabic. Forced interaction has created a simplistic form of both English and especially Arabic which often makes no grammatical sense, but it is understood by both parties.

⁷ I am not equating modernization with globalization but suggesting they are linked in the case of Saudi Arabia. I discuss this further in chapter four.

to eat dates and drink camel's milk and we can go back to it." But few Saudis would be anxious to re-create the social conditions in which their ancestors lived.

In the milieu of this frantically paced social change, diet has become a social factor as Saudis tote up the health pluses and minuses associated with adopting western food habits. The flow of westernized goods into Saudi Arabia coupled with an increase in the standards of living of some segments of society may mean that westernized problems will follow. A concern is that this could lead to a rise in obesity with accompanying non-communicable, diet-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

One startling fact is that of the one million people on planet earth that die of diabetes each year two-thirds are in the developing world. Six out of the top ten causes of mortality in the United States are attributable or influenced by nutrition. According to the Center of Disease Control, 28% of all mortality in the United States was caused by cardiovascular disease in 2003. Five of the top ten causes of death can be attributed to non-communicable diseases which are influenced at least partly by diet. Diabetes has been linked to a western diet, which in the study by Van Darn (2003) was characterized by a diet high in consumption of red meat, processed meat, French fries, high-fat dairy products, refined grains, sweets and desserts.

According to Hossein (2007), the prevalence of diabetes will more than double within the next 20 years in many parts of the Arab world while King (2000) maintains the number of people with diabetes in Saudi Arabia is expected to rise to over 10% of the population by 2025. Although the reasons for this are varied, the authors cite diet, physical inactivity, and obesity as factors correlating with diabetes. Mansour et al. (2004) reported even higher diabetes rates of 23% when studying people over 30 years of age. The mortality rate from cardiovascular disease in Saudi Arabia has been recently estimated at 144 per 100,000 (35% of all deaths) (Kumosani et

al. 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO 2003) has estimated that 2-6% of health care costs in developed countries are due to diet behaviors. A fitting question is whether Saudi Arabia might experience a similar trend (see Al-Rethaiaa 2010; Alseif 2002).

Another implication of a changing diet is that it may be a measure of a changing culture. Saudi culture has apparently changed more rapidly in the last few decades than it did previous to the oil boom. This is not due not only to oil wealth, but to globalization. Saudi eating habits are apparently one principal manifestation of these cultural changes (see figure 1.1). Aside from language, food is one of the strongest forces defining a culture. Farb and Armelagos (1980) explain that cultural traits, national identities and histories, and social institutions cannot be fully understood without the comprehension of a society's forms of eating. Belasco (2008, pg. 1) writes "food identifies who we are, where we come from, and what we want to be."

Figure 1.1- McDonald's, Riyadh. The Saudi Arabian flag—with its declaration of belief in one God—waves next to that of the McDonald's corporation



Source: Author

This study seeks to examine factors that influence the diet of Saudi Arabians. My objective is to discover the extent that factors such as exposure to non-Middle Eastern countries, an increase in income, and the desire to diversify the palette have led to a change in their diet. This study also seeks to observe the nature of these changes. Perhaps there is an increase in fast food restaurant dining or a move towards microwave meals as some suggest (Washi 2010; Al-Rethaiaa 2010). The Saudi market has liberalized over the last 20 years and there has been an increase in the flow of goods into the country including food items. The McDonald's Arabia alone has opened 120 restaurants in Saudi Arabia since 1993 (McDonald's Arabia 2012).

Questions

This dissertation has sought to answer the following questions:

1) What is the extent of interplay among globalization, culture, and cuisine? What are the implications for Saudi culture? Also examined is the effect of culture and globalization on cuisine change, in other words, this dissertation examines the independence and interdependence of local culture and globalization as it pertains to cuisine.

2) This research also examines the relationship between the diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures. In other words, is it possible for a Saudi Arabian to eat a hamburger from a U.S.-owned franchise and to dislike the United States? Furthermore, this dissertation examines the degree to which western food is a symbol for acceptance of a particular western country and its culture.

3) Finally, this paper also examines whether dietary changes are more or less pronounced among those who lived in or regularly vacation in other countries. Also of importance are the dietary differences between Al-Khobar, a more liberal coastal city, and Riyadh, the inland capital and center of traditionalism or, as some would claim, Wahabism.

Researchers have studied changing diets in the developing world in general (Delgado 2003; Popkin 2003) but have for the most part not placed their findings within the context of meaning or culture. Others have studied diet in relation to culture in a particular place such as Belize (Wilk 2007), Mexico (Pilcher 2006), Italy (Counihan 2004), Ethiopia (Shack 1977), or Japan (Watson 1995; Bestor 2004).

Whereas the agent of dietary change discussed in some studies was colonization or modernization/mechanization, this dissertation attempts to view globalization as one of the agents of dietary change in addition to globalization's relationship to cultural evolution. There seems to be little work done on globalization and culture in relation to food in the Arabian Gulf and Saudi Arabia in particular. This study attempts to fill this gap in the literature.

Why Saudi Arabia?

If one thinks of the word "globalization" in the Middle East, Dubai or Abu Dhabi may immediately come to mind. An author (Morehouse 2009) recently termed Dubai "Globalization on Steroids." A city that boasts the world's tallest building and contains the only indoor ski slope, Dubai is a financial and trading hub with more than nine times as many expatriates as citizens. Yet, the UAE (including Dubai and Abu Dhabi), Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait are relatively open societies compared with Saudi Arabia.

Saudi citizens are familiar with Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Manama. They visit often but many Saudis are at the same time critical of these places and resist all attempts to copy them. Riyadh or Jeddah is in no way as metropolitan as Dubai and residents of these cities seem proud that they have avoided emulation of these urban landscapes.

Outsiders understand little about life in Saudi Arabia. Typical Saudi homes are miniature compounds with surrounding ten-foot high walls (see figure 1.2). The people are resistant to

allowing strangers into their lives on a level of intimate familiarity. As a consequence, little is written about the Saudi people aside from stereotypical notions of religious zealotry and backwardness.

This researcher has found them to be a people of diversified opinions and attitudes about their country and their place in the larger global community. Even though Saudi traditionalism is a focus factor for both Westerners and Saudis themselves, no one in Saudi Arabia can deny the profound changes taking place around them. It is as if the weight of globalization is cracking the mortar of their walled, fortress-like homes and forcing their inhabitants into the open.

Figure 1.2- Residential Street in Al-Aqrabiyyah, Khobar



Source: Author

An explanation of changing Saudi dietary habits may provide an inference to the larger question of the role of this country in a rapidly shrinking world at a time when the West seems increasingly skeptical and apprehensive about the country and its citizens.

Chapter Outline

In the balance of this dissertation, I first discuss the three guiding relevant topics in my review of the literature: culture, national cuisine, and globalization. I have included these topics as I believe each one influences the others. Both culture and cuisine are imported and, often intentionally, exported. Culture is an important part of cuisine and vice versa. They are not static, but constantly changing, just as they have been for millennia.

The next chapter discusses definitions of culture in general and characteristics of Gulf Arab culture. I then look at literature examining global influences on culture with a particular focus on multinational corporations. I then look at the Americanization of culture and end the chapter with a discussion of relationships between different cultures and how food is often the instrument of these cultural exchanges.

In chapter three I seek to define national cuisine, its importance or lack of importance, and its influences. I examine the role of indigenous and imported food in cuisine and their interaction with a modernizing Saudi Arabia. I then narrow the discussion to Arab cuisine and focus on the cuisine and eating habits of the Gulf Arabs and Saudi Arabians in particular.

The Fourth chapter looks at globalization in general and within the context of food and culture and attempts to define the term for purposes of this study. I then look at the effect of global food markets on diet and discuss the hybridization of global and local cuisines. I conclude the chapter with Saudi Arabian views of globalization.

Chapter five establishes the methodology of this dissertation. As this dissertation incorporates both surveys and interviews, it contains both quantitative and qualitative data. For the quantitative data, I list the variables I used in this paper, their operationalization, why they are important in answering my research questions, and how I analyze them. For the qualitative

portion, I explicate the challenges of doing research in Saudi Arabia and how I overcame them. I also explain why a qualitative component compliments and further develops the survey findings.

I then detail my findings in chapter six. I clarify each quantitative finding and summarize them in relation to my research questions. I then proceed to discuss what I discovered from the interviews and how they tie in to the quantitative research.

Chapter seven concludes the dissertation with a summation of the results. Re-visiting some of the existing literature, I relate the findings to my research questions and discuss how it contributes to the wider body of literature.

Chapter 2

Culture

The survey of the pertinent literature that I have reviewed indicates the importance culture plays within the context of globalization and cuisine. The world is becoming interconnected and interactive as business and governments of rapidly developing nations seek resources to provide for their burgeoning and increasingly educated, sophisticated and urbane populations (Friedman 1994; Freeman 2006; Giddens 1990). There exists a body of work devoted to the impact of globalization on culture (Henry 2003; Ritzer 2004; Lieber and Weisberg 2002) or the reactions of a culture to globalization (Barber 1996; Burger and Huntington 2002; Hutchings 2004). However, the definition of culture and the totality of what it entails are never fully explained in any of these works. In this dissertation, a nation's culinary habits are viewed as a vital resource to understand that nation's culture. I therefore wish to examine the various definitions of culture. I further propose to explore three paradigms used to understand what is meant by culture and state the ideas which influenced my understanding of the term.

Culture is intimately connected with human's social evolution from hunter-gatherer societies to horticulture and then to animal husbandry and full-scale agriculture. According to Williams (1973), the origin of the word "culture" lies in agriculture or husbandry with the implication of improving a crop or breed. As methods for obtaining success in these areas became more sophisticated, so did the society become more complicated as methods of development continued to improve. For instance, as more animals were domesticated, means for their shelter and feed advanced. As methods for the planting and harvesting of crops developed, a concurrent development ensued for their preservation and storage. Societies became interdependent as skills were acquired to maintain an ever increasing population. Specialization

in such areas of employment as weaving, metal working, distribution of resources, record keeping, trade and other social employments became more and more delegated to those who were especially adept in these areas.

The segmentation of society became necessary as people were defined by their employment which brought them wealth according to the level of their skills and the needs of the consumers. As wealth accrued to fewer and fewer individuals, luxuries as fine clothes, better lodges and upscale cuisine were demanded by the socially successful. Laborers, who depended upon the upper caste for a living, learned the skills demanded by their patrons, who no longer treated them as equals but as disposable commodities that could be replaced by similarly skilled individuals eager for a wage. The evolution of society with all of its accompanying accoutrements became the study of social scientists who parse the connotations of the word “culture” into various definitions (Williams 1973).

It is currently used in biology as a term meaning a microbial population one begins or maintains, as in a bacterial or fungal culture. It is also referred to as a microbial sample taken from another organism. Within the social sciences culture takes on a variety of meanings, but the first discussions of culture implied, as the original use did, an improvement or development. Harris (1998) differentiates humans from other animals in that we use culture rather than instinct to ensure our survival. “High culture” or “popular culture” are terms sometimes used to describe a set of practices, values and understandings used to differentiate the particular from the common. It can also function as a tool used by the dominant class to maintain control over others in that high culture functions as a litmus test for class membership (Bourdieu 1984). Williams (1983) uses the terms “cultured” and “uncultured” to differentiate social classes. The word “culture” can also be used to describe values and understandings of both macro and micro level

groups such as an “office culture,” southwestern inner-city Latino male culture or the “culture of winning.”

In anthropology, paradigms have focused on culture as evolutionary and predictable. Other paradigms have focus on the transmission of values, while still others approach the understanding of culture as something determined by behavior and thinking. Marvin Harris (1968) takes a rather inclusive definition of culture and writes that it, “is the socially learned ways of living found in human societies and that it embraces all aspects of social life, including both thought and behavior” (1999, 19). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) summarized over 150 definitions of culture in their book *Culture, a Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. The mere fact that such a book was written illustrates the complexity, not only in understanding culture, but how to approach understanding culture. However, the most widely accepted definition of culture comes from Edward Tylor who writes in the opening of *Primitive Culture* that:

Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (1970, 1).

Tylor’s work represents one of the first modern attempts to develop a paradigm for understanding culture. This paradigm is often referred to as cultural evolution or cultural ecology.

Cultural Evolution

Tylor and Lewis Morgan, both considered the founders of anthropology in England and the United States respectively, were similar in many ways. Both saw societies evolving in a linear fashion. Culture was a tool by which a society could progress from a lower to higher stage. Both Tylor and Morgan describe a natural, universal, technologically-based progression from

savagery to civilization (Moore, 2009). To return to Tylor's definition, he equated culture with civilization. This notion submits the idea of culture as an improved state.

To state that one society is savage or barbaric (a term Morgan used) implies notions of racism or eugenics. But far from the racism they were accused of by their contemporaries, both Tylor and Morgan considered all cultures to have the same intellectual capacity. However, a culture's placement among the continuum (from savage to barbaric to civilized) is different. Although the evolutionary approach to culture had declined by the beginning of the twentieth century, it reemerged again in the 1930s with the "neo-evolutionists." White and Steward both resurrected the ideas of Tylor and Morgan. They differed with the earlier thinkers in that they saw the progression of culture as multilinear (not necessarily the same for every culture) and not unilineal. Stewart saw culture as the vehicle by which a society adapts to the changing environment while White emphasized the importance of the ability to harness energy in the development of culture to a higher state (Moore 2009).

Harris revisits White's and Tylor's theories in his book *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (2001). Harris maintains that similar technologies in similar environments will result in the same arrangement of production and the development of similar values.

A cultural evolutionist might look at the western world⁸ as a model for developing countries, not only in terms of economics or standards of living, but in terms of democratic institutions, and educational opportunities. According to such a Western-based model, one could expect, for example, that Saudi Arabians will eventually eschew tribal and extended family

⁸Terms such as the Western world, or first world, or developed world are loaded terms, but I am referring to the most developed economies.

cohesion, deemphasize the role of religion in daily life, and remove their current form of government.

Cultural Relativism

Franz Boas, and more importantly his students, saw the prevailing notions of cultural evolution to be unsound science and found no evidence to demonstrate culture developing in a universal linear manner. Instead, the Boasians contend that culture is the result of historical processes and must be understood in that context. The existence of similar cultural traits is due to diffusion or the migration of people and ideas rather than a biological dispensation (Moore, 2009).

Culture, to Boas, was particular to the society in which it was found. As such, there could not necessarily be a universal definition of culture. Historical particularism or cultural relativism lies in contrast to the biological underpinnings of cultural evolution. Whereas cultural ecology focuses on the material, the students of Boas viewed the intangible and abstract. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) noted that culture is able to assimilate and is receptive to change. Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, like Boas, saw culture as relative and non-evolutionary, but also viewed the transmission of key values as a principle characteristic of culture.

A cultural relativist would view Saudi culture within the context of its own history and landscape. Some Western ideas and ideals may enter Saudi culture, but not on a trajectory towards a western-styled system.

Symbolism

While some look at culture as material and others as an embodiment of intangibles as ideas, ideals and principles, there is another group of anthropologists (and sociologists) who understand culture as symbolic. According to Turner, such symbols speak to many people in many different ways (Moore, 2009). Clifford Geertz is sometimes accused of turning anthropology upside down by claiming that culture cannot really be known since one needs to understand not only what the symbol represents but the meaning that the individual places on it. Geertz states that it:

“denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (1973, 89).

The national emblem of Saudi Arabia consists of a palm tree above two swords (figure 2.1). To understand the meaning of this emblem is to gain a brief glimpse into Saudi culture. I initially interpreted the sword to be a historical tool of social order and defense. The palm tree simply represented one of the few trees to grow naturally in the Arabian Peninsula.

Figure 2.1- Saudi National Emblem



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coat_of_arms_of_Saudi_Arabia.svg

In asking many Saudi Arabians about this symbol, they explained that the palm tree represented the correct path. What constitutes the “correct path” has differed according to whom I asked. However, most explanations of the emblem included honesty, belief in God, and the performance of good deeds. People eat the dates⁹ from the palm tree for nourishment. The date palm is God’s provision—a fruit-bearing tree in a desert where little else grows. It also provides shade as well as the palms fronds were once used for roofing material as well as awnings, woven mats, brooms, baskets and other domestic amenities. The swords symbolize a means of correcting a deviation from that path. One Saudi held his arm out as if he was holding a sword horizontally to prevent me from going in a certain direction.

For this study, I have adopted cultural relativism as a guiding understanding to culture. It is my contention that Gulf Arab culture can only be understood in the context of the historical experience of the Gulf Arabs—a history that plays a central role in their identity. For example, the Saudi concept of the immediacy and relevance of history is a stark contrast to the same notion held by many Americans. Events that occurred hundreds of years ago are remembered as recent and relative to current events. An investment benefiting one’s grandchildren or great-grandchildren is seen as prudent. In contrast to these notions, Americans are futuristic and they view the present as a means for securing a better tomorrow for themselves. For Americans, history is a lesson to be repeated if the historical event was beneficial and to be rejected or re-interpreted if the event was deleterious.

⁹ Dates also have symbolic value in not only Saudi but Islamic culture. They are used to break the Ramadan fast, they are rubbed on the palate of a new-born baby, and thought to be a food complete in nutritional requirements. I explain their place within Saudi meals in the next chapter.

Viewing Saudi society as “progressing” would require a definition of progression which would not be the same as the Saudi definition. Progression to a Saudi would include considerations of moral, social, national and cultural compromise as vital factors in any area of material advancement. I believe that a universal definition of culture cannot be transposed into the social milieu of the Arabian Peninsula. Yet, I think that culture is something that can be defined to some extent—that there are a set of common cultural values transferred from generation to generation.

Gulf Arab Culture

There is little work done on the culture of the Gulf Arabs. Some works on the culture of Arabs in general (Berger 1964; Pitai 1975; Lewis 2002) have been critiqued on the grounds that they emanate from secondary or tertiary sources (Barakat 1993), that they over-generalize, and that they use misunderstood anecdotal information to develop behavioral theories (Said 1979). In general, Islam and language play a preeminent role in defining Saudi culture (Al-Yassini 1985; Barakat 1993). It is widely accepted that Arabs as a population define themselves as native speakers of their mother tongue, Arabic. Accordingly, a Moroccan, a Somali, and a Lebanese are all considered Arabs even though their cultures differ greatly (Suleiman 2003). To Gulf Arabs, two main cultural influences exist: the *jahaliyyah* (the period of ignorance) and the Islamic culture brought by Mohammed in the seventh century. The jahaliyyah contained cultural aspects still practiced today which do not contradict the tenets of Islam. The most important of these are poetry and the oral tradition. Before Islam, tribal history and other folklore such as heroes, eponymous ancestors, battles, and alliances would be preserved and passed to the next generation through the writing and recitation of poetry. Competitions were often held to determine the poet laureate who would represent a certain tribe. Knowledge of grammar,

composition and effectiveness of expression determined the winner in these competitions. The winning poetry would be posted on the most revered building, the *Ka'aba* in Mecca. Rival poets would compete to outdo the winner, often posting their latest endeavors to replace the last attempt of a rival. Rivalry between clans of a tribe was not unusual and other competitions were fostered as in the arts of war, trade and animal husbandry. However, whatever rivalries existed between tribe and clan members, loyalty to kin, clan and tribe was demanded of every member. Although Islam introduced the concept of the *ummah* (the common Islamic brotherhood), Arabs continue to value tribe cohesiveness.

The Quran was the sublime example of Arabic literary expression. One of its chapters was nailed to the doors of the Kaba and remained there unchallenged as none of the tribal poets could challenge its language or expression. The language made such an immediate impression upon its hearers that they were moved to either enthusiastically accept it or reject it as magic. The Quran, aside from its sublime literary merits, contained Islam's principle message of monotheism, contains guidelines on issues like family and gender relations, knowledge, societal structure, politics, norms, and values. Although the Quran is a written document translated into various languages, it is considered by Muslims primarily to be something memorized and recited rather than read. As such, the Quran is recited daily in public prayer. Such a practice of public recitation of the Quran caused the ideals and principles promulgated in that book to be accepted as a normal part of Arab culture. The Islam practiced in the Arabian Peninsula does not have a clergy. Scholars, whose religious opinions which can be accepted or rejected, are esteemed by the populace as is the *hafiz* (one who has memorized the entire Quran), who can be found in any setting in Saudi Arabia and the larger Muslim world in general.

The *Hadith* are a set of sayings of the Prophet. They include things which Mohammed approved, disapproved, and things which he saw or heard but to which there was no noticeable reaction (his implied approval). Unlike the Quran, the Hadith are not considered infallible, are not memorized, and are thus open to greater interpretation by scholars who give rulings on their meanings. The Hadith cover a much wider range of norms and values from how to eat, to managing business, to conducting one's relationship with their spouse, neighbor, and the traveler. Unlike other parts of the Arab or greater Muslim world, a greater emphasis is placed on the importance of the Hadith in Saudi Arabia; in particular the volumes *Sahih Al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*. As such, they are often referred to when laws are promulgated by the government. Along with the Quran, the Hadith as the source of jurisprudence has left its indelible mark on the Saudi psyche and culture.

Ibn Khaldun, a 14th Century Islamic scholar and philosopher, whose sociological ideas predated classical western theorists by centuries, saw culture as shaped through the environment. He devotes attention to what he calls *ilm al-umran*; translated roughly as "the science of civilization." For example, he thought that people from warm climates were inclined to be emotional and that calmer personalities were found in cold climates. Salient to Ibn Khaldun was the interplay between the harsh uncivilized nomads and the cultured population of the towns. Ibn Khaldun (1980) saw culture as cyclical and he explained, for example, that as the town became more civilized, townspeople became less cohesive which in turn allowed for eventual takeover and occupation by nomads whose values positively influenced the banality of an urbane culture. Nomadic values were seen as unspoiled and pristine compared to the tainted values of the townsfolk who held a less serious view of the desert customs of hospitality and loyalty to kin. The traditional values of the nomads influenced the larger culture until those rulers, changed by

greed, became isolated from their subjects and the path toward a more civilized culture reemerged.

The stricter interpretation of Islam and its implementation by the government is, in the context of history, a more recent development in Saudi Arabia. In the 18th century the Arabian Peninsula was divided among tribes with the Saud family controlling the area around Riyadh. The version of Islam identified with Saudi Arabia today had its origins with the preacher Muhammad Abdul Wahhab. Seeking to abolish some of the practices of Gulf Arabs—such as saint worship and magic rituals—Abdul Wahhab sought to reform Islam to its fundamentals. His cause was taken up by Ibn Saud, the leader of a small area in north central Arabia.

Ibn Saud used the ideology of Abdul Wahhab to unite the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula and converted the surrounding tribes to his version of Islam. However, during the 19th century the Egyptians took control of the western part of the country while the Saud tribe survived in the interior of the country.

In the beginning of the 20th century, Abdul Aziz bin Saud regained control of Riyadh and once again unified the tribes of eastern and central Arabia under the Wahhabi movement. It was not until 1925 that the western part of the country was controlled by the Saudi family (Lapidus 1991).

In the early days of the Saudi state, a number of the *ulema*, or religious scholars, many of who were descendants of Abdul Wahhab, married into the Saud family. This began the fusion of the religious and political. The Wahhabi clerics would support the ruling family, who would, in turn, recognize their authority in the religious sphere—the implications of which would diffuse into many aspects of day to day life for the average Saudi citizen. As a result of this arrangement

between religion and government, the ideals of Abdul Wahhab became the common unifying agent of the Saudi state as opposed to nationalism, secularism, or even Arabism (Yamani 2009).

Yet the Saudi Arabia we know today is a unification of four different areas. The Asir region lies in the south of the country and Ahsa is in what is now called the Eastern Province. The Hijaz is the western mountain region and contains the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Each of these regions has variations of customs, cuisine, dress, and behavior. Yet after the unification of the country, Najdi culture (Bedouin culture of central Arabia) began to replace those of other areas. Regional dress was altered to Najdi dress, the role of women in public spaces was adapted to fit that of the Najd region (Yamani 2009). The existing political landscape of the Hijaz was replaced with the monarchy in Riyadh. The culture of the Eastern Province was similar and was not as effected as the Hijaz in the west. However, Shia Muslim sects in the Eastern Province (and Asir) are often excluded from political spheres and positions of power. This sometimes boils over into demonstrations—especially in the resource-rich areas north of Dammam.

When the Al-Saud family took control of the Hijaz in 1924, there were several libraries, newspapers, and secular elementary schools. In contrast, none of these existed at the time in the Najd. The people of the Hijaz have not only been interacting with other cultures for millennia, but the cities of Mecca and Medina draw millions of religious pilgrims from all over the world. In contrast, the Bedouin of the Najd have been historically isolated from others—the barren landscape inhospitable and of little value to imperial forces and traders. In unifying the tribes of Arabia, Najd culture dominated those of other regions in what one writer termed the “Saudification of Saudi Arabia” (Al-Atawned 2010).

The culture of the majority of the Gulf is considered *Bedu* (Bedouin or nomadic). Despite their increased urbanization, the term continues to differentiate their culture from other Arabs (see Torstrick and Faier 2009). A survey by Fox et al. (2006), similar in many ways to Williams' (1970) work on American cultural values, prioritized Gulf Arab values as follows:

- Priority of family and family dignity/honor; respect for elders
- Religion provides ultimate meaning, and morality defines face-to-face interactions
- Transactions focused on influence of kin and friends
- Hospitality, generosity, sharing
- Loyalty to family and friends, and patience and mercy
- Pride of heritage and tradition, and respect for traditional norms and beliefs from the past.
- Sociability; the social group is more important than personal achievements; family councils where issues are discussed.
- Justice, honesty, and compassion for the down-trodden; honest transactions to avoid disgracing one's family name.
- Show of strength and courage; defense of one's family, land, and rights at a moment's notice.
- Respect for authority, patriarchy, and gender segregation.
- Marriage within the extended family
- Modesty in dress
- Religious education, as specified within Islam, to take people from the darkness
- Material wealth
- In-group inclusiveness

These values are a contrast to those Robbins found characteristic of American values such as individualism is prized more than adherence to a group and hard work and material gain are valued more than tradition. However, with television advertising, the Internet, and increased travel to the West, these values, identified by Fox, might be less static than one might think.

Americanization as a Second Culture

The idea that the diffusion of culture emanates solely from the United States is not only simplistic, but contradicts the notion of globalization. Yet, for now, American culture seems to dominate and represent what is considered "Western culture." In an essay about American goods

in France, Todd Gitlin (1992) wrote a piece in the *New York Times* in which he quotes a Norwegian national stating:

It is plausible to suppose that global, largely American popular culture is becoming everyone's second culture. It doesn't necessarily supplant local traditions, but it does activate a certain cultural bilingualism. People from Australia to Zimbabwe acquire a second cultural membership, switching with ease from local news to the American Oscar ceremonies and back again.

Maude Barlow has written extensively on matters of free trade and globalization. In an article called *The Global Monoculture* (2001), she declares that: “dominated by US and Western values and lifestyles, driven by a consumer-based, free-market ideology and carried through the massive US entertainment-industrial complex, the global monoculture has infiltrated every corner of the Earth” (2001, 8).

In the same article, Barlow cites a survey of 5,700 Asia-Pacific youth from nine countries asking them their favorite food and drink. The most popular answer of youth in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand was Coca-Cola. The most popular answer for their favorite food was McDonald’s with the exception of Malaysian and Thailand youth who chose KFC. One might deduce that the subjects were given a choice of restaurants, or simply asked their favorite fast-food, but they were simply asked for their favorite food.

Nevertheless, Burger and Huntington (2001) assert that cultures tend to reject and accept different aspects of American culture. It is not necessary, as the quote above suggests, to have a “second culture.” Burger and Huntington maintain that one can adapt certain aspects of a culture to meet their needs while rejecting others. For instance, it is possible to boycott McDonald’s and continue to study at an American satellite university campus. Often cultures will adapt aspects of “Americanization” into their culture, which creates a sort of hybrid of cultures (see figure 2.2).

However, some (Redner 2004; Marlow 2001) liken it to a crop monoculture, which destroys and replaces various landscapes much like one would see happening to the millions of acres of corn or soybean production in the Midwest United States.

Hannerz (1996) asserts that cultures are developed without regard to a specific territory. Hannerz defines cosmopolitans as people who both master and surrender to alien culture. He explains that cosmopolitans will immerse themselves in other cultures. Food-knowledge exemplifies cosmopolitanism.

Figure 2.2- This is the second Saudi Burger to open in Khobar. The first, located in the middle of downtown, is thought to be the first formal restaurant opened when the city began building up in the early 1960s.



Source: Author

Culture and Globalization

Rather than claiming American culture is the second culture of another or that the world is heading toward a uniform culture, Huntington (1993) sees an impending clash of civilizations, not due to economic or political reasons, but cultural forces. Huntington divides the world into “seven or eight” civilizations (he is not sure about the Africans) Japanese, Islamic, Western, Hindu, Confucian, Slavic-Orthodox, and Latin American. He reasons that:

- The differences between us are basic ones of language, race and, in particular, religion.
- The world is shrinking. There is an increased flow of people, but some are accepted more than others. He uses the example of American perception of Japanese investors versus British investors.
- Modernization is separating people from their identities as citizens of a nation. In absence of this, an individual will cling to religion.
- As a result of western influence, or globalization, people are returning to their origins or turning in on themselves.
- Cultural characteristics are less changeable and less likely to be resolved than economic or political characteristics.

Huntington devotes a considerable amount of time to explaining that clashes will occur where these civilizations come into contact with one another and he cites wars in Bosnia and Chechnya among his examples.

However, Liebner (2002) and Bilgrami (2003) claim that there exists no clash between civilizations but *within* civilizations. The battle is not against the traditional Islamic world and the modernizing Western civilization, but between forces of modernity and traditionalism within Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia. Ajami (1993) uses the example of the Iran-Iraq war as a clash within civilizations. I would add the Northern Ireland-Britain conflict, a Russian-Georgian conflict, and maybe conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria if one considers Nigeria as belonging to the Islamic civilization.

Like Huntington, Barber (1996) sees an impending conflict of cultures. Although Huntington posits that conflict will occur along various cultural faults, Barber explains that there are two dialectical forces working together, yet at the same time they are in opposition to each other. They are Jihad and McWorld (also the title of a book authored by Barber). Jihad does not necessarily represent religious struggle or holy war, but traditionalism. It represents the forces which compel people to look inward in an attempt to preserve culture and traditions. It is a

chopped up world of increasingly divided peoples delineated by language, heritage, and culture. McWorld, on the other hand, looks outward and envisions a world unified by capitalism and run by corporations. A more simplistic summary would be that a world struggle is being waged between the proponents of a globalized homogenous world and the advocates of a heterogeneous and fragmented world.

Much of this antagonism, Barber argues, plays out in the style of the Marxian dialectic with the synthesis being the unstable dependency of McWorld and Jihad on each other. Corporations adapt their version of modernity to fit in to various cultures. Red wine is served at McDonald's in France, for example, where Ayatollah Khomeini, while in exile, used cassette tapes to spread his message of the Islamic State. Al-Qaida uses the Internet to spread its message. Critics like Kellner (2002), Cowen (2002), and Manning (2006) have pointed out that Barber simply oversimplifies these two concepts.

Friedman (1999) takes a slightly different view from that of Barber and Huntington. He sees the world's dichotomous division as economic. Globalization (or neoliberalism), as Friedman sees it, is driven entirely by capitalism and the free market. It is a purely positive and inevitable force which will, on its own, solve much of the world's problems. As capitalism improves the standard of living of the world, the Lexus (the modern) will win over the olive tree (the traditional).

Haugerud (2005), Klein (2004), Anowitz and Roberts (2007) and others have critiqued many of Friedman's arguments. Aside from the time he spent researching his first book, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, he has never spent a significant amount of time in any one country or area outside the United States. Klein (2004), for instance, points out that Friedman sees tradition as the only reason to oppose globalization when, in fact, one could be concerned about social

injustice or the environment. She further points out that anti-globalization protests around the world are often centered on human rights, animal rights, and the environment.

Haugerud (2005) has critiqued Friedman's coupling of ethnicity to tradition; in other words, Friedman sees ethnicity as a source of conflict and as an impediment to modernity. However, as Haugerud notes, ethnicity is much more fluid than the simplified process he describes. Nonetheless, the Saudis have a saying (which they never complete): "Me and my brother against our cousin, me and my cousin against the tribe, me and my tribe against..." Ethnicity has a different meaning to a Saudi than it does to Friedman.

Wolf (1982) implies that social scientists (I would include Barber, Friedman, and Huntington here) have two flaws in their assessments of world communities. The first is the misconception that culture is a closed or bounded system independent from other cultures and that it has been a gross miscalculation to characterize societies as "traditional" or "modern." The second flaw is the disregard for the influence globalization has historically played in the development of cultures. Humans, as Wolf states, "construct their cultures in interaction with one another, and not in isolation." Lastly, Friedman has blind faith that the market will guide world prosperity. He works under the presumption that humans are economic individuals and he equates the interests of the nation with the interests of the world.

Huntington, Barber, and Friedman discuss the reactions of cultures to globalization. However, with Barber a dichotomous conflict plays out between the forces of tradition and modernity whereas with Huntington the conflicts arise, as previously mentioned, around major world cultures. With Friedman, the forces of globalization will inevitably diffuse and modernize the world. In his version of Jihad vs. McWorld, Mcworld wins. It is fitting that Barber titled his

book *Jihad vs. McWorld*—the conflict between cultures and within cultures often plays out in the arena of food.

Food as a Political Statement

As an exemplary anecdote where food becomes politicized, Taylor (2002) explores the case of Jose Bové and McDonald's (Bové crashed his tractor into one in Millau, France) and explains that France banned US beef due to fears of hormone treatments. The US responded by imposing a 100 percent tariff on certain French products including cheese made from the milk of Bové's sheep. As a result, the McDonald's restaurant became the location for the destructive settlement of an international political dispute. Similar cases have occurred with the torching of McDonald's in Saudi Arabia during a boycott (British Broadcasting Corporation 2002), in Pakistan where a crowd protested Danish cartoons of the prophet Mohammed (Joyner 2006), and in Belgium allegedly by the Animal Liberation Front in Belgium (Wall Street Journal 1999) and Arizona (Randal 2001). In each case, McDonald's served as an arena for these economic, religious and cultural debates.

In the Arab world, what you eat often has political implications. The 2003 Saudi Food Exhibition was a bit different from previous exhibitions in Riyadh as there were many new cola companies exhibiting their versions of Coke and Pepsi. In response to a boycott call of these two drinks, sales had dropped and new colas from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran had entered the market. (Hassan 2003)

It was not the first time Coca-Cola was the subject of an Arab boycott. During the 1990s it was rumored that Coca-Cola read "no Mohammad, no Mecca" in Arabic when turned upside down and seen in a mirror. Although great imagination is needed to see it and despite the fact that Coca-Cola was created in 1886, many in Saudi Arabia saw it as a conspiracy to the point

that the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in Saudi Arabia formed a special committee to determine if there was, in fact, a slight to Islam. Although the committee determined that there was no basis to the rumor, the company still felt it necessary to do damage control.¹⁰ The same company was boycotted for many years in a larger campaign against companies doing business with Israel. Although most of the Arab World ended the campaign in 1993, Pepsi (which did not sell products in Israel) is still more popular than Coke in Saudi Arabia.

Upon entering the website for McDonald's in Saudi Arabia, the initial webpage reads:

McDonald's totally denies the information claiming that the company is donating part of its sales to support Israel. All related information are absolutely forged and are not related to McDonald's brands by any means. McDonald's hereby reassures its identity as a strictly commercial public company that does not interfere or support any political or religious acts or regimes in any country in the world. In addition, McDonald's in the Arab countries is totally owned and operated by Arab and Muslim businessmen, with 100% local investments and capital.¹¹

In 2006, a Danish newspaper printed cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed deemed offensive by most Muslims. One of the results was a boycott of Danish goods. As in the case of American and Israeli goods, the vast majority of boycotted products were food and drink. As a result, Denmark began to mark its products "Made in the E.U." One company, Arla Foods, printed statements in Arab newspapers condemning the actions of the Danish newspaper. As a result, there were calls to lift the boycott against Arla foods, but not to accord the same respite to other Danish companies. However, a statement came from the Al-Azhar University in Cairo that: "Any human being or a country that lifts the ban and stops boycotting Danish companies or the arrogant Danish government is not worthy of being a Muslim" (Hassan 2006). The quote is

¹⁰ The Statement is available on the "myths and rumors" section (Middle East subsection) of the Coca-Cola website.

¹¹ This statement was from the McDonald's Arabia website in 2009. As of January 2, 2012, the site now reads that McDonald's is "100% locally owned and operated with pride" It also makes sure one knows that (his highness) Prince Misha'al bin Khaled Al-Saud owns them.

telling in that it implies that one who buys and consumes Danish cheese is not a good Muslim (see figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3- This figure was circulated through email during the time cartoons of Prophet Mohammed were published in Denmark. It is common in Saudi Arabia to find circulated emails or posted flyers with lists of companies to boycott for various reasons. Almost all of them involve food.



Source: Unknown

So at times in Saudi Arabia, foods from the West can impart to the Saudi consumer, a degree of wealth or success. They might show a level of sophistication or perhaps a desire for a higher quality. At other times, the same products could imply betrayal against the Saudi culture or religion. National cuisines do not derive their importance simply from nutrition. Food, as an expression of culture, is not only a symbol for values and beliefs but, food is also a key component of cultural identity.

Chapter 3

National Cuisine

As this dissertation delves into the impact of globalization on cuisine in Saudi Arabia, the landscape of Saudi cuisine must first be described. The notion of Saudi national cuisine must be compared against the existence of national cuisines as described in comparable research. If I am to explore changes in the Saudi cuisine as a proxy to possible cultural changes, it is important to establish what constitutes a national cuisine—and what its characteristics are.

Many nations, cultures, and regions have a strong relationship with a distinct style of cooking and the types of food eaten by their inhabitants. As global communities experiment with international cuisine in foreign lands or imported cuisines from foreign lands, certain cuisine genres have emerged. Mention of the Asian subcontinent undoubtedly conjures up images of thick spice-laden curry sauces infused with chili peppers. Conversely, Mexican food is commonly associated with the typical image of a woman preparing hand-made tortillas, covered with beans. Japanese food, as an island nation, evokes images associated with the delicate intermarriage of rice and fish. Thus, begs the question, does the culture dictate the manner in which a food product is consumed and prepared, or does the existent relationship with the food process drive a culture? The reasons *why* a people eat a certain type of food or eat it in a certain way is perhaps not as well understood as the fact that it *is* a part of their culture. Authors in the field of culture and cuisine have put forward divergent arguments.

Parkhurst-Ferguson (2004) writes that cuisine is the private manifested in public. By this claim, she suggests that culture consists of individual cooking practices codified, collectively unified, and thus adopted in a culture. By extrapolation, she suggests that cuisine is the bridge by which the intimate becomes the public. Cuisine remains, across cultures, the one sensory

indulgence that is uniformly accepted as appropriate to revel in public. This intimacy allows for a shared expectation of the delight, as described by Mintz (1996), who has perhaps one of the most comprehensive definitions of cuisine. He writes:

What makes a cuisine is not a set of recipes aggregated in a book, or a series of particular foods associated with a particular setting, but something more. I think a cuisine requires a population that eats that cuisine with sufficient frequency to consider themselves experts on it. They all believe, and care that they believe, that they know what it consists of, how it is made, and how it should taste (1996, 97).

Ken Albala (2011), who claims that there is no place on earth without a cuisine, states that “if a people cooks and recognizes a common set of recipes and discusses them with a common vocabulary, then it should be deemed a cuisine” (2011, X). Thus, Albala suggests that cuisine carries the linguistic construct and grammatical rigidity that is needed for human exchange. The structure of language, as with food, does not divorce the consumer from the delight of nuance of meaning, syntax; and in the case of food, meaning may evolve from prose into poetry.

In turn, globalization and technological advances in technology have allowed a greater consumption of food than ever before. Globalization has broadened the intimate to the international. That which was relegated to consumption for need, or in the more developed societies, food consumption for sensory delight, has once again turned the food consumption process into a drive for immediate satisfaction. This phenomenon has been driven largely by large multinational food companies. With the increasingly efficient growing of staple foods, according to Popkin (2008), the variety of food-stuffs available has decreased. Globalization has allowed the increased transport of food around the world, and no longer is geography a limiting factor in the acquisition of a coconut. Thus, with limited options, the divorce from the intimate, and the structure and process of the food syntax changing, what is to become of a nation’s

cuisine? When french fries are taken from one culture, assigned the name of another, and adopted by the world, is it still British (even though it was introduced by Belgians)? Or, is there really such a thing as a national cuisine anyway?

A nation and its people often associate themselves with a cuisine or an aspect of it. Should or will globalization see a redefining of national labels? Japanese are proud of their rice. Mexicans consider themselves “people of the corn” (Pollan 2007). Will the shifts and tides of the global currents sweep not only food commodities from one shore to the other, but also result in the redefining of the people who consume the food?

Bell and Valentine (1997) argue that despite our perceptions, there are not national cuisines while Mintz (1996) calls a “national cuisine” a contradiction in terms. The United States may serve as an example of a nation for which the lack of a national cuisine is not detrimental to the American national identity. Americans may repeat the phrase “as American as apple pie,” even though the phrase originated in England. In truth, many parts of the United States are not known for having a certain cuisine or regional dish. Lack of a national cuisine is not associated with an underdeveloped sense of nationalism or national pride.

Mintz (1996) devotes a chapter to American cuisine only to reassert that there are only regional cuisines. The regional cuisine is broadly identified with the varying landscapes and evolving histories as the states chose to enter into the marriage of the United States. The conglomerate of cultures and histories known as the United States debunks the notion that one cuisine can be tied to one nation. Further, based upon Americans’ proclivity for dining-out, the origin of the regional diet, Mintz claims, is just as tied to large national chains and restaurants as it is to local cultural influences. Once again, large multinational food companies not only invasively define the global network of food consumption, but divorced the intimate on the

regional level. An individual in Chicago is more likely able to identify with the food menu of Arby's as he travels to California or New York, than the regional evolution of the stockyard and the Midwestern cattle trade infused with German and Polish culture.

Belasco (2008) works to define characteristics of our cuisine as it existed fifty years ago. American staple food is meat with a side dish of starch and vegetables for decoration. This has evolved into a diet that can be characterized more for its preparation (processed, prepackaged) than its ingredients (Belasco 2008; Pollan 2006). The frozen food market that developed in the 1950s shifted the national cuisine from the American kitchen to large plants such as Nabisco. The favorite cookie was made by Sara Lee or Nestle Corporation as opposed to Grandma's kitchen, where the recipe was carefully preserved and passed down for generations. Thus, the American palette became standardized. Once again, the expected gustatory outcome of ingesting a chocolate-chip cookie was predictable from Los Angeles to New York. American foods are more likely to be industrial products tied to carefully marketing rather than products made in a worn and loved kitchen (Gabaccia 2002).

An article by the James Beard Foundation sought to answer similar questions about American cuisine. According to Davis and McBride (2008), the first cook book published in the United States in 1796 was full of British and French recipes. As opposed to suggesting that this cookbook was un-American, it clearly points to the effects of globalization and defining of identity. The early American, even after the Revolution, did not mean to imply that they were different or a result of a historical evolution separate from their British and French grandfathers. Instead, a French and British cookbook establishes that the American national cuisine was no more American than it was French or British; thus, not American at all.

On the other hand, more isolated regions of the world fiercely hold on to their cuisine as they do their culture and their language. Consistency of cuisine is tied to longevity of the people. As such, the tradition of eating rice promotes not only a sense of nationhood, it reaffirms the relationship one has had with their ancestors centuries prior. In Korea, food is strongly linked with national identity and perpetuity. According to Bak (2006), rice symbolizes indigeneness to Koreans. One of the slogans of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing was “Healthy Eating = Eating our Rice.”

Eating a hamburger, Bak reported, is thought of by many Koreans as tantamount to a betrayal of Korean farmers and national identity. A similar finding in Korea was reported by Kim (2001) who noted that there have been strong movements to retain the national diet. The concept of *Sin-To-Bul-Yi* (meaning a body and the land are not two different things) is promoted through mass media programs. The implication is one should eat from the food grown where they live. As such, the Korean cow carries as much reverence as the Korean ancestors. According to Koreans I have spoken with, large national campaigns have dissuaded Koreans from purchasing less expensive beef from Australia, the implication being the beef is inferior. With the sky rocketing price of Korean beef, Koreans have modified their palettes to ingest less beef, albeit Korean beef, rather than modify their dishes to incorporate Australian beef.

The consumption of foreign foods is seen negatively in Korea as a sign of vanity. According to Bak, this is especially true in the case of American foods. There is also the overriding feeling that to purchase something foreign will come at the expense of their fellow compatriots. Just as the years of war in Korea represented the Korean will exerting itself against foreign influences, both Communist and American, the war to preserve the internal Korean-ness continues. Self preservation is as much outwardly manifested in one’s clothes and language as

well as what is internally consumed. Thus, the Koreans hold strongly to the notion, “You are what you eat.” To be truly a loyal Korean, one must eat Korean cuisine.

Even countries with historically expansionist aspirations have an equally strong desire to preserve self through the preservation of national cuisine. Ohnuki-Tierney (1993) wrote an in-depth book on the relationship between Japan and rice. She describes throughout her text the importance of rice in the Japanese culture. Not only do the Japanese find value in rice as a staple food, but rice holds symbolic value. Rice symbolizes self sufficiency, prosperity, beauty, perfectness, and many other attributes. The average Japanese would never consider importing rice or an evening meal without it. Japanese rice, grown in Japanese soil, contains the innate virtues of the nation. Foreign rice, such as rice imported from California, would not only be devoid of these virtues, but also internally sap these virtues from the one who consumes it. Thus, imported rice is a threat to the Japanese self and the Japanese identity.

Furthermore, rice is the definition of a meal in Japan. In the book *Golden Arches East* Ohnuki-Tierney (1997) explains the difficulty McDonald’s customers in Tokyo have accepting a meal without rice. The fast food chain has not been able to convince the Japanese that a hamburger and fries is more than just a snack. Rice, Ohnuki-Tierny claims, sets Japan apart from other countries and especially “the meat obsessed Westerners.” Rice represents the balance that a meal must have to maintain internal harmony and tranquility. Rice is food; Japanese rice is Japan.

Cuisine and Colonization

In *Home Cooking in the Global Village*, Wilk (2007) found the national cuisine of Belize reduced to imported British canned items. Though Belizean coffee carries an international

reputation, Belizean nationals serve imported instant coffee in local cafes and with their own morning meals.

What Wilk argues was that colonization and technology replaced the food of Belize with a canned, prepackaged British version. There were attempts by Belizeans after independence to eat and buy only local foods. The attempt was unsuccessful for it did not accompany the necessary un-yoking of the colonized mentality, i.e., replacing the values of the colonizers with an inherent sense of pride for all things Belizean.

Interestingly though, he argues that globalization resurrected Belizean cuisine. After independence, expatriate Belizeans in the United States set up Belizean restaurants in places like Chicago and Los Angeles. It was the sense of being a stranger in a new land which spurred these entrepreneurs toward a search for self-identity. Along with other cultural affects such as clothing and community, food took the forefront in their quest for self definition. So, for a while, one could eat at a Belizean restaurant, but just not in Belize. These restaurant owners were some of the first entrepreneurs to return home and open Belizean restaurants. Thus, this re-transplanted Belizean cuisine does not reflect a national impetus toward cultural identity, but a larger foreign-inspired movement of globalization, where the different corners of the globe are made close and intimate. In the case of Belize, the restaurant cuisine came full circle around the globe, carried in the sentimental hearts of its citizens.

Wilk's work elucidates many themes about cuisine and national identity. The first is that a national cuisine is not always imperative in forming a national identity. Belizeans take pride in their cuisine today, but this has not always been an important factor. Second, the composition of a national cuisine is not static but constantly influenced by multiculturalism, diffusion,

technology, and colonization. Finally, aside from the increased movement of information and people, a national cuisine is not always influenced by indigenous crops and animals.

Cuisine and identity: indigenous or imported?

Like France or India, Italy may often come to mind when one thinks of a distinct national cuisine. Home to the University of Gastronomic Sciences, Italy is the location of the birth of the slow food movement. This movement was established in 1989 with the aim of “counteract(ing) fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people’s dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how our food choices affect the rest of the world.”¹² However, the affront to its founder, Carlo Petrini, was just as much about the cultural imperialism of McDonald’s opening in Rome as the alleged questionable ecological and environmental business practices of the McDonald’s corporation. The traditional Italian foods the slow food movement seeks to preserve are recent introductions to Italian cuisine and, as Pilcher (2006) notes, “may even have been created in the Americas through the industrial production and canning of olive oil, tomato paste, and cheeses to satisfy migrant workers who could afford foods unavailable to the peasants at home” (2006, 70).

An article in the e-magazine *i-ITALY* Grasso (2010) discusses municipal changes in Treviso, Italy requiring *cous-cous* and *kebabs* to be accompanied by polenta. The slogan “*si alla polenta no al cous-cous*” was apparently in response to the Minister of Agriculture claiming that there was a need to protect local specialties from the rise of ethnic cuisines. Besides the fact that polenta is not native and cous-cous is originally domestic and the fact that it was endorsed by the Northern League, the issue is not food but the erosion of a national cuisine and thus the erosion

¹² Slow food website. <http://www.slowfood.com> Accessed May 26, 2010.

of an Italian national identity. Cous-cous and the kebab represent not only those *not* Italian, but not European. French food was not a subject of this new rule nor was Chinese food. In this case, the kebab represents a cultural invasion. It targets those with large immigrant groups—those who seem to threaten the demographic Italian majority.

Spittler's (1999) ethnography of the Kel Ewey Tuareg of Niger details a cuisine consisting of a drink of millet, cheese, and dates called *eghale*, and a more solid form of millet called *ashin*. In contrast to the variety of foods many in Europe or America would eat, eghale and ashin are consumed every day. Unlike the Belizeans who at one time found their food inferior, the Tuareg are very proud of their simple cuisine and find it to be the perfect food. It is perfect because it is functional and can be served every day. These foodstuffs are just as sustaining and preserving of the individual's health as they are to the community's identity. Given the chance to taste European foods, they prefer eghale and ashin. European cuisine has not stood the long test of time and caravan as eghale and ashin, nor have colonizers' cultural influences proven to be as sustainable in the remote cultural communities of Northern Africa. In contrast to Wilk's assertion that a national cuisine does not need to be indigenous, these foods are a reflection of what is domestically available and sustainable. The same can be said about yams in much of West Africa. *Fufu*¹³ typifies Nigerian and Ghanaian cuisine and the yam is thought to originate in this part of Africa. In all three countries, cuisine is linked to national identity in that the food consumed by most people is indigenous. They consume that which gives them sustenance and view European food as fleeting as their culture.

¹³ A staple food made from a combination of cassava roots and yams.

As rice is known as a fundamental element in Japanese cuisine, sushi is also an important part of Japan's culinary landscape. However, as Bestor (2004) explains, sushi is not a domestic or traditional food, but a recent invention. Sushi has been around in Japan in its current form since the 1950s. Japan's diet is rich in seafood, but because of a combination of overfishing, and the decline of the Japanese fishing industry, much of Japan's fish is imported. To keep the raw fish fresh, they are flash frozen—a technology first developed by Swanson for American TV dinners. A pivotal component of Japan's culinary identity is thus tied to an imported process. One might even argue that the tradition of importing and improving on American technologies is a uniquely Japanese phenomenon, and thus has extended to their cuisine as well.

Both sushi and rice are staples of Japanese cuisine but one is rooted in tradition and the other is not possible without increased trade and technological advances such as flash freezing. From the 1980s, sushi has become increasingly popular in the United States. Such popularity has given the Japanese increased pride in their national cuisine. In these examples, one can see a cuisine domestic and imported, new and old.

As technology aided in the establishment of sushi as a part of the national cuisine of Japan, it aided in the establishment of the tortilla as a part of Mexico's national cuisine. Traditional tortilla production is an arduous process requiring much of the day to ground corn into the flour. Pilcher (2006) discusses the effect of industrialized tortilla production. The vast majority of tortilla production comes from Grupo Maseca. There was initially, and still is, opposition to the standardization of the tortilla and degradation of its quality. Whereas there were many different regional styles of tortilla in the first half of the twentieth century, one finds mostly Maseca flour today. Maseca's corn flour needs only water which makes preparation shorter and lowers the price. As the demands of modernization have forced women to work

increasing hours outside the home, the traditional role of the woman as food preparer has become supplanted. With her role changed, so were aspects of the regional uniqueness of the tortilla. Conversely, these modern forces led to the development of a standardized and national Maseca flour tortilla for Mexico.

Finally, modernization and technology have led to increased communication and trade. The urban roof landscape in countries like Cambodia and Algeria is now dotted with satellite dishes. With these satellite dishes come a barrage of Western exported images of modern success and prosperity. It may be that those watching what they perceive as successful Americans could eat and dress American and possibly acquire some of these qualities themselves (Anderson 2005).

Figure 3.1- End cap at Panda Hypermarket, Khobar



Source: Author

The Gulf peninsula has experienced a similar torrent of Western images and commercials. Major food industries like Nestle and Nabisco routinely advertise on even the smallest of the multitude of satellite stations available.¹⁴ Their strategically-placed end-caps and displays dominate the setting of hypermarkets (see figure 3.1). To understand the effect of these phenomena, it is first necessary to examine traditional Gulf Arab and Saudi cuisine.

Gulf Arab cuisine

Arab cuisine in general is extremely diverse. Arabs restaurants in the United States tend to serve food from Lebanon or Morocco. This is not to be confused with food from the Arabian Gulf. Although Lebanese and Egyptian food is very common in Saudi Arabia, there are still key differences between them. For example, whereas the Arab countries of North Africa and Levant consume bread with every meal, for the Gulf Arabs, rice plays a central role in Gulf Arab cuisine even though it is far from an indigenous crop. In my many conversations with Arabs on the matter, I have found that they feel just as strongly about the importance of rice as a part of their culture and cuisine as Koreans or Japanese. The Gulf Arabs explain that rice was the easiest crop to store in their climate and thus a dramatic improvement to their quality of life before the discovery of oil.

The national dish of Saudi Arabia is *kabsa*, or very similar dishes like *bukhari*, *rozi*, *biryani*, or *mendi*. Kabsa is a rice dish with either lamb or chicken. It is eaten everyday and loved by the population. The interesting thing is that rice needs 100 centimeters of rainfall a year, or at least swamp-like conditions—neither of which Saudi Arabia has. Without trade and the

¹⁴ I estimate over 200 stations from the more than 1000 available satellite stations in Saudi Arabia to emanate from Arab countries—a significant change from the three stations available in the 1990s.

mechanization of food production there would be no national cuisine in Saudi Arabia as we know it.

Goody (1982; 1997) writes of a world cuisine made possible by developments in four areas: preserving, mechanization, retailing, and transport. None of these processes are recent, which Goody explains, but all of these factors have allowed for increased trade which has, in turn, changed national cuisines.

Mennell (1992) sees a trend towards diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties in food production and consumption. He envisions the possibility of a standardized diet, but Warde (1997) notes that the same manufacturers of industrialized food not only require but perpetuate a diversity of foods. He also explains that it is the industrialization of food that allows for the equality in diet among classes thus unifying a country's national cuisine. Popkin (2003) contends that the trend is towards diminishing contrasts and decreasing varieties.

In Saudi Arabia, even foods considered local can be traced to other places. Rice dishes are influenced by India, Persia, and Afghanistan. Their kebabs are Iraqi or Turkish. Breakfast often consists of eating Egyptian or Sudani foul (see figure 3.2). Potatoes and chilies, both quintessential components of a Saudi kitchen, come from the Americas.

Most foods found today in Saudi Arabia are relatively new. Historically, the Bedouin of the Gulf are said to value poetry and the visual arts more than a good meal. It is not for lack of access to spices and foods from other cultures. Mecca, in the west, was a trading center long before the introduction of Islam. Zaouali (2009) asks: "Is it imaginable that their cargoes of incense and spices could have passed one another without the inhabitants of Mecca acquiring some of these things?" (2009, 27).

Figure 3.2- This is a typical Saudi breakfast of Sudani style foul (kidney and garbanzo beans) with Afghani style bread and Shai Hindi (Indian style tea). The pickled vegetables on the left (Lebanese origin) and hot sauce (almost always from Louisiana) are typical features on every restaurant table.



Source: Author

Other Arabs, such as Moroccans or Lebanese, are known for their flavorful and pungent dishes and for incorporating spices, ingredients, and cooking styles from anywhere they could. However, the Gulf Arabs did not exhibit the same excitement towards food as environmental conditions and the lack of arable land allowed for only limited agriculture and storage. As a consequence, among the oldest dishes are bland wheat soups or porridge. Other dishes are made with dates, milk, or cheese with goat, lamb, or camel the principle meat source. They cooked with either clarified butter or other animal fat—typically from sheep.

While the diversity of food available has increased in recent years, occasions such as weddings, births, religious holidays, or even a Friday meal are still celebrated with indigenous food. The beginning of any Saudi gathering begins with a particular coffee and dates. Saudi Arabia is known for its date quality and a Saudi can tell the type of date and the region from where it came. The coffee, served in very small cups, is Yemeni coffee only briefly roasted and

flavored with cardamom, ginger, and cloves. There are rules about who serves, the order in which people are served, and how to accept.

The main dish, while almost always containing rice, will usually be lamb, fish, or on special occasions, camel. In the case of the lamb and fish, they are served whole on top of the rice (figure 3.3). The fish might or might not contain scales and the lamb is only partially disemboweled.

Figure 3.3- This small amount of food for dinner would usually be considered an insult, but I sufficiently pressured my friend to tone it down. However, this was the second course. The chicken and rice dish is Egyptian-inspired. Notice the use of French fries both with vegetables and kebabs. The use of fries is not considered in any way to be Western.



Source: Author

Men almost always eat on the floor and with their right hand. It is unacceptable to eat with the left hand across the Muslim world as it is normally used with water in lieu of toilet paper. Each person eats the food immediately in front of them and works towards the center of the dish. It is common for others to tear pieces of meat and place them in front of you as a show of affection or respect.

Much of Saudi pastime revolves around food. To eat a meal alone is pitied and seldom done. As the saying goes: “*Al-Jinnah bidun nass ma bitindas*” (paradise without people is unlivable). Much time is devoted to going out to eat or discussing where to eat. Where little of recreational activity is found in the city aside from shopping at the mall, restaurants are plentiful and often full late into the night (Mousa 2009).

The central role of food in the social life of Saudi Arabians is one of the reasons that *what* they eat and *why* they eat it is an indispensable part of their culture. If there is a change in Saudi cuisine, it is, therefore, necessary to understand the agents of this change and it is important to look at this in the context of globalization.

Chapter 4

Globalization

As this dissertation explores changes in culture through the proxy of cuisine, globalization may be an agent of dietary change in Saudi Arabia. It is, of course, possible that the globalization of various products, ideas, and people may directly influence Saudi Arabian culture through means other than cuisine. In either case, it is important to examine globalization for the purpose of this research. One of the questions I seek to answer is globalization's impact on Saudi culture.

In addition to grounding my research in a definition of globalization, I will explore two approaches to globalization:

- The world is becoming more homogeneous as a result of globalization
- As globalization occurs so does a hybridization between the global and the traditional

I then examine globalization in the context of food with particular attention paid to the influence of multinational corporations. I close this chapter looking at Saudi Arabian views of globalization.

Definition

Globalization is a value-laden and fluid term. The idea of globalization is not new. Ibn Khaldun (1967) wrote about international trade, surplus, and foreign investment in 1377. Marx and Engels (1979) predicted in the mid nineteenth century in the *Communist Manifesto* that the capitalist system would eventually compel the bourgeoisie to spread their capitalist modes of production throughout the world. Although not calling it by name, they were speaking about economic globalization (Cap 2002).

The penetration of globalization across disciplines can be tracked via its use in the vocabulary of the disciplines. Among the first uses of the term “globalization” was in the context of business and economics in the 1980s. Globalization was then placed into the social sciences in the 1990s with Robertson’s (1995) look at globalization of religion and the examination of space and time (Giddens 1990) to give provide two examples.

Friedman, who has popularized the idea of the shrinking world on talk shows and newspapers, explains it as the “integration of everything with everything else.” While Amin and Luckin (1996) write that globalization is "the existence of relations between the different regions of the world and, as a corollary, the reciprocal influence that societies exert upon one another" (1996, 231). Amin goes on to explain that there have been stages or cycles of globalization but characterizes this latest phase, occurring in 1990, as one dominated by the United States. Amin details three events that allow for this: the fixed exchange system and the dollar standard, the dominance of America's military, and the unprecedented spread of the English language. Amin (2006) places various regions of the world as the core, or power, in previous cycles of globalization; he asserts that the core in this current cycle of globalization is the United States (see Wallerstein 1974).

Inda and Rosaldo (2002) describe globalization as the “intensification of interconnectedness” and assert it is primarily driven by the United States and Europe. They discuss Harvey’s (1989) contention that this current acceleration of interconnectedness is a result of the breakdown of Fordism. Its result is the “crisis of over-accumulation” of American goods in a saturated market, which in turn has led to improved communication and transportation links and an opening up of new labor and consumer markets.

Today's Globalization

Appadurai (1996) and Giddens (1990) describe the current phase of globalization as a culmination of trade, war, capitalism, and technological advances with its roots not 30 or 40 years ago, but 500 years ago and accelerating year after year. Fukuyama (1992) and Agnew (2005) argue that this current stage of globalization is led by the triumph of free market capitalism over communism and the Soviet Union. Roudometof (2003) maintains that this current phase of globalization is rooted in the fall of the Soviet Union and the spread of neoliberal policies, but also posits that the economic and policy trends of the 1990s were a more important factor and independent of the fall of communism.

Marx (1848) and Wallerstein (1974) place the beginning of globalization somewhere in the 16th century with the discovery of the Americas and the colonization of various areas of the world. However, the notion of globalization beginning in the 1500s or after World War II, or the in the 1990s is not only inaccurate according to Pieterse (1995) and Wolf (1982) but centered on the European or American experience (Pieterse 1995).

These divergent theories center around three proposed theories regarding globalization. Those who tend to look at the economic aspects of globalization look to the 1980s and 1990s. Some sociologists (commonly conflict and modernization theorists) see the origins of globalization in the 16th century or the Industrial Revolution while anthropologists like Wolf (1982) often see globalization as a process as old as recorded history. Regardless, it is generally agreed (Pieterse 2004) that globalization today is shaped by technological change, regionalization (the European and African unions, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the North American Free Trade Agreement are examples), and is uneven (concentrated in Europe, America, and East Asia).

It also must be recognized that *something different* has been occurring over the last few decades. This phase of globalization might be more than an ebb and flow of trade. A passage from Heynen and Njeru (2006) illustrates the penetration of globalization today:

There is a good chance the beans, after being harvested, will be shipped to New Orleans, Louisiana, in a freighter produced in Japan from Korean steel made from ores mined in Papua New Guinea. The extraction of iron ore has a good chance of being mined from tribal lands...In New Orleans, the coffee beans will be roasted and packaged in foil and three layers of plastic that were made from oil shipped from Saudi Arabia. The plastic was likely manufactured in...“cancer alley”...The aluminum foil layer...is primarily made from bauxite ore...refined in the US’s Pacific Northwest with energy from a hydroelectric dam on the Colombia River that drastically changed the complete ecosystem around the river. The ramifications of the dam prevented Native American groups from fishing for salmon, which has historically constituted their livelihood (2006, 188).

The abovementioned scenario is not sufficient in describing globalization in its totality as it does not encompass its various aspects. To one person, the term “globalization” might mean changes in the job market whereas another might envision vast swaths of rainforest clearing. To some, globalization takes place when, among other factors, countries lower trade barriers to goods, remove subsidies, and go through the process of privatization. Globalization is controversial because there are winners, such as those benefiting from technological advances like mobile phones or the creation of new jobs (Friedman 2005), and losers, like farmers who can no longer compete with multinational food corporations or those who lost their job to outsourcing (see Chomsky 1998; Lappé and Collins 1977; Kearney 1996).

Modernization

Giddens (1990) claims what is globalized is modernity. Huntington (1996) theorizes that modernization only goes so far in the diffusion of cultures or ideas or products. He also asserts that modernization is not always equated with westernization and that it is possible to modernize without becoming westernized. Robertson (1995) also decouples globalization and modernization by putting globalization in a historical context, but also asserts that some nations will often have a “reference society” they will emulate. The implication is that although

countries like Saudi Arabia can modernize without becoming westernized, the United States or Europe can be used as a reference point. I suggest this is the case with some markets and restaurants in Saudi Arabia.

Globalization in terms of food is multi-faceted. Globalization may affect food-choice behavior of those who financially benefit or suffer from it. For example, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1994 was significant in that it brought food and agriculture commodities under a unified global system of trade rules.¹⁵ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank structural readjustment programs lower prices of agricultural commodities which often effect who can eat what. Globalization allows corporations to penetrate new markets with new products possibly changing the behavior of segments of society (Zukin and Maguire 2004). This is not to say that globalization is managed by governments or corporations, but they are certainly important actors. Finally it may affect the food-choice behavior of those who financially benefit or suffer from globalization.

Homogenization

George Ritzer (1991) was one of the first to locate globalization in Weber's theory of rationalization. Ritzer (2003) and Barbour (1996) posit that rationalized (ultra-efficient) principles guiding the success of McDonald's will diffuse to all business—then to other aspects of life—until it has permeated the globe.

In fact, globalization is sometimes labeled “McDonaldization” (Ritzer 1991) or “Coca-Colonization” (Wagenleiter 1994; see Foster, 2008). These terms highlight the fears some have of a homogeneous world with the flow of goods, followed by culture, moving from developed

¹⁵ GATT predated the World Trade Organization. The agreement of 1994 dealt extensively in agricultural trade.

nations to developing nations. Said (1993) claims that the hegemony from the West has its roots in colonialism. Although these colonizers are no longer physically present in the colony, they maintain a degree of economic and political control.

According to Lang (2003), a prolific writer on issues of food supply, the movement of goods has been from the overproducing western markets of the developed world to the developing world. The speed at which fast-food corporations have penetrated world markets is unprecedented as is its advertising and dominating influence over other restaurants and businesses in the impacted countries (Ritzer 1991). Fading memories of Americana have found new life in landscapes drastically unlike their birth place. It is, after all, in Saudi Arabia and not Louisiana where one can relive childhood memories of a root beer float in an A&W drive-in. New Orleans expats in Dammam or Riyadh nostalgic for PJ's coffee or Popeyes chicken need only go as far as the food court in a shopping mall (figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1- Dhahran mall food court



Source: Author

O’Raian (2000) states that globalization has undermined many state controls of corporations and that the state must integrate itself with the global and local. He cites the neoliberalism of this current state of globalization as the main force shaping the relationships between states and markets. Venues affecting economic, health, trade, and political policies have taken place in international institutions like the IMF, World Bank, the United Nations, World Health Organization, and World Trade Organization. One could argue that these are controlled by States, but they are controlled, at best, by a consortium of States from the most prosperous countries (Conway and Wolfel 2006)

Rosecranse (1999) envisions the creation of the “virtual state” where countries like India and China will have small governments in name only. The market will eventually provide the services the state currently provides. He posits that states will cease to be in conflict with each other as the cost of invasion will be much higher than any rewards from it, as supply chains will be interlinked, thus damaging both sides.

The central premise of Marling’s (2006) book *How American is Globalization* is that globalization is not as American as we think. More salient is his rationale—that local cultures are resistant to the hegemony of others. He writes:

that everyone, especially Americans, recognize American films, language, and logos when abroad, and draws the conclusion that the world is becoming Americanized...In fact, a clutch of cultural constraints—language, food, habitation patterns, educational institutions, attitudes toward race and honesty—resist change in general, and resist the American face of globalization especially. They do so because change makes a bad fit with local culture...we should not underestimate the persistence of the local, the ways in which local culture determines what can be globalized (2006, viii).

Still, there are others (Jackson, 2002; Hannerz, 1996) who play down the importance of such corporations or institutions as globalization symbols, contending that their acceptance only localizes them and reduces their value as an imported item. As the Coca-Cola Corporation has

morphed and developed region specific products, Coca-Cola no longer is marketed as a symbol of Western dominance. Miller (1998) has shown that Coca-Cola is thought to have originated in Trinidad by locals.

Glocalization

I spent about ten days in Tokyo in 2008. Aside from about two or three meals, I bought every other food item from 7-11. There is a greater concentration of convenience stores (and 7-11 stores) in Tokyo than any city I have ever seen in the United States. In fact, according to Whitelaw (2006), 7-11 is a Japanese corporation. The stores have the same layout as in the United States. The back and side wall is lined with refrigerators and coolers. There are a few isles with toiletries, stationary supplies, and various non-refrigerated foods and the magazine rack is present as well.

The remarkable difference is the presence of real food. Food prepared only hours beforehand and nothing like one would expect from a convenience store. It was restaurant-quality food and enough of a variety where one could eat for ten days without tiring of it. Whitelaw (2006) documents the 30 year rise of 7-11 and its transformation of the American model to meet the needs of the Japanese. In the case of 7-11, the Japanese did not see it as cultural imperialism, but absorbed it, made it their own and improved upon the experience.

The word “glocalization” is a blend of “global” and “local.” Its use has been first attributed (Robertson 1995) to the Japanese word *dochakuka*—a word with origins in adapting farming techniques to local conditions. In Japanese business, the word meant selling globally but adapted to local markets. Pieterse (1995) views glocalization with an emphasis on culture rather than economics and refers to the global *mélange*. It is a long term process rather than solely a

local reaction to a global process as evident in examples like the Mardi Gras Indians. Friedman (1990) uses the term “creolization” to refer to similar notion.

Robertson (1995) asserts that notions of what is local are often influenced in global terms. What is local, he maintains, is often created by the global. An applicable example is the red and white *ghurta* (headscarf) worn by the majority of Saudi males.¹⁶ Its origins are Arab, but the red color and checkered pattern were introduced by the British for the Arab soldiers serving in the armed forces. As it became a status symbol, it was adopted by the rest of the population. The style of wearing it down (on the sides of the face as opposed to a turban-style) came from the Ottoman rule. Today, new variations of the red and white ghutra are manufactured in China accompanied with brand logos like Versace and Dunhill.

Ritzer (2003) writes that glocalization is the “interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas” (2003, 196). He adds a new term to the literature explaining that *grobalization* comes from the desire of nations and companies to expand (grow) globally thus affecting the local.¹⁷

Glocalization, at least in the case of food, work in both directions. What we know as Chinese food is unrecognizable in China. Pho, a Vietnamese soup currently popular in the U.S., has been altered to fit American tastes. In fact, the dish itself is a hybrid of French and Vietnamese cuisines. According to Ferrero (2002), there are two types of Mexican food in the U.S: Americanized Mexican food found in the more affluent areas, and the real Mexican food found only in the poorer Mexican communities.

¹⁶ The red and white version worn by Arabs in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and parts of Iraq, is the most popular and frequently-worn but a solid white is also common.

¹⁷ Ritzer leaves out discussion of glocalization in his McDonaldization thesis in 1995, but addresses it in a later edition and introduced grobalization to the literature.

What makes McDonald's successful in different countries is that while much is standardized, like clean bathrooms, the food is often a hybrid of local and international (Watson 2005, Bell and Valentine 1997) and can even be seen as indigenous (Caldwell 2004, Miller 1998). McDonald's has creatively morphed a culinary experience which melds the familiar with the new. One can purchase a McArabia (see figure 4.2), McAloo Tikki in India, or in Germany, the McGemüse¹⁸ with curry sauce. Ultimately, the McDonald's experience is predictable and expandable across the globe, but it does allow the consumer to feel that they are in a McDonald's inside Germany, thus providing an American type of experience, but in Germany.

Figure 4.2- The McArabia consists of chicken or beef served in pita bread.



Source: Author

¹⁸ Gemüse is German for vegetable. Although it is still referred to as a McGemüse, it has been renamed “veggieburger.” I assume the English word is used to divert attention to the fact that it is a veggieburger.

In *Golden Arches East*, Watson (1997) and other authors explore the place of McDonald's in five Asian countries. What is common in each location (Beijing, Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo, and Hong Kong) is that McDonald's could not have succeeded without appealing to younger children and teenagers. Also common to all locations is that McDonald's became an area for conspicuous consumption.

However, not every aspect of culture can be simply exported directly to other cultures. In Hong Kong, a smile implied that a customer was being cheated. In all locations, the concept that there is no "meal" without rice had to be addressed. The population had to be convinced that they were not visiting a snack shop. In Korea and Taipei, McDonald's was fast food, but the setting was more akin to a French or Italian restaurant with customers staying for hours studying, reading papers, or simply enjoying the entire McDonald's experience. McDonald's learned that they had to adapt their restaurants to each location. It was necessary for McDonald's to be "American" but they needed to adapt enough to be considered local as well.

The Global Food Market and Diet

Ceres, a loose group of environmentalists, activists, and corporations saw the need to address the various food issues arising from a globalizing world as early as the late 1980s and early 1990s. Their conferences have been addressing issues such as trade and agricultural policies, global hunger, and the implications of the rapidly changing world. As a forward to the proceedings of the 1991 Ceres Conference, John Dunlop fittingly states:

The global food system, in the past decade particularly, has been undergoing a restructuring through the consolidation and internationalization of enterprises at every stage. Horizontal and vertical coordination has been taking place through joint ventures, partnering, and long-term procurement and marketing arrangements. These changes have been abetted by the technological and information revolutions. Supplies to farms are now provided by fully technological companies; commodity processors of traditional products have been transformed into global wholesalers of custom-designed food, feed, fuel, and pharmaceutical ingredients; and consumer market enterprises are providing full consumer service and logistic systems (1993, XI).

Saudi Arabia's transition in the last 20 years has brought foreign food products to previously inaccessible areas of the country through multinational corporations like Pepsi and Nestle. Now, the global reach of western products can be seen not only in Saudi Arabia, but most of the world's major cities. The Forbidden City is no longer forbidden for Starbucks and the golden arches are now in Mecca. Additionally, food advertising has dramatically increased in the developing world. Chopra and Hill (2004) describe the relationship between globalization and food:

Global marketing and the systematic moulding of taste by giant corporations have been argued to be a central feature of globalization of the food industry. However, just as for tobacco companies, these investments in global brands are being re-enforced by active promotion and the use of the opportunities arising from the increasing liberalization of trade to develop new markets. The growth of the transnational food industry is intricately linked to the process of globalization (2004, 1559).

In interviewing McDonald's customers in France, Fantasia (1995) found that it was the American attributes of the restaurant which attracted them. There have been similar findings in East Asian McDonald's (Watson 1995) and Taco Bell in Mexico (Pilcher 2006). Fantasia also cited studies showing the bulk of the consumers as middle managers, white collar employees, and younger adults.

A meal at McDonald's was cheaper than a traditional French meal. Etiquettes were assumed to be relaxed. McDonald's is a place where one could eat with their hands and have fun. Fantasia likens it to French versus American clothing. Those who wore jeans, for example did so because they were comfortable, more affordable, and more interesting.

Globalization and the Production of Culture

Is it possible that by eating in foreign establishments, you can ground yourself in one culture while visiting another? Ferrero (2002) applies the term “staged authenticity”¹⁹ and claims that one can surrender to another culture but still be the master. Yet another possible outcome is to simply adopt and adapt aspects of another culture until it is no longer considered foreign.

Gladstone (2005) in his book *From Pilgrimage to Package Tour* aptly exemplifies the influence of globalization on Indian culture:

India’s elite culture has changed dramatically over the last fifteen years in ways that are directly attributable to the country’s growing integration into global media flows...the very idea of the “good life” for middle-class India—a nuclear family, a new car, Ralph Lauren shirt, outings to McDonald’s, and vacations spent “sipping on Bacardi rum,” as a popular commercial proclaims—has been drawn almost entirely from Western media portrayals (2005, 144-145).

Here, he perhaps alludes to the prospect that one can buy an alternate citizenship, or perhaps escape to another country without actually leaving. In any event, what is clear is that western media, at least in some circles, influences culture and it is difficult to articulate such changes without including aspects of diet.

In looking at the cultural influences in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world in general, it is important to look at the influences exerted by corporations (see Dicken 2000). Mitchell and Rosati (2006) explain that markets eventually become saturated with certain products. This necessitates the opening of new markets. Not only must new markets open, but new needs must often be created in order to assure items will sell. People must be convinced, for example, that what they are wearing is no longer good enough and must be replaced.

¹⁹ This term was first used by MacCannell (1976). He applies Goffmann’s ideas of dramaturgy to authentic tourist settings and experiences.

Mitchell and Rosati further explain that capitalism produces a globalized culture in three different types of commodities: everyday things, extraordinary things, and media things.

Everyday life, they contend, is defined by everyday commodities. “Pringles change how we eat, and they change why and how food is produced” (2006, 153). These everyday items, they further state, are increasingly provided by a global production system. Thrift (2000) wrote that new forms of culture are always being produced and the definition of what is “local” is changing, with items like Coke no longer being seen as a foreign commodity.

“Extraordinary things,” Mitchell and Rosati write, are a result of an individual’s struggle to redefine themselves and break away from what is “common.” In the context of diet, one might switch from Pepsi to an expensive type of wine to mark one’s distinctive upper class status.

“Media things” in this case meaning mostly television and movies, define *how* culture is diffused through a place to the point where new imports would seem normal. Media things are actually platforms to sell more things. As Mitchell and Rosati put forward, media transforms social spaces into a more predictable and globally uniform place. Additionally, media is welcomed as an authority of cultural production. The media is welcomed into our homes and influences our meaning of culture.

Similarly, Cooperman and Schechter (2008) were able to examine the corporate archives of Philip Morris due to the lawsuits on tobacco companies during the 1990s. In mining their data, they were able to examine how Marlboro was marketed to those in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey. An interesting conclusion in all three countries was that Marlboro was marketed as a lifestyle and this aspect was more important than the product itself. The authors concluded that Philip Morris sought to sell “Americana” without selling America. Marlboro cigarettes provided

a chance to escape into a world of adventure. It was a dual citizenship to a country of independence and prosperity.

Although the article is about cigarettes rather than food, it is important nevertheless because Marlboro was marketed in a way that was thought of as an international cigarette not tied to a class or religion. Yet, the marketing of Marlboro required different advertising techniques in each country. Saudis viewed the Marlboro Man as a skilled horseman rather than a cowboy as such an occupation in the Arab Gulf would be a job for foreign labor. Rather than a dry and dusty landscape, Philip Morris used lush green landscapes which would be more suited to the idea of fantasy and escape of desert-dwelling people. Due to the Saudi's preoccupation with expensive and fast cars, Marlboro also sponsored the Formula One Marlboro Car and formula one races. They also sponsored a chance to win a trip to England for race car training. So, like McDonald's, Coca-Cola, and other multinational corporations, Philip Morris first looked at the culture of Saudi society and adapted Marlboro accordingly. Marlboro, like McDonald's, is simultaneously Saudi, western, upper class, and accessible to all. Additionally, the branding of the product sometimes holds more value than the product itself. Having a pack of Marlboros in Saudi Arabia confers a higher status than other brands as does sitting in front of the window at McDonald's in Cairo. In both cases, being associated with the product holds more value than its consumption. Ritzer (1999) exemplifies the point in that visitors and tourists frequent Hard Rock Café restaurants across the world not for the food, but to purchase shirts, jackets, and other memorabilia bearing its logo.

McDonald's as a Symbol of Globalization

It is fitting that Ritzer (1991) chose McDonald's as the template and symbol to explain the trend towards the ultra-efficient standardization of not only food production, but

entertainment, leisure, knowledge, and ultimately all aspects of our life. Featherstone (1995) elaborates on Ritzer's idea in explaining that "The burger is not only consumed physically as a material substance, but is consumed culturally as an image and an icon of a particular way of life." Neither Ritzer nor Featherstone allege that McDonald's sets cultural trends nor do they claim that McDonald's pioneered standardization.²⁰ Yet McDonald's stands as an example of the influence a corporation can exert on a national identity. Friedman (2000) claims that no two countries with a McDonald's will go to war.²¹ The point of the theory is that McDonald's, as a symbol of globalization, either changes a country or a country must be changed enough to accept a McDonald's restaurant.

McDonald's is a symbol of globalism and Americanism. Why pharmaceuticals or computers are not treated the same way? As explained by Watson (2005); food is serious business. When there is a change in a country's cuisine, notions of national identity are threatened. This is especially true, he claims, when American corporations are involved.

Saudi Views toward Globalization

Globalization in Saudi Arabia generally has a different connotation than in the United States. Saudis, as well as other Arabs, are concerned about the erosion of their cultural identity. Many view globalization as a new form of imperialism. For Saudis, globalization can be equated with secularization and western domination and often as an attempt to Christianize the world. With Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's only yards from the *Kabaa* in Mecca, Islam's holiest site, Saudis are concerned by perceived changes to their culture. Yet, they embrace the

²⁰ Ritzer credits Henry Ford

²¹ The exact quote is: "No two countries that both had McDonald's had fought a war against each other since each got its McDonald's." (2000, 251). The chapter is titled: "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention." The theory has been recently disproven with the Russian war with Georgia.

technology globalization has brought. The Nokia and Motorola phones are as advanced as in the United States. The youth flock to Western restaurants and watch the latest music videos. They look forward to the arrival of the newest model of Toyota Land cruiser all the while begrudging the social deterioration that all these imports bring to their culture. Fox (2006) believes that globalization is changing the landscape of the Gulf, but in a controlled and intentionally directed manner acceptable to traditional Gulf-Arab values. On the other hand, some (Siregeldin 2006; Khalaf 2002) see a changing landscape dictated by the hegemony of the West.

Najjar (2005) sees the Arabs as having three views of globalization. The first is an outright rejection of globalization. To these rejectionists, globalization is viewed as neo-imperialism intent on exterminating their culture. The vehicle for this opposition often comes from what is termed “Islamic radicalism.” They see globalization as a call for the elimination of boundaries and a one-world society built around the ideals of secularization. To them, the differences between America and Germany or New Zealand are miniscule. Lieber and Weisberg (2002) assert that such attitudes are merely transference of anger and hostility from their own governments and that there is a clash within civilizations rather than, as Huntington posits, a clash between them.

The second group, on the other end of the continuum, asserts that globalization is an inevitable process linked with modernization. This group sees that it is no longer possible to live in isolation in a shrinking world. This group welcomes technology, Western-style freedoms, and new ideas.

The third group straddles both these extremes and feels that parts of globalization can be absorbed while parts can be rejected. This third group asserts that Arabs must find their place within the modernizing and shrinking world without surrendering their identity. This is the

situation in which Saudi Arabia finds itself. All three views can be found in Saudi society, but the majority will adopt certain aspects and leaves others. While some Saudis do turn inward, they are neither stranger to trade nor to other cultures.

As Eickelman (2002) illustrates, the Islamic world is and has been open to the outside world adopting, shaping, and absorbing cultures for hundreds of years. There is a consensus however, as Eickelman notes, that globalization is often be equated with Americanization while Najjar (2005) simply connects globalization with secularization based on material values.

Conclusion

I share the view of Rizter (2003) that globalization is the sum of glocalization and grobalization. In Saudi Arabia they are two forces on a continuum representing—as Barber (1996) or Giddens (1990) might suggest—the traditional and the modern. However, glocalization does not mitigate the forces of grobalization. In other words, the world is not necessarily becoming homogeneous but neither is cultural diversity increasing. The last few years have brought the countries of Kosovo and South Sudan into the international community, but both Europe and Africa have been much more fragmented in history—the UN just did not define countries around culture as much as today. The cultures of the Kosovars and Southern Sudanese existed a century ago—but were they both drinking coca-cola and listening to the BBC?

Led by Saudi Arabia, the Arabian Gulf is showing signs of economic and political convergence. The Gulf is moving towards a free trade bloc (see Wilson 2006). Already, movement between the countries of the Gulf (with the exception of Yemen) requires no visa for citizens. They are currently in the process of developing a common set of trade rules and, a more difficult task, a common currency. Linking international cities like Dubai and Abu Dhabi with Saudi Arabia will undoubtedly further influence Saudi culture. Yet, as some suggest (Fox 2006;

Champion 2003), the pressures of globalization will be on the terms of the Gulf Arabs and in a manner not necessarily predictable and neither modern nor traditional (Barakat 1993).

Chapter 5

Methodology

There is a scarcity of studies on food choice in Saudi Arabia. The studies on food choice center on obesity looking at vegetable and fruit consumption among primary school children (Al-Subaie 1999) or university students (Amin 2008). Other studies consider a particular aspect of diet such as fiber intake (Al-Shagrawi 1998) or beverage consumption (Collison et al. 2010) but again, the existing literature on food in Saudi Arabia centers primarily on obesity and associated diseases in a controlled school or university setting. Others (Wilk 2007; Counihan 2004; Pilcher 2006) have studied food as it relates to culture or globalization in Europe or South America but I have not found similar research in Saudi Arabia.

In an attempt to add to the literature—not only on the topics covered in this research, but on the unique challenges of undertaking research in Saudi Arabia—this random study utilized survey data from an adult population followed up by interviews. While the interviews were open-ended and used to add validity to the study, the quantitative portion involved a set of questions. I briefly revisit my main research questions—on which my survey and interview questions are based—below:

- What is the degree of interplay between globalization, culture and cuisine?
- Is there a relationship between the diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures?
- In which segments of society are changes in dietary behavior occurring to the degree that they are occurring?

I attempted to answer these questions by looking at where Saudis bought food and in which restaurants they chose to eat. I suggest that dining in Western-style restaurants and

purchasing food at a traditional market (*souk*) implies a greater openness to both globalization and Western culture.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the quantitative methods employed in this study. I delineate and operationalize both the dependent and independent variables used in the survey and provide a justification for their use. I then discuss how I obtained a random sample and my sample size by placing it within some of the existing studies in Saudi Arabia. I close the chapter discussing the qualitative data including the opportunities and limitations of my interviews.

Quantitative Data

I sought to correlate the following factors with eating more from western restaurants like Chili's and McDonald's than traditional Arabic restaurants as well as in hypermarkets versus traditional *souks* (markets).

- Time spent outside Arabian Gulf
- Low Price
- Cleanliness
- Time spent watching satellite television
- Lower religious conviction
- Favorable feelings of the U.S. and Europe

I also looked at each of these variables in Riyadh and Khobar for the possibility that people in Riyadh are less likely to frequent western restaurants. I reasoned that this is because of the higher number of western oil workers in Khobar and the closer proximity to the more liberal country of Bahrain which is less than an hour from Khobar but more than five hours from Riyadh. Also, Riyadh is known by Saudi Arabians to be much more conservative.

Dependent Variables

The two dependent variables were the type of restaurants frequented and the types of stores in which one shops for food. To determine the first dependent variable, the subjects were

asked about their favorite and second favorite restaurant. This question covered dining in, take-out and delivery. In Saudi Arabia, it is common to order take-out or delivery as many restaurants are the domain solely of men. Although it is common to have a secluded family section in each restaurant, families comprise less of the dining population compared to single men (figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1- The main door behind the van is the men's section (sometimes called the "bachelor's section.") The family (or women's section) is on the right side of the store. More often, the main door is not labeled and assumed to be for men leaving a sign only for the family section.



Source: Author

I categorized restaurants into traditional Arabic restaurants, western restaurants, and other restaurants by the type of food served as opposed to the setting. Some Arabic restaurants had settings similar to McDonald's or Burger King. However, my interest was in the type of food eaten. I considered Western restaurants as franchises from the United States or Europe such as

Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, or any restaurant imitating a common western restaurant serving similar items. At least 80% of the menu must have consisted of non-Arabic items.

I defined Arab Restaurants as those with a menu consisting of at least 80% traditional Arabic food such as hummus, falafel, or kabsa (see figures 5.2-5.3).

Figure 5.2- This is an example of an inexpensive Arabic restaurant where one can eat foul, hummus, mutabak, or other traditional dishes. The attached brick-oven bakery is the left door. As with all prayer times, the gates are closed.



Source: Author

Certain items such as french fries and fountain drinks are considered local items and commonly served with Arabic food. Other restaurants were those that are neither western nor Arabic such as Indian or Japanese restaurants. These restaurants could very well indicate outside influences just the same as western restaurants. However, such restaurants might be more immune to political connotations of “selling out” or going against cultural or religious ideals. I expected that a favorite Chinese or Japanese restaurant would be chosen as a favorite restaurant and I intended to categorize them separately. However, there were no cases of this occurring.

Both restaurants with and without a wait staff were considered the same. I visited each restaurant noted in the surveys to assure proper category placement.

Figure 5.3- A mid-priced restaurant serving traditional Arabic dishes, the name implies that they specialize in Bukhari rice. As with the last figure, this restaurant is for men only and will have seating both at tables and on the floor.



Source: Author

The second dependent variable was the type of business in which food is bought for home consumption. In Saudi Arabia, there are two methods for buying food. One is to purchase food at the traditional souk where vegetables are bought from a vendor, meat is bought from the butcher, and grains are purchased at the grain store, etc. (see figure 5.4)

Figure 5.4- This was one of four stands remaining in this market. This vendor is taking up spaces 100-102 with the same items one can purchase in a hypermarket. The closed down butcher shops can be seen in the background.



Source: Author

There are two implications in buying food this way: one is that the food is less expensive and may, to a certain degree, be an indicator of income. The second implication is that food bought in the souk is less processed than food brought in a grocery store. The other way to buy food is to purchase it from a grocery store like Safeway or Carrefour (see figure 5.5). Similar to these types of stores in the United States and Europe, most food items can be bought in one building.

Figure 5.5- Fruit and vegetable section at Carrefour, Riyadh



Source: Author

Prices in these stores are more expensive than the traditional souk and there is an implication that the manner of not only purchasing but eating food might be changing in Saudi Arabia.

I measured this variable by asking subjects where they typically shop for meat and vegetables. Their answers were categorized into western and Arabic stores. The western grocery stores and those which model after them in Riyadh and Khobar are: Carrefour, Lulu, Panda, Safeway, and Giant.

Independent Variables

Age was measured by asking the year of birth. This method was preferred in the interest of keeping the phone interview as short as possible. Reading off age categories would take too

long and possibly be confusing. Asking the birth year is less intrusive than asking the age of someone.

I made inferences about income indirectly through asking educational attainment and the type of store where one buys food. Income is always a sensitive subject and even more so in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, family members, including wives, often do not have even the vaguest idea of the head of household's income. While I could not find any evidence to support it in Saudi Arabia, I assumed that income correlates positively with education and shopping at westernized grocery stores (which tend to be significantly more expensive).

I obtained information about the time spent outside the Arabian Gulf by asking about the time spent in five different areas: The United States, Europe, East Asia, the Shamiya (countries of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan), and the Gulf countries (Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman). It is not uncommon for the average Saudi citizen to spend some time studying or vacationing for the summer in another country. This was an open question with answers standardized in days. As many Saudi tribes cross country boundaries and no visa is required to visit other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, it is common for Saudis to visit them (especially Qatar and Kuwait) weekly. Accordingly, for the days spent in other GCC countries, some respondents gave answers such as "all the time" or "always" instead of a number. I decided to write this number down as 180 days and control for this variable during my subsequent analysis.

Questions about price, cleanliness of the food, and taste were measured on an interval scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most preferred. The term was chosen to apply to all three variables and relayed a general feeling about them.

There was a dichotomous question on ownership of a satellite with a follow-up question on the length television watched per day which I standardized in minutes. Some respondents did not quantify answers but stated as “always” or “the TV is always on.” In such cases, I omitted the answers. As there are only two or three local television stations and they all carry the same dismal reputation, it is safe to assume that Saudi citizens with a satellite would not watch those stations. The standard satellite (Arabsat) is free to air with an initial setup cost of about \$200. Ownership of a satellite, therefore, is not a good indicator of income but could be an indicator of religiousness. I used the number of minutes per day of television watching to infer the effect of advertising and I asked similar question was asked about Internet use. I standardized and recorded the answers in minutes. Answers such as “all day” were omitted.

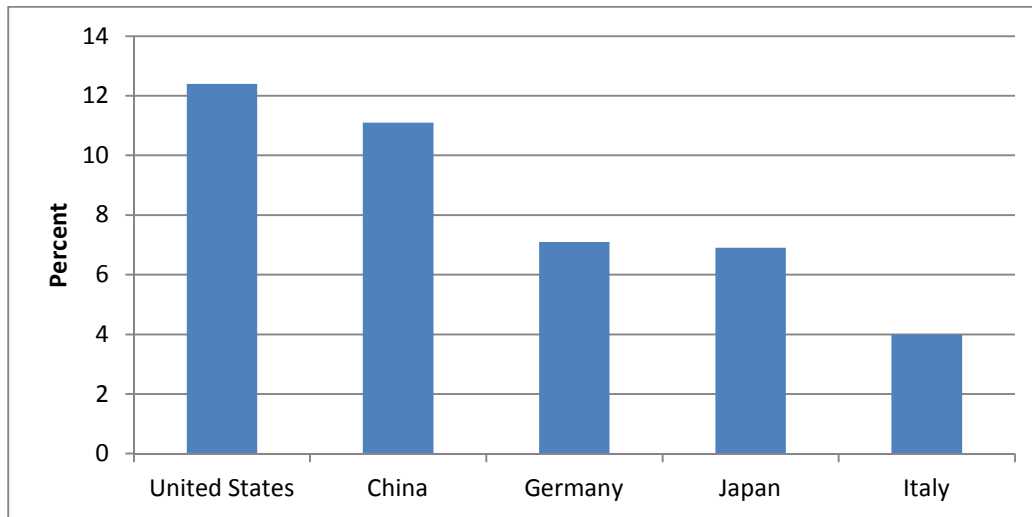
Another measure of religiousness came from what one listens to in the car. Devout Muslims do not listen to music but will often listen to recitations of the Quran. Another option is to listen to news or talk radio in which case, the response was included as an indicator of religious conviction.

Many authors have successfully measured religious conviction in the Muslim world (Khraim 2010; Albelaikhi 1997; Gonzalez 2011), but not in Saudi Arabia. The average Saudi citizen prays in the mosque five times a day, yet this is not an indicator of honesty or infidelity, for example, as the lines of culture, religion, law, and economics are too blurred to separate. As such, people with secular leanings feel less inclined to answer as such.

I measured the final independent variable by asking respondents their feelings (favorable, unfavorable, no opinion) about America, China, Germany, Japan and Italy. These countries were

chosen because they were the top five countries²² from which Saudi Arabia imports its goods (see figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6- Saudi Arabian top five import partners in 2008



Source: CIA World Factbook

Sample Size

The most official estimate of the metro population of Riyadh comes from a 2008 report by the Higher Commission for the Development of Arriyadh placing the population at roughly 4.62 million. From this number, the commission estimates about 67% to be Saudi nationals making the population of Saudi citizens approximately 3.09 million persons.²³

The population of the combined cities of Dammam, Khobar and Dhahran according to the Municipality of the Eastern Region's²⁴ latest 2004 estimate is approximately 1.03 million

²² As of 2012 the top five import trading partners in order are: United States, China, Germany, Japan, and France.

²³ <http://www.arriyadh.com/Eng/ab-arriyad/index.aspx/?1=1&menuId=2671>. Accessed May 5, 2009.

²⁴ The Municipality of the Eastern Region deals with the cities of the Eastern Province.

persons.²⁵ Although the population may have increased since that time, the data includes foreigners, so using this number should provide a proper sample size of Saudi Citizens.

James Zogby from the Arab American Institute sampled 750 Saudi citizens to infer characterizations of the populations of Riyadh, Khobar, Jeddah (a city with a higher population than Riyadh and Khobar together) using a 3.5% confidence level (Zogby International 2006). Other pollsters like Gallup²⁶ and authors such as Davis (1996) and Moaddel (2006) have surveyed around 1000 people to surmise attitudes of the entire country of approximately 27 million. By using the ratio of Davis and Moaddel, a suitable number of surveys in Riyadh would be 172 and 38 surveys in the Khobar area. Accordingly, my target sample size was 200 surveys in Riyadh and 100 surveys in the Khobar area.

I decided to conduct telephone interviews for the following reasons: 1) by doing face to face interviews, I would not be able to sample women as speaking with Saudi women goes against Saudi customs; 2) temperatures can average 110 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer months prompting people to stay indoors most of the time; 3) obtaining randomness would be very difficult due to lack of home addresses; and 4) Saudi citizens could respond to home visits by either not answering the door when the head of house is absent or insisting on a long meeting with food and tea if the head of house is present. Al-Subaihi (2008) reported that in Saudi Arabia, researchers still rely on phone interviews more than face to face interviews. He also reported that the response rate of telephone surveys is about the same for men and women.

²⁵ www.dammam.gov.sa Accessed May 5, 2009.

²⁶ Information gathered from various polls concerning Saudi Arabians at www.gallup.com Accessed May 5, 2009.

I obtained phone numbers using the phonebook for the respective city. There are various true random number generators on the Internet. I used the website www.random.org which allowed me to enter the number of pages in the phone book to generate a random non-repeating number. Once the page of the phonebook was determined, I then generated another random number based on the standard number of entries per page. This method allowed for a completely random representation of the phonebook.

To overcome potential issues of translation, the survey was first translated into Arabic by a translator. The Arabic document was taken to another translator to be converted back into English. I then checked for discrepancies in meaning between the two English documents and adjusted the document and presented it to another translator until the proper meaning and intention of the survey was conveyed in Arabic. I used a translator licensed by the Saudi government from a list of translators provided and authorized by the United States Consulate in Dhahran.²⁷

Surveys

Upon arrival in Saudi Arabia, I had the challenge of disseminating my surveys. I easily found a translating service recommended by the U.S. consulate. However, they were mostly staffed by Indians who understood less Arabic than I did.

A bit of luck came my way a few days later at the local printing shop. They not only had another translator there, but he offered to help. In my experience with Arabs, they generally like to help people. Or, to be more precise, they are extremely ashamed when they cannot. I have

²⁷ A list of approved translators can be found at <http://dhahran.usconsulate.gov/service/public-services/translators.html>

often lost a lot of time in the Arab world with the words “bukrah, inshaAllah” which means “tomorrow, God willing” which really means “I can’t help and I can’t admit it, so God willing you solve your problem by tomorrow.” This time, however, my new friend, with whom I had been drinking tea for the second half of his shift, was actually a sociologist fluent in English. He discussed the proper phrasing and perfected my surveys free of charge.

With my surveys ready, I now had to figure out how to conduct them. I certainly could not do them in person. The principle reason is the impossibility of ever speaking to a Saudi woman. The second reason is that previous attempts to approach strangers mostly failed. Arabs are very warm people, but one needs to follow procedure which involves first sitting for a long time and having tea and discussing family, politics, work, and anything else. The idea of getting down to business simply insults people. The first survey I successfully conducted myself took four hours and involved dinner and coffee.

Therefore, I decided to conduct the surveys over the phone. To do this, I needed to cross two hurdles. The first was to get a phone book and the second was to find a woman I could train to conduct the surveys for me. Finding the phone book actually took longer. It took eleven days and involved three cities. The Saudi Telecommunications Company (STC) has a business directory widely available but while it technically publishes a residential version, nobody has one or knows where to get it. The first three days were spent driving in circles around Dammam and Khobar. I was told that a certain STC office would have them only to find that they do not but another does. Sometimes I was told that no such thing exists. After working my way up through the management, I finally located the phone directory for the Eastern Province. It was in Riyadh, in the Central Province. But I was told I couldn’t have one.

I drove four hours to Riyadh anyway. I spend the first day making friends with a clerk at the STC headquarters. He said he would make some phone calls and he would have something for me “bukrah, inshaAllah.” Feeling good about our friendship, I called him the next morning and while he would not give me a phone book, he had a friend in another STC office in Riyadh who went to America before, and wanted to meet me. He also had a book waiting for me.

When I returned to Khobar, I visited my other new friend, the translator. I asked him how I could find a woman to conduct my interviews. He knew someone who was the head of a vocational school for women. This school taught basic computer and business skills. I reasoned that not only would women talk to other women as opposed to hanging up on someone like me, but also that Saudi men like to talk to women. I met the manager the next night and after the usual small talk we began bargaining how much I would pay the women.

After data collection, I analyzed the data using SPSS. In addition to utilizing central tendency data (using an average of my measurements), I employed logistic regression to correlate the dependent and independent variables. Logistic regression allowed for correlation with both a dichotomous (traditional or Western for example) and a dichotomous or ordinal (ranked from one to five in my research) dependent variable. Furthermore, more than one independent variable can be analyzed simultaneously.

Validity and Generalizability

In addition to quantitative data collected, I collected qualitative data to strengthen the validity and generalizability of the study. Seidmann (2006) advocates two other methods to aid in the generalizability of not only quantitative, but qualitative findings. The first is to find connections among the experiences of those being interviewed. The second method is to present the respondents’ experiences so that the reader can make connections of their own. Stake (1994)

refers to the process of providing the opportunity for vicarious experience as “naturalistic generalization.”

Singleton and Straits (1999) characterize validity as whether our conclusions say anything about reality, and Silverman (2005) defines it as another word for “truth.” Creswell (1998) describes validity as a part of “verification.” In fact, he suggests one to use the term “verification” instead of “validity” to distinguish qualitative research in its own discipline. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Eisner (1998) use the term “credibility” for internal validity and Descombe (2002) refers to “accuracy” of data while Davies and Dood (2002) and Barbour (2001) both state that there is bias inherent in qualitative research and as such, they apply the term “rigor.”

In general, there are two strands of validity that seem to be common. The first is that the research needs to accurately answer the questions in which they were intended to answer. The second is whether the means of the measurement are accurate. Hammersley (1987) examined the literature and found different opinions about what exactly constitutes validity. I have listed three from his article below.

- Validity is the agreement between two attempts to measure the same trait through two maximally different methods.
- It allows the researcher to say that the instrument measures what he says it measures.
- For purposes of clarity, accuracy (or validity) may be defined as the extent to which obtained measures approximate values of the 'true' state of nature.

Hammersley (1987) sees validity and precision as a tradeoff. Validity suffers at the expense of the precision of the data. The researcher is often overambitious in the preciseness of the data and validity is often lacking. Shadish et al. (2002) say that there is a tradeoff between internal and external validity. As one becomes more accurate, the other is weakened.

The techniques and methods discussed below are cited by many authors. I have used Creswell (1998) as the framework and supplemented it with ideas from others where they differ.

The Credibility of the Researcher

Patton (1990) advocates including information about the researcher including what connections we have to the what is being studied and what perspectives we bring with us. It is common to see this in ethnographies. For example, Carole Counihan (2004) and Richard Wilk (2006) begin their ethnographies with a history about themselves and their connection with the place they study. Sidney Mintz (1996), in writing about food, goes so far as to talk about his youth in his father's restaurant as part of establishing his credibility on the subject.

Use of Others/Audit Trail

This involves a peer review using other "experts" in the field to look for limitations. In practice, this is done during the publication process. However, Creswell seems to advocate performing this process beforehand. He also suggests using external audits with the difference being that they will verify that the findings are supported by the data whereas the peer-reviewer looks to expose various limitations in the research. Eisner uses the term "consensual validation" in reference to seeking the opinion of other experts on the analysis of data. Guba (1981) calls it "peer-debriefing"

Prolonged Engagement

Thick description and prolonged engagement are methods often employed by ethnographers. Guba (1981) calls for prolonged engagement and persistent observation as methods to properly establish credibility. Baxter and Eyles (1996) see a fine line between establishing credibility through prolonged engagement and undermining credibility by being involved for too long or "going native." Thick descriptions are the manifestation of this

paradigm's recognition of the reader's role and the importance of the transferability of the conclusions to the reviewer or reader.

Qualitative Methods

I also conducted follow-up interviews with Saudi citizens in various types of restaurants and markets. I interviewed employees and owners of the traditional markets to find out about any changes over the last decade and the nature of those changes.

The advantage of an interview is that it allows for elaboration of survey findings. Irrespective of the surveys finding a link between the variables, interviews can offer a better explanation of these findings. Interviews also allow one to discover new information. I relied on a set of questions but generally inquired about how dietary habits have changed. In the case of market employees, I asked about long-term changes in the marketplace.

The limitation of the interview was that it was not a random process. In fact, I interviewed only men. The sampling was purposive and limited in number. Another limitation was the language barrier. Because English, Arabic or a combination of the two was used in the interview, I did not transcribe the interviews but instead took notes. Arabic speakers often insert Arabic into their sentences or translate directly from Arabic into English. The speaker sometimes used the form of English spoken with third country nationals. In either case, taking notes allowed me to record the ideas and intentions behind the words of the speaker. I kept the few recordings I was permitted to take and enlisted the help of Arabs in the United States to check my understanding of the interviews.

I conducted surveys in three locations in Khobar at different times and on different days. Although the interviews are of a standard length, I attempted to keep them to around ten minutes. As a pilot, I attempted to interview random people about food in general to see what problems I

would encounter. Aside from language barriers, men tended to be at first cautious but then open to talking about anything but were nervous about the recorder. Using a laptop had similar results. When I explained the reasons for recording, they understood, but I could see it was not natural for them. A couple of young men suggested I use my Blackberry to record the conversation. Accordingly, I used a Blackberry phone as the recording device as there is, from my observations, an affinity for smart phones in Saudi Arabia, and they seemed less intrusive. However, the majority of those participating did not want any recording device used. I decided to approach people in restaurants and meat and vegetable markets with a possible limitation of receiving shorter responses but I was able to select from a larger population. I chose four fast food restaurants in Khobar. One location was at Rashid Mall and the other was on the *corniche* (the promenade on the waterfront). The vegetable and meat markets were in the upper-middle class area close to Rashid Mall and the lower class area of Tholibah. Over the two week period of July 9-July 22, 2011, I alternated my visits to the meat and vegetable markets Saturday through Thursday. On two Fridays after the afternoon prayers I visited the main vegetable market in Dammam. During the week I would visit from 4 pm until 8 pm. From 8 pm until 11 pm I would visit fast food restaurants alternating between the two locations.

I conducted a total of nine open-ended interviews in the vegetable markets in two areas of Khobar and one location in Dammam. In meat markets, I carried out four interviews in two different locations in Khobar. Note taking was the primary method of data collection due to the aversion and mistrust of recording devices and the difficulty in translating interviews conducted

mixing English, Arabic, and what I call “worker Arabic.”²⁸ Three participants became comfortable enough to allow portions of their interviews to be recorded.

Fifteen interviews were conducted at various Western and traditional restaurants on the corniche in Khobar. Eight interviews were conducted in Rashid Mall at the food court. From my observations, the people frequenting restaurants on the corniche tended to be older and more often with families. Those at the Rashid Mall food court tended to be under 35 years old. As with the vegetable and meat markets, I took notes and was only permitted to record a couple of interviews.

Accessing Saudi Arabians to interview is quite difficult to say the least. Their apprehension seemed to stem from three different sources. First, they seem nervous and suspicious about any recording device. They ask me where I work in the government even though there is no reason for them to think I do, in fact, work for the Saudi government. From their prospective, they probably never met anyone in Saudi Arabia who was not there to work or visit family members of workers. There are simply no western leisure tourists and western workers stick to their compounds or camps.

Secondly, Saudis do not understand *why* I am studying something like this. Why am I in Saudi Arabia? It did not make sense to them even when I elaborated the reasons for my study. It seemed trivial that I would seek knowledge about something not related to engineering or medicine. For those wanting to know where I study, the University of New Orleans does not

²⁸ An unofficial version of Arabic used between migrant workers and Arabs. It allows for quick and simple communication while still keeping expatriates ignorant of the private lives of the employer.

make sense. The University of Louisiana or even Southeastern University would make sense to them. My story must have sounded, to many Saudis, like a cover for something nefarious.

Thirdly, Saudis in my experience are easily approachable for small talk. They are very extremely warm and hospitable and will open up after a while. They will not, however, simply open up to a complete stranger. There are rules to conversation and even rules to a greeting. A greeting among Saudis involves asking how you are, how your family is, how your health is going, and what the news with that person is. In between these questions should be reconfirmations about how everything is going. The absence of such a greeting or attempting to hurry a greeting is insulting.

A conversation must involve tea or coffee at the very least. The preference is for them to buy you a meal, but they must be able to give you something and you must show them they are able to do something for you. One must talk about where you are from and the origin of your family. In my case, I explain that I am American but that my father is German. I will then be asked about how many family members are in Germany and how far back my German lineage runs. A person, to Saudis, is a sum of their family and cannot be seen simply as an individual. A person carries the sins and success of their family. Even if my host does not know my family, it is important that they know I do. Some of my hosts narrated their lineage more than 35 generations.

Saudis always look for connections between the guest and the host. If they have a nephew studying in Texas, it might be enough to live in a state next to it. Perhaps they know the owner of the hotel I use or someone who works at the rental car outlet from where I lease my car. These are sufficient connections to properly establish a relationship.

The next chapter examines the influence of various factors on food consumption. Specifically, I present data connecting where food is purchased and where one dines to demographic factors, travel to, and feelings about different regions of the world. Statistical models of these variables are tested and presented in an effort to explain causal factors of a changing Saudi diet. While the empirical results are somewhat mixed, the interview data elucidates findings from the survey data.

Chapter 6

Findings

In this study, I have sought to answer the following questions:

- Is there interplay between globalization, culture and cuisine?
- Is there a relationship between the diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures?
- In which segments of society are changes in dietary behavior occurring to the degree that they are occurring?

I sought to use food as a proxy for culture and globalization. I measured this by looking at the types of restaurants in which Saudi Arabians eat food. I also looked at the place they purchase food for home consumption. I then correlated this with the following factors:

- Restaurant cleanliness
- Restaurant price
- Restaurant Taste
- Television and Internet use
- Gender
- Age
- Travel to other countries
- General feelings about other countries
- Education
- What one listens to in the car

I have organized this chapter into two sections. The first part presents the quantitative findings, my interpretation of them, and how they relate to my research questions. The second part details research findings from interviews in two areas: restaurants and traditional food and vegetable markets.

Quantitative Findings

In the chapter on my methodology, I stated my target sample size as a total of 300 surveys. Of these, a total of 148 surveys (exactly half from Riyadh and half from the Khobar area) were used to compile this data. Much of the data was unusable due to a couple of factors:

Some responses were answered too vaguely. For example, respondents would answer the question: “how long have you spent in Europe” with “a long time” or “a little while.” When pressed for a specific time, they would continue with general times or answer “I don’t know” or “I don’t remember.”

Some surveys were incomplete. Respondents would become impatient and end the interview early. I instructed the interviewers to note when they felt respondents quickly gave answers to end the interview.

In general, the survey results did not show any significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. I sought to determine if there existed a relationship between the diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures. I also wanted to know if there was a relationship between a food and the country from which it is associated. The data from the surveys did not show either a positive or negative relationship.

I also wanted to know in which segments of society were changes in dietary behavior occurring and if there were any differences between Al-Khobar and Riyadh. The survey data found no relationships that would answer these questions. In what follows I provide a more detailed account of the data gathered in the surveys.

Descriptive Data

Despite the use of women in telephone surveys, only 17% of the respondents were female. The average reported age of the respondents was a bit over 31 years. I measured four dependent variables, namely, where they bought their meat, where they bought their vegetables, and their first and second favorite restaurants. Responses were coded 0 for Western restaurants and 1 for traditional or Arabic restaurants. Likewise, responses were coded 0 for Western-style hypermarkets like Carrefour or Panda, and 1 for traditional markets. Accordingly, an average

would give a general idea about restaurant and market preference. Table 6.1 summarizes the variables I measured, how they were measured and the range I used.

Table 6.1- Summary of variables

Variable	Measurement	Range
Favorite and second favorite restaurant	Dichotomous	0= Western, 1= Traditional
Where one buys fruit, vegetables, and meat	Dichotomous	0= Western, 1= Traditional
Gender	Dichotomous	0= Male, 1= Female
What one listens to in the car	Dichotomous	0= Quran recitation, religious programming, news, 1= Music
Feelings about selected countries	Ordinal	0= Unfavorable, 1= No opinion, 2= Favorable
Education	Ordinal	1-5 (did not complete high school-terminal degree)
Restaurant cleanliness, price, and taste	Ordinal	1-5 (do not prefer-prefer)
Travel to selected locations	Continuous	In number of days
Television and Internet use	Continuous	In minutes per day
Age	Continuous	In number of years

Analysis of dependant variables

For first and second favorite restaurants, averages were .59 and .60 respectively. Since a score of 0 indicates a Western restaurant and 1 indicated a traditional restaurant, we can use this average to say that 59% of respondents chose a traditional restaurant as their favorite and 60% chose a traditional restaurant as their second favorite restaurant. Table 6.2 details the averages from both the dependent and independent variables.

Table 6.2- Summary of variable averages

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Favorite Restaurant	148	.59	.493
Second Favorite Restaurant	131	.60	.491
Favorite Restaurant Price	145	3.93	1.18
Favorite Restaurant Taste	145	3.63	1.32
Favorite Restaurant Cleanliness	144	3.49	3.82
Second favorite Restaurant Price	127	3.72	1.21
Second favorite Restaurant Taste	127	3.75	1.26
Second Favorite Restaurant Cleanliness	126	3.25	1.50
Where Meat is Purchased	138	.64	.497
Where Vegetables are Purchased	144	.67	.473
What One Listens to in the Car	147	.48	.501
Satellite Dish Ownership	148	.99	.202
Minutes of Television Watched Per Day	142	218.27	139.60
Minutes of Internet Watched Per Day	137	173.36	162.85
Days Visiting Europe	147	19.14	48.80
Days Visiting the United States	147	18.39	74.53
Days Visiting Jordan, Syria, Lebanon	147	13.44	28.34
Days Visiting East Asia	146	5.57	14.71
Days Visiting the GCC	147	26.01	52.42
Feelings About Italy	148	.98	.907
Feelings About Japan	148	1.00	.888
Feelings About Germany	148	.95	.836
Feelings About China	148	.88	.824
Feelings About America	148	.98	.877
Education Level	144	1.06	.667
Age	135	32.27	13.42

Meat and vegetable markets averaged .64 and .67 respectively meaning that 64% of respondents purchased meat at a traditional market or slaughtered an animal at a farm. 67% of respondents reported buying their vegetables in a traditional market. This shows a slight trend of purchasing and consuming food in traditional settings. This can be understood to mean that a majority of Saudi Arabians continue to hold on to traditional ways of purchasing food. It also

shows that Saudi Arabians continue to value traditional food. However, put in a historical context, these findings can mean that although Western-styled markets and restaurants have only been a common fixture of the Saudi landscape for roughly two decades, they have already influenced at least a third of the population's eating habits.

Table 6.3- Summary of Odds Ratios.

	Traditional Restaurant as Favorite	Traditional Restaurant as 2nd Favorite	Purchasing Meat in a Traditional Market	Purchasing Vegetables in a Traditional Market
What One Listens to in the Car	2.126*	1.925	.529	.542
Minutes of Television Watched Per Day	1.000	.999	.999	1.000
Minutes of Internet Watched Per Day	1.001	1.001	1.002	.999
Days Visiting Europe	.996	.992	.993	.999
Days Visiting the United States	.998	.992	.993	.999
Days Visiting Jordan, Syria, Lebanon	1.014	1.009	1.004	.996
Days Visiting East Asia	1.000	.993	.969*	.975
Days Visiting the GCC	.999	1.003	1.001	1.002
Feelings About Italy	1.401	1.062	.624	.865
Feelings About Japan	.806	.496*	1.204	1.101
Feelings About Germany	.831	1.814*	.922	.805
Feelings About China	1.084	1.537	1.124	.862
Feelings About America	1.044	1.014	1.005	.898
Education Level	1.008	1.011	.958	.691
Age	1.431	1.011	.997	.986

*Significant at the .05 level

The percentages give us a general idea of Saudi dietary habits, but they provide no causal explanation. To further examine the meaning of these findings, it is important to analyze the independent variables as they related to what Saudi Arabians eat and where they buy their food. A summary of the odds ratios obtained through logistic regression are in table 6.3 above.

Independent Variables

Influence of Television and Internet

In chapter four, I discussed the influence exerted by corporations on food choice. Mitchell and Rosati (2006) discuss the notion of corporations producing a globalized culture. They assert that “media things” defines *how* culture is diffused through a place to the point where new imports would seem normal. Cooperman and Schecter (2008) illustrated how the marketing techniques of Philip Morris propelled Marlboro to its prominent status in Saudi Arabia. Both Mitchell and Rosati (2006) and Ritzer (2003) assert that media transforms social spaces into a more predictable and uniform place. The presence of television is welcomed and accepted as an authority in the production of culture. In an attempt to place food in the context of this notion, I examined television and Internet use as it relates to food.

According to the collected data, the respondents watch 3.63 hours of television per day and spend about 2.85 hours on the Internet per day. Almost every respondent (99%) reported owning a satellite dish. A logistic regression of one’s favorite restaurant and Internet use showed no relationship nor was it shown to be statistically significant. A similar logistic regression analysis on one’s second favorite restaurant shows similar results.

Table 6.4
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Television	.000	.001	1.000	.891
Internet	.001	.001	1.001	.377

$\chi^2 = .797, df=2, N= 136, p=.671$

Table 6.4 above shows the relationship between one’s favorite restaurant and television and Internet use. Table 6.5 displays the relationship between the respondents’ second choice for favorite restaurant and time spent on the Internet and television.

Table 6.5
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Television	-.001	.001	.999	.396
Internet	.001	.001	1.001	.415

$\chi^2 = 1.186$, $df=2$, $N= 121$ $p=.553$

There was no relationship between time spent on the Internet and purchasing food at a traditional meat market. Additionally, there was no relationship between time spent on the Internet or watching television and vegetable purchases as the following data shows (tables 6.6 and 6.7).

Table 6.6
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Television	.000	.001	.999	.363
Internet	.002	.001	1.002	.122

$\chi^2 = 3.044$, $df=2$, $N= 127$, $p=.218$

Table 6.7
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Television	.000	.001	1.000	.993
Internet	-.001	.001	.999	.559

$\chi^2 = .278$, $df=2$, $N= 133$, $p=.870$

To summarize the preceding data, there were no significant relationships found between Internet and television use and the type of markets in which one purchases food or the restaurant one chooses. All probabilities were above the .05 level.

Time spend outside of Saudi Arabia

In general, Saudis in this sample are well-traveled with an average of 19.14 days spent in Europe, 18.39 spent in the United States, 13.44 days in the northern Arab countries, 5.57 days in East Asia, and 26 days in other GCC countries. Although outliers affect these averages, about 73% of the respondents spent time outside the Arabian Gulf. The only significant relationship

was between time spent in East Asia and purchasing meat in traditional markets. However, the odds ratio was .969 meaning that, practically speaking, as one spends more time in East Asia, the odds of purchasing their meat in a traditional market is the same as purchasing their meat in a hypermarket.

Table 6.8
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
United States	-.002	.004	.998	.527
Europe	-.004	.003	.996	.221
Sham	.013	.009	1.014	.147
East Asia	.000	.012	1.000	.996
GCC	-.001	.003	.999	.688

$\chi^2 = 4.927, df=5, N= 146, p=.425$

Table 6.8 above demonstrates the relationships between the type of restaurant chosen by respondents as the favorite and time spend in selected countries. As all of the significance levels were above .05, I cannot make any inferences about these relationships. In table 6.9 below, none of the relationships were significant.

The data in table 6.10 on the next page shows the likelihood of purchasing vegetables at a traditional market with travel to selected countries. There is one significant relationship showing that one who has spent more time in East Asia purchases is less likely to purchase meat in a traditional market. However, this relationship is extremely weak and in context of the other variables, I do not consider this of any value.

Table 6.9
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
United States	-.004	.004	.996	.286
Europe	-.008	.005	.992	.112
Sham	.009	.009	1.009	.322
East Asia	-.007	.019	.993	.702
GCC	.003	.004	1.003	.396

$\chi^2 = 8.212, df=5, N= 130, p=.145$

Table 6.10
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
United States	-.005	.004	.995	.185
Europe	-.007	.005	.993	.108
Sham	.004	.010	1.004	.661
East Asia	-.032	.014	.969	.024
GCC	.001	.004	1.001	.889

$\chi^2 = 13.150$, $df=5$, $N= 136$, $p=.022$

Table 6.11 on looks at the relationship between where meat is purchased and time spent in selected countries. Although the variable of time spent in East Asia is significant, the odds ratio is too close to 1 (.975) and the significance for the model is above the .05 level.

Table 6.11
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
United States	-.001	.004	.999	.691
Europe	-.001	.002	.999	.824
Sham	-.004	.006	.996	.447
East Asia	-.025	.012	.975	.035
GCC	.002	.004	1.002	.563

$\chi^2 = 5.889$, $df=5$, $N= 142$, $p=.317$

The summary of this data shows that travelling to the countries selected for this study does not make a difference one way or the other on the type of restaurant the respondents visit. It also is not a deciding factor in where respondents purchased food for home consumption.

Opinions of Other Countries

I ascertained opinions of the five largest trade partners with Saudi Arabia using the answers “not favorable,” “no opinion,” and “favorable.” They were coded as 0, 1, and 2 respectively. According, the average would give a general idea about Saudi opinions of these countries. The averages were as follows: Italy: .98, Japan: 1.00, Germany: .95, China: .88, America: .98. As the score is higher, feelings towards that country are more favorable. The

United States score is higher than I expected, but also very close to the other countries in the survey. These scores imply ambivalence in opinion toward Western countries or at least a slightly unfavorable opinion. Table 6.12 below shows no significant predictions of restaurant choice and travel to the selected countries.

Table 6.12
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Italy	.337	.265	1.401	.204
Japan	-.215	.271	.806	.427
Germany	-.185	.241	.831	.443
China	.084	.232	1.087	.719
United States	.043	.228	1.044	.850

$\chi^2 = 2.435$, $df=5$, $N= 148$, $p=.786$

Table 6.13 shows two significant relationships. According to the data, those spending more time in Germany are 1.8 times more likely to choose a traditional restaurant as their second favorite. Those spending more time in Japan are roughly 50% less likely to choose a traditional restaurant as the second favorite. Put into context with the other findings, these two findings do not have much meaning to this researcher.

Table 6.13
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Italy	.060	.303	1.062	.842
Japan	-.702	.323	.496	.030
Germany	.596	.286	1.814	.037
China	.430	.261	1.537	.100
United States	.014	.247	1.014	.955

$\chi^2 = 11.772$, $df=5$, $N= 131$, $p=.038$

Tables 6.14 and 6.15 on the next page show no significant relationships between time spent in selected countries and purchasing meat and vegetables in a traditional market.

Table 6.14
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Italy	-.470	.283	.624	.097
Japan	.186	.288	1.204	.519
Germany	-.081	.246	.922	.743
China	.117	.242	1.124	.629
United States	-.005	.241	1.005	.983

$\chi^2 = 3.468$, $df=5$, $N= 138$, $p=.628$

Table 6.15
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Italy	-.145	.272	.865	.594
Japan	.097	.279	1.101	.729
Germany	-.217	.250	.805	.386
China	-.148	.241	.862	.541
United States	-.108	.243	.898	.658

$\chi^2 = 2.313$, $df=5$, $N= 144$, $p=.804$

Similar to the other regression analyses, there was as a whole no significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The relationships found were between feelings about Japan and Germany and were associated with the respondents' second favorite restaurant. There were no correlations with the other variables.

Religiousness

I attempted to ascertain religiousness by asking what one listens to in the car and asking about satellite dish ownership. As almost all respondents reported having satellite dishes this could not be used as a variable. There is an opinion in Saudi Arabia among the religious that music is forbidden. As such, many religious people listen to the news or the Quran in the car. I asked the question "what do you listen to in the car." If the answer was "the news" or "the Quran" it was coded as 1. Music was coded as 0. 48% of respondents reported listening to the news, talk shows or the Quran in the car. The only significant relationship can be found in table

6.16. Those listening to the news or the Quran or talk shows in the car were 2.126 times more likely to choose a traditional restaurant as the favorite.

Table 6.16
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Heard in Car	.754	.344	2.126	.028

$\chi^2 = 2.126, df=1, N= 147, p=.027$

Table 6.17
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Heard in Car	.665	.367	1.925	.074

$\chi^2 = 1.925, df=1, N= 130, p=.071$

Table 6.18
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Heard in Car	-.638	.358	.529	.075

$\chi^2 = 3.211, df=1, N= 137, p=.073$

Table 6.19
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Heard in Car	-.612	.359	.542	.088

$\chi^2 = 2.949, df=1, N= 143, p=.086$

Tables 6.17-6.19 show no significant relationships between what the respondent listens to in the car and where they purchase their meat and vegetables. Additionally, no significant relationship exists between what the respondent listens to in the car and the second favorite restaurant.

Age

I thought that younger people would be more likely to eat from Western restaurants and purchase their food from hypermarkets. The data which follows show no significance or relationship between age and shopping at traditional markets or eating at traditional restaurants.

Table 6.20
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Age	.358	.269	1.431	.183

$\chi^2 = 1.158, df=1, N= 144, p=.173$

Table 6.21
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Age	.011	.013	1.011	.434

$\chi^2 = .623, df=1, N= 135, p=.430$

Table 6.22
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Age	-.023	.014	.977	.093

$\chi^2 = 2.839, df=1, N= 127, p=.092$

Table 6.23
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Age	-.014	.013	.986	.309

$\chi^2 = 1.027, df=1, N= 132, p=.311$

Education

As I previous stated in chapter five, I used education as a proxy for income. I am also using educational level to make assumptions about class. Although I could not find any studies on education level and class in Saudi Arabia, I still feel that examining education in relation to food choice is important to the study. I independently looked at both choices of a favorite restaurant (tables 6.24 and 6.25) and found no significant correlation.

Table 6.24
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Education	.008	.015	1.008	.599

$\chi^2 = .279, df=1, N= 118, p=.597$

Table 6.25
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Education	.011	.013	1.011	.434

$\chi^2 = 1.147, df=1, N= 128, p=.284$

Table 6.26
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Meat at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Education	-.043	.261	.958	.870

$\chi^2 = .027$, $df=1$, $N= 136$, $p=.870$

Table 6.27
Logistic Regression Predicting Purchase of Vegetables at a Traditional Market

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Education	-.369	.270	.691	.172

$\chi^2 = 1.888$, $df=1$, $N= 136$, $p=.169$

Tables 6.26 and 6.27 detail the relationship between education and purchasing meat or vegetables in a traditional market. In both cases the significance levels were too high to necessitate further analysis.

Price, Taste, Cleanliness

Finally, each restaurant choice (coded as 0 for Western and 1 for traditional) was correlated against price, taste, and cleanliness. I thought that one of these factors might attract customers. I chose to ask about price, taste, and cleanliness because they might be important factors in restaurant choice in themselves. In other words, perhaps it is the low price that attracts a customer to Burger King and not the fact that it serves a non-traditional food. It is possible that the cleanliness of Appleby's, for example, is a more important factor than the food served. Watson (1995) reported customer attraction to McDonald's bathrooms and Popkin (2006) discusses the limiting factor of meal price in developing countries. Tables 6.28 and 6.29 on the following page detail these relationships.

Table 6.28
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Price	-.071	.148	.931	.629
Taste	.093	1.34	1.098	.488
Cleanliness	.008	.048	1.008	.874

$\chi^2 = .734$, $df=3$, $N= 144$, $p=.865$

Table 6.29
Logistic Regression Predicting Traditional Restaurant as Second Favorite

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	P
Price	-.603	.193	.547	.002
Taste	.368	.190	1.445	.053
Cleanliness	-.072	.148	.930	.625

$\chi^2 = 13.053$, $df=3$, $N= 126$, $p=.005$

Strong correlations in these variables could be an influence on other potential findings of the survey data. From my personal observations, American restaurants in Saudi Arabia appear cleaner than traditional restaurants. This is not to imply that traditional restaurants are unhygienic, but that the idea of cleaning the bathroom and sweeping the dining room floor every hour seems to be exported along with the Western restaurant. However, the price of a meal at Western restaurants like Pizza Hut tend to be about the same price as in the United States while a sit-down dinner at a traditional restaurant, generally speaking, would cost anywhere from three to eight dollars. These observations did not, however, translate into significant findings in the survey data.

The only significant finding concerns the second choice for a favorite restaurant. The data in table 6.29 shows that price seems to be an issue with the respondents' second choice for favorite restaurant. As the respondents' gave a lower score for price (ranked 1-5 with 5 being the most favorable price), they were less likely to choose a traditional restaurant as their second favorite. Putting this finding in context with the other results concerning price, cleanliness, and

taste, there seems to be no difference between Western and traditional restaurants in these factors.

Riyadh

Most averages for Riyadh were not statistically different from those of the Khobar-Dammam area. The only noticeable difference was those spending time in other countries was less in Riyadh. Time spent on the Internet, time spent watching television and opinions about the five largest trading partners were too close to those in the Khobar-Dammam area to warrant further analysis. Accordingly, I pooled the data from both the Khobar area and Riyadh to draw general conclusions. In fact, the average of the favorite and second-favorite restaurants were lower in Riyadh (.58 and .56 vs. .59 and .60), meaning that people in Riyadh tended to prefer traditional restaurants less than people in Khobar.

The survey in this dissertation collected descriptive data such as age, gender, education, television and Internet use. I also attempted to examine how much the respondents travelled outside Saudi Arabia and their general feelings about selected countries in an effort to explain how these might be factors influencing where they purchase food for home consumption and where they eat out.

Most of the correlations, even if they were significant, were too weak to consider. However, with a couple of exceptions, there were no significant relationships between independent variables and dependent variables. According to the logistic regression data, I am not able to use factors like age or feelings about the United States to try and explain why one eats at a traditional versus a Western restaurant.

The quantitative data suggests, in the case of the respondents in this survey, that there is no interplay among globalization, culture, and cuisine nor is there a relationship between the

diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures. One of the main limitations of this qualitative analysis is that I was only able to measure certain predetermined variables. The presence of strong significant correlations would assist in understanding causality of food choice, but it is only limited to a priori knowledge. Qualitative methods are sometimes useful in answering questions difficult to know. They can also be useful in strengthening quantitative findings (Tashakkori and Taddlie 1998).

Qualitative Findings

Overnight, it seems, the kingdom has gone from *suq* to super-suq, from the homey corner store to the computerized supermarket with its steel-frame racks of smartly packaged international foods, and from the shopkeepers' old brass scales to electronic registers that total bills, calculate refunds and give printouts of sales (Winsor 1981, 8).

The passage above was written by an English teacher, George Windsor, in 1981 about two grocery chains in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia: Safeway and Panda. Although the American author was 20 years early in his assessment of the radical changes in food supply to Saudi Arabia, they did, inevitably, come. In 2000, there were two Safeway and two Panda supermarkets in Khobar (see figure 6.1). When I lived Khobar in 1999, I would shop at Safeway much like I shop at Whole Foods today—when I have extra disposable income. Back then those stores were directed at oil-industry Western expats earning salaries unthinkable in the United States. I, like my neighbors, shopped in the souks. Today, those two supermarket chains still exist, but are dwarfed by a drove of hypermarkets, much larger than any Super Wal-Mart in United States.

Figure 6.1- This is the first “Western” supermarket introduced in Saudi Arabia. It was directed at western expatriates working for the oil companies. Today, it is mostly frequented by the Arab and Asian workers who live in the lower middle-class “Worker City” (the nickname of this area).



Source: Author

It is a logical assumption therefore, that these hypermarkets would change the face of the traditional souk. Yet as I visited the traditional meat and vegetable markets in Khobar and Dammam in the Eastern Province, I found other factors leading to their diminished popularity.

The Vegetable Markets and Saudization

Most vegetable market workers I spoke with had been at their positions more than 20 years. The vegetable markets in the Eastern Province are merely a shell of what they were when I saw them in the 1990s. About half of the vegetable shops in the Thoqbah area of Khobar were closed (see figure 6.2). The market in the Green Belt area of Khobar had only 4 of the 113 stalls occupied. The workers present in the remaining stalls confirmed that they were completely filled 12 years prior. Although I expected the reason for this to be competition from the hypermarkets, Saudization was cited as the principle factor for the lack of business by almost all the vendors.

Figure 6.2- This is one of the indoor vegetable shops in Thaqbah. They are still visited often by local Saudis who have built relationships with the owners. However, many of the surrounding shops have closed and most of the produce comes from the same trucks supplying the hypermarkets.



Source: Author

Saudization is the official government policy of replacing foreign workers, who are estimated to be over 70 percent of the nation's workforce, with Saudi citizens. The oil boom of the 1970s and 1980s not only increased the incomes and quality of life of the average Saudi citizen, it increased the birth rate. By the 1990s it was estimated over half the population to be under 20 years old (Fakeeh, 2009). By 2004, that rate increased to 60 percent (Looney 2004). Under the Saudization program, the government attempted to restrict the number of foreign workers by denying companies work visas unless a certain quota of Saudi nationals worked in the company (this percentage changes according to the industry) or decreed that an entire industry (like security or gold and jewelry markets) employ only Saudi nationals. Although a majority of the workforce should have been Saudi nationals by the time of this writing, only very small practical changes occurred in most sectors (Taecker 2003; Fakeeh 2009)

The vegetable market was among the first affected by a total ban on foreign workers in the late 1990s. Although it is illegal for non-nationals to work in these markets, it is common to find other Arabs from Yemen or Egypt working there. When asked about the hypermarkets, none of those interviewed blamed them for the downfall of the souk. However, some stated that it sped up the loss of business in the last five years.

According to two employees who have worked in the vegetable markets more than 25 years, Saudi citizens were quite wealthy until the first Gulf war. Around 1992 their behavior changed. As he held up a box of mangos, one worker told me: “Before, [we used to get] too much tips. We [used to] carry [the boxes of produce] to the car but now [there are] no tips. Before, [there was] too much money [in] Saudi. Now they [haggle] too much for one riyal.” In other words, they simply bought vegetables without negotiating the price before but now quibble for the equivalent of 28 cents over a box of mangos. Although Saudis seemed to have less disposable income, this kept business in these markets where the prices were cheaper.

One of the reasons the prices were kept down was the low labor cost. Most of the workers came from Southeast Asia and worked with Egyptians and Yemenis. When Saudis were mandated to work the vegetable markets, they would not work for the same salary as an Egyptian. Because of this, Saudis would not bargain for the same price. It was explained to me by a few foreign workers that “they see Saudi and drive to other one” meaning that Saudi purchasers do not feel comfortable bargaining with another Saudi. An employee from India (rare to find now in the vegetable markets) said about the Saudi customers: “They fight [with] other Saudi [citizens]. They say 35 riyal. [It is] not same [with] me. Maybe I [will] say 33 riyals [and] you take [it]. Saudi [Arabians don’t] say that.” Saudis are used to bargaining with foreign nationals but are not accustomed to dealing with someone they see as more their equal.

The same person also illustrated another oft cited issue: “[Saudis don’t] work many hours. [They] go home for anything. [They stay] only three hours and maybe (they don’t) come everyday.” It was claimed by almost every worker in the vegetable and meat markets, including Saudi citizens that Saudis will not work the 12-16 hour days that foreigners work. The common schedule I heard was to come in at 10 am and leave for lunch and perhaps come back for a few hours after the afternoon prayer sometime around 5 pm.

Air Conditioning

Another factor influencing Saudi patronage of the vegetable markets was the fact that these places did not have air conditioning. Although temperatures reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer, the winters are pleasant but air conditioning has come to be an expectation all year. In my experience, a drink only cold and not “very cold” is unacceptable. In the restaurants I visited it was very common to hear the phrase “jib wahad barrid” or “bring a cold one” because a drink was pulled from the front of the refrigerator and not the back. In my apartment, I needed to put duct tape over all the A/C ducts to keep from freezing. It is common for nationals from Southeast Asia to open windows in the summer to keep warm. In light of this, the lack of air conditioning is an important factor in Saudi Arabia even when the weather is bearable. As one vegetable vendor explained “[you can] see everywhere [has] A/C...not for this place. Saudi [Arabians do] not come [if there is not] A/C.”

The Government Modernization of the Meat Markets

As with the vegetable markets, those employed in the meat markets had been employed for more than a decade. Accordingly, I was able to ask about changes over time. Like the vegetable markets, my assumption was that business had been affected negatively by the proliferation of hypermarkets. It turns out that in each store visited, business had indeed taken a

turn for the worse according to those who worked there and the changes, like in the vegetable markets, were attributed to the government.

Entering the first store, I could see that something was not quite right. The floor was cement with drainage grates along the periphery. Only old, mismatched freezers stood along the walls similar to what you would find in a run-down corner store (see figure 6.3). The difference was that these refrigerators held shrink-wrapped whole chickens. The massive emptiness in the middle of the store already told me what the workers confirmed. “We used to have live chicken, rabbit, pigeon, and quail,” the seller at the first store told me. He went on to narrate the same history given by workers at other stores.

Around 2003 the government banned the slaughter of animals in cities. Before this time, the meat markets carried an assortment of live animals which would be slaughtered and prepared on-site. Meat was available in supermarkets, but Saudis still prefer fresh meat and will drive to farms out in the country to slaughter animals and drive them back to their homes. When the government banned the slaughter of animals in the city, they took away the foremost reason to purchase meat at a traditional souk as opposed to Lulu or Carrefour hypermarket. Today, as respondents explained, the same chicken can be bought for the same price in a cleaner environment.

Figure 6.3- This market, like the others next to it, used to house live chicken, quail, rabbit, gecko, and pigeon. The white tiles on the right side of the photo are covering one of the drains where the animals were slaughtered.



Source: Author

On a few occasions at the meat market, customers would pull up and ask if they had Sauda-brand chicken. I finally asked one of the owners of the market what, specifically, they were asking for. He explained that Sauda chicken, from Brazil, and Doux chicken, from France, were the first imported chickens to enter the market in Saudi Arabia (see figure 6.4). Before the slaughter ban, these pre-wrapped whole chickens were only available in the hypermarkets and were unpopular with the locals. After implementation of the ban, the popularity of these chickens exploded as they were the only alternatives that could be bought without driving to the outskirts of the city. The hypermarkets have exclusive contracts with these companies the local meat markets could not obtain. As a result, the local meat markets (really relegated to being only

“chicken markets” today) carried similarly packaged local varieties. As both local and imported chickens are deemed less fresh, Saudis preferred the imported chickens.

Figure 6.4- Consuming packaged chicken was unthinkable a couple of decades ago. The idea is still deplorable in many parts of the Arab world and many Saudis still refuse to purchase something so “un-fresh.” Yet the idea has gained some acceptance in Saudi society. All of the refrigeration units in this photo are devoted solely to frozen meat items.



Source: Author

In both the meat and vegetable markets one can find evidence of the vast changes taken place in the last couple of decades in Khobar and other cities in Saudi Arabia. However, the agents of change do not appear to be the hypermarkets but the government. In both cases, the government experienced pressure to implement changes. In the case of the vegetable and fruit markets, the pressure to provide more jobs to Saudis and the restrictions on foreign workers seems insular and counter to the notion of globalization Ritzer (1991) might envision. Yet the revenue from oil exports and the increased migration of foreign nationals is a result of globalization (Freeman 2006). The prohibition on animal slaughter in cities is likely due to either

a perceived notion of modernization, the fear of epidemics like the avian and swine flu outbreaks (the H5N1 strain was spreading through Asia in the same year as the ban), or both. Either reason can be attributed to affects of globalization.

Perhaps the “super-souq” would have inevitably led to the demise of the traditional souq, as George Windsor alluded to in his article, but it was not overnight and not without the intercession of the Saudi government. As for the Saudi customers I interviewed, there are three cited reasons for shopping at the vegetable or meat market—they are cheaper, fresher, and more convenient.

Loyal Customers of the Souk

The vegetable markets specialize in bulk quantities. They most often sell by the box. As mentioned previously, Arabs tend to eat in groups or families. Saudis live in extended families in either large compounds or on the same street. The notion that parents and adult children each have their own money for food, or uncles or nephews would only cook their own meal does not exist. When the wife or the mother or the sister makes the shopping list of vegetables, it is only with regard to how many people to feed in the extended family. It is not important to them, according to the respondents, who buy or pays. The cook only knows she is cooking for many people. One grown man said in reference to his mother’s preference of the Dammam vegetable market: “she buys from there. She has big house...a big family...for me, it [is] too much for me. I will throw it [in the garbage]. Sometimes she buys [produce] and I take [them] from her.”

Other respondents likewise bought in bulk and felt they could get a better price when purchasing a box of potatoes or apples. It was more convenient to drive a car up to the vendor and load those boxes into the car as opposed to pushing a couple of carts through a shopping center and loading them in a busy parking lot. The meat and vegetable markets are usually

situated in close proximity to each other and whether indoors or outdoors, they are within five or ten feet of the curbside.

While I did not find Saudis reasoning like this with respect to the meat markets, it was common to find the same customers frequenting the vegetable markets to drive up to the adjacent meat market and inquire about the price of chicken. It seemed, from my observation, that the existence of those meat markets was due largely to their proximate location to the fruit and vegetable vendors.

There is still a belief among some Saudis that vegetables and fruits sold in the traditional markets are fresher than those sold in the hypermarkets (see figure 6.5). One man said the fruit is “very cheaper compared to Panda because they buy it from the source.” This is in spite of the fact that the vendors themselves claimed that they buy their produce from the same trucks as the hypermarkets.

For meat, some of the customers explained that they buy their animals in the countryside. One respondent explained: “I buy the whole [live animal] and I take it to the butcher.” Another told me: “I buy the whole lamb and I make sure it’s today [read: fresh]. [Hypermarket meat is] not fresh, not like the thing I bring myself. I see my eyes...also cheaper. If I buy the whole thing it will last me two months.”

Figure 6.5- Besides the vegetable market, there are many fruit and vegetable vendors on corners and in front of Mosques after prayers. Sometimes tolerated, sometimes raided, these markets are run by Yemenis. Most of these products come from Yemen or the Qassim region close to Riyadh.



Source: Author

I asked this man how he will store an entire lamb in his refrigerator. He told me: “I give some [to] my brother, my mother...we [do] not eat all [of it].” Another Saudi explained to me that it is common for the head of the family or the oldest brother to buy a camel or sheep and distribute it among the family. This idea confirms my observation that there is a head of each family to which the others give deference. If it is not the father, it is the older brother. When I visit Saudi families, I am always seated closest to the oldest male in the family. The one who brought me is sometimes three or four people away from me or serving coffee. Saudis will often take the advice or permission of the head of the family before attending a certain university or taking a job. Although a meat purchase is not the sole responsibility or expectation of the head of

the family, it seems, nevertheless, to be an expected role; and not one achievable at the hypermarket.

Restaurants and Choice

I interviewed a total of 23 people in the Khobar area. I conducted eight interviews in Rashid Mall, which is the oldest mall in the area. Build in the late 1990s, Rashid mall is a four-story modern shopping mall frequented by Saudi Arabians from all strata of society (see figure 6.6). Fifteen interviews were conducted on the Cornice area of Khobar where many traditional and non-traditional restaurants are located. From these interviews, I was able to find five common themes.

Figure 6.6- Rashid Mall boasts a number of coffee houses and a food court containing 15 restaurants. Additionally, there are 15 other stand-alone restaurants a hypermarket, car rental outlet, two mosques, and a five-star hotel among the amenities. The food court is directly ahead in this photo. A coffeehouse is visible on the right of the photo above the women's dress store.



Source: Author

Finding 1- Saudis prefer seafood and rice dishes

This was the most unexpected of my findings. Twenty respondents spoke about seafood during the interview. They find seafood to be the “tastiest food”²⁹ and the highest quality dining experience one can have. They are fond of their local fish, in particular Subaiti or Hamour were mentioned in many interviews, but they also enjoy shrimp, lobster and crab. Aside from taste, respondents noted that it was a healthy dish and the freshest meal one can have. They mentioned that many restaurants keep live fish and cooked them on request. When asked about their favorite restaurant, the most common answer was a seafood restaurant. Every seafood restaurant named during the interview was a local restaurant and those not listing a seafood restaurant as their favorite choose seafood if price was not a factor. As one person answered: “[I] likes Hindi style, Shawait Khaleej (a local traditional restaurant) and if money is not problem, then seafood.” In general, it was explained to me that seafood restaurants tend to be very expensive compared to others. They were places where one would take his wife or family on a special occasion or where one would have a business meeting.

Fish, but not shrimp or lobster, was often listed as a food eaten in the home. This meal can be made in the home but is most often brought from restaurants to the house. They are almost always baked or barbecued. Respondents spoke about the cooking style of a particular restaurant claiming to prefer a certain restaurant because it cooked the fish over wood or in a brick oven.

Secondary to seafood, various rice dishes were listed as favorites in restaurants and especially in homes. Kabsa was a dish often eaten in the home while respondents spoke fondly of

²⁹ The word “tasty” was used quite often in describing seafood.

mendi and bukhari. All three of these rice dishes are usually served with a part of lamb or a whole or half chicken on top. These dishes seemed to be consumed with friends rather than family and these restaurants seemed less expensive and less formal. As one respondent said “I’m [a] student and I don’t have many money and it’s cheap for us.” One particular restaurant cited as a favorite place to frequent was Shwaiat Al-Khaleej (see figure 6.7). I found this restaurant to be a typical traditional restaurant. The setting and ambiance was not elaborate or fancy. Some seating was at tables and some on the floor. It seemed very crowded though and the patrons were almost entirely Saudi. Shwaiat Al-Khaleej is also in a poor and run-down area of town. I could not see the difference between this place and other similar restaurants. Yet this particular place at this address was mentioned in the majority of the interviews by people from all areas of the city.

Figure 6.7- This restaurant was often cited during interviews as one of the best places to eat. This was irrespective of where the respondent lived in the area. Most of the customers seemed to be ordering take-out. The average price for a meal here is around four to five dollars.



Source: Author

Finding 2- They value convenience

Respondents often cited the proximity of the restaurant as a factor. “We were hungry” and “We were driving by” or “the restaurant was close to our home” were cited as reasons for eating at a particular place. Some people eating at Kentucky Fried Chicken or Burger King were there not because they desired a particular food but because of proximity to their location. Rather than eat at home, some men will simply go out, grab a quick bite, and return home.

Additionally, some respondents explained that fast-food restaurants are open later than others. Men under 30 years old tend to stay out late in Saudi Arabia. Due to the temperature, most shops stay closed in the afternoon and open around four or five o’clock. Younger men tend to go out after nine o’clock at night and stay out until the first prayer before sunrise. Most fast-food restaurants remain open until at least two o’clock in the morning.

Finding 3- Saudis are open to different foods.

Although I found that that Saudis like seafood and traditional rice dishes, they tend to eat out often and like to change not only the food they eat, but the scenery. Seven people explained that they vary the types of food they eat weekly. As one respondent said: “McDonald’s every time not chicken same so we eat at other restaurants” meaning that he does not like to eat the same type of chicken each time so he eats at other places. He elaborated that he will eat whatever he feels like at that particular time. Almost all of the respondents claimed that they eat traditional food and Western food depending on their mood. Most of the respondents named a favorite restaurant, but also claimed to like traditional food, or Western food. Additionally, the respondents did not claim a particular type of Western or traditional food as better than others. One might like McDonald’s but also like Chili’s or a steakhouse or pasta.

When I would interview someone at a Western-themed fast-food restaurant, like Kentucky Fried Chicken, I would ask why they did not go to a particular traditional counterpart, like Tazaj. They would usually answer that Tazaj is also a good restaurant. When at Tazaj, I would ask the same question about Kentucky Fried Chicken. It seems like either place was suitable. However, when asked the same sorts of questions about sit-down restaurants, respondents had particular preferences.

Saudis seem to like all types of food and have restaurant preferences for each particular item as opposed to a cuisine. Many Saudis I saw in McDonald's were only purchasing sundaes. I asked two customers about this. Each independently said that while McDonald's food was "tasty," they prefer hamburgers from other places or chicken from KFC but liked the sundaes at McDonald's. There were places where one could find "the tastiest steak" or the "number one chicken." The same theme reemerged when discussing traditional dishes like mendi, foul, shawarmas or mutabak. There were special places for each dish.

Finding 4- The service is better in "Western" restaurants

The influx of foreign workers over the last few decades included more non-skilled laborers from places like India, Nepal, and the Philippines than Western oil-workers. The wages of a non-skilled laborer typically costs an employer between \$100 and \$350 per month. As a result, the service industry would seem greatly overstaffed to someone from the United States. In a sit-down restaurant, it is uncommon for one's drink to fall below two-thirds a cup before being refilled. The waiter is often only a few yards from the table and watching during the entire meal. While this might seem odd or uncomfortable to an American, this level of service has become expected to Saudi nationals.

The term “khidma” or “service” came up often during the interviews. This was one area where there seemed to be an appreciated difference between traditional and Western-style restaurants. One man told me: “they offer beautiful meals. Shawait al Khaleej service not as good as Chili’s.” I asked people what they meant by service. They explained that the wait staff was more attentive to their needs and it looked like more care was taken with their food.

In the term “khidma” I find a similarity to what the vegetable vendors said concerning Saudis not wanting to price-bargain with other Saudis. An Indian vegetable vendor can be pressured, humbled, and insulted during negotiations with no recourse. Likewise, the Indian waiter can be treated the same. The acceptance of this treatment, coupled with a subservient attitude, is a large part of “khidma.”

Finding 5- We go for the children

“She used to go to McDonald’s during our time in the USA. She likes the playground” remembered one of the respondents, referring to his daughter. Children seemed to prefer not only Western-style fast food restaurants but also sit-down restaurants like Chili’s or T.G.I. Friday’s. Of the married respondents I spoke with, most of them dined at least monthly at a Western-themed restaurant. They all stated that it was either their children’s choice or their wife who was thinking of the children.

One man, visiting T.G.I. Friday’s with his family told me: “for fast food we go for Herfy. It’s like McDonald’s, but our brand. But food-wise, Herfy is better.” He will take his children to McDonald’s though as they are fond of the environment. He continued to explain that he was similarly at T.G.I Fridays for the children and said about the food: “it’s like from the freezer. I eat the food but after half an hour we will be sick.” An Appleby’s patron I interviewed told me that “my kids like Appleby’s because of the desserts.” He elaborated that traditional restaurant

simply do not have the types of desserts of the Western-style restaurants. It is the desserts that attract the children. This was similar to many of the young college-age men I saw who bought sundaes from McDonald's. They were not purchasing other items but only went there for a dessert.

To summarize both the qualitative and quantitative findings, I suggest simply that Saudi Arabians deal with pressures from the outside on their terms and change at their pace. Fox (2006) and Champion (2003), assert that the pressures of globalization will be on the terms of the Gulf Arabs and in a manner not necessarily predictable and neither modern nor traditional. I suggest the same is true for Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

Researchers have studied the relationship between globalization and diet in several parts of the world in relation to what is referred to as the “nutrition transition” in developing nations (Popkin 2008) or in particular places like India (Shetty 2002), China (Du 2004) or in the Arab world (Ng 2011). However, the research in this field has identified only general broad changes towards eating more refined carbohydrates or animal fat, for example, and do not examine diet in relation to a particular national cuisine.

However, there are more specific accounts of cuisine change in relation to both globalization and culture. Wilk (2007) illuminates how the forces of modernization, colonization, and nationalization create, recreate, and place cuisine in the notion of national identity. Similar accounts, although now always as encompassing as Wilk’s ethnography, have been written about aspects of cuisine and culture in countries like Italy (Counihan 2004), France (Fantasia 1995) or regions like East Asia (Watson 1997).

The only work thus far concerning diet in Saudi Arabia has been in relation to general calorie consumption (Amin 2008; Al-Subaie) or a particular characteristic of diet such as fiber intake (Al-Shagrawi 1998) or beverage consumption (Collison et al. 2010), and then mostly in relation to obesity and health care costs. There has been little work done on globalization and culture in relation to food in the Arabian Gulf and Saudi Arabia in particular. This study is in attempt to fill this evident gap in the literature.

I sought to answer three questions in this dissertation. In the remainder of this chapter, I revisit these questions and review the research findings in relation to them. I then discuss opportunities for future research and the limitations of this study.

Question 1- What is the degree of interplay among globalization, culture and cuisine and what are the implications on Saudi culture?

I initially assumed that this recent phase of globalization was changing Saudi society at a faster rate than the rest of the world. I assumed that one of the principle manifestations of culture, aside from language, is a country's cuisine. Saudi cuisine, as I saw it, was going through radical changes. These changes seem evident by the prevalence and dominance of Western-styled restaurants and grocery stores (hypermarkets). As Saudi Arabia is one of the most traditional and closed societies in the region, the juxtaposition of Starbucks and similar outlets becomes more pronounced against the landscape of Saudi Arabian cities.

While smaller-scale supermarkets like Safeway and Panda have existed in Saudi Arabia since the late 1970s, the introduction of hypermarkets like Carrefour (2004) and Lulu (2008) have changed the quantity, packaging, and type of food available to the average Saudi Arabian. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Saudis have forsaken the traditional markets, nor does it translate into a change in cuisine. All the ingredients, vegetables, and meats of traditional foods are available at these places albeit on a much larger scale.

Convenience seems to be more important to a Saudi than company origin. In fact, these hypermarkets are owned by Saudi corporations as franchises. In Carrefour, French foods are relegated to a small section within an aisle. Lulu Hypermarket is a joint Indian-Saudi venture.

There is no doubt that Saudi customers make up the bulk of the hypermarket customer, but the reasons are not as I thought. There is no relationship between shopping at a hypermarket and positive or negative feelings about Europe or the United States. Travel to other parts of the world has no influence on where fruit, vegetables, or meat is bought nor does television or Internet use.

However, there is a noticeable increase in the number of hypermarkets and a decline of the traditional market. According to the vendors, the agent of change is the government rather than capitalism or globalization. Yet the government must deliver *something* to its people. The Saudi government, like other governments in the Gulf, leads by taking care of its citizens rather than by brutality. What does a government do with such wealth? What does a strict religious country build besides shopping malls? It is only natural that Saudis have new, large, and cool shopping centers. Their existence is certainly influenced by similar (but smaller) markets in Europe and America, but the models on which these hypermarkets and shopping malls were built could have come from China or Argentina. These hypermarkets are not thought of as “foreign” and if they are, so what? Rather than a desire to imitate the West, the introduction of hypermarkets, as well as foreign restaurants, is a result of a desire to modernize and globalization only facilitated this.

Yet the impact of these hypermarkets on cuisine and culture is not as I thought. All the ingredients of kapsa or mendi are available at Carrefour. Saudis purchase traditional food at the hypermarket and when they want to slaughter a sheep, they go to the countryside. Ritzer (2004) and Burger and Huntington (2001) claim that cultures tend to adopt some aspects of another culture and leave others. This seems to be the case in Saudi Arabia as well.

Question 2- Is there a relationship between the diets of Saudi Arabians and their perception of other cultures?

Robertson (1995) also claims that some nations will often have a “reference society” they will emulate in their pursuit to modernize. The predominance of Western cultural icons exceeds the sum of Western expats living in Saudi Arabia. I can only assume, therefore, that there is an emulation of at least style, if not content from Europe and especially the United States.

While a significant proportion of the survey population reported eating at Western-style restaurants, it did not seem to be an indication of attitudes towards the United States or Europe. The survey data did not show any relationship between eating at Appleby's or buying their meat at Safeway and feelings toward the United States. However, neither did the survey data show any relationship between where meat and vegetables are purchased and feelings about China, or any of the other three countries on in the survey.

Question 3- Are dietary changes more or less pronounced among those who lived in or regularly vacation in other countries?

Whether one spent time in the United Kingdom or the United States did not influence one's choice of restaurant according to the survey data. In fact, the interviews implied that Saudi Arabians will eat at Chili's or Burger King because of a completely different set of reasons than I thought. A Saudi can, indeed, simultaneously eat at McDonald's and dislike America. It is not the absence of foreign travel that compels him to eat kabsa—he simply prefers it and might eat a hamburger later that day. As far as cuisine is concerned, there does not seem to be a struggle between traditionalism and modernity as some (Liebner 2002; Bilgrami 2003; Barber; 1996) suggest—at least played out in the venue of food—nor is there a rush towards a homogenization of cuisine. Yet the interviews reveal that those who travelled to Europe, United States, or even Thailand ate at American restaurants and, therefore, are a bit more endeared to them. It is not the type of nostalgia referred to by Sutton (2001) or Counihan (2004) as a remembrance of a vacation or the time spent as a foreign student, but that the travel to another country simply introduced them to the food. An interview finding of particular interest was that some respondents reported going to Western restaurants for the children. It was mentioned a few times that the children were introduced to these restaurants in the United States.

Summary

These findings, I believe, imply glocalization, or the adoption of a food to the extent that it is no longer considered “foreign.” It seems the most applicable form in which Saudi Arabians handle outside forces of globalization. It can also mean that there is no problem with a restaurant being “Western.” Both explanations seem plausible. According to the interviews and my personal experiences, Saudi Arabians do not hate the United States or Europe. On the contrary, they tend to have a good opinion of these places. When pressed, they will tell you that they do not like a particular government and its foreign policies, but see that as an entirely separate issue.

Although some (Bell and Valentine 1997; Mintz 1996) doubt the existence of a national cuisine, I find that Saudi Arabia does have a definable national cuisine. Yet that definition is fluid and allows for change without betraying ones national identity and culture.

Figure 7.1- Shamaliyyah, Khobar. Developed in Wisconsin and a rarity in the US, broasted chicken is popular in Saudi Arabia.



Source: Author

The recent introduction of so many foreign restaurants and foods into Saudi Arabia is not a new story, but only a new chapter in a book written by Saudi merchants. The Gulf Arabs are, after all, known, and have been known for millennia, as traders. I have found that the Saudi businessmen are the agents of change not multinational corporations. The presence of these restaurants and hypermarkets is due largely to pull, not push factors. If their culture is dramatically changing, and I found little evidence that it is, then it is at the behest of Saudi Arabians.

No one can visit Saudi Arabia and argue that it is not a closed society and, I believe, most people familiar with the country will concur with such a broad generalization. Yet this is by their choice. Globalization is, undoubtedly, changing Saudi society in profound ways. However, such change, exemplified by the prevailing food culture, is on their turf and on their terms.

Limitations and difficulties

Saudi Arabia proved a very difficult country in which to do research. In my extensive travels, including travel to the Arab world, I have not come across a society as closed as Saudi Arabia. I do not say this as a slight to Saudi culture—I believe that many Saudi Arabians would acknowledge the same. Some Saudis might argue that it is an inward-looking way of life that has protected them from great change, from colonization, and allowed them to interact and trade with others while retaining their culture. But because of this, I needed to alter my survey and my interviews less than I had idealized. However, these same challenges that have limited my research have probably contributed to the dearth of literature on globalization and cuisine in Saudi Arabia. Research built upon the experience of others is often preferable to forging a new path. Perhaps I am not the only person to examine cuisine in Saudi Arabia, but I have not found similar research indicating otherwise.

Language is always a limiting factor. While I can read and write Arabic, my spoken Arabic is by no means fluent. The impact of language on culture can never be underestimated. Yet my limited understanding of Arabic and of Saudi culture has given me, I believe, an insight not available to others. The novelty of the “other”—the American—interested in Saudi opinions has often given me an advantage over even other Arabs. This advantage notwithstanding, true understanding of Saudi culture, and the effects of outside forces their culture, requires more engagement than a year or two.

Including women in quantitative or qualitative research is one of the most significant challenges in doing research in Saudi Arabia. This is especially true when it comes to attitudes about food as women still determine what is cooked and served in the home. Only 17% of the respondents were women and it was therefore difficult to include gender as a variable in the study. One of the purposes of conducting the interview over the telephone was to be as inclusive of women as possible.

In many cases, it could be argued that one’s favorite restaurant is not one frequented often. For this reason, asking about one’s favorite and second-favorite restaurant might not be the best method to determine where Saudi Arabians eat out. This question might not measure diet trends well without quantifying the frequency of such visits.

Future Research

Future research should involve both women and children. A common theme occurring during the interviews was that children sometimes influenced where the respondents ate. I suspect this might be the case with purchasing food for home consumption as well. I also suspect that the successes of Western restaurants in Saudi Arabia are due significantly to the younger Saudis. Unless they travelled, older people grew up eating only Saudi cuisine and might not have

developed a taste for Western food. Children, however, have grown up frequenting these restaurants. To really understand even short term changes in Saudi cuisine, it is important to include this demographic.

Including women in research in Saudi Arabia is simply not possible without the assistance of other women. Conducting joint research with a university in the Arabian Gulf might be a way to overcome this. This would most likely require direct university-to-university contact. My attempts to partner with other academics were not productive. However, with an official joint partnership of some kind, this could open the door to conducting research with women graduate students who can better access Saudi women.

Works Cited

- Abowitz, Kathleen and Jay Roberts. (2007) "The Fallacies of Flatness: The World is Flat." *Journal of Philosophy of Education*. 41:471-481.
- Ajami, Fuoad. (1993) "The Summoning: 'But They Said, We Will Not Hearken'" *Foreign Affairs*. 72:2-9.
- Albala, Ken. (2011) *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press.
- Alsharekh, Alanoud. (2008) *Popular Culture and Political Identity in the Arab Gulf States*. Robert Springborg (ed.), London: Saqi Books.
- Al-Rethaiaa, Abdallah et al. (2010) "Obesity and Eating Habits Among College Students In Saudi Arabia: A Cross-Sectional Study." *Nutritional Journal*. 9:39.
- Alseif, Mohammed, et al. (2002) "Prevalence and Risk Factors of Obesity and Overweight in Adult Saudi Population." *Nutrition Research*. 22. 1243-1252.
- Al-Subaihi, Ali. (2008) "Comparison of Web and Telephone Survey Response Rates in Saudi Arabia." *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*. 6:123-132.
- Amin, Samir. (2006) *Beyond US hegemony?: Assessing the Prospects for a Multipolar World*. Beirut: World Book Publishing.
- Amin, Samir and David Luckin. (1996) "The Challenge of Globalization." *Review for International Political Economy*. 3(2). Pg. 231.
- Amin, Tarek et al. (2008) "Overweight and Obesity and their Association with Dietary Habits, and Socio-demographic Characteristics Among Male Primary School Children in Al-Hassa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." *Indian Journal of Community Medicine*. 33:171-181.
- Anderson, E.N. (2005) *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*. New York: New York University Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bak, Sangmee. (2006) "McDonald's in Seoul: Food Choices, Identity, and Nationalism" in *Golden Arches East*. Edited by James Watson, 136-160. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Barber, Benjamin. (1996) *Jihad Vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World*. New York: Ballantine Books.

- Barbour, Rosaline. (2001) "Checklists for Improving Rigor in Qualitative Research: A Case of the Tail Wagging the Dog?" *British Medical Journal*. 322:1115-1117.
- Barlow, Maude. (2001) "The Global Monoculture" *Earth Island Journal*. Autumn, 2001.
- Baxter, Jamie and John Eyles. (1996) "Evaluating Qualitative Research in Social Geography: Establishing 'Rigour' in Interview Analysis" *Transactions of the Institute for British Geographers*. 22:505-525.
- British Broadcasting Corporation Online. (2002) *McDonald's Torched in Saudi Attack*. BBC News, November 21, 2002. Accessed May 27, 2010 at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2498047.stm
- Belasco, Warren. (2008) *Food: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Bell, David and Gill Valentine. (1997) *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat*. London: Routledge.
- Burger, Peter and Huntington, Samuel. (2002) *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Beriss, David and David Sutton. (2007) *The Restaurants Book: Ethnographies of Where We Eat*. (eds.) Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Belasco, Warren. (2008) *Food: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Bestor, Theodore. (2004) *Tsukiji: The Fish Market at the Center of the World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bisogni, C.A., et al. (2002) "Who we are and how we eat: A qualitative study of identities in food choice." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. 34(3):128-39.
- Bourdier, Pierre. (1984) *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Translation by Richard Nice. Harvard University Press.
- Cap, Chu. (2002) "Marx and Engels on Economic Globalization" *Nature, Society, and Thought*. 15: 241-245.
- Cesari, Jocelyne. (2004) *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and the United States*. New York: Macmillan.
- Champion, Daryl. (2003) *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform*. London: Hurst and Company.

- Chomsky, Noam. (1998) "Free Trade and Free Market: Pretense and Practice." *In The Cultures of Globalization*. Frederic Jameson and Misao Miyoshi, eds. Pp. 356-370. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Chopra, Mickey. (2004) "Globalization, Urbanization, and Nutritional Changes in South Africa." *FAO Food Nutrition Paper #83*. www.fao.org. Accessed January 27, 2007.
- Chopra, Mickey and Hill, D. 2004. "Tobacco and Obesity Epidemics: Not so Different After All?" *British Medical Journal* 328:1558-1560
- Cooperman, Hilary and Schecter, Relli. (2008) "Branding the Riders: "Marlboro Country" and the Formation of a New Middle Class in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey." *New Global Studies*. 2:1-41.
- Cowen, Tyler. (2002) "The Fate of Culture" *Wilson Quarterly*. 26:78-84.
- Counihan, Carole. (2004) *Around the Tuscan Table: Food, Family, and Gender in Twentieth Century Florence*. New York: Routledge.
- Creswell, John. (1994) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage
- , (1998) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. London: Sage
- Davies, Deirdre and Jenny Dodd. (2002) "Qualitative Research and the Question of Rigor" *Qualitative Health Research*. 12:279-289.
- Davis, Mitchell and Anne McBride. (2008) "The State of American Cuisine." White paper issued by the James Beard Foundation. www.jamesbeard.org/files/jbf_state_of_american_cuisine.pdf. Accessed March 5, 2011.
- Davis, Nancy and Robert Robinson. (2006) "The Egalitarian Face of Islamic Orthodoxy: Support for Islamic Law and Economic Justice in Seven Muslim-Majority Nations." *American Sociological Review*. 71:2 167-190.
- Delgado, Christopher. (2003) "Rising Consumption of Meat and Milk in Developing Countries Has Created a New Food Revolution" *Journal of Nutrition*. 133:3907-3910.
- Denscombe, Martyn. (2002) *Ground Rules for Good Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Dicken P. (2000) "Globalization" in Johnston R J, Gregory D, Pratt G and Watts M J (eds) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Du, Shufa, et al. (2004) "Rapid Income Growth Adversly Affects Diet Quality in China Particularly for the Poor." *Social Science and Medicine*. 59:1505-1515.
- Dunlop, John. (1993) *The Emerging Global Food System*. New York: Wiley and Sons.
- Eickelman, Dale. (2002) "Islam and Ethical Pluralism" in *Islamic Political Ethics: Civil Society, Pluralism, and Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Eisner, Elliot. (1998) *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill
- Fakeeh, Manal. (2009) *Saudization as a Solution for Unemployment The Case of Jeddah Western Region*. Accessed at theses.gla.ac.uk on August 14, 2011
- Fantasia, Rick. (1995) "Fast Food in France" *Theory and Society*. 24. 201-243.
- Farb, Peter and George Armelagos. (1980) *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Food*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Featherstone, Mike. (1995) *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernization and Identity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ferrero, Sylvia (2002) 'Comida Sin Par, Consumption of Mexican Food in Los Angeles: "Foodscapes" in a Transnational Consumer Society', in Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton (eds) *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*, pp. 194–219. New York: Routledge.
- Fox, John et al. (2006) *Globalization and the Gulf*. London: Routledge.
- Freeman, Richard. (2006) "People Flows in Globalization." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 20:145-170.
- Friedman, Jonathan (1994) *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London: Sage.
- Friedman, Thomas. (2000) *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. New York: Anchor Books.
- , (2005) *The World is Flat: A Brief history of the 21st Century*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Fukuyama, Francis. (1992) *The End of the World and the Last Man*. London: Hamish Hamilton.

- Gabaccia, Donna. (2002) "As American as Budweiser and Pickles? Nation-Building in American Food Industries" in *Food Nations: Selling taste in Consumer Societies*, edited by Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton. 175-193. London: Routledge.
- Geertz, Clifford. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic
- Giddens, Anthony. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gitlin, Todd. (1992) "World Leaders: Mickey et al." Electronic Document from New York Times Archives. www.nytimes.com. Accessed April 4, 2007.
- Gladstone, David L. (2005) *From Pilgrimage to Package Tour: Travel and Tourism in the Third World*. New York: Routledge.
- Glesne, Corrine. (1999) *Becoming Qualitative Researchers*. New York: Longman
- Gonzalez, Alessandra. (2011) "Measuring Religiosity in a Majority Muslim Context: Gender, Religious Salience, and Religious Experience among Kuwaiti College Students." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 50:339-350.
- Goody, Jack. (1982) *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- , (1997) "Industrial Food: Towards the Development of a World Cuisine" in *Food and Culture: A Reader*. 338-356. London: Routledge.
- Grasso, Benedetta. (2010) "Polenta vs Cous Cous. LEGALLY Banning Ethnic Food from Northern Italy" i-ITALY April 9, 2010. Accessed at <http://www.i-italy.org/13883/polenta-vs-cous-cous-legally-banning-ethnic-food-northern-italy> on May 26, 2010
- Hammersley, Martyn. (1987) "Some Notes on the Terms 'Validity' and 'Reliability'" *British Educational Research Journal*. 13: 73-81.
- Hannerz, Ulf. (1996) *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. London: Routledge.
- Harris, Marvin. (1998) *Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times*. Walnut Creek, CA., Altamira Press.
- (2001) *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture*. Walnut Creek, CA., Altamira Press.
- Harvey, David. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Hassan, Fatah. (2006). "Muslims Urged to End Boycott of Danish Products. *The New York Times*. April 5, 2006. Accessed March 4, 2012 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/04/world/africa/04iht-islam.html>
- Hassan, Javed. (2003) "Boycott Opens Saudi Market to New Cola Brands" *Arab News*. 20 September 2003. Accessed at: <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=32266&d=20&m=9&y=2003>
- Hawkes, C. (2002) "Marketing Activities of Global Soft Drink and Fast Food Companies In Emerging Markets." *Globalization, Diets, and Noncommunicable Diseases*. <http://whqlib.who.int/publications/9241594016.pdf>. Accessed Feb 2, 2007.
- (2005) The Role of Foreign Direct Investment in the Nutrition Transition. *Public Health Nutrition*. 8:357-365.
- Henry, Clement. (2003) "A Clash of Globalizations: Obstacles to Development in the Middle East". *Harvard International Review* Spring: 60-64.
- Heynen, Nik. and J. Njeru. (2006) "Ecological Globalization and the Social Production of Nature." In *Globalization's Contradictions: Geographies of Discipline, Destruction & Transformation*. Eds. Dennis Conway and Nik Heynen. London: Routledge.
- Hossain, Parvez. (2007) "Obesity and Diabetes in the Developing World — A Growing Challenge." *The New England Journal of Medicine*. 356:213-215.
- Hunter, Shireen. (1986) "The Gulf Economic Crisis and its Social and Political Consequences" *The Middle East Journal*. 40:593-613.
- Huntington, Samuel. (1993) "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*. 72:22-49.
- Hutchings, Robert. (2003) "X+9/11". *Foreign Policy* July/August: 70-72.
- Ibn Khaldun (1980) *Muqaddima*, ed. and trans. F. Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah: an Introduction to History*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Inda, Jonathan and Renato Rosaldo. (2002) *The Anthropology of Globalization*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Jacson, Peter. (2004) "Local Consumption Cultures in a Globalizing World." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 29:165-178.
- Joyner, James. (2006) *Pakistan Rioters Burn KFC, Pizza Hut, and McDonald's*. February 14, 2006. Accessed May 27, 2010 at

http://www.outsidethebeltway.com/pakistan_rioters_burn_kfc_pizza_hut_and_McDonald's

- Kearney, Michael. (1996) *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry: Anthropology in Global Perspective*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Kellner, Douglas. (2002) "Theorizing Globalization" *Sociological Theory*. 20:285-305.
- Khalaf, Sulayman. (2002) "Globalization and Heritage Revival in the Gulf: An Anthropological Look at Dubai Heritage Village." *Journal of Social Affairs*. 19:75.
- Khraim, Hamza. (2010) "Measuring Religiousity in Consumer Research from Islamic Perspective." *International Journal of Marketing Studies*. 2:166-179.
- Kim Soowon. (2001) "Nutrition transition in the Republic of Korea." *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 10:48-56.
- King, H. (2000) "Global Burden of Diabetes, 1995-2025: Prevalence, Numerical Estimates, and Projections." *Diabetes Care*. 21:1414-1431.
- Klein, Naomi. (2004) "Outsourcing the Friedman" *The Nation*. March 22, 2004. Pg. 10.
- Kluckhohn, Clyde and Kroeber, Alfred. (1963) *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts And Definitions*. New York: Vintage.
- Kumosani, Taha et al. (2011) "Cardiovascular Diseases in Saudi Arabia" *Prime Research on Medicine*. 1:1-6.
- Lapidus, Ira. (1991) *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lappé, Francis Moore and Joseph Collins. (1977) *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Lentz, Carola. (1999) *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America, And Europe*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Lieber, Robert and Ruth Weisberg. (2002) "Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis" *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. 16:273-296.
- Lincoln, Yvonna and Egon Guba. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. London: Sage
- Looney, R. (2004) "Saudization and Sound Economic Reforms: Are the Two Compatible?" *Strategic Insights*, Vol. III, Issue 2 (Feb.).
- Manning, Patrick. (2006) "Interactions and Connections: Locating and Managing

- Historical Complexity” *Society for History Education*. 39:175-195.
- Marcus, Noland and Howard Pack. (2008) “Arab Economies at a Tipping Point.” *Middle East Policy* 15:62
- Mansour, M, et al. (2004) “Diabetes Mellitus in Saudi Arabia.” *Saudi Medical Journal*. 25:1603-1610.
- Marling, William. (2006) *How “American” is Globalization*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Marx, Karl. (1979) “Communist Manifesto,” in Robert Tucker (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*, New York: Norton.
- McDonald’s Arabia. (2012) “Local Ownership” Accessed from the World Wide Web: http://www.McDonald’sarabia.com/ksa-jeddah/en/the_truth/our_history/leadership.html. Accessed March 2, 2012.
- Meneley, Anne. (2007) “Like an Extra Virgin”. *American Anthropologist*. 4:109. 678-687.
- Mennell, Stephen, Anne Murcott and Anneke H. van Otterloo. (1992) *The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet, and Culture*. London: Sage.
- Moaddel, Mansoor. (2006) “The Saudi Public Speaks: Religion, Gender, and Politics,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 38: 79-108.
- Morehouse, William. (2009) “Globalization on Steroids,” *The American Scholar*, Winter 2009. Pg 6-10.
- Mousa, Hussein. (2009) “Saudi Diet Food Market.” *Gain Report*. Accessed August 8, 2010 at <http://gain.fas.usda.gov>
- Mintz, Sidney. (1996) *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Miller Daniel. (1998) “Coca-Cola: a black sweet drink from Trinidad” in Miller Daniel ed. *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter*. London: UCL Press.
- Mitchell, Don. (1995) “There’s No Such Thing as Culture: Towards a Reconceptualization of the Idea of Culture in Geography.” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*. 20 (1): 102-116.
- Mitchell, D. and Rosati, C. (2006) “The Globalization of Culture: Geography and the Industrial Production of Culture” in *Globalization’s Contradiction*, edited by Dennis Conway and Nik Heynen, 152-154. London: Routledge.

- Najjar, Fauzi. (2005) "The Arabs, Islam, and Globalization" *Middle East Policy*. 3:91-106.
- Ng, Shu et al. (2011) "Nutrition Transition in the United Arab Emirates" *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 65:1328-1337.
- Ohnuki-Tierty, Emiko. (1993) *Rice as Self: Japanese Identities Through Time*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . (1997) "McDonald's in Japan: Changing Manners and Etiquette" in *Golden Arches East*, edited by James Watson, 161-182. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Parkhurst-Ferguson, Priscilla. (2004) *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine*, University of Chicago Press.
- Patton, Michael. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. London: Sage.
- Philby, J.B. (1959) "Riyadh: Ancient and Modern" *Middle East Journal*. 13:129-141.
- Pollan, Michael. (2007) *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Popkin, Barry. (2003) "The Nutrition Transition in the Developing World" *Developmental Policy Review*. 21: 581-597.
- . (2008) *The World is Fat: The Fads, Trends, Policies, and Products That Are Fattening the Human Race*. New York: Avery-Penguin Press.
- Pilcher, Jeffrey. (1998) *Que Vivan Los Tamales: Food and the Making of Mexican Identity*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- . (2006) "Taco Bell, Maseca, and Slow Food: A Postmodern Apocalypse for Mexico's Peasant Cuisine?" in *Fast food/Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*. 69-82. Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press.
- Randal, Tom. (2001) *Earth Liberation Front; Terrorists Wreak Havoc in America*. Tulsa World, October 7, 2001. Accessed through LexisNexis May 27, 2010.
- Ritzer, George. (1991) *The Mcdonaldization Thesis*. London: Sage.
- . (1999) *Enchanting a Disenchanted World*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

- , (2003) "Rethinking Globalization: Glocalization/Grobalization and Something/Nothing" *Sociological Theory*. 21:193-209.
- , (2004) *The Globalization of Nothing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Robertson, Roland. (1995) "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity" in *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernization and Identity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Rosecrance, Richard. (1999) *The Rise of the Virtual State*. New York: Basic Books.
- Rugh, William. (1979) "A Tale of Two Houses" *The Wilson Quarterly*. 3:58-72.
- Said, Edward. (1979) *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- , (1993) *Culture and Imperialism*. Alfred Knopf.
- Schmidhuber, Josef and Prakesh Shetty. (2005) The Nutrition Transition to 2030. Why Developing Countries are Likely to Bear the Major Burden. *Acta Agriculturae Scand Section C*, 2: 150-166.
- Seidmann, Irving. (1998) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers In Education and the Social Sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1998.
- Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D., & Campbell, D.T. (2002) *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Shetty, Prakesh. (2002) "Nutrition Transition in India." *Public Health Nutrition*. 5:175-182.
- Spittler, Gerd. (1999) "In Praise of the Simple Meal: African and European Food Compared" in *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America and Europe*. 27-42. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Singleton, Royce and Bruce Straits. (1999) *Approaches to Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Silverman, David. (2005) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text, and Interaction*. London: Sage
- Siregeldin, Ismail, (2006) "The Trends in Globalization Critiqued" in *Globalization and the Gulf*. Fox et al. (eds.). London: Routledge.
- Stake, Robert. (1994) *Case Studies*. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Sutton, David. (2001) *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*. Oxford: Berg.
- Taecker, Kevin. (2003) "Myths and Realities About Unemployment in Saudi Arabia," *Saudi American Forum*, March 30th edition.
- Tashakkori, Abbas and Charles Teddlie. (1998) *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Thrift, Nigel. (2000) "Geography of Consumption," in R. Johnston, D. Gregory, M. Watts and G. Pratt (eds.) *Dictionary of Human Geography*, 4th ed. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 108–110.
- Tsing, Anna. (2000) "The Global Situation." *Cultural Anthropology*. 15(3):327-360.
- Tylor, Edward. (1970) *Primitive Culture*. New York, Harper.
- Van Darn, R. (2002) "Dietary Patterns and Risk for Type II Diabetes Mellitus in U.S. Men." *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 136: 201-209.
- Wolcott, Harry. (1995) *The Art of Fieldwork*. Walnut Creek, Ca: Altamira Press.
- Wall Street Journal. (1999) *Animal Rights Flare Up as McDonald's is Torched; PETA Breaks off Talks*. August 13, 1999. Accessed through LexisNexis on May 27, 2010.
- Warde, Alan. (1997) *Consumption, Food and Taste*. London: Sage
- Washi, Sidiga, and Ageib Maha. (2010) "Poor diet quality and food habits are related to Impaired nutritional status in 13- to 18-year-old adolescents in Jeddah." *Nutrition Research*. 30:527-534.
- Watson, James L. (1997) *Golden Arches East (ed.)*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Watson, James L. and Melissa Caldwell. (2005) *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating* (eds.) Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- Wei, A. et al. (2001) "Competition Among Foreign and Chinese Agro-Food Enterprises in the Process of Globalization." *International Food and Agribusiness Management Review*. 2:437-451.
- Wagenleiter, Reinhold. (1994) *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Whitelaw, Gavin. (2006) "Rice Ball Rivalries: Japanese Convenience Stores and the

- Appetite of Late Capitalism” in *Fast Food/Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*. 131-144. Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press
- World Health Organization. (2003). *Obesity: preventing and managing the global epidemic*. Working Group on Obesity. Geneva, World Health Organization. Accessed September 28, 2010 at http://www.who.int/hpr/NPH/docs/gs_obesity.pdf
- Wilk, Richard. (2006) *Fast food/Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*. Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press
- , (2007) *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Williams, Raymond. (1976) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, Robin. (1983) “Sociological Tropes: A Tribute to Erving Goffman” *Theory, Culture & Society*. February 1983 2: 99-102.
- , (1970) *American Society: A Sociological Perspective*. New York: Knopf.
- Wilson, Rodney. (2006) “Saudi Arabia’s Role in the Global Economy” in *Globalization and the Gulf*. Fox et al. (eds.). London: Routledge.
- Windsor, George. (1981) “From Suqs to Supermarkets.” *Aramco World*. Jan/Feb 1981.
- Wolf, Eric. (1982) *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.
- Wolf, Martin. (2004) *Why Globalization Works*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Yamani, Mai. (2009) *Cradle of Islam: The Hijaz and the Quest for Identity in Saudi Arabia*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Zaouali, Lilia. (2009) *Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Zobby International. (2006) “Five National Survey of the Middle East” *Zogby Internaitonal*. Accessed May5, 2009 at: http://aai.3cdn.net/96d8eeaec55ef4c217_m9m6b97wo.pdf .
- Zukin, Sharon and Jennifer Maguire. (2004) “Consumers and Consumption.” *Annual Review of Sociology*. 30:173-197.

Appendices

Appendix A

Telephone Survey

1) Gender M_____ F_____

2) What are the top two places you dine outside the home or order food for takeout/delivery?

3) Concerning (*restaurant #1 name*), on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the most to your liking, how would you rate the price? The taste? The hygiene of the restaurant?

4) Concerning (*restaurant #2 name*), on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the most to your liking, how would you rate the price? The taste? The hygiene of the restaurant?

Restaurant Name	1:	2:
Price		
Taste		
Cleanliness		

5) Where do you typically shop for meat? _____

6) Where do you typically shop for vegetables? _____

7) What do you typically choose to listen to in the car? _____

8) Do you have a satellite dish? Yes_____ No _____

9) On average, how long do you watch television per day? _____

10) On average, how long do spend on the Internet per day? _____

11) If you have spent any amount of time in another country, how long have you been in:

Europe _____

The United States _____

The Shamiya (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon) _____

East Asia _____

The GCC (excluding Bahrain) _____

12) Using the words “favorable”, “unfavorable”, or “no opinion”, what is you general feeling of:

Italy _____

Japan _____

Germany _____

China _____

America _____

13) What is your highest level of education? _____

14) In which year were you born? _____

Appendix B

Completed Survey in Arabic

٢٥٥

استبيان عبر الهاتف

(١) - الجنس ذكر انثى

(٢) - ما هي اكثر الاماكن التي ترغب ان تتعشى فيها خارج المنزل او تحب ان تطلب منها الاكل لتوصيله لك في المنزل/ تاخذه بنفسك؟

(٣) - فيما يتعلق (بالمطعم رقم ١) اذا كان هناك مقياس مدرج من ١-٥ باعتبار ان المطعم رقم ٥ هو الاحب اليك اين تضع اسعاره في المقياس؟ مذاق الاكل؟ ومستوى النظافة في المطعم؟

(٤) - فيما يتعلق (بالمطعم رقم ٢) اذا كان هناك مقياس مدرج من ١-٥ باعتبار ان المطعم رقم ٥ هو الاحب اليك اين تضع اسعاره في المقياس؟ مذاق الاكل؟ ومستوى النظافة في المطعم؟

اسم المطعم	١ مطعم كبا لمراقي	٢ مصبات زادي
الاسعار	٥	٤
المذاق	٤	٤
النظافة	٣	٣

(٥) - من اين تشتري اللحوم؟ سوق اللحوم

(٦) - من اين تشتري الخضروات؟ الخضروات

(٧) - الى ماذا تحب ان تستمع في السيارة؟ القرآن الكريم

(٨) - هل لديك قنوات فضائية؟ نعم لا

(٩) - ما متوسط مدة مشاهدتك للتلفزيون في اليوم؟ ساعة

١٠- ما متوسط مدة استعمالك للانترنت في اليوم؟ ساعات

١١- اذا كان قد سبق لك قضاء بعض الوقت في البلدان الاخرى كم كانت مدة اقامتك في:

اوروپا شهرين

الولايات المتحدة الامريكية ٧

الشيوعية ٤٥ يوم

شرق اسيا ٢٠ يوم

دول مجلس التعاون (باستثناء البحرين) ١٥ يوم

١٢- باستعمال كلمة "ملانم" "غير ملانم" "ليس لدي فكرة" ما هو احساسك العام عن ما يلي:-

ايطاليا غير ملانم

اليابان غير ملانم

المانيا /

الصين /

اميركا ملانم

١٣- ما هو مستوى تعليمك؟ كلية المعلمين

١٤- في اي عام كان ميلادك ١٩٨٠

Vita

Klaus Heyer was born in Concord, California. He received a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Rhode Island College in 1994 and a Master's degree in Sociology in 1996 from San Jose State University in California. He also received a Master's degree in Environmental Science from the University of Rhode Island in 1999.