Marta Rudnicka

“It makes you want to eat it”. Everyday food, cooking and the making of gustatory identities in Northern Ghana

Dissertation

zur Erlangung der Würde einer Doktorin der Philosophie

vorgelegt der Philosophisch-Historischen Fakultät der Universität Basel

von Marta Rudnicka

aus Polen

Original document stored on the publication server of the University of Basel
edoc.unibas.ch

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

This is to certify that this doctoral dissertation has been approved by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Basel, upon the formal request of Prof. Till Förster and Prof. Diawarra Mamadou.

Basel, 13.12.2022

The Dean, Prof. Dr. Martin Lengwiler

To all the women I met along the way.
Without your support and kindness this project would not be possible.

Abstract

This anthropological research is concentrated around everyday practices of food production and commensality in Northern Ghana. It treats them as a springboard to tackle contemporary approaches to identity-making among middle-class Ghanaians in two urban centres, Tamale and Wa. To achieve its goals, this research employs anthropology of senses, food and embodiment as the theoretical apparatus behind the analysis. It also proposes an innovative methodological angle through the application of sensory ethnographic methods. This research treats culture primarily as practice, thus it has been designed to follow certain activities and spaces in which those activities take place. Women as social actors stand at the centre of this study, as it follows their daily activities both in domestic and public spheres. The research tackles issues such as gender, ethnic and class identities, agency, traditionalism and changemaking, embodied spaces of gustatory encounters and professionalism in a persistently colonial educational environment. The thesis presents how food-centred practices and gustatory narratives can provide a springboard for scholarly analysis of other cultural phenomena. It also provides insights into practising sensory ethnography and supplies feedback on the scope of its feasibility. Ultimately, this thesis highlights the fact that embodied approaches to autoethnography provide a deeper understanding of culturally-created sensibilities.

Acknowledgments

The path towards this dissertation has been turbulent. I owe many thanks to several people and institutions who consistently supported me along the way to its completion. I would like to express deep gratitude to my first supervisor, Professor Dr Till Förster for his constant belief in my skills, his knowledge and guidance; to my colleagues from the Institute of Social Anthropology and Graduate School of Social Sciences for offering support, companionship and feedback. I extend my thanks to Prof. Mamadou Diawarra for providing his expert feedback.

I would like to thank the Graduate School of Social Sciences, Josef und Olga-Tomcsik Stiftung and the Freiwillige Akademische Gesellschaft (FAG) for providing the funding which made the practical part of this project possible. I am also grateful to Böniger-Ris Stiftung for providing financial support.

This thesis would not have come into being had it not been for the openness, hospitality, kindness and understanding of the people I met in Ghana, some of whom became my friends. I am eternally grateful to my host families for inviting me to their homes and for all the meals we cooked and ate together. I am forever indebted to all short- and long-term collaborators, their patience and understanding when I kept rummaging around their kitchens and asking too many questions.

I would not be able to finish this monumental project had it not been for the constant support of my family and friends, who believed in me even when I did not. I extend special thanks to Dr Julia Büchele who supported me with all her might on the final stretch of writing.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

> "Anthropologists who began to study such things [food] in the field at the start of this [XX] century went from their own large, urban, Western societies to others, then still numerous, in which people were consuming foods they had produced (or gathered, or caught) themselves […]. Women in such societies commonly did much of the labor to collect or grow food, as well as nearly all of the cooking. Most anthropologists were men and didn't find such matters especially interesting. Hence it would probably be accurate to say that food and eating got much less attention in their own right as anthropological subjects than they really deserved."
>
> S. Mintz, *Tasting food, tasting freedom: excursions into eating, power, and the past*, 1997

Research focus

This thesis intends to provide a better understanding of the correlation between gustatory practices and the creation and maintenance of economic, class, gender and ethnic identities, as well as contemporary kinship relations in Northern Ghana. Furthermore, it is set out to investigate the role of individual agency and creativity in the adaptation of ingredients, methods of cooking and modes of eating among professional and non-professional cooks, in the context of continuing globalisation, international exchange of goods and new media influence. Also, the aim is to examine private and professional spaces of sensory pedagogy, such as catering and vocational schools. There, moments of sensory clash, which become a breeding ground for sensory learning, are examined. Moreover, techniques of the body engaged in food preparation are observed, thus offering valuable insight into the construction, transformation and adaptation of sensory modalities, based chiefly on the sense of taste, smell and touch. Finally, this thesis proposes an autoethnographic study of the expansion of sensory modalities, sensory ethnography and difficulties of sensory writing.

The data for this study has been gathered during a twelve-month-long research stay in Northern Ghana: two months in Tamale, the Northern Region and ten months in Wa, the Upper

West Region. I focussed mainly on collaborative practices, such as shopping, cooking and eating together with my research participants. Part of the data was gathered through participant observation in restaurants, chop bars, street stalls, drink spots and other places where food and beverages were sold. Through cohabitation with a host family, collaborative and narrative methods were implemented. Similar methods were applied with a number of other closer collaborators, mainly women. Finally, semi-structured interviews with a randomised research group (in terms of age, gender and ethnicity) were another valuable source of qualitative insights.

The research was designed around eating practices and preferences in the daily lives of the research participants. It was aimed at providing an overview of daily gustatory strategies involving shopping, storage, cooking, commensality, preservation, menu planning, budgeting and others. The practices were contextualised through the personal background of the participants, namely their living situation, presence or absence of family members nearby, rural or urban origin, education, language and ethnic identity, form of employment, gender and marital status. The research group was designed to remain diversified but mostly included educated, English-speaking urban dwellers. Thanks to this, the research did not require the aid of a translator.

The type and character of evidence collected through sensory collaboration with the participants is varied: from pictures, through recorded and written down interviews, to weekly private and institutional menus, to recipes, to extensive field notes. My personal gustatory diary provided an invaluable insight into initial sensory encounters with Ghanaian food. My participants offered not only meals and recipes, but also involved me in a reciprocal activity of teaching and learning. I had a chance to learn how to cook Ghanaian dishes and in return, I taught them how to make pizza, pancakes, European soups, cakes and cookies. In the end, this research provided space for gustatory encounters, clashes, and reconciliations between apparently opposing sensory modalities. I leave it to the reader to assess the accuracy, validity and poetics of the translation.

Research questions/problem statement

The objective of this investigation is to contribute to the existing knowledge about how gender, class, ethnic and economic identities in contemporary West Africa are conjured and performed through daily dietary choices. Furthermore, it aims to unravel whether and how consumer practices in Northern Ghana have been subject to change under the influence of globalising processes. Lastly, by employing sensory ethnographic methods, grounded theory

and a practice-oriented approach, it aims to contribute to the understanding of how sensory ethnography enriches anthropological understanding of contemporary cultural phenomena. The main research questions that guided this study are: (1) *How do the urban inhabitants of Tamale and Wa live, practise and negotiate their multiple identities through everyday dietary choices and gustatory preferences?* (2) *In what contexts do dietary patterns change and what factors underlie such change?* (3) *How does sensory ethnography help our understanding of those phenomena?*

Rationale and inspiration

While the ethnographic approach and rationale utilised in this thesis could be applied anywhere in the world, most likely bringing forth equally interesting results, I decided to focus on Northern Ghana. Food and eating practices are as ubiquitous as human populations. We all have to eat to survive. What, how and with whom, has been an object of avid interest for generations of social researchers. From early anthropologists interested in taboos and sacrifice symbolised by food offerings, to mid-twentieth century researchers investigating gustatory mythologies and deep structures behind cooking, to contemporary scholars examining olfactory geographies, transnational gustatory identities and gender norms in Western kitchens; it all began with a closer look at the seemingly mundane and irrelevant act of filling hungry stomachs. It was discovered that even hunger is experienced, treated, judged and aided differently. Human beings eat because their bodies need fuel; everything else is subject to varying socioeconomic, political, geographic, agricultural, cultural and emotional factors. Indeed, such research could be done anywhere and everywhere, but its results would vary every time.

Before starting this research, I had not been interested in Ghanaian foodways at all, but once the subject focus of the thesis was selected, it became a logical continuation of my previous interests and smaller projects. I have always been fascinated by the power of food to bring memories, to gather people together, to offer consolation and finally, as a channel for artistic expression. In addition, I have always been fascinated with the anthropological perspective of everyday lives, epistemology of the mundane, questioning the obvious and finding obscurities in what seemed perfectly clear. When I was twenty years old, I left Poland for an international exchange, where for the first time I had the chance to experience gustatory displacement: trying to shop among foreign products, learning what and how is eaten and the unifying power of shared pots and plates in a vibrant multiethnic community. Then, as a Polish immigrant in Switzerland, I had the chance to reflect deeper on my gustatory preferences,

clashes of sensory modalities, spending patterns reflecting class belonging (my observations spanning from being surrounded by many "Migros Chind" but no "Aldi Chind"[1], to ordering organic vegetable baskets and buying only Swiss meat, to obtaining insider's knowledge about which shop sells the best Indian food and commensality. Thanks to such improbable sensory encounters, I learned distinct ways of approaching everyday sustenance.

From there, I moved to my master's thesis project, which revolved around food production and women support groups. Staying in Man in western Côte d'Ivoire was another important cross-cultural sensory experience, not only pointing to the gustatory sphere, but also to the sensory perception of space and race. Moving from my immediate interest in food and cooking, to the sensory modes of being in space and time, I arrived at this topic, examining multifaceted, changing dietary patterns and consumer identities in Northern Ghana.

Literature overview

This research was informed by a range of anthropological, phenomenological, and philosophical influences. Contemporary sensory anthropology traces its roots back to the ancient philosophical thought of Plato and Aristotle, who first proposed a division of senses into five and their hierarchy with the primacy of vision. Senses were present in Christian philosophical accounts and the Bible, which condemned them as sinful and recommended casting away the sensory needs of the body for the salvation of the spirit. Senses and sensory knowledge have been restored to favour during the Enlightenment, and vision was established again as a primary sense linked with reason and objectivity. Newly established scientific approaches appropriated vision as their main tool. Social sciences utilised sensory hierarchy models to paint the difference between Western "civilised" and "uncivilised" communities. Hearing and vision were considered as closely related to objective reason, whereas corporeal senses such as touch, smell and taste as animistic, primitive, unrelated to reason. The latter was associated with enslaved and colonised people and reflected their "savage" character, making them closer to animals than men. Sensory anthropology of the mid-twentieth century became more self-reflexive and relativist. The new norm was to see senses as sources of tangible and relevant knowledge about the world. Increasingly, senses started to be seen as culture-dependent and the division between aural and visual communities was made.

[1]Apparently, in Switzerland shopping habits say a lot about social status. "Migros Chind", or "Migros Child" denotes a person who grew up shopping in Migros (as opposed to Coop, another big chain store brand). Aldi is considered to be a low budget supermarket frequented by low-income shoppers, mostly with an immigrant background.

Contemporary sensory approaches have been informed by phenomenological and performative approaches. Pioneering work in this area has been done by David Howes, Anthony Synnott and Constance Classen at Concordia University in Montreal. The new paradigm in sensory anthropology places all senses and sensory information on an equal footing and proposes that sensorium (sensing apparatus) is culturally created. Initial classificatory approach, which focussed again on the hierarchies of the senses and particular sensory models (how we smell/taste/touch) is currently supplanted by a more particularised perspective. Classification of sensory models and modalities is less crucial than their interconnectedness and contextual importance of sensory-based information. Furthermore, new approaches stress the validity of utilising non-visual methods to gather non-visual data in anthropology. Senses become a springboard into complex cultural phenomena that call for new and creative methodological approaches.

Phenomenological, embodied and performative strand in anthropology and philosophy have been important in the conceptualisation of embodied knowledge, its cultural importance and measures of anthropological approach. Works of Husserl, Heidegger, Csordas, Butler and Conquergood inform contemporary sensory approaches that ask ontological and phenomenological questions, such as *how is knowledge created and transmitted*? Corporeal knowledge operating, among other things, with proprioceptive techniques of the body, has come to be seen as a valid source of information. Contemporary sensory anthropology is chiefly concentrated on the issue of sensory orders, multisensoriality and synaesthesia, sensory landscapes and particular modality-oriented cultures. It is conducive towards a particular and intersubjective experience of sensory stimuli and perception of the cultural values and symbols they provide. A sensory approach to food has been particularly fruitful, possibly thanks to its multimodal character, centrality for human survival and role in politics of identities.

Anthropology of food and sensory anthropology are closely connected and have provided solid grounds for this thesis. It was not until the latter part of the twentieth century, that it earned itself a place among "respectable" subjects. Works of Bronisław Malinowski, Edward E. Evan-Pritchard and Radcliffe Brown focussed on food as a vital element of myths, rituals, kinship relations, social and economic exchange or sex. Cooking as a "women's job" was dismissed and treated as not socially significant. Works of Audrey Richards among the Bemba set a new standard for anthropology focussed on nutrition and food as a cultural product. Claude Levy-Strauss's culinary triangle and binary oppositions of cooked and raw laid the groundwork for structuralist analysis of food-related practices. Two works, that of Jack Goody:

"Cooking, Cuisine and Class. A Study in Comparative Sociology" (Goody 1982) and of Sidney Mintz: "Sweetness and Power. The Place of Sugar in Modern History" (Mintz 1985) likely elevated cultural studies of food to its contemporary position. Currently, food is often examined from the perspective of power, displacement, negotiation of gender identity and class. Many contemporary works are also focussed on sophisticated modes of eating, culinary trends, gastrotourism and creation of national cuisines, and this thesis is a reflection of those trends. Among others, works of Sutton and Seremetakis, Law, Counihan, Williams-Forson, van Esterik and Wise have been crucial for the conceptualisation of the role of food in establishing gender, economic, racial and kinship relations with Ghanaian food.

Northern Ghana has been quite thoroughly examined by an array of foreign and Ghanaian researchers. The intricacies of ethnicity and political organisation in the making is presented well in works of Carola Lentz, Paul Nugent, Ivor Wilks, Sonia and Meyer Fortes, and Jack and Esther Goody. These authors examine historical perspectives on the pre-colonial acephalous political organisation of the northern settlements, and the invention of chieftaincy. In addition, Hawkins, Boahen, Gocking, Konadu and Oppong provide a general overview on history, politics, economy and sociocultural change in Ghana.

Feminist approaches in anthropology and ethnography, especially those pertaining to the autoethnographic approach and positionality were vital for outlining my positioning, influence, efficacy and possibilities of ethnographic research in Northern Ghana. Works of Reed-Danahay, Pollard, Ellis and Ettorre were used to contextualise the autoethnographic chapter of this thesis.

Methodological and theoretical approach

This research adopted a qualitative methodology based chiefly on collaborative practice/participation, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Methodology involved sensory ethnography approach. In the case of this project, this called for rethinking the elements of the "traditional" ethnographic approach. Methods, much like theories, reflect current trends and the state of interpretational consensus, therefore, searching for new "ways of doing things" in the field requires reflection and deconstruction. When it comes to thinking about senses as methodological tools for the sensory anthropologist, as well as the object of exploration, Howes and Classen ask: "If one's field research involves participant observation, then the question to be addressed is this: What senses are emphasized or repressed and by *what means to which end*s?" (Howes 1991, 259). Although they pay attention to the use (or lack thereof) of the senses by research participants (which senses are dominant, which are repressed,

which are given special cultural significance, which are not), the approach represented by Howes and Classen lacks what Pink calls "experiential anthropology" and focuses mainly on collecting visual data through participant observation. In her critique of their work, Pink emphasises that in treating the visual data as "the most important mode of understanding" Howes and Classen ignore a body of data coming from the "sensory learning" and emplacement of anthropological bodies (Pink 2009, 64; Ingold 2011).

In this research I have used non-visual modes of collaboration that were based on working, sitting, eating, cooking and shopping together. Bodily practices and techniques were crucial for my broad understanding of North Ghanaian, and in particular household, market and workplace sensorealities (Pink 2009; 2012) By focussing on the multisensory corporeality of everyday chores, I have gained an insight into the "lifeworlds" (Schütz) of my research participants. In other words, I had an insight into how reality is lived and experienced through the interaction of the environment and its elements: the land/sound/smell/tastescapes, the working tools, means of transport, the kinaesthetic experience of walking, jumping gutters, clambering in and out of tuktuks and so forth (Ingold 2000). Okely calls this "knowledge beyond language," which is "embodied through sight, taste, sound, touch and smell" and "bodily movement, its vigour, stillness or unsteadiness" (Okely 1997, 45; Pink 2009, 64). Similarly, for Stoller, ethnographers "absorb [another's] world" (Stoller 1997, 23). Thus, the sensory relation is reciprocal as ethnographers immerse themselves in others' sensory worlds and emplace themselves in those worlds through autoethnographic self-reflection (Pink 2009).

The translation of those lived experiences presented a challenge. As Okely remarks, such knowledge transgresses language by nature. The question of how I could translate it from experience to text, while preserving emplaced embodied knowledge, which I so assiduously collected, remains an issue (Okely 2007; Classen 1997). At first, I had been quite sure that using rich, descriptive language borrowed from literary works would suffice. Soon, however, I found myself dumbfounded by TZ[2] with okro soup and had no idea how to describe the multisensory experience of eating it. Writing, as it turns out, needs to use reference points known to the writer and the reader – and I had none. It needs to be pointed out that I disregarded how useful and important audiovisual materials can be. I collected hundreds of pictures and videos, but instead of recording the gestures, the movements and sensory reactions, I was concentrated on "dry documenting". What should have been a video, is a picture. Where a picture would not suffice,

[2] TZ or *tuo zaafi* is a maize porridge typically eaten in the northern regions of Ghana. A more detailed description of the dish follows.

there is a short, shaky video. I lacked the fundamental experience and knowledge of how to collect and analyse such materials, and while the camera was one tool, it was not the primary tool I was reaching for. That was a pen and paper. My reasoning was that my field notes would be the ultimate form this research knowledge would take. I followed what Paul Stoller calls "tasteful ethnography" and tried to involve as many nuggets of embodied experience as possible. In the end, the data collected is somehow accurate; I have gone to the limits of my vocabulary in both languages I speak fluently in and discovered the boundaries of the sensorial experiences that can and cannot be described verbally (at least by me).

A constructivist framework lends itself to generating new ways of conducting sensory ethnography (Bryant and Charmaz 2007; Walker and Myrick 2006; Glaser 2002). To some extent, it was also used for this research. Constructivist theory

> "emphasizes the studied phenomenon rather than the methods of studying it […] That means giving close attention to empirical realities [...] and locating oneself in these realities [...]. What observers see and hear depends upon […] the research context, their relationships with research participants, concrete field experiences, and modes of generating and recording empirical materials:" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 509).

As such, this method allows for flexibility in the methods of collecting material and in the planning of the research itself. It largely depends on the serendipitous character of the field research experience: the events and phenomena lived and observed that cannot be planned or anticipated. Mixed elements of grounded theory and phenomenological approach served a similar purpose. Attention to bodily experience and situating oneself in the lifeworlds of the research participants was central for the organisation of the research, much like the "following the thing" approach[3]. Whenever a new key element appeared, a conclusion was made, or a novel insight was provided, the plan was rearranged to investigate that particular element deeper. Sometimes those diversions led to a dead end but at other times they resulted in a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, or a connection to another element was discovered and a bigger picture appeared.

Autoethnography and feminist perspectives on anthropological methods were helpful for determining my positionality as a researcher in the field, as well as keeping track of and situating my personal experience against the experiences of others. Feminist ethnography,

[3] "Following the thing" approach is generally a methodology in research at the intersection of human and economic geographies, material culture, globalisation and multi-sited ethnography. For instance, Ian Cook follows items from grocery stores in an unconventional form of outlining global commodity networks. See also: Hulme (2017).

according to Craven and Davis, offers a critical approach to everyday life experiences, as they are determined by racial, gender and economic factors. Third Wave feminism advocates for gender justice, anticolonialism, antiracism, reproductive justice and anti-violence initiatives. It also seeks ways in which feminist thought can transcend ethnic, gender or racial divisions (Davis and Craven 2016). As a white woman from Central Europe working in a Northern Ghanaian, and, broadly speaking, West African community, interested in the corporeality of my participants, I was challenged to transcend more than one category: sensorial, racial and gender. An intersectional approach to my positionality was necessary to contextualise how my presence was received, depending on the space, place, cultural specificity of the situation and actors involved, and how I reacted to them, considering my cultural background. Through such an approach I realised the limitations to my agency, what it affords me and how my presence influences the data I am collecting. A feminist approach helped me to conceptualise what research group I would be engaging (i.e. where I would be the most effective as a researcher) and reflect on my role not only as an observer but also as a participant, a friend, a tenant and a (white) woman (Chang 2008; Chang, Ngunjiri, and Hernandez 2013; Ettorre 2016).

Autoethnography, which I focus on in Chapter 8 of this thesis, evaluates in detail how my previous experiences in the field affected my interactions with participants and situations during my stay in Ghana. In certain social science circles autoethnography remains somewhat frowned upon for being too focussed on the researcher and their feelings, emotions and observations; after all, ethnography should be about the others, not us. Advocates of the method claim that the presence of the ethnographer cannot be erased from the data in any way. Why, then, pretend we are invisible? Rather than pursuing total objectification and dissociation from the data, we should strive to highlight how our personality, modes of perception and thinking processes infiltrate it and affect its interpretation. Especially in the case of sensory ethnography, conscious, self-reflexive embodied fieldwork should remain at the centre of methodological conceptualisation and realisation. It seems plausible to say that sensory ethnographers are their own guinea pigs, experimenting with their own cognitive processes of learning and gaining access to the lifeworlds of the others.

Semi-structured interviews were the last qualitative method used in this research and their introduction into my fieldwork came relatively late. I resorted to them once I had gained enough contextual (emplaced, embodied, experiential) knowledge, which enabled me to understand and relate to the people's experience of everyday life.

Ethical considerations were made while working on the data. No personal names are revealed and if so, have been changed. All interviews have been conducted after gaining permission from the participant after assuring them they remain anonymous. The only data ascribed to the participants are approximate age, gender, approximated place of origin (where necessary) and form of employment. Observations and participation in schools and health institutions were approved by the administration. I did not conduct interviews with people who declared bad health. The conditions for the interviews were approved by them and concluded as soon as they wished.

Finally, it is necessary to highlight that my last fieldtrip was cut short by the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The influence of the pandemic on food security, dietary patterns and social support networks, which I had the opportunity to observe and be a part of, did not make the final version of this thesis for two reasons. First, it would not have been ethically sound to continue research in the same manner, that is chiefly through participation, once the pandemic started. The threat posed by a then unknown virus to the health, lives and livelihoods of my research partners, many of whom remained economically vulnerable, prevented me from seeing them and engaging with them. Secondly, the short amount of time I spent in the field during the pandemic did not allow me to restructure the research plan and conduct any coherent investigations. The data used in this thesis has been collected almost exclusively until March 2020 (with occasional interviews conducted in accordance with governmental restrictions at the beginning of April 2020).

Boundaries, proposed site and justification

This project began in February 2017 and involved three field trips, which took place consecutively in 2018, 2019 and 2020, amounting to twelve months in total spent in the field. I left for Ghana for the first time in May 2018, responding to an invitation from the University for Developmental Studies (UDS) in Tamale. It was there, where after consulting my thesis supervisor, I decided to spend the first two months of my field research. Tamale counts among one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa (Abankwa et al. 2009), an important transport hub and a lively centre of business, politics, non-governmental projects and tourism. The presence of an airport, close proximity to Mole National Park and good road connections to Bolgatanga, Wa, Yendi, Techiman and Kumasi, as well to the neighbouring Burkina Faso, make it an obvious hot spot on the map of Northern Ghana. Furthermore, Tamale is a centre of a big

expat community as the city hosts a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) [4], Peace Corps centre, foreign medical staff at the Teaching Hospital and many business investors from abroad. On top of this, Tamale is the only predominantly Muslim city in Ghana with more than 90% of the population declaring this faith[5].

After two months in Tamale I moved to Wa, the capital of the Upper West Region, and a location of another UDS campus. While Tamale is an attractive economic and tourist hub and a stopover for the busy transport route of Accra-Bolgatanga-Paga-Burkina Faso, Wa is by every means located "off the beaten path". While the whole northern sector is struggling with unemployment, climate change affecting agriculture, urban migration and meagre educational possibilities, Wa is the smallest local capital of one of the most destitute regions in the entire country. The city is rather small with around 200,000 regular inhabitants. As elsewhere, much of the local business is galvanised by migration labour, as many people from the Upper West travel down south for seasonal work in agriculture, teaching, trade or gastronomy (Asare 2012; Awumbila and Ardayfio-Schandorf 2008; Van der Geest 2010; 2011). Research shows that a large number of hawkers and petty traders working in Accra are originally from the Upper West. They travel south to live with family members and collect the means to further their education back home. Wa is less popular with NGOs than Tamale and hosts almost no expats; those present are usually integrated well into the local community. Wa is predominantly Catholic, the second religious group being Muslim, and the religious division largely splits along the ethnic lines: (original) Wala inhabitants of the inner city have been practising Islam since the fourteenth century, while Dagabas and Sissalas[6] were converted to Catholicism in the early twentieth century (Wilks 2002; Der 1974)

Northern Ghana and specifically the Upper West, was chosen as a field site for a few reasons. First, Ghana remains one of the few countries in West Africa where English is the official language. As I do not speak French and did not want to work with the help of a translator, I decided to choose an English-speaking country. Secondly, seminal research on

[4] As of 2004, there were around 60 NGO registered (Abankwa et al. 2009). This number is likely higher.

[5] Population & Housing Census. Summary Report of Final Results. Ghana Statistical Service 2012.

[6] Ethnic names in northern Ghana are still a matter of political dispute. According to Lentz: "Ethnic names are often a matter of political controversy, and 'Dagara' is no exception. Colonial administrators introduced the terms 'Dagarti' and 'Lobi', which many Ghanaians continue to use. Most of those so labelled reject these names as pejorative, but there is much discussion on what to use instead. Some believe that the people living around Wa, Nadawli and Jirapa form a distinct group, the Dagaba (the British 'Dagarti '), who speak 'Dagaare', and that the term 'Dagara' (or 'Lobr') should be reserved for the population of Lawra, Nandom and south-western Burkina Faso (the British 'Lobi'). Others hold that 'Dagara' is the only correct unitary term for both the language and the ethnic group" (Lentz 1994, 457). In this thesis I am consistently using the name Dagaba.

food, cooking, commensality, food security, race and ethnicity has been completed in Northern Ghana, offering a baseline and opening possibilities for comparison.[7] Thirdly, the Upper West Region belongs to one of the most underprivileged and destitute areas of the country. Under colonial rule the region belonged to the so-called "Northern Territories", which served mainly as a source of cheap labour. Migrants from the North worked chiefly in timber and mining industries located in today's Brong, Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern and Central regions. Decades-long exploitation and virtually no investment in education, infrastructure or agriculture affected the region's dependency on the southern sectors. Until today, the region relies heavily on agricultural supplies from the South as well as migrant labour.

While the southern sectors had been under European influence for centuries (first, mercantile and later, colonial) and are quite religiously and linguistically homogenous, the North remains ethnically and religiously heterogeneous. I was curious as to what role food plays in such a diverse environment. At the same time, the natural resources of the North remain scant and the situation is rapidly deteriorating due to climate change. A precarious labour market, poor farming conditions, gender and religious traditions are strong determinants for shaping northern foodways. The rise of a Ghanaian middle class is a fact, but the literature talks mostly about young professionals in large metropolises such as Kumasi and Accra and overlooks more remote regions on the periphery such as those studied. I was interested in how middle-class consumer behaviours related to food consumption are practised in areas where means and supplies are scarce and hardly available. Finally, it was required that this thesis had a West African focus, due to the regional interests of the supervisor.

Overview of the thesis

This thesis is organised into 8 chapters: an introduction, the methodological approach, five analytical chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 provides an overview of this thesis's theoretical, methodological and conceptual framework. Chapter 2 is focussed on the methodological approach applied in the study. The chapter starts with a brief overview of the methodological challenges and solutions proposed by other works. Detailed organisation of the fieldwork, characterisation of the field, research groups, locations and methods is presented. The methods are thoroughly described and justified, presenting their efficacy in this study. Further on, lessons learned and suggestions for future research are proposed. The chapter also

[7] Goody (1982; 1995), Fortes (1936), Lentz (2000; 2007), Ham (2017; 2020) and others have contributed to a significant body of anthropological data pertaining to the issues of food in the northern regions of the country.

provides an overview of the research process from the first to the last phase, as well as concrete foci. Further, it addresses issues of positionality and ethics in the field.

Chapter 3 tackles the topic of food as a marker of social class. The chapter begins with a characterisation of the most popular dishes in Northern Ghana and noting the personal experience of being a "sensory stranger" at the beginning of the trip. It proposes opening remarks about the connection between food and social class, as well as offers an initial critique of the notion. Then it follows on to describing in details everyday eating habits of a "middle-class" northern family on the example of my host family, as well as the eating habits of young professionals in the city of Wa. In the latter part, the chapter proposes alternative to social class theoretical frameworks such as milieu and lifestyles. It concludes situating localised social practice of eating in Wa in the wider context of globalised diets by invoking several crucial works on food chains, power and industrialisation of food production.

Chapter 4 discusses the broad topic of "othering" as seen through the example of public consumer practices. It focusses first on the example of *Chuck's Bar* in Tamale and characterises it as a "white spot", of which the organisation and character result in a strange multicultural and convivial space, where certain behaviours acquire a performative character. Such spaces afford practices that are both dividing and unifying. The chapter also discusses how TZ, the northern staple food, is contemporarily contested and its status remodelled. It seems that TZ unifies and divides Northerners in equal measures, and it is both an actor and a subject of economic power and competition between the North and the South. The chapter also touches upon gender-specific approaches to modern and traditional food, and gustatory freedom.

Chapter 5 tackles the topic of catering and home economic courses in vocational schools in Wa, the Upper West Region. Here, I present data collected at demonstrations, practicals and practical examinations concluding three-year courses in catering. The historical context of home economics in Northern Ghana is presented and thick description of the pedagogical methods used during class is provided. The data is contextualised in reference to culturally produced sensory modalities, in this case, the multimodal experiences of taste. Links between Western and local sensory modalities are made and the school classrooms are characterised as productive spaces creating sensory profiles of Western consumers, and in a wider sense, of global capitalist consumers. Beyond this, the classroom is interpreted as a space of sensory clash and translation, where non-traditional sensory modalities are being summoned and sensory clashes take place.

Chapter 6 discusses female agency in both gustatory traditionalism and modernity, taking place through the everyday dietary choices in North Ghanaian homes. It further tackles the issue of customarily assigned gender roles and challenges existing links between femininity and tradition. In contrast, it proposes a view of women as creative agents of change, whose presence in the kitchen is not a sign of oppression but of power, agency and creativity. They work both towards preserving traditional values and identities, embedded in local foodways and embrace changes brought on by new lifestyles. As keepers of tradition, they are the link between the past and the future of local and modern Ghanaian food. Typical gender-specific food-related everyday behaviours are presented and their affective and emotional load characterised.

Chapter 7 tackles the subject of autoethnography. First, it presents relevant literature and leading works that substantiate the choice of that approach. Then it presents three main cases where autoethnographic methods have been used. It presents the concept of a white woman I encountered and how it affected the methodology and the character of data collected. "A white woman" is characterised through her sensorial qualities. Then, my struggle with becoming acquainted with local food becomes the canvas for an act of sensory translation. In that section, the effect of gustatory trauma on scientific performance and personal wellbeing is discussed.

Chapter 8 presents final conclusions and opens a space to discuss further possibilities for research.

Chapter 2

Methodology and research design

> "The sensuous scholar's agency, however, is a flexible one, in which the sensible and intelligible, denotative and evocative are linked. […] It is also an agency in which scholars admit their errors of judgment and interpretation and struggle to improve their analytic and expository skills - all the better to cope with the burgeoning sociocultural complexities of globalization. […] And so sensuous scholarship is ultimately a mixing of head and heart. It is an opening of one's being to the world – a welcoming".
>
> Paul Stoller *Sensuous Scholarship*, 1997

> "To research sensory perception and reception requires methods that are capable of grasping the most profound types of knowledge [which] is not spoken of at all and thus inaccessible to ethnographic observation or interview."
>
> Sarah Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography,* 2009

This research is focused on the many facets involved in the creation and presentation of self and the other through everyday consumer practices, in particular food preferences, observed among urban inhabitants of Northern Ghana. It concentrates on the formation and reconstitution of multiple identities: social group, class, gender, ethnic and regional, through the consumption of certain foods. It also tackles the perpetuation of gustatory portrayal of self and the "sensory other" defined along racial and cultural lines. Finally, it invokes autoethnographic approaches to analyze the ethnographer's methods of gathering data as a sensory being, whose body has been used to collect ethnographic data.

Once approaching the topic of sensory research on food, one must ask, whether traditional, positivistic ethnographic methods, such as interviews, focus groups and participant observation, will be of much use. Why? Sensory ethnography has famously been plagued with methodological challenges, only partially resolved. Much is left to be done, and, as Pink suggests, upon entering this field, anthropologists must remain inasmuch as cautious as they

should become creative. Available literature suggests that key problems jeopardising the reliability of anthropological approaches to the sensory ethnography of food (where sensoriality and sensescape are understood as a methodological approach, a set of sense-based and sense-oriented tools, and not as an object of study), are 1) inherently tacit, idiosyncratic and intersubjective nature of consumption (including the cultural, emotional and social predeterminants of consumer choices and the act itself), 2) the accessibility of the sensory experience to those outside of the localised sensorial milieu, 3) development of specific bodily awareness (Förster 2022) as an ethnographic tool to access the non-predicative knowledge and 4) the inevitable conundrum of translating the visceral, bodily knowledge into the ethnographic narrative.

This project called for a special reflection on ethnographic research methods to access the gustatory realities and the tacit experience of eating among research participants and overcome the disjuncture of sensory orders. To be sure, the final methodological approach for this research developed iteratively, following the principles of constructivist grounded theory (Bryant and Charmaz 2007; Charmaz 2000; Mills, Bonner, and Francis 2006; Glaser 2002). First and foremost, it was guided by many anthropological perspectives on phenomenology and embodiment: classical works of Alfred Schütz, Aron Gurwisch, Marcel Mauss, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Pierre Bourdieu, as well as more contemporary pieces by T. Csordas, K. and B. DeWalt, R. Desjarlais and J. Throop, T. Ingold, and M. Jackson. Works of T. Förster and R. Kesselring, both members of the Institute of Social Anthropology, contributed significantly to the setting of this research's premises, as well as the analysis of the results.

Furthermore, the writings of Sarah Pink and Paul Stoller informed a creative and multimodal approach to conducting and writing this ethnography (Pink 2009; 2010; Stoller and Olkes 1986; Stoller 1997; 2004). This project was also informed by the notions in bodily ways of knowing and bodily ethnography. Autoethnographic approaches presented by T. E. Adams, S. Holman Jones and C. Ellis (2015), Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy (2008); D.-A. Davis and Craven (2016) as well as embodiment, performativity and gender approaches of Sarah Ahmed (2007), Judith Butler (1988) and Judith Okely (2007), which emphasised the mutual influence between researcher and their environment.

Constructivist grounded theory

Both grounded and constructivist theories embrace an inductive type of reasoning, focussing on the collection of data and its subsequent analysis. According to Charmaz, "grounded theory methods are a set of flexible analytic guidelines that enable researchers to

focus their data collection and to build inductive middle-range theories through successive levels of data analysis and conceptual development" (Charmaz 2000, 507). Collecting data in accordance with grounded theory is processual and involves intermittent analysis. The analysis informs further data collection with an adjusted focus and a deeper understanding of the participants' lifeworlds and how they are created. Charmaz explains further:

> "Grounded theory entails developing increasingly abstract ideas about research participants' meanings, actions, and worlds and seeking specific data to fill out, refine, and check the emerging conceptual categories. Our work results in an analytic interpretation of participants' worlds and of the processes constituting how these worlds are constructed" (Charmaz 2000, 508).

Grounded theory focuses on subjective and collective experiences, social structures and how they function in society. While keeping an analytical perspective, grounded theory helps to maintain close links between theoretical data and the empirical world from where it is taken.

Constructivist approaches, like the one presented by Cresswell and Creswell, indicate that "Individuals develop subjective [and varied] meanings of their experiences–meanings directed toward certain objects or things" (Creswell and Cresswell 2017, 8). Researchers who do not share the same views and perceptive models as their participants create data-oriented inductive theories instead of theoretical approaches. Constructivist approaches allow a grounding on the empirical perspective of participants and researchers and treat them as a springboard for more theoretical analyses of general activities.

Lifeworlds

The conceptual framework of a "Lebenswelt" or a „lifeworld" created by Alfred Schütz, is central to this thesis. Based on the phenomenological tradition established by Edmund Husserl, lifeworld theory explores the subjective experiences of individuals in their everyday lives. According to Schutz, our lifeworlds are largely defined by that what is "taken for granted": "the unquestioned ground of everything given in my experience, and the unquestionable frame in which all the problems I have to deal with are located"" (II, 131) (Fairtlough, 1991, 550). Central to Schütz 's theory is an emphasis on individual perception and consciousness, where each person's lifeworld is shaped by their unique experiences and interpretations. He explores intersubjectivity, looking at how people share and understand each other's experiences through social interactions. Schutz introduces the concept of typification, whereby individuals categorise and simplify their experiences in order to navigate the social

world, which helps to understand and predict behaviour. The lifeworld is also temporally structured, as past experiences influence present perceptions and future expectations. In addition, Schütz argues that the lifeworld is socially constructed through ongoing interactions and shared meanings that are continually shaped by culture, language and social institutions (Schütz and Luckmann 1973).

Other scholars have subsequently added their interpretation to the understanding of the lifeworld concept. Talcott Parsons, perceive the concept of lifeworlds as a means for social cohesion that "ensure that interpersonal relations are ordered in a way which makes society function effectively" (Fairtlough, 1991, 550). In that sense, he veer away from Schutz individualistic position on the lifeworld (it's what I see and I experience that makes up my cognitive horizon), to shared lifeworlds, providing a resource for acceptable behaviours. Habermas uses Schutz's work extensively in his „Theory of Communicative Action", where he points out the role of communication in carrying out tasks necessary for survival within the limits of acceptable behaviours. For Habermas, lifeworlds, besides being are spatiotemporally situated, are made up of culture and language, and serve as framework of for a group to communicate within it.

Lifestyle is important for this thesis for several reasons. First, it proposes and alternative to the weary and teary theory of social class which I am addressing Chapter 3 of this thesis. Second, it provides a firm building block for bodily-oriented ethnographic approach. Experience of "Lebenswelt" covers much more than just the communicated, narrative sphere of life, but also tacit, non-predicated knowledge built on corporeal experience. Phenomenology of experience, intersubjectivity, non-visual knowledge and group creation and understanding of social and cultural meanings, come together in the notion of lifeworlds, laying ground for understanding tastescapes as social phenomenon.

Bodily ethnography

According to Okely, "making sense of fieldwork is also a bodily process" (Okely 2007a, 77). While Geertz rejects the idea that knowledge can be produced as a result of shared experience, Judith Okely claims, that we in fact, can access other people's lifeworlds vicariously – through compiling shared experience fed by empathy, self-reflection and cautious positioning. As Kesselring concludes:

> "As a way of accessing the everyday experience of others, she [Okely] suggests to work through what she calls vicariousness: 'The anthropologist cannot replicate others' experience, but she can use her own [experience]

> for a vicarious understanding to surmise others' experience' (Okely 1994: 47). As such, the 'having been there' assumes a quite different meaning from anthropologists' typical assertions of authority as regards their interpre- tation of happenings in a particular locality" (Kesselring 2015, 17).

Accounts she mentions are not only focussed on sensory experience but also on learning how to perform manual tasks, such as walking, sitting, wearing clothes, looking, and talking, which are inextricable elements of learning how to live the participant's world. Without this knowledge, the researcher risks remaining a stranger, an outsider, and they would never come close to understanding cultural notions rooted in embodied experience. Therefore, contemporary approaches in anthropology lean towards the statement that the experience of the fieldworker is "a research process and source of knowledge" in its own right. Such a process should not take place subconsciously but rather under close self-reflection. According to Okely, "Knowing others through the instrument of the field worker's own body involves deconstructing the body as a cultural, biographical construction through a lived and interactive encounter with others' cultural construction and bodily experience" (Okely 2007, 77).

As Förster writes, a lot has been done when it comes to the anthropology of the body, where the body, whether that of the ethnographer or the research participant, is the object of anthropological analysis. Much less attention has been paid, as he claims, to the body as the subject and the tool of ethnographic research, even though "The body is the way in which humans enter in a relationship with their social lifeworld." (Förster, 2022, 2). Kesselring expresses a similar sentiment (2018) asking, how knowledge about the life worlds of the research participants is being generated in the field and what role the researcher's own body plays in it. Generating knowledge through the body seems to be imbued deep into the foundations of ethnographic work – so deep, in fact, that rarely does anyone reflect on the process itself. Those who do, as Kesselring writes, "often explore it as a consequence of their interest in the body and its role in relating one's being to the world and participating in the formation of the social" (2018, 4).

Habituation plays an enormously important role in generating what scholars call "pre-predicative" (after Husserl's phenomenology) or "non-predicated" (suggested by Kesselring, 2018) knowledge. Upon entering a new cultural field, the researcher sees and perceives the phenomena in an unstructured and hazy way. As Förster writes (2001), it is a necessary step in the process of familiarization with the social world that, over time, allows us to notice deeper mechanisms and structures. Förster proposes a methodological approach to obtaining non-

predicated knowledge by employing “seeing” in place of “observing” as a tool for gathering ethnographic data. Forster understands observation as a cognitive activity, while seeing is a sensory, unstructured activity that avoids ‘looking for’ cognition as predefined by our own categories of knowledge underlying means of non-narrated knowledge (Förster 2001).

When it comes to practicing bodily ethnography, it might be useful to add that such transition also takes place on the sensory plain of the ethnographer’s toolkit: from practising and depending on visual knowledge to corporeal, bodily knowledge. Here we come back to the „non-predicated” embodied knowledge: one of bodily ethnography's key strengths is providing a way into the unspoken elements of everyday life that do not operate on the narrative level. Much of the lifeworld is “taken for granted” – precisely those unspoken areas where we depend on non-visual perception. Bodily ethnography informed by autoethnographic reflection on the personal experience of the researcher, and intersubjectivity of said experience, can lead to moulding the non-predicated into the predicated. Such transition was core in the practice of autoethnography I present in Chapter 7.

Participation gives access to the unspoken experience of social facts before the researcher becomes cognizant of their occurrence, much less reflexive of their significance. In this sense, bodily ethnography gives privileged access to the tacit rules of the social world unencumbered by the language barriers and the efforts of translation. Forster calls those practices “ephemeral”, pointing to their subtle, fleeting and seemingly “meaningless” character. He also underlines the intersubjective and secretive character of these ephemeral social practices that occur in the public but are meant for the private. In a vignette taken from his fieldwork in a Senufo village in Cote d’Ivoire, Forster describes the emergence of certain understanding between him and a young woman, born and maintained through what could be called, specifics modes of being. They do not exchange many words. Their connection and understanding was executed through bodily presence and movements: infinitesmal gestures, head movements, pointing of tools, or simply sitting together. Their unspoken and unevident connection led Forster to ponder, how many such ephemeral practices were woven into the fabric of semi-public life in a Senufo village. He also started wondering what meanings (hidden transcripts) were they imbued with and how they were performed.

According to Forster, he became aware of those “ephemeral social practices at the borderline of what could have happened accidentally and what could be an intentional act.” (Förster, 2022, p. 6) through what he calls “moments of dislocation”. In his view, moments of dislocations are moments of “sensory ruptures in the duree of everyday experience” (Förster,

2022, p. 10). I have also experienced several moments of dislocation: moments in which the "taken for granted" elements revealed their deeper meaning and social structures were uncovered. One particular moment worth recalling occurred suddenly during a short trip to Tongo Hills. In March 2020, during my last fieldwork, I went on a week-long trip to Bolgatanga, the northernmost city of Ghana, to visit the famous Tongnaab Yaane shrine in the village of Tengzug. While there, I kept leading my usual conversations about food with everyone I met: "What do you usually eat for dinner? Who cooks? What is your favourite food?". A man in his thirties who guided us around the village answered, that they eat banku, rice, the usual. "What about TZ?", I asked. "Oh yes, we eat food… that is TZ, as well", he answered. At the time, I had been researching local tastescapes for over a year and knew the importance of TZ. But that small passage, seemingly tainted with a language lapsus, was my moment of dislocation. The cultural importance of TZ, its ambiguous role as poverty food and beloved "simple meal" in Spittler's understanding (1999), changes local diets have undergone over the previous 30 years – all came together providing new clarity to my data.

Premises and challenges of sensory ethnography

Sensory ethnography as a tool offers a flexible approach to planning and devising the methodological aspect of research. Sarah Pink concludes that no strict rules guiding methods of sensory research have been devised, nor are they necessary (Pink 2009). It can be considered both an advantage and a drawback. The former is clear with regards to allowing for much appreciated flexibility in the field, especially combined a with constructivist approach. Furthermore, grounded theory input prompts reoccurring revisions of data. Such frequent examinations allow resolution of problematic matters as they arise, implementing amendments to the methods, in case they do not bring expected results. One does not need to adhere to inefficient or poorly fitting methods. On the other hand, methodological freedom can be overwhelming. Classical anthropological training provides experience in two or three basic qualitative methods: interviews and participant observation, which other branches of social sciences often do not consider accurate and scientific. Applying multiple (often interdisciplinary) methods that eschew the qualitative pantheon may result in data being framed as anecdotic, incomparable and situational. Creativity in methodological approach hence requires strong and accurate arguments.

It is commonly known that one cannot fully predict how an ethnography will develop in the field. Even the best efforts to conceptualise a methodological approach may be in vain, once some time is spent doing empirical work. This research was founded on an overall

methodological concept that assumed some level of collaborative practice, chiefly in relation to cooking and eating (as food and taste are its main objectives). As the research evolved, certain practices, spaces and phenomena came into focus. Methods evolved in parallel after considering which approach would prove the most fruitful.

Phenomenology of taste

The notion of phenomenology of taste is grounded in several key premises. Central to it is the the concept of embodiment, whereby the experience of taste is understood as an inherently bodily sensation. The embodied character of taste assumes that our taste is responsible for our interaction with the outside world, which is both physical and social. Thus, food items are interacted with not only through their physical properties (texture, smell, the five tastes) but also through their socially established context. The latter is related to another phenomenological quality of taste: subjectivity and perception. It assumes that each person experiences the food through the perspective of their previous gustatory encounters. Tasting a particular dish, the person is thrown onto a sensorial memory lane, invoking experiences with similar dishes. Sensory experiences are thus historically established. Certainly, taste experiences are neither static nor fixed, but rather fluid and responsive to the spatiotemporal changes. Thus, food can be perceived and experienced differently depending on the time, location, or emotional state in which it is consumed – as a product of lived (and re-lived) experiences (Korsmeyer 1999, Sutton 2001, 2009, 2011).

The proposed stance suggests that taste experiences are intersubjective, in as much as sensory perception as a social construct can be intersubjective. Here, it is important to differentiate between the approach represented by the anthropology of taste and the phenomenology of sensory experience. Distant at first, these two strands are, in fact, interested in the same issue: how we build knowledge based on sensory perception of the world. The first, with David Howes at the forefront, is chiefly interested in what Rodaway calls "cognitive models of perception" (1994: 17-19). In light of the argument brought up above by Förster, cognitive perception is precisely what we're trying to veer away from, and we're rather interested in the non-predicated knowledge contained in the pre-cognitive activity of our sensorium. In this case, intersubjectivity is not formed through intellectual engagement with outside stimuli but through embodied interaction with the outside world. Intersubjectivity doesn't occur spontaneously but through commonly lived experiences, that created common patterns of perception.

Situating the researcher

To conform to the requirements of visibility and autoethnographic approach, I have chosen to retain the first-person narrative approach. I came to Ghana for the first time in May 2018 as a PhD student, with very little relevant field experience. I originally come from a small town in southwestern Poland and at the age of twenty-three, I moved to Switzerland to continue higher education. My research in Ghana took place in my mid to late twenties. Without a doubt, my race and gender heavily influenced my fieldwork experience and how I was received. Although in both Tamale and Wa the sight of a white person is nothing new, frequent cries of *seleminga* and *nansaara pogo*, that is "white woman", heard on the streets, in churches, prayer grounds, shops, restaurants and other public places, made me feel exposed. Although the cries were not mocking, angry or aggressive and did not entail inverted racism, the colour of my skin did trigger certain encounters. Such enhanced visibility exposed my evident reduced confidence as an individual and as a professional.

Working in the kitchen, I quickly learned that as a white woman, I was perceived as weak, fragile and delicate – as if my body didn't know the reality of manual labour. Upon first encounter, I was seen as lacking resilience, dexterity, and stamina, to walk far in the sun or carry heavy things[8]. In reverse, it created the image of African womanhood as one of strength, resilience, defiance of discomforts and resistance to the elements. It became apparent to me on many occasions, particularly at the hospital kitchen, where I was once asked to wash dishes. One of the employees sat me down at the big basin where the dishes were being done and explained what I should be doing step by step. It made me realise several points. One is the assumption that chores are performed differently across the world. Second, the assumption that learning comes from practice, not observation (I had been accompanying women washing the dishes for the previous three weeks). On another note, as a woman in Northern Ghana, I was often exposed to certain types of behaviour coming from men. Many, even in professional situations, perceived me not as a student, a professional or an academic, but primarily as a woman. In many instances, I was not treated as seriously as male students and researchers, for instance, being asked during a concluding talk at the end of a collaboration whether I had found a Ghanaian boyfriend. I received countless marriage proposals, many young men approached her asking for her number or trying to arrange a date with her. I was othered twice: as a woman and as a white woman.

[8]This experience will be explored in more depth in Chapter 8 of this thesis.

In another instance, I othered myself by choice. By choosing to wear a covering, loose fitting and rather run-down clothing, I hoped to make my tall, white body somehow less visible and definitely less desirable. Such a shabby style also dominated among white tourists and volunteers; it was somehow in bad taste to be overly well-groomed. However, the effect was exactly the opposite of indifference. I othered myself from women, precisely those I sought the company of. Almost all women engaged in this project were incredibly well-groomed. They paid attention to their clothing, shoes, hairstyle, jewellery and make-up, and the symbolism of well-kept looks soon became apparent. I still looked very female, very tall and very blonde, and very unkempt at that. "Clothes make a man" said Mark Twain and I soon ordered a few dresses, nice shoes and started wearing jewellery. Paradoxically, looking smart helped me to be treated seriously and blend in.

Timeline and location of research

This research took place in three phases between 2018 and 2020: the first phase from May until September 2019, the second from February until July 2019 and the third between February and April 2020. The third trip was interrupted by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and ended more than a month earlier than expected. The fieldwork was located in two North-Ghanaian cities: Tamale, the Northern Region (lasting two months) and Wa, the Upper West Region (lasting ten months). In Tamale, I was hosted by a family originally from the Eastern Ashanti Region, while in Wa, by a local Wala family. In Tamale I stayed in a rented pavilion situated right beside the family home, where I had my own kitchen. I dined with the family only from time to time, whereas in Wa, I was fully involved in family foodways.

As mentioned earlier, Tamale is the third largest city in Ghana and an emerging investment hub. It remains one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa, with around 700 000 inhabitants as of 2022 (the number has tripled over the last twenty years). According to local authorities, Tamale is a hotspot for infrastructure and business investments in both public and private sectors, as well as a financial and economic centre of the northern regions. Its central location facilitates its role as a centre of regional administration and avenue for cultural and social institutions. Tamale is an important cultural centre of the traditional Kingdom of Dagbon and populated chiefly by the Dagbani speaking population (although the capital and the seat of the King is located in Yendi, east of Tamale). The city is the only predominantly Muslim city in Ghana, with ninety percent of the population declaring that religion as compared to eighteen percent nationally. In 1992, the University of Development Studies was established in Tamale

to help with and stimulate the development of the three regions (now five, since the 2020 administrative reform).

Wa is a significantly smaller city than Tamale, with only around 100 000 inhabitants (as of the 2012 census). It is the capital of the Upper West Region and a seat of regional authorities. Wilks establishes the origination of Wa at around the fourteenth century, as a post on the trade route leading through the Arabic states in North Africa and the Kingdom of Asante (Wilks 2002). Around eighty percent of the population belongs to the Mole-Dagbani ethnic group with the indigenous urban population of Wa, the Walas, forming around sixty-five percent of the inhabitants. Dagaba and Sissala count among around twenty nine percent of the population and declare themselves Christian. Wa remains a largely agricultural community and the majority of the population live from subsistence farming or are engaged in other cash-based sources of income.

Tamale and Wa were chosen as research sites for a few reasons. First, this project was required to take place in West Africa, due to the regional interest of its supervisor. Secondly, Ghana is an English-speaking country, which was considered an advantage considering I do not speak French, the dominant language of the region. Thirdly, a large body of work has been done in the northern sector of Ghana. As I mentioned earlier, many seminal anthropological works on ethnicity, chieftaincy, kinship, social organisation, class and food in Northern Ghana have been produced between the 1940s and the 1980s, however there are few contemporary monographs on North Ghanaian foodways. On the other hand, many contemporary studies produced by Ghanaian and foreign scholars focus on the persisting issue of lack of food security (Ham 2017; 2020; Messer and Cohen 2007; Owusu, Abdulai, and Abdul-Rahman 2011; Moseley, Carney, and Becker 2010; Destombes 2006). Literature suggests that even in situations of extreme poverty and food insecurity (in situations of displacement, war or conflict) food preferences remain guiding factors of food habits (Spittler 1999; Dunn 2014). An informed approach to culturally constructed food is necessary, otherwise "the projects that address hunger will continue to be fuelled by narratives of risk that promulgate solutions focused on quantity (calories) rather than quality (preferred foods and meals)" (Ham 2020: 916). As such, in-depth research on culturally informed food preferences comes across as valuable for policymakers.

Overview of phases and methods

In the initial phase of research, participant observation and interviews were conducted, focussing on understanding the basic premises of food and cooking, family and kinship structures, language of food and economic networks. This approach was a result of two causes.

First, those two methods are default for conducting any anthropological research and have already proved fruitful beforehand. I felt confident in applying them and considered them a springboard for further methodological quests. In this phase, the goal was to build fundamental knowledge of the issue at hand and provide a context for it. Both methods played their role in situating me, providing basic knowledge and narrowing down the focus. Secondly, applying those two elementary methods permitted a precise identification of their shortcomings in the research of sensory phenomena. Those shortcomings were noted and amended later with more creative approaches. In this phase, the focus remained on public gustatory spaces, such as restaurants, chop bars and prayer grounds. As this phase fell on Ramadan, the researcher focussed on public fast-breaking and evening meals, related to some extent to initial sensory research focussed on their role in religious and ritualistic practices. Participant observation and interviews were conducted at chop bars, restaurants and street stalls, with restaurant-goers, restaurant owners, cooks and private practitioners who gathered to break fast together.

The second phase involved close collaboration with the host family, especially the hostess. There I was able to become truly involved in the daily life of the family and participate in food-related practices such as shopping, preparation, cooking and eating. This approach did not involve strict interviews and moments of participant observation, but rather entailed an ongoing processual participation that started every morning and ended late in the evening. Additionally, in this phase the focus of the research shifted to the school feeding programmes and institutional meals, catering classes and cooking knowledge acquisition. This phase involved participation in catering classes: demonstrations, practicals and examinations. Further, it entailed co-working with employees of a hospital kitchen in Wa and school canteens. These three foci prevailed during the second phase of fieldwork where classical methods were used less and new sensory methods were introduced. Emphasis was put on "working together", participation in physical labour. As was mentioned earlier, my entry into every community of working women was marked with a "rite of passage"[9]. I had to undertake a physically difficult task, such as stirring a pot of hot dough, partly to entertain them and partly to reassure my image and position as a white woman (weak and fragile). In turn, participating in physical labour made it clear how special, demanding and skill-based the labour was. Something as simple as wrapping hot dough in corn leaves (making *kenkey*[10]) or pouring liquid into plastic bags

[9] This process is explored in more depth in Chapter 8.

[10] *Kenkey* is a starchy staple made from fermented maize flour wrapped in corn leaves and steamed.

(dividing *sobolo*[11] into portions) or pounding cooked tubers (making *fufu*[12]) proved nearly impossible for me.

The third phase, during my third field trip, consisted of working with the same group of people in an attempt to provide a deeper and more contextualised understanding of phenomena already described. In this phase, more individual conversations and interviews took place. I found a new gatekeeper who facilitated contact with more, especially young people from the Wala-speaking community. Biographical and semi-structured interviews were applied frequently, however their goal was different from those in the first phase. While at the time, the aim was to gain basic knowledge, now, thanks to information gathered using collaborative methods, the goal was to collect narratives as a juxtaposition to observed non-verbal practice.

Choice and characterisation of research participants

The choice of participants for this research was not dictated by any of their internal or external common features, such as gender, education, form of employment, living situation, political status, etc. It was indeed difficult to delineate a research group, just by seeing how everyone ate. Instead of following any common denominator among potential participants, this research was concentrated mainly around spaces of embodied social practice, which by any measure involved practices focussed on food. In this sense, it followed Bourdieu's theory of practice as a scaffolding for communication and social structure (Warde 2008; Bourdieu 2007). Theory of practice is inherently tied to anthropology of everyday life, which emphasises the connection between activities (practice) and their environment (de Certeau 1984; Pink 2012; Highmore 2001; Ingold 2000). Everyday practices are never too insignificant or mundane, on the contrary, they are dynamic and fluctuating, fuelled by changing perceptions, modes of being and knowledge. Emplaced, embodied and culturally situated practices create spaces where food preferences, methods, skills, conscious and corporeal knowledge could be acted upon (Middleton 2010; Pink et al. 2010; Marte 2007; Shilling 2004; O'Neill and Hubbard 2010) and in turn, characterised by the purpose they serve. Social practice for Bourdieu is a space of reproduction on one hand and social change on the other (Bourdieu 2007).

Following the spaces of certain practices allows one to determine who performs those practices and how they fulfil the potential of the space through their agency and creativity. In this research, places such as school kitchens and canteens, classrooms adapted for cooking demonstrations, home kitchens and verandas, hospital kitchens, restaurants, bars, street stalls,

[11] *Sobolo* is a popular drink made from dried hibiscus flowers boiled with sugar, pineapple peel and *prekese.*
[12] *Fufu* is a popular West African starchy staple made from either yam, cocoyam, plantain or cassava.

momentary fast-breaking spaces, street corners with a gas stove and boiling tea kettle, benches under the trees, an arrangement of plastic chairs, were all spaces where the potential of food related practices could be realised, where knowledge and skill was honed and passed on, where various identities were ascertained and negotiated. The same actor could be engaged in multiple spaces performing different tasks and satisfying different needs. Situated practices tie embodied knowledge to a space that enables the practice to be changed or reproduced in a performative manner.

The spaces determined the choice of actors and research participants. As the research was located in the city, the majority of participants were urban dwellers, most of them educated at secondary or tertiary level. Most of them spoke English, as it was a condition for the researcher to be able to conduct the research alone, without the help of a translator. The majority had jobs related to cooking or teaching, and among those, most were professionals in their field. Those spaces were bars, restaurants and street stalls in Tamale, as well as communal spaces for evening gatherings before sunset. In Wa, observed spaces became more private and gated. Accessing them required permission, either coaxed through emotional intimacy or applied for through institutional procedure. Home kitchens and institutional cooking spaces gave access to brand new food-related types of practice. Professionalism turned those into well-functioning machines, where matrons and housewives were responsible for shaping the physical and social space.

The spaces had a temporal aspect to them. This was especially visible in catering schools, where demonstration rooms were created, transformed from unused classrooms, auditory halls and storage rooms. First the students had to clean them thoroughly, then equipment was dug out of storage, tables assembled, utensils organised, ingredients placed on trays, finally the cooking could commence. Before that, however, the students had to turn into "catering apprentices" and "cooking students". The function of a costume in a performative practice is profound, as many studies have shown (Barbieri 2017; Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2016; Gilman 2002; Gennep et al. 2019). The students were supposed to wear all white: from shoes and socks to skirts and blouses and aprons, to white elaborate bonnets. Cooking classes were disciplining their bodies and subjugating them to strict moral norms. To wear white in the kitchen is impractical but it encodes the message of cleanliness, tidiness and neatness. The girls had their uniforms, aprons, napkins and kitchen towels checked before commencing, as well as their hands and nails. Those whose nails were considered too long had to go back to the dormitory and cut them. Similar rigour was implemented in the household kitchen.

A dominating proportion of the research participants were women and the rationale behind this is twofold. First, in Northern Ghana spaces related to cooking and food production are associated with women and female labour. Male respondents expressed many times that the place of men is not in the kitchen: "A northern man should not come close to the kitchen". Many women were of the opposite opinion, in fact they complained that all duties related to food provisions fall on them. Many were the main food providers for the family, with the man working away from home or being unemployed and in schooling. As it is explained in Chapter 4, an overwhelming majority of home economics students are female. Those who finish tertiary education in catering and continue their careers as teachers, matrons and nutritionists, are also predominantly female. The same pattern applies to small vendors, restaurant cooks and chefs. In Wa, which does not offer many opportunities for career development, those who hold more economic and social capital head south to look for employment in established hotels in Accra and Kumasi. Those are usually men. Spaces related to food production, which this research examined, were hence almost exclusively female. Spaces of consumption, on the other hand, were mixed, with some being exclusively male. Me being a woman, access to female-only spaces was easier to me, than to those that were exclusively or predominantly male.

The decision to involve female participants was also informed by a feminist ethnography agenda. Women are usually the chief food providers in the household; they purchase the food provisions (the man provides the "chop money[13]" but it is the woman who chooses what she purchases), cook and distribute it. In literature, women's practices of cooking and tastemaking are rich in symbolism. Especially in dialectics of displacement, it is the production and ingestion of certain foods and tastes that assert their social position, anchor them back to their home-made identities and create sensorially safe and familiar spaces (Warin and Dennis 2005; Mata-Codesal 2010; Tuomainen 2009; Durmelat 2015). Women are keepers of tradition and the main change-makers, linking past and future gustatory generations. While the importance of women's input in cultural food-making processes has been largely admitted, female voices are still not afforded enough space. This thesis was guided by a principle: to give space to female agency and perspectives.

Another reason for seeking predominantly female participants has been informed by my previous traumatic experiences with male participants as well as gender-based harassment

[13] Chop money is a sum of money which the husband is obliged to offer his wife, to obtain ingredients for cooking the family meal.

and microaggression experienced in the field[14]. Additionally, the act of eating together, an activity located at the core of this research, achieves another meaning when performed between a woman and a man. As Bloch writes, there is social significance paid to "the relation of ideas related to sharing substance through food and through procreation and sex" (Bloch 1999, 134). Young men repeatedly said that if they want to attract a woman's attention, they take her out for food. The topic of this research lent itself to marital games. I refused many invitations to lunches and dinners prompted by the information that I am here to investigate food. The tension and suggested intimacy involved in dining out, apparent in those situations, did not serve my wellbeing, could potentially skew my research and distract me from the main goals. Contact with women was much more straightforward and lacking in hidden agendas based on gender relations.

In the end, the choice of research participants seemed to be random, which, to some extent, was one of the goals of this research. This section started with a statement 'everyone eats' and everyone is an expert in the field of their own food and taste making[15]. Instead of becoming a limitation, this became an advantage. It allowed freedom in choosing participants depending on spaces they were encountered in and practices they performed. In the end, the research group combined genders, ethnicities, professions, financial status and various walks of life. Nonetheless, the assemblage of respondents falls under the umbrella of middle-class, educated, English-speaking consumers coming from urban areas, usually professionally active or retired.

Detailed characterisation of methods

Participation

Embodied approaches in anthropology require a thorough revision of the ethnographic methods used in the field. There are many forms of participation one can engage in the field: from simply sitting with the research partners to accompanying them in their everyday chores, working with them in the field to engaging with their art. Participant observation, the cornerstone of the ethnographic method, has been widely discussed, and its limitations have been pointed out (Okely 2007, DeWalt 2011). In the case of this research, participant observation represents contrasting perspectives: observation indicated the primary use of

[14] I write more about harassment in the field in Chapter 8.

[15] Taste making can be understood as formation, learning, refinement of aesthetic judgement (Bourdieu 2010) but also in the gustatory and corporeal senses.

vision, and thus distanciation from the lived experiences of the participants. Participation, on the other hand, instigates corporeal engagement and attention to non-visual experiences, stimuli and finally, knowledge. Forster underlines the importance of accessing non-predicated knowledge through bodily ethnography that is executed via participation.

Gerd Spittler's concept of *dichte Teilnahme* which translates to "thick participation" proposes a similar mode of ethnographic approach. It emphasizes moving beyond mere observation to include the subjective experiences of the researcher, thereby uncovering insights that are not accessible through observation alone. The approach also involves reflexivity, where the anthropologist reflects on their and impact on the community and prioritises depth over breadth in data collection. Ethical considerations, such as respect for community norms, informed consent and the protection of participants' privacy, are also crucial (Spittler 2014). Thick participation thus encompasses in certain ways Förster's bodily ethnography and autoethnographic methods, and becomes important in reflecting over one's corporeal experience in the field.

However, some limitations of this method have to be addressed. The first limitation was related to my sensory models of perception, which were trained to remain visual. To transcend it, I actively sought to be able to describe sensory information gained through other senses: hearing, smell, taste and touch. Soon, I started paying more attention to how I felt in certain spaces, how my body interacted with them and with the others, to non-visual remarks about the bodily feelings of my research partners. The second limitation lied in the skill of writing about the experience. Notes jotted down immediately often missed the focal point of the corporeal feeling in question. Often, the deeper understanding of it only came much later, and the notes had to be revised and annotated. The latter is not that unusual of an occurrence. Much of initial anthropological observation gains deeper meaning over time, along with the habituation of the anthropologist in the field.

Collaborative labour: shopping, preparations and cooking

While other elements of life are easily translated into language, food and taste rarely make their way into coherent, self-reflexive narratives. Spaces of embodied practice, such as the open air, kitchens, dining tables, canteens, open fire pits, common plates, benches under the trees behind chop bars or a random gathering of seats, were places where a sensory narrative of food took place. To become a part of those activities of food production and consumption became a methodological goal. In general, women were happy to show me "how it is done" for the first two times. After that, the activity became mundane and tedious and to maintain the

interest of both the participant and the researcher became challenging. Cooking is a physically strenuous and demanding chore, even when the food is cooked in small quantities. At institutions, the portions are enormous, cooked in huge cauldrons, using long pestles and usually over the open fire. Where firewood is used, the space is smothered in choking fumes. The food is often manipulated with bare hands, even when it is piping hot. Furthermore, it requires focus and attention. Tedious questions, such as "Why are you doing this? Why are you doing that? Why this ingredient and not the other?" can wear down even the most patient. Especially if asked daily. The only way to actually participate in cooking was to force oneself to accompany women every day in the same activities, preferably saying nothing or nothing of importance.

Chapter 8 describes in detail how the image of me as a white woman interfered with the researcher's fieldwork in the kitchens. There is no doubt that it required additional willpower and decent labour to convince women that I was in fact capable of performing basic kitchen tasks. The same issue was evident in the host family. At first, I was supposed to be only an observer, asking questions and making notes, perhaps pounding something for the entertainment of the family. Later, when I proved knowledgeable and capable enough, I started to be entrusted with other tasks, like shopping, peeling, cutting, even making full dishes and drinks. Persistence was key. On many occasions sitting in the kitchen among women performing their daily chores was tiresome and, in fact, boring. Being there, however, showed zeal, patience and appreciation for their work. It was a gradual process, which transformed the activities from exciting to interesting to mundane. That moment when the processes of cooking became mundane and my presence became sometimes overlooked or disregarded, was the moment of deepest immersion (and new discomfort).

Cooking with friends made along the way in Tamale and Wa was of a different character. Following the period of being treated as a guest (and therefore graced with extra effort: especially nice table arrangements, soda drinks instead of water, etc.), I was able to come by just to be greeted with food they regularly cooked for the evening meals. None of them were affluent; one worked as a nurse in a public hospital, another had a weaving business and two small children, yet another was a single mother with a casual job in the hospital kitchen. A good, positive relationship was established with all of them. Cooking together was a bonding experience for those women and me, and gradually as I became more and more acquainted with local food and ways of eating, I would participate more in the preparation and then gladly share all the meals. We peeled and cut, ground and stirred together, one looking over the pots while

the other bathed the children, got changed or went shopping all important factors that helped to establish, practise and reassure a close emotional bond.

Commensality and tasting

As mentioned earlier, commensality and food prohibitions (also poisoning) has been one of the key themes in anthropology since the beginning of the discipline (Klein and Watson 2016; Bloch 1999; Marovelli 2019; Giacoman 2016; Douglas 1966; Rozin et. al 2008). Commensality offers insights into the creation and reinforcement of kinship and alliance bonds, ethnic or gender identity, rituals and enculturation of children. On the other hand, commensality can create feelings of discomfort, strangeness and alienation. Such an act typically conveys notions of kinship, solidarity and conviviality (Marovelli 2019). Giacoman identifies two types of commensalities, everyday and exceptional (Giacoman 2016). She summarises the characteristics of both exceptional and everyday commensality, stressing the relevance of three main dimensions: first, eating together is regarded as interactional, as an act of communication between participants; secondly, as already remarked by Douglas (Douglas 1966), shared meals entail a normative dimension, "the staging of norms carried out by diners and the control over those norms" (Giacoman 2016, 463); and finally, commensality involves a symbolic dimension, embracing the wide range of meanings attributed to eating together in different societies" (Marovelli 2019).

In one way or the other, commensality has been widely recognised in social sciences as a socially significant practice. Rarely, however, has the sensing body of the ethnographer been used as an instrument and object of research through commensal participation. Crang goes as far as to name ethnographers' bodies "a ghostly absence" (Crang 2003, 499). Feminist ethnographies call for positioning oneself in the field to establish a sort of "baseline", delimiting the possibilities and limitations of the researcher. However, what about sensory receptacles, bodies in space? As Longhurst, Ho and Johnson state, "Researchers and participants perform different embodied subjectivities (sometimes contradictory) in different spaces. Bodies produce space and knowledge, and space and knowledge produce bodies" (Longhurst, et. al 2009, 208). In anthropology, this movement has been precipitated by de Certeau and the practice of walking, and further by Foucault and his embodied subjectivities constituted historically through social relations (Middleton 2010; Pink et. al 2010; de Certeau 1984; McLaren 2002). In many current ethnographies, however, the bodies of researchers have been absent.

However, ethnographers do exist in fieldwork spaces and they do engage subjectively and corporeally with those sensorealities. One of the core premises of this research was to bring

the ethnographer's body from the shadows and utilise its methods of sensory perception as tools and objects of sensory ethnographic research. Considering the subject of this research, the body of the researcher was to engage consciously in the practices of commensality. The goal was not only to learn to digest food, but also to become a member of the eating community. Commensality was to become not only an object of observation but experienced through collaborative practice. The nature of this commensality is such that it transcends the limits and borders of the body. We willingly agree to invite a foreign substance inside us, assuming the good will of the host and engaging in intimacy with co-diners. Many ethnographies, while examining the events of commensality, provide a perspective of the observer, focussing on the commensality of the Other, as if the authors were not sitting at the same table as their research participants. This research, however, was intended to refine the lines between the participants and the ethnographer and use the body of the ethnographer as a training ground for sensory remodelling.

Paul Stoller is one of the most prominent among those advocating more descriptive and "tasteful" ethnographies, in which the ethnographer becomes one of the protagonists of the ethnographic story. In "The Taste of Ethnographic Things" he brings to life a "tasteful fieldworker", who becomes sensually immersed in their surroundings. For Stoller, focussing on a sensual vantage point leads to an ethnography focussed on the individual, rather than metaphysical "ethnic group":

> In tasteful fieldwork, anthropologists would not only investigate kinship, exchange, and symbolism, but also describe with literary vividness the smells, tastes, and textures of the land, the people, and the food. Rather than looking for deep-seated hidden truths, the tasteful fieldworker understands, following Foucault, "that the deep hidden meaning, the unreachable heights of truth, the murky interiors of consciousness are all shams" (Stoller 1989, 29).

In their seminal article "Bad Sauce, Good Ethnography" Olkes and Stoller become characters in their own story (Stoller and Olkes 1986). During their time in a familiar village in Western Niger, they stayed at Stoller's friend's compound. The family was conflicted over the decision of the youngest son to live with a woman from a different tribe, Djebo. The house owner and his wives were in permanent disagreement with her and criticised her all the time. The girl, as the youngest in the compound, was also responsible for shopping and cooking. However, the food she made was regularly unsavoury and she did not show any will to learn. Stoller and Olkes write:

> She didn't know how to cook-probably because she hadn't listened to her mother long enough to learn. When she prepared meat it was so tough that even Moru couldn't chew it. The sauces were tasteless even though Adamu Jenitongo gave her money to buy the best spices. But no one had done anything to improve the domestic situation (Stoller and Olkes 1986, 340).

One night, Djebo prepared an utterly distasteful sauce to show her dissatisfaction with the researchers' contact. The researcher's personal experience becomes a canvas for more theoretical considerations.

It is undeniable that learning how to "eat like a local" is part of every research and one that takes place outside of the researcher's place of origin. Learning to eat with hands, chopsticks or knife and fork, encountering new ingredients, combinations of flavours and textures is a necessary element of fieldwork. Often, however, such experiences remain in the background. Personal struggles with getting used to local food, learning how to eat things for the first time, sensory and physical discomfort and even hunger are rarely acknowledged, treated as "non-scientific", overly focussed on the persona of the researcher. After all, ethnography is supposed to be about the Other. In this research, a decision was made to reverse that order. Personal gustatory encounters and a journey of sensory translation became one of the core methods in this research. To document it, I committed to writing a daily gustatory journal, recording every meal I ate with a detailed description, personal commentary on how it tasted to me, the social situation in which the meal took place and the accompanying emotions. This food diary was kept independent for the first two months of fieldwork, then merged with the regular field notes[16].

The outcome was interesting. It had been clear before that writing about bodily experience is not easy and many scholars still struggle with the "right" language to describe the nuts and bolts of a globally accessible variety of dishes and gustatory experiences. Again, few languages have the linguistic capacity to describe accurately the subjective experience of taste. Furthermore, the same words can describe various experiences or experiences of varied intensity. As far as colloquial language is concerned, there seems to be no rigid classification of terms that should be used to define sensory experiences, as well as *the right method* of perception. In her linguistic experiment, Mondada shows that

> in this [experiment's] context, the sensory experience is organized in relation to multiple resources and contingencies. For instance, the senses

[16] There is a substantial body of literature on self-reflexivity, emotions and visibility in anthropological fieldnotes. See: Sanjek (2019), Wolfinger (2002) and Strudwick (2021).

> might generate some verbalizations of touch, smell, and taste, and, reflexively, overheard verbalizations can contribute to shape the bodily access to the sensorial features described. This reflexivity is strongly related to the multi-modal organization of multi-sensorial experiences (Mondada 2021, 82).

Professional tasters are a different category of "consumers". Butler describes how rigorous training among food safety professionals helps them to define "good" and "bad" food. Here, linguistic expressions are tightly connected with certain chemical and gustatory qualities which, in this situation, operate within objective, standardised categories (E. Butler 2018).

In this way, the food diary was an anthrolinguistic experiment in trying to describe foods I had never seen or tasted before. It was also a record of learning how to eat by hand and in various social situations. The diary was written in English and Polish, but mostly the latter, which is my mother tongue. The first shocking experience occurred when I realised I never had to, nor felt the need to describe food that has no equivalent in European menus. How can one describe the textures and flavours of something that is tasted for the first time? Efficient building of any kind of knowledge usually takes place in reference to existing knowledge. In this case, I was racking my brain for gustatory memories to pinpoint and define tastes that were entirely foreign to me. In many cases I was lost, repelled, engrossed or positively surprised. The diary is an excellent example of the affective element of research, especially one where bodily integrity is somehow compromised. Food clearly did not bring me the emotional comfort it usually does in a familiar environment. Lacking this positive reinforcement, I experienced a feeling of bodily alienation and strangeness.

Over time, as I began to get acclimated to the food, to quite literally, internalise the local gustatory landscapes, the descriptions in the diary started to change. The ultimate victory took place when I enjoyed eating TZ for the first time. Following this, having an "insider's" conversation with others was not problematic as, through ingesting local food on a daily basis, I appeared less strange and more familiar. Having that "insider's", tacit knowledge and having acquired a feel for local ways of sensing[17], I was able to comprehend casual remarks dropped here and there: "the soup is not good", "the *banku* is sour". What makes the soup not good? What does sour mean? Is it a good or a bad thing? Corporeal, gustatory competences I acquired over time, enabled me to transcend from a chaos of unfamiliar sensory experiences to an organised semantic journey of sorts, from tacit to verbal, from passive listening to conversation.

[17] I would not say I have gained full expertise in tasting local food; I will never be able to eat Ghanaian food and taste it the way my respondents did.

Tasting, from a passive, chemical and physical act of feeling food in the mouth, touching it with hands and smelling it with the nose became a cognitive act of recognising food with its cultural, ethic and moral values. This would not be possible without a complete, holistic sensorial journey.

Finding opportunities for commensality was a processual effort. It soon became clear that eating together required a certain level of intimacy or visibility. I (wrongly) assumed that the participants, upon hearing about the topic of my research, will start inviting me to meals to display Ghanaian dishes. This assumption could not have been further from the truth. First, it soon turned out that a certain level of intimacy was required to be invited to meals. That intimacy did not arise after one or two interviews, but rather after becoming part of a certain group or community. Such a community feeling was harder to achieve in the urban environment (I lived in a gated house) than it would presumably be in the village. Secondly, participants were eager to extend meal invitations, ("You come once and I'll cook you some local-local food"[18]) but when it came to arranging a date, people became elusive. There is no doubt that invitations to meals stemmed from genuine kindness, but it was evident that people did not expect a white person to accept them. Thirdly, at the initial stages of the research, I was often too shy and reserved to follow up on the invitations.

Soon enough however, eating together became a norm. In Wa, commensality with the host family was an element of daily life. Much of the work in the hospital kitchen and at schools involved eating together. The kitchen veranda at the hospital was a complex tastescape, where economic dependencies and social hierarchies were embodied and played out. For instance, casual workers were much more likely to acquire a portion of the hospital food than the regular employers, as they did not receive a regular salary (employees were entitled to a portion of food they cooked). The latter were more likely to bring purchased or home-cooked food which they did not share. One of the matrons was running a small business selling home-made millet drinks; she "employed" casual workers to sell them around the hospital grounds but did not pay them in any means other than a bottle of free beverage. Interns, most of whom still lived at home, were likely to bring snacks they shared with everyone. In much the same way, demonstrations and practicals at vocational schools became an arena where my "white" or "European" taste preferences were employed in the moral judgement of students' creations and

[18] Local-local is used as "traditional", "heritage", "typical".

juxtaposed with local ones. Much of that process was non-verbal and had a purely embodied dimension.[19]

The fact that I ate the same food as the family became legendary among the hostess's friends. She would report as a joke that they pitied her for having a *nansara pogo* a "white lady", in the house. "It's the husband that invites people, but the wife must serve them", they said, assuming she had to cook extra meals, searching for ingredients especially for her white guest. She denied this fervently. "Marta eats everything we eat and even sometimes more than a local person", she would tell them, looking incredulous, "She's a local woman now". Eating local food gave me a more credible persona, crossing cultural barriers much in the same way as speaking the local language would.[20] After some time, I was also frequently invited to eat with other people I befriended along the way.

There, one of the difficulties linked to moments of commensality, was to be able to come by as a regular visitor, not as a guest, who would be treated with special care and reverence. For instance, women extending invitations often refused to eat together with me, even though eating from the same bowl was common practice between friends of the same gender. I received extra treatment. Where women would sit on the floor, the place for me was arranged at a table with a nice napkin, two water sachets and cutlery. I would receive the better cuts of meat or fish, or two *bankus*. Few women, especially those of southern origin, were comfortable sharing the same bowl and eating together. For me, it was important to establish myself as equal, not superior to other women. Pragmatically, I did not want the women to go the extra mile for me, as it made the arrangement of meals more difficult. Women did not want to cook their everyday food for me, only the best and richest and did not feel comfortable inviting me when they did not have money to buy ingredients. The financial aspect was a major problem, as I did not want to blatantly hand in money in exchange for the meal as it would have been offensive. Instead, I proposed to go shopping together or sometimes brought take-out meals I knew my friends liked and we ate them together.

Naturally, celebratory meals were much more accessible for me, as they were open to passers-by, guests, neighbours and family members. Everyday cooking was disregarded as something not worth examining; the women did not want to invite me to eat regular food that was often poor in protein and lacking richness. However, in line with the theoretical orientation of this research, everyday food habits were my primary focus during fieldwork. Soon it also

[19] See Chapter 5.
[20] See Chapter 8.

became clear that everyday food featured the most variety and it was there, where the most creativity was being invested. “Therefore, everyday life is a context of human creativity, innovation and change, and a site where processes towards a sustainable future might be initiated and nurtured” (Pink 2012, 5). Extra events were always celebrated in more or less the same way; there was simply more of everything and the food was richer (Spittler 1999; Goody 1982). Eating in public, serving guests and celebrating occasions all bore the same characteristics, whilst everyday food was subject to changes and sways of the home budget, whims and preferences, sickness and health, work problems and amount of free time. For celebratory meals everyone would prepare “what should be done” and the standard was unequivocally agreed upon. Meanwhile, in everyday life the standard was non-existent and there was space for idiosyncrasies, such as not eating pepper, preferring fish over meat, never eating TZ, picking out vegetables and scraping burnt *jollof* rice from the bottom of the pot (the best part). Sensory practices of everyday life, as Pink writes, lead us to a better understanding of society and its environment (Pink 2012, 12). Analysing domestic spheres of consumption allows us to gather information about strategies and techniques of survival, responses to outside conditions, negotiating relations inside the family and in private, away from the prying eyes of the world.

Interviews

Despite the shortcomings of the interview method detailed earlier, interviews were used in the initial and final stage of the research as secondary methods, alongside collaborative practice, participant observation and participation. Scholars agree that sensory experience, due to its fundamentally corporeal nature, cannot be fully translated into a narrative (Classen 1997; Howes 1991). However, there is no need for it to be. Semi-structured and biographical interviews served mainly two purposes; in the beginning, during a pilot study, they helped me gain contextualised, factual knowledge about food, cooking and eating practices. I enquired about personal statements referring to aspects of food other than gustatory: methods of cooking, memories, family organisation, perceptions of professionalism and, in the context of institutions, the organisation and maintenance of food supplies. At a later stage, they served to tie food with personal memory and extrapolate patterns of change, and in the later stage of the research, to contextualise practice with sensory narratives. After acquiring more nuanced tacit knowledge about food and consumption, I was able to ask more adequate questions related to the corporeal experience of food and gustatory preferences.

Regardless of the difficulties, I conducted and recorded around forty interviews, individually, in pairs, as well as in focus groups. The majority of focus group interviews were done with senior high students who preferred to come in groups; they probably felt more confident this way. Individual interviews were always semi-structured and usually followed a similar pattern, which was adjusted depending on the profession of the research participant. The choice of semi-structured interview over a questionnaire was informed by two matters. First, I was focussed on the individual and free narratives prompted by open-ended questions allowed the guest to guide the conversation. Secondly, it allowed for flexibility from the interviewer when it came to choosing topics and when shifting the focus of the interview, should an interesting subject have surfaced. Semi-structured interviews leave space for biographical elements, sensorial recognition and even recipe sharing, which happened more than a few times. Such interviews are thought to encourage two-way communication. it was not just the participants speaking; I could also share something I learned or was surprised by, building a mental bridge between the participant and myself in the process. The casual character of the interview was a priority.

Casual conversations

Casual conversations were an important part of data collection throughout the research, both with new and long-term acquaintances. It quickly became clear that while men had no trouble setting aside time for a sit-down interview and being recorded, female participants were rarely comfortable with this arrangement. First, the working women important for the research (food vendors, matrons, teachers, chefs and others) were extremely busy and it was hard for them to plan a moment of free time. Scheduling ahead was difficult; on many occasions I called them to confirm the meeting and the women had to postpone for a variety of reasons: they had to go to the village, were working or it was just not a good time. I had to seize the moment and be ready for a conversation at any time. Secondly, for many the formality of the interview situation was overwhelming. I noticed a considerable variation in women's behaviour; when recorded, they were more careful of how and what they were saying, their body language communicated uneasiness, confusion and shyness. Casual conversations flowing from one subject to another, often over a plate of food, were much more fruitful in gathering unprompted data than formal sit-down interviews. This was true especially among those whom I met regularly at schools, at the hospital or at other places, who gradually got used to my presence and did not mind my questions anymore. The importance of hours upon hours of casual chats

with the host family were priceless. They visibly improved my understanding of eating practices, and cultural and language background.

Context

The interviews took place in a variety of settings where participants felt most comfortable. It was clear that for many, meeting in a public space was not comfortable as they were not used to going out. I made this mistake a few times, for instance inviting three young women (students of nutrition whom I met during a programme) to a restaurant, for a smoothie and a chat. They had to catch a taxi to get there, which meant paying extra. They all came beautifully dressed and behaved very officially, treating this as an official outing. They had never been in that restaurant as it was significantly beyond their budget and was located on the other side of town. After some time, they overcame their shyness, lost their official composure and started conversing freely, but it was clear that they were not entirely at ease. I never made this mistake again and whenever possible, asked to visit women at a convenient time to have a conversation in a comfortable space. Meeting at home, in the living room or at a veranda made women visibly more comfortable, created a host-guest dynamic and I was also often treated with typical hospitality, which sometimes included being offered meals and drinks.

Many of the interviews took place at the interviewee's workspaces, which created some problems as well. It was clear that those who worked extensively were much more likely to be found in their workplaces than at home. Since the conversation was very often related to what they were doing, the familiar surroundings facilitated the flow of the interview; I could point out various elements of the place, which prompted the research participant to tell stories. The coworkers often added a few points and the conversations were usually very concise. The interviews were, for example, conducted in shops, workshops, at food joints, in tuk-tuks, restaurants and kitchen facilities, and although the extra noise and hustle could be seen as a distraction, in the end I found those interviews the most productive and efficient.

Focus groups

I conducted a few focus group interviews with students at vocational and grammar schools. They were by far the most strenuous and demanding, especially for personal reasons. The students often felt and behaved cheekily and immaturely, they mocked me, laughed frequently and gave plainly unreasonable answers. Those interviews proved difficult to be a source of reliable information. Yet, students were shy to speak on the forum of the whole class and group interviews were the only chance to hear what they had to say. On the other hand,

once asked a good question, they encouraged one another to provide information. Focus groups with students made me nervous, exposed and unsure of herself. On the other hand, a few interviews conducted in pairs or groups of three, usually with family members, were very fruitful. Participants encouraged one another to answer questions, helped each other to remember details of certain events, corrected mistakes and added interesting facts. It is undeniable that some of those interviews counted among the most fruitful.

Autoethnography as a method

One of the most important elements of this research was founded on the notion of autoethnography and a substantial body of data was collected through self-reflection and self-discovery. As a body in the field, a sensing, feeling, thinking, processing and learning body, I felt it was important to document the processes of sensory knowledge acquisition, becoming gradually more acquainted with the Ghanaian sensory landscape. Self-reflection and sensory writing were one of the tools I used frequently, specifically during the first fieldwork trip, to monitor processes of gaining tacit knowledge. Methods, such as keeping a food diary, were used to record a changing perception and understanding of local food. I describe how I used the autoethnographic method and my findings in Chapter 8.

Characterisation of collected data

Data collected during this research requires separate commentary and critique. The first large body of data consists of a written record that comprises chronological fieldnotes, annotated interviews, personal diaries, recipes, food diaries, short narratives and profiles of people encountered in the field. The second consists of audio recordings of interviews and soundscapes. The third is visual; pictures and videos taken by myself and the research participants, who mostly recorded me in various social situations, usually involving cooking and eating.

Sarah Pink (Pink 2010; 2012) encourages sensory ethnographers to be creative, even adventurous when it comes to methods and types of data collected in the field. She lists such documents as recipes, songs, videos, art projects and others, which can later be analysed to produce scientific text. Traditional methods of data recording, those that focus on the written word, are often inapplicable in collecting sensory experience, such as touch or taste. First, as mentioned earlier, corporeality does not lend itself well to translation into a narrative, as it is agreed that experience precedes conscious thought, which is only able to interpret it in the aftermath. Secondly, the language limits the writer and shapes perception. Often, many feelings in the body do not have a linguistic label. The Saphir-Whorf hypothesis proposes that the

language one speaks shapes how one thinks about reality. “Linguistic relativity stands in close relation to semiotic-level concerns with the general relation of language and thought, and to discourse-level concerns with how patterns of language use in cultural context can affect thought” (Lucy 2001). Experience adds another variable to this equation. Hence, the language one speaks not only shapes *how* one talks about sensory experience but *what* one perceives as meaningful or relevant at all. In a cross-cultural environment, without fluent knowledge of the local language, using notes seems inadequate.

As imperfect as it was, writing fieldnotes became a key method of recording data. The main benefit of a written record is its comparability; I could easily juxtapose notes from the beginning of the first field trip with those from the end, both in terms of content and format of writing. Both changed significantly; from detailed albeit superficial descriptions of the environment, the food, the conversations, practices and emotional states, to less frequent but in-depth records of interesting, new phenomena grounded in previous knowledge. Moreover, writing organises loose observations into a linear record, it facilitates and quickens analysis and it introduces coherence to seemingly disconnected elements. In the beginning, the field felt overwhelming and writing down observations, emotions and feelings helped organise them, pinpoint initial patterns and identify interesting threads. On the other hand, writing fieldnotes demonstrated the limitations of both languages used for writing (Polish and English) and prompted me to seek other, more accurate methods. Written narratives highlighted my own sensory orders, in which the primacy of vision and introspection were the chief ways of perception. While I had no trouble naming my myriad emotional states and minute details of places and activities, it was near impossible to find accurate words and terms to describe what was happening to my body after eating a bowl of *fufu*, or how it felt to learn how to stir *banku*.

Recorders were mostly used in situations where writing was impossible or inefficient, such as interviews. Some audioethnographers resort to soundscapes to record the character, the *feeling* of the space, which is more immersive and accurate than words. Admittedly, recorders and editing of sound act as “windows” or channels, which alter the original ambience much in the same way as language moulds and forges lived reality. Audio recordings were not used in collaborative practices, nor at the table. Certainly, recordings of interviews enabled the analysis of *how* people would talk about food, namely what emotional and moral load they attached to certain topics, how enthusiastic or how indifferent they were about it. Recording was not always possible, as not everybody permitted it and at other times conversations proceeded more smoothly without the presence of a machine.

Videos and photos were an important method of recording data. In fact, their importance and usefulness was, to some extent, overlooked during fieldwork. Upon realising that it was nearly impossible to describe the plethora of complex and new sensory experiences, I resorted to collecting visual and audiovisual materials to convey the "feeling of space" or "feeling of activity". Such materials, unfettered by words, had a much stronger, evocative influence on the memory of the place, the activity, the taste and the smell. A few hundred photographs were frequently used while writing this thesis, also as an evocative tool to bring back sensory memories. On the other hand, videos recorded *of* me while I was accompanying the research participants in cooking, cleaning, stirring or pounding, were valuable materials for self-reflection as they allowed to assume a perspective on the process of sensory learning[21].

As Okely writes, "the anthropologist's body at work [was] also something to be recorded and othered by the indigenous subject" (Okely 2007, 69). At the time of recording, I felt awkward due to my lack of skill, to look back on those videos. However, they turned out to be excellent materials displaying embodied participation and the process of empirical learning. At one point, the hostess recorded me when I was stirring *banku*; she was elated at how well the *nansara pogo* did. Watching the video, one can see the posture, gestures and methods of using tools observed in the actions of other women. Performing manual tasks involved in cooking was a challenge, but at the same time an excellent way of embodied learning and creating common ground for me and the other women as well as potential research participants. A casual mention of pounding, stirring, chopping or perhaps showing a video of *nansaara pogo* pounding *fufu* recorded by a friend was often enough to shift the image of a white woman in their eyes and prompt more personal stories. They still did not treat me as equally knowledgeable as them, but they realised that I "got it".

The methods selected for the purpose of this research proved to be effective, but only after appropriate training and amendments made along the way. The triangulation of methods proved certainly very efficient and the choice to focus on participant observation and participation before engaging in interviews was right. The lack of experience conducting sensory ethnographic research led to a few dead ends, but since so much attention was paid to the constant revision of research methods, quick adaptations and adjustments could be made to fit the given situation. With my growing fluency and confidence in the field, as well as my

[21] To my defence I have to point out that this project did not sketch out visual methods such as photography or filmmaking or using visual data in general as main sources of gaining information. My goal was to circumvent ethnographic ocularcentrism but, as this example shows, I did not think through alternative methods of documenting.

continuous build-up of knowledge, my methods and their application became increasingly fine-tuned and able to provide more in-depth information. This is certainly evident in the interviews from the last research trip from February to March 2020, when I was able to engage in nuanced conversation about food choices, seasoning, decision making, social values and everyday practices.

Ethical considerations

No methodological chapter can ignore the ethical implications of the research, and a retrospective look at the impact of the ethnographer's presence and practice is necessary. The long-term fieldwork which served as a basis for this research was crucial for a better understanding of the cultural processes which influence the formation, perpetuation and negotiation of the local sensory landscape. It helped to provide in-depth knowledge about the corporeal modes of sense-making, moral, social and ethnic values pertaining to them, all not possible without the physical presence of the researcher in the field. The research was geared towards more nuanced, subtle and non-narrative aspects of cultures that are usually taken for granted and hence overlooked. This project was intended to shift the focus to the foundational elements of the local models of "being in the world". Northern Ghana has been a site of ethnographic research since the 1920s[22], but only recently has the voice been given to the subjects, namely the research participants. This was also one of the principles of this project.

Research participants found through various institutions and organisations, were chosen on a voluntary basis. I always introduced myself, presented the topic and the principles of research, including the methods and tools which were to be used, together with the form of documentation and timespan of the research event. When necessary, I produced a confirmation letter assuring anonymity and guaranteeing that the data would remain classified. I made an effort to ensure that all data collected during my research would be anonymous and used solely for the scientific purpose of obtaining a doctoral degree (dissertation, presentations, colloquia, conferences, etc.). I made sure to provide anonymity by not recording the names and ages of the participants. All those preconditions had to be verbally accepted by the research participant before commencing an interview or meeting.

The relationships built during the research period were always based on true information; not once was my identity concealed to extract information. I made my purpose clear and, in some instances, the relationship between me and the partner was focussed on short-

[22] One of the first ethnographic accounts from today's Ghana are provided by R.S. Rattray, who worked chiefly among the Ashanti (Lentz 1999a).

term exchange. In some cases, however, frequent visits, closer collaboration and kindness helped to build trust and friendship, which further enabled me to deepen my understanding of the subject matter. All sensitive information, such as family problems, money, health issues, marriage problems not pertaining to the topic of the research were left out of the recordings and notes. Particularly the relationship with the host family has been reviewed and agreed upon many times, in order to provide smooth collaboration and safety.

Many indirect participants in this research were students of technical and vocational schools where I conducted observations. The students were not approached individually and directly, only during class-related activities, under the teacher's supervision. I asked for permission to take pictures and videos. Teachers and caretakers issued their authorisation for me to talk to the students, take pictures and collaborate in classes. The students all issued a formal oral agreement to participate in the research, to have their picture taken and their anonymity was assured. The children of the host family are never mentioned by name, nor is their school, nor teachers, friends or family members through which the children could be identified.

I was fully trained in qualitative methods of research, data collection, ethical conduct and collaboration and had relevant experience before leaving into the field. I was able to balance my role as a researcher, member of a group, collaborator and observer. My methodological capacity was assessed by the supervisor and remained under constant monitoring in the form of written reports sent monthly to the main supervisor. I actively refrained from moral judgements and interventions; one difficult situation, which evidently called for intervention, was thoroughly discussed before taking any action. At all times, I made sure that my research participants were comfortable, safe and that no harm was being done to them by consulting them about their situation, listening to their requests and needs and conforming to them.

Requests which extended beyond the scope of my influence and were not possible to fulfil, were politely denied. Some organisations asked me to participate actively in fundraising, supplying documents or advocating for them to local and international bodies. I always clearly communicated what I was and was not capable of and what I was willing to engage in. Some projects never came to fruition, for instance, I was asked to raise funds for drilling a borehole on the property belonging to the Christian Mother's Association. Due to the onset of the global pandemic, collaboration on this project was suspended and never succeeded.

I continuously reviewed my approach, based on the effects of the research process, feedback from the research partners and from the supervisor. In the case of this research, a

significant amount of attention was being paid to the economic fairness of the research contacts. I did not demand the participants to host me at multiple meals; if I invited my guests to eat out, I covered the cost of meals and in the case of prolonged collaboration, such as that between me and the two gatekeepers, I made sure to reimburse them appropriately, consulting them to make sure that the monetary remuneration was something they agreed with.

Writing down sensory experience

Ethnographic texts, even those focussed on sensory experience in one way or another, tend to lack creativity in using language to pass on the complexity of the ethnographic field. Academic standards are partly to blame here, with their expectation from writers to avoid using rich, depictive and sensorially-laden language. Furthermore, it is encouraged to limit fieldwork scenes to a minimum (hence the contested role of a "vignette"). Ethnography is not supposed to be a story, it is a scientific analysis of certain cultural phenomena. Similarly, the narrative remains impersonal; the scientific "we" replaces the individual voice of the researcher. Stoller, in his works, encourages the opposite: to engage in tasteful methodologies, to immerse in the local lifeworlds through our senses and to bear witness to them through ethnographic writing. Rich ethnography, inspired by literary language, is, to Stoller, a better representation of the fieldwork experience than dry scientific texts (Stoller 1989). Moreover, such literary works would reach a wider audience, outside tight academic circles. He lists the benefits of such writing on the basis of a few examples and concludes:

In all the examples, the writers season their prose with the non-theoretical senses to evoke a world. Agee masterfully uses a melange of smells to evoke the habitus of southern tenant farmers-their fatty diet, their filthy clothes, their stuffy houses, their abject misery. In one smelly paragraph we have a memorable portrait of the lives of these people. Chernoff records the interpenetration of sound and sight in African social life. This paragraph evokes an African world in which "participatory" music gives shape to a people's system of values as well as to their manner of living-in-the-world.

And asks:

> Should this kind of writing be excised from the ethnographic manuscripts of the future? Aren't expositions on odors, sounds, and tastes extraneous to the ethnographic message? What can these details reveal about a sociocultural system? […] Tasteful anthropology books are analytic, theoretical, and ephemeral; tasteful ethnographies are descriptive, non-theoretical, and memorable. […] Indeed, there is life in the words of a good story; there is life in the prose of a tasteful ethnography (Stoller 1989, 32).

Writing this thesis, I had to take academic requirements for a PhD thesis into consideration, but, inspired by Paul Stoller, tried to engage in "tasteful ethnography", both through storytelling and autoethnographic approach wherever possible. Certainly, the great strength of ethnographic writing lies in the careful and culturally sensitive capability of translating the Other without creating sensorial hierarchies often found in non-academic texts, such as restaurant reviews. The juxtaposition of visual and gustatory representations of European and "African" food shows a blatant discrepancy in the ways of sensing and making sense of food and gustatory pleasures, that is not accounted for. Instead, it builds sensory hierarchies. Ako-Adjei points out that "Food journalists and restaurant reviewers have the power to shift how the public sees African cuisines", through the power of their professionalism and established gustatory preferences. However, they often reinforce stereotypes about African cuisines and do not pay them the same heed as to other culinary traditions. If the language used by gourmet magazines does not change, discarding narratives of "oddity", "exoticism" or "culinary niche", African culinary influences will never enter the mainstream. She explains that "in a culinary world where there are hundreds of cuisines to choose from, the cuisines that are not written about favorably, or are not written about at all, are very unlikely to move from the culinary periphery to the center" (Ako-Adjei 2015, 53).

To discard (in Stoller's words: vomit) the rich, meaningful sensory material that fieldnotes are usually bejewelled with, is surely a waste. The use of vignettes is certainly helpful in creating a moderately accurate representation of the field. Arguably, this is not enough. This thesis borrows from journalistic and literary genres including first-person narratives to create an immersive story. Food is deeply intimate: eating it, cooking it, talking about it. There is no satisfactory way around food, other than total immersion. The spoon or hand that brings food to mouth is the same that writes notes. Engaging in the field means ingesting and digesting, dipping fingers in sauces and soups and tearing pieces of bread dipped in olive oil. This ethnography is definitely personal and moreover: personally sensuous.

Chapter 3

Becoming middle class? Consumer habits as cultural class markers among North Ghanaian professionals

> "Obinze laughed. She liked his quiet laugh. "When I came back, I was shocked at how quickly my friends had all become fat, with big beer bellies. I thought: What is happening? Then I realized that they were the new middle class that our democracy created. They had jobs and they could afford to drink a lot more beer and to eat out, and you know eating out for us here is chicken and chips, and so they got fat."
>
> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah,* 2013

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the main methodological premise, and the entry point into the field for this research project was what Spittler calls *dichte Teilnahme.* As it is the case with any anthropological research, spending time with and around people, watching them enact socially significant practices such as work, play, dance, chatter, or, in this case, cooking, is essential for collecting non-narrative data. Forster, cited in the previous chapter, underlines the importance of getting access to the non-predicated social knowledge – the knowledge of the body – as it offers access to another level of understanding social behaviours.

Seeing how cooking and eating are an inextricable elements of everyday life, the most important premise of this research was to accompany the research participants in their daily pursuit of sustenance. In this chapter I am focusing on everyday life in the household of my host family. Over the course of 7 months I spent living with them, I was able to take active part in sourcing food, cooking, eating and cleaning after the meals, as well as became an apt observant of everyday meals of other research participants. Conscious consumption of home cooked meals at my host family, together with their opennes to answer my questions, show me various dishes, methods of cooking and finally, share a table with me, opened the doors to a local sensorial landscape that wouldn't be available otherwise.

In this chapter, I present in detail the everyday eating habits of my host family as well as two other young professionals. I propose to understand their consumer habits as marker of social status, where economic, social and ethnic identities interject and coexist. After Weber, I

propose to understand everyday food consumption as an indicator of social class, and juxtapose it against Schütz's "lifestyles" and postcolonial theory of social class. Further I refer to the crucial work of Jack Goody "Cooking, cuisine and class", were he analyzes the development of *haute cuisine* in Western societies, and lack thereof in non-Western ones. I also call upon Spittler's idea of a "simple meal" and tie it back to the emergence of African "middle class" consumers.

A sensory stranger

Any categorization of food I encountered during fieldwork will, by necessity, be artificial and incomplete. I will, however, attempt such categorization based on several factors, such as spaces where certain foods were consumed and others not, frequency of cooking, preferences expressed by my collaborators, and those based on unspoken practices that went unnoticed until a certain point in my research. The purpose of such categorization is not to portray clear divisions of consumer practices and label certain foods as "entirely Dagaaba" or "100% middle-class" (what is "middle-class", anyway?). Consumer practices are, of course, fluid, ambiguous and changeable. However, *the modes of consumption and places where food is cooked and consumed* are usually paired with certain values. And those values we are going to explore.

To be sure, not all foods that are available and consumed in Northern Ghana are going to appear in this work. In the 13 months I spent in Tamale and Wa, I tried my best to become acquainted with as many ingredients and dishes as I possibly could. However, there were certain limitations to my chances of becoming familiar with food in Northern Ghana. For one, all the food was completely new to me, and I started my gustatory journey from the standpoint of a sensory stranger. My existing gustatory landscape couldn't give me any clues to make my way through – similar to walking in the dark before one's eyes become accustomed to the limited sources of light. In a similar manner, the more I consumed, the more I became aware of the complexity, richness and, for lack of a better word, idiosyncrasy, of eating and cooking practices. Starting from the fragmented and idiosyncratic experiences, I slowly made my way through to the bigger picture of the gustatory landscapes.

The journey came in stages: while it was immediately clear that food in Northern Ghana is not contained to *TZ, waakye, fufu* and three or four types of soups, it was hard for me to notice subtle differences brought by various styles of cooking, use of ingredients (which I often did not know), substituting one with another, and of course, the seasonality of ingredients. Due to organisational reasons, my three fieldwork stays in Ghana took place during the spring semester

between February and September. Thus, my fieldwork fell mostly on the rainy season that lasts in Northern Ghana, roughly from the beginning of April till October. I did not get to observe the yearly changes in food patterns – those I know only from the conversations and reminiscing.

Food in Northern Ghana

Maize porridge, called *tuo zaafi*, or TZ for short, remains one of the most culturally significant and widely consumed staple foods in Northern Ghana. Its historical importance is visible already in the works of Meyer and Sonia Fortes, who noted in 1936:

> "The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what man has in his grain store, it is made of early millet, guinea corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used." (Fortes and Fortes, 1936, p. 265)

Contemporarily, the porridge is usually prepared from maize meal, not millet. Jessica Hamm notices how the ingredients for porridge, or TZ, change over time in the rural areas of Northern Ghana (Hamm 2020). From self-grown crops such as millet or guinea corn to maize corn (from self-grown maize) to purchased corn meal. My research collaborators used to purchase large quantities of maize meal a few times per year and store them for daily use. Such maize was a cheap dry ingredient (cheaper than cassava flour and dough used for cooking *banku*), easy to store and available all year round, as opposed to yams.

Maize meal was considered a "go-to" starchy staple both among more and less affluent inhabitants of Wa. Those with better financial situations would eat TZ a few times a week (perhaps 2 or 3) as an element of a varied menu, while those who could not would eat TZ every single night. After several months of eating TZ every now and again and talking about eating it, it became clear that the taste of TZ is less important than the texture. If the texture is right, the TZ is considered to be "good". The light, plump TZ is prepared with processed maize meal, while its tougher version with unprocessed. The latter is better for storing, while the former should be eaten promptly.

The taste and texture of maize porridge are rather difficult to describe for someone who's not used to eating it daily and doesn't have a point of reference. Perhaps having to translate my first encounter with TZ from the bodily experience to words was the first challenge that many scholars refer to. Bodily sensory experiences are notoriously indescribable because they cannot be objectified and co-experienced (that is until scientists come up with a device

allowing us to tap into other people's impulse processing systems). Describing a taste without a point of reference to something well-known to the public is a challenge, as words can hardly carry over the full-body experience of smelling something considered repugnant or tasting something "delicious".

Comparative narratives help and for the purpose of this audience, I would describe the taste of TZ similar to finely ground polenta cooked without the usual additives such as salt, cream, bouillon or cheese. Salt is said to spoil TZ; thus, porridge is cooked without it. The texture resembles that of a light omelette or warm, slightly set pudding. TZ is eaten with soups, which in Northen Ghana are many. Most are categorized as vegetable soups and usually contain onion, collard greens such as pumpkin, *alefi,* cassava or baobab leaves, tomatoes (fresh or puree), groundnut paste, okra, and spices such as *dawa dawa* (a very good source of protein), dried fish, shrimp powder, Maggi cubes, grounded peanuts or other. Fresh or dried okra adds sliminess to the soup, a highly appreciated feature. There are dozens of types of soups and, as I'm going to show further down this thesis, while TZ is prepared the same way across the region, the soups are the element that defines the social and financial, as well as ethnic character of the household.

Other meals typically encountered in the North are staple foods commonly eaten all over the country, though associated with other ethnic groups than those encountered in northern Ghana. Starchy staples commonly eaten for lunch and easily found around town are *kenkey*, a fermented maize dough wrapped in maize leaves and steamed, *banku***,** corn dough and cassava flour cooked into a lumpy, slightly beige-grey dough (that one tastes stronger than TZ and has thicker texture). Vendor's tables and home kitchens see plenty of cooked and roasted yam, especially during the yam season. Cassava grains called *attieke*, a typical street food in West Africa, can be found on the Wa and Tamale markets, as well as *fufu* which is known elsewhere in West Africa as pounded yam and, of course, rice.

Rice in Northern Ghana is usually not considered "local food", although it has been grown in the north since several hundred years. Rice is harvested only once a year (as opposed to twice a year in the south) and does not reach to feed the whole household for the entire year. There is a clear distinction between the "local rice" grown in the area, and "perfumed rice", white refined rice imported from Thailand or Vietnam. The latter has been incrementally more present on the markets and on the plates of Ghanaians since the mid-80s, when Ghana opened its markets to the global exchange. Rice is still a more pricy staple and thus eaten less regularly than TZ or *banku*. Significantly, rice is typically an element of so called "fast foods", meals

found in food joints which many women described to me as “too tasty”. More pronouced flavours of rice and sauces that come with it (red stew, fried chicken paired with a bit of coleslaw salad or other green salad was something I also ate regularly) were preferred among the younger generation compared to TZ and soups.

As I mentioned above, it was the texture of TZ that decided about its quality. Already early on during the research I found out, that my participants divided all types of food into two categories: “chewed” and “swallowed”. The meaning of this category is quite literal and relates to the method of ingesting the food. All starchy staples coming with a soup, that is TZ, *fufu* and *banku* were categorized a swallowed. Their texture and weight was light and addition of the soup, often with fresh or dry okra, made pieces of dough slick and easy to swallow without chewing. Harder textures of rice, kenkey, and boiled yam, that came with variety of stews, required more work on each mouthful. Interestingly, all European food were categorized as “chewed”, since even soups contained pieces of vegetables that needed chewing.

Consumption, class and social milieu of a Northern family

I met my host family in July 2018 through a chain of contacts from Tamale, where I had stayed previously. We had never met before, but my contacts put in a good word for me and after quick negotiations I was invited to stay with them for the last six weeks of my research. Our relationship developed well enough for me to ask them to host me during the next visit in 2019. Overall, I lived with them for well over 7 months, only spending the last several months on my own. In 2018 the family consisted of six members: three children aged two, five and eight, my host and hostess and their niece, who was around seventeen. My hostess was pregnant at the time with another baby who was born later that year, so in 2019 there were up to 8 people living in the house, with some family members coming to stay for a period of time.

The family lived in a spacious, one-story house in a sparsely populated area of town, still relatively close to the centre. The house was fairly new, built no more than five years prior. The common space consisted of a big hall, dining area and a kitchen in the back. The kitchen was rather big and modern, with a regular size gas cooker, double sink with tap water, microwave and standing blender. There were two guest rooms adjacent to the main hall, one of which was rented to me, and one remained unfinished. It was a comfortable room with a bed, big wooden wardrobe filled with papers and knick knacks, and a chest tucked away in the corner. I also had *en suite* bathroom. The main hall was richly adorned with marble floors, white and gold curtains, a big plasma television screen, a dining table, two fridges and a large seating area. There were two verandas, one more representative in the front, one private in the back. It

was there, where mosst of the cooking and cleaning took place. The family owned three cars and a motorbike.

It's safe to say, the host family enjoyed good social status that stemmed from several factors. For one, the family owed certain affluence to the rather successful political career of my host. At the time, he was an important party member and had just recently lost his position as a city mayor. His wife was employed at the NGO-supported governmental unit for development, and was soon promoted from local office to the regional supervisor. They were both well educated; Madame had a bachelor's degree from UDS and Mister held a few degrees, including a Master, from national universities. He also held a honorary lecturer position at the University of Cape Coast. I soon learned that both of my hosts were very well connected in town and in the region through the political career of the host and his function as a city mayor. They both made their names through family connections, lines of work, political engagements and public appearances. Although no longer in office, Mister was frequently invited to attend events, give speeches and vouch for people and their projects.

The family claimed to be a tradtional, local Wala family. Both parents came from Wale speaking families: Madame's family, her mother and sister, still resided in the *zongo* area in the town's centre: a rather shabby looking area close to the market. Mister's famly lived in a village close by town. They both came from chief clans, although Mister's clan stood higher in the clan hierarchy. While they spoke Wale at home on a daily basis, their English was excellent and I had no trouble communicating, even with the children. The family practiced Islam, religion tradtionally associated with the Wala ethnicty. It was visible in how they dressed, spoke and ate. Although children were enrolled in a catholic school, they also attended Koranic school at the nearby mosque. Madame did not wear typical Islamic clothes, choosing local *kabas* and skirts over *abayas*. Leaving the house, girls and women wore *hijabs* and veils, though Madame also often wore traditional colorful headwraps.

Everyday life in the North Ghanaian household

When it came to family life, there was a clear division of household chores: Madame was responsible for them all, including cooking, cleaning, doing the laundry, shopping and taking exclusive care of the children on top of her professional career. Her niece, Fatima, helped her during school holidays and a girl living in the neighbourhood would come regularly to help with cleaning, laundry and simple cooking. From time to time, another female relative would stop by to help. At the time of my research, Mister had lost his lucrative position in the

municipal government and was pursuing a career in local politics. He was not employed permanently, therefore Madame served as the sole provider for the household.

We quickly found common ground and Madame eagerly took me under her wing. I asked her to allow me to take part in her daily chores outside working hours: shopping, taking children to school, visiting people and cooking. I attended naming ceremonies with her, was invited to a few funeral preparations and visited her friends. At home she often called me to accompany her in the kitchen. There I was able to see how she prepared everyday meals, from TZ with soup to occasional jollof rice. I helped her carry the bags to the market and we would often take a motorbike (later on with the baby tied to her back), to run errands and visit her family members. They invited me to come with them to the prayer ground at Eid and when they were sending a family member on *hajj*. In short, was quickly incorporated into the everyday family life, with their ups and down.

Days in the shared household followed a similar pattern. After breakfast in the morning, Madame would drive the children to school on her way to work. Mister would usually leave soon after if he had any appointments. Sometimes he would stay home, but mostly in his quarters. I left the house most days as well, even if only around lunch time to get something to eat. In the afternoons at around three o'clock, Madame would bring children home and the house was filled again with buzz and noise and the sound of television playing in the background. Madame would sometimes leave the house again in the afternoon to meet with family members and friends, or do shopping. She was usually back at around 5, if she had to cook, or later, when Fatima was home and there was someone who could serve supper to children and Mister.

Madame didn't cook everyday but planned weekly meals very thoroughly. Although we didn't have a strict weekly meal schedule like some households, Madame planned her dishes so that they don't repeat themselves daily. She also reused and repurposed leftovers and was very proud, that in her household, not a single spoonful of food is wasted. One day it was TZ with soup. The next, banku with groundnut soup with okra, the next the same banku with a different soup. On day fourth it might have been boiled yams with beans. She didn't cook every day but rather prepared food in larger quantities so it could last us two or three days, especially the starches.

Especially in the beginning she often called me from my room to the kitchen to come and watch. She was a prolific cook and really enjoyed preparing meals for her family – and admittedly, her food was excellent. After the watching period, I was tasked with small things,

like turning (mixing), chopping, washing and so on. At some point I was asked to pound fufu in a mortar which turned out to be a challenge but one that I managed with skill. I had a chance to learn how to cook everything the family ate: from *kpogolo*, traditional bean flour dumplings cooked in saltpetre, to *jollof* rice, boiled yams, to bean and vegetable stews and soups. Only TZ soups slipped my attention and dishes such as green-green or cassava leaf, I never had a chance to practise. In the beginning every cooking lesson was an adventure of sorts for all of us and Madame would film the whole process of showing me how to proceed and me trying to mimic her.

In the evenings Mister would most often be back home and the family would gather in the hall to eat, watch TV, talk or play. Madame was usually very tired but when Mister was home, they would talk at length discussing all things regarding his plans, her work, the household and others. After dinner I would sometimes stay and keep them company, chatting, playing and watching Indian dramas, maybe go to my room and work on the notes from the day, or sometimes rest from all the commotion four children can make. I spent quite a lot of time with them and soon became somehow responsible for them as well, which to some extent did not sit well with me. As much as I enjoyed being part of that family, it came with a reduction of my independence.

Food and money had the biggest impact on our relationship. I agreed with them to pay them 500 GHS (110 EUR) a month for upkeep. Mostly, it was money for food rather than rent per se, but it was to give Madame the freedom to buy better food in bulk and allow me unlimited access to food cooked in the house. Madame praised me for being easy to feed; her friends could not apparently believe her, when she claimed that her "white lady" eats everything the family eats (I was less fussy than her own husband). Regarding food, Madame turned out to be very particular (one could say controlling) about the food, the portioning, the preservation, the space in the fridge and many other things. I slowly became unsure of what I was allowed to take or not, being somehow reduced from an independent adult to a child. In the end, I chose not to stay with them again during my last field trip, although we remained in touch.

Eating together

Breakfasts

The family always ate breakfast and dinner at home. Lunch was usually not planned or served during weekdays, only weekends. During weekdays, breakfast would be eaten at any time between seven and half past seven and it was always the same: bread with tea. Although

simple, this meals was subject to strict rituals. Around seven, Fatima would boil a kettle of water (and when she was not at home, I often volunteered to do it) and pour it into an insulated flask. This way, the water would stay hot throughout the morning for everyone to prepare tea at their own time (Mister would often eat breakfast later). Then bread, a knife, a box of teabags, mugs, a can of condensed milk and a blue round container with sugar were placed on a small table in front of the couch in the hall, exactly in front of Madame's usual spot. She would appear a bit later and start preparing tea for the children in a form of daily ritual. They were not allowed to do it on their own. She took a big blue plastic cup, the type many people used for bathing. After pouring hot water from the flask, she added one bag of strong black tea (the brand they usualy bought was imported from Turkey). After letting it brew, she added several spoonfuls of sugar and enough sweet condensed milk turned tea pale brown.

After the tea was brewed and cooled down a bit, Madame divided the tea between the younger children. Then she would ask how much bread they wanted and cut appropriate slices. Then she would make tea for herself and cut herself a piece of bread. She would drink her tea unsweetened, only with milk (she did not enjoy sweet foods in general; when I brought cake from schools, she would only have a small piece) and when they learned I do not sweeten nor add milk to my tea, they were surprised that I like to drink my tea "raw like that". Mister drank his tea with both sugar and milk. The bread would be eaten plain, without any toppings such ss margarine, butter or jam. I occasionally bought jam for myself and Madame sometimes allowed children to have some too.

On weekends, when she had more time in the morning, Madame would make oats, semolina porridge or vegetable omelettes, and on very rare occasions she would prepare Wale *koko*, corn porridge. Preparing oats and eggs for the whole family was quite expensive and time consuming, so naturally we ate them rarely. Both oats and semolina (which she acquired through a friend in Tema Mills in the South) were imported (semolina mostly from Canada and Russia). Semolina has a consistency of polenta, soft and smooth when hot and becomes set when cooled down. We ate both semolina and oats with the addition of sweetened condensed milk and sugar. I really enjoyed the semolina and Madame would leave a bag for me to make for myself, as only a few members of the family enjoyed it.

Omelettes with onion and tomatoes, a very popular breakfast in diners and hostels, became more domesticated only recently, due to the considerable costs. To prepare them, Madame would whisk eggs in a bowl, add half of a thinly sliced onion and a small, sliced tomato. She would then pour that mixture onto a sizzling pan and in no time the omelettes were

ready. The children were not allowed to eat a lot; Madame would divide the omelette between them so that the oldest would get half or three quarters and the smaller children half to share. Omelettes are not my favourite dish, so on the few occasions I could prepare the eggs myself, I would usually make them scrambled with tomato and onion or fried with tomato on the side. The first time I showed them what was on my plate, the family, especially Madame, looked surprised; she had never made scrambled eggs before. Eggs in the house were considered "a rich addition" but not seen as particularly healthy or necessary in an everyday diet.

Lunches

In the literature on dietary patterns in Northern Ghana, lunch is rarely eaten at home. Among self-employed urban dwellers and lately among formal wage labourers, it is typical to each lunch out during office break time. From around eleven to three, Wa was swarmed with people eating in or buying takeaways to eat together with work colleagues or friends. The town has many options for eating out during lunch hours, from street stalls selling rice with stew, fried yams, *bambara* beans with vegetables and sauce, to local chop bars selling *banku*, *fufu* or TZ, to fast food joints and restaurants. For my host family, lunch was the least important meal of the day and there was never fresh food to eat during the week. Food that Madame cooked in bulk, was kept for dinners and weekend lunches.

Madame was out from morning until late afternoon and she and her husband either ate in town (Madame had a few favourite places she liked to frequent but remained secretive about) or skipped food until evening. On a daily basis, the children ate lunch at school and Madame and I in town. When Fatima was at home, she usually ate a late breakfast and waited with food until dinner. Sometimes I would meet Madame in town and we would collect the children from school together and eat lunch from the stall: a bowl of spaghetti with tomato stew, a ball of *kenkey* with fish or roasted yam - dishes she wouldn't cook or serve at home. During weekends, the food was more likely to be available, but Madame did not pay much attention to preparing something fresh; we would eat leftover *banku* with soup, banku with tin fish and pepper or rice with stew. All the leftovers were always stored and saved, mostly frozen, for the occasions when Madame did not have time or energy to cook. The children would sometimes snack on *gari* soaked in a small amount of water to keep them nourished until the evening meal.

Dinners

Dinner (or supper as they called it) was by far the most important meal of the day, one that was discussed, planned and thoroughly prepared from scratch, unlike other meals, where

we got by with ready-made products and leftovers. Madame planned dinner a few days ahead and had a few things to consider. She needed to plan for herself and the kids and additionally for her husband. Mister was hard to cook for; he had a few staples that he enjoyed and Madame strived to accommodate his wishes. He did not like anything with chilli pepper and he did not eat *banku*, TZ nor *fufu* (any "swallowed" food). His favourites were rice, *waakye*, *Bambara* beans, boiled yam and *kpogolo*. To plan meals a few days ahead she consulted the children, Fatima and sometimes me. Then we would negotiate. As mentioned before, the meals were rarely repeated for a few days in a row, especially TZ.

> They were cooking TZ and the soup. I said that she read my mind and that I was thinking I'd like to eat TZ today. She said it's obvious it's gonna be TZ, it was rice yesterday so today it should be fufu or TZ, fufu we had before that so it's TZ.

While we didn't have a strict weekly menu and Madame allowed wiggle room for family members to share their particular cravings, When it came to rice, Madame sometimes allowed the family to dine on it for a few days straight, as it was her favourite dish. We would eat rice with stew with an egg or a piece of meat if Madame managed to get it for a good price, and a bit of green salad. Sometimes it was just rice with stew.

Spicy or not spicy

Food in Ghana is typically quite spicy; the red stew and certain soups are supposed to come with a "heat" from chili peppers. I have a vivid memory of soups prepared by my first host, Mama A. in Tamale, who used plenty of chili in everything she cooked. Her soups were very hard for me to get used to. In general though, chili in various quantities is a crucial ingredient of nearly all soups in Northern Ghana, and I'm delving deeper in the topic in Chapter X. Mister did not like it; Madame claimed that he started to refuse to eat pepper after he had been treated for a stomach ulcer. Usually, people with ulcers are advised against eating too much hot pepper. Often, refusing to eat peppery food would evoke comments of people around wondering if the person is ill, as it is the most common reason:

> People think when you cannot eat pepper you must be sick, or the elderly people would also eat pepper free. […] They will think that, that there's something wrong with you and with the kids, why would they not eat pepper, everyone eats pepper. I don't bother but some people when they try there's no pepper in the food they will not continue eating. […] You can also hide it easily, when you

> order food, the pepper is usually ties separately so you just discard the pepper and nobody knows, then when there's buffet they serve stews with and without pepper, so you just take without pepper, not making any comments and no-one will know. This tendency to comment on pepper-free food is strong here in the north, as everyone eats pepper.

A preference for mild food is considered unnatural. Madame said that as a grown up, one can easily hide the avoidance of pepper, whereas she did not want her children to be pointed out as odd, fussy or weak eaters. Therefore, she made sure to train her children to be able to eat any "hot" food they might encounter. My host started to prefer "*peppa-free"* meals and at the beginning of their marriage, when Madame cooked only mild dishes, which they ate together. She admitted she didn't enjoy them much. As soon as their niece moved in with them at the age of 6, Madame started sharing a bowl with her: they added a few pepper fruits to enjoy. When the children came along and there were moe people to feed, she had a reason to cook two soups or stews: one with pepper, to please her and Fatima's tastes, and the second to please her husband's. Madame did not complain much about having to cook two different types of meals and usually said it was not a problem. She could afford to buy the ingredients for two and had the time or someone to do it for her. Sometimes, especially when she planned TZ or *banku* for the family, she would buy steamed beans and defrost some stew for her husband to make things easier.

Buying ingredients

Much like many other working women, Madame would go shopping on her free day (although she would religiously omit market days, as she hated crowds) and designate Saturdays for bulk cooking. I often accompanied her to the market, where she had her favourite stalls and sellers, with whom she had long-term relations. She usually purchased portions of ready-made corn and cassava dough necessary to prepare TZ and *banku*, a large amounts of vegetables such as carrots, green peppers, hot peppers, turkey berries, garden eggs, tomatoes and onion, together with oil and fish. She would usually have maize flour, groundnut paste and basic spices at home and upon returning from shopping she would turn most of those ingredients into a few meals. She would prepare, for example, a pot of *jollof* rice, two pots of stew, a soup and a big batch of *banku* (when Fatima was home, she would perform more strenuous jobs, like stirring the *banku* and cooking jollof, while Madame would make the soup, for example groundnut soup). *Banku* would be eaten first, for supper and maybe lunch the next day, *jollof* for dinner and the stew

would be frozen. These dishes would keep us going for the next three days and after that, Madame would do some extra shopping and prepare TZ or fufu. Her fridge was still small compared to some others I saw and did not allow her to store or freeze a sufficiently large amount of items. In other homes, women would store dozens of frozen containers full of soups, stews, or raw ingredients like groundnut paste or tomatoes, bought and processed while they were cheap.

Our meals were fairly seasonal and depended much on Madame's budget and time. Plain rice with stew and salad or *jollof* rice appeared on our plates repeatedly, sometimes enhanced with a chunk of meat, tinned fish or egg. Most often however, especially when Madame's schedule was tight, we would just eat plain rice with a little stew on the side. A usual weekly menu would involve dishes such as TZ with green-green, baobab leaf or dry okro soup, *banku* with groundnut, light or *okro* soup or *okro* stew, rice with beans (*waakye*), *kpogolo* and boiled yam with stew. Depending on the season, we would eat more yams and okra, which were incredibly cheap in season and were used by Madame to prepare stews. Out of season, she would add a few pieces into her light soup, but mostly resorted to dried okra powder.

On occasion we would eat *jollof* rice: plain when she was short on budget or richer, with vegetables such as green bell peppers, French beans and carrots. From time to time, Madame would also make my favourite, yam *fufu*. She was not very keen on this dish, as I realised, because the preparation required much more time and effort than other dishes. Although she would not pound the *fufu* herself (she would drive some ten minutes down to the main road and use a pounding machine), she had to cook yams in advance, cool them, carry them there and back. Then the dough needed to be loosened up and formed in a mortar and served while still fresh. Additionally, she would have to prepare a separate dish for her husband. When she learned that I found a place to eat *fufu* in town, she practically stopped making it at home; this makes me realise she went this extra mile to cater to my tastes almost exclusively.

We would always eat dinner around half past six, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later, but as soon as the sun went down, we usually gathered at the table, If Madame was cooking that day, she would start around half past four or five, to be ready for six thirty, especially since the soups needed a long time to cook. When the food was cooked fresh, we would be called to eat as soon as it was ready; with leftovers, we could eat at our convenience. I usually adjusted my timing to fit the family's schedule to benefit from the opportunity to eat, talk, and share thoughts about the day together. The order of consumption was also specific and depended on the type of food and who was present during the meal.

If everyone was present and we were served, for example, boiled yams, I had my own plate or bowl and I would serve myself. Mister also had his own plate and would be served by one of the women in the household. Either Madame or I or Fatima would be responsible for serving the youngest children. Mister allowed his son to eat with him from the same plate. Madame would have her own plate, same as Fatima; but would serve herself last and often eat once everyone was finished. When Mister was absent from dinner, Fatima would often share a plate with the boy and the two older children would eat from the same plate. When we were served *fufu*, Madame and the children, including Fatima, would eat from the same big bowl, I would eat from mine and Mister, if he was present, would eat something else, for example rice from his own plate. In general, only the boy was allowed to share a plate with his father. I always had my own plate and the women would, more often than not, share the plate among themselves. Madame shared a bowl with her children only if we were eating *fufu*. When they shared a bowl of *fufu* with light soup, the pieces of meat for everyone were carefully selected and each child was permitted to eat as many as prescribed. Frequently arguments broke out when one child snatched another's meat portion or ate one too many. The same practice applied to eggs and fish pieces.

Madame would usually be responsible for doling out food, for both cooked and purchased meals. On a few occasions we ate food bought at one of the few restaurants in town she approved of, *2nd Kitchen*. We bought three portions and it was Madame who divided the food between the children. First rice and the stew were served, while meat, fish or egg would always come last. Traditionally, meat (and other more expensive kinds of protein) would be first served to the elders; if eating from the same bowl, they would eat as much as they needed first and the rest would be left for the women and children (Kifleyesus 2002; Goody 1982; Fortes and Fortes 1936). In this modern nuclear family, the traditional hierarchy of food sharing among the household members was sustained. Mister would receive the best quality of meat and the biggest portion, then Madame would select pieces for herself and the rest was divided among the children. The latter would know not to touch the meat without their mother's permission.

Dinner was served not only to the family staying in the house; on occasion Madame would pack dinner for a lady bringing food for the dogs (leftovers from one of the restaurants in town) and almost every evening she would stir a big bowl of TZ and prepare a simple soup for the gatekeeper. He was a slim elderly man, who knocked on the front door every evening, greeted us and waited patiently, maybe sharing a word or two with the Mister. Madame would

soon emerge from the kitchen with a big bowl of TZ and soup tied in a plastic wrap. The bowl would then reappear in the morning in the kitchen. Very occasionally Madame prepared food for her sister or mother, or a seamstress friend; she would take it along with her when visiting them.

The art of cooking

Madame was a prolific cook; she claimed to love cooking and that the kitchen was her favourite place in the whole house. She was skilled and talented; indeed, I always enjoyed her meals, regardless of the dish she prepared, and I made sure she knew it. She eagerly accepted my praise; she held her cooking in high regard and knew that people complimented it widely. She regularly entertained the idea of opening her own restaurant (she even had a name for it: "The Only Place") and sometimes, when she was particularly pleased with her cooking, she would nod with self-content and murmur: "*The only place"*. Having said that, she very seldomly purchased food outside. She had a few "approved places" where she trusted the women to cook competently; she knew them well or was related to them. One restaurant formerly called "Countryside Kitchen" and later renamed into "2nd Kitchen", met her approval entirely and I remember her buying food there on a few occasions. Second, was a simple *fufu* spot run by a Wala woman. Madame enjoyed her food because, as she claimed, "the lady prepares the soup like I do. It's like eating my own soup". Usually, she thought street food was unhealthy or too "tasty" and did not let her children eat it.

Although Madame put an effort into cooking, she made sure she did not spend much time doing it. She was a busy person with an official position, big family and responsibilities. Additionally, the family was quite prosperous in terms of social position and financial means. Although Mister was not working full time at the time I was staying with them, Madame earned well enough to provide her family with a decent upkeep, although she was very cautious about how she spent the food money, making it stretch as much as possible. She almost never bought things that would serve for one meal only; items such as plantains were reserved for special occasions. She also very rarely bought meat and claimed it too expensive to buy for the whole family. If she did buy meat, it would usually be goat or mutton. Rather than meat, she preferred smoked fish: mackerel or catfish. Canned sardines that would be added to *banku* and pepper were limited; Madame would share one tin between three people. She also used eggs sparingly and never purchased milk, yoghurt nor butter (margarine), except sweetened canned milk. On the other hand, she never bought and cooked cheaper local rice; instead, she purchased big bags of "perfumed", imported white rice, which was much more expensive. To make *egusi* soup, she

would use a 10 GHS bag of *egusi* and form it into balls while in other households with smaller budgets a 3 or 4 GHS quantity of *egusi* would be mixed into the soup.

Madame would seldom use spices in the form of pre-packaged ready-made mixes of ground roots and herbs. Big companies like *Maggi* and *Onga* would advertise them as an easy solution to season meat and fish and to enhance the flavour of soups and stews. Madame claimed that they are artificial and unhealthy, a view shared by many housewives I had a chance to talk to. She did regularly use *Maggi* or *Onga* cubes however, to add flavour to stews. In the soups, she would only use onion, ginger and chilli peppers, which she would usually blend together with tomatoes and garden eggs. One extra spice she used religiously in all her meals was powdered *dawa dawa*. *Dawa dawa* (or *dawa-dawa*) is a traditional spice popular among the Hausa of Ghana and Igbo and Yoruba of Nigeria, made of locust bean seeds (*Parkia biglobosa)*. *Dawa dawa* has a strong cultural meaning among the rural population of the Upper West Region, its rich protein content used to compensate for the lack of animal protein in foods. The contemporary role of *dawa dawa* is being contested, mainly due to its pungent smell and long-term association with poverty and shortages.

Madame had both gas and charcoal cookers using them interchangeably, depending on what she wanted to cook. Cooking on gas was definitely more convenient but less obtainable, as filling one big gas bottle cost around 90 GHS and needed to be done every 4 to 6 weeks. Meanwhile, a bag of charcoal cost 1 GHS and provided fuel for at least three cooking sessions. For the weekly bulk cooking, Madame would usually light up the charcoal stove and simply switch pots; once one dish was done, she would move to another. The charcoal oven was also a preferred option for cooking larger quantities of dishes that required more time, as big cauldrons fitted better on the charcoal than on the gas stove. This is why Madame always cooked big batches of *banku* and TZ on the charcoal, but for convenience she customarily used the gas stove for smaller batches of food or for dishes that cooked relatively quickly.

It was not until later into my fieldwork, that it became clear that cooking and foodways of the family reflect their ethnic belonging. More has been written about tastes, food and ethnicity in Northern Ghana in other chapters, but here it would be beneficial to make a few remarks. Madame considered herself a typical Wala woman; she spoke Wala, grew up in a typical Wala household, particularised by location, religion and kinship ties. Her family was polygynous; she was and remained part of extended kin ties and those relations were still guiding much of the family's social life. At the same time, she belonged to the city elites. Her husband was a well known politician and a municipality figure, while she was employed at a

governmental office. She was able to afford varied and richer food than many and yet, she still taught her children to eat TZ (albeit she did not make it too often and never forced them to eat it). She cooked soups that were typically associated with her ethnic group, which she most likely learned by watching her mother cook. Soups such as dry okro and *egusi* were staples in her home, while dishes such as *jojo,* typically associated with Dagaba households, were not.

Special occasions

Special occasions of religious or personal character were marked with the patronage of certain dishes. It was usually their richness and abundance of quantity that differentiated them from everyday food, not the character of the dish itself. Everyday *jollof* rice or plain rice with stew was upgraded to a celebratory version by adding more vegetables, fish or meat and eggs, leaving no limits to how much each member of the household could eat. Such practices are rather common in the literature and were observed by Goody (Goody 1982) among the Lobi, Ashanti and Gonja in Ghana, Kifleyesus (Kifleyesus 2002) among the Argobba Muslim communities in Ethiopia or Holtzman among the Samburu in Northern Kenya (Holtzman 2001; 2002; 2007). From my research, it would appear there was no strict celebratory menu; every family I have spoken to ate "whatever everyone liked best" to celebrate occasions like Christmas, Eid Al-Fitr, weddings or naming ceremonies. However, as my data shows, the type of sustenance served at particular ceremonies or gatherings is dictated by more than sole idiosyncratic preferences.

In the case of my host family, the differentiation between private and the public was more palpable than between religious and non-religious modes of celebration. There appeared also to be a type of dynamic between "rich-but-scarce" and "plain-but-abundant" types of celebratory food, as the following examples will now illustrate.

My host family celebrated Islamic ceremonies (Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, sending family members on a pilgrimage to Mecca), as well as naming ceremonies, weddings, funerals, "end-of-school" days and birthdays. On both Eids we ate rice; once it was rich, *jollof* rice cooked on beef stock with ginger, garlic and plenty of vegetables. Another time, it was plain rice with rich vegetable stew, quail eggs and salad. At the end of the school semester on so-called "Our Day", every child received a lunch packet containing fried rice with chicken worth 10 GHS (around 2 EUR in 2019), purchased from one of the town's best-known restaurants, *Spicy.* We celebrated the eldest daughter's tenth birthday in what was clearly the most luxurious hotel in the Upper West, Jirapa Dubai, with fowl, chicken, fried rice and ice cream. When I attended funeral preparations however, the food cooked in big cauldrons was

TZ and cassava leaf soup. I did not attend a Muslim wedding, but Madame told me there is usually rice with stew and meat and TZ, for those who prefer to eat it. At two Dagaba weddings I attended we ate a rather humble meal; one was cooked by a family and guests could choose between rice and *tubani*, while the other ordered catering serving two types of rice, chicken or fish and *tubani*. At the naming ceremonies I attended, there was a snack offered to everyone (meat pie and *sobolo*) and the inner circle of guests were also offered TZ with baobab leaf soup.

The meals seemed to follow a pattern mentioned above; big public events offered abundant amounts of food that was cheaper and more wanting in ingredients (and sometimes flavour), while private, small celebrations like family Eids or birthdays saw more elaborate dishes that were scarcer in quantity. The two gustatory approaches should not be mixed, otherwise the quality of the meals would not reflect the celebratory nature of the respective event. Once Madame wanted to play a joke on her children and asked me to watch and corroborate. We were sitting together in the hall and Madame, using her most tired and woeful voice, said that she did not have money to purchase fried rice and chicken for the children to eat on "Our Day". All three siblings stared at her in horror. She said she would probably have to cook TZ for them to take to school and I said they should not worry, it would still be nice. The eldest daughter was visibly angry. "We will eat rice and we will give TZ to the dogs!" she said and left the room. Madame laughed and called her back, saying that it was only a joke and that she would get them rice. Upon hearing that, the children started jumping and screaming with joy.

Approach to foreign foods

My presence in the family home was seen as an opportunity for them to try new dishes and ingredients. Already during my first stay, Madame asked me to prepare something Polish for them in exchange for the Ghanaian food I was able to try. I was at loss as to what I should prepare; in the end, I thought a nice soup with chunks of meat would be a good choice. I purchased expensive beef, prepared a broth and added a selection of vegetables. It could not have gone down worse. The family struggled to swallow even a spoonful of the soup; only the eldest remotely enjoyed it. As Chapter 5 shows, catering students loathed clear soups and were not able to eat them. My host family was similar. The consistency of the soup was too thin, there were no carbohydrates to go with it and the cooked pieces of vegetables were inedible to them. It was a magnificent failure. My next attempt was *pierogi* with cabbage filling, a traditional dish eaten at Christmas and on fasting days. When I explained to Madame the idea of pierogi, she was not convinced as she did not like the boiled dumplings she had tried in Asia.

I adapted the recipe for the family to enjoy it more, by using yeast dough and baking the pierogi in the oven, making them similar to the Ghanaian meat pies sold popularly as a snack. They did not resemble the original at all, but the family was happy.

What really became their favourite was pancakes. Ever since I had proposed to prepare them for some occasion I was requested to make them regularly. Madame was initially sceptical of milk I had bought in the carton (imported from Germany) and did not quite believe me when I said it was safe to drink raw. Later I found out she used to buy milk from the Hausa traders on the market and that milk had to be boiled before consumption. Madame also did not approve of the way I was preparing the pancakes; she did not understand the need to measure the ingredients, nor that not all the flour nor eggs were meant to be used. She was sceptical of any measurements and proportions. To her, a good cook should be able to cook without a recipe and with trial and error, she did in fact master the recipe herself. Pancakes were eaten as a snack or taken to relatives as gifts, and upon my return a year later, Madame told me that they still prepared them regularly.

I once brought a jar of jam. I was tired of eating dry bread for breakfast and needed some variation. I am not partial to margarine, so I thought jam would serve as an agreeable topping. I shared the jam with everyone, although not without some hurdles. Madame did not allow the younger children to eat much, claiming it was not healthy for them. The youngest one did not like the sweet taste, whereas the elder two did. Mister apparently became rather fond of spreading jam on his morning bread, whereas Madame resolved to keeping to her dry slice. Fatima harnessed her home economics education and I soon saw her preparing mango jam by boiling slices of ripe mango with sugar. Madame approved of that one much more.

During my time working extensively with vocational schools, I was being given a lot of food to take home, including cakes. The cakes were always welcome in the house, although Madame did not enjoy them so much, nonetheless revering them as an emanation of skills she had never learnt, that is baking. I suggested a few times we should bake something together: a simple banana bread, some cookies or chocolate cake. Madame was eager to some extent, whereas the children were ecstatic even if Madame did not allow them to eat too much. Still, the one who ate the majority of the cake at home was the Mister.

Madame frequently attended so-called “programmes”: conferences, workshops, training sessions and other events in connection with her job. Those events were usually catered for and she eagerly used the opportunity to try or bring some things home. I remember one event in particular; it was a three-day workshop hosted at a renowned hotel in town. Every day she

would come home bringing her whole diet and distributing it among the children. “I was starving myself to bring the things for children”, she said, splitting a club sandwich, spring rolls, fried rice and other treats. She was not an ardent fan of those dishes herself, but she knew that the children would love to try them as a special, unusual type of food. She made sure they were used to various types of meals even if they were not usually prepared by herself.

Eating habits of young professionals in Wa

Though Wa does not offer as many possibilities to go out for food and drinks as Tamale, let alone Accra, many of my respondents were frequent customers of chop bars, drinks bars and discos. Most of them were in their late twenties to mid-thirties, unmarried or married and childless, the majority were educated at the tertiary level and had more or less stable jobs. Their eating habits were crafted to reflect their financially and socially independent status, which, as I advance, makes them aspirational middle-class members. In this part of the chapter, I will draw a few gustatory portraits of Northern Ghanaian young professionals.

J. was a woman in her late twenties. Her family originated from around Jirapa and she identified as a Dagaba. Her widowed mother lived with her younger brother and sister in a small house in town, whereas J. lived on her own in a two-room apartment in a more remote part of town. Her mother was a primary school teacher in her mid-fifties, and her late father used to be a civil servant. Both of J.’s siblings were receiving education; her younger sister was in secondary school and her elder brother was planning to join uniformed services. J. obtained her nursing degree in the South and returned north to take up a position in a public hospital in Wa. When I met J. she had a fiancé and they were traditionally married; their clans agreed to their union and the bride price had been paid. As practising Catholics, they were also planning a church wedding soon. J.’s fiancé was also from Jirapa and at the time resided in Accra where he had a lucrative position. He obtained his master’s degree in Australia and was an amiable, caring and well-spoken man. They saw each other every so often when J. would travel to Accra for a couple of weeks, or he would come to the North to visit her and the family. J. was planning to continue her education to become an ophthalmological nurse; such courses were available in Accra and her future husband was supposed to pay for it.

J. was a very independent woman. She always looked impeccable, well dressed and well-groomed, since she regularly visited her seamstress and beautician. She was popular in town and had many friends, with whom she often spent time. Most of her friends received a higher education and were pursuing further degrees while searching for (very scarce at the time) job opportunities. Many frequently relocated to bigger cities, such as Tamale, Kumasi or even

Accra. J. often invited me to eat with her, either something she cooked, or food purchased outside. She knew a lot about the local kitchen and was an excellent cook, having learnt from her mother. She did not recollect learning how to cook with particular fondness and said that her mother often used to beat her with a cane when she did not do things correctly. She loved TZ and *banku* and often prepared it at home in bulk. She could afford to buy good ingredients and her food was quite rich and hearty, but she also did not shy from purchasing food outside.

Her home was a comfortable one, equipped with a seating set, a television, a fridge and a private bathroom. Her home was of a higher standard than that of her mother. J. was on a governmental salary and was supporting her mother and siblings, whereas her husband was regularly supporting her by paying for the bus tickets, school and home equipment. Although they were both educated, there was a clear gender role division and although J. accepted it and was eager to make her relationship work, was not entirely happy with it. Food was a bone of contention; while J. did not cook for herself every day and was used to storing food in the fridge for a few days, he asked her to cook something fresh for every meal, because that is what he liked: an expectation I observed among many men. Much like my hostess, she served him meals, undertook house cleaning and did the laundry.

Later next year they got married in an exquisite ceremony. The wedding took place at the local cathedral and the reception was held at the local house of chiefs. On Sunday, after the wedding, there was a thank-you mass and a small party for close friends, held at a local guesthouse. J. ordered all her wedding attires and accessories in Accra, save a smock dress she wore on the second day (her husband was wearing a traditional male smock made from matching material), made by her local seamstress from locally woven material. She had six bridesmaids with matching tailor-made purple dresses, golden heels, golden jewellery and headpieces, and her make-up was taken care of by an artist flying in from Accra. Her husband, similarly, had six groomsmen, all dressed in white tuxedo jackets. The church ceremony was attended by some important politicians with whom J.'s husband had connections. J. wore a beautiful white dress and a veil, which she later changed for an equally stunning golden one with matching headpiece, heels and a white feather fan. The reception was meticulously scheduled, with a ceremony master calling for speeches, dances, blessings and cake cutting.

The food was ordered from a catering company and served in the form of a buffet. There were three types of rice: plain with stew, *jollof* and fried, chicken, fish and a separate container with *tumpani* and *banku* with soup, prepared mostly for the elder's convenience. Another specialty was a multiple tier cake, also prepared by a local cateress. One corner hosted a modern

cocktail bar, run by the groom's friends, which offered a variety of drinks popular in Accra. On the second day of the wedding, the buffet was much smaller and included mostly home cooked *tumpani* served from an ice box and drinks. I visited J. soon after the wedding and she was peaceful and elated. She said that the preparations were long and tedious (their church wedding had been postponed for a year) and she had been very nervous about how everything was going to proceed. Nobody from her family ever experienced a "Western" wedding before and she made a lot of effort to have it the way it "should be". Her parents, although Catholic, wed on a Sunday after the mass, her mother did not even have a wedding dress and there was no reception. For J. and her husband, the format of the ceremony symbolised their belonging to the modern caste of Ghanaians and their rising social position.

Although J. loved local food and was an excellent cook, she did not have a problem with purchasing food from outside. She was financially independent and lived on her own, something not too common in the North, as most of her friends were still staying with their families. Her status was possible partly due to her relationship; her fiancé and soon-to-be husband supported her and was not opposed to her living on her own. My hostess was surprised when I told her about J.'s living situation and claimed that neither she nor any women she knows would ever be able to do that. J. got married both in a traditional and in a Westernised ceremony. Although the wedding took place in Wa, it was possible thanks to her close links to Accra; her clothing and accessories, make-up artist, cocktail bar, the cake and food were arranged through the import of goods and services, as well as various forms of Bourdieu's capital. In a sense then, her wedding was a translocal event, which transported aesthetics, objects, tastes and lifestyles from Accra to the Northern city. I argue that this wedding, structured along the lines of opulent Southern weddings, which in turn, copy the Western and especially American ceremonies as seen in the media, was a performance designed to ascertain and articulate J. and her husband's social status and class belonging.

I., a man in his early thirties, was a teacher at a secondary school in a village near Wa. He identified as Wala, he spoke Wala every day, his family was originally from Wa and he was a practising Muslim. I. was not married nor was he, to my knowledge, engaged. He lived independently in the city. Besides his teaching position, he was a business owner: he ran a shop inside the Wa market. When not at school he spent time mostly there, not only selling his products but also socialising. I. already had a degree but was pursuing another degree in teaching. I met him through my driver and gatekeeper at the time, R., who was his relative.

I. ate mostly out, since he lived far from his family and could not capitalise on their cooking, and was single, therefore there was no woman who would cook for him every night. He did not consider his regime to be healthy, but claimed to have no other choice, seeing how he could not cook himself. During the mornings and afternoons, he would mostly eat alone, but in the evenings he would meet with his peers and relatives to share an evening meal. A lot of single men of his age corroborated that eating pattern, especially those who lived comparatively far from their relatives. Many, like I., had more than one source of income: usually a formal one, such as teacher, bank clerk or a civil servant and unofficial, related to trade, exchange, delivery or agriculture. All those men were claiming to suffer from having to eat outside (typically street food and non-traditional meals) and that they would benefit more from eating at home. The women I consulted this statement with usually shrugged and murmured that this is a pose men display to garner pity, or to show that they are available for marriage, while in fact they enjoy their gustatory freedom.

I. eagerly participated in "programmes": conferences, workshops, training and others, where he was able to try foreign food. He claimed that Wa was not a good place to try foreign food as there were not many restaurants offering it for a good price. He was not keen on emptying his wallet on pizza, pasta or other things he was not sure he would enjoy. He was not partial to those foods for their health benefits or gustatory pleasures; they were rather an element of a foreign sensor spectrum which he, an educated man, wanted to possess. Therefore, he welcomed opportunities to try them at catered events. He claimed to have a curious and exploratory attitude towards new, foreign foods.

> Like me for instance normally when I go to a programme or another workshop in Accra or have a meeting to attend, or a school programme to be in Accra or some of those big cities. When you go there you have to go to complex, or shall I say, standardised restaurants where you are going to meet this foreign food. When after the program you all go, and they have to serve you, you receive a variety of food items and you become happy. Sometimes you feel like eating, finishing and going back to take. Because of the appearance of the food and the fact that you have not eaten it before. We don't get that here. […] I wish I had the opportunity to try more. Both the capacity and the ability

My respondent shared that view with many other men of a similar age, status and aspirations. He was eager to broaden his overall horizons and gain experience; part of that experience was to be able to try continental, modern and foreign foods. They did not display

the need to uproot their current eating habits, but rather that their education and future position should enable them to enjoy a much wider variety of foods and drinks. Another respondent, one of the few male teachers of home economics I met, presented a similar need for growth and expansion not only of his tastes but most of all, skills. He was a talented and perseverant person. Aside from his teaching job, he owned a bakery and produced cakes, cookies, doughnuts and other goods for a growing group of clients. Sweet bakes were by far the most popular non-local types of foods and the practice of celebrating birthdays and weddings with cakes was quickly becoming more and more popular among the more affluent people of Wa. W. was adamant to hone his skills outside the region. He claimed that the northern regions are not yet rich enough to ensure a market for elaborate and therefore expensive cakes, and no schooling in that regard is provided. He travelled to Sunyani, Kumasi and Accra in southern regions to participate in programmes and brought his knowledge back north, adapting it to the tastes and financial possibilities of the local clientele.

Middle-class, industrial foods and global relations of power

The Western understanding of social class is arguably not very pertinent to the understanding of how societies in contemporary Africa are stratified. Rachel Spronk addresses the idea of social class in the postcolonial Kenyan society carefully: "speaking of distinct social classes in Kenya is a complicated matter because vertical links of kinship, religion, regional affiliation, and ethnicity have been as important as the horizontal connections among those sharing the same objective economic situation" (Spronk 2014, 95). Scholars researching the stratification of contemporary African societies in the context of postcolonial studies use the term "social class" very carefully. It is indeed a loaded term, one that has been repetitively deconstructed and criticized. For instance, Bourdieu's classic understanding of social class has been widely criticised for its homogenization of class, focus on the reproduction of inequality, neglecting intersectionality and Eurocentrism. Surely, habitus-based notion of social class is of little use in the case of this research. And if this is the case, why use the category of class at all?

Although profoundly criticised, social class as an analytical category in the context of West African societies persists and thus should not be overlooked or ignored. Additionally, many scholars have contributed to varied, more nuanced and contextual understanding of class in postcolonial Africa. A number of those analyses are based on patterns of consumption and pursuing the idea of "modernity". For the purpose of this thesis, I understand the middle class as a set of cultural practices that set its participants aside from non-class members. This

approach has been widely applied among African anthropologists and it seems the most viable for several reasons. It responds to the main analytical qualm, which is how to define the middle class. A qualitative approach allows one to perceive class as a blurred, fluctuating, rather than rigid category. In this aspect, it stands in stark opposition to the definition provided by the African Development Bank, which proposed classification based on spending patterns (Spronk 2014; Melber 2016; O'Kane, Scharrer, and Kroeker 2018; Chevalier 2015). According to the ADB, the middle class comprises households and people spending an equivalent of two to twenty dollars a day. This is a very broad and nondescript category containing a spectrum of households, from those living on the verge of poverty to the well-off. Moreover, this classification does not consider factors such as access to and distribution of salaried income among the household members, patterns of consumption, access to education, levels of education, gender division of labour and many others.

For many contemporary scholars, class in the African context is inexorably linked to the notion of modernity. Cultural practices that constitute social status and identify one's cultural and economic capital, are influenced by modern global society (Spronk 2014; Giuseppe Balirano and Guzzo 2019; Klein and Murcott 2014). I find that approach appealing and applicable to the context of this research, especially when it comes to behaviours driving everyday food choices. Jessica Ham in her article "Cooking to be modern, eating to be healthy" (2020) hints on the idea of modernity in the Ghanaian kitchen through the changes in perception of palatability in preparing soups. Over the last several decades, the use of Maggi cubes has increased dramatically. Maggi cubes symbolise modern approach to cooking, which is juxtaposed with the use of "traditional" spices like *dawa-dawa* seed paste. Distinct pungent smell of *dawa-dawa* is considered unpleasant and unpalatable. Its smell is connected with the idea of traditional and, at the same time, outdated, ways of cooking and eating. Maggi cubes are quick, fragrant and easy way to make the soup taste nice and "sweet". At the same time, they are not considered as "healthy" as dawa-dawa. This constant negotiation in the kitchen depicts well the back-and-forth relationship many "middle-class" Ghanaians, like my host family and young professionals, face every day when choosing what to eat.

In the African context, the notion of modernity has typically been associated with the processes of urbanisation (the new "urban middle class"), that in turn propelled an exclusively dualistic view on society, divided between the urban (linked with modern) and the rural (linked with traditional) communities. Such division has hence been criticised as unproductive and simplistic. Granted, for many the urbanisation and industrialisation of the country has created

space for new identities, where original ethnicities were being shed for the sake of more utilitarian, contextual labels. Modernity in the African context, however, and the position of Africans in the globalising world, could be looked at from a different, more agency-centred approach. According to Fergusson, classes in modern African societies could be distinguished based on "cultural styles". Spronk concludes, that:

> Instead of seeing cultural style as a "secondary manifestation or a prior identity which style then expresses," he [Fergusson] considers style as "a signifying practice" that marks socially significant positions and allegiances: "It is not simply a matter of choosing a style to fit the occasion, for the availability of such choices depends on internalized capabilities of performative competence and ease that must be achieved, not adopted" (1999:96). This approach opens up various ways of helping us understand people's agency in processes of social stratification. (Spronk 2014, 99).

It is certain that Ghanaian society is not a class society in European terms. Few African countries could be analysed from a class perspective apart from South Africa. The latter is considered the most class-sensitive among post-colonial African countries, still demarcating class identity along the race, localisation and type of occupation. Gradually however, consumer practices are coming to the fore as distinguishing practices, with the former lower castes becoming more visible and affluent in formerly white-only spaces (Chevalier 2015; Nugent 2010). Therefore, Spronk and others advocate a conceptual shift from class defined through Marxist modes of production to Weberian modes of consumption that indicate, rather than fixate, social stratification (Spronk 2014; Chevalier 2015). Class, in this perspective, is not seen as a fixed, rigid category of *de facto* deeply varied social actors, but as habitus: constantly redefined, practiced mode of being, or as Lopez and Barbara call it "a working social concept, a material experience, a political project and a cultural practice" (López-Pedreros and Weinstein 2012, 20–21).

Being middle-class, in this understanding, is based on context-specific consumer practices, lifestyles and aspirations. A practice-oriented perspective is not limited solely to one's economic status, but rather takes into consideration all facets of social life, therefore providing a more complex and contextual picture of what middle-class lifestyles could be. It also moves beyond typical, established dichotomies used to define what middle class is and is not: modern versus traditional, Western versus local, developed versus developing or underdeveloped. In this way, it fixes what remains ailing in Bourdieu's class theory, that is the

role of agency in constantly evolving communities. In consequence, it allows African actors to define what is modern beyond Western values and how to incorporate the traditional and local into their contemporary lifestyles. As such, class distinction is transformed from a top-down, presumptively conceived economic category into one considered through agency and self-perception in relation to category of class (Spronk 2014; Heiman, Liechty, and Freeman 2012).

Milieu and lifestyle as alternatives to social class

The concept of social milieu and lifestyles can be proposed as an alternative to the theory of social class in the understanding of Marx, Weber or Bourdieu. The strength of this concept lies in the fact, that it goes beyond the notion of socioeconomic classes by emphasizing the importance of cultural practice. On the other hand, it helps to transgress the ever-present issue of class mobility, highlighted in the works of Bourdieu and Weber.

Social milieu as a concept was first introduced by Emile Durkheim in the early 20th century. Inspired by the French term meaning "middle" is usually translated to "environment" and denotes the social environment that consists of the physical environment and social relations in their various forms. Social milieu was an important addition to the discussion about the organization of social groups. It mediated the notion of total fragmentation of social groups in favour of individual pursuits encapsulated in "lifestyles" (fueled by globalisation and mobility) and the role of social groups in creating those lifestyles. Less constrictive than a social class, milieu postulated the fusion of the individual and the collective, admitting that individual lifestyles do not take place in the social void. In fact, people do share practices, needs and consumption patterns that are driven by individual socioeconomic positions, the physical environment and social relations that take place in it. What is important "Schulze (2000) focused on cultural lifestyles as schemes of everyday experience and cultural consumption, whereby educational levels served as a stratifying dimension, but the hierarchical socioeconomic structure was not considered as constitutive for social milieus." (Groh-Samberg, O., Schröder and T. & Speer 2023).

What is important milieu as a technical tool focused on wide variety of features and practices, including practices of everyday life. Such classification was thus much more horizontal than it was vertical, more flexible, and, most importantly, less restrictive. Still, certain modes of distinction exist between social milieus. Vester et al. proposed that social milieus be "characterized in terms of a specific "habitus," their everyday ways of coping with their stratified positions." (Groh-Samberg, O., Schröder and T. & Speer 2023). Milieus can be defined by values shared by its members, who disagree with or even dislike people guided by

another set of values. Schwartz defines values as '"concepts or beliefs" about "desirable end states" that "guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events"' (Groh-Samberg, O., Schröder and T. & Speer 2023). Thus, values unify members of certain milieus through common cultural practices or lifestyles - an assembly of practices that meet to create certain stratified identity.

The concept of lifestyle was already introduced in Chapter 3 of this thesis. To my mind, lifestyle as presented by first Husserl, then Schutz, Habermass and Parsons, to name just a few, is a useful theoretical framework to understand social impact on dietary patterns. First and foremost, lifeworld is understood here as a set of limitations guiding social behaviours, also those pertaining to consumer choices. As such, lifestyle acts as a set of unspoken but subconsciously ingrained, "taken for granted" rules that fuse a social group together. Furthermore, lifestyles refer to intersubjective experience and are based on declared and tacit knowledge. Among North Ghanaians, building and maintenance of dietary preferences takes place in part based on non-predicated knowledge and bodily reactions to known and new food items, aimed at securing social gains.

Bread, sugar and globalised networks of power

Jack Goody's seminal work *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* (1982) has been quite important for the conceptualisation of this thesis and the analysis of the data I collected in the field. Significantly, Goody took it upon himself to tackle the topic of food as a significant social practice in reference to the rest of the culture and society. In his book, he examines how culinary traditions, cooking techniques and modes of consumption have been influenced by economic, social, and cultural factors, particularly within different class strata and why culinary traditions emerged in Europe, Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa have become so different. Furthermore, Goody's work has triggered major discussion regarding anthropological theory and methods. As J. Klein writes, Goody's holistic approach, combining the materialistic and the symbolic dimensions of food, sets him apart from the previous analyses of eating practices. Those looked for the underlying "cultural logics" of eating practices largely overlooking the materialistic dimension of food, such as cooking techniques and methods of consumption (Klein 2014).

Goody's theory is situated in a comparative study between African and Eurasian societies. He points out that in stratified societies, such as those in Europe and Asia, social status has been reflected in modes of eating practically since ancient times, while in hieratic, acephalic, egalitarian or dispersed societies, food doesn't seem to play a distinguishing role. Regular people as well as chiefs, kings and rules in the Sub-saharan region had been eating "a

bit of everything" in Goody's words. Certainly, those in power enjoyed larger and more varied quantities of their bits. However, the nature of the food largely remained the same. Goody seeks an explanation for those differences in two, perhaps not entirely obvious factors. The first is the modes of production: Eurasian states have been practising intensive agriculture with the use of plough, irrigation system and other technological advancements since the Middle Ages. While Sub-Saharan hoe-based shifting cultivation farming didn't allow for the introduction of the same scale and variety of crops. The second factor was literacy versus orality of cultures, and the expansion of the print. Printed cookbooks and recipes allowed Eurasian societies to exchange, compare and elaborate on recipes, techniques and culinary practices leading to "greater culinary complexity", (Klein 2014, 2). The latter argument is corroborated by Appadurai. In his article "How to make a national cuisine: cookbooks in contemporary India" (Appadurai 1988a) Appadurai proves that cookbooks can have a profound impact on the consolidation of disparate culinary traditions into a somehow homogenised "national" cuisines, which can function as an export commodity.

This work, however, will benefit from another notion raised by Goody in the latter part of *Cooking, Cuisine and Class*, that is "industrial food". Industrialisation of food production in the 19th century brought uniformisation of tastes on the global scale. Colonial empires such as Great Britain canned and shipped goods such as baked beans, tomato puree, and sardines across the world to the most remote colonies. Without a doubt, those products soon entered the food chain and even became staples: thousands of kilometres away from their place of production. Globalisation of industrial food brought an enormous change to the food systems on the small and large scale, as well as shifted the modes of global consumptions. Perhaps the best example of such shifts in local dietary patterns reflecting the power-laden arrangements on the global food markets has been depicted in the works of Sidney Mintz.

His life-long interest in the emergence of industrial sugar production and how the availability of cheap sugar drastically changed everyday diets of people around the world, culminated in the book *Sweetness and Power. The Place Of Sugar in Modern History.* Published in 1985, it became the second most important book tackling the subject of food item from a global perspective: economic, historical and socio-cultural. Mintz offers a fascinating insight into the glocalized history and presence of sugar: a commodity that indeed defies spatiotemporal connections. Much like products mentioned above, the case of sugar illustrates perfectly the separation between places of production and places of consumption. In doing so, it also illustrates relations of dependency and power, where consumer networks are distributed

across centres and peripheries. Demands, needs, means and purchasing power are distributed unevenly and co-create themselves. That is also why Mintz's analysis also offers a pathway for more contemporary analysis of global food networks, dietary influences and lines of cultural exchange changing the way we eat today.

Together with Goody's "industrial meal", Mint's theory of global food networks and relations of power embedded in the demand and supply chains create a foundation for contemporary research of globalised food patterns. I found it especially insightful in one particular case: food that both of my host families typically ate for breakfast. As I describe above, food eaten everyday in the morning before school and work, was bread with tea. As I learned later, many people chose to "take" bread with tea as their first meal, even though many didn't even consider it a fully-fledged meal. Notably, many Muslims gave up those products during Ramadan and opted for heavier, more filling meals for their *suhur*, morning meal. As Nugent (2010) writes, tea, coffee, wine and beer, together with types of bread available, are a infallible clues by which one can recognise, on which side of the old colonial boundaries one resides. While coffee and wine prevail in former French colonisers, tea and beer win in former British territories. In northern Ghana, tea drinking was additionally promoted by Muslim culture, which doesn't allow drinking alcohol. Social gatherings among older men and young people alike were equipped with snacks such as biscuits and fruit, and large amounts of tea brewed over the wooden stove.

Eating white bread with butter and jam and washing it down with tea mixed with lots of condensed milk and sugar, is a profound example of, on one hand, implementation of industrialized methods of food production under global capitalist markets, and vestiges of colonial order on the other. Sweetened tea, as Mintz writes, was considered in the 19th-century industrialised England as a quick and sufficient source of calories. Research shows, that generations of children became malnourished simply because their breakfast oatmeal was replaced by a slice of bread and sweetened tea. Afternoon tea and a sweet bite still remains a mark of those times, when people needed a small pick-me-up. Their mothers simply substituted more time-intensive meal with a quick, affordable and easy one, so that they can sleep a bit longer before their morning shift at the manufacture. And so, consuming bread and tea for breakfast, especially among the city dwellers, is not simply a change of tastescapes in Northern Ghana but an affordable replacement of a more time-consuming meal that could be prepared at home. Oftentimes, it is also a matter of finances: bread and tea is cheaper than buying *Hausa koko* at the street stall.

Middle-class consumers

Literature suggests that habits of food and beverage consumption as class markets in Africa have been widely employed as a demarcation of class belonging for some twenty years. Lentz and Noll argue that the term "middle class", partly due to its ambiguity, has become more and more attractive "as a term of self-description invoked by upwardly mobile individuals and groups to position themselves in the social landscape" (Lentz and Noll 2021, 2). The inclusion of southern markets and communities into global capitalist and market systems did have a grave influence over consumer patterns; some critics claim that a rush for the identification and inclusion of the African middle class in the global economic system we observe is part of a neoliberal extension of consumer markets (Melber 2016, Therborn 2012; Chevalier 2015). However, those perspectives are desperately void of agency from local actors; as much as global markets and the media influence the availability of products, create need and propose new varieties of consumer choice, the agency of the supposed middle-class members cannot take place without an active pursuit of lifestyles offered by those images. Therefore, I propose to move away from Goody's definition of the middle class to that based on agency, practice and self-perception, and therefore much more flexible.

In his paper, Nugent (Nugent 2010) remarks on the change in patterns of alcohol consumption in South Africa as a demarcation of the practice of class belonging. To be sure, South African and Ghanaian society cannot be compared in terms of social stratification. It is commonly agreed among scholars, that the former remains one of the few in Africa presenting a hierarchical structure resembling those in Europe. Post-apartheid South African society is, though, an exception in Sub-Saharan Africa. Nonetheless, it's interesting to see the changing consumer patterns happening across class boundaries. Previously, the clear division between white upper-class consumers of wine and the lower, Black, working-class consumers of beer becomes less clear cut, as the consumption of certain beverages becomes a status marker. He says:

> Taking the long view, it is striking how much South African under- standings about race, class and ethnicity have played themselves out in pat- terns of alcohol consumption. The Cape coloured community came virtually to be defined by its "destructive" relationship with cheap wine - under- pinned by the dop system - at the same time as Afrikaner nationalists prided themselves on their habits of abstention. While beer became a symbol of the increasingly confident Black consumer in the 1970s, upward mobility for Afrikaners and more recently for Blacks has been associated with the shift to sweet white wine and then toward dry red wine. At every point, the liquor companies have self-consciously appealed to perceived racial preferences and class aspirations, but consumers

> have been no less aware of the meanings attached to the act of putting a glass to one's lips (Nugent 2010, 104).

There are a few interesting studies focussed on changing food patterns within multigenerational migrant families, whose members belong to different consumer classes (women versus men, parents versus children, etc.). Chapman and Beagan examined the food practices among two Punjabi families living in Canada and their conclusions regarding the axis of class and consumption were coherent with mine (although not in the transnational context). First, both families preserved a close relationship with their traditional foods, eating them regularly, although the more affluent family members were more likely to diversify their diets with Western or purchased foods (Chapman and Beagan 2013). Similar patterns were observed in my host family; although my hostess did not didn't enjoy many Western dishes, she incorporated some in daily diets. For example, she occasionally prepared *Indomie* noodles or fried rice for the children. Both families had rotating dinner menus, so that the same food would not be eaten consecutively. The younger generation enjoyed the modern foods to a greater extent, while the elder men in the family had decisive power over what is eaten for dinner. Women did not think about what they desired and when they did, their choice concerned whether or not to spend time preparing something extra for themselves. Despite their progressive lifestyles, both families retained a traditional gender division of labour when it came to cooking; it was predominantly a women's job, and a big part of it was to deliver what their husbands enjoyed.

In their paper from 1995, Jack and Esther Goody note considerable shifts in dietary patterns, which took place in Northern Ghana in the forty years between the 1950s and the 1990s, and they list four plausible causes for changes of this magnitude. The first is famine or shortage of food, the aftermath of which can last a long time. Spittler's work, however, contradicts this theory, arguing that a lingering threat of hunger must not be seen as the sole driving force behind rapid dietary changes or the satisfaction of a simple meal. He points out that seasonal food deprivation appears consistently among societies living off subsistence farming and does not stop their members from returning to the same meals during and between times of affluence (Spittler 1999, 34).

The second cause is the change in the variety of crops: the introduction of new ones and the slow demise of the old, accepted voluntarily, especially when the new ones are easier to farm and bring a higher yield. This is certainly true of Ghana; however, the process of commodity exchange and appropriation has been taking place for centuries as Ghana has adopted imported foods over the course of British colonial rule, some of those products

establishing themselves as staples in the everyday diet (tea, corned beef, tinned sardines etc.). Thirdly, Goody lists the process of "hierarchical emulation", that is adopting the practices of those higher in the social hierarchy by those with a lower status. Finally, the fourth instance, according to Goody, takes place when the minority accepts the practices of the majority. While the trickle effect might be applicable in highly stratified societies with vastly different diets, where food speaks loud of social status, it seems to be less applicable in today's Ghana.

Interestingly, neither in his earlier nor later analyses do Jack and Esther Goody make a connection between cultural food practices and the emerging middle class in Ghana. They agrees that new categories of social hierarchy emerged, which he calls "the new bourgeoisie" and "the educated class", and that consumption patterns have changed, influenced by "metropolitan modes of consumption" (Goody and Goody 1995), which translates to ingestion of more ready-made, purchased foods. For Goody, cultural practice does not play a leading role in defining class; it is a rather rigid category of formally educated "government servants and teachers", who live in metropolitan areas and have access to cash. Because of this, they are able to purchase ready-made, usually fast food. As such, Goody's theory remains top-down; it is the increasing purchasing power and the availability of foreign products which make for the changes in the dietary patterns of the middle class. Goody seems to argue that for middle-class Ghanaians, to be modern is to be more Western, and that takes place by incorporating Western foods into everyday diets.

Much of the North Ghanaian middle-class lives revolve around aspirations: those related to money, looks and consumer choices. My respondents generally agreed that if they had more money to spend, they would revamp their diets, not necessarily by eating more foreign foods, but by expanding the range of foods and quality of ingredients. My male respondents also agreed that they would more likely eat in restaurants, as they revered food prepared by true professionals, who "knew what they were doing". All my respondents displayed ambition to pursue further education, to develop new skills and gain new financial possibilities. People in their late twenties and thirties were usually the first generation to enjoy intra-national and international ties and become global consumers. In conclusion, I disagree with Goody's theory that demarcation of class is firstly stagnant, secondly founded on categories directly unrelated to food. On the contrary, I argue class belonging in Northern Ghana is closely linked to patterns of eating and the contents of plates, albeit other factors such as gender and economic capital are tightly interwoven in those practices.

Chapter 4

It's not our food. Perceptions of gender, race, ethnicity and social status through the consumption of traditonal and "modern" foods.

> "food and language are the cultural traits humans learn first, and the ones that they change with the greatest reluctance. Humans cannot easily lose their accents when they learn new languages after the age of about twelve; similarly, the food they ate as children forever defines familiarity and comfort."
>
> D. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*, 1998

This chapter takes a closer look at imagined gustatory communities (Anderson 1999) whose affiliations are cemented through (among other things) common taste preferences. Such affiliations are founded on the assumption that the perception of reality and aesthetic judgement are intersubjective (Mondada 2019; 2021; Gillespie and Cornish 2010; Duranti 2010; Desjarlais and Throop 2011). Sensory reality is a form of common sense; it is socially created through the participatory action of members of a given group. They can, for instance, feel unified through a memory of common meals (Sabar and Posner 2013; Mata-Codesal 2008; 2010; Holtzman 2006; Seremetakis 1993; 2019; Sutton 2001; 2018). Gustatory affiliations, divisions and identities could be identified alongside one another: that of class, race or gender. In this chapter, conjunctions of such affiliations are examined.

"It's not our food"

"It's not our food"; I heard this phrase regularly over the course of my field research. It would come as an off-hand remark, rather non-important but in the end indicating fundamental divisions between foods."Not our food" signified existence of the category of "our food". As far as I could understand, "our food" seemed to provide satiation "not our food" couldn't. I could understand that very well - I too, was spending my time in a sort of profound state of *lack* and *dissatisfaction*, coming from not being able to *eat to my heart's content*[23] since my none of

[23] I particularly like this phrase as it indicates that food doesn't just "fill the hole" in your stomach - rather it fills your heart with content and provides sense of peace, stability and satiation beyond satisfying physical hunger.

the meals I would eat typically were available. Could I tell what made "my food" stand out from "not my food"? What qualities, such as taste, texture, spices, composition made food "strange"? Or was it the obscure "feeling in the body" that could indicate it? The more I thought about it, the more I realized such knowledge doesn't come from conscious reflection, rather than the previously mentioned "non-predictaed" knowledge of the body. The mind might have been confused and lacking words while the body instantly could tell "familiar" from "foreign" apart.

During the initial phase of the research, I was living with an Ashanti family in Tamale, the biggest city in Northern Ghana. Mama A., her eldest daughter, two nieces and a house girl with her six-month-old son were originally from a small town in the Eastern Region[24]. Mama A. was a trader and owned a shop in town, and despite living in Tamale for more than thirty years, she did not speak Dagbani, nor did her daughters. They mostly kept with other Twi speakers, the majority of them identifying as Ashanti. On Sundays they attended an evangelical service, after which the extended family met for *fufu* and an incredibly spicy soup cooked by Mama A. She purchased a great deal of her foodstuffs in the South; items such as avocados, pork, snails or mushrooms, typical in Ashanti cuisine, were nearly impossible to obtain in Tamale. At the time I feverishly tried to categorise and locate various dishes on the geographical map of Ghana. Mama A.'s diet did not match my clear-cut picture of the Northern diet. Why were we never eating TZ at home? "Yes, it's their food, that's what they eat here", Mama A. would say, hearing about TZ and dry okra soup. "Yes, that's what the Ashanti eat, we don't eat it here", my gatekeeper's mother would say, hearing about snail soup. "That's what you, white people eat, we don't eat it", I would hear from everyone. Which food was whose, then, and what made it so?

The term "It's not our food" had begun to emerge as a leitmotif in numerous interviews, especially at the beginning of my research. It was not clear right away which food is whose, which is not, and why. The same terms were used for Western, South Ghanaian or Nigerian food, as well as that cooked in a household across the street. The "other's" food was served at the fast-food chop bars, restaurants in town or at the school cantines. After a while the term became more conclusive; "our food" was a symbolic, flexible and contextual category rather than a strict registry of "our" and "foreign" foods. The eating of "our food" marked "us" and separated us from the "others". It was a token of affinity and difference, used circumstantially most often in situations of encounter.

[24] Some details have been changed to protect the privacy of my participants.

Research shows that food and gustatory preferences have been used extensively as demarcations of identity, ethnicity, political affiliation or gender identity across societies (Ferzacca et al. 2013; Warin and Dennis 2005; C. Counihan and Højlund 2018; Counihan 1988; 2018, Avakian and Haber 2005; Wilk 1996; Almerico 2014; Klein and Watson 2016; Klein and Murcott 2014). Globalisation processes, together with the expansion of the capitalist markets and free trade, facilitated and sped up communication and cultural exchange, creating new connections and redrawing boundaries, along with creating new types of identities. As Chapman and Began write:

> Processes of modernity such as travel, deterritorialization and exposure to mass media, have disrupted the structures of cultural tradition, such that individuals can now imagine a vast array of possible lives and can thus, to some extent, construct their own biographies by making choices about how to live (Chapman and Beagan 2013, 368).

The term "tradition", although commonly used in ethnographic studies, has garnered a lot of criticism. Eric Hobsbawm in his seminal work *The Invention of Tradition* (Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012) argues that most contemporary traditions are understood as a set of rituals, aimed at inculcating values and norms, and use continuity with the past as a tool of legitimation. Yet most of these traditions were invented within the lifespan of the previous generation. Tradition treats the past as an invariable fact thus providing a stable foundation for the creation of contemporary identities. Ranger (1993) argues that invented traditions supported the creation of nation-states in decolonizing Africa. Shanklin (1981) disambiguates between passive and active (or theoretical and empirical) uses of the idea of tradition, favouring the use of the latter, which she understands as an active process of handing down symbolic cultural practices from generation to generation.

Certainly, categories such as "traditional" and "modern", "local" and "foreign", "African" and "Western" applied commonly to food items, dishes and methods of preparation are symbolic and socially constructed. Bearing in mind the analytical limitations of binary oppositions, the categories are still being used in this chapter in a critical and conscious way.

Whiteman's food and spaces of surveillance

The first category of "not our" foods I would like to explore is the assembly of loosely related "Western" or "Westernized" dishes available in quotidian spaces demarcated by specific assembly of sensory experiences. Those social spaces mediated the performance of particular identities, were spaces of clash and re-invention and the creation of the consumer's social body. Those quotidian spaces of embodied sensory encounters were frequent in Ghana. Research

shows that such convivial spaces appear in cosmopolitan environments (Wise 2012; Devadason 2010; Russek 2011; Law 2001; Wise and Velayutham 2009). In a Ghanaian context, the capital city of Accra provides the most fertile ground for such "quotidian mixing" (where food plays a role of medium) to take place. Here, restaurants, cafes and bars offer a wide variety of Ghanaian and foreign food and drinks, and act as spaces of sensory (here: gustatory) encounter. The exchange goes both ways; some places offer "normalised" or "disciplined" or "toned down" local foods[25], others propose foods known to all global consumers.

At the time Tamale is a seat of over 150 NGOs, almost each hosting a group of non-Ghanaian, predominantly white workers or volunteers and, often, their families. Generations of white expats met in various cafes or restaurant regularly to chat and eat, preferably something "non-Ghanaian". Tamale's food scene catered to that demand. One of the most well-known "white" places and spaces of quotidian mixing of "us" and "them" in the city was Chuck's Bar located on the northern side of town, just off the main road to Bolgatanga. My hosts recommended that I too, like their previous tenant, go to Chuck's on Friday night, where I can mingle "with my own kind" over scarily strong cocktails served at half price between 7 and 8 pm.

At the time of this research, there was hardly a more well-known place on the gastronomic map of Northern Ghana and its popularity was solely based on word of mouth. Chuck's Bar was located behind a fenced garden at the back of a two-story modernist building, surrounded by monumental kapok trees. Upon crossing the gate, one had to wonder whether one had teleported to a summer bar somewhere in Europe. Looking from the gate, to the left there was a bar with a long winding counter made of dark wood, covered with a thatched roof. Rows of bottles were displayed on the glass shelves, climbing high up to the ceiling behind busy bartenders. Wooden tables, benches and chairs were painted in bright colours, each decorated with a candle and a small bunch of flowers. The restaurant area was separated out from the surrounding darkness of the early West African night by strings of lightbulbs and fairy lights spread between the trees.

In an interview, one of the owners and the main manager of Chuck's at the time painted the picture of visitors who regularly frequented his establishment:

R: And who belongs to your regular customers, more locals or rather expats?

P: Expats. 99% are expats.

R: Why do you think it is?

[25] For more on this topic see Chapter 5 of this thesis.

> P: We have different food. I have to say… I'm always in this bar, in this restaurant all the time. I know everybody here. Expats look for each other after [some] time. They come from the same culture they need to talk about something else sometimes, you know. They work here in Ghana and sometimes they just need to… home away from home, almost, you know.[26]

According to the owner of Chuck's, his bar is a place where expats come to seek company and support from other expats. The majority, according to him, experience solitude and mental discomfort during their everyday life in Ghana, especially those who, for various reasons, have not integrated well in the local community, or have been here only briefly. Surrounded by strangeness, foreign workers treated Chuck's as a "third place", where the environment, the food and the fellow restaurant goers brought them a sense of familiarity and thus ontological comfort. Such "white spots" or "white pockets" were common in Accra and Kumasi (not only restaurants but also backpacker hostels or clubs). Typically, in those places acquaintances were made quickly and there was a general atmosphere of joy and amusement and conviviality. At least, as long as one was white. Finding the new place of work and living unfamiliar, especially in terms of food, newcomers gathered in places where they could *eat to their heart's content*.

At the time of this fieldwork (between 2018 and 2020) the restaurant did not offer any Ghanaian dishes. Instead, the menu included Swedish meatballs, fish and chips and Italian style pizza from a wood oven which was absolute bestseller. Despite high prices (a single pizza would cost around 50 GHS/10 EUR at the time) people would come, eat and drink here regularly. The affective power of this space was based on recreating a familiar (universally Western) sensory landscape: light as opposed to dark, quiet as opposed to loud, meticulously arranged as opposed to rudimental. Most importantly, those coming to Chuck's have a chance to enjoy familiar food, typically unavailable in the North. Getting used to Ghanaian food is, for many foreigners coming there, a challenge. Food served at Chuck's provides mental and physical comfort, a sensory respite of sorts.

Comfort food

The issue of comfort food and its influence on emotional and physical well-being has been an object of extensive study in psychology, sociology, consumer research and anthropology alike. Scholars define the category of comfort food as home-cooked, favourite childhood meals, which are usually simple and have a high content of carbohydrate content

[26] From an interview conducted in June 2018 with a man in his early forties, Wa.

(Spence 2017; Troisi and Wright 2016; Troisi and Gabriel 2011; Morris 2014; Stacy 2010; Locher et al. 2005; Fischler 1988). Research confirms there exists a correlation between one's emotional state and one's food choices. Consumers who feel lonely, unhappy or stressed are more likely to choose indulgent products and dishes over those universally considered healthy and nutritious:

> Individuals in a negative mood prefer indulgent foods to healthy foods because a negative mood invokes proximal, concrete construal which puts more weight on immediate concerns such as mood repair and the affective benefits of foods such as taste and sensory experiences. In contrast, individuals in a positive mood prefer healthy foods to indulgent foods because a positive mood invokes distal, abstract construal which puts more weight on long-term, higher-level benefits of foods such as health and well-being (Gardner et al. 2014, 333).

The affective qualities of comfort foods seem to become ever important in situations of sociogeographical displacement and emotional distress caused by it. In their article, Locher et al. examine the social construct of "comfort foods", which is based on "the strong relationships between emotions, memory, and food preferences" (Locher et al. 2005). According to their theory, people who have been dislocated from their community, environment and usual resources, "feel compelled to engage in self-help behaviors to make themselves feel better" (Locher et al. 2005, 274). Some suggest that food is the primary tool to regain "control over the body, the mind and therefore over identity […] it is the first and probably the main means of intervening in the body, the favored instrument of control over the self" (Fischler 1988, 280). Comfort food, often identified as ethnic, home, national or "our" food, becomes an anchor, tying the displaced population with the imaginary homeland, thus providing a link to past identities, endangered by new social, political, or economic situations. Tacit sensory knowledge plays an important role in this process. As Warin and Dennis describe it based on their research among Ecuadorian migrants in Santander:

> By enacting 'body memories' (the knowledge stored in our bodies without us even being aware) through familial food, older migrants are resisting to acknowledge the discontinuity migration has inserted into their lives. […] Familiar food plays the role of a powerful comfort food for these older Ecuadorian migrants in Santander because it provides psychological and emotional comfort when the self feels fragmented in the situation of change that migration implies. As an Ecuadorian woman put it: 'I know I am not in Ecuador when I eat Ecuadorian food, but it feels as if I am'. […] These migrants are attempting to be kept sensorially connected with their past in Ecuador as eating known food 'occasion[s] a habitual, corporeal experience of continuity. [Food] provide[s] a means by which "original" home place and "new" home place are linked: via the continuing life of the habitual body that has and continues to experience home objects (Warin and Dennis 2005, 168).

At Chuck's, both food and drinks such as Nespresso coffee and alcohol were available in forms that brought familiar comfort to temporarily displaced restaurant-goers. The restaurant's menu therefore provided emotional and sensory comfort and stabilisation for people whose identities and sensorial modalities have been challenged by daily life in Northern Ghana.

Local in white spaces

The owner of Chuck's admitted that ninety-nine percent of his customers are white, but that he also has a few regular customers counting among the local business elite. The owner of Chuck's describes them:

> R: I was wondering if you hear anything from the locals, how they approach your place, and do they see it that kind of exclusive? Do you hear any opinions from the locals?
>
> P: It's yeah, of course, I hear, yeah. I have many regulars. Ghanaians who come here every night, you know. And they come here because they tell me it's… it's calm. It's calm. You don't play music so loud, so you can speak to each other. There's like the clientele here. They like it, you know, more grown-ups, let's say like that, because we are a bit expensive. Compared to many other places. Yeah. So, I mean, 18–20-year-olds, they don't come here because most of them don't have the money. So, it's more grownups who comes here. And they like it. And every time there's someone here who… when someone comes in here, smokes weed first… It's not always but this happens sometimes, it's always a young dude who comes in and tries to be a little bit cool with other people and smokes weed. They always react immediately. Hey, that guy over there. He smokes. We don't… we don't want him. They tell me we don't want them. And I just walked up to them and say, put that out. Go out and smoke but you're not allowed to do it [here]. And most of them take it very, very good. They are mostly like… thank you for not calling the police, at least told me. Sometimes they get drunk and high and most of the time.
>
> R: I see, I see. I was here once and I noticed a lot of guys may be in late 20s, early 30s, fresh into business for example. So, I guess it plays along on what you say that the people who kind of just started having money or have well…
>
> P: Like you said, younger Ghanaians, but they come with cars, and nice clothes and they kind of…And many of them drink, they are not drunks, but they drink a lot of, you know… tequila and beers and things like that. And I mean… in many places, when people go there… they like to hear [themselves], we have the lights, you know, we can see each other we can talk to each other. Many places are dark, you know, they have corners, it's dark, you don't really see and that's pretty good for some people because you can go there and drink. even if you're a Muslim. You can go and drink because no one will see. Yeah, the same thing, some people are not faithful to their wives. [laughter] So they go out to dark places.[27]

[27] From an interview conducted in June 2018 with a man in his early forties, Tamale.

This excerpt indicates several issues. Firstly, the "white pockets" such as Chuck's were well-known among locals in Tamale. White dedicated to white expats, such places appealed to the certain part of the local population, who openly appreciated the "non-Ghanaian" atmosphere: quite music, lights, and the food. Those visitors were categorized as slightly older, more mature and surely, more well-off, since the prices in Chuck's were considered high. Most of those people were local entrepreneurs who considered coming to Chuck's as part of their "globalised" and "international" lifestyle. Many of them had lived or traveled abroad and sported more cosmopolitan perspectives on culture, religion and, most certainly, food.

On the other hand, Chuck's was popular destination for "young and rising" Tamale businessmen. There would usually come earlier in the evening and sit at the bar or hang out outside the main restaurant floor on the assembly of plastic chair. Those were mostly friends of the bartenders and waitresses who did not interact much with the expat community but rather remained engaged with their own groups of friends. They usually did not eat there, only drank beer or Malt, a sweet non-alcoholic beverage popular across Ghana. Their body language was withdrawn; they sat crookedly, refrained from talking, held their arms folded and spoke quietly. Some were more outgoing and came to spend time with the white youth. For many of them, it was an opportunity to find a side hustle (a guide, a driver, an assistant) and maybe, eventually, work with one of the NGOs. They did not seem to feel comfortable and at ease there.

Their peers with better incomes and more convivial lifestyles entered loudly with a confident stride, greeted the owner, chatted a little and sat down at one of the tables. They usually ordered expensive liquors such as whiskey or tequila and food. They often came in groups and chatted among themselves, not interacting much with the foreign youth. Clearly, their objectives were different; they did not come to Chuck's to hustle, but to have a good time. Those men were usually older, in their late thirties and forties, dressed in a more elegant and stylish way. There was a clear division in economic status between the two groups, and the purpose of their visits. While the first group was interested in getting to know people, especially foreigners, meet girls, drank the cheapest drinks and never ate, the other was there to enjoy the spoils of the menu. While the first group acted as satellites and did not claim their space, staying on the outskirts of the social space, the latter played a central part in it. Such division demonstrates well the masculine hierarchy observed elsewhere in the public spaces of Ghana between "big men" and "small boys", whose social position was built on financial capacity, intra-regional networks, education and marriage status (Langevang 2008; Nugent 1995).

According to the owner, "big men" enjoyed coming to Chuck's because of its ambience, which stood in stark opposition to typical North Ghanaian restaurants. Brightly lit, with quiet music, neat furnishing and expensive beverages drunk in the Western way at the bar, the restaurant was a good place for conversation. It seems plausible to argue that by choosing to meet at Chuck's, the men were also communicating their dissociation from the "typical" (immoral) types of action that take place in such public spaces. Typical Ghanaian bars and restaurants, dark, loud and crowded, are thought to facilitate reprehensible acts among men who attend them, such as drinking alcohol and infidelity. Spending evenings out in restaurants and bars is considered "shady" and "insincere" and respectable married men do not usually attend those places, especially if they are Muslim. Choosing Westernised public space over local, they show their dissociation from morally questionable actions associated with the latter. The owner mentioned an event when someone was spotted smoking marijuana. The guests called the person out and reported him to the owner, who asked him to put out the joint or else leave the establishment.

I would like to argue that "white spots" or such as Chuck's are permeated with heightened levels of social surveillance based on the concept of power relations. Such relations are perpetuated on the basis of existing and imagined social hierarchies, founded on cultural, social and economic capital of the actors[28] (Jung 2014; Portes 1998; Foucault 1982; Stringfellow et al. 2013; Cappellini et. al 2016). The affective sensory landscape of such places emphasises their distinct character by juxtaposition with ones that are local. Actors frequenting Chuck's by sitting in bright light and quietude are willing to subject themselves to social surveillance, proving that they have nothing to hide. Further, their confidence is based on solid foundations of broad intra and international social networks. Such networks are very often crucial for their financial and cultural significance; most of them have either been schooled or have travelled abroad, where they could develop knowledge and taste for international food. Furthermore, they are financially successful; they can afford eating and drinking at Chuck's. In doing so, they separate themselves from the other (unsettled) men and affiliate themselves with the affluent white community. Such status elevation comes at the cost of freedom; they remain under constant surveillance and have to show compliance with local rules. Furthermore, they feel obliged to behave even more appropriately than other white customers (who, for instance, would most likely not report a marijuana smoker).

[28] For further reference see also: Øygard (2000), Turner and Edmunds (2002) Agovino, et al. (2017).

In many ways, therefore, the division between "white" and "Black" spaces corresponds with their physical sensory qualities (light, dark) and moral imperatives that bring people there (honesty, dishonesty). This is not to say that "white spaces" are considered inherently morally superior but that morality in the sense of judgement and meaning-making is rooted in "embodied experience of reality mediated through action and observation" (Sekimoto 2018, 85). "White places" such as Chuck's can be considered as sensory mediated spaces of encounter, stages, where carefully choreographed performances take place. They are proof of "sensory prowess", the ability to adjust to foreign sensory modalities and feel comfortable with them.

Such prowess encompasses a range of sensory experiences, from which the body orients itself in space through certain poise, flamboyance, or table manners or enjoying foods like pizza or pasta. Interviews conducted for the purpose of this research show that most interlocutors did not enjoy eating "white food", yet they did so, perhaps as a tool to transform their bodies into "white bodies" in a sensorially significant and oppressive environment. Sensorial prowess does not come from nowhere; it is usually a derivative of foreign education or work experience. As such, it elevates the person's social status. Among the "aspiring" bar-goers, this confidence is acquired through spending time with people from "there". Sensorial flexibility, defined as the ability to switch between various sensory modalities, is employed at Chuck's to perform one's local social, economic and gender status.

White food for white bodies

Bashkow, in his book "The Meaning of Whitemen: Race and Modernity in the Orokaiva Cultural World" (Bashkow 2006) depicts a process of creating an image of sensory Other, or as Stasch writes: "internal imaginings of cultural otherness" (Stasch 2006). Bashkow theorises that the titular "whitemen" are not a universal, objective, racially designated group of people. Rather, "whitemen" for the Orokaiva of Papua New Guinea are shaped to become a negative of Orokaiva's self-image and their values. The "whitemen", then, has become a cultural category to the Orokaiva, built from extrapolated images of food, morality, vision, language and body feeling[29] (Stasch 2006, 327). On the other hand, in South Africa Black people who "behave as white", speak standard English, dress, eat, talk in a certain way, are commonly called

[29] Body-centred sensorium, morality, socialisation and sensemaking through the "feeling in the body" has been described by K. L. Geurts in her seminal book *Culture and the senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community* (Geurts 2003).

Black Englishmen (previously) or coconuts. In this sense, perceptions and attitudes, and sense-making are viewed from a racial perspective (Rudwick 2010).

The Orokaiva in Bashkow's monograph create an image of the whiteman through food practices and items that are typically associated with white consumers: "the most constant and vivid medium of Orokaiva racial thought" (Stasch 2006, 329). This does not necessarily mean that all white people in Papua New Guinea commonly eat it. "Whitemen food" broadly speaking, is a category extended to purchasable goods; the cash economy during decades of colonisation, has been associated with white colonisers who mostly resided in towns, where such products were available in stores. Orokaiva consider taro and pork, both grown and bred locally, heavy and strong. Both products require physical work and can only be obtained through physical labour[30]. Rice and tinned meat, which can be obtained through cash commodity exchange, are seen as "light" and "weak". Eating respectively either of those two types of foods translates to the type of bodies that whites and the Orokaivas have. Such embodiment of food items is expressed in the theory of *hamo ari*: "body development, body fashioning, embodiment, habituation" (Bashkow 2006). According to Stasch:

> This model occupies in Orokaiva life something like the functional space of racializing models of humans in Western societies. Whitemen and Orokaiva do have fundamentally different kinds of bodies, but the source of this difference is not internal to these bodies. The source lies rather in the kinds of spaces, objects, and actions through which bodies have been fashioned. The *hamo ari* idea includes a notion that people are what they eat: taro's nature makes Orokaiva what they are, as rice's nature makes whitemen what they are. Behind these foods' natures, in turn, lies the nature of their relations to land. Taro and pig embody a regime of close connection to land, while storebought rice and tinned meat embody disconnection from land. They are made in factories, circulate long distances without land-rooted contexts, and arrive in Orokaiva lives via monetized social transaction (Stasch 2006, 329).

For the Orokaiva the whitemen's food undoubtedly ranks lower than food that is locally sourced. However, Ghanaians, according to Tuomainen, have long since incorporated certain originally European foods into their daily diets. Products such as tinned tomatoes, white bread, tea, bacon and canned sardines have been part of Ghanaian foodscapes since early colonial times and were commonly eaten by Ghanaian elites, who were able to find and purchase them. Among the Ghanaian diaspora in London, Tuomainen discovered great affection towards those foods:

> Migrating to the UK enabled many to indulge in foods that previously were limited to the elite and to those in a higher social position […] The habits of

[30] See also Kahn (1988).

> Ghanaians resembled to a degree those of early Italian migrants in the United States who, as Diner describes, "built their lives and diets around the consumption of foods that were familiar but had been inaccessible, since they had been the preserve of the elite back home (Tuomainen 2009, 537–38).

Many research participants confirmed that they ate bread with tea for breakfast, regularly ate biscuits and canned sardines and used tinned tomatoes for their stews. Research participants declared a weakness for sweet drinks, noodles and simple stews. The latest addition to these appropriated diets was, without a doubt, *Indomie*: instant noodles originating from Nigeria (sic!), which took over late-night street food stands. Such stands, crowding the streets of Tamale, were occupied every evening, the customers forming long queues into the streets. However popular on the narrative level, it soon turned out that "whiteman's food" stood much lower than local food in terms of perceived gustatory pleasure and health value. Participants underlined that foods such as pizza (which was usually available in more expensive restaurants) is not at all appealing to them, and if they decide to eat *Indomie* it is only because they crave it, or have no other option for food at home. Some vendors and restaurant owners registered lower sales of fast foods during Ramadan, when people are said to pay more attention to what they eat.

It was not obvious at first, but gradually the sensory and cultural category of a white body as it appeared through food choices became more apparent. First came the portions; the evaluation sheet, filled by teachers at the end of every practical, assessing the size of the portion. "Oversizing" appeared to be a common mistake repeated by the students. The portions were rather sizeable, but not different to those commonly encountered in Poland, the UK or Germany. The teachers, however, remained adamant that "white people do not eat as much as we do"[31], pointing out plates and pots that were, to their mind, too full.

The whiteman's portion became a humorous element of everyday life for me. In situations when food was shared with me or doled out during meals with the host family, nobody expected me to clear my plate and if I did, I received incredulous looks and claps of approval. When I started working at the regional hospital's kitchen, I was often dismissed from performing heavier kitchen tasks, steered away from the fire and kept aside in a cool place. The cooks were convinced that I was too weak and fragile, unfit for the hard manual labour which cooking undoubtedly was. White people were assumed to have weak, flabby bodies from sitting in the office; such bodies did not need heavy food, hence white men's inclination towards raw

[31] From my fieldnotes, April 2019.

and light foods, like salads. Through eating heavy food and performing taxing jobs, I went through a rite of passage of sorts: from weak and fragile, to strong and resilient.

Hard labour or lack thereof, had an evidently tactile dimension. It was embodied chiefly in the hands; hardened skin, calloused palms, extremely short nails, rough skin, disfigured joints, little cuts and bruises were a constant reminder of one's way of earning a wage. Hardened hands were a source of pride, like for one taxi driver who was convinced no white man would have hands like him. For him, rough hands equated to honest labour. However in Wa, even among women with office jobs, having hard resistant hands seemed to be a natural thing. Women used their hands to rearrange smouldering charcoal, to wipe the edge of the pot full of boiling hot *banku*, as well as scoop and clean the ladle. The same method applied to tasting food while cooking. Whilst it is common in the Western world to use spoons to carefully ladle a small amount of hot liquid and taste it with the edge of the mouth, Ghanaian cooks dipped their bare fingers in the boiling liquid or splashed some of it on their palms and licked it. Historical use of the spoon aside, the power of the hands was remarkable. When I wanted to mimic the gesture of wiping the edge of the pot or the ladle, I quickly got burned. My white hands were indeed not used to this type of labour.

Physical exertion is still part of everyday life of many Ghanaians, since the majority of the population still works primarily in agriculture and other manual jobs. The embodied experience of hardened hands has a moral dimension to it; it is directly connected to perseverance, honesty and humbleness. Hard work, in turn, requires heavy food. In this way, moral values attached to physical exertion are transferred to food, TZ, *banku, fufu* and other starch-based meals, eaten to replenish one's strength. Even in an urban environment, where work is not as tiresome as in the villages and life is made easier by amenities such as running water, certain foods remain more appreciated through their heaviness. Many elderly respondents expressed that only TZ "gives them blood", "gives them strength", and helps them maintain their bodies and thus, lifestyles.

Eating Western food, on the other hand, fulfilled only the needs of the mouth. White men could *afford* not eating heavy and dense food such as *banku* or TZ, because their bodies did not need to bear such strain. Their lives were *lighter*: no carrying, no farm work, no heavy pounding, plenty of raw foods which do not require the use of heat (like salad). White foods were like white bodies: a cultural concept that appeared to be prevalent among respondents. The confrontation between white and Black bodies and their eating habits was always interesting. Body image also played a role; I, being rather slim and tall, was not expected to eat

much, while some more corpulent white people were expected to eat more and it was appreciated when they displayed appetite. Gender mattered also; while white women tended to be seen as weak and fragile, and it was expected of them to choose something like avocado on toast or a salad, men were expected to eat much more and heavier food, whether they were Black or white. The landlord's wife always piled up food on her husband's plate, even though he almost never finished his portion. She felt obliged to cater to his manly needs for sustenance and he was obliged to perform his manliness by eating a lot of food. A dietician and nutritionist working at the Regional Hospital said:

> Just last week a man was telling me after giving the education on dietary intake, a man was telling me that he doesn't determine the size of the food in the house. It is the wife that determines that. And how the wife cuts the food it is so much, so that he had to eat that to impress their wife. Are you getting the point? He says he has no control. […] So, under the circumstances can't you tell your wife, I want my food to be of this size, the size. Then he was of the view that the wife will not be happy with him, because, he has to play. So they sort of see it as a role that they need to play, to eat so much to impress the wife.[32]

Small portions of lightweight meals were not sufficient for the body to perform the role of the man of the house and to seek fulfilment of the stomach (McPhail, Beagan, and Chapman 2012; Bietti et al. 2019; Cusack 2014; Naguib 2015). Highmore writes in particular about the correlation between foreign spiciness and Western manhood in the contemporary UK. In his study of "sensory pedagogy", he argues that consumption of South Asian curries in Great Britain, here *vindaloo chicken* to be exact, has become an arena for gender and ethnic power play (Highmore 2008). In a story he recaps, a group of supposedly young, drunk Anglo-Celtic men enter an ethnic South-Asian restaurant in London in the middle of the night. One of the men asks for the spiciest curry on the menu. The dish produced by the kitchen is not to the man's liking and he requests more chilli to be added to it. He then proceeds to eat it, sweating and crying profusely. The men are visibly drunk and the atmosphere in the restaurant is tense. The owner steps out to protect his cooks from a possible escalation of violence. However, no violence ensues; the Anglo-Celtic man thanks him for preparing "the strongest dish he ate in his life" and leaves (Highmore 2008, 385).

In this humorous story, the chilli in the dish becomes an opponent that needs to be defeated. However, only a strong enough rival is worth the fight; hence the man requests to have more chilli added, once he realises that he can eat the dish with ease. He does not respect it, unless it is up to par; his "English stomach", brought up on famously bland and flavourless

[32] From an interview conducted on 13.05.2019 with a nutritionist and dietician, Wa.

English food, is still supposed to overcome the chilli, which in this interpretation could be identified with the South Asian ethnic minority. The attitudes are contradictory, however. To Highmore, the general predilection for curries in England stands in opposition to the persistent xenophobia of many curry-lovers; the British accept and devour curry while remaining unwelcoming to the South Asian diaspora. Highmore dubs it "aggressive food consumption", but the aggression is directed towards food, namely chilli (Highmore 2008, 383). Here, working-class masculinity is not comfortable with eating spicy food, it is rather challenged by it. Perhaps a plate of *chicken vindaloo* is a metaphorical place where two masculinities clash. By conquering the chilis, Anglo-Celtic men assure their dominance and masculine strength over men from South Asia.

Gender, age, money: family and othering

Another differentiation between "us" and "them" can be drawn along gender, age and economic lines. Such lines are especially clear in kin relationships, both among nuclear and extended relatives. Many scholars have written about the generational gap in eating and cooking practices (Goody and Goody 1995; Chapman and Beagan 2013; Ferzacca et al. 2013). There is no doubt that the generally improved economic status of Northerners, better farming conditions, urbanisation and availability of products (also imported), as well as exposure to globalised mass media such as TV and internet, aided the change in dietary patterns. The last twenty years have seen a significant elevation of the status of women, beginning with extended access to education, including tertiary level, changes on the job market, more women taking up formal, salaried jobs, women moving out from their family houses to live on their own or at the university. There has been much labour- and education-driven migration in both directions: from the South to the North and the North to the South. In this part of the chapter, I will discuss generational, gender and economic-based practices of othering that I came across in the field.

The following excerpt comes from an interview with a woman in her fifties and her son, aged twenty-four, talking about their daily eating habits. They were asked how many times a week they eat TZ and why.

> P1 (Son): We don't like TZ. We don't like it every day... But they can eat it every day. No problem.
>
> R: Why is that, why don't you like TZ as much as your mum?
>
> P1: Ok, because it's a local dish... it's the taste, you know, the young ones we like... taste.
>
> P2 (Mother): They like rice. Rice, rice, rice.
>
> P1: Tasty, very much tasty.

R: Mhm, so there's a lot of flavour there.

P1: Mmm, no, no, with the TZ. We, the young ones, like something that is tasty. […] So TZ is not tasty. So... we don't take it that much. But they don't care. Yeah, they don't care about the taste.[33]

During the first phase of my fieldwork in 2018, it quickly became obvious that TZ is one of the most popular, ubiquitous and cherished local dishes of the North. From Tamale, to Bolgatanga, to Wa, when asked about local food, people would immediately mention TZ. What set people apart more than the method of cooking or the type of ingredients used for soups (which I will discuss further in this chapter) was the depth and character of personal attachment to TZ.

TZ, or *tuo zaafi* is a yellow-white carbohydrate staple made from cassava and/or maize flour. In the North, some mix both types of flour, resulting in a softer, more runny porridge, or use only white maize starch, making the TZ set when cooled. It is rather easy to cook, however it requires certain knowledge and dexterity. Water is put on the fire and while it boils, a measure of flour is slowly poured into the water until a thin, smooth porridge is formed. Then a calabash full of porridge is scooped out of the pot and put aside. Then, more flour is added and mixed well until the porridge is thick and comes off the spoon. Thin porridge is added to control the texture of TZ. Maize flour TZ is easy to store in "sour water", which is water mixed with fermented corn dough. Use of such liquid has been documented in the villages, where sour water is poured into earthenware vases, subsequently filled with TZ pieces and covered. If stored correctly, TZ can be preserved in these conditions for up to a week. At homes, TZ is usually prepared in smaller quantities, poured into plastic bags, tied and preserved in insulated flasks (to be kept warm) or overnight in fridges, and can be eaten both hot and cold. TZ does not have a distinct taste; it is forbidden to add salt, as the porridge will not set, and it is usually of very loose, jelly-like consistency and usually eaten with various types of green leaf, vegetable soups and stews. It is a typical "swallowed" type of food, like *fufu*, as eating it does not require chewing. My respondents claimed to know at least twenty different types of soups that can be accompanied with TZ, which can be cooked throughout the year depending on what leaf or vegetable is in season. TZ has been traditionally prepared with the use of maize, millet or guinea corn flour, although some people also use Bambara beans flour, which I had an opportunity to try.

[33] From an interview conducted in August 2018 with a woman in her mid-fifties and her son in his mid-twenties, Wa

Rice dishes have not been present in everyday diets in Northern Ghana until the late 1980s. Although rice has been cultivated (irrigated cultivation) regionally in the North, the harvest has never been enough to feed the whole family for extended periods of time and even among city dwellers, rice has been eaten on occasions such as Christmas, or Easter or *Sallah*. Then, rice dishes were considered special and celebratory and many of the respondents recalled their craving for rice dishes, which was rarely satisfied. Today, rice is one of the most popular staples. After Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were introduced in 1983 in Ghana, the Ghanaian market opened to imported rice from Vietnam, Bangladesh and Cambodia. So-called "perfumed rice" largely displaced indigenous species of rice. Many respondents claimed their preference for imported rice as they described it to be whiter, tastier and much better processed. However, local types of rice are cheaper, swell more and thus feed more people. Those are typically purchased by the less affluent.

Rice is commonly eaten as frequently, or even more so than TZ, *fufu, banku* or other local and national staples. *Jollof* rice, supposedly originating in Senegal, fried rice, which has been introduced some years ago through the catering industry, or plain rice with stew, have become sought-after options, thanks to availability of ingredients, simplicity, short cooking time and versatility. Rice has been one of the most popular fast foods all over Ghana, usually served with stew, *shito,* piece of fish or meat, macaroni and salad. The most popular restaurants in town, such as *Spicy, 2nd kitchen* or *Global Kitchen* had an extensive offer of rice dishes. On the menu poster hanging at *Global Kitchen*, located at the Regional Library, *jollof* with chicken, fried rice, plain rice with stew and chicken were paired with various soft drinks as a cheap offer geared towards students. *Spicy*, commonly frequented by the local youth, arriving on mopeds colourfully dressed, with shiny jewellery, also offered mostly rice: *jollof*, fried or plain with stew and chicken, guinea fowl or fish. Prices in either establishment did not exceed 10 GHS (2,5 EUR), and usually oscillated around 6 to 7 GHS. For the same plate of rice with stew, served by the street vendor, one would pay around 5 to 8 GHS, depending on the amount of meat. Typical student places would even serve a plate of rice for 3 to 5 GHS.

There is no doubt that rice and TZ have become two staples, dividing the Northern society into "traditionalist" and "modern" eaters, a division which simultaneously coincides with the generational gap. While the elderly still cannot imagine their diets without an almost daily portion of TZ, the youth, albeit used to it, prefer a more varied diet, including more and more rice and foreign dishes. In the interview excerpt, the twenty-four-year-old man raises the issue of "taste", which here could be understood as a more pronounced flavour. Rice with stew,

in comparison with TZ with *ayoyo* (a typical, slimy green vegetable used for soups accompanying TZ), has a much more intense and simple taste. The latter oscillates around a salty, tangy, hot, umami mix of tomato paste, dried fish or brine, salt, oil and hot peppers. The former, however, is harder to grasp: there is saltiness and a slight tanginess coming from the saltpetre used to soften the leaves, a pungent smell of smoked or dried fish, or goat meat, acidity of the leaves, crispiness and viscosity of okra, all mixed into a subdued, smooth yet pungent concoction.

The gustatory void between the older and the younger generation is very well displayed in this interview. A woman in her twenties, a student of educational sciences who was raised by her Wala grandmother, explained to me how their eating habits differ. It shows an interesting dynamic that I observed among many young people.

> R: What's your favourite food?
>
> P: My favourite food? [laughs] *Jollof* rice! [laughs]
>
> […]
>
> R: What about your grandma?
>
> P: My grandma, hmmm. She doesn't like *jollof*, she likes TZ. She's always comfortable eating TZ more than eating *jollof*. […] But TZ she's always comfortable with it. And she's used to it. She's used to it. And because she's old, *fufu* and… TZ, when you cook it for her every day, she will eat it […] because she's been eating it for long and so if she was to cook it is the TZ or *fufu* that she prepares.
>
> R: So, growing up what was the main thing that you were eating with your grandma? Was it TZ?
>
> P: Every evening, every day [laughing] But now the menu has changed, you can't be eating TZ all the time. […] Me if I get to some time, maybe one week and I didn't have TZ, I'm not always comfortable, even though TZ is not my favourite but I'm used to it.
>
> […]
>
> P: They [neighbour's children] eat [TZ] but they don't like eating it every day. If you cook it every day you yourself will eat it, they won't eat it. Unless you balance it, today TZ, tomorrow rice, tomorrow next *banku*, then next day you cook TZ, they will eat.
>
> R: And when you have your own children, will you teach them how to eat TZ?
>
> P: My children will never eat TZ [..] because the way I ate TZ I don't want my children to eat TZ. They will be eating rice, *banku, fufu.* TZ will not be our main food.
>
> […]

P: I have one of my friends, if you cook TZ she will tell you oh, today, no food, they didn't cook. Because she doesn't like TZ. The name TZ, she doesn't want to hear it, ai.

R: Because she doesn't like the taste, or she's just bored of it.

P: She's fed up, that's why, and now TZ, she doesn't want to eat it.

[…]

R: What if TZ disappeared? What would happen if nobody wanted…?

P: [laughs] TZ will never disappear! […] It cannot because some of us we like food, sorry TZ. Some people still like TZ are gonna get that every day they will eat, and some people don't like. So, it can never disappear, and some people still train their children to eat, at that you know, we are not the same. Some people in in the next generation will be eating TZ, some people like me will not. […] So TZ can never disappear. It will always be there.[34]

The girl claims that her favourite food is *jollof* rice (one she cooks herself, which is much healthier than store bought; she makes sure it contains plenty of vegetables), while her grandmother's favourite food is TZ. She grew up eating TZ every night, sometimes also for breakfast. She does not like TZ for its taste; she would much rather eat rice dishes. However, when she does not eat TZ for over a week, she feels something is missing; she cannot be "satisfied" until she eats TZ. Here, she confirms the influence of the affective element of food, the bodily satisfaction coming from a sensory complex experience that exceeds the basic gustatory dimension of food. Her "feeling in the body" (Geurts 2003) commands her to eat TZ not for the gustatory (seen here as hedonic) pleasures, but for a deeper psychophysical satisfaction. Another man in his early thirties confirm this:

R: So normally every evening it's rice that you eat.

P: Yes, our popular… is rice.

R: But you said you don't like rice that much.

P: Yeah, because… sometimes when I eat rice, I'm always tired and I get up, but I'm not always that satisfied. But for TZ, *banku* and *fufu*, that kind of food, if I eat it, I'm always satisfied. But rice… I will eat and get tired without getting satisfied.[35]

The young woman's grandmother, on the other hand, is so "used to" TZ, she cannot be satisfied with anything else. She will not enjoy eating rice, since that is not what she has been eating her whole life. Although TZ is the cheapest and most accessible type of food and her

[34] From an interview conducted on 14.04.2020 with a woman in her mid-twenties, Wa.

[35] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2020 with a married man in his late twenties, Wa.

family can afford more varied and, at the same time, expensive dishes, she still prefers "swallowed" food over "chewed".

As another participant, woman in her thirties, commented:

> P: I've seen that [their] children mostly they don't like the soupy food, that's the TZ. You see they always like rice. I don't know whether in their future they will also continue with their rice or they will still patronize the TZ. But you can see the children like rice a lot. But for the local food, for their grown-ups, I think that is their local food. If you go to Kumasi, *fufu* is their best. If someone don't eat fufu today tomorrow she'll say oh yes, I didn't eat. Because he didn't eat *fufu*.
>
> R: Yeah, so with many people is like that with TZ here, right. I'm not I'm not satisfied, I haven't eaten TZ.
>
> P: Aa, the person will eat rice in the evening. Then the next day, Oh, yesterday I didn't eat, I slept on hunger [laughing] Because he didn't eat TZ. [36]

Many of my elderly participants indeed claimed that they really feel like they have not eaten unless they have had TZ, especially for the evening meal.

> R: We're just chatting what's your favourite food, what do you enjoy eating the most.
>
> P1: TZ.
>
> R: Is it TZ too?
>
> P1: Mhm, and then… *tubani*. That's my favourite.
>
> R: What makes it your favourite?
>
> P1: I can say that's my favourite because that's our local dish. So… if I ... miss it, two or three days…
>
> P2: Oh, you can't sit.
>
> P1: So I have to eat it, and enjoy it, and it makes my body too firm.
>
> R: Do you enjoy the taste of TZ?
>
> P 1,2: Yes, of course. We enjoy it![37]

Nowadays, children are not used to eating TZ and since their parents usually can afford varied diets, they have become more selective. Parents must account for their children not wanting TZ if served too often and mothers are willing to prepare an extra dish, catering to the gustatory needs of the children. Thus, children are happy to eat both traditional and non-traditional foods, as long as their diet is sufficiently varied. However, many of the youth who grew up in the early nineties and were forced to eat TZ purely due to lack of means, are no

[36] From an interview conducted on 24.06.2019 with a woman in her early thirties, Wa.
[37] From an interview conducted on 24.03.2019 with two women in their fifties, Wa.

longer willing to eat TZ now that they have the possibility to eat something else. Some people still feel a bodily need for TZ, some reject it entirely, like the young woman's friend from the previous excerpt. In conclusion, although fewer and fewer people eat TZ daily, such as the elderly, TZ will never disappear as it has a deep social impact that resonates mainly through wellbeing on the body-mind axis. As a male participant in his twenties explained:

> R: So, because of that exposure [to media] the younger people don't want to eat…
>
> P: It's not like they don't want to eat, as they've been used to see this thing, they want to try it, if not they take local ones.
>
> R: So, it's not like they don't want to take the local of food, but they also want to take something else.
>
> P: Because when we eat the modern ones, we don't feel like going for the local foods. There is time when you feel like eating TZ. Even when they don't cook it, you find a place and buy it. The…, the local foods. Because our parents those days, they were limited only to that food, like TZ for instance. Because they are used to farming, they use the corn to prepare the flour and use for the TZ, so that one will be cheapest food. So, our parents and the elderly people they are used to the local. That's the reason why they are used to because it's cheap source of foods.[38]

While gender differences between dietary choices of the elderly men and women are not that noticeable, there exists a significant gap between dietary choices of young women and men. In summary, young women who participated in this research were more likely to eat homemade, traditional soupy foods, while men were more likely to not only eat more varied and less traditional foods but were also more in charge of their own dietary choices. Their gustatory agency was inextricably connected with their social and economic status, as well as personal freedom embedded in polarised gender roles. Men and women in their twenties did not share similar living and eating patterns. While many of them still lived with their families, women were much more integrated in terms of family feeding allegiances than men. Women, married or unmarried, were responsible for cooking. In the compound, it was usually the wife of the eldest brother (if he was married) who cooked for everyone. If he was not, it was the mother, eldest daughter or a housegirl, who was tasked with cooking. While young women usually stayed at home for the evening meal (cooked by a family member or by themselves), young men, especially those living independently, would venture out to seek their evening sustenance. Women were not only responsible for cooking, but they also had to cater to the tastes of their husbands and the house elders. Still, they were usually exposed to a lot of

[38] From an interview conducted on 13.04.2020 with a man in his twenties, Wa.

criticism. In many polygamous households, the quality of the evening meal was a matter a competition between the wives, who took turns over the week.

> R: And who is cooking in your house?
>
> P: My wife, my brother's wife.
>
> R: And why is it that your brother's wife is cooking for you? Can you explain the… dynamics there?
>
> P: She's cooking because she's a wife of the senior brother in the house, so she's supposed to cook. And if I also do free time in the house, I cook. [..]
>
> R: Who is deciding what you're going to eat that day?
>
> P: The lady.
>
> R: Oh, the lady is deciding.
>
> P: Yes, my brother's wife is deciding what she cooks.
>
> R: And do you have any influence on that, he or you or your mum?
>
> R: Yea, he does. The husband, what he says that's what she's cooking. […]
>
> R: Do you like this arrangement, or would you rather cook yourself or your mom to cook for you, and herself?
>
> P: It's that when I want to cook alone or my mum, it's not gonna be good… the people will complain. That she's having daughter in law, and yet she cooks alone, so I guess because of that, we have to let her.
>
> R: Who would talk?
>
> P: Family members, they would complain.[39]

In this household, the wife of the eldest son cooks for the whole compound, in consultation with him. Other members of the household do not have a voice in deciding what they are going to eat every night, and it is a custom for each unit not to be allowed to cook on their own; otherwise, it would demonstrate that they do not respect and appreciate the woman's performance of their duties. However, criticism arises especially from the elders, when she does not cater to their needs and wishes, or when the food is not of the quality they are used to. For the elders, this often means "swallowed" food, prepared with only natural ingredients. Elder women usually have the upper hand, as they are believed to have a vast knowledge and experience coming from many years of cooking. Young women are believed to cut corners by using ready-made ingredients, such as spice blends, and favouring quickly cooked meals such as rice, over those requiring more labour, such as TZ or *banku*. The participant claimed that she would even cook two meals to appease both: the husband and the elders. Among the household

[39] From and interview conducted on 09.04.2020 with a woman in her mid-twenties, Wa.

members, only perhaps some young men who already have their own income, might decide not to eat at home from time to time. However, an informant, a woman in her mid-twenties, had to comply or "go to sleep hungry".

> R: So it's if you have a is there a difference between how your sister in law is cooking and how your mom is cooking or you yourself?
>
> P: Yes, mum's cooking is always the best [smile]
>
> R: How so?
>
> P: The taste, it's the taste. Maybe she cooks rice, my brother's wife will cook rice, I'll cook rice. But of course, hers will be special.
>
> […]
>
> R: So is there a difference between how your mother cooks and your sister in law cooks?
>
> P: Yeah, because my mother is normally cooking…[with] there's the natural ingredients that are available. Local ingredients that are from either plants… those kind of things.
>
> R: And your sister-in-law?
>
> P: Ok you know [giggles] those young wives at times they want to add more flavour to the food just add some chemicals and things to the food and… spices and those things. I don't even like it, I don't take it. [40]

The evening meals or even weekly menus are put together mainly in consultation with the man who mainly provides for the house. In my host family, the landlord did not eat *fufu*, TZ or *banku.* He also did not eat hot pepper. Hence, his wife often cooked two meals: rice or boiled yams or beans for him and TZ or *banku* with soup for the rest of the family. Yet, this situation was possible due to the financial stability of the household. Many houses could afford only one meal and that was usually ordered by the man. Women had some room for flexibility when it came to what soups or stews will go with the chosen carbohydrates, but no more than that. The following are a few examples of men talking about being, at least partially, in charge of their weekly menus.

> P: TZ… TZ is my dad's favourite. So, because he's no more around, like he's not [at] home all the time, we don't eat much TZ nowadays. What we take most often is rice.
>
> R: Ok, but when your dad is at home, is TZ?

[40] Ibidem.

P: When he comes back my mum wants to satisfy him, because he's not been taking that food for long, so when he comes, he would be taking TZ all the time. [41]

R: And in the evenings, do you also take rice or something else?

P: I don't have a choice because I don't provide for the house, so whatever they cook for the evening. So whatever it is I have to take.

R: What is it mostly then?

P: *Banku*.

R: Or TZ?

P: Yeah, *banku* or TZ. [42]

P: […] I live in Tamale from the office I do… if you if I even go home there will be no one. My wife goes to work, everybody's away, so lunch... I go for lunch outside, maybe with a friend or something. And I would always eat *fufu*, because at home. They would serve me TZ at night or *banku* at night. These two, those are the only ones… I if they want rice, maybe they will do it for themselves. But I wouldn't eat any of them at lunchtime. So, I eat out a lot. […]

Yes. In my in my home there is, there is [a weekly menu]. Sometimes when I'm going out in the morning, I just… I just look at it and I know what I'll be taking. And as I said, for supper, for me, irrespective of what the menu says, I know it will be TZ or *banku* or sometimes rice balls. Because I if they want to eat rice or something, I don't like it. I just… so they are aware. They will make sure I have my TZ. Okay, I don't stop them from eating what they want.[43]

In large compounds, it was usually the man or men who provided, who were the ultimate judges of the quality of the meal. If they appeared in high numbers, it meant they appreciated the food and the cook ("*they start jubilating before the food is ready*"). When they remained quiet and would not eat much, it was a clear sign they did not value the food prepared by the person. This, apparently, resulted in rivalry between women.

R: Was there rivalry... a, a competition between women, who cooks better, among the four wives?

P: That, that was the main thing! [all laugh] That you wanted to cook better than everybody, that today you cooked and they know you cooked better than your colleagues, so even if you didn't have money you would try your possible best. To let the food be better. So that when the men come to eat, to your children come to eat, they will ask, who has cooked today, then it's you... then you'll be proud, and you'll be praised. [laughing][…] So that... when... men or they're

[41] From an interview conducted in April 2020 with a man in his early twenties, Wa.

[42] From an interview conducted in March 2020 with a man in his mid-twenties, Wa.

[43] From an interview conducted on 07.09.2018 with a man in his fifties, Wa.

> grown out children, got to know, it was like a timetable, they knew this person is cooking today, so there are days when they know a particular woman is cooking, they start jubilating even before the food is ready, because they knew they will eat better soup or better food. But there are days, when it's said this person is cooking and you're soo... so feel bad, because those days it wasn't common especially in the evening, to get food outside to buy, for no matter how it is, whether it's good or bad, that's your supper. You either eat it or you go hungry.[44]

The participant in this interview is recalling a situation from some thirty years prior, hence the comment that it was not easy to get a meal outside the house; one had to eat what was prepared at home, or else one would simply go hungry. Much has changed since then and more often than not young men go out for food when they do not have the appetite for what is being prepared at home.

> R: Okay, and you when you were growing up, in your house, what did your mother cook for you the most?
> P: *Tuo zaafi*.
> R: Did you eat it every evening?
> P: Eee, I ate it every evening.
> R: When did it change?
> P: Yeah, like later on I had options. I would get money on my own to buy food. So maybe if I don't feel like taking the TZ I go for a different meal. […] Or it's not like I don't eat at home anymore. Sometimes when you get home and they prepare meal you don't feel like eating that one, now get your own, a different. […] Mostly I go for rice. Plain rice.[45]

Another man in his early twenties shared that he does not eat much at home in the evenings, neither does he cook:

> R: Do you eat at home, or do you buy food do you prepare yourself something
> P: Actually, I don't prepare. I usually go and buy. Sometimes they will prepare, and I will go and eat. For the buying there, actually when I come to the market you have to buy. When I'm at home, if they cook, I'll eat. But for me, I don't cook. […] For the morning I just take water, water plenty. Then I will go and buy rice, maybe around 3 to 4, I'll go and buy rice… Maybe till tomorrow I won't eat again.
> R: So sometimes in the night you also don't eat in the house.
> P: Yes, actually… if I take rice, maybe I just take small.[46]

> R: So who's cooking in your compound?
> P: My brother is married. So, at times my brother's wife gives me, or sometimes my mother too gives me.
> R: Your mother?

[44] From an interview conducted in August 2018 with two women in their sixties, Wa.
[45] From an interview conducted on 16.04.2020 with a man in his early twenties, Wa.
[46] Ibidem.

> P: Yes. [clicks] The problem is, most at times I'm not always at the house. As I come to work, I'm having some friends after I close [finish work], I will go there to have fun with them. So, when my mother comes to the house, I will not be there. So maybe she will turn [cook] the food but like when I go to the house I will pass by and collect, but at times I will just go and sleep.[47]

Eating out as an option was available mostly to young men, but not to young women, and was founded on economic opportunities, patterns of spending and distribution of household duties. While young women also sought wage-earning activities like men (often related to food production and vending), they did not choose to spend the money earned on food. Certainly, if they found employment on the market they would, just like men, purchase lunch food outside from a trusted source. Yet many of them would also prepare their lunch boxes to take along or even cook on the spot, like my hostess's mother, who regularly cooked dinners in her small shop. Purchasing lunch food outside is not new and has not been considered out of norm for women, but many considered such food unhealthy and "bad for you" or did not trust the women preparing it, saying they can do better.

The main difference lies in the consumption of the evening meal. While young women would stay home and either cook or eat something prepared by a family member, many young men, if they happened to have the means, would venture out seeking food catering fulfilling their craving. Some complained about how unhealthy such a lifestyle is but explained either there is nobody to cook for them at home, if they lived alone, or that they are simply too busy. In fact, however, they admitted that they enjoy the freedom to choose what, when and how they want to eat; like the man quoted above, who sometimes took food from the house, but sometimes chose not to. Considering that it was their fathers or uncles who oversaw menu planning, seeking food outside by young men could be interpreted as trying to gain the same kind of gustatory influence as men with a higher status. Young unmarried women often had to comply, as they were not permitted or were frowned upon to eat out; many complied unresentfully, claiming that food cooked at home might not be always up to their tastes, but it will always be good and healthy. Here a young man explains his gustatory freedom that also depends on his economic standing:

> R: Some people tell me that they enjoy that they can choose what they eat during the day. So, you also feel that freedom that you can choose whatever you want to eat every day?

[47] From an interview conducted on 06.02.2020 with a man in his late twenties, Wa.

> P: Yes, I have but… sometimes you have to consider your finances before you do something. If not, mostly, even at the house, what they give me, I don't like. I don't like it. But I [share, eat].[48]

Ethnicity and regional sense of belonging through food

Data suggests that apart from gender, racial or economic categories, otherness is also defined based on ethnically, historically and geographically oriented identities embodied in everyday dietary choices. The following part of the chapter will focus on cultural gustatory identities being enacted through the embodied practices of cooking and eating.

Williams-Forson in her article about the preservation of Ghanaian identity among the members of the diaspora in the US, writes:

> Food is a significant component of cultural sustainability in that it is one of the many life rituals that play an important role in helping reinforce the norms that we embody (Sutton 2011). The smell of familiar foods can instantly evoke a series of emotions and desires because food and food customs are carriers of identity, memory, and tradition. Food habits are part of our cultural identity, and they, like language, are among the markers of identity that are seldom relinquished (Gabaccia 2000; Grosvenor 1998). More than sustenance, food in rituals and customs, as ingredients and in processes of preparation, are symbolic for what they convey about our racial and ethnic identities. […] Dinah Ayensu muses in the statement that opens this essay, "there are [some Ghanaians] who will say they haven't eaten the whole day, simply because they haven't had their soup and *fufu*." An examination of this kind of cultural demand should be central to discussions of sustainability because accessing recognizable foods can be challenging for immigrants to the United States (Williams-Forson 2014, 71–72).

As the previous section of this chapter showed, dietary patterns serve as a tool to perpetuate, enact and secure certain identities. This is especially visible among young women and men. The latter are eager to spend what little money they have to eat out, having the freedom to choose their meal, while the former comply with family eating patterns and participate closely in the kin-informed feeding structures. Chapter five of this thesis demonstrates how women partake directly in production and reproduction of cultural values and senses of belonging through cooking, while acting as leading agents of change in cooking traditions. For men, food becomes a symbolic cultural element that they use as a tool to assert their status: whether as a main provider, a "big man" or a "North Ghanaian". For the elderly, eating homemade "swallowed" food is a matter of physical comfort and wellbeing, in contrast to the youth, for whom eating has a much more pronounced hedonic character.

[48] From an interview conducted on 13.04.2020 with a man in his mid-thirties, Wa.

According to Forson, eating homemade "slow food" (as opposed to "fast food", ready-made sustenance usually purchased from street vendors) is in its essence an action of cultural production and reproduction of the cultural. Such a process produces a variety of identities: local, regional, intra- and transnational. Forson describes identity-making among the (South) Ghanaian diaspora, but I would like to argue that for the North Ghanaians, practising eating local food has a similar effect of preserving cultural (ethnic) identity. At the same time, leaning towards more varied or heavily Western-influenced diets could be interpreted as an act of rejecting certain ethnic or socio-geographical identities in favour of the global consumer. In a context of an increasingly connected, mobile and urbanised North Ghanaian society, the preservation and reproduction of culinary landscapes, as well as open acts of their rejection, becomes a cultural and political act of sustainability and disruption. These processes gain a heavier symbolic meaning for some than to others, especially among those who, having a choice between local and foreign sensory modalities, actively pursue slow foods i.e., the educated and the mobile middle class. For them, choosing to eat TZ becomes an emotional and affective act of, quite literally, reproducing their Northern bodily and gustatory selfhood.

In literature, ethnicity and the ethnic identity of Northern Ghana is presented as a rather complex and problematic issue. In their monograph, Carola Lentz and Paul Nugent present Northern ethnicities as invented, malleable and having secondary importance for the social organisation of the Northern societies in today's Ghana (Lentz and Nugent 2000; Lentz 2006). Pondering the importance of ethnic labels in Northern Ghana is not the goal of this chapter, however, an overview of existing research seems due, if such labels are to be used in the context of food choices and dietary patterns.

According to Lentz, "ethnicity is indeed above all a problem that has to be approached historically, but through history of a particular kind, namely an approach that breaks through the epistemological barrier between the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods" (Lentz and Nugent 2000, 6). She emphasises that the dualistic approach pictured in a conflict between primordialist and instrumentalist approaches to identity (Eriksen 2001) must be overcome to "shed lights on the ways in which ethnicities relate to older idioms of collective identity, we can investigate the scope as well as the limits of cultural and political creativity" (Lentz and Nugent 2000, 6). Early sources indicate the existence of large, centralised ethnic groups in both southern and northern regions of Ghana. Indeed, the Ashanti Kingdom, the Kingdom of Gonja, Dagomba and Mamprusi were among the first to come into (often violent) contact with the first traders and later, with the British colonisers. While the Ashanti Kingdom was considered a

threat to British rule, the North was seen as largely scattered and decentralised peripheries, later unified under the common term of the Northern Territories. One of the objectives of the British colonial rule was to create an ethnic map of the North and a "corpus of law and customs" (Lentz 1995, 72). This process was, however, interactive and reciprocal, as the tribalistic discourses were accepted by the interpreters and chiefs, who used them to reach their own objectives. Lentz writes:

> Colonial ethnography and historiography were not a monolithic block of 'invented traditions' that had successfully, and irreversibly, reified what had once been flexible, authentic African 'customs' (Ranger 1983), but were rather the result of 'creative negotiation between agents of both discursive communities, the British and the African' (Pels 1996: 740), marked by unexpected and often also undiscerned moments of mutual instrumentalization (Lentz 1995, 72).

Ethnicity and tribalism in Northern Ghana were therefore not entirely arbitrarily imposed, rigid categories, but rather social constructs founded on previously existing social institutions (Lentz 2000; 2006; Lentz and Nugent 2000). Ethnic and tribal as the primary categories of political orders were indeed organising categories introduced by the British, but their interpretations and modes of appropriation lay largely with the local communities and translators between the British and the Africans. Moreover, ethnic knowledge was not set in stone after WWI and major shifts in the colonial staff (from soldiers to educated clerks) took place, allowing more long-term collaboration between the administration and the local communities. Considered necessary to introduce the concept of indirect rule, it also made more accurate ethnographic knowledge possible to obtain. Finally, nineteenth century concepts of tribes as homogenous groups were also constantly revisited and reinterpreted, much like personal objectives and approaches displayed by various district commissioners. In the end, the colonial quest towards clear-cut ethnolinguistic maps and transparent administrative divisions was very much in a state of constant remaking, with continually evolving, nuanced concepts of tradition, ethnicity and governance. According to Worby: "Ethnicity is fundamentally about the power to name others [and is] increasingly bound up with an imaginary knowledge of the relationship between ethnic identities and socio-geographic space" (Worby 1994, 371).

In the case of Northern Ghana, ethnonyms were not the first labels reached for when it came to divide "them" from "us". As Lentz writes, toponyms were mistaken for or used interchangeably with ethnonyms, alongside religious and linguistic categories. The population was mobile without clear boundaries between settlements, villages or other territorial entities. Yet, British ethnic nomenclature proved to be persistent and many ethnic names are still in use

today, despite the fact that their denotation changed over the years. In the 1930s, the goal of the colonial administration changed and less emphasis was put on dividing northern societies into tribes. The interpretation of tribalism and ethnicity became more nuanced and went beyond common descent, language and geographical location. Early anthropological works show that the acceleration of labour migration and urbanisation in the 1940s and 1950s have contributed to a so-called "detribalisation", which contemporary scholars regard as distortive (Lentz 1995). As Gluckman writes:

> An African townsman is a townsman, an African miner is a miner: he is only secondarily a tribesman […] the moment an African crossed his tribal boundary, he was 'detribalised', outside the tribe, though not outside the influence of the tribe. Correspondingly, when a man returns from the towns into the political area of his tribe he is tribalized – de-urbanised – though not outside the influence of the town (Lentz 1995, 308).

For Gluckman and others from the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute[49], the ethnic label was one of many that labour migrants shuffled depending on their situation. Detaching from the tribal etiquette as a primary self-identification tool in favour of more contextual labels, social scales and localised phenomena, ethnicity was yet again relegated to the bottom of the factors involved in group formation. Later research suggests that language, gender, age, religion, or urban and rural localisation played a much more important role in the aforementioned process than ethnicity had ever had in Northern Ghana. Ethnicity remains an evocative category, played in situations of detachment, migration and encounter when called upon, rather than in everyday life.

Jack Goody in his seminal work on cooking and class in Northern Ghana and many later works indicates that there is no connection between not only class and food, but also ethnicity and food (Goody 1982; Goody and Goody 1995). He contests ethnicity seen from a primordialist perspective and attaches it to nationalist movements that in some ways lead to the development of national cuisines[50]. For him, ethnic ties in Ghana were in fact cemented by the emergence of nation states, such as Ghana. Thus, ethnic identities play a far less prominent role

[49] Rhodes-Livingstone Insitute, sometimes called Manchester School in South-Central Africa, had a great impact on shaping British anthropology in the African context. For more see Kees van Donge (1985).

[50] In his well-known work on cookbooks in India Appadurai (1988) makes a connection between the rise in the availability and usage of cookbooks and shifts in the common palate and moralities of taste, as well as standardisation of the national cuisine. Cookbooks in India are commonly used among middle class women which is a class internally also quite differentiated. In his view, in India cookbooks have a postcolonial character and they help to reshape the Indian nation through creation of national cuisine from regional and local cuisines. A similar pattern could be outlined in Ghana. See also: Gallegos (2005), Portincasa (2019), Ichijo and Ranta (2016), Nugent (2010).

in food preferences and vice versa, food preferences are hardly ever dictated by one's ethnic belonging. To him, "tribal belonging" succumbs to economic and political factors.

> For them nationality is not ethnicity, although the emergence of the nation state may serve to create ties of an ethnic kind, as is the case in Ghana. But that does not eliminate local languages, local recipes, local practices; rather it adds another significant level to such 'tribal' loyalties, emphasising the potential plasticity of such ties. In an age when many are trying to add regional (i.e. European and) world (i.e. United Nations) loyalties to national and more local ones such diglossia should be a ground for hope. This is true not only for mankind but for the catering industry since we can see those identities being increasingly expressed in regional and world cuisines (Goody and Goody 1995, 13).

Data collected in this research shows that indeed ethnicity and tribal allegiances do not play out to a great extent in the selection of everyday food among North Ghanaian urban dwellers. Personal gustatory preferences, health issues, religious beliefs and financial status appear to have a far more significant influence when it comes to choosing certain types of food over others. Nonetheless, in moments of encounter or self-reflection, ethnicity becomes a factor in separating "their" food from "ours". Ethnic othering through food is very subtle and never contested, especially since there is one unifying food factor that brings the entire North together: TZ. While northern sense of belonging and identity seems to be played out by eating TZ ("everyone in the North eats TZ, the Dagaba food is TZ, the Dagomba food is TZ, the Wala food is also TZ") the ethnic differences are emphasised by frequency, modes and gustatory nuances of the soups that go with the TZ. A nationalist perspective on the Ghanaian nation speaks of "diversity" and "plurality" of regional cuisines rather than antagonisms.

One of the close participants for this research once extended an invitation to dinner. From my field notes:

> He was racking his brain to come up with something I haven't eaten to invite me to his place to try. I said he can test me. I love *fufu* with *egushie*, it's positively my favourite. He said it's because of my family – Wales are good with *fufu*, *egushie* and rice. In the end he asked me if I ate *jojo* soup – that I haven't, but I know it's the Dagari soup, and he was happy to hear it. I should come over to his place and he will cook it for me to try. [51]

My host family was never particular about breakfast; the usual fare consisted of bread with tea, sometimes omelettes on Sundays when the landlady was off work and children did not go to school. Sometimes however, especially when she was out of change, the hostess would prepare *koko*, millet porridge. Millet porridge is a very popular dish sold typically both morning

[51] From my fieldnotes, 05.05.2019.

and evening, accompanied by *koose,* fried bean cakes. Only later did I find out, there are differences between various types of millet porridge and the hostess prepared Wala-style porridge. She explained that Wala *koko* includes small balls of millet flour, formed with the hands, while the Dagaba, one that could usually be bought in the streets, is smooth. However, the proof was in the pudding, or rather, the soups. As stated many times elsewhere (see chapter 3) at the beginning of the research, I was not able to distinguish differences between various types of soups. It seemed that the host family ate just about the same meals as everyone else met during research. It was usually either a starchy staple such as *banku* or TZ with groundnut soup and dry okra, or just dry okra with smoked or dried fish. My hostess liked using smoked fish and rarely added goat meat or mutton to the soups. It was after some time that it became clear that the range of soups is much wider, and while everyone uses similar ingredients, some soups are associated with either Wala, Dagaaba, Sissala or Frafra households. Dry *okro, egushie* and groundnut are associated with the Wala. *Jojo*, bitter leaf, and raw groundnut are usually associated with the Dagaaba cuisine. The landlady would never cook *jojo*, a pumpkin leaf soup, while J., a friend, would rarely prepare *mampuoni*, dry okra soup. Everyone ate beans, but Bambara bean TZ was associated with the Dagaba ethnicity. J. spoke of *jojo* this way:

> P: We have this soup, it's called *jojo* […] it's our local soup for the Dagabes, so Wala people they don't know what it is […] The *jojo*, it's our favourite. […] Because you can either eat that one alone and you're good to go, you don't need to add TZ to it, or just a small bit of it, of TZ, and you're good to go. We use groundnut... yes, groundnut, the raw ones, it has been pounded. then... you have em... *kita* schoolboys the fish, the small-small ones, we pound that one too. Then you can add *dawa dawa* if you want. And with the leaves, we have what we call *alefu*, […] we have the *braa*. Then, we have the pumpkin leaves... yes, these three, these are the main vegetables you use for cooking *jojo*. […] Then you can also add raw... when you're about eating, you can add raw shea butter. You just add little of the raw shea butter. And drop it inside the soup, whilst it's how […]. And when you add it it's very nice, it gives, it's a different... taste, altogether.
>
> R: What kind of taste?
>
> P: It's, it's... it doesn't make it... heavy. Because the *jojo*, it's a heavy meal, it's a heavy soup. [with all the leaves and groundnut] But when you add the shea butter, just a little, little bit. It makes it soft. […] Mostly the *jojo* goes with cold TZ. But when you add shea butter, it makes it soft, it makes this soup soft. You can eat it now with hot TZ […]. And the *bambara* beans you see yesterday, they use it to stir TZ, that one too. It's one... it's also one of our people, they're favourite. The *bambara* beans TZ, aside the maize and... the corn flour.
>
> […]

> P: So apart from the jojo, which is our main... our favourite, when it comes to the Dagabe people, that's our favourite. But when it comes to the Wala people, it's the dry okro, they love the dry okro so much![52]

It is important to mention that ethnic lines (malleable, blurred and nuanced) in the North are contemporarily driven alongside religious and linguistic ones. Therefore, most of my Dagaba speaking participants identified as Catholics (or belonging to other Christian denominations), while all Wala participants were Muslim. As a result, the Wala claimed to eat neither pork nor dog, whilst the Dagaba ate both. Once, I had a chance to try a little bit of dog meat. Later, I shared this experience with my hostess. She laughed with an exasperated look on her face. "So, she said, you ate Bingo?", she asked mockingly. Bingo was the household guard dog, a thin, mustard-coloured creature with a mild disposition. Moreover, Dagaba city dwellers were often first- or second-generation migrants from the villages in the region. It seemed to matter for the biographical, personal accounts of the dietary habits, their evolution and appropriation. While many of the Wala people had relatives in the villages, they themselves were born and raised in Wa and therefore were much more used to sourcing their food from the market, which made incorporation of foreign food more feasible. Those raised in the village, however, were used to a much greater variety of wild fruit, as well as vegetables and leaves (usually grown in gardens or foraged), used for soups.

Much more voracious was the division between southern and northern food. "Everyone in the North eats TZ" was a golden phrase during visits in the *zongo*[53] quarters of Wa, where the majority of the population spoke Wale, the villages north of Jirapa, the outskirts of Tamale or the hilly surroundings of Bolgatanga. "Maybe the taste or the method of preparation might be different but fufu [and] TZ is across the Northern Sector, the Dagabes, the Wales they all eat *fufu* [and TZ]"[54], firmly claimed a Wala woman in her seventies. The huge unifying potential of TZ was reminiscent of that of *fufu*, the notorious Akan staple food. According to scholars *fufu*, although no longer as popular as before among the Akan of Ghana (Clark 2014, Goody and Goody 1995), remains an extremely important and symbolically laden element of the gustatory landscape of Central Ghana. Results of a survey I did among nearly a hundred university students of UDS, coming from all regions of Ghana, seem to confirm that tendency. This premature observation led to a firm assumption about a strong link between ethnic groups

[52] From an interview conducted in August 2018 with a woman in her later twenties, Wa.

[53] The word "zongo" in Hausa means "village or place of strangers" and usually indicates a predominantly Muslim settlement in the city. Im Wa, the so called the zongo quarters encompass the innermost areas of the city, inhabited chiefly by Muslim Wala speaking people. For context see Schildkrout (2007) and Casentini (2018).

[54] From an interview conducted in August 2018 with two women in their sixties, Wa.

and their food; that various ethnic groups in Ghana reaffirm their ethnic identity much in the same way as the ethnic groups in multicultural Europe or India (Srinivas 2006; Appadurai 1988a).

Much as *fufu* among the Akan, *kenkey* among the Fanti, TZ turned out to be equally popular and loved (and hated) among the Walas, Dagabas, Konkombas, Gonjas, Mamprusi and other northern ethnic groups. In conclusion, TZ turned out to be a pan-northern staple, which clearly indicated a common taste preference that went beyond ethnic labels. There might be a few reasons standing behind this, mainly to do with the natural landscape and climate of the region (Ham 2020). The sub-Saharan climate with one wet season, the rather infertile soil as compared to the central areas of the country and lack of colonial infrastructure investment all contribute to the cultivation of local staples: millet, guinea corn and, introduced later, yellow corn. Easy to store outside the yam season, milled into flour, millet and corn serve as a main source of carbohydrates. Millet and corn porridge, *tuo zaafi*, remains a staple that precedes, overlaps and transcends any ethnic, religious or linguistic boundaries, wielding a unifying power similar to *fufu*. The difference between the two, is that the Akan historically have been more centralised than the northern ethnic groups and therefore, appropriated fufu as a certain ethnic unity. Allegiance to TZ is pledged based on geographical location and agricultural traditions, rather than corroborated by ethnic labels.

The phrase "it's not our food", which appeared regularly in conversations, usually referred to southern foods, often assigned ethnic labels: "Fanti *kenkey*", "Asante *fufu*", "Ewe *akple*". Northerners, whether in Tamale or in Wa, drew a strong boundary between southern and northern food traditions, born mainly out of the climate and the resulting agricultural disparities. There appeared to be a moral judgement embedded in this division. When I was in the South and talked about my project with the people I met, they were often not familiar with northern foods. Those who knew it, said it is very simple, that they cannot eat it (they are not used to it), and pointed out "crude" methods of food acquisition; Northerners were still gathering some of their soup ingredients, while in the South everything was purchased or grown in the garden (Yaro 2006; Aasoglenang and Bonye 2013). Northern food was presented as less varied and rich, containing fewer fruit and seasonal vegetables such as avocados, and much less animal protein. In many ways, northern food was described as more "traditional" than southern. Depending on the context, this appeared to be either an advantage or disadvantage, whether traditional was understood as "backwards" or "natural, healthy".

Chapter 5

Sensory clash, creativity and culinary (de)colonisation in vocational schools.

> "No source of influence in cookery – perhaps in the exchange of culture generally – has exceeded imperialism."
>
> F. Fernández-Armesto, *Near a Thousand Tables: A History of Food*, 2002

The previous chapter investigated the role of women as primary food providers in contemporary North Ghanaian society and challenged the notion of women as guardians of traditionalism in contemporary diets. Drawing from literature and ethnographic material, chapter four proposes that women's role in preserving food traditions only partially reflects the scope and cultural significance of their food-related activities. Women in Northern Ghana indeed remain among the main recipients of orally transmitted cooking expertise, which is usually passed on along the female line from generation to generation, thus remaining the source of practical and theoretical knowledge of traditional ways of food preparation. Yet, women in Northern Ghana are also agents of change; their creativity, will to learn new methods, ingredients and dishes, is a motor propelling constant change in Ghanaian food culture. This chapter looks at women's agency in a professional setting as teachers, cooks and caterers and their role in disseminating professional knowledge, setting cooking standards and elevating young women's status through providing them with practical skills. It also looks at the status, types of knowledge and methods of its dissemination among students, together with the challenges and opportunities offered by home economics and catering courses.

Contemporary food culture in Ghana encompasses more than just home cooking and street vending businesses. The Ghanaian cooking scene is becoming increasingly professionalised: the main Ghanaian cities such as Accra, Kumasi, Tamale and Takoradi witness a burgeoning upscale dining experience. Bar and restaurant culture is becoming part of everyday life for many up-and-coming Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Thanks to its good economic standing and lively market, the country hosts many foreign investors and witnesses a constant influx of tourists and volunteers working with many German, Dutch, British or Canadian, to name a few, non-governmental organisations. To answer to a rising demand for international,

Western or European food, Ghanaian hotels and restaurants employ educated caterers and cooks, usually graduates of vocational schools. Such positions are considered prestigious and sought after by many graduates. Consequently, they are also rare and many food professionals, usually called "cateresses" have to resort to their own creativity and their business knack to make a living in this competitive field.

Home economics: roots, critique and contemporary educational programme

Home economics as a vocation appeared in the USA in the first half of the nineteenth century and was focussed on the 'domestic economy' (Betts and Goldey 2005). By the late 1880s HE was offered as a university course and domestic science was introduced as a school subject. In an increasingly literate society, where printed materials were widely available, the first women-only schools were founded. There, students were taught the principles of cooking, laundry, cleaning, sewing and sanitation: the fundamentals of housekeeping. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that so-called "domestic sciences" gained official status as a school subject. It covered domestic work, hygiene and cleaning. In 1908, the attendants of the 10th Lake Placid Conference established the American Home Economics Association (AHEA), which went on to lobby federal and state governments for funding to facilitate the research and teaching of home economics (Weigley 1974). In the same year, the International Federation of Home Economics, an NGO which tackles issues such as poverty alleviation, human rights, food security, was established in Switzerland (Betts and Goldey 2005).

The goal of the home economics programme was the preparation of students for "efficient administration of household affairs" and the courses were initially offered exclusively to girls. The AHEA took it upon itself to promote the significance of unpaid work women exercise when undertaking competent management of the household and to elevate their roles in society. Association members advocated simplifying household chores and promoted modernisation of life, which should be "unhampered by the traditions of the past" (Weigley 1974, 94). Home economic departments aimed to introduce the first generation of wage-earning American women to the basics of household management. In the interwar period women gradually faced a demise of domestic service, predominant in their mothers' generation, and relegation of household responsibilities to the wives (Bix 2002). By the 1930s home economics also became a well-established college subject and the curriculum expanded into more science-oriented directions, including biology, chemistry, food science and nutrition.

The latter half of the twentieth century witnessed rising feminist criticism of Home Economics. It perceived HE as restrictive, traditionalistic and oppressive. HE was gradually

transformed to teach skills for out-of-house employment and its image was revisited. In the late 1990s HE morphed into Family and Consumer Science (Betts and Goldey 2005). Eventually, several main branches of home economics emerged. The American Association of Family and Consumer Care (the successor of the American Home Economics Association) lists the following eight areas covered by modern HE: culinary arts, hospitality and tourism; education and training; food science and nutrition; housing and interior design; health management and wellness; human/child development and family relations; personal and family finance; textiles, apparel and retailing (AAFC 2021). The values shared by FCS are to strive to live better lives, be work and career ready, build strong families and make meaningful contributions to communities.

Elsewhere in the world HE courses have undergone a similar transformation: from teaching domestic work (cleaning, hygiene, cooking) to providing employable skills, knowledge of food and nutrition, budget planning and childcare. In West Africa HE came with the missionaries who took local women and girls into their households and taught them the basics of domestic work. The objective was to train them in unpaid domestic service. According to Betts:

> The first half of the twentieth century saw HE grow and diversify as young women were trained in food preparation, home management, childcare, housing, and textiles and clothing. Practical education was emphasised and focused on building a body of knowledge and skills. HE was valued as a way to alleviate extreme poverty through improved home life and the acquisition of skills that women could use to earn a living (Betts and Goldey 2005, 109).

Home economics departments were closely linked to the developmental departments and their focus was on alleviating extreme poverty and improving living conditions. In Ghana the origin of HE can be linked to the activity of missionaries as well (in the case of the Upper West Region, Catholic missionaries) (Der 1974). Around the 1930s the first schools in Northern Ghana were established where HE was taught as a subject (Graham 2013).

In the latter part of the twentieth century, HE became a subject at many west African universities, but educated and locally based home economists who could work as teachers and facilitators, were missing. According to Mberengwa and Mthombeni, most teachers were still educated abroad, for example in Canada or the UK, and transplanted those Western standards to the local environment (Mberengwa and Mthombeni 2012). There is not much literature that covers the history of HE in Ghana. In her article from 1948, F. Kittrell, the first Black woman to earn a PhD in home economics in the United States, gives an account on the state of education in the Ghanaian (then: Gold Coast) hinterland. She notes that the current curriculum offers little

to the locals and their everyday life. Knowledge disseminated in school classes and through textbooks, most of which were modelled after European or American examples, rather than proposing solutions to local problems imposed foreign standards, incongruent with the cultural and social landscapes. She notes that many teachers are educated abroad and do not have skills and knowledge relevant to the problems at hand. Kittrell advocates that home economics can and should be taught with local socioeconomic and environmental conditions in mind and aim to elevate the role of women, which she considers a factor against which the general progress of society should be measured (Kittrell 1948, 193).

In 1965, the Ghana Home Economics Association (GHEA) was established, to promote education in home economics as a valuable career path, together with the general premises of home economics, which is to promote healthy lifestyles, appropriate development of children, financial independence and sanitation (GHEA 2021). However, according to Betts and Goldey, home economics and home economists in most African countries were not able to bring sustainable systemic changes until the subject was incorporated into intra and international developmental programmes in the 1970s and 1980s. Until then, education and development of skills among women were treated as an issue separate from political or economic systems and their development. This changed only with the introduction of Gender and Development (GID) approaches, replacing Women in Development (WID) (Betts and Goldey 2005; C. Miller and Razavi 1995) approaches, which started seeing women as active agents and not only beneficiaries of the welfare programmes. Improvement of women's social and economic status and their input in domestic labour started to be seen as crucial for the general economic development of society (Betts and Goldey 2005). Much like the first home economists in the US, contemporary home economists in Ghana fought for acknowledgement of their unpaid labour to be considered as a motor for societal change.

The first cateress to achieve nationwide success was Barbara Baeta. Educated abroad in Liverpool and West Scotland, Baeta came back to Ghana in the mid 1960s to take up a position as Catering Officer at Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra. In 1968 she was famously asked to prepare an Independence Day dinner for American dignitaries. Earnings from that event led her to establish her catering company, Flair, which she operated from her uncle's home basement. Over the last fifty years, Flair has catered to all Ghanaian Heads of State, an impressive number of international crowned heads, numerous national and international events and continues to provide services to this day (Kuenyeheia 2018) Although Baeta studied abroad and cooked for international guests, she is a strong advocate of Ghanaian cuisine. Together with

Fran Osseo-Assare, she published a cookbook that became an international bestseller and earned the "Gourmand Cookbook 2016" award. In it, she proposes recipes for Ghanaian dishes prepared with a twist to cater to international tastes. In the 1980s Flair expanded into a catering and hospitality teaching facility and Mrs Baeta is said to have educated generations of successful entrepreneurs. Their programme is "designed around the basics of cookery theory and practicals, food and beverage training, hygiene, housekeeping, customer care, entrepreneurship and bookkeeping". Baeta's school sets standards for catering education across the country.

Although the hospitality industry in the country is blooming and home economics and catering programmes can be studied at secondary and tertiary level educational institutions, this line of profession still does not have a good reputation. Many contemporary Ghanaian scholars point to the fact that the rate of enrolment in home economics programmes is steadily declining. Ankoma-Sey, Quansah, and Nsoh (2019) examined determinants of students' enrolment in HE programmes at secondary level and their results were thought-provoking. Their research suggests a few root causes for this issue. To begin with, admission to secondary school is very competitive. There is a limited number of secondary schools (Senior High Schools, academic path) in Ghana, meaning that not every student attempting BECE (Basic Education Certificate Examination) will be granted a placement there. Only students with the best results are admitted to secondary schools of their choice, while the rest have to either resign from studying at SHS or choose vocational education, which has very low enrolment requirements. For this reason, vocational education is much less esteemed and considered a "second choice" for some (those who "failed"), or the only choice for those who have weak academic ability. Interviews with teachers confirm those prejudices.

Furthermore, deep-rooted expectations still dictate today's choices of education and career paths among teenagers. In their article, Ankoma-Sey, Quansah and Nsoh (2019) (Ankoma-Sey, Quansah, and Nsoh 2019) point out that students who receive strong discouragement from their parents are less likely to pursue home economics. Their parents perceive the subject as not worthy of effort, a waste of opportunities and a field unlikely to wield financial benefits. Other factors deterring teenagers from studying HE are the financial commitment and the workload involved in studying home economics and catering at secondary and tertiary level. Ankoma-Sey, Quansah and Nsoh (2019) suggest that HE and catering programmes are considered irrelevant for males and their relatives strongly discourage them from enrolment. Gendered division of labour is still a prominent factor in the choice of

specialities; male students tend to gravitate towards branches typically associated with men, such as building, ICT, carpentry or welding, while girls form a crushing majority in HE and catering programmes. Researchers associate such a division with the difference in patterns of socialisation between boys and girls and the low social value of so-called "female jobs", which usually concern the domestic sphere. Moreover, on top of regular classes in Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and English, students of HE need to attend practical classes. They also have to be provided with extra uniforms and utensils, not to mention perishable ingredients necessary to cook dishes at demonstrations, practicals and examinations. The overall extra costs can rise up to 800 GHC a year (around 100 EUR).

> R: […] Do you have both boys and girls?
>
> P: Noo... I think… the last group… 2016 that we had two boys. Since then, nothing.
>
> R: Oh? Why is that?
>
> P: It is sometimes the cost. You know, catering is expensive, so sometimes it's the cost. I think another reason is… in the North here we say males don't go for females…Tasks. So, they feel shy to come out. Especially in the North. But down south you have men going for it. So, these are some of the reasons […] "Ah, you are a man and you're learning how to cook, is it a job for a man. This job is for a woman".
>
> R: So, his colleagues would bully him.
>
> P: Yes, they would bully him. […] Sometimes I tell them it's only here in the North that we say that men don't do women's job. Because at home you don't expect the female to be sitting and the male would be stirring TZ. Because we believe it's a job for female. So, this has come to stay. But I think we should break away from that and that we should embrace. The female job.[55]

On the other hand, many students are encouraged and inspired to pursue home economics for several reasons. Teachers often play a major role in advertising HE courses to potential students. They point to the fact that HE and catering provide good job prospects and if the students have the passion and perseverance to cope with the extra workload, it will most definitely pay off. Seeing their peers prosper, even though they did not go to SHS, has inspired many to pursue the same line of education. Female teachers of HE see this line of career as accessible and prospective for young women, who have the possibility to become financially independent by acquiring new skills.

> R: So, what inspires these girls and boys to come still here to the vocational institutes and pursue education and still complete some kind of school.

[55] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2019 with the head of catering department at a technical school, Wa.

> P: Because when one person decided to come and then they see the prosperity of the person, they will also come. Somebody from the village, will come here, struggle like this take care of him or herself, then at the end, the person will be a teacher. So, when somebody sees like that, then the person will also try and do it. And most of them to our teachers, especially their first batch I met, most of them are teachers.[56]

> P: You know our main objectives to let the children to be their own employers, to start a business, to make their own food, they should be creative. More than those who have not done the course, our job is to train them for them to start their own business.
>
> R: So, what kind of skills put them in better position than the others.
>
> P: The extra skills… you know, they already know the food preparations from homes, but us we add extra part to it. As you know the hygienic part of the food counts, like in the house they prepare the local food. And here you learn to prepare food to serve for different people from all the different countries, so we have to teach them different dishes.[57]

However, this male teacher was of the opinion that a career in home economics and catering should be reserved for men, who do not have family obligations and can pursue it with more freedom. He did not believe that women can and should take their skills outside of the home and use them to become financially independent, maintaining rather that women would not achieve the level of expertise the men would.

> P: And I believe catering in Africa should be even for me, because in the house locally, the ladies, it's good for them to just learn it that way, learn different courses, in terms of education. Because when you [have] grown up in the house, whatever they teach you anyhow, is good, enough. Because a lady here, studying catering, can't take it anywhere. […] Because the marriage! The girl will get 20 you are into marriage. It's very early.[58]

It has to be highlighted that pursuing home economics is not easy, requires commitment and passion and graduating with skills still does not guarantee easy entry into the job market. Official job posts at hotels, restaurants or school canteens are rare. Many students of home economics and catering wish to become nutritionists, dieticians and public health workers, careers that are none the easier to make, since they require pursuing further education beyond the level of technical colleges. This calls for further financial and personal engagement and many students migrate seasonally to the South and seek menial jobs to collect money for fees and extra costs. A small group can count on their relatives for financial support, but many young

[56] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2019 with a matron and catering examiner, Wa.
[57] From an interview conducted on 02.04.2019 with a catering teacher at a technical school, Wa.
[58] From an interview conducted on 21.06.2019 with a catering teacher at a vocational school, Wa.

women are encouraged to engage in relationships with men, who promise to support their education in exchange for sexual intimacy. This leads to a proliferation of teenage pregnancy, something that is generally frowned upon. Women in this situation almost certainly leave school and rarely do any of them return.

Catering courses in Ghana provide students, chiefly women, with professional cooking skills and knowledge that in turn will help them become financially independent, even if they do not have the opportunity to continue school. Although the majority of catering graduates are women, only a small fraction are likely to make a career as a chef, a matron, a restaurant manager or other. As mentioned earlier, gender division of labour is still prominent in Northern Ghana and male students are generally not encouraged to pursue catering or home economics courses. Cooking and other types of domestic work is still perceived as a "woman's job", but those few men who do complete cooking courses, are much more likely to reach heights than their female counterparts. For men, following a catering or home economics course is related to passion and interest, while for women it is often a necessity, for lack of a better option. Men are likely to have more personal freedom and access to the economic capital to pursue their interests by taking up extra courses in other regions of the country, not only for the purpose of collecting funds for the fees. A few men in catering I talked to, were not only very determined but also aware of their possibilities and opportunities. This is not to say that women are less ambitious or determined, but in their case, more factors come into play, such as family obligations, dependency on the father's decision, lack of funds that are allocated to elder siblings and finally general poverty. Many girls marry early or have children, which makes leaving the region impossible. Hence, they resort to small scale food businesses.

Teaching catering: goals, possibilities, challenges, creativity

In this study, two schools provided ground for ethnographic fieldwork, one vocational and one technical, both located in the city of Wa. The schools provide boarding for the students, however the majority come from the Upper West Region or the city itself. Vocational and technical training in Ghana is subject to the Ministry of Local Government and rural Development, and answers directly to the Department of Community Development. Recently, a new commission has been created, the Ghana Technical and Vocational Education and Training Service, which is part of the Ministry of Education. As mentioned earlier, vocational training was initially focussed on the sustainable development of local communities, but its status has been quite low compared to other educational facilities in Ghana. Since January 2022, vocational and training institutes have been added to the Computerised Secondary School

Placement System (previously, admissions were possible only through paper forms). Inclusion in the CSSPS and TVET services and undertaking technical training under the MoE wing, have been introduced to elevate vocational education as a valuable training opportunity.

Both schools offer courses in fashion and design, general textiles (weaving), electrical, catering and hospitality management, ICT and carpentry. While most secondary schools offer home economics, vocational and training institutes offer specialisation in catering, which emphasises development of practical knowledge and skills in cooking, baking and services to facilitate self-employment. Vocational schools do not offer WASSCE (West African Secondary School Certificate Examination) but NAPTEX examinations (National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations), after which students can continue their education at vocational colleges such as Wa Polytechnic.

In both schools, catering departments are very small and the teachers complain about the declining enrolment rates. In each school, there are around ninety students enrolled in catering and hospitality programmes (roughly thirty people per year) and those numbers sink every year. The fact that the departments are small, severely underfunded and with only a few teachers each, does not help to raise those rates. At the time of writing, neither of the schools has a dedicated kitchen lab with working stations containing coal and gas stoves, work counters, ovens and fridges. The teachers struggle with the organisation of workspaces for practical classes. Those include demonstrations, where the teachers explain step-by-step how to cook certain dishes; practicals, where the students recreate the menu presented to them during demonstrations; and examinations which take place at the end of the programme.

> P: For example, if today is the practical day, we have a demonstration for the children, it is the teacher who will announce, will do the thing and they will be watching you. We have bread rolls, we have something in the form of a… menu, where we plan for the week. So, what we do, is when we have a menu for the day, you could have the starter, the appetiser, then we have the main dish, then the dessert. So mostly we prepare a bread roll, a soup for the starter. Then we come to prepare the main dish, where we have the protein, the carbohydrate, and the veg. Then we have the sweet, last. Like a dessert. So that's what we do. So, when I come and we have a demonstration, I teach them how a particular soup is prepared. When we have the protein, the carbohydrate and the veg, I teach them how it's prepared, then the dessert. That is for the whole day. Then the following week the student will provide her own ingredients and present what I taught them on the previous week.[59]

[59] From an interview conducted on 02.04.2019 with a catering teacher at the technical school, Wa.

Demonstrations in the technical institute I was present at, took place in a makeshift kitchen organised in an old classroom used primarily as a storage unit for the school canteen. Old school desks were piled on one side, while ceiling-high stacks of non-perishable goods such as flour, sugar and tinned milk occupied the other. The classroom was equipped with a running tap, but little besides. One gas cooker was placed in the far end of the classroom and a gas oven in the other. Students crowded around a long table covered with a plastic cloth; at the head the teacher was standing, explaining step-by-step how to cook a full menu. On that day, it was sausage rolls and brown mutton soup for appetiser, braised rice with mushroom and coleslaw for mains and a coconut cake for dessert.

At the vocational institute the department's situation was no better. A few demonstrations I observed there took place in an old auditorium, which students first had to clean and arrange, early in the morning. At least this room had enough space to hold everyone. Some took to swiping and mopping the floor while others organised the necessary kitchen equipment, brought water and washed the utensils thoroughly. Others brought an old gas cooker and a big industrial oven and hazardously connected it to the gas cylinder. The menu had to be written faultlessly on the blackboard, the demonstration table arranged neatly together with all the ingredients and utensils. The students were many and they crowded around the table and, granted, many did not see much. The topic of the class was sweet bakes and the teacher presented six different cake recipes: carrot cake, rich fruit cake, scones, cinnamon and gingerbread and genoise sponge.

The practicals highlighted even bigger technical issues. In the technical school they took place in an unfinished school pavilion, built precariously between two old school buildings. It was intended to serve as a kitchen lab, but at the time of my research was in a shell state with concrete floor, bare walls and unfinished countertops. The building was covered with a corrugated sheet and had no amenities such as running water or electricity. In both schools, the students had to arrange their working stations themselves: they brought tables and arranged them in a U-shape. Students worked alone or in pairs (forms 1 and 2 usually worked in pairs or in threes and form 3 alone) to split the costs of the ingredients and help each other complete the given task. The students used portable gas and coal stoves, depending on whether the recipe called for cooking, frying or grilling. The students had to arrange buckets with water to clean and tidy their workplaces as they went and make sure they had their utensils and ingredients organised in a neat *mise en place*. Utmost priority was given to keeping everything clean and tidy.

In addition to all of this, students had to look the part. Each school had their own uniform, which had to be worn during practical classes. Uniforms varied in style between the schools but invariably, the whole outfit had to be white. In the technical school the students had to wear sleeveless dresses, aprons, head caps, knee socks and covered shoes. In the vocational institute, the uniform comprised of jacket and trousers, white caps, socks and covered shoes. Each student had to have one handkerchief for personal hygiene and several kitchen towels only for utensils and handling hot pots. The students were severely admonished for missing out elements of their uniform, for stains and dirt or for incorrect design. Teachers also made sure that all students had closely clipped nails and their hair tucked neatly inside the bonnets and caps. Personal hygiene was of utmost importance.

The classes were not only hindered by the technical shortcomings of the workplace but more importantly, the lack of or difficulties in obtaining ingredients. Depending on the school, ingredients necessary for all practical classes were funded entirely or partly by the students. The vocational school had a funding program, which collected small sums of money from the students over the year to help them fund their final examinations (their cost could reach up to 100 GHC or more). The school also set aside some of the fee funds to buy non-perishable ingredients in bulk, such as margarine, flour, baking soda or rice and provided them during practicals and demonstrations.

> P: I don't know what they do here, but in other schools, we do that, when the students enters the school in the first year, when they pay the fee, they add something small to put the money aside so that now when they are in third year, they might be having difficulties getting that money, we buy tinned tomatoes, we buy butter, rice for them, oil. And them what they buy themselves is the fish, but many, many things, even milk mostly, we buy for them. It depends on the nature of the menu.[60]

At the technical school, everything was provided by the students, who often loudly protested at having to purchase an ingredient that was particularly difficult to find. At the end of the demonstration described above, the students were given a task to find a gizzard for the next demonstrations. Many lamented loudly that they have no idea where to get it and that it is pricey. The teacher was stern; she gave them instructions where to find a stall selling it and ordered them not to come to class without it.

The organisation of practical classes was consequently a troublesome, laborious and expensive task and many teachers claimed that they did not hold them often enough. Sometimes

[60] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2019 with a matron and a catering examiner, Wa.

the classes were held only when the students collected enough money to buy all the ingredients and the school provided funds for amenities such as gas or charcoal. Money was not the only issue; finding the right ingredients was often a real challenge as the majority of the dishes cooked during the three years of the catering course were continental.[61]

The colonial curriculum

There is no doubt that the Ghanaian school programme is still suffering from colonial vestiges (Adzahlie-Mensah and Dunne 2018; Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah 2016; Giroux 2004; Graham 2013) and although much has changed since Kittrell visited Northern Ghana in the mid 1940s, there is still a long way to go. Mensah and Dunne suggest that the long-standing influence of British colonialism still casts a shadow on contemporary Ghanaian education. Through the three analytical foci: the formal institutional structure of the school, the curriculum and pedagogic practices and the language of instruction, they depict "the ways that schooling continues to echo and re-instantiate colonial constructions of the gendered African child" (Adzahlie-Mensah and Dunne 2018, 56). Through the colonial curriculum and the way the school structures daily life and shapes ways of perception, instils obedience and forms of communication, Ghanaian schools reproduce colonial subjectivities. As Foucault writes:

> The activity which ensures apprenticeship and the acquisition of aptitudes or types of behaviour is developed there [at school] by means of a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differentiation marks of the "value" of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by the means of a whole series of power processes (enclosure, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy) (Foucault 1982, 787).

I suggest that vocational catering programmes are fundamentally colonial in the format of teaching, teaching materials, aesthetics and bodily discipline, the language and the scope of skills and knowledge which later becomes employment in a colonised industry. According to Sanjinés, coloniality of knowledge refers to prioritising one type of knowledge over the other as more useful for economic development and movement towards modernity (Sanjinés 2007). As Mensah writes:

> The prescribed curriculum produces an epistemic hierarchy that legitimates and privileges Western knowledge and a foreign, European language of instruction. This is a wholesale disparagement and disregard of indigenous knowledge and traditions in ex-colonies, in favour of colonial interests that continue to dominate global agendas" (Adzahlie-Mensah and Dunne 2018, 48).

[61] The term "continental" designates dishes originating in Western and Southern Europe, mostly Mediterranean.

As one of the respondents said:

> P: We teach them [European dishes] because of... how should I say. Getting jobs. They may get a place Europe, in a hotel where they tell you, blend the local dishes with the European dishes. You may get the job, but because you don't know this, they will prefer someone who knows all those European dishes. So we try to blend them. So that you can fit in. If you asked to make some European dishes, even if you haven't learnt them all, you know some that you can present. You can also cook some. But if you come here and teach them only traditional, they will be people who know more in the traditional cooking, you will be handicapped. But if you have small knowledge about the European dishes, that can push you to get a better job. [...] We have people who cook by the roadside. They don't cook European dishes. [They cook local.] And they are perfect in it. So, if you add a little European dishes and you add the traditional, that can push you to have a better job. [...] Like most of them wouldn't even come to school, their mothers can teach them how to prepare the traditional ones.[62]

The African colonial dyad of white-black, inferior-superior, educated-uneducated is applied in the formalisation of the teaching curriculum. Teaching is based on textbooks: those prescribed for catering programmes are usually foreign and most of the recipes they include have never been seen, touched or smelled by the students. The teachers, no longer trained in Europe, also do not have personal experience of eating and cooking those dishes in the form they have been conceived. All cooking knowledge passed on in schools is based on theoretical and written source and not corporeal, participatory and oral practice, as passing on cooking expertise is usually done.

> R: I wanted to ask you about the continental food that you're teaching here […]. I talked to the girls that many of them don't enjoy the continental dished they're cooking, […]
>
> P: Yes, you know, we cook them but we cannot eat them. I don't… we cook the continental food, but we don't eat it, we don't like it, or we don't know it.
>
> R: If it's done well, properly?
>
> P: That's the thing. Because it's not our food, or maybe because we don't like it, but we follow what the book said […] but because you don't know it, you don't know whether it has a taste, whether it looks like it should, but the book said it and you made it. […] You see, the problem, is how will you know. I've seen… maybe if you have cooked your food then when I eat, this is your food, this is the taste. Then when I cook, then that's how I can judge on how you prepared your food and I tasted it.
>
> R: That's only when I am a good cook!
>
> P: That doesn't matter, I can cook my food. It will be different food, but unless you've eaten my food before, then you'll also cook you'll know, what you have

[62] From an interview conducted on 02.04.2019 with a catering teacher at a technical school, Wa.

> eaten is what you have prepared. But it's not there, the thing is given in the book to follow.[63]

This participant suggests that the food they learn how to cook during class will never taste the same as in Europe, because none of the cooks, who are supposed to know how to prepare it, have ever tried that food before. It would be the same for a European such as myself, trying to cook a Ghanaian dish without previously seeing it. The chances that I get it right are slim. It is not impossible if the instructions are good, but having never tried it, I would never know if the dish tastes as it should.

It could be suggested that using foreign textbooks deem indigenous forms of knowledge about cooking, inferior to the European or Western ones. They favour European dishes, methods and techniques over the local ones. It is only lately that textbooks containing elevated Ghanaian recipes have appeared on the market[64]. In the majority of schools, recipes for shortbread biscuits, queen of puddings, bread rolls, vegetable soups and sauces dominate over recipes for TZ, *kpokpoi* (cornmeal bread), *palmnut* soup or cassava leaf soup. Instead of drawing from the incredibly rich cooking traditions from all regions of Ghana, the books transfer the kitchen labs to gustatory Europe and leave the students clueless. Moreover, the books do not incorporate local methods and techniques, instead imposing a completely new set of skills that need to be taught. Using a chopping board, a rolling pin or a strainer is foreign in Ghanaian kitchens. Certainly, standardisation of certain technical practices is generally considered a stepping stone towards its professionalisation. Can the same be said for replacing certain long-standing methods and techniques with foreign ones? If so, catering training in Ghana has clear colonial connotations.

Another indicator of discursive inferiority imposed on the Ghanaian schooling system, is how outdated the textbooks recommended for the courses are. As the head of the catering department at the vocational schools said:

---

[63] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2019 with the head of the catering department at a technical school, Wa.

[64] Dr Alberta Bondzi-Simpson, a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Coast, recently released a new catering textbook: "Serving Ghana: 70+ Everyday Ghanaian Indigenous Recipes for Hospitality with Step-by-Step Instructions". In a media interview she said: "The idea came up when I visited a hotel in Tamale about 11 years ago. When we got to the hotel, we requested Ayoyo Soup and Guinea fowl with Tuo Zaafi. We were told that for us to get the staple, we needed to have made a 24-hour reservation so that they could prepare ahead of time. I said to myself, but we can't come all the way from the south and eat fried rice. I then said to myself something needs to be done about this. We need to capture our food in the hospitality sector. I then had to do a focus group discussion. Of the many ethnic groups, we went to about 13 ethnic groups to look for opinion leaders who are women, paid them to buy the ingredients, and prepare the food in our presence for us to see what it is like and why it's eaten. I then did my Ph.D. just to find out from the chefs in the various regions why they do not serve their indigenous dishes." (Boakye 2021).

R: Okay, and how has the school and the program changed over the last 20 years that you've been into it?

P: Yes, it's still there. It's just two books that we use. The practical and the theory. So, whatever, just follow those two books, but still the same thing, but they summarise what is still the same, nothing changed.[65]

The students are rarely able to purchase the books and the fact that the same ones have been in circulation for the last twenty years, makes it slightly easier and less expensive for them. Sometimes, the teachers obtain newer or more relevant materials for use during class. The school curriculum is drafted by the Ministry and enforced nationally, however the teachers often adapt it to the needs and skills of the students and reach new heights of creativity to obtain the right ingredients (often practically unavailable) or find suitable replacements.

R: And for the ingredients, I know some of the ingredients are difficult to get.

P: Yes, some of them! For example, there are certain things, foreign dishes that we cannot teach them, because you cannot get the ingredients. So, if you can get the substitute we do.

R: Such as…?

P: Things like… turnips, or something. […] Like… there's turnip, we use yam. And… parsley. We use carrot leaf, in place of that.

R: Aha, ok, well, you can also eat that, just the taste is not the same.

P: Ahaaa, but just to tell them it looks something like that we can't get them. […]

P: For example, if you want to teach them how to make ice cream, we don't have cream here! You have to send it from Kumasi, Accra… So, those things we don't have them. What we can get here, we teach.

R: Yeah but shorting of ingredients must be difficult to overcome.

P: Yeah, for example minced meat. We now have it, and we're teaching that, but those days it wasn't there. And I remember when we first got it and taught… they left… 2017 or 18, they were able to learn, things came and we were able to teach them. But before that we told them, that this is what it is but we don't have it. So those days if you wanted to teach spaghetti bolognese, how were you supposed to do that. You would cut the meat big, big but it's not supposed to be like that. But know we have it and we can teach them how it's done.

P: Yes, cheese is our problems, we don't have… We have the… Laughing cow? You know the Laughing Cow?

R: The Laughing cow?

P: The one that comes in the box.

R: Oh, that one. Uh, it's not good for pizza.

[65] From an interview conducted on 19.07.2019 with the vice-headmaster of a vocational school, Wa.

P: That's the only one we have here. So, we have another problem when you have to use cheese to prepare something. There are many, many types of cheese and you use them for different dishes, but we can't get it here. So, we have to forget it. [66]

P: You see like bread sauce, béchamel sauce, we add milk and breadcrumbs.

R: For béchamel you need butter which is hard to get.

P: And we have been using margarine in place of butter. So, when you use butter, the taste is different than when you use margarine. So, you see the taste can never be the same.[67]

R: I heard them saying before the examinations, that they had problems with obtaining parsley. That it's difficult to get here in Wa. So do you for example accept equivalents or it has to be parsley. Parsley for the butter.

P: Ah, parsley! Yes, you don't get, even in Bolga. Normally when they pick up things, we message Accra in Kumasi, they will message it for us. In Accra there are shops where they can get the fresh one but more likely dried one. That is bottled, normally we buy that one. And sometimes we improvise: the fresh carrot leaves, they are just like parsley. So sometimes, when we get fresh carrot leaves, we use that one instead of the parsley, just to garnish.[68]

At the end of their three-year-long programme, the students are supposed to take a practical examination. An office in Accra sends an exam menu a week before and students have to obtain the ingredients, no matter what. Otherwise, they will not be able to receive high marks. The teachers, the school and the students often have to go on a hunt for the missing ingredients or their closest equivalents.

R: Sometimes it's difficult to cook what is available in Europe. There are no ingredients, and you have to get inventive.

P: Yes, as for that, some of the ingredients are not there, you have to get what's equivalent to that. And we accept it, because it's not your fault that you didn't get it, it's because it's not there. So whatever is equivalent to what is necessary, we accept it.

R: And what when for example cheese is necessary for the food and it's not there. It's hard to find an equivalent.

P: Hmmm, maybe when the equivalent is not there… But we are also not supposed to change anything, it must be that. The school has to arrange it somewhere, that's why the paper is given them a week… this is the menu. It should be issued a week before. If you've gone to the market and it's not there, you can arrange it from another town, another region. Even if it's Accra or

[66] From an interview conducted on 02.04.2019 with a catering teacher at a technical school, Wa.

[67] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2019 with the head of the catering department at a technical school, Wa.

[68] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2019 with a matron and catering examiner, Wa.

> Kumasi, you have to arrange it. You can send mobile money and buy and come and give to all of them.[69]

Teachers not only encourage their students, especially girls, to undertake catering in secondary schools but also go the extra mile to make studying and graduating possible for them. Many of those teachers are women who have gone through the same path before, who also had to find ways to earn money to pay for fees, to find someone to support them financially and finally go through the painstaking process of learning how to cook from a book.

Agency, creativity and individualism in the classroom

Being exposed to new types of food and tastes and, to a greater extent, being compelled to cook them and try them, leaves space for cross-cultural interaction on the gustatory level. It could be suggested that practicals act as mediation spaces between two culturally distant sensoria: local and (imagined and enacted) Western, where negotiation of moral judgements, aesthetics, techniques of the body and bioethics take place. Delocalisation of the practicals through alteration of scenery (costumes, props and decorations) in which local cooking usually takes place, turns them into performances, or even re-enactments of foreign gustatory practices.

To depict the performative and negotiative aspects of practicals, I am going to present a vignette from a cookery examination that took place at a technical school in April 2019. I was invited to join the examiner, an educated caterer, teacher and a matron, who came from Bolgatanga to supervise the test and mark the students. There were around forty eligible form-three students. Their task was to prepare a full three-course menu: from appetiser, through main course to dessert. For the appetiser, students were to prepare bread rolls with coleslaw, and saffron rice with tomato stew, buttered French beans and grilled tilapia with parsley butter for main course. Queen of puddings came as dessert. The menu had been sent around a week before the examination and the infamous parsley was of course listed (nobody had it and the students used a combination of carrot leaves and other herbs). Practical tests took place in a school kitchen lab and the students were working along a long table, where they could organise their *mise en place*, equipment, hot water buckets for sterilising equipment, separate water buckets for washing hands and dishes and baskets with extra equipment.

When I arrived in the kitchen lab around 8:30 in the morning, the exam had already started. The girls (form three was exclusively female) were bustling behind their working stations. A long row of tables lined with plastic tablecloths (for easy cleaning and maintenance)

[69] Ibidem.

was fully covered by plastic boxes containing measured ingredients which were going to be used to prepare the examination menu. The smell of grilled fish was slowly filling the air as the smoke from the charcoal ovens was spiralling up towards the ceiling.

The examiner greeted me happily and explained in detail what was going on. She was to supervise the examination and evaluate the performance of the students. The grading spreadsheet contained three main categories of skills: working method, practical skill and professional practice. Under those headings, activities such as the following were listed: time planning, use of equipment, preparation, presentation, organisation of work and various aspects of hygiene. I joined the examiner in her activities; we walked along the tables looking at the methods of preparation, choice of spices, proper use of tools and garnishing ideas. The girls were already grilling their tilapias which were part of the main dish and preparing plates for the presentation. The examiner was eager to interact with the girls, offering help when they seemed lost or clearly on the wrong path.

I also got involved with helping students a little, such as whisking egg whites for them, while they took care of the salad. While this was their examination, the examiner did not seem to apply very strict rules. Instead, she wanted the girls to succeed and, judging by the grading spreadsheet, whisking eggs was only a small part of what they were being evaluated on. Still, the atmosphere was rather peaceful. The examiner and I had the opportunity to discuss the differences between Western and local food. She demonstrated a very positive perspective:

> P: You know, continental dishes are well advanced. And you know, we are, excuse me to say, with our local dish, we are attached in cooking one bulky way. Every day you can prepare your TZ and okro soup, TZ and okro soup, like that. It is a local dish, that is what you have been eating all the time, so you're used to it. Nowadays, continental dishes and our knowledge of nutrients in food, you see that in continental dishes, the nutrients are all there.
>
> R: So, you say that in continental food...
>
> P: It's richer as compared to the local food. Because the way it's been organized and prepare everything is there, so when I take this food, I get all the nutrients that I need. As compared to the local one.
>
> R: So, like more balanced.
>
> P: Yes, it's a balanced meal, that's the right word. It's a balanced meal.[70]

After the prescribed three hours, the students had to carry their dishes, carefully wrapped in cling film to prevent any dust from getting into the food, to the display hall. It was organised in another classroom in a nearby pavilion. Inside, school desks were arranged in rows and each

[70] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2019 with a matron and catering examiner, Wa.

student had a designated space to display their food. This part was also important and some students received scolding for not providing glasses with boiling hot water for the cutlery (forks, knives and spoons were kept in glasses with hot water for hygienic reasons). Every station had to be equipped with a menu board and separate tags for each dish. The display was then covered with a net curtain propped up by four standing holders.

After a short break the examiner proceeded with the final assessment of the quality of the food; she examined the dishes using different sensory methods. Buns were evaluated in terms of proofing, shape and size; shaping them too small or too large was a mistake. The examiner squeezed the buns by hand to check their consistency but did not check the taste. Saffron rice was evaluated in terms of colour (it was supposed to be bright yellow), whether it was overcooked or just right. She never tasted the rice. The gravy was evaluated for its consistency and colour; bigger pieces of vegetables were favoured over small, and if someone ground the vegetables, they did not obtain a good score. Extra artificial seasoning such as saltpetre or *Maggi* cubes was frowned upon and one student was even told that she "destroyed the dish" using saltpetre. The beans were evaluated in terms of size and appearance in general; the students were supposed to know that French beans should be cut in smaller pieces and extra points were given for a neat and even shape of all pieces. Similarly, the coleslaw was judged by the size and colour of the vegetable pieces. The biggest attention was paid to the fish; the examiner tried a small piece of every fish and commented on the choice of seasoning and marinade, dryness, level of charring, crispiness of the skin, etc. Finally, the examiner would try a little bit of pudding and check for consistency of the meringue and the batter. She commented when the student overused flavouring oils. On top of that, the method of serving and garnishing were an important part of the evaluation and the examiner cast some critical remarks about a few dishes which were served in a rather sloppy way.

After the exam, the food was distributed. One of the teachers collected some of the fish, rice and coleslaw into a big bowl and took it away. Nice pieces of fish, rice and salad (never beans) were arranged onto separate plates, wrapped in clingfilm and taken to the principal's office. The students could take the remaining food with them as they were supposed to share it with their friends in the dormitories. I was also invited to have some of the food, which I gladly took. In the lunch break between the morning batch and the afternoon, I took a stroll around the school grounds and just behind the kitchen pavilion I discovered a group of exam students seated with leftover food filling pots, pans and dishes scattered around. To my surprise, they were cooking. Intrigued, I asked if I could join them. They accommodated me in a burst of

giggles and offered me a plate of French beans; I was told if I do not eat them, they will be thrown away as nobody likes them. Eating the beans (which I really like), I observed what was unfolding.

One of the girls, the one who received a scolding for using the saltpetre, was carefully grilling tilapia; she said she was preparing an extra one she had for her father. Another was frying meat in a pot placed on a coal stove. Once the meat was done, she took it out leaving the flavoursome fat inside, poured the onion and tomato stew and added the beans, water and rice. In twenty minutes, she had perfect *jollof* rice. Another student added rice, pieces of fish and coleslaw into a big bowl and three girls from younger classes were bowing over it, scooping mouthfuls of food from the bowl in solemn silence. She mixed the remaining coleslaw with three eggs and then fried them into vegetable omelettes: a sumptuous version of a Ghanaian breakfast eaten only once a while, since eggs are rather expensive. Food was further distributed; a few boys came to eat the fresh *jollof*, fellow students and siblings came to hang out, plates were sent over to dormitories until all the pans and pots were empty, all scraps repurposed. What used to be a feast for strangers, became a well-known, familiar feast for the local mouth.

Incredulous, I went to search for the examiner to tell her about my observation. On my way I stumbled upon another teacher and told her what I saw. She laughed and said: "Oh yes, in Takoradi we also did that, we used the stews to make *jollof* and other things, nothing was left". Even more incredulous, I finally found the examiner; she was sitting in one of the classrooms with a fellow teacher, eating lunch: TZ with goat meat soup. I threw my hands in the air, laughing. "Madame!" I cried, "all this food here and you're eating TZ?". She looked at me a little sheepishly. We had just spoken about how balanced and healthy Western food is. She said, "I knew you were enjoying the food, so I didn't call you to eat with us. What can I say... I don't enjoy this food. I prefer ours. I think all the protein makes a person age quicker".

I think this vignette depicts very well how this exam and catering courses, broadly speaking, provide a scene for the cultural clash between the Western and the local sensorium. Understood as an apparatus capable of receiving and processing sensory impulses from the outside, it is argued that sensorium is conditioned by culture. Can we talk about the existence of a so-called "Ghanaian sensorium" or "African sensorium" or "European sensorium"? David Howes and Constance Classen advocate the existence of cultural sensory profiles with characteristic modes of perception, list and hierarchy of the senses and moral values attached to them (Classen and Howes 1996; Howes and Classen 2017; Howes 1991). Pink criticises such a classificatory approach as traditionalist, bringing little value to the understanding of cultural

sensory perception (Pink 2009; 2010). Much more than "what it is" we need to ask "what is being done with it, through it, despite it". I agree that it is extremely hard and risky to propose a national or culture-wide classification of a sensorium. However, observation of the cooking classes made it clear that there are fundamental differences in the conceptualisation of "good food" and how it is evaluated, the ways of preparing and eating it, represented by the Western and Ghanaian cooking cultures.

The ambivalent behaviour presented by the students and by the teachers towards European food should not be seen as contradictory or insincere, but rather rooted in two disparate perspectives. On the one hand it is a completely strange and unfamiliar food that is never eaten at home, therefore culturally and sensorially foreign. However, years of practice, teaching and cooking turn that unfamiliar set of smells, textures and tastes into a somewhat domesticated amalgam of edibles, produced only in a professional environment. Cooking European food is subject to the public domain of a professional, but it does not involve consuming the food one has produced. Professionalisation of cooking separates the maker from the product; the product is passed on to the consumer who is, in this case, culturally strange. Cooking is a strange practice of learning how to cater to the sensory Other. The circle of food dependencies does not close like in domestic food production and consumption. Appreciation for European food displayed at a professional level does not mean the two types of food, the local and the foreign, have an equal cultural meaning. Also, attachment to local foods seems to have a much deeper affective quality than attachment to foreign foods. In the same way, cooking in the catering schools cannot be understood as a culturally significant gustatory practice, like it is in the private domain. Rather, it is a process of acquisition of commodifiable skills which are later exchanged for a quantifiable gustatory pleasure.

White but cultured: bargaining the identity of the foreign consumer

Learning how to cook Western foods at the catering courses is intended to help the students get good jobs at hotels and restaurants serving food to foreigners. There seems to be a general understanding that not everyone who comes to Ghana will like Ghanaian food and will want to eat it, therefore they should be given the opportunity to eat what they know and enjoy. As one of the respondents said:

> P: The issue is this: when you come fresh, you will not be used to our dishes. So I will introduce your food, that you're used to. Then if you are to stay for more than two days, I will add my local dishes. [...] I was asked to prepare and cook for [a group of foreigners], so I went to them to ask them what they want. And they started mentioning foreign dishes. And then I asked, will you try TZ? And

> they started asking, what is it, what does it look like. It's soft and you can eat it. With what soup? We have different soups to go with it. If you wouldn't mind, I will cook them for you. At first when I cooked foreign dishes, the following day I cooked TZ and still added foreign dishes, so that if you are not able to eat, you will eat the food that you know. [...] You know, it's difficult to change. To adopt new things. [...] But gradually, if you're interested, you can change. But some will come and they will not be interested in your local dish. So as such, you will have to cook their dishes, which they will like.[71]

It is interesting to note that tourism in Europe seems to be founded on a completely opposite assumption; trying local foods is considered an important part of cultural experience. Ellis points out that gastro-tourism has been subject to avid academic interest over the last ten to fifteen years and experienced a shift from mostly management-oriented approaches to more wholesome discussions about the connections between food and culture (A. Ellis et al. 2018). After Hall and Sharples, food tourism, or gastro-tourism, can be understood as a: "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall and Sharples 2004). According to Richards, this trend is connected to the rise of the so-called "experience economy", (G. Richards 2015) connected to buying and selling experiences where attractiveness of the potential destinations is measured by quality, uniqueness and sense of fulfilment it offers. Eating local food, understood as prepared from indigenous ingredients, grown and produced locally (Feagan 2007) becomes much more than a necessity, it is an affective and multidimensional cultural consumption of the tourist system (Adongo et. al 2015). According to Adongo, "The centrality of food in tourism is further heightened by the fact that it is a product that arouses almost all the human senses — touch, taste, smell and sight; hence, its strategic position in tourist holiday experiences" (Adongo et. al 2015, 57).

Authors point out that literature addressing the subject of African tourism seldom focusses on the food experience among tourists. Studies that do, point out a general dissatisfaction and negative experience of local food among tourists (Adongo et. al 2015; Amuquandoh 2011). A study conducted among 654 tourists in Ghana (55,2% coming from Europe, 33,2% coming from Africa) shows that experience of eating local food such as *red-red, banku, fufu, kenkey, tuo zaafi* and *akple* was positively evaluated as a meaningful, cultural experience, learning opportunity and a generally novel experience. Participants strongly agreed that "they ate something meaningful or important" and they "learned something about

[71] From an interview conducted on 08.07.2019 with the head matron at a secondary school, Wa.

themselves". They were also positive about learning and exploring. They agreed that they "explored a new form of knowledge" and "learned the history of local food". Additionally, they were certain they experienced a "once-in-a-lifetime" experience and that it was "different from a previous experience". However, many equally agreed that they had a negative experience connected with an upset stomach, unhygienic eating conditions and unpleasant contact with the staff.

The study also included questions about the evaluation of gustatory pleasure while eating Ghanaian food. The results are located in the middle of the scale and the respondents rather agreed that the local food was tasty and that they enjoyed eating it. The results were acquired through qualitative methods and the questionnaire did not include contextual inquiries, such as duration of stay, frequency of eating local food as opposed to continental, places of consumption and whether the person had a guide as an introduction to local foods. The participants also did not indicate whether they had previous experience with West African cuisine or not. The results are interesting. For the majority of respondents, consumption of local food had a chiefly cultural dimension and was qualified as meaningful through its uniqueness. Eating heritage food was generally considered as connecting with indigenous, authentic[72] and tangible culture and in that perspective, they would recommend other tourists to try local food as well. Eating local food was also valued as a means to expand their knowledge about the world and about themselves. Through food as a cultural experience, they tied themselves to the global category of "foodies" who frequently challenge their gustatory limits by leaving their comfort zone and trying new things, effectively expanding their gustatory range. Many authors consider such adventurous flavour seeking as class-based modern behaviours asserting one's cosmopolitan status.

This study suggests that gustatory qualities of Ghanaian food have an ambivalent status among European tourists and are not the main factor that prompts them to choose local food over continental. Hospitality employees and managers, teachers and students' testimonies suggest that there is a consistent and ever-increasing demand for continental food, which is chiefly consumed by guests from abroad. Both Amuquandoh (2011) and Adongo et. al (2015) suggest that tourists are afraid of gastrointestinal infections and that often prevents them from enjoying local food. Novelty, presented in a positive light in the study mentioned earlier in this research, is often perceived negatively. Lack of previous gustatory experience with West

[72] Discussion over "cultural authenticity" of food has been widely spread across tourism and food studies. Food perceived as authentic is more likely to be sought after and consumed on the ground of the aforementioned pursuit of cultural experience and novelty. See also Kalenjuk (2015) and Srinivas (2006).

African food and knowledge about the dishes, ingredients, good vending spots and restaurants prevents many tourists from frequently ingesting Ghanaian food. Consumption attempted as a cultural experience does not equal genuine enjoyment of the food and the survey also shows this. Many foreign tourists, counting especially among them the youth, repeatedly share gustatory boredom, dissatisfaction and insecurity when it comes to eating local foods.

Then again, the same dissatisfaction was displayed about continental foods. Chuck's Bar in Tamale, a "white spot"[73] on the map of Northern Ghana, was famous and revered among volunteers and NGO workers for its "authentic Italian pizza". Indeed, their pizza was baked in a wood oven, had a thin, crisp base and was topped with mozzarella, but the menu included (a very popular) Hawaiian pizza with cooked ham and pineapple. The general opinion of any Italian is that Hawaiian pizza is considered an abomination. Much more often, the "continental" food was considered lacking in "authenticity". The tastes were never the same: too bland, too spicy, wrong consistency, too mushy or too sweet, as if Western dishes available in Ghana were just mere bad copies of the ones everybody knew from home. I also caught myself being disappointed many times. Looking for the comfort of familiar tastes, I almost never found it. Stringfellow provides a useful conceptualisation of inaccuracy and inadequacy of tastes and gastro-tourism in late modernity, namely by interpreting them through the notion of Jean Baudrillard's simulacrum (Stringfellow et al. 2013).

According to Stringfellow, Jean Baudrillard understands simulacrum as a representation of reality that is not simply a copy of what is real, but rather a representation of itself as a truth in its own right. In the hyperreality of a simulacrum "signs no longer represent or refer to an external model. They stand for nothing but themselves and refer only to other signs. They are to some extent distinguishable, in the way the phonemes of language are, by a combinatory of minute binary distinctions" (Baudrillard 2000). Unlike in the earlier Platonian concept of a simulacrum, where it distorts reality merely temporarily, in Baudrillard's work simulacra are permanent, irreversible distortions of reality, coming to be perceived as "the new normal". Opposing Baudrillard's interpretation, Gilles Deleuze proposes to consider simulacra as avenues of positive change, rather than negative: not only as distortion or malfunction of perception but simply alteration. According to him, simulacra are "those systems in which different relates to different by means of difference itself. What is essential is that we find in these systems no prior identity, no internal resemblance" (Stringfellow et al. 2013). For Deleuze simulacra exist in their own right, not as faulty, misleading copies.

[73] More on that topic can be found in Chapter 6.

In their article, Stringfellow et al. tap into Deleuze's concept of massification and popularisation of culture (Stiegler and Roussow 2020) and point out its coherence with the commodification and globalisation of taste. Considering the inequalities in access to goods in the global capitalist system (partly instilled by this system), the demand for cheaper and more attainable equivalents of certain goods rises. Contemporarily "simulacra provide accessible substitutes for consumers lacking the purchasing power to acquire more distinctive, original products" (Stringfellow et al. 2013, 78). They quote Deleuze further: "the simulacra is not a degraded copy, it possesses a positive power which denies both the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction" (Stringfellow et al. 2013, 78). In their analysis of contemporary gastro-tourism, cultural practice of eating, reformation of tastes and pursuit of certain aesthetics of gustatory experiences is directed at creating a social body. In times of liquid modernity, bodies operate under the pressure of time, and:

> Safeguarding authenticity is an important concern for tourism, yet the world of fast consumption and instant gratification requires compromise among the cultural elite to meet ever-increasing consumption demands. These demands are underpinned by a reduction in the time willing to be invested in the acquisition of taste and a consequent reluctance to accept deferred gratification in cultural pursuits (Stringfellow et al. 2013, 83).

The painstaking cooking lessons the catering students go through, scavenger hunts for ingredients and laborious preparations, and a genuine effort to deliver good food to foreign tourists often boil down to one sentence: "it doesn't taste like real X". Meals in Chuck's and other restaurants serving continental food, eaten by white foreigners mostly, would usually end with comments along the lines of: "this is not pizza, this is *Ghanaian* pizza", "well it didn't taste like back home", "It wasn't good but it was something", "Still better what we get back in the village", "I literally don't know what else to eat". Such opinions were rooted in the inadvertent application of Western standards to local capabilities. It was not simply bad cooking; the contradicting sensory experience of the food was rooted in gustatory discrepancies and plain shortage of ingredients. The tourists assumed that if the restaurant offers pizza, it will be the pizza they know from "back home". The confusion stemmed from the fact that this cook's approach to pizza could not be located on a scale from 1 (bad pizza) to (10 excellent pizza), as most European tourists knew it from home. The experience was outside of the scale. Yet, the same clients would order the same food over and over again in various places, hoping that somewhere the food would taste good and familiar.

Food practices of Western tourists can be characterised as an act of constant bargaining. On the one hand, they pursue food that they consider "local" or "indigenous" and thus

"authentic", such as *banku*, TZ or *jollof rice*. They exhibit appreciation and excitement, which stems from a feeling of becoming more knowledgeable about a foreign culture and participating in its practices. By consuming local foods, the tourists also expand the range of their culinary tastes and legitimise their social position as "worldly" and "cosmopolitan", which authors link to the practice of class identification and belonging (Cappellini et. al 2016). On the other hand, the tourists who find themselves often in completely strange environments, seek comfort in familiar foods. Moreover, reaching for continental food is supposed to abate physical discomfort or threat posed by local food, which may cause gastrointestinal issues. However, eating continental food in Ghana rarely brings them the sensory comfort they expect as the taste of the food, although familiar on the surface, does not align with the gustatory memories of past meals[74]. A cognitive confusion ensues and the lack of expected consolation offered by the affective, multisensory qualities of food leads to disappointment and complaint.

Yet, in meals to come, they still choose continental food in the hope to reach contentment. In the situation where "the original" authentic German, Polish or Dutch food is not available, the next best thing fulfils the requirement. By and large, the most crucial quality of simulacrum of Western food is the fact that it is *not* Ghanaian and is usually accessible in spaces that separate the eater from the outside world. In the situation of sensory bewilderment caused by a new and strange environment, recent stomach problems and a perspective of unintelligible conversation of the street stall owner, many tourists resort to "white spots" mentioned earlier, effectively separating themselves from the social and cultural environment and creating an illusion, a simulacrum, of physical and mental familiarity and comfort. A social agreement to accept the imperfect version of the dish in exchange for instant gratification one seeks in the reality of fluid modernity, repeatedly makes continental food a desirable option.

Decolonising catering in Ghana

The main objective of catering courses mentioned by teachers and matrons, was to provide women and girls with concrete skills and knowledge, which would help them become financially independent. As this chapter shows, Ghanaian teachers and food professionals are far from becoming advocates of the implementation of foreign food in Ghana. While the educational system forces them to follow the foreign, colonial curriculum, they find ways to empower the students through improving their overall cooking skills and promoting cooking local dishes using local ingredients and herbs. The influence of "white man's" food taught from

[74] Correlation between food and memory has been discussed broadly in Chapter 2.

a "white man's" book on the gustatory preferences and culinary tastes of catering students should not be overestimated. As the observation in the vignette showed, students' creativity worked both ways: making something foreign with something local and remaking the foreign into the familiar.

After all, the market for continental or Western food remains a small fragment of the gastronomic business on the national scale. It is the specialised restaurants in popular tourist spots that mostly offer Western food. Other places, while having a few of those types of dishes on the menu, do not serve them on a regular basis. Most restaurants serve middle class Ghanaians and offer an elevated version of homemade, typically heritage cuisine, which is characterised by simplification of recipes and increased richness in terms of ingredients. Many local recipes, despite using simple ingredients, require laborious and lengthy preparations to achieve satisfactory results. Modernised recipes for dishes available in restaurants have to be quicker to prepare and flavourful when served. While street food sellers tend to reach for artificial flavouring, salt, sugar and pre-packaged spice mixes offered by *Onga, Maggi* and other brands, caterers are taught to use a combination of naturally flavourful ingredients like onion, garlic, ginger, fish and meat stock to season their dishes. Due to the richness of ingredients, dishes served in restaurants are more expensive.

> R: And what are the spices you teach them to use? The *Onga*, or the other spices?
>
> P: We don't encourage those ones. We go for the ginger, garlic, the bay leaf, rosemary, those type of things. Sometimes here we don't have the fresh ones, but we buy the dried ones and we encourage them to use those ones.
>
> R: And what about the local ones, like *dawa dawa*?
>
> P: Yes, we use *dawa dawa* when we prepare the traditional dishes, we have *dawa dawa jollof,* we encourage them. We don't want to… even when you are planning your dishes, we don't want to hear them using the Maggi cubes, you don't want them to get used to it, but we encourage them to get the natural flavour of the food that we're preparing, they're cooking. But even if you're using Maggi cubes, it should be used sparingly, it's not something you use to spice the food, you should be thinking about the natural flavour of the food.[75]

Teachers also underline that the course provides students with valuable competencies that have nothing to do with cooking foreign dishes. Studying catering is supposed to improve the student's orientation in hygiene, sanitation and food safety. Additionally, the students gain knowledge about the nutritional components of the food and how to compose a balanced meal. They learn about food-related diseases, standard dietary requirements, preservation of cooked

[75] From an interview conducted on 02.04.2019 with a catering teacher at the technical school, Wa.

and raw ingredients and personal safety. Thus, the students are able to improve the sanitary standards in their own homes and provide a more balanced and varied diet for them and their families. Certainly, it is true that most will never use their knowledge of how to make pizza or minestrone, but just acquiring skills and learning different methods and techniques, combinations of tastes and new ingredients, augments their general knowledge, creativity and inventiveness. Catering courses, say the teachers, encourage the students to think outside the box and seek new solutions, combinations of flavours and ingredients and eventually create a product which can attract potential clients. Currently, many chefs turn to using local ingredients and familiar recipes to create elevated versions of home-made dishes, sometimes in combination with a few foreign appetisers or desserts.

The media confirms that such trends are becoming more and more popular. Catering services in Accra and Kumasi hired for weddings and christenings present food framed in opulent Western-style buffets. According to the needs, the food served can be either typically heritage with *kenkey, banku, akple*, soups and stews, but can also include contemporary, high standard fast food and dishes such as *jollof rice*, plain rice, macaroni, salads and fruit. Food served is rich, flavourful and plentiful in vegetables and protein. The buffets are richly decorated with flowers, textiles and traditional earthenware, in tune with the general aesthetics of the occasion. The same catering services offer breakfast and brunch baskets filled with tortilla wraps, waffles, fruit, Danish pastries and other delicacies. Other places, such as restaurant Midunu belonging to the well-known chef Selassie Atadika offer a true haute-cuisine experience with her unique approach to heritage African ingredients.

In conclusion, as this chapter demonstrates, that Ghanaian vocational schools still carry on the colonial vestiges. The official education programme does not include many heritage dishes (those are individually introduced by the teachers) and Ghanaian food is still considered less presentable or attractive to serve at a restaurant then some forms of Westernised food. Still, caterers by applying methods, techniques and a perspective gained through formal education, find new, exciting ways to serve well-known dishes, and are the trailblazers of contemporary West African cuisine. They actively seek and incorporate new trends into the Ghanaian culinary landscape, at the same time promoting knowledge and expertise about heritage dishes. Cateresses, educated in foreign and local culinary tastes, can and already are becoming gustatory intermediaries between the foreigners and the local culinary world, translating unknown tastes into memorable gustatory adventures.

Chapter 6

Changing traditions, women's agency and gendered relationship with food and cooking.

> "In Africa, as in other world areas, cookery is a stage for performance (by the cook) and audience (family, neighbors, and guests), who respond by eating and appreciating it. In Africa, women were almost always the performers, and techniques of cooking remained women's specialized knowledge."
>
> J. McCann, *Stirring the Pot. A History of African Cuisine,* 2009

In this chapter, I focus on practices of cooking and feeding in professional and domestic spheres dominated by women. I analyse the intentions that drive women's approaches to such practices, the challenges they encounter, and their activities' short- and long-term impact on their immediate community. By applying the feminist perspective on cooking as a site of activism, creativity and empowerment, I analyse the cultural and social undercurrents shaping contemporary cooking practices in Northern Ghana. I also address the ever-present duality of "tradition" and "modernity" in the kitchen by showing how cooks play equally important roles in preserving and changing local cooking practices. Professionalisation and commercialisation of cooking skills and food-related knowledge have led to the creation of career paths for caterers, matrons, chefs, cooks, bakers, dieticians, etc. They operate on a different scale than, for instance, street vendors and implement changes on the macro scale. I then propose an approach to women's agency in the context of service, prevention and health, especially regarding the food scene in public institutions. I suggest that women hold power over traditional and progressive eating practices and are, in fact, links between past and future generations of consumers.

Although the subject of food has been at the core of anthropological research in African societies since the beginning of the discipline, few scholars have undertaken an in-depth examination of dietary and cooking practices. Admittedly, a great number of academic texts focus on food making and social networks (McCann 2009; Goody 1982; Mintz 1985; Fortes

and Fortes 1936; Beoku-Betts 1995; Avakian and Haber 2005; Counihan 1988; Counihan and Williams-Forson 2013; Ham 2017; 2020) underlining the crucial role of women in food preparation. However, a closer look at the most prominent monographs leaves one wondering: where are the women? Undoubtedly, we encounter meticulous descriptions of kin allegiances (Fortes and Fortes 1936; Goody and Goody 1995), reciprocity, value chains, subjugation and social hierarchies. However, where does the food come from? Where are the women and their domestic practices that are responsible for the production of food?

A notable exception is Audrey Richard's "Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia" (A. I. Richards 1941), in which she closely examined food production and preparation processes, paying attention, for instance, to the seasonality of certain crops. Richards who worked among the Bemba in today's Zambia (Northern Rhodesia), was the first female researcher who actively involved women as participants and whose interest in the mundane, everyday practice of cooking was deep enough to make it one of her key areas of focus. Richards and her successors, like Diane Wylie, proved that local diets are not and have never been stagnant and that in fact "both Bemba and Zulu diets were then undergoing change through contact with the wider world of neighbouring people, economic forces and European intruders" (McCann 2009, 21). Apart from adapting to seasonal changes in produce availability, women were eager to borrow, imitate, appropriate and invent new ways of cooking their soups and stews. Further studies, especially from the feminist perspective, put women at the forefront of gustatory permutations, the shaping of what is traditional, local, modern and foreign (Cairnset. al 2010; Haukanes 2008; Pink 2020; Holtzman 2001; 2002; D'Sylva and Beagan 2011).

In agrarian communities both men and women are responsible for farming: while men still mostly take care of grain (maize, sorghum) and yam fields, women are tasked with taking care of the gardens that provide vegetables for soups, i.e. groundnuts, cassava plants (roots and leaves), as well as participating in harvesting. Ethnographies follow the distribution of food, raw and cooked, omitting an essential step: turning raw into cooked. Distantiated, even depersonalised descriptions of cooking practices are common, as if observed from the opposite side of the yard, remarking mostly upon the repetitiveness of the actions: the pounding, the stirring, the scooping (McCann 2009). The food is always there, as many (Spittler 1999; Goody 1982) would claim. Women are a constant.

Feminist anthropological critique seeks the source of this state of affairs in androcentric traditions in anthropology; culturally and practically, the domestic sphere has been associated with female labour, thus escaping systematic scrutiny. Women's work has not been considered

culturally substantial or important in creating cultural knowledge systems (Beoku-Betts 1995, 535). According to DeVault, examination of women's domestic practices, such as food preparation, is crucial in understanding the creation of traditional values and identities and provides a glimpse into female empowerment (DeVault 1991, 232). Previously condemned as sites of oppression, kitchens in today's feminist perspectives are considered sites of empowerment and female influence, also through activism. Furthermore, Pink advocates focusing on everyday life and its immediate environment as sites of change and channels of transformation (Pink 2012, 4).

"You can't sit". Women's approaches to traditional foods.

According to literature, women in traditional societies are usually burdened with care tasks that secure social and cultural continuity and cohesiveness. Their role as "guardians of the hearts" indicates not only their cultural and spatial affiliation to the domestic sphere but, in wider terms, their role in reproducing societies in the literal and metaphorical sense by maintaining social networks, nourishing kinship bonds and reproducing cultural values. Many scholars indicate that such reproduction, especially in situations of displacement, helps forge trans-local identities that anchor diasporic societies with their motherland and an idea of home. To a large extent, this connection is executed through cooking and eating of certain types of foods. The "feeling of home" many scholars touch upon (Warin and Dennis 2005; Mata-Codesal 2008; 2010; Durmelat 2015, Tuomainen 2009). But does it mean that women are more attached to traditional foods and food practices, as opposed to men? Are dietary preferences in any way tied to the everyday performance of one's gender role? What other factors might be at play here?

From a broader perspective, data from this research suggests differences in dietary preferences and everyday food choices between men and women. As I indicate elsewhere in this thesis, those disparities can be traced back to various economic and social factors. Those include but are not limited to access to salaried work (and thus cash), localisation of the household (rural, urban, arid or equatorial climate, etc.), its constitution, ethnic identity, education, and many others. Feminist and environmental studies suggest, though, that socially construed gender roles permeate and shape all of those categories, affecting perception, access and enactment of agency. In fact, many scholars have looked at everyday food practices across the globe and found that cooking is not only tightly woven into female self-identification but also food-related issues, such as food security, affect them more than men.

In this research, I investigated gendered approaches to "traditional" ways of cooking and eating. I focused on notions such as "our food," "healthy," and "local" in the declarative and narrative sphere and compared them with observed practices of ingesting such food. Food that were of particular interest to me were TZ, tubani (tumpani), kpogolo, Bambara beans, and other foods associated with the Northern regions of Ghana, characterized by the usage of maize meal, leafy vegetables, *dawadawa* beans and other local spices. Ultimately, the aim of this exercise was to discern any differences between the dietary practices of men and women.

I often started my interviews with a simple question: what is your favourite thing to eat? The conversation would often go along these lines:[76]

> R: We're just chatting; what's your favourite food? What do you enjoy eating the most?
> P2: TZ.
> R: Is it TZ too?
> P2: Mhm, and then… *tubani.* That's my favourite.
> R: What makes it your favourite?
> P2: I can say that's my favourite because that's our local dish. So… if I... miss it, two or three days…
> P1: Oh, you can't sit.
> M: So, I have to eat it and enjoy it and it makes my body too firm.[77]

Many female respondents answered in a similar way. They named dishes such as TZ and tubani their favourites: something they can also eat every day and won't get bored of. Respondents from the excerpt above were in their late fifties, but even the younger generation showed fondness for TZ. R. was a woman in her early thirties and a professional weaver, living in Tamale, where I stayed during the first phase of fieldwork. She and I would become friends, and she invited me a few times for dinner.

> At R. for dinner. She said she will cook something nice, something I will enjoy. Her husband is visiting longer these days, normally he's in Techiman, staying there as a teacher. I didn't understand the name of the dish in Dagbani but turned out it was rice with stew and macaroni. She asked me to help her cook while she was changing and then bathing the baby. She looked very excited to cook it and for me to eat it. I asked whether she likes to eat it too. She laughed and said she could eat TZ every day, but he [her husband] is here and he is the head of the house and he wants something different every day, so what can she do.[78]

[76] I use the same abbreviations in all interview excerpts throughout this thesis: R – researcher, P – participant, (P1, P2, P3…).
[77] From an Interview conducted on 02.03.2020 with two women in their mid-fifties, Wa.
[78] From my field notes.

R. was genuinely keen on eating TZ with soup every night, and she was able to prepare it very nicely. That night, after cooking macaroni and stew for her husband and me, she proceeded to cook a pot of TZ for her workers, which she bagged and stored for the next day. Another example from an interview with a younger person shows a disparity in preferences to TZ between younger and older generations.

> P: Though she [grandmother] can, she can cook. But when she cooks, I don't like it. [laughs] But the way I prepare the food I like it and she can also eat.
> R: Oh, I see there's a difference between the two of you. Can you tell me more about what your grandmother prepares?
> P: My grandma, hmmm. She doesn't like *jollof*, she likes TZ. She's always comfortable eating TZ more than eating *jollof*. When I cook it… how will I say? When I cook it I don't prepare it to be… I mean it won't be… [gestures] Sticky. So, because of that, she doesn't always like eating the *jollof*. But TZ she's always comfortable with it. And she's used to it. […] And she's always comfortable and she's used to it because she's been eating it for long.[79]

However, not all of my respondents were so keen on TZ. While they appreciated it greatly, indicating it through expressions such as "you can't sit when you don't takie it", "you're hungry", "I feel like I have not eaten", they also craved variety. Eating TZ every night was, for many, a sad reality in the past when they didn't have money to buy more expensive and varied ingredients. Now, they enjoy balanced diets that include a bit of everything. One respondent said it clearly: I can cook stew because I can afford the ingredients. Those who cannot, have to eat TZ with dawadawa and pepper soup every day.

Interestingly, as indicated above, women still craved less variety of meals at dinner time than men. R. cooked different dishes every night only when her husband was home. Other respondents expressed similar sentiment. While it was not the same in every case, men seemed to have more influence on everyday menus in the households than women: or rather, it was expected of women to please men in the house with food they enjoy as a part of sociocultural bargaining many scholars, for instance Gracia Clark (1989) refer to in their works. But why would women often choose to cook TZ when alone with children, and not macaroni or rice with stew? At my host family, the wife usually initiated preparing TZ, since her husband did not like it and the children refused to eat it more than once or twice a week. She sometimes stirred a small pot of TZ with soup only for herself and the gatekeeper while serving us *banku* or rice. My host never ate TZ or *fufu* while his wife claimed she liked it and was very attached to it,

[79] From an interview conducted on 14.04.2020 with a woman in her twenties, Wa.

however, unlike the elders, she would not be able to eat it daily[80]. My two other friends, M. and J., both women in their late twenties or early thirties, expressed attachment to TZ and both cooked it on a regular basis, although definitely not every day.

Literature confirms that changes in dietary and health behaviours usually occur due to urbanisation, foreign influences, growing affluence of society and increasingly widespread education (Goody and Goody 1995; Lentz 1999b; Awedoba and Hahn 2014; Kifleyesus 2002). However, regarding local food, the likely benefits of education take a different turn. While women had previously gained practical, sensorial knowledge from participating in the cooking practices of their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers, now, due to educational displacement, girls are no longer involved in the intricacies of local cooking. While, in general, it is greatly encouraged that girls attend schools and receive higher education, the chain of knowledge transmission is broken.

> P: Not all of them. They grow up not knowing all that I'm telling you, like 15-year-olds. It's not their fault. They are just coming, just as myself, I was schooling, I didn't have time to look at local things, it's the same thing going on now. But if are able to join the organisation and you listen, you will also pick up.
>
> R: So, these things are there because people go to school.
>
> P: Yes, those who don't go to school learn a lot. We have the youngest, they didn't go to school and they know a lot. But you, you go to school, you come, they have already done some of the things, you know it but don't know the procedure. So if you're interested, when you finish school you can join the groups and you will learn. And we continue, it's a continued teaching, learning. So that our cultural food doesn't disappear in the system.[81]

In multigenerational households, it is usually the responsibility of the younger woman (the elder daughter's or eldest son's wife) to cook for everyone, while elder women cook sporadically. If young girls do not learn how to cook while still young, they do not have a chance to do it later and since they lack skills in cooking traditionally, they opt for easier, more modern choices, such as rice with stew. Thanks to schooling their financial situation is usually fairly good, so they can afford those foods. However, some women who notice the problem advocate re-establishing traditional dishes in today's society in an effort to reinstate lost knowledge. To them, local foods have not only symbolic, but more importantly health, environmental and economic value. Local ingredients are easy to find, cheap to purchase (women are usually responsible for the food budget) and do not require being transported from

[80] For north Ghanaian family food habits see Chapter 7.

[81] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2020 with a woman in her sixties, Wa.

the South (or from abroad). The Christian Mothers' Association in Wa organises cooking and food preservation courses, where women teach other women how to prepare local foods and process raw ingredients.

> P: My mother used to prepare shea butter, yes, I saw it being done in the house, yes, but I myself, I have never taken that, because I was schooling. My mother was doing this procedure, but it has never occurred to me how is it done. But during the meeting [course] they explain, the shea nuts, from the tree, you pick it, then they go through a process and all that. So that is how we did. And then we thought, why don't we prepare shea nuts in the bulk and look for market as to support the women.[82]

Women at the CMA saw the economic potential of food-related knowledge and decided to utilise it. What is more, they popularized it among women who otherwise would not have access to it and facilitated monetisation of their new skills by creating employment opportunities and market exchange. They do not condemn modern foods, rather they advocate health consciousness, economisation of spending and preservation of local foodways. On top of this, they try to show that local foods are not too time consuming to cook and women should not feel oppressed by cooking them.

> R: You mentioned the last time we were chatting, that if things continue like this there's no future for traditional food. If people keep choosing the easy way of buying food…
> P: That is the thing we are trying to discourage. Don't buy fried rice and fried chicken [laugh], go back and prepare it yourself. Mhm. And they are listening, we have young girls coming in and they are listening, we encourage them to come. We are not the only ones, there are other groups. But CMA exists basically to empower women […] through education and skills […] that are connected to the traditional ways of living. And then we try to see how we can maintain our nutritious food.[83]

Many of my elderly female informants complained extensively about the young generation's eating habits. There is a common understanding that people in their twenties no longer want to spend as much time in the kitchen as their mothers. The younger generation corroborates this claim; among interviewed UDS students all declared having no time, space or patience to cook local food every day. On the other hand, many, especially girls, maintained liking it and gladly consuming traditional foods at home. It was the same among participants in their late twenties and early thirties.

[82] Ibidem.
[83] Ibidem.

> P: some people they can still get time but they prefer to buy food some people are always they feel lazy in cooking, so when they just have their money they prefer to go and buy than cook.
> R: Yeah, oh lazy I hear that a lot from… I talk a lot with elderly woman maybe not as old as your grandmother. But some women that are already retired they say that the young girls are lazy to cook. So, you as a young girl you can say you can say if it's true or not.
> P: Oh, is true [laughs] we are lazy. I think we are lazy [but] we prefer to cook it ourselves, it's true. […] You see, cooking *jollof* is easy.[84]

> Another thing is that they are lazy, they are lazy in cooking. So, you see these *Indomie*[85] has come to stay, some students will say it's the easiest to prepare so they would be going for that one. […] But they're lazy, it's laziness that makes the people move away from TZ. Because you have to sit down and stir and they feel lazy to do it. TZ, you have to be there, *banku* you have to be there. [86]

Upon hearing those statements (and others, the inclusion of which lies beyond the scope of this paper), one can quickly come to a conclusion that women advocate conservative diets rather than switching to modern, quickly cooked foods. Their attachment to "local food" is both declared and displayed in the everyday practice of cooking and consumption not for political or symbolic reasons but on health and gustatory grounds. The interviewees are also more than aware of economic hindrance and since they are often the main providers and managers of home budgets, they dole out carefully what they have, resorting to cheaper and more available local options. They all declare a preference to cook from scratch, rather than purchase food, mostly for economic reasons. Even when asked what they would change in their diets if they had more money, they often say "nothing", or that they would add more ingredients to their soups to make them more nutritious. They often claimed they would cook what children like best more often. Men, on the other hand, often claimed that they would rather dine out more in nice restaurants, eating fish, meat and eggs as they wished.

Traditionally women's domestic labour is seen as servitude towards other members of the household. Women's role as a wife is validated through their ability to provide healthy, tasty and varied sustenance.

> A woman makes a home, a woman must be patient. Tolerant. Accommodative. Accepting everything if you want to make a home. Those are the things we're teaching at the meetings. […] It's not only the woman who decide on the food. If you prepare a meal and the children don't like, or the husband doesn't like, you have done nothing. And that's what we teach at the meetings. […] you as a

[84] From an interview conducted on 14.04.2020 with a woman in her twenties, Wa.

[85] Indomie is a brand of instant ramen noodles originating in Nigeria, which has become very popular in Ghana as an "unhealthy" quick meal or street food.

[86] From an Interview conducted on 04.04.2019 with a catering teacher, Wa.

> woman must be observant. If you process the food and you cook the food and the man doesn't eat it, or he eats very little, you have to watch out. Maybe there's something wrong somewhere. You need to strategize […] adjust to prepare another meal. [87]

Women do not cook only for themselves, and they rarely appear to have a say in what they eat, especially regarding the evening meal. My female participants declared that they never decided alone what the family would eat in the evening, but rather that it was a common decision between the husband, the kids and her. From the interviews, it was clear that the husband's opinion was the most important and women's cooking abilities were measured whether she could deliver what he requested. If the wife proved repetitively unable to provide what he liked, he was likely to start "eating out", which would equal marital infidelity.

Both in Europe- and Africa-focussed literature concerned with food preparation in what it considered traditional households[88], it has been noted that preparing the most important meals of the day (whether it is dinner, lunch or breakfast) always remained in the hands of women. Serving meals to men coming back from work was part of the fulfilment of the gender role women took upon themselves as wives. As Kemmer writes, referring to Murrcott:

> She draws out the symbolic importance of women's role as food preparers and of the way in which tasks were performed; […] women deferred to their husband's food preferences and this deference reflected deference to his authority as the wage earner (Kemmer 2000, 324).

Chapman and Beagan in their comparative study of two immigrant Punjabi families in Canada note, that both families' foodways were determined by the preferences of men:

> Although Sukhi and Anita did most of the food work, the men's preferences for what, where and when they ate were a driving force in shaping family food practices. Sukhi provided Indian food for dinner every day because that was what her husband wanted. When asked how they decided whether to order in food or make something at home, Anita said: We would get a consensus with everyone, like, "What do you feel like eating?" and if we're making something and everyone's like, "No, no, no. We don't want to eat it," then we just don't. Then we just get a consensus with everyone, because there's a majority and then we'll end up doing that. […] In this comment, "everyone" appears to refer to Kam and Hardeep, as Anita and Sukhi are the "we" tasked with making "something," usually a roti meal, in line with the preferences of Sukhi's husband Fakeer. The "consensus," then, is Kam and/or Hardeep saying "no" to the planned roti meal (Chapman and Beagan 2013, 372).

---

[87] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2020 with a woman in her sixties, Wa.

[88] Traditional here is understood in terms of gender division of labour into domestic work performed by women and outside, typically income earning work performed by men. See for example Murray (1987), Bikketi et. al (2016), Goody and Buckley (1973).

It seems plausible that in the case of North Ghanaian families who participated in this research, their family foodways are also chiefly adjusted to the older men's preferences (fathers, husbands, grandfathers). If women want to eat something else than what has been requested, they are likely to prepare two meals, if their budget allows it. My hostess regularly prepared two meals, as her husband did not eat any "swallowed"[89] food, while she and their children did. Such allegiances could be interpreted as a sensorial power relation, in which women sacrifice their gustatory preferences for the good of the family. Interestingly, many male interviewees never openly admitted having a final word in organising family menus and presented themselves as those who "eat what's there". They also did not actively pursue knowledge about their household members' preferences but were happy to let them have whatever they wanted, like this research participant:

> In my home there is […] Menu on the door, sometimes when I'm going out in the morning, I just… I just look at it and I know what I'll be taking. And as I said, for supper, for me, irrespective of what the menu says, I know it will be TZ or *banku* or sometimes rice balls. Because if they want to eat rice or something, I don't like it. I just… so they are aware. They will make sure I have my TZ. Okay, I don't stop them from eating what they want.[90]

The man confirms that he does not really know what his family eats but is happy as long as he gets what he wants. This man displays gustatory attachment to local foods and elsewhere in the interview, he mentions also that he is particularly attached to *fufu* and he requires his wife to cook it regardless of the season, since he provides the money (yams in the Upper West Region tend to be quite expensive outside of harvest season). He studied and lived abroad, so he has a broad palate but prefers when his homemade food is traditional. This dichotomy is often visible in men's statements: traditional when homecooked, modern and exciting when eaten out, preferably prepared by a skilled professional.

It is seemingly men who crave innovation, variety, stimulation and gustatory experiments from their meals, rather than women, who never declared enjoying eating out. The same man who wants to eat TZ or *fufu* for dinner owns a restaurant and goes out for lunch every day. He is given a wide range of options to choose from and he can always eat what he wants. On the contrary, my female interviewees displayed suspicion and reluctance towards purchased foods regarding the hygiene of the conditions they were prepared in and the use of natural ingredients. For many men who regularly eat out, taste and the feeling of satisfying hunger are

[89] Usually starchy dough served with a soup, such as *banku* of *fufu,* which does not require chewing.
[90] From an interview conducted on 07.09.2018 with a man in his fifties, Wa

more important than healthy and natural ingredients. I argue elsewhere in this thesis, that consumer practices such as eating out, seeking novelty and excitement by purchasing foreign foods and indulging in professionally prepared food is a symbolic status and class practice. Many scholars argue that members of the same household might (depending on the factors) belong to two different socioeconomic classes. Men who wield more economic capital, as compared to women, and are not traditionally required to provide food for children, are more likely to devote attention to those class-making consumer practices. They also develop pleasure-seeking tendencies in their gustatory adventures[91].

The connection between food and sexual relations has been looked at by a number of anthropologists. Food and sex are described by the same words and men who “dine out” are thought to have out-of-wedlock sexual relations. For example Gracia Clark, researching motherhood, financial independence, food and cooking relationships among the Ashanti, notices that

> The sexual connotation of cooking is so strong that Ashantis use it as a euphemism as well as a symbol for sex. The ubiquitous street comments from young men of "my wife, my wife" change to "ah, you are bringing me food" for girls carrying even the smallest dish. An older woman trader with a new boyfriend made a great show of departing early to cook for him, complete with bawdy gestures (Clark 1989, 325).

She further comments:

> The important role of personal cooking in establishing and maintaining a marriage means that departures from ideal standards of performance can have severe consequences to the relationship. These dangers tend to compress the gap between ideal, expected and actual meals. This effect, however, appears almost entirely in the evening meal, because the sexual and financial associations of cooking focus heavily on the evening (Clark 1989, 326).

Although this research was conducted among the Ashanti, the same patterns can be observed in the North. Often, when relationships become more serious, men start asking women to cook something for them and the most faithful husbands go without food the whole day only to eat at home in the evening. This was the case of my host who, being Muslim, declared he would never marry again and that his wife was his best friend and adviser. She, in return, would serve his meals as he liked them, whenever he decided to come home. Some young men still assess whether the woman they like will be a good wife by testing her cooking skills: “If you're

[91] For literature and details, see Chapter 7 of this thesis.

in a relationship with some guys, sometimes they will test you, they will make you cook food for them to eat. So then, they will marry you." [92].

The notion of emotional comfort and discomfort is very prominent in conversations about providing food. Women often display stress and sorrow when they are not able to provide what their family wants to eat. It causes them psychophysical irritation, discontent and displeasure. Similar discomfort does not translate to their own psycho-emotional state. As I explained earlier, not eating TZ makes some of them crave it, and usually they are able to prepare it. Seeing how providing the right food is crucial for keeping their marriage happy and smooth, financial difficulties or shortcomings are a major obstacle that needs to be overcome. Money is an issue not only in terms of providing rich, nutritious and tasty meals; gustatory discomfort affects the stability of social relations very significantly.

> P: Yeah. Especially the elderly people. Maybe, where I'm going, they will definitely be having older people. So unless you confront them about what they want, so you can prepare this and then one will say I don't like it. So, they will have to sleep like that, so you have to consult them (?) what they like,
> R: So, you would consider elders equal to your husband. Is it a sign of respect? Or is it like care? Or why would you especially consult the elders?
> P: Yeah, that's just respect and care. So that I have to ask them.
> R: If they ask you to cook something that your husband doesn't want you to cook, who would win?
> P: I would cook it for them and prepare what my husband wants.[93]

Interestingly, the writer observes the same tendency among food professionals: caterers employed at schools and hospital canteens. In all places visited, including high schools, primary schools and institutions, the students and patients complained about the quality and quantity of food, while the matrons displayed a lot of distress when it came to management of the little resources they had and wielding no influence over the quality of the foodstuffs delivered to the schools. They were personally upset at the inability to provide suitable, nutritious meals for everyone under their care. In the next part of this chapter, I will focus on women's role in institutional feeding schemes.

School Feeding Programme

In 2005 the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government introduced their national Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP). According to the programme's website:

> The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) is an initiative of the comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar 3

[92] From an interview conducted on 14.04.2020 with a woman in her twenties, Wa.
[93] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2020 with a woman in her mid-twenties, Wa.

> which seeks to enhance food security and reduce hunger in line with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (MDGs) on hunger, poverty and malnutrition. The basic concept of the programme is to provide children in public primary schools with one hot nutritious meal, prepared from locally grown foodstuffs, on every school going day. The aim is to spend 80% of the feeding cost in the local economy. The PSC is an inter-ministerial committee that is chaired by the Minister for MoGCSP. It provides policy guidance to the Programme. The Ministries involved are Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The immediate objectives are to reduce hunger and malnutrition, increase school enrolment, attendance and retention, and boost domestic food production in deprived communities of the country. The Development objective is to reduce poverty and enhance food security (Ghana School Feeding Programme 2020).

In 1996 the Ghanaian parliament introduced the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (FCUBE), which was geared towards poverty reduction and sustainable development in the country. The programme covered the cost of school supplies, uniforms and food. Together with the abolition of school fees, the programme aimed to increase the attendance and retention rates among students, particularly in the most deprived regions. In 2005 the Ghana School Feeding Programme was introduced as a joint effort of six ministries aimed towards a further reduction of poverty and malnutrition, and meeting millennium development goals. The programme initially covered the needs of primary and junior high school students, but in 2019 the NPP (National Patriotic Party) government, under the leadership of Nana Akufo Addo, extended its coverage to senior high school. The fee was abolished and school canteens were to receive the food products delegated by a centrally directed committee in Accra. It all sounded very promising.

Unfortunately, the programme failed in ways other than expected. Personally gathered data shows that in the case of urban schools in Northern Ghana, the programme, the goal of which was to provide a stable source of nourishment for pupils and students, instead brought about a deterioration of quality and quantity of school food. More importantly still, the programme diminished the role and influence of matrons and caterers employed at school canteens. Previously it was the matrons (head cooks and kitchen managers) who were responsible for purchasing ingredients for the kitchen. They had established relationships with local producers and traders, designed the menu and their meals were adjusted to the seasonal availability of ingredients. Their impressive expertise allowed them to choose the best produce on the market and long-established trading links enabled them to obtain produce even during shortages and for a good price. Now, matrons do not wield any decisive influence neither over

the menus nor the ingredients. The supplies are delivered from geographically removed places despite governmental promises to deliver locally grown produce. Worse still, the foodstuffs delivered to schools are of appallingly poor quality.

Even today, the Ghanaian agrarian system is persistently plagued by unhygienic storage of produce and low quality of processing technologies. If the produce is delivered through unknown, government-assigned suppliers, women cannot check the quality of the food prior to delivery. The matrons are not involved in the assessment process at any stage. Unfortunately, the school food supply chain lacks supervision at any stage and this leads to many malpractices and corruption. According to an explanation received personally during travel research for this thesis the suppliers are not food traders but rather selected people who work as intermediaries between traders and schools. Those intermediaries are employed directly by the government and provided with the means to buy and transport produce. For instance, a supplier has an order for a shipment of black-eyed beans; the government dedicates ten GHS per unit, placing an order for a thousand units of black-eyed beans. Ten GHS is a market price of high quality, well-processed, fresh produce. However, taking advantage of the lack of quality control, the supplier chooses to purchase beans of lower quality that are sold for seven GHS per unit. As long as one thousand units of black-eyed beans are delivered, no complaints or checks are made as to whether the money was spent correctly. Meanwhile, the extra three thousand GHS is shared between trader and supplier.

As a result, products supplied to schools are usually of the lowest quality; personal conversations with matrons attest to beans half eaten by pests, mixed with stones, dried, old or unfit for cooking. The same applies to maize, groundnuts, groundnut paste, millet, oats and dried fish. Sometimes, as much as a third of the produce is suitable only for disposal due to rot, mould, vermin infestation, stones and age of the produce. As one of the matrons attested:

> Those are some of the problems we are facing. And as I said, because of the way they supply, they pay. They are just going for the cheap items which may not be of good quality, they are dumped on the school. And you can't throw it away and you can't refuse it – you refuse it, you won't have anything to cook. The students are hungry, what do you do? So, you take it and the matron has to manage. [It makes the job] very, very stressful. It's not easy. You are given a peanut, half of it is rotten. You sit down to pick it, you pick and what is left is very little; what does it mean? It means, it will not reach [the number of students]. If you're supposed to use it for two meals and in the end it's not sufficient, what do you do? You have to find a way of improvising, find them something to eat. You understand. So instead of the children getting that groundnut taste feeling, you may have to force some soya flour to eat. To get the soup that you want, for it to reach them. So, they will eat, this is groundnut soup,

> but they will not feel the groundnut, it's not complete groundnut. Then they will say, oh this soup is supposed to the groundout soup, but the taste is not good. Sometimes the nuts are so spoiled that you cannot even pick them out. What do you do? You only roast it, mill it and try to add spices and other things to improve the taste.[94]

During conversations with students from various local secondary schools, all complained about the quality of the food they were served. They frequently experienced an upset stomach, diarrhea, headaches and general dissatisfaction with the food they were given. A group of students at the Islamic High School in Wa claimed they cannot study when they have to run constantly to the toilet or remain hungry after a meal. Many resort to cooking *gari* (dried manioc grits) in the dormitory rooms since it is the easiest and cheapest way to fill their stomachs. On the other hand, many claimed that the variety of meals is something they value. At homes they ate mostly TZ with soups. At the same time, being so used to TZ, they found it hard to feel "satisfied" after a meal of rice.

As has been shown above, the menus in the public school are no longer designed by matrons but are delivered by the central ministry in Accra. When it came to deciding upon it, matrons stepped in. The decision to introduce this scheme did not come without interventions from the matrons.

> With the inception of the free SHS, the ministry wanted us to have one common meal for the whole nation. But we, the Domestic Housewives and Matrons, because they asked our national president, to give them a menu, that will serve the whole nations. But it's not possible. So, she informed us. I am the regional chief for the Upper West, so we were called together for a meeting and this was put before us. So, we decided that we will zone the country into areas: Accra, Central, Western and Volta. One menu for them. Then we have a middle belt consisting of Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Eastern Regions. That time it was ten regions. So, we have four down, then three in the middle, they also have one menu. Then we have the Northern regions, Upper West and Upper East, which consist of the Northern Belt, that's how we did it, and we made a menu for these regions too. Why, because the foodstuffs vary. […] The menu from the North will have TZ while the menu from the South will prefer *kenkey* and *banku.*[95]

Despite declaring that meals in the School Feeding Programme would be *"prepared from locally grown foodstuffs",* the government failed to consider the difference in foodstuffs and dietary patterns present across the country. Those are considerable. Women from the Domestic Bursars and Matrons Association stepped in and provided more accurate menus, which considered the cost and availability of food supplies and local dietary patterns. The

[94] From an interview conducted on 08.07.2019 with a secondary school matron, Wa.
[95] Ibidem.

matrons also vouched against the rise of school and feeding fees in private and vocational schools, claiming that it would put too much of a burden on parents and in effect, result in a drop out of children (Domestic Bursars and Matrons Association 2021). The school feeding programme, albeit undoubtedly rooted in good intentions, failed by removing the most valuable element assuring good functionality of school canteens: the matrons.

Institutional food, caretaking and female expertise

Apart from visiting schools and their kitchens I also spent a substantial amount of time in the kitchen of the Wa Municipal Hospital. I was interested to see how institutional food is prepared and wanted to seek answers to the following questions: 1. What are the main objectives of the hospital food? 2. Who decides on menus? 3. Who prepares meals? 4. Which ingredients are used and which are spared? My intention was to observe some qualities that would dinstinguish between institutional, restaurant and homemade foods. People's accounts only partly corroborated my (prejudiced) theory based on information gathered prior, regarding the low quality of hospital food devoid of taste and fulfilling the sole purpose of filling the stomach rather than appeasing the taste buds, due to lack of care during the meal preparation process.

The women employed in the kitchen were quite excited to have me there. There were approximately ten of them: fully, partially employed, as well as several doing their National Service (a year-long "internship" compulsory for all university graduates). After the initial stirring test[96] which I failed, I had to go through a couple more: a Hot TZ Packing test, a Hot *Banku* Forming test, a Cabbage Chopping test and an Okra Cutting test. After seeing me work, behave well and provide good company, they accepted me fully as kitchen associate. That position entitled me to eat the same meals as were prepared for the patients, an option chosen by other women employed in the kitchen as well. Soon I realised that I had rarely eaten food better than there, at the hospital. This opinion was by no means popular.

The meals at the hospital are funded by the Ghanaian national insurance company and are not a standard service in all national hospitals. This hospital is supported through extra governmental funds because many patients have been known to come from surrounding villages or as far as Jirapa or Tumu. The large distances make family visits (a usual practice among patients from Wa) all but impossible. The kitchen is provided for by the governmental suppliers and, much like in the case of schools, the foodstuffs are not of the highest quality. Even worse however, the insurance company regularly delays suppliers' payments, which

[96] See Chapter 3 and Chapter 8 for details and commentary.

results in stalled deliveries and frequent shortages of foodstuffs. While the kitchen has a menu designed by the matron and approved by the dietician, in reality the cooks prepare whatever they have ingredients for.

Based on the changes in the hospital menu, one could discern a trend: from cuisine of prosperity to cuisine of hardship, from variety to repetitiveness, from rich to basic, from nutritious to passable. At its height, the hospital menu provided *jollof* rice[97] with fresh vegetables (three to four times a week), *banku* with groundnut soup (also three to four times), TZ with *ayoyo, waakye*[98] with brown sauce and other meals. Vegetables would vanish first, then stews, then rice, leaving women with maize meal, dried okro[99], some dried "*kita* schoolboys"[100] and onion. When that was gone too, the kitchen was in despair. At the beginning of my collaboration with the hospital, the food was abundant and the menu was adhered to every day. After some time, the supplies stopped coming in and the women tried to adapt skilfully to the remaining foodstuffs in order to prepare sufficient food for everyone, to the detriment of variety. Soon there was nothing else other than maize flour and dry okra: no fresh vegetables, no tomato paste, no rice, no pepper, none of the main ingredients which make dishes in Northern Ghana appetising. With the vanishing ingredients women were becoming increasingly distressed, frustrated and angry. The source of those feelings lay, as I found out, not in the idleness that was forced upon them, but in the helplessness. They were not able to fulfil their duties: to feed the patients. While the fault lay on the insurance company which did not pay the suppliers, the kitchen workers bore the brunt of the anger and frustration of the patients. The women, like M., one of the permanent workers told me, felt responsible for the wellbeing of patients. While they could not cure them, they wanted them to have enough food to facilitate their recovery. Although patients regularly complained about the food, they suffered from the lack of it when there was none.

The Municipal Hospital was another victim of failures of the central, governmentally steered food program, just like the schools. The National Insurance System exposed its deficiencies in providing payment for suppliers in time, same as for casual workers who had

---

[97] *Jollof* rice is a popular West African dish with contested origin but likely coming from Senegal. It's prepared by cooking rice in tomato stew, with the addition of assorted meat cuts, fish, vegetables. In the North, *jollof* is often cooked with dried fish and dawa dawa.

[98] *Waakye* is a popular northern dish prepared with rice and black-eyed beans, characterised by reddish-pink colour coming from red millet stalks the dish is cooked with. Often served with *shito,* macaroni and tomato stew.

[99] Okro, okra or ladies' fingers (*Abelmoschus esculentus*) is a subtropical plant whose edible pods are very popular across West Africa, South and East Asia. The pods are mucilaginous: they release a sort of viscous liquid which gives soups and stew prepared with okra a specific slimy texture.

[100] Small, dried fish.

not been receiving their salaries for months on end, while all medical directors and high-profile employees were paid regularly. The women in the hospital kitchen had to work together to procure ways in which they could feed as many patients as possible with balanced meals, meeting their nutritional and gustatory needs. While the former was easier to meet, since the food included a lot of fish and plant protein, carbohydrates and microelements from vegetables such as okra, tomatoes, cassava leaves, onion, *alefi* (*Amarantus incurvatus*) or *kontomire* (cocoyam) leaves (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*), the gustatory needs of the patients were often not met and were not a priority.

Whilst I enjoyed the hospital food, even more than some street or restaurant-bought food, the patients complained about its lack of taste, poor protein content and mildness. It was true that the hospital menu did not include meat, only fish. Dried or fresh fish was added to soups for extra flavour, but in such small quantities that the flavour never came through. It was difficult to find more than a few pieces of dried fish in one portion of *jollof*. Moreover, the kitchen refrained from using Maggi and bouillon cubes, claiming they were unhealthy. The taste of *Maggi* was something many were missing in hospital stews. Finally, the kitchen minimised the use of red pepper since it could potentially upset the delicate stomachs of patients. All those features suited me: a non-meat eater, who uses only herbs for cooking and suffers from an upset stomach after particularly spicy dishes. What made the hospital food agreeable for me made it completely unpalatable for patients and their families, specifically, the lack of pepper.

Pepper and healthy meals

Capsicum chinense, otherwise known as the *Scotch Bonnet* pepper, is a staple ingredient added generously (by the handful) to stews and soups across Ghana. The *Scotch Bonnet* originates in the Caribbean and counts among the spiciest peppers in the culinary world[101]. It is not a new spice in Ghana, having been introduced by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century as another sweat-inducing spice next to ginger and grains of paradise (*Aframomum melegueta*, cousin of cardamom). While the origin of the West African penchant for spicy food is not clear, it is assumed that the use of capsaicin-rich spices has a preserving effect on food that is particularly perishable in tropical climates. McCann writes about the hot peppers:

> If Africa's culinary geography of texture rests on the consistency and bulk of its bland starchy staples, its most ubiquitous staple marker of flavor is that of the

[101] The Scoville scale places *Scotch Bonnets* between 100,000 and 350,000 units. For comparison, *jalapeño* peppers usually range between 2,500 and 8,000 Scoville units.

> capsicum pepper, otherwise known as chili, pimiento, berbere, harissa, piri-piri, or red pepper. For many areas of Africa we cannot imagine sauces and meats without the distinctive qualities of capsicum peppers in one form or another. […] Capsicum peppers changed African cooking because they democratized the fiery flavors; capsicum plants came from easily stored seeds that could be grown locally, or at least regionally, more cheaply and simply than the previously used spices. Capsicum peppers, either in fresh form or processed into powders, thus were not a new flavor sensation, but one that farmers could produce for the market and their own use in kitchen gardens managed by women. The nature of peppers, both as plants and as spice, broadened access to them for more than elites and their cooking pots (McCann 1992, 58).

Women, as food preparers, have been in charge of the level of spiciness of food for centuries and in contemporary Ghanaian cuisine, despite the introduction of refrigerators, it plays just as important a role as before. As McCann writes, even the poorest households generally have access to pepper, which is a staple in the preparation of soups and stews. I have been given recipes for the cheapest, most affordable soups to go with TZ; those usually contain onion, "*kita* schoolboys" and *dawa dawa* (*Parkia biglobosa*) for its protein content and pepper. Those ingredients, except for onion, are to be pounded together, fried in oil (either palm oil or shea butter). Then water is to be added together with some dried okra for the oily texture. According to my respondents, eating or not eating pepper lies at the heart of social inclusion or exclusion. Mothers told me that they teach their children to eat pepper, so that they are not looked upon with disapproval and can eat out. Young women argue with their mothers and grandmothers about the amount of pepper used for soups; neither too much nor too little is tolerated. People have to explain why they refuse to eat pepper, pointing to health issues or shy away from eating out. The elderly claim they cannot eat food without pepper for it is too bland, too flavourless, so much so that they vomit. Children cry into their soups, because their mothers like to cook spicily. Pepper in Ghana is as ubiquitous as it is ruthless; to be able to eat Ghanaian, one needs to accept and embrace the heat or seek a way around it.

In general, I saw women to be quite accommodating when it came to using pepper.

> P: Yes, we eat pepper… but not plenty, you know. Some people like plenty red pepper, some people really like it, my family likes pepper a little, but not plenty, not sharp, sharp. We grind it into the soup, we make it very soft and add it into the soup. But we don't take sharp pepper. That you can start running. Me myself I like pepper, but I don't like plenty.
> R: So, for example in case someone doesn't eat pepper, do you make food pepper-free, or you make that person eat whatever?
> P: Nooo, we don't make anyone in the family eat whatever. It's wrong. A woman does the home, if a child or any member of your family doesn't like pepper, when you're about to add pepper to the soup, you take some of the soup, you put

> it in a dish and put it away. Then you add the pepper to the rest of the family soup.[102]

Separating the mild and peppery soup is common practice, as well as grinding the pepper into a separate bowl and letting whoever prefers their soup spicy to add as much as they want. In my host family, this was also the case. My landlord did not eat pepper; he was famously able to detect even the tiniest amount and would promptly refuse to eat the entire dish. My hostess told me, at the beginning of their marriage she cooked pepper-free for them to eat together because "she didn't mind eating pepper-free", but when the children came, she started getting them used to pepper. Now she cooks two batches of stew, one hot and one mild, or simply adding whole peppers to the soup. Peppers do not release their full spice level unless ground or crushed, therefore the host and I could eat the same soup as our fellow diners who were more tolerant of pepper, simply by omitting the floating red bulbs.

While working in the hospital kitchen, I tried to observe closely the leftovers that were brought back with the serving pots. After cooking, the food was divided into a number of pots and pans reflecting the number of wards scattered on the hospital grounds. Each pot contained sufficient portions for all patients in that ward (who were counted that morning). Interestingly I did not perceive a consistent pattern. Sometimes there were more leftovers because patients had home-cooked food brought by the family. Sometimes the weather was hot and they did not want to eat. Sometimes the nursing staff ate some of the food and sometimes they did not. One reoccurrence was definitely the low popularity of *waakye* with brown sauce, with the result that a more significant amount of leftovers were coming back from the new mothers' ward. Upon my questioning the women shrugged and said this is because young mothers are traditionally recommended to eat hot TZ with *dawa dawa* soup; it helps them heal, produce milk and, quite prosaically, facilitate bowel movement.

> Why are you taking hot TZ, why, because [when] we give birth your inner… the inner side of the stomach is sore. So, you have to eat something hot in order to heal the sores in your stomach. That's the reason why we eat hot TZ. It also helps you to regulate the breast milk so that the child will feed well, then you are taking cold food. […] Let's say they are doing the caesarean section. But you can be taking rice and… because of your… the stool. The stool, when it's hard and you want to pass it, and you push the stitches can go off. That's why they prevent you from eating those things for a while. Then you go back to your meals.[103]

[102] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2020 with a woman in her sixties, Wa.
[103] From an interview conducted on 26.02.2020 with a woman in her late thirties, Wa.

As for the brown sauce, it is not considered a typical Ghanaian, much less traditional dish, not only in the North but in the whole country. I was told the cateresses introduced it some years ago and it has been appropriated by institutions and restaurants ever since as a cheap meal: a cheaper equivalent of the stew. Brown sauce (gravy) is based on wheat flour, first fried in oil to achieve its brown colour and then absorbed into water or stock. Here, stock is made using dried fish, together with salt and a little pepper. The sauce then thickens by reduction and is served with waakye, rice and beans. Usually, waakye is eaten with stew (beef stew, tomato stew or fish stew), with shito[104], a small serving of macaroni and some fresh vegetables. The brown sauce came as a cheaper substitute for the stew for times when the kitchen was not able to afford to cook every day.

For all the aforementioned reasons, the hospital food, albeit prepared with care and skill, was widely complained about. It was not considered good and rich, for it lacked meat, the variety of ingredients, leaves, Maggi cubes and spices that are typically used to make food palatable. The kitchen employees were often upset about it and told me many times that they are doing their best; but without proper ingredients what can one do? They did not consider the food to be that good themselves. As I mentioned before, I was served food whenever I was there and I enjoyed it; the cooks were very skilled and the food was pleasant-tasting. However, only the casual workers[105] joined in to consume the food or gave the food to their children. All permanently employed staff either brought their home-cooked meals or purchased something outside. I asked them a few times why they do not eat the kitchen food themselves. One lady frowned and said that she is able to purchase the ingredients for the stew and cook good food in the house, so she does not have to eat the food made here. The casual workers who regularly went unpaid made amends by eating at work, however the food tasted.

There is a consensus that hospital food will never be as good as home-cooked food; ingredients essential in providing general gustatory satisfaction, such as meat, Maggi or pepper, are lacking. Cooking in smaller portions with more varied and higher quality ingredients, selected by women themselves on the market, allow for the provision of more refined tastes. In the municipal hospital kitchen, the employees are bound to pool their resources and make the most of what is available to them, which often means cooking using ingredients they would not choose themselves. Hospital food is also not supposed to provide refined gustatory pleasures;

[104] *Shito* is a pungent Ghanaian relish prepared with ginger, fresh chilli pepper, prawn or crayfish powder, tomatoes and other ingredients, depending on the region. It can be served with everything.
[105] Workers employed part-time or for a smaller wage, lower level employee.

its goal is to replenish stomachs, quite literally. The contrast between my own reception and that of the locals of the sensory qualities of the food is a manifestation of a deep chasm in sensory reception and cultural and moral values attached to food. By contrast, what I considered an asset, a virtue, was seen as a downside from the local perspective. In the end I had to admit the reception of food provided in the municipal hospital resembled that of the food in Polish hospitals: marred by the absence of essential gustatory elements that transform basic comestibles into a meal.

I have also attempted to inquire about prison canteen food but was unsuccessful. I had contacted the head of the regional Ghana Prison authority, the head of the Wa Prison, but after a short conversation he claimed that to conduct research in the prison canteen, I needed to obtain written permission from the central committee of the Ghana Prison Service in Accra. Unfortunately, I had no time to send the letter and wait for the prescribed two weeks for the response, so I resigned. It would be an interesting addition to the general view on institutionalised food.

Women as changemakers

In the first part of this chapter, I suggest that women have a deep emotional connection with traditional food. In the field, I saw them practise its preparation and consumption in their everyday lives and their propagation of it among family members, students and acquaintances. Some women venture into activism, working towards reinstating this knowledge in the younger generation. They displayed a deep understanding of the local landscapes and competence in recognising wild edible plants and growing domesticated ones in their own garden. I have seen many women planting peanuts, okra, bitter leaf (*Vernonia amygdaline*), peppers and other leafy vegetables in their gardens, either for private use or for sale, and the widespread practice of sharing and exchanging harvest. As home economics and catering teachers, those women advocate introducing more native cuisine into official school programs, alongside (or even replacing) continental dishes.

> R: And to your mind, if you could change the catering program to whatever you think is useful and suitable for the environment and for the people, what would you change?
> P: Oh, I would change the continental dishes to local. For them to understand [it is] very easy. Because the way they prepare some of the foods, they won't even know their names. But when you go into it, then they know the name, they know how to prepare it, you are even adding any ingredients to change the name of it, but they will be able to cope. And some of them can also look at creativity. They can also look at certain things and also produce a different thing.
> R: So, to you the teaching of the continental dishes is not a good idea?

> P: [It] is not, [it] is not. Because if only they will get the opportunity to travel abroad, fine. But where?[106]

At the same time, in my interviews, women declared the will to try out new dishes, especially if given the chance to travel abroad. Their main argument was that it would be smart to live in another place to get used to local food and be able to eat it for the comfort of life. Thus, they showed practicality and adaptability of taste preferences. However, they also declared readiness to find ingredients to cook their local food to create that "feeling of home". On the other hand, when asked what they would change in their diets if they had more money, they often said "nothing" – rather than allocating more funds to more varied or more expensive ingredients, they would rather spend it on tuition fees, investing in opening a business, paying off dues and other necessities.

> R: So, ok. Coming back to the food and the money. So, if you yourself, had plenty money, that you will not have to worry about it, would you change anything that you eat every day.
> P: Oh, I will be eating what's my favourite or anything. I have to use the money for something, not for the food. Food you eat and then you go and shit. And maybe there are some things in front of you to do it, I have to use the money to do that.[107]

Naturally, the trends were different in various age groups. Among the elderly, women still demonstrate both motivation and abilities to learn new things but have their fixed preferences (such as my respondent's grandmother, quoted above). Among the younger age groups, another disparity is apparent. Men and women in their twenties and thirties still display attachment (the "feeling of the body"[108]) to local dishes; however, from the practical point of view, they do not cook nor eat them as regularly. Young women are more likely to declare sentiment towards TZ and other dishes, while it appears that food is either not that important, or they actively pursue a variety of meals permitted by their single, affluent lifestyle: avoiding home-cooked meals, eating out, buying food. During my research I have found that among the youngest, there is a consensus that local food is an important part of heritage, although an emotional attachment to local food was apparent to a lesser extent, unless for political purposes.

Upon collecting those statements and noticing patterns of gustatory attachment, a question surfaced: is gender an important factor when it comes to attachment to local foods? Are women considered the keepers and promoters of culinary traditionalism, or even

[106] From an interview conducted on 19.09.2019 with the head of HE department, Wa.
[107] From an interview conducted on 24.03.2020 with two women in their late fifties, Wa.
[108] "Feeling in the body" is an important conceptual frame used for instance by K. L. Geurts in her seminal work on Anlo-Ewe in Ghana (Geurts 2003).

conservatism? Are women less likely to enjoy and cultivate new ways of eating, eating modern foods, and eating out than men? Compared to men, are women less likely to try new foods, experiment and venture out of their comfort zone, resorting to choosing the food they know and can cook? Can their attachment to local foods be attributed to their traditional role as homemakers, reproducers and keepers of the hearth? Finally, is the food that women declare to consume (whether traditional, modern or continental) any marker of female social status?

Gender and preparation of selected meals

Patricia Allen and Carolyn Sachs state clearly: while we have made huge strides to venture beyond the traditional gender relations in many spheres of social life, such as law, medicine, politics and scholarship, they remain quite static in the area of food systems (Allen and Sachs, XXX, 24). Around the world, women are burdened with most food-related activities, both in productive and reproductive spheres. Women shop, prepare, cook, serve and clean in the households, and, more importantly, invest their mental capacity into thinking about what to cook. Women also dominate low-paid production and service jobs in the food production system. With the industrialisation and scaling of food production, the majority of the food processing that used to take place within the households was moved outside into secluded facilities. Here, too, women often take subordinate roles while men dominate in managerial positions.

Feminist scholarship that focuses on women's role in feeding others is divided between two perspectives: one that considers cooking and food work as granting certain power and one that perceives it as subservient. In both cases, food work is crucial for the creation and maintenance of a female identity – often with preservation of tradition at its core. (Counihan 2004, Avakian and Haber 2005. In west African food cultures, gender division of labour is strongly connected with the passing on of knowledge. Girls and daughters are traditionally supposed to help their mothers in the kitchen, rather than sons. The practice of foraging, knowledge of plants, herbs, methods of preparation and sensorial knowledge are all reproduced in a chiefly feminine environment. In my data, women in Northern Ghana are still responsible for most of the food-making and display extensive and detailed knowledge about foodstuffs. The intricate difference between a good TZ and a bad one, good beans and beans infested by a parasite, edible plants and those one should not ingest were practised through the corporeal knowledge gained and hones over years of practising the cooking. Most of the home economics students knew how to cook, as was attested to by comments made by the teachers. They learned from the elder female household members by observing and practising.

Women are the food providers, keepers and cooks, roles that are dominant in their day-to-day lives. In my conversations quoted above, women are obliged to consider the preferences, habits and health issues of all the house members (compound members) of both close and extended family in their cooking plans. In larger monogamous compounds, it is often the wife of the oldest son, whereas in polygynous households, women can take turns in cooking the evening meal. The pressure on women to deliver food accepted by the family members is high, and disregarding their wishes is considered impolite at best, offensive at worst. The same applies to feedback: nobody complains directly to the women since it would be considered rude.

> R: But do you genuinely consider your sister-in-law a good cook?
> P: Yeah. Sometimes. Sometimes she is, sometimes you can…
> R: She will not know!
> P: Oh, but we don't tell her, even if you don't like it, but you don't tell her. You just ignore and you eat but sometimes the food is not that… if you say it, maybe you can have a fight with her, so you just decide to keep quiet.
> R: What if your brother doesn't like the food?
> P: That one I can't tell, because they are in their room, whether he likes it or not, I can't tell.
> R: He doesn't talk about the food with your mum.
> P: It's between the two of them. He doesn't tell us anything.[109]

This example shows how the issues of food remain closely connected to sexual/marriage relations. Although the woman in the household cooks food for the entire compound, nobody except her husband addresses her directly, if they are not satisfied. They also must accept the food, whatever and however it may be. From my encounters, elders in this compound complained between themselves but never voiced their concerns. I heard repeatedly that they were especially displeased when the women prepared rice for dinner. Since the elders often have weaker stomachs or teeth, or they feel a strong gustatory connection with "soft" (swallowable) food, they tend to make remarks such as "I haven't eaten" or "They didn't cook tonight" if they did not get to eat TZ or fufu[110].

Women's taste preferences seem to come last in the hierarchy of gustatory needs of the household. The husbands' come first, then the elders' and children's, then those of the rest of the members: helpers, extended kin and women. This is corroborated by extensive literature on household food practices. Allen and Sachs ask plainly: why is it that women cook the most and often eat the least? (XXX) This is due not only to traditional household hierarchies but, as it was explained to me, to economic factors. According to one of my respondents, the woman

[109] From an interview conducted on 09.04.2020 with a woman in her mid-twenties, Wa.

[110] Interestingly, the same remark could be reversed and used for any other foods one does not like or digest well: food that leaves a person dissatisfied. Youth tend to refer to TZ in this way.

should not prepare solely what she wants to eat but must consider what other members like, often putting her preferences aside. If no one is keen to eat, they will only eat a small portion and leave the rest, leading to food waste. Certainly, in poorer households there would be no other option than to eat what is being served, but among my respondents there were women who could afford to cook whatever their families requested. Children, knowing they can receive what they want, would refuse to eat.

> P: We eat rice […] Because of the children, the kids. They like rice. Sometimes I will pound fufu and I will still prepare rice for them. Yeah, they will tell me that they do not take *fufu*. That they want rice, that if I don't produce rice, that I should give them tea to drink. […] And they will tell me the type of rice. Yes. At time, they will do say they want *jollof* rice. So you have to prepare *jollof* rice. Sometimes they want rice with stew, they don't want any vegetable at all. Just the rice with plain stew. At times they say rice with groundnut soup. Or… when there's the light soup with fufu, they say I should prepare the rice and that they will take it with the light soup.
> R: Wow. So, you don't make your kids eat whatever you prepare. It's not like, this is what we eat today. Kids, sorry, you must eat.
> P: They will not eat, they will not eat. And they will disturb you, you will not sleep! When they do that and then I said what is it, they will not eat. They will waste and then when it's midnight, they will wake up and they will be crying that… they are hungry.[111]

All the women I met during my research were conscious about avoiding food waste to the same extent as making their fellow household members satisfied. The budget did not matter; whether affluent or poor, women made sure to cook accurate amounts of food liked by the household members. I remember being late for dinner once and my hostess informed me, irritated, that my portion of *fufu* was given to the dogs, since it would have gone bad. Needless to say, I was never late for dinner again. I also had a fiery disagreement about wasted yam pieces with my first hostess, the gravity of which I did not understand until I learned how expensive yam is, and that wasting food is a serious offence.

Nonetheless, it must be emphasised that women treat their own taste preferences disparagingly. Many, upon moving with their husband's families, give up their previous eating habits completely for the sake of blending in, becoming accepted and effectively becoming part of their new households in full. One woman mentioned having severe stomach problems, including vomiting, after changing her diet. However, she did not give up and continued eating until this new diet became normal and her body accepted it. One of my closer friends complained to me about her fiancée; upon coming to visit her, he demanded she cooked two

[111] From an interview conducted on 19.07.2019 with the vice-headmaster of a vocational school, Wa.

meals a day from scratch and refused to eat refrigerated food, something she would serve regularly, saving her much time and effort. She was upset about it and thought it to be a waste of time, but she obliged. Considering the food-sex nexus Clarke writes about, it is no wonder that she could not refuse. He was providing for her and in return, she was obliged to deliver food he requested (even though he was able to cook). Finally, my own hostess would rather cook bigger portions of food everybody liked and prepare just a small portion of the food she felt a craving for, like TZ and baobab soup which, she knew, neither her children nor husband would enjoy.

In praise of the simple (but excellent) meal

The preparation of local meals is a time-consuming, laborious work requiring skill and physical strength. Each time the recipe was explained or shown to me, it was clear that every step was intentional: the amount of ingredients, the order of adding them, the motions, the shapes into which vegetables were cut, etc. The processing of foodstuffs appeared to be one of the most important, laborious and time-consuming stages of cooking. It also seemed to lie at the core of the cooking method, requiring mastery to achieve the desired refined outcome. The chief part of the cooking was the method which appeared much more structured than in the Western kitchen. Ironically, the simpler the dish appeared to be, the more time and effort it took to make it perfectly.

The preparation of ingredients was that much more time-consuming and laborious since no ready-made products were being used (except for the groundnut paste). I learned that the cassava and baobab leaves must be selected, chopped and washed a few times before being pounded in the mortar. The fish and cowhide must be soaked and scrubbed clean. The tomatoes must be washed, halved, steamed, and blended in the grinding bowl or a blender. The meat must be seasoned and steamed in advance with the correct amount of salt, *Scotch Bonnet, Maggi* and ginger. The steps must be followed closely to ensure the ingredients reach their correct properties (viscosity, malleability and clarity). The dishes were assessed daily, at least in the household of my host family. My repondents also confirmed this being a habitual practice in their households. It was especially important for multigenerational and large compunds, where multiple women cooked in turns. Sometimes, such comparisons led to competition between them. The implications of “good” or “bad” supper (the most important meal of the day) were serious, especially for young wives, who had just joined the compound and wanted to get into the good graces of their husbands and elder family members.

At first look, the meals comprising the daily sustenance of north Ghanaians seem a little repetitive. A pierce of starchy porridge and a soup, day in, day out. Wouldn't one get bored of it? In his seminal research of a "simple meal" among the Kel Ewey Tuareg of Niger, Gerd Spittler tackles the difference between the Western need for varied diets using multiple ingredients and non-Western, limited to very few similar dishes eaten all year round. He claims, that while for a Westerner, the idea of eating TZ and soup every evening would be "insipid and monotonous" (Spittler 1999, 27), for those who actually eat it, such diet is desirable and satisfying. Meal that Kel Ewey eat are always the same: *eghale* for breakfast (millet, goat cheese and dates stirred in water), and *ashin* for midday and evening meals: a millet polenta with soured camel or goat's milk. (Spittler 1999, 28). Spittler adds, that special family occasions and Islamic celebrations are marked by eating rice dishes and more meat – that's when a goat or a sheep is being killed and consumed.

The simplicity of this cuisine has been considered "primitive" or "underdeveloped" by many European travellers and researchers who encountered it. But for Kel Ewey, this cuisine is superior to any other. Each ingredient has a special quality. Millet is considered the best of all cereals for its ability to satisfy hunger and great taste. Goat cheese carries excellent flavour thanks to the great mountain grazing conditions of the Kel Ewey goats. As Spittler mentions, "the mountain cheese contains more strength and health. It is considered a preventive and curative means un various diseases." (Spittler 1999, 28). The dates used for *eghale* are also grown in special areas, where conditions are believed to give the fruit special qualities. Best-quality ingredients are a necessary condition for preparing a good meal – but the preparation methods are equally important. A well-prepared meal is always appetising and tasty – even eaten every day for months on end and Kel Ewey are the most pleased when no expensive ingredients and additional flavouring is being used. Just like that: millet, milk and water, and one is always satisfied.

The Kel Ewey dishes are far from primitive in the sense of "raw" and "unprepared" or "basic". On the contrary. Each meal is cooked carefully, following established steps in what is often a laborious process to ensure its quality. They never eat raw, uncooked or otherwise unprocessed food. A similar sentiment is expressed by the Tallensi, quoted in the seminal work of Meyer and Sonia Fortes (Fortes and Fortes 1936). They note:

> The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and soup. Porridge is prepared using flour and, depending on the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea corn or late millet. […]

> When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things, they spoil your belly' (Fortes and Fortes 1936, 265).

Fortes note further that:

> Porridge is the substance, soup is the relish. A woman tries to vary the latter 'so that they do not tire of eating the same'; when a visitor from afar comes she prepares the most tasty soup she knows, and if she wishes to please her husband she observes which soup he prefers and cooks it frequently for him. Seasonal factors, however, count for much, and women cook mainly what is most easily obtainable at the time (Fortes and Fortes 1936, 266).

Spittler concludes that "African peasants" replace polenta with tubers or grains, milk with sauce or soup, but the principles of a simple meal remain the same. Indeed, the cooking of TZ and soup is more time-consuming and laborious. It's easier and faster to cook rice and stew than a good baobab leaf soup. Furthermore, women often cook in very basic conditions without electricity or gas, running hot water, clean table stops and high-quality tools. The perfection of a simple dish preceded by laborious preparations, washing, grinding, pounding and stirring is enabled through a knowledgeable eye, ear and nose, a combination of sensory indicators that women learn how to read. Simple doesn't mean primitive or monotonous – it means prepared carefully with the best ingredients and caring for the best nutritious and psychosocial results. Simple here means satisfying.

Women, innovation and agency

Agency as an analytical term has been used in anthropology quite liberally and in varying contexts. My use of the term here requires thus further explanation. Broadly speaking, I understand agency as a capacity for change. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) delve deeper into the sociopolitical and philosophical concept of agency, which leads them to reconceptualise this concept through pragmatist and rationalist perspectives. They conceptualise agency as a "temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its "iterational" or habitual aspect) but also oriented toward the future (as a "projective" capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a "practical-evaluative capacity to

contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)." (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998, p. 962). From the phenomenological perspective represented by Alfred Schutz, "action [should] not be perceived as the pursuit of preestablished ends, abstracted from concrete situations, but rather that ends and means develop coterminously within contexts that are themselves ever changing and thus always subject to reevaluation and reconstruction on the part of the reflective intelligence" (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998, 967). Thus agency here is understood as a proactive, anticipatory process connected with the past, interacting with the existing structures creatively in the hope of changing the future without set goals for the end result.

To say that women's role in the food system is limited to that of guardians of tradition is to neglect their activism, educational progress, leadership and agency. Research shows that women are more likely to initiate change than men, both in urban and rural areas. Especially in the domestic sphere, women advocate and benefit from the introduction of new technologies that save time, such as gas cookers, fridges or pounding machines. In women-only households that I visited, members made clear of their readiness to use all the technological advancements they could afford. It was men, like my friend's fiancé, who generally opposed the introduction of different approaches to food, such as quicker cooking, storing, refrigerating and reheating. It goes without saying that men were not the ones who had to set aside time to cook two hot meals a day.

> P: No, I pound it [*fufu*] myself. For the man… He even vowed that I should never venture and send yam to machine, I should always pound the yam for the meal. If I send, he said that I should eat alone [laughing]. I'll eat it alone. He knows the fufu is being pounded […] So… [112]

In my interviews, young men, especially bachelors, appear to be more adventurous and outgoing with their food choices. Young men expressed their willingness to taste new foods (Southern Ghanaian, continental or Western) far more often than women of the same age. Among those who had experience living abroad, however, the majority claimed to have been faithful to Ghanaian cuisine through and through.

> In fact even in Europe, I lived almost throughout on *fufu*, Neat *fufu* and all that. Yeah. And it was quite expensive. But that was what I could… The only thing I could comfortably eat also was just salad. Yeah, apart from that… If I don't have access to my Neat *fufu* or something close, for food I may just take some apples, getting some apples or some… I don't like pizza.[113]

[112] From an interview conducted on 19.07.2019 with the vice-headmaster of a vocational school, Wa.
[113] From an Interview conducted on 07.09.2018 with a man in his fifties, Wa.

In the survey I made of ninety-seven students of political sciences at the UDS Wa campus, the majority of men made known their attachment to traditional food, indicating it as their favourite. Women, although expressing their predilections for local dishes, stated that these take longer to cook and that they do not wish to spend so much time in the kitchen. While evidently treating food as an important part of their heritage, there was a sense that they seemed to advocate easier lifestyles, which entailed cooking more convenient (and flavourful) meals.

The approach to tradition in North Ghanaian societies must first be assessed through gender roles and status, which is never an easy undertaking. In Northern Ghana and specifically in Wa, such relations are dictated by religious and cultural (also ethnic) traditions. Ethnic issues in relation to food and gustatory identities will be discussed in the following chapter; here I will only focus on the status of women. Historical research indicates a sociocultural division in the city of Wa based on localities, lifestyles and economic endeavours between the Dagaba (LoDagaa, Dagari) and the Wala. While the former inhabit mostly rural areas to the northwest of Wa and live agricultural lifestyles, the Wala have traditionally been concentrated in the city of Wa, engaging in cross-Saharan trade and religious activities. The former have been subject to Catholic missions since the early 1900s, while the latter have been under the influence of Islam since as far back as the fourteenth century (Wilks 2002; Lentz 2000; Lentz and Nugent 2000). Today's inhabitants of the city of Wa are a mix of indigenous and migrant dwellers, identifying as Wala, Dagaba, Sissala, Kassena, Ewe, Ashanti and others. While their position in the family hierarchies might differ depending on their religious affinity, locality, marital status, education and other factors, there is no doubt women form a considerable force in Northern Ghana's economic sphere.

Most women are in wage-earning employment, the majority of which involves petty trading or vending. The latter was chosen as a centre of interest for the focus of this dissertation. In my encounters, women declared that food vending was their first choice for a source of income, when they were in need of additional money. It transpired that many women sought opportunities to learn new dishes and drinks made from trendy ingredients, which would entice clients to buy their products. Some of my educated respondents such as matrons, teachers and caterers, informed me about their organisation of classes and workshops with their church group members, who were willing to learn how to prepare new dishes. They would teach them how

to prepare drinks such as tamarind or *sobolo*[114] juice, fry *bofrots*[115], *kulikulis*[116] and *turnovers*[117], bake pies and make *koose*[118]. Women who mastered those dishes were able to sell them at a stall and if their products were good, they attracted a new clientele fairly quickly.

To beat the competition on the market, women have to be thorough, creative and inventive. By devising and testing out new methods, using ingredients, and combining flavours, they make their products stand out. The quality of food, the hygienic conditions and safety are always a priority (and a home economics and catering diploma helps) but the experience, the taste and the extra spice are all crucial in beating others for the clients' money. Teachers of home economics and catering with whom I have worked extensively as well as members of the Christian Mothers, all emphasised that learning proper hygiene and ways to become more creative are crucial for every caterer, matron and street seller alike.

> P: […] But if you come here and teach them only traditional, they will be people who know more in the traditional cooking, you will be handicapped. But if you have small knowledge about the European dishes, that can push you to get a better job.
> R: So you're saying there will be people who know more about the traditional dishes?
> P: We have people who cook by the roadside. They don't cook European dishes.
> R: They cook local.
> P: And they are perfect in it. So, if you add a little European dishes and you add the traditional, that can push you to have a better job.[119]

> […] when you look at the school aspect of learning continental or European dishes, beans are also playing the same role but in the different way of cooking, different method of cooking them, as compared to the traditional way. So you look at the method of cooking they use and look at your method of cooking and you play alongside, you intersect them together and then everything goes the way you want it to be.
> So you expand your skills so that you do more with the knowledge that you already have from the house.
> More, you can do more! Because adding that one to your house knowledge, you can come up with something extraordinary.[120]

[114] *Sobolo* is a drink made from cooked dried hibiscus flowers.
[115] Doughnut-like balls made of fried yeast dough.
[116] *Kulikuli* is a snack made of fried groundnut paste; depending on the region, it is formed in circles or sticks.
[117] Colloquial name for a shortcrust meat pie.
[118] Bean flour fried cakes.
[119] From an interview conducted on 03.04.2019 with a HE teacher, Wa.
[120] From an interview conducted on 9/10.04.2019 with a HE teacher and matron, Wa.

Women learn from their neighbours, relatives and friends, they constantly hone their skills, they are creative and inventive in the kitchen, trying to incorporate new tastes, discover new ways to utilise ingredients and animate their daily food. Among elderly women the exchange is still personal; knowledge and experience are conditioned by a given person's social interactions. However, among the younger generation, learning about new foods and experimenting in the kitchen is increasingly influenced by social media and television. Virtual communities such as chat groups, Facebook pages and other means of communication are replacing and extending personal networks and augmenting the range of exchange in the domain of cooking skills. Young women search for inspiration and knowledge online instead of asking their aunts. Some young students of nutrition told me that once they wanted to cook TZ, they searched for the method online; it was more convenient to visualise the process of preparation than to listen to verbal instructions. They are also better equipped to read and follow instructions, a skill their older family member never had a chance to master.

Young women avoid cooking the same dish over and over again, copying the recipes and methods of their aunts, mothers and grandmothers. Some are, as they say, "tired", some feel "lazy". However, a possible conjecture of a movement towards gustatorial independence and agency, which women could not entertain before, offers a more plausible explanation. Gradual changes in the social position of women, laicisation, access to global resources and changes in family locality (nuclear families) give women the chance to become independent, not only financially through selling foods their clients enjoy, but also through their choice to change cooking and dietary patterns in their homes. The rising middle class take on food traditions and moulds them to fit their new identities. My hosts are a good example of this.

Although my hostess was a religious and self-proclaimed traditional woman (she would wake up at three o'clock in the morning to pound her husband's *fufu* during Ramadan), at the same time, she was formally employed and a worldly woman. She decided to adjust her cooking habits to her lifestyle, not the other way around. She cooked quicker meals such as rice with stew and meals she could store in the fridge, thus allowing her to save time. She was very creative in the kitchen and actively learned and incorporated new dishes in her menus. She looked up new recipes online and when I introduced them to American pancakes, they gladly learned how to make them. A year later, when I visited them during my next field trip, she proudly said they still prepare them regularly.

Many women in the South, who traditionally claim to enjoy more independence (Clark mentions the economic and social power of the Ashanti women and the benefits of the wife and

children living separately from the husband), have already made major shifts in their diets. In the North, it is mostly women who pursue a career in catering, a path that is noticeably superior to that of a street vendor. It is women who initiate change in the market, both in demand and supply. It has been mentioned to me many times that trading women and caterers uphold close exchange networks in Wa. Until recently, many products were not available in Wa; today one can easily find, for example, baking ingredients nearly everywhere.

> Maybe those people [students] when they're coming out they can bring the change. When you set up your restaurant or your fast food and you cannot prepare those continental dishes, maybe the ingredients are not there – you find the way. Like somebody else is setting up search for market to bring things to sell. You know, the person will make something. Gradually, because of this course, people are now gradually trying to know most of the continental dishes, how they are prepared, and the ingredients. So, if they are not there, they will be able to see how to purchase it from other places to come. And that will motivate somebody to then use that as business.[121]

The shift and expansion of both demand and supply visible on the market in Wa can be presumed to be driven by women seeking business opportunities within the food market. This claim substantiates my hypothesis of women being the main agents of dietary change; those who seek and embrace new products and invest their intellectual capabilities to learn new skills, adapt recipes and bring forward new dishes. Their attachment to traditional cooking is much more practical than that displayed by men, who treat traditional dishes symbolically, as elements of their cultural, ethnic and regional identity. Women, on whose shoulders the performance of those identities (eating) lie, are much more flexible. Being the food preparers, they are the agents of change, which is in fact the only way to keep the tradition alive.

[121] Ibidem.

Chapter 7

A white woman in the Ghanaian kitchen. An attempt at autoethnography

> "With TZ, you're not excited to eat it, but when you dig in, it's nice, and you want to eat more. With *jollof* you know you want to eat it but with TZ it's different."
>
> N., 10 years old
>
> "We tend to take routine and habit for granted, forgetting the massive achievement of something 'becoming habitual' (learning to speak the language, playing the piano, etc.)"
>
> B. Highmore, *Alimentary Agents*, 2008

When I arrived in Ghana, I had no idea about Ghanaian food. I might have read about *waakye*, *banku* and *fufu* all I wanted, but the pictures of rice or pale blobs of dough submerged in brown and green sauces did not speak a word of my sensory language. Visual representations did not invoke any sensory reactions, contrary to pictures of familiar food, which almost allowed me to smell the long-stewed cabbage leaves, recognise the doughy texture of pancakes, or recollect the mild sour flavour of cream. Images of Ghanaian food said nothing of the sort. So, when I arrived in Accra for the first time in 2018, I set sail for an incredible expedition of sensory self-discovery. In this chapter I am going to analyse the process of sensory knowledge acquisition, the broadening of sensory landscapes and access to sensory modalities, which I became aware of once more. To complete this task, I will use autoethnographic methods, which I will first discuss. Later, I will proceed to chronological reflections on my sensory experiences, which I had meticulously noted throughout my presence in the field.

The autoethnographic methods in anthropology

Autoethnographic methods, like sensory anthropology, which forms the core of the theoretical and methodological approaches in this thesis, arose only in the 1980s. According to many scholars (Buzard 2003; Ettorre 2016; Gupta and Ferguson 1997b Appadurai 1988b; Strathern 1987), this could be seen as a postmodernist countertrend to scientism dominating the

discipline in the previous two decades. Perhaps the most important premise of autoethnographic methodology is the acknowledgement of the perceptual constraints and efforts to overcome them by the person behind the research. The narrative model of ethnographic writing in the previous decades sought to remove any traces of subjectivity associated with anecdotical rather than scientific knowledge. Autoethnography proposed a counter perspective, where the researcher's lived experiences and observations were reflected upon and compared with the experiences of those around them.

In the autoethnographic method, researchers contextualise their experiences within broader cultural and social contexts, exploring how individual stories intersect with larger societal structures. Reflexivity is a key concept, prompting researchers to critically assess their biases and assumptions. Emotional engagement is encouraged alongside cognitive understanding, enriching the research process. Autoethnographers also consider their audience and ethical responsibilities towards communities where their research is situated. Enhanced reflexivity also results in greater attention paid to the researcher's positionality, background, impact and role in the field. In many ways, such approach equips the researcher with new useful tools for tackling emotional struggles embedded in every fieldwork.

According to Buzard, autoethnography also offers a perfect scene for all the silenced groups to finally find and claim their own voice (Buzard 2003, 61). Autoethnography was intended as a tool to wield in fights around identity politics, essentialism and, from a more feminist perspective, positionality (Buzard 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997; D.-A. Davis and Craven 2016; Okely 2007; Reed-Danahay 1997; 2009; C. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011). Scientism of the previous decades and objectivism of the anthropological gaze fell under scrutiny, and the results did not turn out positive. In the words of Ellis, Adams and Bochner:

> In particular, scholars began illustrating how the "facts" and "truths" scientists "found" were inextricably tied to the vocabularies and paradigms the scientists used to represent them (Kuhn, 1996; Rorty, 1982); they recognized the impossibility of and lack of desire for master, universal narratives (De Certeau, 1984; Lyotard, 1984); they understood new relationships between authors, audiences, and texts (Barthes, 1977; Derrida, 1978; Radway, 1984); and they realized that stories were complex, constitutive, meaningful phenomena that taught morals and ethics, introduced unique ways of thinking and feeling, and helped people make sense of themselves and others (Adams, 2008; Bochner, 2001, 2002; Fisher, 1984) (C. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011).

The changing conception of the self and society, which arose at the end of the twentieth century, inspired many scholars to reflect on the positionality of the anthropologists, the boundary between the self and the Other, as well as the politics and construction of the idea of

otherness, hidden in ethnographic narratives. This became especially poignant with regard to the geographic and symbolic dimensions of the anthropological "field". As Buzard rightly points out, the practice of the discipline underwent a transition: from the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century's association of knowledge with the deskbound researcher (the symbolic "armchair" as knowledge) to a fervently mobile anthropologist of the late twentieth century (travel as knowledge) (Buzard 2003, 63). A spatiotemporal understanding of the notion of culture ("a property of a spatially-localised people", Buzard 2003, 61) resulted in the static character of the cultures being subject to anthropological research. Quoting Appadurai, Buzard writes:

> Indigenous people were considered 'confined by what they know, feel, and believe […], prisoners of their 'mode of thought', – incapable in other words, of thinking themselves 'outside' the metaphorical 'mental space' of their own culture to see it as historically-produced and contingent rather than as natural or proper for all humankind (Buzard 2003, 63).

This approach is problematic for a number of reasons: 1. why must "knowledge", by necessity, be "there" and not "here"? 2. How are relations of power and privilege distributed and 3. What should be considered anthropological knowledge and what should not. Additionally, Buzard asks who the ultimate holder of "indigenous knowledge" is and where it is located. In the 1960s, following a new trend of self-reflection, anthropologists coined the term "anthropology at home" (Greenhouse 1985; Peirano 1998; A. Jackson 1987), which could be interpreted as an attempt to show contrition. In light of the questions posed above, "anthropology at home" should rather be seen as a return to the fundamental question of where "culture" is located, who should be researching it and how to retrieve "authentic" knowledge. In the end, anthropology at home coincided with many autochthonous anthropologists graduating from universities and coming back to their homeland to give an "insider's" view on "local cultures". The contrition of white Western anthropologists went as far as to say, "We do not need any extra sources justifying your observations. For the fact you are indigenous, we assume that your knowledge and observations must reveal a deeper and truer understanding of things than ours". Buzard does not agree with this statement. To his mind, it proves how essentialist Western anthropology is, by simply assuming that every "native" holds knowledge of all positions, customs and behavioural patterns, as if cultures were ethnographic units (Buzard 2003, 64).

The question of ascertaining objectivism of anthropological knowledge in works written by autochthonous scholars, was taken up by Pratt in her seminal book "Imperial Eyes: Travel

Writing and Transculturation" (Pratt 2007). There, she presents the case of works of a mysterious Spanish-Quechua chronicler who wrote extensively on the indigenous Quechua communities in the seventeenth century. Based on this, Pratt coins the term "autoethnography" by which she means indigenous self-depictions yet containing "a mix of imported and indigenous terms, symbols, and genres, reinventing their cultures through critical engagement with external representations" (Buzard 2003, 64). Autoethnography, according to her, should contain both elements; while being written from an autochthonous perspective, it must present a distanced view on local culture, most likely the one proposed by the colonisers (the first outsiders with a scientific approach to researching local cultures). In her view, the two elements represent two types of knowledge, subconscious and reflexive, the latter answering the question of how culture is constituted.

As to why, in Pratt's work, the tension between the two types of knowledge remains imbued in the position of the (de)colonised and the colonisers, is another question. Certainly, the idea of subconscious and reflexive knowledge, the latter identified with scientific, objectifying (not to be confused with objective) thought, has been perpetrated by many scholars, not only anthropologists. On the one hand, the perspective of the coloniser is presented here as a mirror, against which the "authentic" yet "imperfect" indigenous knowledge is proposed. On the other hand, the outsider's perspective, indispensable in anthropological research, is symbolised through the work of white interventionists. Pratt advocates the transcultural and translatory character of autoethnography, whether written by autochthonous authors considering external perspectives or external authors attempting to gain a view as close to an insider's as possible. It seems logical to compare the use of indigenous knowledge to the use of local, indigenous language; without translating it to a broadly spoken tongue, the ideas will not be understood by a broader group of people. Naturally, no translation is perfect and the translated text will bear the stamp of the culture to which the language of translation belongs.

"Seeing extraordinary in the ordinary" as Greenhouse calls it (Greenhouse 1985, 261), uproots the founding concept of anthropology, that one must be foreign to the environment one observes, to maintain clarity and sharpness, and, most importantly, objectivity. Anthropology at home caused an upheaval on the methodological side in more than one way. For once, the realisation of preconditioned methods and patterns of observation and reasoning, inextricably tied to anthropologists' own cultures, made them question their findings. Being removed from one's own social and cultural environment did not guarantee impartiality. On the contrary, the more one was removed, the less accurately one could see. Gupta and Fergusson, among others,

recontextualised the concept of an anthropological field (Gupta and Fergusson 1997a; 1997b). From "a faraway, foreign place" to a "place nearby", from an all-seeing narrator to a member of the local community, from assumed objectivity to relearned observational skills, from being a distanced stranger to a participant, anthropology at home revolutionised the approach to collecting data and positionality of the researcher vis à vis the participants.

More and more native anthropologists, finally allowed into the halls of universities previously reserved for the ruling (predominantly white) class, began publishing their own ethnographies. Native ethnographers have challenged and revised the existing view of "giving the subaltern a voice". Instead of assuming the subaltern has no voice unless a white ethnographer gives them one, they magnified existing narratives and showcased the independent thought of the locals through their insider's eyes. In which case, who was doing anthropology at home and how? Reed-Danahay writes:

> The most cogent aspect to the study of autoethnography is that of the cultural displacement or situation of exile characteristic of the themes expressed by autoethnographers. This phenomenon of displacement […] breaks down dualisms of identity and insider/outsider status. Whether the autoethnographer is the anthropologist studying his or her own kind, the native telling his or her story, or the native anthropologist, this figure is not completely "at home". The ability to transcendent everyday conceptions of selfhood and social life is related to the ability to write or do autoethnography (Reed-Danahay 1997, 4).

Another important shift, which laid foundations for the emergence of autoethnography, had to do with the character of ethnographic writings. As Bochner writes:

> Gradually, scholars across a wide spectrum of disciplines began to consider what social sciences would become if they were closer to literature than to physics, if they proffered stories rather than theories, and if they were self-consciously value-centered rather than pretending to be value free (C. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011).

Telling stories from the position of a social researcher appealed to many. One of the biggest advocates of the more digestible and less impenetrable anthropological writing has been, of course, Paul Stoller. In his works, he presents not only the idea of "tasteful ethnography" in the sense of turning to the sensory aspect of cultures (sensuous scholarship), but, maybe more importantly, to literary prowess and vividness of anthropological prose. In his book "The Taste of Ethnographic Things" (Stoller 1989) he puts his idea to use when writing about the Songhay of Niger, where he conducted most of his research. In his many works on the importance of taste in the communal spheres of cultures, his writing follows a politics of inclusiveness. He treats his readers equally, whether they are professors, doctoral students or

people who have never heard of anthropology nor of Niger. By writing in the first person, Stoller hints at the possibilities offered by autoethnographic writing and does so in style.

Certainly, this research has not been conducted or written by a person originating from a local community in Northern Ghana—far from it. However, in this case, the autoethnographic method was inextricably involved in the process of collecting data and its further analysis. Bodily ethnography, another important strand in the theoretical foundation of this thesis, is, as Förster claims, partially covered by autoethnography in its self-reflexive attitude towards the researcher's personal experience of the social (Adams et al., 2015; Denzin, 2018)." (Förster, 2022, p. 2). Reflection on one's sensory experience, comparing an individual's lived experience (especially corporeal experience) to those of others, the evolution of said experience, and thus, the repository of bodily knowledge, formed the essence of the ethnographic process. It seems necessary to add that while autoethnographic methods bring importance to non-visual and non-narrative knowledge and enhance reflexivity, they only assume the possibility of partial participation in the lifeworlds of others, especially in its corporeal sphere. The use of the autoethnographic method also comes with a few stipulations one should be mindful of and which will be addressed below.

Classification of autoethnographies

Multiple scholars, with Carolyn Ellis and Deborah Reed-Danahay at the forefront, have ventured to classify different types of autoethnographies that arose over time. Surely, this categorisation is, to a certain extent, artificial, and many ethnographies do not fall into any strict categories but rather situate themselves on the border of genres. Categorisation they use follows scholarly thought from left, right and centre, creating a network of interconnected approaches. As imaginary as those categories can be, acknowledging them allows me to locate my work in this chapter within a spectrum. It also inspires in-depth reflection in comparison with other works and approaches and, more importantly, an ethical and scientific evaluation of what I decided to make the core of this chapter. In other words, as a non-native ethnographer in Northern Ghana, I want to lay the foundations (and justify myself to some degree) for my use of autoethnographic methods in this research.

Reed-Danahay in her seminal work "Auto/Ethnography. Rewriting the Self and the Social" (Reed-Danahay 1997) lists all the main contributors to the development of the autoethnographical trend in anthropological writing. Here, several main trends arise. Strathern, van Maanen and Hayano qualify autoethnography as an ethnography of one's own culture: "anthropology carried out in the social context that produced it" (Reed-Danahay 1997).

Additionally, Strathern differentiates between autoanthropology and indigenous anthropology, questioning the dichotomy between insider and outsider knowledge. According to her, insider knowledge gained by an anthropologist does not necessarily overlap with that of the indigenous. In Deck's view, the indigenous voice of the anthropologist does not need to be supported or verified by any other sources (Reed-Danahay 1997, 7).

Apart from indigenous autoethnographies, Danahay points to the direction of autobiographical ethnography. This trend has garnered by far the most criticism and has regularly been questioned for its usefulness in anthropology. The criticism is not unfounded, and I will come back to it later. Brandes distinguishes two types of autoethnographies: ethnic and autobiographical. The first would be written by a member of the society the ethnography is focussed on, the latter would be organised around the experiences of the foreign ethnographer as they learn about the local culture. Both, according to Brandes, could make valuable contributions to the understanding of local communities, customs and patterns. The latter category, however, remains a bone of contention among critics. To make the character of the anthropologist the core of ethnographic writing seems to stand in opposition to what anthropology should be about: the Other.

Upon writing this chapter I faced the daunting task of having to re-evaluate my position in the field and review my autoethnographic material. Terms such as autoethnography, self-ethnography, autobiographical ethnography all provoke questions stemming from an invoked sense of guilt; as a white female ethnographer located in Western Europe, am I not too self-obsessed? Who is the anthropological "I" that speaks through this ethnographic writing? What should and should not be the centre of an ethnographic narrative? The answer, of sorts, to these questions is advanced by Buzard, who quotes Pnina Motzafi-Haller asking, "Can I indulge myself, or even feel comfortable, in such fashionable postmodern 'navel-gazing'?" (Buzard 2003, 75). Buzard quickly answers: she should not be comfortable, but she will indulge.

It seems that my hesitance went in line with a general tendency; the expression of doubt whether one surely *can* and *should* indulge in self-reflection in one's ethnography seems to be a necessary step among writers, before they turn to said indulging. I do not find fault with this. Acknowledging one's privilege and position has been a fundamental part of the feminist perspectives I have tried to incorporate into my methodological and theoretical frameworks. As I mentioned before, the autoethnographic method is embedded in the narrative, the story, and the autobiographies have become "the key form of storytelling in our time" (Buzard 2003, 76). Elisabeth Ettorre goes further saying:

> In her work, Hannah Arendt (1998: 184) tells us that 'stories (or narratives) are living realities' and it is through 'action and speech that we insert ourselves in the world'. For her, we are 'not the authors or producers' of our own life stories, but rather there are many 'actors, speakers and sufferers' who exist in the 'web of human relationships' wherever men (sic) live together – but 'no authors' (Ettorre 2016, 1).

Narratives and storytelling are crucial for Arendt; through them, we turn personal into political. This applies not only to our story, of course, but the stories we equally incorporate into the fabric of ethnographic writing. Ettorre concludes:

> Simply, on the one hand, with Arendt we see the redemptive power of narrative (Benhabib, 1990). On the other hand, with autoethnography, we see the transformative power of 'writing the self', transforming personal stories into political realities by revealing power inequalities inherent in human relationships and the complex cultures of emotions embedded in these unequal relationships (2016: 2).

How does all this relate to my own work? Naturally, I approached my fieldwork knowing that a significant part of it would deal with autoethnography to a lesser or greater extent. It was difficult to foresee how much; I knew, however, that a sensory ethnology method would require me to become the tool, the object and the interpreter of the sensory experiences I was consciously exposing myself to. Therefore, from the beginning, a significant portion of my notes were focussed on sensory experiences in situations concerning food, cooking and eating (whether alone or in company). They outlined a sensory journey towards acquiring localised sensory knowledge; in other words, acquiring the vocabulary necessary for the sensory translation. As idiosyncratic as this experience might have been, it did not happen in a social and cultural void. On the contrary, I was constantly surrounded by other cultural consumers, in a fairly literal sense. I was able to refer and juxtapose my experiences with those of others and through a collaborative effort I could locate my experiences on local sensory maps and slowly learn to assimilate new sensory models. Simply put, my companions taught me how to taste, cook, eat and savour the local food; they guided me in navigating what was considered good and bad, where to start and how to interpret what I was going through.

However, the reach of an autobiographical narrative does not end there. Apart from collaborative and contextual sensory learning, there was another current I was influenced by. Namely, the outsider's perspective on me, a white woman in a Ghanaian kitchen. I have spent a considerable amount of time with North Ghanaian women in their kitchens, both private and public, in restaurants, school canteens and lab kitchens, where students learned how to prepare local and foreign foods. Everywhere I went, I both fitted in and also completely did not. As a

woman, it was culturally fitting for me to be in the kitchen and take part in the cooking process. However, while my gender worked towards my benefit, my cultural background and the colour of my skin drew a deep chasm between me and the local women. I was seen rather as a "white lady" than a woman, whose natural environment is the kitchen. Just as in the previous case, it created space for deeper thought on the discrepancies between the two sensoria: mine[122] and the local.

Being the Other. Intercultural sensory translation

In the methodological chapter of this dissertation, I mentioned how the preconceived ideas my research participants had about me, a white European woman, influenced our relationships, especially at the points of encounter. I see many similarities between my experiences and those described by Fran Osseo-Asare (Osseo-Asare 2002), who came to Ghana for the first time at the beginning of the 1970s. Although she came to stay with her fiancé's family in Accra (who were Ga and Twi speaking), and I was introduced as a total foreigner to a local Wala family, our observations and the image we encountered of a "white/Westerner" gustatory persona, are in many ways similar. I have hinted upon the othering processes oscillating around racially perceived gustatory boundaries. Osseo-Asare experienced such othering especially in relationships with female members of her Ghanaian family, based on what and how she wanted to eat and what she could and could not cook. As I worked chiefly with women and in female-dominated spaces such as canteens, institutional kitchens and vocational schools, my experience was quite similar. Although men othered me also, the process seemed to happen from a different perspective than with women, especially since I had found myself a member of a few female-only socio-professional groups. Therefore, for the purpose of this chapter, I will focus on how my gustatory status evolved in the eyes of my female research participants.

One such group that made me reflect on my status, gustatory affiliations and preconceived ideas about white women in Northern Ghana, was the staff of the Regional Hospital Kitchen in Wa. At the time of our first encounter in April 2019, I had already been working and living in Ghana for a few months and I had a basic knowledge of local food. I had mostly been observing and working with home cooks and individuals, so this was my first contact with a group of professionals with an established dynamic. On the first day, the staff greeted me enthusiastically and welcomed me to the kitchen. I had already spoken with the

[122] I deliberately use "mine", not "European" or "Western" as I do not wish to extrapolate my personal experience onto that of the entire Western culture.

medical director and the matron and was allowed to come and go as I felt, to observe and participate in the work of the hospital kitchen. The employees were busy portioning a huge pot of TZ into plastic bags and they quickly involved me in their activity. Here is how I described the event in my fieldnotes:

> Then it came to packing [TZ] and I said I can help – they brought bags and one was scooping the TZ with a calabash and pouring it into our bags. I really can tie that bag, done it with *banku* and *sobolo* but here it was very hot. M. showed me a different technique on how to tie the bag so that even when it bursts it won't scald me […]. Then suddenly the one who was pouring, it was M. then, poured a little bit of very hot TZ on my left hand – they all panicked, I tried to shake it off, then they put my hand in water then they wanted to put salt on it and I said just give me something cold and they took out half frozen water out of the freezer and gave it to me. After that she apologized many times, but I said she shouldn't worry and that I won't tell anybody (she laughed).[123]

From that first encounter, I was immediately involved. On one hand, I perceive it as a symbol of inclusion and hospitality (I came to study the food and the cooking) and on the other, an opportunity to see how the *nansaara pogo*, a white woman, will manage in the kitchen (she should see how difficult cooking in Northern Ghana is). The TZ dough was scalding hot as it just came off the fire. The women used a special method to scoop, bag and tie every portion with great agility and in smooth collaboration. Although I had tied bags of *banku* before, I recognised this task would be more challenging, due to the temperature of the dough, the method of tying and my overall lack of experience. I tried anyway. Everything was going well until a sudden turn of events, a quick miscalculation, a reckless move and an unfortunate chunk of boiling hot TZ landed on my hand. I was slightly shocked but, in the end, the burn was not too serious and I probably would have ignored it had it happened in my own kitchen. Here, however, small talk was immediately replaced by shouts of distress. Everyone was repeating how sorry they were, cries continued, and I was instantly removed from the vicinity of the pot, even though I kept repeating that I was completely fine and that nobody should worry about my hand. I was not allowed to pack another single bag of TZ that day.

This was not the first time this type of co-working went awry. During my fieDuring my field research in Cote d'Ivoire, I was once handed a long knife and a pile of manioc roots and told to peel them (probably with the same intention of challenging me, the white woman). After an hour or so, when I had gone through the assigned pile and laughingly showed my hands to the nearest woman, where two blisters had already formed, she jolted and yanked the knife from

[123] From my fieldnotes, 07.05.2019.

my hands, saying that I were not to peel any more roots that day (or ever, as it turned out). I think the women knew that my hands were not used to such work, but they did not assume that I would go to the length of "injuring" myself to prove I can do what they can.

Nonetheless, I did not allow such situations to sidetrack my budding relationship with the hospital kitchen members. My goal was to participate in the work and participate I would. When I came the next day, I showed that my hand was as good as new and I firmly stated that I wanted to be included, not only by watching but also doing the work. To do that for real, not just for my fun and theirs, I had to gain the women's trust. Their opinion about my skills and agility was, as it turned out, very low. I am a fairly good cook and know my way around kitchen utensils. There, however, I was not even allowed to handle a knife (quite a blunt one) and when I was finally bestowed with one, I had to sit patiently through a series of instructions on how to use it. There was a sense of lamentation that I will surely cut myself doing what I do, like in this situation:

> I asked if I could help, got one knife, and started peeling the stem when they shouted that I will cut my finger! I asked, how are they not cutting they fingers cutting in exactly the same way but just in different direction. It wasn't difficult but the big [stems] were hard and I had a very blunt knife. They admitted it's right and laughed.[124]

I have experienced such friendly mockery and genuine concern about my manual skills many times, especially when it came to doing things for the first time. Fran Osseo-Assare notes down a similar experience:

> Yet the preparation of *fufu* is difficult and time-consuming. I recall sitting on wooden stools in Ghana like those pictured in my reader, peeling African yams, or cassava, or cocoyam or green plantains, using large knives to the accompaniment of good-humored laughter directed at my awkwardness (Osseo-Assare 2002, 49).

I was more or less awkward too. While I was accustomed to using chopping boards, the women cut all the vegetables, holding them in the air. Over the course of two or three weeks, however, the women agreed that I indeed possessed *some* agility and I was gradually allowed to help them more and more. I was closely observed, I realised, as I moved from easy tasks like chopping okra, to peeling and cutting vegetables for *jollof* rice, to finally preparing raw fish for frying and portioning hot dough and only after having proven my agility, practical skills and will to work hard, was I accepted as a member of the kitchen. I still was not allowed to perform some tasks such as stirring *banku* or TZ, or in general, to be around open fire. After some initial

[124] From my fieldnotes, 07.05.2019.

approaches, I also stopped trying. I understood that stirring *banku* or TZ is hard labour, requiring not only skills but strength I simply did not possess. My clumsiness would result in a waste of food or its diminished quality, so I stepped aside and let the more experienced deal with it, while I stuck to what I felt confident in. I was only given a ladle when there were spectators and even that ceased after a while.[125]

The idea of hard physical work, which definitely included cooking, was not perceived as the "work of white people". On many occasions I was told that "white people are too weak to do the work we do here" and was subsequently invited to touch hardened, calloused hands and observe heavy weights being lifted. Passing comments and puzzled looks that I received, when I proved to be strong, agile or diligent beyond expectations, were telling me a story of a "fragile white woman". Such women felt too hot standing by the open fire or in the gusts of smoke, they feared boiling pots, used spoons and forks instead of hands to eat, and they could not use a knife without hurting themselves. White women, as I learned, could not do without kitchen amenities, had weak stamina, strength and lacked the dedication necessary to cook the way Ghanaian women cooked. White women were simply too weak and delicate and their food (small portions of salad and raw food) were proof of just that.

In Chapter 4, I describe in detail, how white bodies are othered through their diets in juxtaposition with typical Ghanaian diets. It was a common preconception that "white people" could not eat the way Ghanaians ate: big portions, rich in starches, pieces of meat and fish. Apparently, white people's stomachs were not fit to accommodate the heaviness, spices and size of portions characteristic of Ghanaian food. Fran Osseo-Assare notes: "In 1971 one of my first tasks was to convince my fiancé's aunt in Accra that *fufu* is not "too heavy for an American's stomach" (Osseo-Assare, 2002, 50). I only had to convince my coworkers that the knife was not too sharp for my Polish hands, neither was the *banku* too hot, nor heavy, nor was the portion too big for me to eat. Not only did the heaviness and size of the portions differ, but also the skill, difficulty and meticulousness involved in preparing the dishes. This gustatory chasm was depicted by juxtaposing a plate of salad and a bowl of *banku*. Cooking *banku* takes time, strength, use of utensils, practice and knowledge of ingredients, while preparing the former takes just a few fresh ingredients, no fire and virtually no skill. This stereotype does not

[125] One hospital employee kept bothering me about stirring TZ. He would come almost every day to ask if I had stirred TZ or *banku* already, supposedly to "assess my skills as a woman". I did my best to avoid him and after some time, even my fellow kitchen workers started chasing him away, instead of mockingly encouraging me to stir for the show. While women were teasing me jokingly when I did not manage to turn hot and heavy dough, the man was quite seriously judging me for my womanhood.

ring true when talking about many traditional Eastern or South European dishes (whoever cooked *bigos*, *burek*, some Italian stews and sauces or *chinkali* would know). Such a simplistic view on Western diets could be an aftermath of the selective image of Westernised dishes, popularised in Ghana through catering. Certainly, as I described in Chapter 5, vocational schools teach more complex European dishes, such as cakes, stews and other things. However, the image of European cuisine as simple, light and bland persists; perhaps containing a dose of truth and what we Europeans praise and aspire to (popularity of Mediterranean diets being an example).

What caught me by surprise was, first, the very existence of the image of a delicate white woman and secondly, my immediate desire to prove the women around me otherwise. I felt an urge to show them that white women also work hard, can cook and, in the end, are not so different from them. Admittedly, some white women I met along the way proved the point. Many were definitely not interested in putting all the work into cooking, perceived local dishes as heavy, coarse and unpalatable and giggled at the thought of turning *banku*, playing along the stereotype game. However, the contrast of images was not only my personal struggle; it added another hurdle to the process of gaining trust and friendship of my female participants. I did not only want them to see me as a friendly person, with whom talking was easy. I also strove to be seen as a woman equal to them in the field of cooking. That, I thought, would earn me their respect and give leverage in food-related conversations. I knew that I had both the skills and the agility to work alongside the kitchen employees, almost as an equal. My participants, on the other hand, were convinced that my eagerness to work is just a pretence, formality or politeness, and that I do not have what it takes to cook the Ghanaian way. Mainly I lacked strength. It was my perseverance to show that I am capable, that finally turned the tables and made me a kitchen member.

The image of white fragility surfaced in many situations. Almost every time I introduced myself and the topic of my research, the conversation naturally turned to my experience with Ghanaian food. Everyone, fleeting acquaintances, friends, their mothers, fathers, uncles, research participants, hospital administrators, all wanted to know what I had eaten and whether I had liked it. Responding, saying that I had eaten everything and that in fact TZ is my favourite dish, frequently earned me puzzled looks. Many times when visiting chop bars, upon my question about what is available, I was instructed to come back later as “the food is not ready”. Once I dared to ask if I could have what one man at the table was eating: *banku* with groundnut soup. The lady looked at me incredulously and laughed. Of course, I was served *banku* with the

soup. She only assumed that since I am white, I would not like to eat it. After some time, I concluded that people were more likely to expect me to speak the local language than eat local food.

Here, a pause would be much desirable. Many times I was asked, at most random moments, whether I speak or understand the local language. During later months of my stay, that answer was more likely to be affirmative, as I could grasp more and more from everyday conversations. However, many of those encounters had an antagonistic character. Upon hearing that I do not speak the local language, men especially took it upon themselves to express how disappointing and insulting it was. Nobody ever reacted in the same way when I claimed, especially at the beginning, that I do not really like the local food. On the contrary, everyone nodded their heads and agreed that "white people" find swallowing Ghanaian food difficult. That attitude corroborated the impression of strangeness of my presence in the kitchen, as nobody expected me to be there, know how to cook and eat. Meanwhile, once I learned how to eat locally and expressed my affection towards local foods such as TZ, I received applause, laughs and excited questions. It got to the point where my host family and a small community of regular research partners and friends claimed that judging by how I eat, I have become a Ghanaian.

It is evident that learning how to function properly in another sensory order could be likened to acquiring fluency in another language. Fluctuating between the two is nothing other than a constant act of translation or bilingualism (Balirano and Guzzo 2019). Much like language, symbols and culturally sensitive communication skills, sensory patterns are acquired through processes of enculturation. However, unlike in linguistic translation, instead of codified signs, this conversion from one sensory system to another uses sensory memories and individually established gustatory links (Sutton 2001; 2018). Our sensing patterns, intersubjective and communal, could be likened to a language we share with a group. To become fluent and understand its nuances, official and colloquial terms, proverbs, jokes and swear words, we need to immerse ourselves in another linguistic/sensory culture. Over time, new sensitivities will grow and we will be able to decipher ever more nuanced elements of the sensory code. This is "learning by doing" *par excellence*; learning to speak by listening and reading only is nigh on impossible. To learn how to eat, one must eat and one never eats in a void. Linguistic translation will never make sense if done one to one; it needs to remain sensitive to the colloquialisms of the language. Much in the same way, my understanding of local tastes took place through the likes and dislikes of my palate.

Writing tastescapes

One last contribution of autoethnographic methodologies I would like to bring forth in this chapter is ethnographic writing. As mentioned previously, autoethnography significantly contributes to the understanding of corporeal lifeworlds by capturing the unspoken and unintelligible in an attempt to turn it into a transmittable message, for instance, an academic article. Tastescapes are certainly one of those spaces of bodily practice denominating social groups, milieus or classes. Yet, they only marginally exist in the linguistic spheres. Except from highly specialized professionals, such as sommeliers, chefs, and food production specialists (Butler 2018), describing particular attributes of food and eating experience has proved challenging. Some groups of taste specialists didn't even develop a particular jargon as a discernment tool, as Tsigkas indicated in his work on tea tasters in Sri Lanka (2019). This challenge opens an avenue for bodily autoethnography. As indicated in Chapters 3 and 7, I found it challenging to describe the taste, smell, and texture of the dishes I tried for the first time. Lack of sensory reference and evident linguistic limitations of Polish, my mother tongue, and English, the language I know very well, were a challenge I was eager to overcome.

The dynamic and transition of non-propositional to propositional knowledge embedded in the learning of the sensory lifeworlds through the subjective lived experience has been core to my practice of autoethnography. Writing about it came with a new challenge: marrying the necessarily depictive, sensuous passages with the somewhat non-committal academic writing. Paul Stoller addresses this disjuncture: "And just as writers need to spend many years searching for their own voices, so we anthropologists need to find a 'voice' and create works which bring readers to dwell within us as we walk along our solitary paths in the field, exposing our hearts so full of excitement, fear, and doubt." (Stoller1989, 55). In this instance, I drew inspiration from travel books and food writing. I was particularly drawn to the writings of Zoe Adjonyoh and her depictions of Ghanaian cuisine. In this thesis, I turned to vignettes, which included rich depictions of experience from all five sensory sources, as well as my bodily reaction to the tastes, smells, and textures. Admittedly, the translational challenge remained but gradually became easier as I became more apt at recognizing, naming and addressing my subjective experiences against the experiences of my research partners.

Disgust and gustatory trauma. The affective role of food

According to Noble, "a well-fitted habitus (Hage 1977) produces a sense of ontological comfort (Wise 2010, 925). Habitus, as presented by Bourdieu, is "a system of perduring dispositions which is the unconscious collectively inculcated principle for the generation and

structuring of practices and representations" (Csordas 1990, 11). Embodied sensory practices, including those of cooking and eating, lie at the core of the phenomenological experience of habitus. They orientate, lure, repel and bring bodies together in an entanglement of social rules. We can, therefore, smell, taste and hear otherness in the "contact zones" between disparate sensory modalities, spaces and habitus, as much as we can sense our own otherness, finding ourselves in a stranger place. I have hinted upon this topic in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6, but I would like to draw more attention to the personal experience of gustatory memory and sensory-induced trauma, which I lived through and observed in myself during the first two or three months of my fieldwork. I believe this to be a good example of how interrelated the cultural perception of disgust, the anchoring role of smells and tastes for memories and emotions, and the process of overcoming what can be called gustatory trauma, are.

Upon my arrival in Tamale in May 2018, neither did I know almost anything about West African food, nor had I tried many of the local dishes. The only encounter I had, however, turned out to have laid solid sensory foundations for my upcoming experiences. At the beginning of 2016 I travelled to Côte d'Ivoire for a six-week long field course. In many ways I remember it being a very difficult experience. It was my very first time travelling to Africa and I went through a deep cultural shock, a rollercoaster of emotions: from shock, to disgust, to fear, to resentment. Unfortunately, I was also emotionally manipulated and harassed by someone I lived with, whom I was told I could trust. That left a heavy mark not only on my personal mental and physical wellbeing, but also my professional stance. Feminist ethnographers point out that sexual harassment is a common experience among female-bodied and non-binary researchers (Pollard 2009; Kloß 2017; Kitzinger and Thomas 1995; Green et al. 1993). Experiences of that nature have been a source of personal trauma and professional embarrassment. A "good anthropologist" would not have let this happen; it must have been a mistake. Harassment in the field is an issue raised not nearly enough. In her article, Sinah Kloß (Kloß 2017) describes the harassment she experienced at the hands of her host father during fieldwork in Guyana and how it affected her mental health, anthropological persona and, in the later stage, her work. Kloß writes:

> Incidents of harassment, as well as other gendered and sexualized experiences, are intricate aspects of fieldwork practice, data and writing. They must be openly addressed, without authors running the risk of being labelled 'bad anthropologists', or considered too sensitive. I am certain that insights produced by reflecting and addressing such emotions and experiences will enrich future ethnography (Okely, 2009; Abdullah, 2011). In this way, the trope of hetero-patriarchal fieldwork may be deconstructed, encouraging female and LGBTIQ

> researchers to consider their work, emotions, perceptions, and experience not as 'other' but valid sources of knowledge. (Kloß 2017, 410).

Although I felt heard and taken care of, as I was promptly removed from the place where I did not feel safe, this experience cast a shadow on the data I collected and my abilities to trust and get emotionally involved with people in the field, especially with men. In the two years that separated the two experiences, the first one from Côte d'Ivoire and the following one from Ghana, I did not put enough effort into grappling with my trauma and although I thought I was fine in April 2018, when I arrived Accra, it was far from true.

I was shocked when I discovered that a sip of okro, leafy or groundnut soups, which I immediately went to try in the first couple of weeks, had the power to transport me directly to my Ivorian host family table. I could smell the dust in the air, feel the touch of the plastic table cover, recollect the clothes I was wearing, feel the touch and taste of the fish I never learned to like, although we had it every day. However, most of all I felt ridden with emotions those tastes were intimately linked to. Emotions I thought were long gone: fear, helplessness, confusion and misunderstanding. As a result, it made eating the food I was supposed to research, quite repulsive. On the other hand, I was stubbornly refusing to eat Western food, as that was not what I was there for. I was upset both on personal and professional levels; tired, hungry and sleepy, I was not able to focus on work and was, quite frantically, searching for a way to circumvent the traumatic sensory impulses. I felt guilty for not being able to approach the topic with a cold scientific distance. The food, the textures, the smells, the taste, naturally was to become part of me, and yet my body seemed to refuse it on a psychosomatic level. Thus, the first few weeks of my stay in Ghana were tainted with bad memories of bad soups[126]. I quote:

> Perhaps it too much reminds me of meals from Côte d'Ivoire, it's all very similar after all. I can feel this floury, bland, pungent aftertaste in the sauce, and I have no idea where it comes from. [127]

And:

> The stew was much like the one Madame cooked in Côte d'Ivoire: I cannot get used to cassava and cocoyam leaves at all, I've no idea what it is but I just can't. I *kind of* liked it [stew] but not really. I didn't realise how much food in Côte d'Ivoire prejudiced me towards what I eat here. This stew or palmnut soup are not bad but through the connection with those memories, it's hard for me to try, taste and react to them unbiased.[128]

[126] Although I am quite certain it was not bad according to Stoller's understanding of bad soup (Stoller and Olkes 1986).
[127] From personal fieldnotes, 23.05.2018.
[128] From personal fieldnotes, 24.05.2018.

I became aware that the deeply engraved gustatory memories from Côte d'Ivoire were tainting my encounter with Ghanaian food. First, I had not expected to remember the taste of anything so vividly. Secondly, it came as a shock that my sensory memories would ever be able to induce disgust, likely based on the traumatic events they reminded me of[129]. In fact, I had been absolutely sure that having this previous experience would rather make the task of learning how to eat Ghanaian food easier. On the contrary: this was another hurdle to jump over, that of bad connotations and bias. Perhaps had I not eaten plates upon plates of rice with fish stew with my Ivorian host, learning how to eat TZ with dry okro would have been easier. However, in the end I had to deal with mental, physical and professional concerns. Bad memories induced fear, hesitancy and rejection, which from a physical and professional standpoint were counterproductive. I had to eat to stay healthy and to function properly. I also had to eat because that was what I was there for: to produce data. However, mentally rejected food did not bring any physical satisfaction and emotional distress caused by stress and traumatic responses made it impossible to stay professional and removed from the picture. I became my own fieldwork.

An extensive amount has been written about the sense of disgust as closely related to culture, morality and individual psyche (Douglas 1966; Rozin, Haidt, and McCauley 2008; Highmore 2008; Durham 2011; Bubandt 1998; W. I. Miller 1998). According to Durham, "anthropology of disgust opens up for the practice of anthropology, including the mind–body 'problem', the nature of selfhood, ideas about the senses, intimacy and emotion, and the nature of imagination" (Durham 2011, 132). However, much like discussions of harassment as an element of practising anthropology in the field, disgust has been:

> confined to the off-hours of drinks and dinner at anthropological conventions. On the surface, such private exchanges of field stories are a convivial indulgence for most anthropologists, and an affirmation of our field credentials […]. The informal field stories we exchange of illnesses that almost brought us down, comic misunderstandings and disgusting foods ventured into or not, bring us into a more intimate and human community of practitioners (Durham 2011, 132).

Where else would a personal story of disgust, trauma and overcoming it, fit better than in this autoethnographic trial?

For Durham, Kristeva and Highmore it is clear that disgust is much more than an intellectual reaction; it is bodily, visceral even. We experience disgust through our bodies, the famous "gut" feeling, head turning, eyes closing, tongue sticking out. Furthermore, disgust is

[129] I later realised that a certain scent of a popular deodorant, which I was using in Côte d'Ivoire, triggers the same reaction. Needless to say, I gave the unused deodorant away.

often considered to be located in our stomachs, as the first use of the word would suggest. Therefore:

> Although we often think of Western culture as privileging the visual, studying disgust alerts us to the importance of other fields of knowing and sensing even in our own culture, especially (for us) in the complex of senses, from smell to sound to balance, connected with our stomachs (Durham 2011, 134).

However, it would be right to assume that other sensory orders locate disgust in other sensory experiences, rather than taste/stomach. Theory of disgust would be therefore useful "to explore further different cultural constructions of the senses and to link a cultural anthropology of the senses to a cultural anthropology of affect" (Durham 2011, 134).

Personally, the theory of disgust as presented by Durham, Kristeva or Rozin (Durham 2011; Highmore 2008; Rudge 2015) helps me orientate my individual experiences within a broader social, cultural and anthropological context. First, contemplating the revulsive reaction of my body is something practised among and across anthropological practitioners. However, instead of reserving stories of disgust to social events at conferences, I decided to use them in my thesis, in an autoethnographic context, something more and more anthropologists try to do. Secondly, that disgust is irrevocably connected with the senses, affect and body-mind dualism. Thirdly, that the concept of disgust is not entirely based on individual experience, although it is inherently subjective, but rather speaks to the habitus, to the moral orders and aesthetic choices of society. Disgust is perhaps one of the key ingredients of the othering processes and creating imaginary boundaries. In Bourdieu's theory of class (2010), the distinction is made based on the looks, the smells and the tastes of the preferred food among groups of people; the higher the class, the less animalistic their homes, bodies and food.

For Durham, disgust is concentrated around concepts of intimacy and imagination. Intimacy has always been at the centre of anthropological interest, due to the nature of the arenas where anthropology has been conducted: close-knit communities, households and clearly bounded institutions. She says:

> Intimacy is one of the correctives to a 'rules and structure' anthropology that described normative relationships within overall structures – that is, roles – but also avoids assuming human actions to be the outcome of strict rational decision-making. By looking at the affective dimensions of such relationships, we were able to see better how roles were motivated from below, rather than simply enforced from above. Intimacy also draws our attention to intersubjectivity, to the ways in which roles are not roles assumed by the individual but are instead relational ways of being (Durham 2011, 147-148).

Intimacy makes objects, people and sights that do not inflict disgust when seen from afar, repulsive when interacted with, smelled, touched or tasted. Thus, disgust is based on proximity; for (W. I. Miller 1997), disgust can be treated as equal to fear of contamination.

Imagination, in Durham's theory, is not interchangeable with culture, but rather "imagination is applied to things we don't know" (Durham 2011, 149). Anderson in this theory of imagined communities, used people's ability to create links and feel commonality with other members of the society they will probably never meet. Hence:

> Disgust, confounding so many forms of knowledge, linking both in-the-gut sureness with the intentionality towards a very alien unknown object, is a form that forces us to ask what is at work, or at play, in imaginative acts. […] Insofar as these 'images' engage the imaginer (and of course, they do), they allow him to be 'part of the picture'. But we should consider the 'felt' part of imagination, too, keeping in mind especially that the imagination can be both a bodily act, and a form of action. The imaginative impulse of disgust is effective because it is an intimate impulse, an act of body as much as mind, not a cerebral, distanced one. To be disgusted, one imagines oneself as other or in other situations (Durham 2011, 150).

In this research, my disgust was interlaced with physical repugnance arising from the touch, smell and taste of food, elevated by the traumatic memories associated with them. I could feel my stomach squirm and my mouth go dry as my fingers submerged in the bowl of okra soup. Feeling the earthy smell of spices, the touch of small fish bones, the rough skin of okra pieces not only made me identify as a gustatory other, whose sense of what is palatable was being challenged, but were triggering memories of coercion, discomfort and helplessness. Realising the nature of this hindrance was most important, followed by devising a plan of how to overcome it and be able to collect data. I could have chosen either of the two ways; one was to give up on the triggering foods entirely and only eat "safe" foods, ones which did not cause any unpleasant ruminations. This way however, I would essentially create a list of taboo foods, unavailable and foreign to me, which would exclude culturally important dishes such as TZ with dry okro. Another way, more mentally demanding, was to continue eating the triggering foods and gradually work through the memories and emotions of the past, hoping that they dissolve, and that I would be able to move forward. I chose the second, notwithstanding the extra effort it required, as it seemed more reasonable both from a personal and professional perspective. I did not want to perpetuate the trauma, I did want to make my life easier and I did want to gain sensory knowledge of local foods. This was the only way to achieve all the goals.

As I mentioned before, overcoming trauma caused by fieldwork is not a popular topic in the literature. It is also rarely (if ever) mentioned in methodological textbooks. For many

years in anthropological circles, the psychological impact of conducting research in frequently hazardous environments has been swept under the carpet. On the contrary, the more perilous the state of the research field, the better, as if withstanding danger, oppression or harassment while conducting research was worthy of a medal. It was only a few years back that the first calls for more attention towards the mental state of researchers coming back from the field began to emerge from under the radar. In collected essays edited by Beatriz Reyes-Foster and Rebecca J. Lester (2019), various authors review what it means for anthropologists' psyche to study traumatic events such as genocide, war or female oppression. Reading those texts, I felt slightly ashamed of myself; how could I claim to be dealing with trauma when other researchers were facing matters of life and death on a daily basis? However, that was my reality and accepting the fact that multisensory experience of food was triggering the trauma, was a starting point to overcoming it. It did not happen overnight, but rather through a gradual, conscious interaction with the triggering elements in a safe environment. Living in a different household, where I felt secure, I was able to try the dishes again and override the initial connections between the taste and the emotion. Eventually, I was able to eat everything.

From a greater perspective, it was an extraordinary journey of overwriting emotionally laden gustatory memories. It was not possible for me to move any further with understanding the meanings behind tastes and practices unless I were to have gotten rid of the traumatic bias directly related to them. I was aware of it, because I also had the opportunity to try food which did not have any distressing connotations. A free and unbiased mind helped me overcome any initial reservations and facilitated the process of getting used to flavours and textures.

Techniques of the body and sensory pedagogy

In his seminal article on techniques of the body, Marcel Mauss focusses on describing how members of "primitive societies" use their bodies to perform daily tasks, both those connected to bodily functions as well as those involving the use of tools. He conveys a belief that the way we do things, simply put, is not the same across the globe: on the contrary, it is culturally specific (Mauss 1973, 70). Although his work is more than eighty years old, it still remains fundamental for research on bodily engagement with the environment, modes of being and doing, as it were. Later, corporeality, presence, gestures, greetings and their symbolism were placed under anthropological scrutiny. A good example would be David Sutton's book on cooking in Kalymnos, where he carefully examines the ritualised, physical aspect of cooking: the agility, the corporeal knowledge, the body memory which all direct the techniques of cooking (Sutton 2009; 2014). The bodily aspect of cooking and eating never came up as

essential in my research; it was the sensory narrative that I was paying far greater attention to, at least initially. To my mind, the differences I noticed in the beginning of my observation were all to be expected: *we did cook differently*. As I gradually started to notice the symbolism and meanings embedded in the gestures of cooking, I started to reflect on my own methods and techniques, which not only pointed to me as the gustatory Other, but othered me in any given social situation.

The issue here is twofold: observation as part of ethnographic data (thick description of cooking and eating) and the acquisition of skills as an element of methods, positionality, self-reflection and certainly, another body of data. In this part of the chapter, I would like to focus on how I learned how to cook and eat "the Ghanaian way", not only in terms of methods of moulding food into bite-sized pieces and putting them into my mouth or pounding *fufu*, but also the acquisition of tastes and cravings for local food. Ben Highmore considers the role of "sensual pedagogy" in everyday life (Highmore 2008; 2002) in the context of existing multiculturalism. In my everyday life, the "exotic" and the "multicultural" was mostly provided by the presence of one white lady: me. According to Highmore, the agent that allows for sensory learning is the food itself. In the case of vindaloo chilli, described in Chapter 6, the excessive amount of chilli took the role of a stern teacher to a young man who behaved aggressively in a Southeast Asian restaurant. He seemed to have conquered food (ate the chilli) but in the long run, it was the food that taught him a sensory lesson.

I had some equally thrilling encounters with chilli as well, notably during my first week in Accra, when I followed a friend for a takeaway dinner of *Indomie*. Over the last fifteen years, *Indomie* has turned into a much-desired fast-food dish sold typically as a midnight 'snack'. The noodles are usually precooked and the seller prepares the dish on the spot, mixing onion, fried egg, corned beef, shredded cabbage and green bell peppers with a hefty dose of spice blends and hot peppers. I asked the seller to make the dish "less hot" and what I received definitely looked appetising. Eating it, however, was an experience of its own; I could very well identify with the man who fought the battle with the chillies and thought he could win. He did not, much less did I.

Eating hot pepper became one of the most challenging aspects of getting used to Ghanaian food. Ground *Scotch Bonnet* peppers with some tomato and onion became my nemesis, as only a tiny amount of this concoction made my stomach "run". It was especially challenging during my stay at Mama A.'s in Tamale, who was famous for using an excessive amount of pepper in her dishes. People accustomed to spicy food would cry and snot over her

soups; I stood no chance. There was an ongoing conversation about the 'hotness' of the food, and people would have to make excuses when they were not able to eat peppery dishes. Peppery was the standard, as opposed to non-spicy. Spiciness was not a matter of personal preference, it was a general agreement, a status quo and those who refrained from pepper were regarded with suspicion. Usually, medical conditions were considered a good excuse, as well as age. However, eating out it was extremely hard to find non-spicy food. Gradually however, I had gotten used to the spiciness of the food; from small amounts every now and again, to a slow and steady increase in volume of peppers, soon I was able to enjoy moderately spicy dishes and would miss pepper were it to not accompany my serving of *kenkey*.

As the majority of my research concentrated around eating, in restaurants, at homes, with friends, at feasts, etc., it was logical to me that I should pay close attention to how my techniques of eating, posture and gestures adapted to handle various types of food. Eating with hands is what puzzled me the most, especially when it came to soups (Mann et al. 2011). It is not efficient, I thought, to eat soup with a hand. It seeps, burns the fingertips, it takes longer and it is harder to scoop and finish. I deliberately asked people why they prefer to eat with their hands and their answers were the complete opposite to my observations: eating with a hand is faster, it is more convenient, eating *fufu* with a spoon just does not feel the same and that the *fufu* does not taste good. I felt disbelief and stubbornly saw the spoon as one of the biggest achievements of Western technology.

The cultural importance of eating with hands, for some incomprehensible reason, has not been thoroughly examined in the context of anthropological research. After all, using hands instead of utensils is still the predominant way to transport food from the plate, pot, or leaf to the mouth in many places in the world. Eating practices have been the subject of psychological and historical studies, the latter highlighting the so-called "civilisational process" underscored by the use of increasingly elaborate utensils: from peasants sharing a bowl and a spoon, to French courts utilising multiple spoons, forks and knives.

> Historically oriented sociological studies explore how utensils were first used in French courts and from there gradually moved down to aspiring bourgeois and finally even to peasants. Their use came to index what the West celebrated—and still celebrates as its own civilizing process. Fork and spoon created a distance between eating body and foods to be eaten that helped to differentiate rational man from animals and savages (Mann et al. 2011, 222).

The loss of manual dexterity among the elderly, dementia patients and paralysed patients has been thoroughly examined. Regarding anthropology, I suspect that an overlay of a few trends has led to this situation: that of corporeal senses such as touch being regarded as lower,

thus less worth observing, that of using hands instead of more refined utensils demonstrating an earlier stage of development, that modes and techniques of eating are too mundane to pay closer attention to, finally, that who eats, what is eaten and with whom, is more important than how eating is undertaken. Certainly, the symbolism of using the right hand instead of the left (used for personal hygiene) has been thoroughly described and put into context. However, hardly any literature focusses on techniques of eating: the mundane process of scooping, forming, carrying and inserting.

I would like to argue that learning how to eat with hands is a phenomenological experiment par excellence, a reflexive process of sensorial pedagogy, a trigger of shifts in sensory modalities on par with becoming acquainted with smells, learning how to practice a new sport, or recognising undertones while tasting wine. In the spirit of experiment, what I can offer is a thick description with a trial of a sensory analysis of my experience. I quickly realised that much like when tasting food, no matter how much I practise, I will never be able to achieve the same level of sensory fluency. In the best-case scenario, I would be able to switch back and forth between modalities and feel comfortable and grounded whether reaching for my food with a fork or a hand. Eating TZ proved to be the most challenging and as Highmore, cited above, argues, sensory pedagogy takes place through edible agents and their affordances (Highmore 2008). The journey to learn how to eat TZ, the most cherished food in the North, has had a profound impact on my research and I think it is only right that TZ serves as an example of my tactile, olfactory and gustatory learning journey.

To reiterate, Esposito summarises the role of food well:

> Food has historically contributed to carrying, creating and recreating a vast number of significant social meanings and processes related to identity. It has the power to serve as a powerful, all-encompassing, crucial "indicator of social identity, from religion to ethnicity, from class to age or gender" (Leeds-Hurwitz 1993, p. 90). Analogous to language, food works as a way of communication, but it is a very revealing one: according to Lévi-Strauss (1996, p. 595), "the cooking of a society is a language in which it unconsciously translates its structure or else resigns itself to revealing its contradictions". Barthes (1972, p. 2ff.), in his attempt to give life to "a veritable grammar of food", acknowledged the centrality of eating as a social behaviour "that develops beyond its own ends, replacing, summing up and signalising other behaviours" (Esposito 2019, 46).

Food has been widely recognised as a "badge of identity" much on the same level as other symbols of local, regional and national identities. I have mentioned before that I realised it was more likely I was expected to speak the local language than eat local food and eating it "like a local" not only eased my contact with people, most of which was centred around eating

together, but also earned the respect and trust of someone who is able to "appreciate the culture". In many ways, being fluent in food had a more profound meaning than being fluent in language. Corporeality deeply influenced meaning making and division between us and the others; my attempt at learning how to eat, manually and gustatorily, was an act of learning a non-verbal language of behaviours, gestures, preferences and creating a common area of spatial experiences.

My first encounter with TZ, mentioned previously, was in a restaurant of the Catholic Guesthouse, where I stopped during the first few nights in Tamale. Looking now at the picture I took, I am able to appreciate the way the TZ was served: porridge neatly in one bowl[130], most likely freshly cooked, *ayoyo* (cassava leaves with okra) in a separate bowl with red stew and chicken in the middle. At around one pm on the 19th of May 2018, I was hesitant. First, I dipped the spoon in the bowl of porridge and I saw it cutting through smoothly. The porridge seemed to have a glutinous, wobbly, almost jelly-like consistency. I scooped a little bit of green and red sauce; the green turned out to be stretchy and slimy, the red was thick and smelled pleasantly. I put the spoon in my mouth; the bland taste of the porridge came as an unpleasant shock and the slimy texture of the green-green sauce made that experience decidedly unpalatable. I quote from my notes:

> The first total food failure: *tuo zaafi* is a kind of thick gruel, like semolina, completely tasteless: maybe slightly sweet but generally bland, clogging, nothing to bite into. Chicken in red sauce ok, but the sauce from ayoyo (cassava leaves) is awful – I don't know what main influences sit, but probably the texture: sticky, malleable, slimy, slightly sweet, but mostly nauseating taste. No texture at all. Why do I dislike it so much? Reminds me of all those lunches and dinners in Man, with fish, with everything.[131]

Again, the taste of the cassava leaf stew worked as a sensorial anchor, bringing back bad memories from my field trip in Côte d'Ivoire. *Tuo zaafi* was a shock to my tastebuds; I had never eaten anything quite like that before.[132] I had no positive link, no reference point save the unfortunate Ivorian soup: nothing to guide my senses in the process of sense-making. In other words, I could not translate this dish into my own sensory dialect that would fit a familiar modality. I, quite literally, *missed the sensory point* of TZ with *ayoyo*.

---

[130] Cultural differences in aesthetics of food serving and plate arrangement are worth closer scrutiny, which sadly lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

[131] From fieldnotes, 19.05.2018.

[132] Polish cuisine does not have many similar dishes, we do not use corn flour. Later I realised that the closest dish I could recall in terms of texture was polenta but I never had it cooked so "badly", that is without salt, bouillon, cream or butter.

Soon after, I learned that TZ is to be eaten with the hands. After telling my research assistant that I disliked TZ from the Catholic Guesthouse restaurant, he invited me to his mother's house to try "real TZ". I was promised to have it hot (the best TZ is served fresh from the fire) and with homemade soup. I arrived full of careful hope. I watched my assistant's mum cook the soup and stir the TZ and in the end I received a bowl of hot food. From my notes:

> [The TZ was] Cooked by D's mom because I wanted to try a different TZ than the one at CGH, and indeed, it was different. Still gelatinous, less firm than the *banku*, less springy than the *fufu*, well, just more gelatinous, though true: less tasteless than that one. It was also fresh and hot, so I even enjoyed it. I wonder if I'm just getting used to these flavors and textures, knowing what to expect and not to expect too much. The soup tasted more like peanut paste because she made this soup based on groundnut soup, and added dried okro, and it didn't get slimy at all like the sauce. I just don't understand why they make this soup so runny for TZ - she said herself that for TZ she prefers a runny soup to a thick one, and after all, when it's thick it's better to eat by hand, you get more sauce on the TZ or *banku* and all. And they slurp this soup from the hand, completely uncomfortable.[133]

I learned that unlike *fufu*, TZ falls apart in the fingers due to its delicate texture. One might "cut" or scoop a bigger piece but it is more likely to fall apart. A chunk of *banku* or *fufu* might be moulded into a small spoon shape, by carving, forming into a ball and dipping the thumb in the middle. This is not possible with TZ. Moreover, as the soup is usually thin, a piece of TZ will not scoop much of it, even less will end up in the mouth. It is normal then to have less soup with TZ, than with *banku*. The *decorum* of TZ is lightness.

Around three weeks later I had a chance to taste TZ again, this time cooked by a newly met woman, who later became one of my closest friends. She invited me to try her favourite soup made with *bra* (*Hibiscus cannabinus*, also known as jute or kenaf), a typical Dagbani soup, known also among the Hausa. The impression I wrote down in my notes is very raw and emotional, but I decided not to censor it.

> Ok, I officially confirm, I don't like TZ. However well-made and allegedly tasty it is, I have no idea why people persist in eating it, as it has no taste at all, its consistency is gelatinous and glutinous, it doesn't stick to soup, you can't scoop anything with it, it's disgusting. Even if I lived in the country, I would refuse to eat TZ. […] I think I'd have to get used to the taste and texture, because it doesn't resemble anything I've known before - maybe a little bit of sorrel soup, if you thicken it with the meat sauce. First these leaves: a strange sour taste, like sorrel a bit, a bit creaky when cooked, not glutinous but rather mushy? Then the groundnut paste, mainly gives the aftertaste, density and appearance, although the colour is so-so - or maybe it is not the colour that is the problem but the taste,

[133] From the food diary, 03.06.2018.

> earthy, a bit bland. Next, I know what's crunching in my teeth, it's crushed peanuts and small fish. These peanuts, plus these leaves are for me such a disgusting combination and yet with the glutinous TZ - not my favourite food.[134]

I may now laugh at my reaction, but I remember how upset, disappointed and hopeless I felt coming back home that evening. D. was very excited for me to try the soup with TZ and all in all, she was an excellent cook. I appreciated the effort she made in obtaining all the ingredients and preparing the meal for me also; she was a business owner, a mother to a small girl and a boss to a few apprentices. I felt honoured that she invited me to her house, served the meal and I really wanted to enjoy it. Unfortunately, I was only able to eat a few spoonfuls (I asked for a spoon as I did not feel confident eating TZ with my hand, due to its texture) before putting the spoon down.

Soon after that I moved to Wa and joined a family of six. I asked to be included in their daily eating habits and after a few days it turned out that Madame is a very good cook and they do not eat TZ too often. Around this time, I also stopped writing meticulous descriptions of every meal I had in my food diary. My notes become more scant, precise and full of references to the sensory knowledge I had. While before I used detailed descriptions of every texture, flavour and method of eating, by then I just mentioned the name of the dish, the place of origin and whether there were any strange features, like a different ingredient or particularly good or bad preparation. TZ however, my main *nemesis,* remained mentioned every single time I ate it. In late July I wrote:

> Then we were cooking together, baobab leaf stew with TZ, didn't like it much, I just don't like these slimy soups with TZ, there's nothing to chew, this food has no content. […] some traditional families: eat only TZ, you can eat it with 20 different soups, a different soup every day for 2 weeks (but God damn, they all taste almost the same...).[135]

Mid- August I was served TZ again:

> TZ and bean soup for supper. I wasn't enjoying it much, but I ate some. Madame said I'm to eat as much as I can of TZ from the rubber [plastic bag], and the rest they will give to dog. Kids ate TZ, [younger girl] who generally doesn't like vegetables except of onion, enjoyed TZ with soup much more than me.[136]

At the time, I started eating TZ with my hand; I felt more comfortable eating it with my host family, in a safe and secure environment. My hostess' TZ was sometimes slightly firmer and I

[134] From the food diary, 22.06.2018.
[135] From field notes, 26.07.2018.
[136] From field notes, 09.08.2018.

felt more confident cutting small pieces, turning them in the soup and, using a technique I learned while eating *banku*, *fufu* and rice, I put them in my mouth. Later that month:

> I made a few boiled *pierogi* [family asked me to cook something Polish] and mainly I was eating them: they [family] were laughing at me from enjoying them so much. Madame said I must miss them so much. Well, in fact I was enjoying them, but it wasn't like a craving that I had for them, I wasn't missing them really. It was another point to the theory of how you can get used to everything you eat (how long before I get used to TZ?)[137]

This did not happen before I came back to Ghana six months later, in 2019. In the meantime, I did not cook nor eat Ghanaian food, but upon my return I felt much more confident and knowledgeable: I was not starting from scratch this time. In March 2019, I visited the same friend in Tamale who cooked *bra* soup for me. She served TZ again. I noted:

> I have to say, I still didn't like the TZ but I also didn't dislike it as much as before. So, there was definitely an improvement in my acquisition of taste, I might not like it much ever, but I might be able to eat it without disliking it. It made me remember some of the things we ate at home that I might not have liked much but I still ate it, since mum was the one who was cooking: cauliflower, some types of meat, ordinary soups – there were things you ate because they were there but had favourite ones as well.[138]

At this point I realised I had become accustomed to TZ a good deal more than before. Despite a six-month-long break in between my trips, when I did not have the opportunity to eat any Ghanaian food, I had memorised the taste of TZ and upon the next encounter I knew where to place it. My preferences did not go unnoticed. I noted a conversation I had with my hostess about our favourite foods, which took place just a couple of days later:

> She was walking around and asked me, what's my favourite Ghanaian food: I said it's probably *fufu* or yam with any stew, I like red red and plantains and *banku* with okro many other things. She said she noticed that I like most of the food, it's just the TZ that I'm not enjoying. I asked her the same and she said that her favourite is rice with stew, *jollof* and salad, she likes rice, then TZ and out of the two, *banku* (ask why!!!) and TZ, she prefers TZ. Then she likes *fufu*. [139]

I have mentioned elsewhere that my hostess went the extra mile to cook dishes I, as well as any other member of the family, would enjoy. She took my suggestions into account, but she would spare herself the trouble if she could; for example, when she learned that I had found a good fufu spot, where I would regularly eat lunch, she stopped making it that often for supper

[137] From field notes, 12.08.2018.
[138] From field notes, 10.03.2019.
[139] From field notes, 15.03.2019.

(it was not her favourite food, and she did not have much time to prepare it). She knew that I did not enjoy TZ; I frequently left some on my plate, something that almost never happened with other foods and I was not as enthusiastic about the prospect of having it for dinner as compared to other meals. Yet, the breakthrough came soon enough:

> I went back home and turned out, there was TZ for dinner, so I wasn't too happy at the prospect. I ate one at R. and it still didn't taste nice. So, when it was time came for dinner, I was given the TZ and the soup (cassava leaves and red stew with fish) I was surprised that I don't hate it. I really didn't hate it. The initial experience was a bit border-like – there was somehow still the residue of this initial distaste at the taste of TZ and the slimy soup but most of the apprehension, aversion, was gone. I didn't necessarily enjoy it, but I was ok. I managed more than half of the TZ and I gave away the rest to the kids. I asked Madame a couple of times if she used the same flour, the same method, the same everything to prepare this TZ and she confirmed, that she did. It really tasted differently. And the mix of the soup with red stew was very nice. Maybe there wasn't any of those smelly dried fish inside, that's why I liked it. [140]

And then finally, my conversion was complete.

> Great victory and all, I'm getting used to the taste of TZ - and that day I ate WHOLE TZ for the first time! I don't know if my taste perspective is broadening, if I'm getting used to eating without a particular taste, or if it's also related to confidence but TZ is starting to taste good to me. I.e., soup makes a difference and Madame N. made a very good red soup, quite spicy. Plus, cassava leaves for slipperiness, and it's a pretty good mix. […] I didn't have to overcome the aversion that appeared as soon as I satisfied the first hunger (several times at R.), plus I don't know how it is, but the TZ itself tastes somehow different to me. It occurred to me that TZ tastes very similar to polenta without any spices. I had not thought about it before – to compare this food to the food back home but without spices. But groats, potatoes, polenta, porridge are bland and tasteless unless you add something to them - salt, sugar, fruit, milk, whatever. […] Really, I had a sense of great achievement. I called Madame N. to show her how I had eaten everything - and she said, oh, you must have been hungry! Unless you liked it. And I said that I liked it […][141]

It is interesting to see how I started to perceive the slipperiness of the soup as something positive. A few quotes before, I mentioned that adding okra makes the soup indigestible for me due to its slimy texture. Here, one year later, sliminess is a welcome characteristic of the soup, together with the spiciness from the red pepper. At the time I had already become quite skilled with eating by hand and gotten used to the hot, sticky textures of the starchy balls I ate at almost every meal. I remember being so proud of myself that I even sought praise from my hostess. I

[140] From field notes, 02.04.2019.
[141] From field notes, 04.04.2019.

wanted to let her know that I, in fact, can and will eat TZ the way the locals eat, that I will not be a burden to her anymore, being unhappy when presented with a plate of hot TZ. Soon enough, TZ became one of my favourite and go-to foods, which I gladly ate for lunch and dinner.

During my third session of fieldwork in 2020, I was staying on my own in a small compound in the eastern part of town. Again, I did not have a family to borrow eating patterns from, but at the time I found myself very confident in my knowledge and preferences towards everyday food. My friends laughed at me, remarking that "I eat like a local woman", as I was purchasing TZ for lunch or dinner, or stocking balls of dough for the next couple of days. I did not cook TZ on my own, that skill I did not manage to obtain, but I did cook some soups and many a time exchanged food with some friends and neighbours. So much so that I rarely ate rice (previously the most digestible food for me) and opted for TZ, *fufu* or *banku*, in that order. The circle took a full turn, the sensory transition was complete, as I noted in March 2020.

> I told G., that I think with TZ one could really never be bored, unlike rice. I think rice is becoming my least favourite thing to eat here. When you eat rice with stew every day you can easily get so done with it, but with TZ, with the variety of soups that we have here, it's really never too much. He started laughing and he said, that it's very good, that I must have gotten a good understanding of the food, that it's clear for him I'm a good food scientist. He agreed, that the TZ is really the best, because you can switch up the soups as you like and TZ is not so tasty (doesn't have so much flavour to it), so you cannot be done with it, you cannot get bored of the taste.

In this chapter I described two corporeal processes, achieved through mediatory agency of food. Once, I have moved beyond my corporeal "whiteness" enclosed in my eating habits. Usually, foreigners are perceived as weak and fragile through the small portions of food they eat and their preference for raw and light foods. I have overcome my gustatory trauma and taught my body how to eat (with hands), how to digest and how to enjoy strange smells, textures and combinations of flavours. It is hard to operate with racial categories without simplifying them and giving them justice at the same time. I would say, eating Ghanaian food made me shift on the scale from Other to familiar through its affective and participatory element. Second, in the same process I have acquired a "sensory anthropologist body" who in the process of constant reflection and conscious overcoming of corporeal obstacles, becomes immersed and grounded in her fieldwork.

Chapter 8

Food, taste and everyday life. Summary and discussion

> "The moral tasks of a liberal democracy are divided between the agents of love and the agents of justice. In other words, such a democracy employs and empowers both connoisseurs of diversity and guardians of universality. The former insist that there are people out there whom society has failed to notice. They make these candidates for admission visible by showing how to explain their odd behavior in terms of a coherent, if unfamiliar, set of beliefs and desires – as opposed to explaining this behavior with terms like stupidity, madness, baseness or sin. The latter, the guardians of universality, make sure that once these people are admitted as citizens, once they have been shepherded into the light by the connoisseurs of diversity, they are treated just like all the rest of us."
>
> Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, 1991

The aim of this thesis was to provide insight into the everyday lives of North Ghanaians, through examining their food choices, habits, practices and gustatory preferences. Food, in all its aspects, acted as a starting point to an investigation of other complex social phenomena. Gender roles, family organisation, cross-cultural gustatory clashes and corporeality of racialised spaces are just a few of the issues tackled in this thesis. In the short space this conclusion inhabits, I summarise the most important tropes that appeared in this study. Next, I reflect on the limitations and make recommendations for further research. Lastly, I showcase the unique knowledge I contributed with this study and consider how the project and ethnographer evolved over the last five years it took to complete.

Anthropology of the everyday

The fundamental question posed during the conceptualisation phase of this research was: what cultural, social and economic values are embodied in everyday food habits of urban inhabitants of Northern Ghana? Additionally, this question was divided into three detailed subquestions:

1. *How do urban inhabitants of Tamale and Wa negotiate their multiple identities through everyday dietary choices and gustatory preferences?*

2. *How do dietary patterns evolve and what factors underlie such changes?*
3. *What original input does sensory ethnographic approach offer to our understanding of those phenomena?*

In the end, this research tackled a number of cultural phenomena that reached beyond the original idea. Those entail but are not limited to: gustatory imperialism in vocational training, sensory pedagogy, food practices as indicators of class belonging, gendered attitudes to food and cooking, as well various typologies of othering based on daily dietary choices. The broad scope of this thesis fulfils the initial aim to present a general perspective of everyday food habits and their cultural significance in Northern Ghana.

Everyday life became the overarching theme of this study: the agency and creativity found in mundane chores and habitual practices. Through engagement with the mundane, this research aimed to unveil social and cultural mechanisms embedded in seemingly obvious things "the unnoticed, the inconspicuous, the unobtrusive" (Highmore 2002, 1). Quotidian events, usually overlooked out of habit or boredom, such as family meals, meal planning, trips to the market, school activities, work, cooking and cleaning become objects of conscious scrutiny. In this sense, studying the everyday is ambivalent at its core. Yet, it is "where we make our worlds and where our worlds make us" (Pink 2012, 5). Reciprocal relationships between the agents and their environments, crucial for the continuity of social groups, have been an object of ardent interest among social scientists. It seems easy to focus on the unnatural or the unfamiliar; our senses immediately catch deviations from the usual, the latter remaining a benchmark for the normative. Everyday is where the usual occurs.

Yet, it is also the everyday where change takes place. As Highmore proposes:

> In modernity the everyday becomes the setting for a dynamic process: for making the unfamiliar familiar; for getting accustomed to the disruption of custom; for struggling to incorporate the new; for adjusting to different ways of living. The Everyday marks the success and failure of this process. It witnesses the absorption of the most revolutionary of inventions into the landscape of the mundane. Radical transformations in all walks of life become 'second nature'. The new becomes traditional and the residues of the past become outmoded and available for fashionable renewal (Highmore 2002, 2).

Therefore, to track the strategies of adaptation and change in society, a closer look at the everyday is indispensable. This is precisely the fundamental premise of anthropological research: to find the unusual in the everyday.

Many scholars compare the everyday to an assembly line: "the repetition-of-the-same characterizes an everyday temporality experienced as a debilitating boredom" (Highmore 2001; Giedion 1948). According to Highmore:

> Continuous production, says Highmore, in whatever form, follows the logic of industrial capitalism in its drive to maximize output; it does so by 'an uninterrupted production process' which is characterized by 'the inexorable regularity with which the worker must follow the rhythm of the mechanical system' (Highmore 2002, 3).

Continuous production affects the everyday life of workers who become the cogs in the global capitalist machine. This research aims to prove that the everyday lives of people in Northern Ghana, seen through their food-related practices, are affected by and connected to the capitalist world system. Through media, personal mobility, modern communication tools or economic ties, the everyday choice of sustenance transcends its mundane, idiosyncratic character and becomes an act of production of, for instance, a global consumer.

Summary

Chapter 4 raises the issue of traditionalism, gender and agency among women in their family and professional lives. The chapter focusses on how women navigate and negotiate tradition and modernity in the kitchen and their role as agents of change. Traditional approaches in academia, economy and development have tied women to the domestic sphere. Women have been "the keepers of the hearth" in both literal and figurative sense. They have been solely responsible for providing meals for close and extended families and in doing so, have been in charge of passing down cultural norms, values and intangible heritage. Contemporary approaches no longer see women as keepers and perpetuators of tradition, but rather as chief executors of change, at least in the culinary world. Those changes happen in the everyday; this is where the strange becomes familiar, where the new becomes customary and the uncomfortable becomes safe. In his book, McKay describes how women in the sub-Saharan continent have been for centuries adopting new methods of cooking, new ingredients and dishes in correlation with their arrival through international economic ties.

In Northern Ghana women are first and foremost servers of the family. Their gustatory preference seems to matter less than those of their husbands, children and the elderly members of the compound. Women are likely to give up on their gustatory preferences when choosing what to cook for family dinners, in order to satisfy the needs of other family members. Upon getting married, some women give up their eating habits completely to comply with those of the family they marry into, namely their husbands. Some give up certain ingredients completely

(such as peppers), or certain dishes. Some others cook more often as their husbands require fresh food for every meal. Some diversify meals more than they would need to, had they been cooking solely for themselves and the children. Typically, only women with bigger budgets and more hands available to help, cook more than one dish per meal, with the view to satisfy their own needs. Often if women are unable to provide good and nutritious food for their family they become stressed, worried and unfulfilled.

It is clear that for men to eat is still as socially significant as it is for women to cook and that is how they display their social and financial status. At the same time, women display a deeper and more nuanced understanding of food, dishes and flavours. Both women and men tend to be guided by their cravings but women, especially elderly, are more likely to choose foods considered healthy and local. Considerable tension exists between women over what they choose to cook and how they approach their role. Younger women with salaried jobs do not always want to cook starch-based dishes, diversifying them with meals that are easier to cook in bulk, as well as store-bought dishes. Older women accuse the younger of laziness when they do not want to spend much time in the kitchen. Women find themselves navigating budgets, family needs, their own needs, time and energy, dietary requirements, their working schedules and religious norms in planning everyday family meals. Yet, they remain curious, passionate and involved in their everyday chores. Many women express their eagerness to learn and incorporate new methods of cooking, new ingredients and dishes, as long as they fulfil their requirements of being healthy and good for their family.

Women form the majority of staff in institutional canteens and their work tends to be very stressful and demanding. School matrons usually cater to more than a thousand students at every meal and navigate between health requirements, individual needs and cravings, resources at hand and limitations of their work environment. Since 2019 all Ghanaian schools fall under the jurisdiction of the Ghana School Feeding Programme, meaning that all school canteens are centrally supplied. The idea initially seemed to be promising, however its execution did not rise to expectations. Women lost their influence in providing supplies for the kitchen; they no longer can choose the suppliers and they cannot check the quality, quantity and character of the goods delivered to the kitchen. Before, personal customer ties allowed them to purchase ingredients at a good price and even when there was a shortage of produce. The ingredients had a chance to be local and seasonal. Now, menus for the three general regions are agreed on in Accra (under the influence of the matron association the ministry did not enforce one menu for the whole country) and the goods are delivered through governmental suppliers.

Due to inefficiency, bad storage, delays and lack of quality control in the supply chain, the produce delivered to the kitchens are often rotten, spoiled and unsuitable for use. Matrons have to again show an incredible amount of flexibility, creativity and inventive attitude to meet the requirements of food quantity, nutritious content and diversity. Many students complain about the school food as it tends to give them stomach ache, sometimes it is insufficient or monotonous. Some praise the diversity they are not used to, coming from small village communities where diversity of food is scarce. Nonetheless, matrons struggle to meet everyone's demands with a faulty delivery chain they no longer have control of.

In Chapter 5, I described in detail how contemporary Ghanaian upper education is still permeated with imperialist thought, embodied in home economics and catering programmes. The contested status of home economics is described in detail; originally, home economics promulgated the "natural" affiliation of women with domestic work and perpetuated a stereotypical gender division of labour. With the rise of feminist critique of domestic labour as a source of women's oppression in Western societies, home economics shifted their focus on improving the quality of life within the framework of gender equity and empowerment of women. However, this was not the case in non-Western societies. While in Europe home economists became agents of change, the gender sensitive approach to developmental programs was missing in non-European societies until after the 1970s. Domestic labour was still perceived as a non-wage-earning activity and women were excluded from programmes improving their economic power and thus social position.

Substantial changes have taken place since then and home economics, according to the president of Ghanaian Home Economics Association, equips women with both skills and a sense of agency that enables them to achieve financial independence and improve their social status. However, research shows that home economics programmes still face considerable prejudice. Housework and cooking in particular are regarded as a "woman's job" in the derogatory sense, thus low social value is attributed to them. Those pursuing this line of education are considered less intelligent and capable, and males especially are often discouraged from choosing HE at secondary school. Troublesome career path and high costs of the course are other factors discouraging potential students from studying HE.

The Ghanaian educational system has roots in the colonial system. Although Ghana has recently celebrated sixty-five years of independence, contemporary school programmes are still deeply affected by colonial vestiges. HE and catering courses are no exception. The curriculum in vocational and technical schools testifies to this, especially as regards subjects tightly

connected to culture, and what is food if not the epitome of the cultural? The everyday lives of catering students in the Wa vocational school is permeated with clashes between culturally established sensoria. Students learn how to cook dishes they have never seen, never tasted and probably never will. Moreover, they do not have the will to do so; continental food is generally contested as too rich, too flavourful and not light.

Their books are designed for British gastronomy schools and thus present a strictly Western approach to food. Teachers and students encounter major hurdles finding the right ingredients and reach considerable heights of creativity to substitute unavailable foodstuffs. Yet, there is a common agreement that the food will never taste the same as in Europe. It could be said that catering students in Northern Ghana engage in creating a simulacrum under the command of colonised textbooks to satisfy (albeit never to a full extent) the gustatory cravings of foreigners, who have the means to purchase them. As a result, a new gustatory subreality is created, where an agreement is made between producer and consumer, based on pretence and performance; the producer pretends to know how to make the food and the consumer pretends that the food satisfies him. The purpose of such a meal is to a far greater degree symbolic, rather than corporeal.

In Chapter 6, a portrait of gustatory identities and processes of food-based othering is presented. Here attention is paid to the differences painted between cultural and racial sensory modalities, as well as gendered and generational differences. The image of a "white man" is seen through the gustatory production of his body and juxtaposed with the production of an African, Ghanaian body. Following this, gender differences in approach to food, cooking and eating, which appear chiefly in family dynamics are described. Finally, othering practices based on ethnic, local, regional and national differences are looked into. Without a doubt, food habits play an immense role in everyday othering in Northern Ghana. Gustatory preferences provide an arena for performance, bargaining, asserting and denial of multiple identities, whether gender, class, religious, ethnic, racial, regional or national. It is clear that everyday decision making, seemingly mundane and uncontroversial, is a space of constant cultural negotiation, undertaken in a more or less conscious way.

The image of a weak, white body permeates the North Ghanaian corporeal perception of foreigners. White women, as I had a chance to discover, are considered fragile, inept and susceptible to the elements, while Black women are used to hard work in difficult conditions. A comparison between the resilience of the two comes with moral judgements and a recognition of privilege. Food white people eat reflects the nature of their bodies: cold, light food could

feasibly support bodies which do not perform physical labour. As most Ghanaians live off the work of their hands, Ghanaian meals have to be by necessity heavy and filling. Foreign consumers in Northern Ghana have a few places where they can "feel at home". There, mental and corporeal comfort is rooted in the affective quality of the sensory landscape of the place. Most of them are bright, quiet and dainty and serve European-inspired food, thus placing them in a direct opposition to what typical Ghanaian places look like. "Places-out-of-places", such as Chuck's Bar offer corporeal comfort chiefly through gustatory experiences of familiar foods. That situational feeling of comfort is founded on the phenomenon of simulacrum and social agreement, described in Chapter 4. Such "white spots" have a dual nature, however. While for (mostly white) foreigners, such places offer feelings of familiarity and unity with fellow foreigners, for the local population they become inaccessible and hostile European enclaves. More often than not, white foreigners connect chiefly through common experience of cultural isolation and distanciation in their daily lives. Narratives they share often have a derogative tint and are based on a feeling of superiority. Hence, for the local population such places become spaces of moral surveillance and corporeal discipline.

My research suggests that men in general wield more power over what they eat. While married men usually eat supper (the most important meal of the day) at home, young unmarried men often choose not to eat what is cooked at home in the evenings. At the same time, married women are obliged to provide home cooked meals which cater to the needs and wishes of their husbands and extended relatives. Young men are more likely to be employed and decide independently how they spend their salaries than young women. Their purchasing power and general social agreement that grants them personal and gustatory freedom, allows them to eat out frequently. While both women and men often eat purchased food for morning and midday meals, women almost exclusively eat supper at home. Women also display a far greater contempt towards street food and restaurant food. Regarding the former, they do not trust the hygienic standards enforced by the cooks, as well as the quality of ingredients. As for the restaurants, their concern is mostly economical. They see it as more sustainable and frugal to use the money they would spend on one restaurant meal to cook two or three meals at home. All in all, women are much less likely to consider food a marker of social status than men. Many male respondents demonstrate a willingness to allocate a bigger budget on eating in restaurants while women refrain from doing so.

There is a pronounced difference between the approach of the older and the younger generation towards traditional foods such as TZ and *fufu*. The older generation seems to

prioritise the cultural status of the food, the cost of preparing it and the comfort they feel after eating it. For the younger, their gustatory pleasure and cravings, as well as availability of foods are the most important. Many among the twenty-year-olds are not concerned with what they eat during the day to the same extent as their parents and grandparents. They also enjoy the possibility of eating convenience food and fast food available in town. The influence of the media makes them curious of foreign foods and their financial independence and social contacts prompt them to try new ingredients and dishes. Not everyone enjoys them for the gustatory pleasures they afford, treating them rather as a broadening of their gustatory horizons. The older generation treats TZ as a daily staple, while the younger considers it a meal one can eat once in a while. Many express that they no longer enjoy eating TZ, since they have been eating it all their lives. At the same time, only TZ provides a certain gustatory and physical fulfilment, which they have to pursue every now and again. For many young people eating TZ becomes a statement of their ethnic, regional and class belonging. For the educated, TZ functions on the symbolic plane as a part of their heritage, therefore they still patronise it. However, their financial status allows them to combine with other dishes, so that their diet is not as monotonous as it used to be in the past.

TZ could also be considered a factor contributing to the North Ghanaian identity. Whereas Southern Ghana has for centuries experienced various forms of centralisation (for instance under the rule of Asantehene), the North remained to a great extent ethnically diversified and acephalic. Research shows that ethnicity has never played a major self-determining role in the North and nowadays its importance decreases even further. However, the division between the southern and northern sectors remains. The North still bears the brunt of being a less developed, industrialised, attractive and poorer part of the country. The richer, fertile, Akan speaking, Christian South seems to dominate the representations of "Ghanianness" with its colourful kente, attractive beaches and big cities, topped with a plethora of fresh vegetables and flavoursome food. While *fufu* is generally eaten across the country (yam in the North, cassava in the South), TZ is predominantly eaten in the North. Furthermore, TZ is not considered as tasty, rich and flavoursome as southern food. Many southerners speak about northern food with reserve and claim that "they cannot eat it". Eating TZ slowly becomes a symbol of northern pride, especially among those who can choose what they want to eat and are not limited by financial difficulties.

Chapter 7 looks closely at the correlation between food habits and class identification using the example of a North Ghanaian family of seven. Through a close examination of their

everyday habits of food acquisition, cooking and commensality, the chapter establishes gendered and normative relations between the members of the family. The family claims to be "local", by which they mean that their ancestors originate from the area of Wa and surrounding villages (the wife's family even comes from the *zongo* of the inner city) and they speak Wale on a daily basis. They are also Muslim. Both wife and husband come from chief clans. They are the first in their families to graduate from university and have salaried positions. The husband is a well-known local politician and the wife works for the municipal government in collaboration with a global aid organisation. They are generally considered well-to-do and belong to the higher levels of local society. They are educated, speak fluent English and communicate in that language with their children. They live in a large, detached house in a central area of town. They own a few cars, a motorbike and their house is equipped with many contemporary amenities.

This research suggests that social class in Northern Ghana is an elusive and contextual category, which this family could be considered a representative of. The family cherishes their food heritage; they still celebrate various occasions with traditional foods. Especially during religious and traditional festivities they prepare and consume local meals such as TZ and fufu. They mark occasions such as Eid Adha with an abundance of meat, sending family members to Makkah with a bowl of *fufu* and breaking fast with *kenkey* water and fruit. However, many occasions are celebrated with contemporary foods; their children's birthdays, school celebrations and New Year's Eve all feature rice dishes. The everyday menu is varied in the family and the wife makes sure they do not eat the same food too often. Thanks to her budget, she can afford buying more ingredients and making the food richer and more flavourful. However, due to her time limitations she often resorts to cooking fewer time-consuming meals that she knows everybody likes. Those are plain rice with stew, *jollof* rice, rice and beans, bean stew with boiled yams and *kpogolo*.

Although the wife is an educated woman, with a salaried job, she still performs the majority of household duties, including shopping, food preparation, storage and distribution. Moreover, she strives to cater for her husband's preferences; he is a discriminating eater and never consumes *fufu*, TZ, *banku* (any "swallowed" food that comes with a soup) and does not eat hot pepper. Therefore, she often needs to prepare two separate meals, if she and the children want to eat something else. The wife often cooks food in bulk and stores it in the fridge and the leftovers are always frozen and kept for later. She is also quite inventive in her approach and she likes to look for new ways of preparing food and incorporates new ingredients in her

cooking. She seeks inspiration on social media and gladly learns from other women. When I presented her with a pancake recipe she was immediately interested and asked me to teach it to her. Yet, she is suspicious of recipes and she claims that a true cook should know how to prepare food without having to look up and follow written recipes. In that sense she represents the oral culture of cooking, where methods of cooking are passed on personally through observation and common practice. At the same time, she is often sceptical towards foreign foods. To her mind, it is not healthy and is also expensive and time consuming to prepare.

In conclusion, this North Ghanaian family practised their own definition of middle-classness. Factors such as education, form of employment, standards of living and social network have driven them to assume a high social status. Their food budget and social position allows them to enjoy a variety of dishes, including those less known in Northern Ghana. The wife was open to trying out new recipes and incorporating new foods. At the same time, the family was adamant to preserve eating habits that reflected their ethnic and regional identity and prioritised those. The mother shaped the food preferences of her children, teaching them how to eat local food such as TZ and enjoy peppery food. Despite being educated and financially independent, the wife still performed the majority of household chores and served her husband, according to the traditional division of labour. She voiced her disagreement and frustration but did not have her husband's support in changing anything in the organisation of family duties. She expressed that she would raise her sons differently and those men should also be able to perform household chores and actively participate in them.

The last, Chapter 8, focusses on the autoethnographic experience of conducting sensory anthropology in Northern Ghana as well as on the positionality of the me as a white Central European woman. Here I reflect on my previous experiences in the field and how they affected my current approach. I begin by considering the benefits and providing a critique of autoethnographic approaches in anthropology and point to the direction in which autoethnography is currently developing. In summary, it emphasises that anthropologists cannot and therefore should not be erased from their research, as their choice of methods, point of view and analytical angle are the effect of their positionality and fieldwork interactions. Rather than being considered a hindrance, those factors should be acknowledged, analysed and incorporated in the argument. On the canvas of my own positionality, I raise the issue of cultural disgust and show how gustatory memories negatively influenced sensory encounters, maintaining a professional stance and wellbeing in the field in Northern Ghana. Overcoming

this trauma was pivotal for achieving sensory immersion necessary for the acquisition of corporeal knowledge.

The core value of the chapter lies in the detailed description of the transition from "a foreign body" to "a localised body" through collaborative practice, consumption and non-verbal corporeal accommodation into the lived environment. Such a statement can prove controversial but with the example of my own transition from gustatory ineptness to a degree of proficiency, I prove that the phrase "it's not our food" has a deep cultural meaning that concentrates around unspoken processes of corporeal en- and acculturation. Through the process of becoming familiar not only with the content of the plate through repeated ingestion, but also with methods of cooking, techniques of the body, commensal behaviours and honing of taste preferences or cravings, one transforms from being the sensorial Other (in both active and passive ways) to being congruent. Schools, canteens, private and institutional kitchens, tables, benches, living rooms and street stalls are cultural spaces of gustatory encounters which occur in clashes, conflicts, permeation and assimilation.

It should be mentioned that through various culinary cultures and sensory modalities coexisting in Northern Ghana, the acquisition of gustatory proficiency is usually unidirectional. Foreigners are more likely to acquire local modes of tasting through an act of sensory exposure, discomfort and assimilation, as those sensory places are not guarded or limited. However, the reverse process is much more difficult as access to the European gustatory sphere in Ghana is exclusive, gated and selective. White spaces of consumption are hostile and permeated with contempt, which is visible in the sensory separation of such spaces from the rest of the urban sphere. Although school curriculums teach the technicalities of Western cooking, they do not offer space where modes of sensing could be acquired. The sensory landscape of the gastronomy school is oppressive through the discipline of the student's body but does not encourage accommodation to the food the body learns to produce. In many ways, the sensory body of the student becomes a skilled medium but not a participant, in the creation of Western gustatory simulacrum in Northern Ghana.

Globalising Ghanaian food

In many ways, Northern Ghana is witnessing the emergence of the contemporary global consumer who taps into worldwide food trends, fads and cravings. This consumer is educated (perhaps abroad), most likely has travelled outside Ghana and most certainly stays in touch with diasporic family members. On the other hand, this consumer does not share the same corporeal attachment to local food and does "feel bad" if it has not been consumed in a while. According

to this research, this is a result of growing up, eating it far less regularly than their grandparents did. However, they still cherish "grandmother's food" and eat it gladly from time to time, however they pursue flavourful and varied meals in their daily lives. This way, the consumer upholds their transgressive status on one hand, dabbling in the gustatory possibilities offered by global capitalist markets and preserving contact with heritage foods through continuous consumption.

Mastering traditional methods of cooking is no longer a must among urban women and many have not learned how to cook from their mothers or grandmothers. Some went to school away from home and never had a chance to observe home cooking. Some, by choosing to study home economics or catering, learn other ways of cooking, more creative, more flavourful and do not continue family traditions. Some choose not to spend much time in the kitchen, if they can afford not to and instead of using cheap ingredients that are laborious in preparation (such as bitter leaf, baobab or cassava leaf) they purchase rice and vegetables, which are quick and easy to prepare. Traditional meals such as TZ and *fufu* are increasingly eaten only on weekends when women who work salaried jobs have more time to cook.

Ghana, especially the southern sector, has a booming catering and restaurant culture. Services are offered to cater to weddings, engagement parties, christenings and other events. Luxurious catering feeds well into other service industries, tapping into a craving for opulent aesthetics that dominate contemporary family or corporate events. A buffet as a centrepiece, with an abundance of protein and fried food, which is generally not considered healthy and probably ending up mostly wasted, is seen as an expression of status. In many luxurious hotels located on the coast, restaurants offer a mix of Western and modernised Ghanaian dishes. In the majority of those hotels the chefs are men and one of the most popular catering companies bases its advertising on (often sexualised) images of male cooks. As Goody claims, a transition of cooking duties from women to men is a sign of the development of *haute cuisine* and consumption of certain foods becomes a class marker (Goody 1982). Food is no longer mere sustenance, but a symbolic act of othering and belonging to a certain social class (Bourdieu 2010).

However, while men seem to dominate in hotel kitchens, catering to local and foreign guests, many incredibly competent female chefs take on a more activist role. One of the most well-known Ghanaian chefs, Selassie Atadika, has followed the path to the roots of Ghanaian cooking knowledge and incorporates it in her contemporary dining experience. Her well-known restaurant and a small chocolate factory, Midunu, also provides training for young women who

wish to gain skills and start their own businesses. In this way she elevates other women by providing them with a professional education and springboard into a niche but burgeoning industry. She is a food system advocate and has many years of experience working for governmental and non-governmental humanitarian aid organisations. She turned to cooking as her way of marrying culture and heritage with sustainability and development. Born in Ghana but raised and educated in the US, Atadika is pioneering a plant-based diet, slow food and grassroots collaboration with local farmers. In an interview she says:

> My inspiration at the moment is indigenous knowledge. There are many recipes that our grandparents and great grandparents used to make that are highly nutritious and are slowly being lost in the urbanization and fast-paced lifestyle of contemporary Africa. I look to these recipes and ingredients to see how we can bring them back into our dining rooms, keep our cuisine as diverse as possible, support local producers, and inspire conversation about the global appeal of African cuisine (Eat Forum 2022).

Atadika's company, Midunu, is focussed primarily on creating handcrafted truffles incorporating local ingredients such as moringa, prekese or berbere (a special spice blend), as well as chocolate drinks and gift sets inspired by Ghanaian chocolate. By processing Ghanaian cocoa into a luxurious product, Atadika is contributing to the efforts of the Ghanaian government to raise and retain the value of cocoa on the domestic market. Chocolate does not have a big market in Ghana (cocoa trees were imported to Ghana purely for farming and trade purposes) but tastes are changing. Instead of importing chocolate commodities to cater to growing middle-class tastes, Ghana strives to produce its own. Ghana remains the second largest producer of cocoa beans in the world, accounting for around twenty-five percent of global supply (Reuters 2022). Yet, the majority of its raw product is exported to the US, Belgium, Netherlands, China and Switzerland. In 2021, president Nana Akufo Addo declared that the Ghanaian government is planning to secure more investments in cocoa processing.

Another well-known female chef is Zoe Adjonyoh. Born and raised in the UK, Adjonyoh's roots in Ghana can be traced through her father. In 2014 she opened "Zoe's Ghana Kitchen" pop-up diner in London, where she demonstrated her own interpretation of Ghanaian cuisine. Adjonyoh is an advocate and promoter of the New African Cuisine, which is gradually gaining global recognition. Over the last seven to eight years the incredibly rich culinary heritage of the African continent has made its way to the world of the Western restaurateur, yet still remains far behind other culinary traditions. In her own words:

> Since that time [2014] the global mainstream food landscape has changed considerably. We have been noticed – to some extent. And yet, we still don't see

> African cookery shows on TV; we rarely see reviews of the myriad pan-African restaurants serving up great food from an incredibly rich and diverse continent, whose influences have nevertheless spread all over the world. 'African cuisines' remain surprisingly marginalized, both in people's consciousness and on the high street (Adjonyoh 2021, 11).

Adjonyoh's mission is to bring the richness of the African culinary worlds together with their varied ingredients and remould them into a contemporary shape. However, she still operates with the "traditional" and "modern" dualisms; "traditional" African cuisines need to be "modernised" in order to attract Western palates. In doing so she inadvertently reinforces the stereotype about the "backward" nature of the African kitchen, its laboriousness, simplicity and specificity of flavours and textures which will not suit everyone. On the other hand, through the actions of chefs like her, Ghanaian and broadly speaking West African cuisines do keep gaining more and more recognition on the global market. The globalisation of food leads to simplification of ingredients, tastes and methods of cooking; after all, the goal is for everyone to have access to sources and methods and can recreate them in their own kitchens.

Reflections on the methodology and the senses

The methodological approach applied in this research was both an exhilarating and cumbersome experience. I would frequently ask myself if what I was doing could ever be qualified as a scientific approach. After all, it essentially boiled down to sitting and listening to conversations in a language I could not understand, or clumsily shovelling food into my mouth, or mixing endless stews, chopping carrots and chasing people to tell me more about their childhood food. Compared to how I had been trained, with the rigid structures of questionnaires and sat down interviews, focus groups and occasional participant observation, sensory methodology seemed directionless and often naïve. The varied topics covered in this thesis called for a variety of approaches and often a triangulation of a few. Often, one method would only start producing results over time or, on the contrary, would stop bearing any fruit after a while. Since there is no rigid methodological structure proposed for anthropology of the senses, I could enjoy a freedom I did not know before, coupled with an equal dose of doubt, self-reflection and creativity.

Many scholars (Pink 2010; Howes 2010) claim that sensory anthropology is the methodology of the future: a statement that is difficult to disagree with. It is inherently interdisciplinary, as at its core lie elements borrowed from psychology, sociology, neuroscience and philosophy, among others. While other disciplines have employed a sensory approach some time ago, sensory anthropology is still fairly new in ethnographic practice. Here,

anthropologists employ such methods as walking together, sensory geography and artistic collaborations to achieve best results. Pink (rightfully) asks, do we still need anthropology of the senses which treats sensory experience as a separate object of anthropological interest (such as sense of hearing, as in Feld's work) or treat sensory anthropology as an element of an interdisciplinary approach to issues of food, identity, governance, mobility, etc.? (Pink 2010).

This research employed sensory anthropology as a foundational method to investigate everyday practices of cooking and commensality. It treated eating together much in the same way as other contributors treat walking together; as a collaborative practice and a "red-thread" type of activity, which can guide the researcher through various facets of someone's cultural and social life. Therefore senses, sensory modalities and orders, their hierarchies and close descriptions are not the core of this thesis. Instead, cultural modes of sensory perception were the tools of communication and places of clash and encounter between the researcher and the research collaborators.

Contributions to the field

This research contributes to the general body of anthropological knowledge in a few aspects. The first contribution is a detailed description of everyday eating habits and dietary preferences of urban middle-class inhabitants in Northern Ghana. This description is based on long-term observation and participation and considers such factors as type of employment, income, gender, ethnicity, location and family status. Those narratives paint a nuanced and culture-sensitive picture of the contemporary consumer in Northern Ghana. This consumer finds themselves pulled by many influences. To name just a few, they remain entangled in kinship ties and family feeding patterns. However, the growing financial independence of the youth, forced also by their pursuit of academic degrees in other parts of the country, separates them from family allegiances and breaks the patterns of knowledge transition. Vocational and technical schools offer catering courses which develop skills and preferences different to those shaped at home. Gender roles and family obligations change, the salaried job market grows and the number of middle-class consumers rises. Such people are more likely to eat out in restaurants rather than street stalls and cook a variety of meals at home. For one, their consumer choices are not directed solely by the need to economise. Food becomes a status symbol, especially that prepared by food professionals. Finally, global markets and the media accelerate the rate of exchange: of information, ingredients, trends, fads and cravings.

The second contribution of this research is a detailed description of the vocational schooling system with a focus on home economics and catering. Home economics is an

important branch of education in Ghana pursued yearly by thousands of students. At the same time, education in Ghana remains deeply entangled in colonial vestiges. By using the example of home economics, I show how the educational system subjugates students' bodies in an intranational relation of power. Their textbooks are largely outdated and have little to do with their daily lives. Students learn to perform skills and tasks that are far removed from their native cooking culture. The products of their hands are also not eaten predominantly by the Ghanaians but by foreigners: students, tourists, foreign workers, investors and businessmen. The best jobs are offered at hotels that are too expensive for local people. While the topic has garnered many academic contributions coming from West African researchers, it largely remains unseen by Western scholarship.

Thirdly, this research adds to the understanding of practice-oriented categorisation of social class. Rather than strict expenditure-based classification, this research offers a perspective based on multifaceted consumer practices and treats class as a flexible, gendered and contextual category. Further it revises the class-cuisine axis as presented by Jack Goody in his seminal work "Cooking, Cuisine and Class" (Goody 1982). It proves that the category of *haute cuisine* in West Africa is not applicable as a class marker per se, as it has not developed in similar socioeconomic, political and environmental circumstances as in Europe, but the employment of facets of *haute cuisine* can be found in contemporary food habits. People do mark their social and financial status through choosing certain types of dishes and through organising their weekly menus. Perhaps the most crucial change is the development of gourmands, who draw pleasure from eating a meal. For many, taste is still less important than its texture and quantity and the feeling the food leaves the body with.

The final contribution of this research is its application and development of sensory anthropology methods. Since sensory anthropology does not propose any strict methodological procedures, being instead context and subject sensitive, devising an effective approach was a challenge. Many scholars have tackled the issue of food from a methodological perspective, but detailed accounts of their methods are still scarce. Some of them tend to border activist or artistic projects but their results are presented in strict academic form. Methods applied here are hardly groundbreaking but they do align with the contemporary developments in the field. They also provide space for anthropological self-reflection and an autoethnographic approach. Through combining bodily and mental retrospection, I was able to outline the transitional arch from "white" and "foreign" bodies to "localised" as it happened through non-verbal, tactile and gustatory acculturation.

Limitations

This research had its limitations. Firstly, from a methodological perspective, more audiovisual materials could have been produced and analysed. I had not been trained well in the application of such methods and did not give it enough thought beforehand. Only later did I realise how valuable the short clips and videos that I gathered were. A full analysis of all visual, audiovisual and audio materials is also beyond the scope of this thesis. Furthermore, an even closer collaboration and co-practice with research participants would have been recommended. I initiated such an approach in March 2020, when I made contact with the Christian Mothers Association and asked whether their members would like to invite me to their kitchens and show and teach me a few of the dishes they cook every day. Closer analysis of cooking practices and their comparison between households would have been very useful. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic ceased those plans as I purposefully limited my contacts with the participants and met them mostly outdoors, keeping a safe distance. Additionally, closer contact with hospital patients could have been made to gather their opinions on the food served by the kitchen. Similar insights collected among high school students proved very perceptive and informative in the context of the school feeding programme and the matron's agency. However, fear for their health and wellbeing prohibited me from reaching out.

Possibilities of further research

Possibilities of further development of this study are broad and I will name just a few directions of potential expansion. First and foremost, a deeper contextualisation of the interconnection between the notions of gender, class and food preferences would be necessary. This research highlighted the basic premises of gender, income, food and social status as they are acted upon in everyday life. However, a much more nuanced and detailed investigation would be in order. Secondly, an intranational survey of home economic and catering courses could provide a better overview on the challenges and possibilities offered by this line of career. Moreover, such a survey should apply a gender-sensitive approach to find out what factors contribute to home economics' contested status. On one hand it is promoted as a programme offering a valuable skill set, on the other it is still struggling with gender and intellectual stereotypes. More extensive research spanning the whole country, would hopefully provide an insight into regional and cultural factors underlying such bias. Additionally, it would provide a context for permanent or temporary southbound labour migration undertaken by many home economics and catering students.

Another idea for the development of this research could be connected to global dietary trends such as veganism and vegetarianism in the context of morality, masculinity, cultural aesthetics and traditionalism. I met one vegan Ghanaian in Tamale and although his narrative was not incorporated in this thesis, it provided valuable insight into the motifs, goals and challenges vegan people encounter in their daily lives. For instance, going out with friends for food was not always easy and many of his friends were not interested in eating the food he prepared. They claimed it had "no taste"; typically taste or flavour in Ghana is associated with the addition of protein, such as meat, fish or protein-packed spices or legumes. The issue of protein is economic, biological as much as it is cultural; many of my respondents claimed that dishes that do not contain fish or meat do not satiate well. On the other hand, some elderly people refuse to eat meat, claiming it is unhealthy for them. They usually eat dried fish. One of the key middle-class consumer practices is the increased ingestion of meat, sometimes even twice a day, whereas everyday local meals seldom contain a lot of meat, most likely one piece per person. The influence of veganism and vegetarianism would be interesting in the context of local food habits and cultural entanglements.

Another direction of development could be related to the methodological limitations mentioned earlier. Writing about food and corporeal experiences proved to be quite challenging. It could be fruitful to venture beyond text-oriented academic representations of knowledge and invest in more egalitarian, accessible and collaborative forms of knowledge production and presentation. For instance, a workshop, a photo gallery or a documentary film could be made to highlight the nuances of cooking, commensality and cultural production of tasting bodies.

Final note

This research began by asking simple questions: why do we eat what we eat? Why do others not eat what we do? How does our culture shape our daily food habits? How is the world perceived through senses other than vision and how can it be described? I hoped to explore the possibilities of sensory anthropology and anthropology of the senses in a North Ghanaian sociocultural environment. My goal was to look at the contemporary globalised Ghanaian society through their everyday consumer choices. I was interested to see what identities they perform and project, how gender identities are sustained and challenged and how bodies are quite literally built and moulded by complex social behaviours in sensoreality. Richard Rorty says that anthropologists should take on the role of "agents of love" or "connoisseurs of diversity". They should act towards bridging cultural differences and advocating for those marginalised by (Western) society. They should explain their views and behaviours from a

relativist perspective, on their own logical and magical terms. Still yet, anthropologists are not innocent and the majority of Western scholars work within and in accordance with the oppressive liberal and capitalist systems. Such systems do not strive for equality and acknowledged diversity, rather towards hierarchisation and commodification of goods. Such orders are also applied in the academic world. Yet still, more often than not, those connoisseurs of diversity discover incredible ways in which individuals appropriate, defy, accommodate and put to use combined elements from their and foreign lifeworlds, in effect turning them into their own.

List of references

Aasoglenang, A.T., Bonye, S.Z. (2013). Rural Livelihoods Diversity: Coping Strategies in Wa West District in Northern Ghana. *European Scientific Journal,* 9 (35), pp. 139-156.

Abankwa, V., Grimard, A., Sommer, K. and Kuria, F. (2009). Ghana: Tamale city profile. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

Adichie, C. N. (2014). *Americanah.* New York: Anchor Books.

Adjonyoh, Z. (2021). *Zoe's Ghana Kitchen: An Introduction to New African Cuisine - from Ghana with Love*. New York, Boston, London: Voracious. Little, Brown and Company.

Adongo, C.A., Anuga, S.W. and Dayour, F. (2015). Will They Tell Others to Taste? International Tourists' Experience of Ghanaian Cuisines. *Tourism Management Perspectives,* 15, pp. 57-64.

Adzahlie-Mensah, V. and Dunne, M. (2018). Continuing in the Shadows of Colonialism: The Educational Experiences of the African Child in Ghana. *Perspectives in Education,* 36 (2), pp. 44-60.

Ahmed, S. (2007). A Phenomenology of Whiteness. *Feminist Theory,* 8 (2).

Ako-Adjei, N.B. (2015). How Not to Write About Africa: African Cuisines in Food Writing. *Gastronomica,* 15 (1), pp. 44-55.

Almerico, G.M. (2014). Food and Identity: Food Studies, Cultural, and Personal Identity. *Journal of International Business and Cultural Studies.* 8, pp. 1-8.

American Home Economics Association. (2021). https://www.aafcs.org/about/about-us/what-is-fcs [Accessed: 21.01.2021].

Amuquandoh, F.E. (2011). International Tourists' Concerns about Traditional Foods in Ghana. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management,* 18 (1), pp. 1–9.

Ankoma-Sey, V.R., Quansah, F. and Nsoh, J. (2019). Determinants of Students' Enrolment in Home Economics Programme in Senior High Schools in Ghana. *European Journal of Education Studies,* 6 (4), pp. 339-350.

Appadurai, A. (1988a). How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 30 (1), pp. 3-24.

Appadurai, A. (1988b). Introduction: Place and Voice in Anthropological Theory. *Cultural Anthropology,* 3 (1), pp. 16-20.

Asante, G., Sekimoto, S. and Brown, C. (2016). Becoming 'Black': Exploring the Racialized Experiences of African Immigrants in the United States. *Howard Journal of Communications,* 27 (4), pp. 367-384.

Asare, P. (2012). *Labour Migration in Ghana*. Accra: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Avakian, A.V. and Haber, B. (eds) (2005). *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Awedoba, A.K. and Hahn, H.P. (2014). Wealth, Consumption and Migration in a West African Society: New Lifestyles and New Social Obligations among the Kasena, Northern Ghana. *Anthropos: International Review of Anthropology and Linguistics,* 109 (1), pp. 45-55.

Awumbila, M. and Ardayfio-Schandorf, E. (2008). Gendered poverty, migration and livelihood strategies of female porters in Accra, Ghana. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography,* 62 (3), pp. 171-179.

Balirano, G. and Guzzo, S. (eds) (2019). *Food Across Cultures: Linguistic Insights in Transcultural Tastes.* Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan.

Bashkow, I. (2006). *The Meaning of Whitemen: Race and Modernity in the Orokaiva Cultural World*. University of Chicago Press.

Baudrillard, J. (2000). *Simulacra and Simulation*. The University of Michigan Press.

Belasco, W.J. (1987). Ethnic Fast Foods: The Corporate Melting Pot. *Food and Foodways,* 2 (1), pp. 1-30.

Belasco, W.J. (2006). *Meals to Come*. University of California Press.

Belasco, W.J. (2008). *Food: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg.

Belasco, W.J. and Scranton, P. (2014). *Food Nations. Selling Tastes in Consumer Societies*. New York: Routledge.

Beoku-Betts, J.A. (1995). We Got Our Way of Cooking Things: Women, Food, and Preservation of Cultural Identity among the Gullah. *Gender & Society,* 9 (5), pp. 535-555.

Betts, S. and Goldey, P. (2005). A Multidisciplinary NGO: The Interface of Home Economics with Gender and Development. *Development in Practice,* 15 (1), pp. 106-114.

The Bible. https://biblehub.com [Accessed: 15.02.2021].

Bietti, L.M., Bangerter, A., Knutsen, D. and Mayor, E. (2019). Cultural Transmission in a Food Preparation Task: The Role of Interactivity, Innovation and Storytelling. *PLoS ONE,* 14 (9), pp. 1-19.

Bix, A.S. (2002). Equipped for Life: Gendered Technical Training and Consumerism in Home Economics, 1920-1980. *Technology and Culture,* 43 (4), pp. 228-254.

Bloch, M. (1999). Commensality and Poisoning. *Social Research.* 66 (1), pp. 133-149.

Boafo-Arthur, K. (1999). Ghana: Structural Adjustment, Democratization, and the Politics of Continuity. *African Studies Review,* 42 (2), pp. 41-72.

Bourdieu, P. (2010). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2007). Outline of a Theory of Practice. In: Seidman, S. and Alexander, J.C. (eds) *The New Social Theory Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 80-87.

Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (eds) (2007). *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.

Bubandt, N. (1998). The Odour of Things: Smell and the Cultural Elaboration of Disgust in Eastern Indonesia. *Ethnos,* 63 (1), pp. 48-80.

Bush, B. (1986). 'The Family Tree Is Not Cut': Women and Cultural Resistance in Slave Family Life in the British Caribbean. In: Okihiro, G.Y. (ed.) *In Resistance: Studies in African, Caribbean, and Afro-American History*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts. pp. 117-132.

Butler, E. (2018). Tasting off-flavors: food science, sensory knowledge and the consumer sensorium. *The Senses and Society,* 13 (1), pp. 75-88.

Butler, J. (1988). Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. *Theatre Journal,* 40 (4), pp. 519-531.

Buzard, J. (2003). On Auto-Ethnographic Authority. *The Yale Journal of Criticism,* 16 (1), pp. 61-91.

Cairns, K., Johnston J. and Baumann, S. (2010). Caring About Food: Doing Gender in the Foodie Kitchen. *Gender and Society,* 24 (5), pp. 591-615.

Cappellini, B., Parsons, E. and Harman, V. (2016). 'Right Taste, Wrong Place': Local Food Cultures, (Dis)Identification and the Formation of Classed Identity. *Sociology,* 50 (6), pp. 1089-1105.

Casentini, G. (2018). Migration networks and narratives in Ghana: a case study from the Zongo. *Africa*, 88 (3), pp. 452-468.

Certeau, M. de (1984). Part III. Spatial Practices. In: Certeau, M. de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 91-110.

Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as Method*. London and New York: Routledge.

Chang, H., Ngunjiri F. and Hernandez, K.-A.C. (2013). *Collaborative Autoethnography*. New York: Routledge.

Chapman, G.E. and Beagan, B.L. (2013). Food Practices and Transnational Identities: Case

Studies of Two Punjabi-Canadian Families. *Food, Culture & Society,* 16 (3), pp. 367-386.

Charmaz, K. (2000). Constructivist and Objectivist Grounded Theory. In: Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd Ed.)*, Thousand Oakes: Sage. pp. 509-635

Chevalier, S. (2015). Food, malls and the politics of consumption: South Africa's new middle class. *Development Southern Africa,* 32 (1), pp. 118-129.

Clark, G. (1989). Money, Sex and Cooking: Manipulation of the Paid/Unpaid Boundary by Asante Market Women. In: Rutz, H.J. and Orlove, B.S. (eds) *The Social Economy of Consumption*. Lanham: University Press of America and The Society for Economic Anthropology. pp. 323-348.

Clark, G. (2014). From Fasting to Fast Food in Kumasi, Ghana. In: Klein, J.A. and Murcott, A. (eds) *Food Consumption in Global Perspective. Essays in Anthropology of Food in Honour of Jack Goody*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. pp. 45-64.

Classen, C. (1992). The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories. *Ethos,* 20 (2), pp. 133-166.

Classen, C. (1997). Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses. *International Social Science Journal,* 49 (153), pp. 401-412.

Classen, C. and Howes, D. (1996). Making Sense of Culture: Anthropology as a Sensual Experience. *Ethnofoor,* 9 (2), pp. 86-96.

Conquergood, D. (1989). Poetics, Play, Process and Power: The Performative Turn in Anthropology. *Text and Performance Quarterly,* 1, pp. 82–95.

Conquergood, D. (1991). Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics. *Communication Monographs,* 58 (2), pp. 179-194.

Counihan, C. and Højlund, S. (2018). Making Taste Public. An Ethnographic Approach. In: Counihan, C.M. and Højlund, S. (eds) *Making Taste Public. Ethnographies of Food and the Senses*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 1-8.

Crang, M. (2003). Qualitative Methods: Touchy, Feely, Look-See? *Progress in Human Geography,* 27 (4), pp. 494-504.

Cresswell, J.W.J. and Cresswell, D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Csordas, T.J. (1990). Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. *Ethos,* 18 (1), pp. 5-47.

Cusack, I. (2014). Cookery Books and Celebrity Chefs: Men's Contributions to National

Cuisines in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Food, Culture & Society,* 17 (1), pp. 65-80.

D'Sylva, A. and Beagan, B.L. (2011). 'Food Is Culture, but It's Also Power': The Role of Food in Ethnic and Gender Identity Construction among Goan Canadian Women. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 20 (3), pp. 279-289.

Daston, L. (1995). The Moral Economy of Science. *Osiris,* 10, pp. 2-24.

Daston, L. and Galison, P. (1992). The Image of Objectivity. *Representations,* 40 (October), pp. 81-128.

Davis, A. (1981). Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves. *The Massachusetts Review,* 13 (1/2), pp. 81-100.

Davis, D.-A. and Craven, C. (2016). *Feminist Ethnography: Thinking through Methodologies, Challenges, and Possibilities*. Lanham: Rowman & Litterfield.

Delalande, F. (2003). Sense and Intersensoriality. *Leonardo*, 36 (4), pp. 313-316.

Dench, S., Iphofen, R. and Huws, U. (2004). *An EU Code of Ethics for Socio-Economic Research*. (IES Report 412). Brighton: The Institute for Employment Studies.

Denzin, N.K. (2002). Much Ado about Goffman. *The American Sociologist,* 33 (2), pp. 105-117.

Denzin, N.K. (2003). The Call to Performance. *Symbolic Interaction,* 26 (1), pp. 187-207.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds) (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Der, B. (1974). Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940. *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* 15 (1), pp. 42-61.

Desjarlais, R. and Throop, J.C. (2011). Phenomenological approaches in anthropology. *Annual review of anthropology*, 40, pp. 87-102.

Destombes, J. (2006). From Long-Term Patterns of Seasonal Hunger to Changing Experiences of Everyday Poverty: Northeastern Ghana c. 1930-2000. *The Journal of African History,* 47 (2), pp. 181-205.

Devadason, R. (2010). Cosmopolitanism, Geographical Imaginaries and Belonging in North London. *Urban Studies,* 47 (14), pp. 2945-2963.

DeVault, M.L. (1991). *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

DeWalt, K., DeWalt, B. (2011). *Participant Observation*. Plymouth: Altamira Press.

Domestic Bursars and Matrons Association. (2021). https://www.modernghana.com/news/180788/association-of-domestic-bursars-and-

matrons-holds.html [Accessed: 06.07.2021].

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Praeger.

Dunn, E.C. (2014). Humanitarianism, Displacement, and the Politics of Nothing in Postwar Georgia. *Slavic Review,* 73 (2), pp. 287-306.

Dunne, M. and Adzahlie-Mensah, V. (2016). Subordinate subjects: the work of the hidden curriculum in post-colonial Ghana. In: Wyse, D., Hayward, L. and Pandaya, J. (eds) *The SAGE handbook of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd. pp. 216-230.

Duranti, A. (2010). Husserl, Intersubjectivity and Anthropology. *Anthropological Theory,* 10 (1–2), pp. 16-35.

Durham, D. (2011). Disgust and the anthropological imagination. *Ethnos*, 76 (2), pp. 131-156.

Durmelat, S. (2015). Tasting Displacement: Couscous and Culinary Citizenship in Maghrebi-French Diasporic Cinema. *Food and Foodways,* 23 (1-2), pp. 104-126.

Eat Forum 2022 https://eatforum.org/learn-and-discover/qa-with-selassie-atadika-plant-forward-50/ [Accessed: 09.03.2022].

Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). What is food tourism? *Tourism management*, *68*, pp. 250-263.

Ellis, C., Adams, T.E. and Bochner, A.P. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research*, 36 (4), pp. 273-290.

Eriksen, T.H. (2001). Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences. In: Ashmore, D., Jussim, L. and Wilder, D. (eds) *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*. Oxford University Press. pp. 42-68

Esposito, E. (2019). Callaloo or Pelau? Food, Identity and Politics in Trinidad and Tobago. In: Balirano, G. and Guzzo, S. (eds) *Food across Cultures: Linguistic Insights in Transcultural Tastes*. Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 43-70.

Ettorre, E. (2016). *Autoethnography as feminist method: Sensitising the feminist 'I'*. New York and London: Routledge.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1954). The meaning of sacrifice among the Nuer. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 84(1/2), pp. 21-33.

Fairtlough, G.H. (1991). Habermas' concept of "Lifeworld". *Systems Practice* 4, pp. 547–563.

Falk, P. (1991). Homo Culinarius: Towards an Historical Anthropology of Taste. *Social*

science information, 30 (4), pp. 757-790.

Falk, P. (1996). Expelling future threats: some observations on the magical world of vitamins. *The Sociological Review* 44 (1), pp. 183-203.

Feagan, R. (2007). The Place of Food: Mapping out the 'Local' in Local Food Systems. *Progress in Human Geography,* 31 (1), pp. 23-42.

Featherstone, M. (1987). Lifestyle and Consumer Culture. *Theory, Culture & Society,* 4 (1), pp. 55-70.

Feld, S. (2005). Places Sensed, Senses Placed: Towards a Sensuous Epistemology of Environments. In: Howes, D. (ed.) *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg. pp. 179-191

Ferguson, P.P. (2011). The Senses of Taste" *American Historical Review,* 116 (2), pp. 371-384.

Fernández-Armesto, F. (2002). *Near a thousand tables: A history of food*. New York: The Free Press.

Ferzacca, S., Naidoo, N., Wang, M. C., Reddy, G., and Dam, R. M. van (2013). Sometimes they'll tell me what they want: Family and inter-generational food preferences in the food decisions of Singaporean women. *Appetite,* 69, pp. 156-167.

Fischler, C. (1988). Food, Self and Identity. *Social Science Information,* 27 (2), pp. 275-292.

Fortes, M. and Fortes, S. L. (1936). Food in the domestic economy of the Tallensi. *Africa*, 9 (2), pp. 237-276.

Foucault, M. (1982). The Subject and Power. *Critical Inquiry,* 8, pp. 777-795.

Förster, T. (2022). Bodily ethnography: Some epistemological challenges of participation. *Ethnography*, 0(0).

Gabaccia, D. R. (1998). *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gallegos, D. and McHoul, A. (2006). 'It's Not about Good Taste. It's about Tastes Good': Bourdieu and Campbell's Soup…and Beyond. *The Senses and Society,* 1 (2), pp. 165-181.

Gardner, M.P., Wansink, B., Kim, J. and Park, S.B. (2014). Better Moods for Better Eating?: How Mood Influences Food Choice. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 24 (3), pp. 320-335.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick Description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays.* New York, Basic Books. pp. 310-323.

Geertz, C. (2000). *Available Light. Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Geest, K. van der (2011). North-South Migration in Ghana: What Role for the Environment? *International Migration,* 49 (S1), pp. 69-94.

Geest, K. van der (2010). Local Perceptions of Migration from North-West Ghana. *Africa,* 80 (4), pp. 595-619.

Gennep, A. van, Vizendom, M., Caffee, G. L. and Kertzer, D. I. (2019) *The rites of passage*. Second edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Geurts, K.L. (2003). *Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Geurts, K.L. (2018). 'Bodily Ways of Knowing: Anthropological and Historical Approaches to Affect and the Senses' in *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of African History*. https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-320 [Accessesed: 15.05.2021].

Ghana School Feeding Programme. (2020) https://schoolfeeding.gov.gh [Accessed: 14.02.2022].

Ghana Home Economics Association. (2021). http://www.gheagh.org/pages/about_us.php [Accessed: 22.01.2021].

Giacoman, C. (2016). The dimensions and role of commensality: A theoretical model drawn from the significance of communal eating among adults in Santiago, Chile. *Appetite*, 107, pp. 460-470.

Giedion, S. (1948). *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gikandi, S. (2011). *Slavery and the Culture of Taste.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Gillespie, A. and Cornish, F. (2010). Intersubjectivity: Towards a Dialogical Analysis. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour,* 40 (1), pp. 19-46.

Gilman, C. P. (ed.) (2002). *The dress of women: A critical introduction to the symbolism and sociology of clothing*. Westport and London: Greenwood Press.

Giroux, H.A. (2004). Cultural Studies and the Politics of Public Pedagogy: Making the Political More Pedagogical. *Parallax,* 10 (2), pp. 73-89.

Glaser, B.G. (2002). Conceptualization: On Theory and Theorizing Using Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 1 (2), pp. 23-38.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.

Goody, J. (1982). *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Goody, J. (2002). The Anthropology of the Senses and Sensations. *La Ricerca Folklorica*, 45 pp. 17-28.

Goody, J. and Goody, E. (1995). Food and Identities: Changing Patterns of Consumption in Ghana. *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology,* 18 (3), pp. 1-14.

Graham, C.K. (2013). *The History of Education in Ghana. From the Earliest Times to the Declaration of Independence*. London: Routledge.

Green, G., Barbour, R.S., Barnard M. and Kitzinger, J. (1993). 'Who Wears the Trousers?': Sexual Harassment in Research Settings. *Women's Studies International Forum,* 16 (6), pp. 627-637.

Greenhouse, C.J. (1985). Anthropology at Home: Whose Home? *Human Organization,* 44 (3), pp. 261-264.

Groh-Samberg, O., Schröder, T. and Speer, A. (2023). Social Milieus and Social Integration. From Theoretical Considerations to an Empirical Model. *Köln Z Soziol,* **75** (Suppl 1), pp. 305–329.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (eds) (1997a). *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (eds) (1997b). *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field of Science*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press.

Hall, C. M., & Sharples, L. (2004). The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste. In: Hall, C.M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macionis, N. and Cambourne, B. (eds) *Food tourism around the world*. London: Routledge. pp. 1-24

Ham, J.R. (2020). 'Every Day It's Tuo Zaafi': Considering Food Preference in a Food Insecure Region of Ghana. *Agriculture and Human Values,* 37 (3), pp. 907-917.

Ham, J.R. (2017). Cooking to be modern but eating to be healthy: the role of Dawa-Dawa in contemporary Ghanaian foodways. *Food, Culture & Society*, 20 (2), pp. 237-256.

Hamera, J. (2006). Performance, performativity, and cultural poiesis in practices of everyday life. In: Madison, D.S. and Hamera, J. (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. pp. 46-64

Hanna, J.F. (2004). The Scope and Limits of Scientific Objectivity. *Philosophy of Science,* 71

(3), pp. 339-361.

Haukanes, H. (2008). Sharing Food, Sharing Taste? Consumption Practices, Gender Relations and Individuality in Czech Families. *Anthropology of food*, (S3). https://journals.openedition.org/aof/1912 [Accessed: 13.02.2021].

Hayes-Conroy, A. and Hayes-Conroy, J. (2008). Taking Back Taste: Feminism, Food and Visceral Politics. *Gender, Place and Culture,* 15 (5), pp. 461-473.

Heiman, R., Liechty, M. and Freeman, C. (2012). Introduction: Charting an Anthropology of the Middle Classes. In: Heiman, R., Freeman, C. and Liechty, M. (eds) *The Global Middle Classes: Theorizing Through Ethnography (School for Advanced Research Advanced Seminar Series)*, pp. 3-29.

Highmore, B. (2002). *Everyday life and cultural theory: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

Highmore, B. (2008). Alimentary Agents: Food, Cultural Theory and Multiculturalism. *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 29 (4), pp. 381-398.

Holtzman, J.D. (2001). The food of elders, the "ration" of women: Brewing, gender, and domestic processes among the Samburu of Northern Kenya. *American anthropologist*, 103(4), pp. 1041-1058.

Holtzman, J.D. (2002). Politics And Gastropolitics: Gender And The Power Of Food In Two African Pastoralist Societies. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2), pp. 259-278.

Holtzman, J.D. (2006). Food and Memory. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 35, pp. 361-378.

Holtzman, J.D. (2007). Eating time: Capitalist history and pastoralist history among Samburu herders in Northern Kenya. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1(3), pp. 436-448.

Homan, G.C. (1941). Anxiety and Ritual: The Theories of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. *American Anthropologist,* 43 (2), pp. 164-172.

Horrigan-Kelly, M., Millar, M. and Dowling, M. (2016). Understanding the key tenets of Heidegger's philosophy for interpretive phenomenological research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15 (1), pp. 1-8.

Howes, D. (1991). *The varieties of sensory experience: a sourcebook in the anthropology of the senses*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Howes, D. (2005). *Empire of the senses: the sensual culture reader*. Oxford: Berg.

Howes, D. (2010). Response to Sarah Pink: The Future of Sensory Anthropology. *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 18(3), pp. 331-333.

Howes, D. (2019). Multisensory Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 48,

pp. 17-28.

Howes, D. and Classen, C. (2013). *Ways of Sensing: Understanding the senses in society*. New York: Routledge.

Howes, D. and Classen, C. (2017). *Doing Sensory Anthropology*. www.sensorystudies.org. [Accessed: 21.11.2019].

Howes, D. and Lalonde, M. (1991). The History of Sensibilities: Of the Standard of Taste in Mid-Eighteen Century England and the Circulation of Smells in Post-Revolutionary France. *Dialectical Anthropology,* 16 (2), pp. 125-135.

Ingold, T. (2000) *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London: Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2011). Worlds of sense and sensing the world: a response to Sarah Pink and David Howes. *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 19 (3), pp. 313-317.

Jackson, A. (1987). *Anthropology at Home*. Tavistock Publications.

Jackson, T. (2018). *Multisensory Ethnography: Sensory Experience, the Sentient Body and Cultural Phenomena*. PhD thesis. Leeds: University of Leeds.

Jung, Y. (2014). Tasting and Judging the Unknown Terroir of the Bulgarian Wine: The Political Economy of Sensory Experience. *Food and Foodways,* 22 (1-2), pp. 24-47.

Kahn, M. (1988). "Men are taro" (they cannot be rice): Political aspects of food choices in Wamira, Papua New Guinea. *Food and Foodways*, 3 (1-2), pp. 41-57.

Kelly, J. (2016). The Ethnographic Turn. In: Hopkins, D. (ed.) *A Companion to Dada and Surrealism*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 319-333

Kemmer, D. (2000). Tradition and Change in Domestic Roles and Food Preparation. *Sociology,* 34 (2), pp. 323-333.

Kesselring, R. (2015). *Moments of Dislocation: Why the Body Matters in Ethnographic Research*. Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Basel (Basel Papers on Political Transformations, 8).

Kifleyesus, A. (2002). Muslims and meals: the social and symbolic function of foods in changing socio-economic environments. *Africa*, 72 (2), pp. 245-276.

King, J. C. H. (1975). [Review of *Kwakiutl Ethnography; Indians Before Columbus*, by F. Boas, P. S. Martin, G. I. Quimby, & D. Collier]. *RAIN*, *11*, pp. 12.

Kittrell, F.P. (1948). Some Observations on Life and Education in West Africa. *The Journal of Negro Education,* 17 (2), pp. 192-194.

Kitzinger, C. and Thomas, A. (1995). Sexual Harassment: A Discursive Approach. In:

Wilkinson S. and Kitzinger C. (eds) *Feminism and Discourse: Psychological Perspectives*. pp. 32-48.

Klein, J.A. and Murcott, A. (eds) (2014). *Food Consumption in Global Perspective: Essays in the Anthropology of Food in Honour of Jack Goody*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Klein, J.A. and Watson, J.L. (eds) (2016). *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Kloß, S.T. (2017). Sexual(Ized) Harassment and Ethnographic Fieldwork: A Silenced Aspect of Social Research. *Ethnography,* 18 (3), pp. 396-414.

Konadu-Agyemang, K. and Adanu, S. (2003). The changing geography of export trade in Ghana under structural adjustment programs: Some socioeconomic and spatial implications. *The Professional Geographer*, 55 (4), pp. 513-527.

Korsmeyer, C. and Sutton, D.E. (2011). The Sensory Experience of Food. *Food, Culture and Society,* 14 (4), pp. 461-475.

Kuenyeheia, E.N. (2018). Barbara Baeta: 50 years of feeding the nation and its visitors. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@elikemkuenyehia/babra-baeta-50-years-of-feeding-the-nation-and-its-visitors-139bb5050bbc [Accessed: 15.03.2020].

Kuhn, T. (1962). Historical Structure of Scientific Discovery. *Science,* 136 (3518), pp. 760-764.

Küpers, W. (2013). A Phenomenology of Embodied Senses: The 'Making' of Sense in Organisational Culture. *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion,* 5 (4), pp. 325-341.

Langevang, T. (2008). Claiming place: the production of young men's street meeting places in Accra, Ghana. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography,* 90 (3), pp. 227-242.

Law, L. (2001). Home Cooking: Filipino Women and Geographies of the Senses in Hong Kong. *Ecumene,* 8 (3), pp. 264-283.

Lentz, C. (1995). 'Tribalism' and Ethnicity in Africa. A Review of Four Decades of Anglophone Research. *Cah. Sci.Hum.,* 31 (2), pp. 303-328.

Lentz, C. (1999) Changing food habits: an introduction. In: Lentz, C. (ed.) *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America and Europe.* Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Lentz, C. (2000). Contested Identities: The History of Ethnicity in Northwestern Ghana. In: Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (eds) *Ethnicity in Ghana: the limits of intervention.*

Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan. pp. 137-161.

Lentz, C. (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lentz, C. (2008). Hard Work, Determination, and Luck: Biographical Narratives of a Northern Ghanaian Elite. *Ghana Studies,* 11 (1), pp. 47-76.

Lentz, C. and Behrends, A. (2012). Education, Careers, and Home Ties: The Ethnography of an Emerging Middle Class from Northern Ghana. *Zeitschrift Für Ethnologie,* 2 (May), pp. 139-164.

Lentz, C. and Noll, A. (2021). Across Regional Disparities and beyond Family Ties: A Ghanaian Middle Class in the Making. *History and Anthropology,* 0 (0), pp. 1-18.

Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (2000). Ethnicity in Ghana: A Comparative Perspective. In: Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (eds) *Ethnicity in Ghana*. Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan. pp. 1-28

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966). The Culinary Triangle. *Partisan Review,* 33 (4), pp. 585-595.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (2013). The Culinary Triangle. In: Counihan, C. and Esterik, P. van (eds) *Food and Culture: A Reader*. New York: Routledge. pp. 40-47

Locher, J.L., Yoels W.C., Maurer, D. and Ells, J. van (2005). Comfort Foods: An Exploratory Journey Into The Social and Emotional Significance of Food. *Food and Foodways,* 13 (4), pp. 273-297.

Longhurst, R., Johnston, L. and Ho, E. (2009). A Visceral Approach: Cooking 'at Home' with Migrant Women in Hamilton, New Zealand. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 34 (3), pp. 333-345.

López-Pedreros, A. R. and Weinstein, B. (eds) (2012). *The Making of the Middle Class: Towards a Transnational History*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Lucy, J.A. (2001). 'Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis'. In: *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. pp. 13486-13490.

Macpherson, F. (ed.) (2011). *The Senses: Classic and Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Madison, D. S. and Hamera, J. (eds) (2006). *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. Thousand Oakes, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Malinowski, B. (2001). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea [1922/1994]* (1st ed.). London: Routledge.

Malinowski, B. (1935) *Coral gardens and their magic : a study of the methods of tilling the*

soil and of agricultural rites in the Trobriand Islands. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Mann, A., Mol, A., Satalkar, P., Savirani, A., Selim, N., Sur, M. and Yates-Doerr, E. (2011). Mixing Methods, Tasting Fingers. Notes on an Ethnographic Experiment. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory,* 1 (1), pp. 221-243.

Maquet, J. (1970). The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology. Vol. 1. *Technology and Culture,* 11 (4), pp. 613-615.

Marovelli, B. (2019). Cooking and Eating Together in London: Food Sharing Initiatives as Collective Spaces of Encounter. *Geoforum,* 99 (January), pp. 190-201.

Marte, L. (2007). Foodmaps: Tracing Boundaries of 'home' through Food Relations. *Food and Foodways,* 15 (3-4), pp. 261-289.

Mata-Codesal, D. (2008). Rice & Coriander Sensorial Re-Creations of Home through Food: Ecuadorians in a Northern Spanish City. *Reason*, 50, pp. 1-21.

Mata-Codesal, D. (2010). Eating Abroad, Remembering (at) Home. *Anthropology of Food*, 7, pp. 1-13.

Mauss, M. (1973). Techniques of the Body. *Economy and Society,* 2 (1), pp. 70-88.

Mberengwa, L.R. and Mthombeni, F.M. (2012). Envisioning an African-Centric Higher Education Home Economics Curriculum for the 21st Century. In: Pedergast, D., McGregor, S.L.T. and Turkki, K. (eds) *Creating Home Economics Futures: The Next 100 Years*. QLD: Australian Academic Press. pp. 195-206

McCann, J.C. (2009). *Stirring the Pot: A History of African Cuisine*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.

McLaren, M.A. (2002). *Feminism, Foucault, and Embodied Subjectivity*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McPhail, D., Beagan, B. and Chapman, G.E. (2012). "I Don't Want to Be Sexist but…" denying and re-inscribing gender through food. *Food, Culture and Society,* 15 (3), pp. 473-489.

Melber, H. (2016). *The Rise of Africa's Middle Class: myths, realities and critical engagements*. London: Zed Books.

Messer, E. and Cohen, M.J. (2007). Conflict, Food Insecurity and Globalization. *Food, Culture & Society,* 10 (2), pp. 297-315.

Middleton, J. (2010). Sense and the City: Exploring the Embodied Geographies of Urban Walking. *Social and Cultural Geography,* 11 (6), pp. 575-596.

Miller, C. and Razavi, S. (1995). From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 11 (4), pp. 50-72.

Miller, W.I. (1997). Gluttony. *Representations,* 60, pp. 92-112.

Miller, W.I. (1998). *The Anatomy of Disgust*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Mills, J., Bonner, A. and Francis, K. (2006). The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 5 (1), pp. 25-35.

Mintz, S.W. (1960). *Worker in the Cane. A Puerto Rican Life History*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mintz, S.W. (1974). *Caribbean Transformations*. Chicago: Aldine Press.

Mintz, S.W. (1985). *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Viking-Penguin.

Mintz, S.W. (1989). Cuisine and Haute Cuisine: How Are They Linked? *Food and Foodways,* 3 (3), pp. 185-190.

Mintz, S.W. (1996). *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Power, and the Past*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mintz, S.W. (2010). *Three Ancient Colonies. Caribbean Themes and Variations.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Mintz, S.W. and Du Bois, C.M. (2002). The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 31 (2002), pp. 99-119.

Mondada, L. (2018). Multiple Temporalities of Language and Body in Interaction: Challenges for Transcribing Multimodality. *Research on Language and Social Interaction,* 51 (1), pp. 85-106.

Mondada, L. (2019). Contemporary Issues in Conversation Analysis: Embodiment and Materiality, Multimodality and Multisensoriality in Social Interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 145 (May), pp. 47-62.

Mondada, L. (2021). Orchestrating Multi-Sensoriality in Tasting Sessions: Sensing Bodies, Normativity, and Language. *Symbolic Interaction,* 44 (1), pp. 63-86.

Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. London: Routledge.

Morris, M. (2014). Comfort Food. *Gastronomica,* 14 (4), pp. 81-82.

Moseley, W.G., Carney, J. and Becker, L. (2010). Neoliberal Policy, Rural Livelihoods, and Urban Food Security in West Africa: A Comparative Study of The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United*

States of America, 107 (13), pp. 5774-5779.

Naguib, N. (2015). *Nurturing Masculinities: Men, Food, and Family in Contemporary Egypt*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Norbeck, E. (1963). African Rituals of Conflict. *American Anthropologist,* 65 (6). pp. 1254-1279.

Nugent, P. (1995). *Big Men, Small Boys, and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology, and the Burden of History, 1982-1994*. London: Pinter.

Nugent, P. (2010). Do Nations Have Stomachs? Food, Drink and Imagined Community in Africa. *Africa Spectrum,* 45 (3), pp. 87-113.

Observatory of Economic Complexity. (2022). https://oec.world/en/profile/country/gha/ [Accessed: 25.03.2022].

O'Kane, D. and Scharrer, T. (2018). Anthropology and class in Africa: challenges of the past and present. In: O'Kane, D., Scharrer, T. and Kroeker, L. (eds) *Middle Classes in Africa*. Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 81-105

O'Kane, D., Scharrer, T., and Kroeker, L. (eds) (2018). *Middle Classes in Africa. Changing Lives and Conceptual Challenges*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Okely, J. (2007). Fieldwork Embodied. *Sociological Review,* 55 (SUPPL. 1), pp. 65-79.

Oldenburg, R. and Brissett, D. (1982). The third place. *Qualitative sociology*, *5* (4), pp. 265-284.

O'Neill, M. and Hubbard, P. (2010). Walking, Sensing, Belonging: Ethno-Mimesis as Performative Praxis. *Visual Studies,* 25 (1), pp. 46-58.

Osseo-Asare, F. (2002). 'We Eat First With Our Eyes': On Ghanaian Cuisine. *Gastronomica,* 2 (1), pp. 49-57.

Owusu, V., Abdulai A. and Abdul-Rahman, S. (2011). Non-Farm Work and Food Security among Farm Households in Northern Ghana. *Food Policy,* 36 (2), pp. 108-118.

Palmer, G.B. and Jankowiak, W.R. (1996). Performance and Imagination: Toward an Anthropology of the Spectacular and the Mundane. *Cultural Anthropology,* 11 (2), pp. 225-258.

Pearce, K. (2018). Philosophy and Trust in the Senses, From Montaigne to Berkeley. *Philosophy Mod Squad.* [Blog post]. 6 July 2018. https://philosophymodsquad.wordpress.com/2018/07/06/philosophy-and-trust-in-the-senses-from-montaigne-to-berkeley/ [Accessed: 17.05.2021]

Peirano, M.G.S. (1998). When Anthropology Is at Home: The Different Contexts of a Single

Discipline. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 27, pp. 105-128.

Pfeiffer, J. and Chapman, R. (2010). Anthropological Perspectives on Structural Adjustment and Public Health. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 39, pp. 149-165.

Pink, S. (2009). *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pink, S. (2010). The Future of Sensory Anthropology/the Anthropology of the Senses. *Social Anthropology,* 18 (3), pp. 331-333.

Pink, S. (2012). *Situating everyday life: practices and places*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Pink, S. (2020). *Home Truths: Gender, Domestic Objects and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge.

Pink, S., Hubbard, P., O'Neill, M. and Radley, A. (2010). Walking across Disciplines: From Ethnography to Arts Practice. *Visual Studies,* 25 (1), pp. 1-7.

Pollard, A. (2009). Field of Screams: Difficulty and Ethnographic Fieldwork. *Anthropology Matters Journal,* 11 (2), pp. 1-24.

Portes, A. (1998). Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 24 (1) pp. 1-24.

Pratt, M.L. (2007). *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. *Second Edition*. London: Routledge.

Proust, M. (1992). *In Search of Lost Time, Volume I: Swann's Way.* New York: Modern Library.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. (1933) *The Andaman Islanders*. Cambridge: University Press.

Ranger, T. (1993). The invention of tradition revisited: the case of colonial Africa. In: Range, T. and Vaughan, O. (eds) *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-century Africa*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press. pp. 62-111.

Reed-Danahay, D. (ed.) (1997). *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social*. Oxford and New York: Berg.

Reed-Danahay, D. (2009). Anthropologists, Education, and Autoethnography. *Reviews in Anthropology,* 38 (1), pp. 28-47.

Reuters. (2022). https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ghana-cocoa/incoming-ghana-government-gives-cocoa-sector-chance-of-fresh-start-idUSKBN1481Q5 [Accessed: 09.03.2022].

Richards, A.I. (1941). Land, Labour, and Diet in Northern Rhodesia: An Economic Study of the Bemba Tribe: The Mrs. Will Gordon Lecture, *The Geographical Journal,* 124 (3), pp. 302-313.

Richards, G. (2015). Evolving Gastronomic Experiences: From Food to Foodies to Foodscapes. *Journal of Gastronomy and Tourism,* 1, pp. 1-14.

Rorty, R. (1991). *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers, vol. 1*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rozin, P.H.J., Haidt, J. and McCauley, C.R. (2008). Disgust. In: Lewis, M., Haviland-Jones, J.M. and Barrett, L.F. (eds) *Handbook of Emotions.* London and New York: The Guilford Press. pp. 757-776

Rudge, T. (2015). Julia Kristeva: Abjection, Embodiment and Boundaries. In: Collyer, F. (ed.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Theory in Health, Illness and Medicine*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 504-519

Rudwick, S. (2010). Coconut Notes: Discursive Constructions of Race Identity in South Africa. *Oriental Archive,* 78, pp. 55-73.

Russek, A. (2011). Appetites without Prejudice: U.S. Foreign Restaurants and the Globalization of American Food between the Wars. *Food and Foodways,* 19 (1–2), pp. 34-55.

Sabar, G. and Posner, R. (2013). Remembering the Past and Constructing the Future over a Communal Plate: Restaurants Established by African Asylum Seekers in Tel Aviv. *Food, Culture and Society,* 16 (2), pp. 197-222.

Sanjinés, J. (2007). The Nation: An Imagined Community? *Cultural Studies,* 21 (2-3), pp. 295-308.

Sekimoto, S. (2018). Race and the senses: Toward articulating the sensory apparatus of race. *Critical Philosophy of Race* 6 (1), pp. 82-100.

Seremetakis, C.N. (ed.) (2019). *The Senses Still. Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*. London: Routledge.

Seremetakis, C.N. (1993). The Memory of the Senses: Historical Perception, Commensal Exchange and Modernity. *Visual Anthropology Review,* 9 (2), pp. 2-18.

Shanklin, E. (1981). Two meanings and uses of tradition. *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 37 (1), pp. 71-89.

Shilling, C. (2004). Physical Capital and Situated Action: A New Direction for Corporeal Sociology. *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 25 (4), pp. 473-487.

Song, H. (2017). James Clifford and the Ethical Turn in Anthropology. *Cultural Critique*, 97, pp. 176-200.

Sparr, P. (ed.) (1994). *Mortgaging Women's Lives: Feminist Critiques of Structural*

Adjustment. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.

Spence, C. (2017). Comfort Food: A Review. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science,* 9 (October), pp. 105-109.

Spittler, G. (1999). In Praise of the Simple Meal: African and European Food Culture Compared. In: Lentz, C. (ed.) *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America and Europe*. Amsterdam: Harrington Academic Publishers. pp. 27-42.

Spittler, G. (2014). Dichte Teilnahme und darüber hinaus. *Sociologus*, 64 (2), pp. 207–230.

Spronk, R. (2014). Exploring the Middle Classes in Nairobi: From Modes of Production to Modes of Sophistication. *African Studies Review*, 57 (1), pp. 93-114.

Srinivas, T. (2006). 'As Mother Made It': The Cosmopolitan Indian Family, 'Authentic' Food and the Construction of Cultural Utopia. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family,* 32 (2), pp. 191-221.

Stacy, W. (2010). The Comfort Food Fallacy: Avoiding Old Favorites in Times of Change. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 36 (6), pp. 950-963.

Stasch, R. (2006). New Release: A Society Through Its Other [book review]. *Anthropological Quarterly,* 79 (2), pp. 325-334.

Stiegler, B. and Roussow, J. (2020). Suffocated Desire, or How the Culture Industry Destroys the Individual: Contribution to a Theory of Mass Consumption. *Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy,* 34, pp. 52-61.

Stoller, P. (1989). *The Taste of Ethnographic Things. The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Stoller, P. (1997). *Sensuous Scholarship*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Stoller, P. (2004). Sensuous Ethnography, African Persuasions, and Social Knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 10 (6), pp. 817-835.

Stoller, P. and Olkes, C. (1986). Bad Sauce, Good Ethnography. *Cultural Anthropology,* 1 (3), pp. 336-352.

Strathern, M. (1987). The Limits of Auto-Anthropology. In: Jackson, A. (ed.) *Anthropology at Home*. London: Tavistock Publications. pp. 16-37.

Stringfellow, L., MacLaren, A., Maclean, M. and O'Gorman, K. (2013). Conceptualizing Taste: Food, Culture and Celebrities. *Tourism Management,* 37 (August), pp. 77-85.

Sutton, D.E. (2001). *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*. London and New York: Berg.

Sutton, D.E. (2009). The Mindful Kitchen, the Embodied Cook: Tools, Technology and

Knowledge Transmission on a Greek Island. *Material Culture Review,* 70, pp. 63-68.

Sutton, D.E. (2014). *Secrets from the Greek Kitchen: Cooking, Skill and Everyday Life on an Aegean Island*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Sutton, D.E., Naguib, N., Vournelis, L. and Dickinson, M. (2013). Food and Contemporary Protest Movements. *Food, Culture and Society,* 16 (3), pp. 345-348.

Sutton, D.E. (2018). Cooking Skills, The Senses and Memory: The Fate of Practical Knowledge. In: Esterik P., van and Counihan C. *Food and Culture. A Reader (Third Edition),* New York and London: Routledge. pp. 299-319.

Synnott, A. (1991). Puzzling over the Senses: From Plato to Marx. In: Howes, D. (ed.) *Varieties of Sensory Experience*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. pp. 61-78.

Taussig, M.T. (1993). *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. New York: Routledge.

Therborn, G. (2012). Class in the 21st Century. *New Left Review,* 78, pp. 5-29.

Troisi, J.D. and Gabriel, S. (2011). Chicken Soup Really Is Good for the Soul: 'Comfort Food' Fulfills the Need to Belong. *Psychological Science,* 22 (6), pp. 747-753.

Troisi, J.D. and Wright, J.W.C. (2016). Comfort Food: Nourishing Our Collective Stomachs and Our Collective Minds. *Teaching of Psychology,* 44 (1), pp. 78-84.

Tsigkas, A., 2019. Tasting Ceylon Tea: aesthetic judgment beyond "good taste". *Food, Culture & Society*. 22 (2), pp.152-167.

Tuomainen, H.M. (2009). Ethnic Identity, (Post)Colonialism and Foodways: Ghanaians in London. *Food, Culture and Society,* 11 (1), pp. 69-87.

Turner, B.S. and Edmunds, J. (2002). The distaste of taste: Bourdieu, cultural capital and the Australian postwar elite. *Journal of Consumer Culture,* 2 (2), pp. 219-239.

Turner, V.W. (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Turner, V.W. (1988). *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.

Warde, A. (2008). Dimensions of a Social Theory of Taste. *Journal of Cultural Economy,* 1 (3), pp. 321-336.

Warin, M. and Dennis, S. (2005). Threads of Memory: Reproducing the Cypress Tree through Sensual Consumption. *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 26 (1-2), pp. 159-170.

Weigley, E.S. (1974). It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement. *American Quarterly,* 26 (1), pp. 79-96.

Weismantel, M.J. (1988). *Food, Gender, and Poverty in the Ecuadorian Andes.* Philadelphia:

University of Pennsylvania Press.

Weismantel, M.J. (1991). Maize Beer and Andean Social Transformations: Drunken Indians, Bread Babies, and Chosen Women. *MLN* 106 (4), pp. 861-879.

Weismantel, M.J. (2004). Moche Sex Pots: Reproduction and Temporality in Ancient South America. *American Anthropologist,* 106 (3), pp. 495-505.

Wilk, R. (1996). Learning to Be Local in Belize: Global Systems of Common Difference. In: Miller, D. (ed.) *Worlds Apart. Modernity through the Prism of the Local*, London: Routledge. pp. 110-133.

Wilks, I. (2002). *Wa and the Wala: Islam and Polity in Northwestern Ghana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Williams-Forson, P. (2010). Other Women Cooked for My Husband: Negotiating Gender, Food, and Identities in an African American / Ghanaian Household. *Feminist Studies,* 36 (2), pp. 435-461.

Williams-Forson, P. and Counihan, C. (2013). *Taking food public: Redefining foodways in a changing world*. London: Routledge.

Williams-Forson, P. (2014). 'I Haven't Eaten If I Don't Have My Soup and Fufu': Cultural Preservation through Food and Foodways among Ghanaian Migrants in the United States. *Africa Today,* 61 (1), pp. 69-87.

Wise, A. (2010). Sensuous Multiculturalism: Emotional Landscapes of Inter-Ethnic Living in Australian Suburbia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 36 (6), pp. 917-937.

Wise, A. (2012). Moving Food: Gustatory Commensality And Disjuncture In Everyday Multiculturalism. *New Formations,* 74 (74), pp. 82-107.

Wise, A. and Velayutham, S. (eds) (2009). *Everyday Multiculturalism*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wolfinger, N. (2002). On writing fieldnotes: collection strategies and background expectancies. *Qualitative Research,* 2 (1), pp. 85-95.

Worby, E. (1994). Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in Northwestern Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 20 (3), pp. 371-392.

Yaro, J.A. (2006). Is Deagrarianisation Real? A Study of Livelihood Activities in Rural Northern Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 44 (1), pp. 125-156.

Yi, L. (2016). The Sense of Chengdu: Embodied Heritage in Tastescape. PhD thesis. University of Illinois.

Bibliography

Aasoglenang, A.T., Bonye, S.Z. (2013). Rural Livelihoods Diversity: Coping Strategies in Wa West District in Northern Ghana. *European Scientific Journal,* 9 (35), pp. 139–156.

Abankwa, V., Grimard, A., Sommer, K. and Kuria, F. (2009). Ghana: Tamale city profile. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

Adichie, C. N. (2014). *Americanah.* New York: Anchor Books.

Adjonyoh, Z. (2021). *Zoe's Ghana Kitchen: An Introduction to New African Cuisine - from Ghana with Love*. New York, Boston, London: Voracious. Little, Brown and Company.

Adongo, C.A., Anuga, S.W. and Dayour, F. (2015). Will They Tell Others to Taste? International Tourists' Experience of Ghanaian Cuisines. *Tourism Management Perspectives,* 15, pp. 57–64.

Adzahlie-Mensah, V. and Dunne, M. (2018). Continuing in the Shadows of Colonialism: The Educational Experiences of the African Child in Ghana. *Perspectives in Education,* 36 (2), pp. 44-60.

Agovino, M., Crociata, A., Quaglione, D., Sacco, P. and Sarra, A. (2017). Good taste tastes good. Cultural capital as a determinant of organic food purchase by Italian consumers: Evidence and policy implications. *Ecological Economics*, 141, pp. 66-75.

Ahmed, S. (2007). A Phenomenology of Whiteness. *Feminist Theory,* 8 (2).

Ako-Adjei, N.B. (2015). How Not to Write About Africa: African Cuisines in Food Writing. *Gastronomica,* 15 (1), pp. 44–55.

Almerico, G.M. (2014). Food and Identity: Food Studies, Cultural, and Personal Identity. *Journal of International Business and Cultural Studies,* 8, pp. 1-8.

Ameeriar, L. (2012). Sanitized Sensorium. *American Anthropologist,* 114 (3), pp. 509-520.

American Home Economics Association. (2021). https://www.aafcs.org/about/about-us/what-is-fcs [Accessed: 21.01.2021].

Amuquandoh, F.E. (2011). International Tourists' Concerns about Traditional Foods in Ghana. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management,* 18 (1), pp. 1-9.

Anderson, E. N. (2005). *Everyone Eats. Understanding Food and Culture.* New York: New York University Press.

Ankoma-Sey, V.R., Quansah, F. and Nsoh, J. (2019). Determinants of Students' Enrolment in Home Economics Programme in Senior High Schools in Ghana. *European Journal of Education Studies,* 6 (4), pp. 339-350.

Appadurai, A. (1988a). How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 30 (1), pp. 3-24.

Appadurai, A. (1988b). Introduction: Place and Voice in Anthropological Theory. *Cultural Anthropology,* 3 (1), pp. 16-20.

Asante, G., Sekimoto, S. and Brown, C. (2016). Becoming 'Black': Exploring the Racialized Experiences of African Immigrants in the United States. *Howard Journal of Communications,* 27 (4), pp. 367-384.

Asare, P. (2012). *Labour Migration in Ghana*. Accra: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Avakian, A.V. and Haber, B. (eds) (2005). *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Awedoba, A.K. and Hahn, H.P. (2014). Wealth, Consumption and Migration in a West African Society: New Lifestyles and New Social Obligations among the Kasena, Northern Ghana. *Anthropos: International Review of Anthropology and Linguistics,* 109 (1), pp. 45-55.

Awumbila, M. and Ardayfio-Schandorf, E. (2008). Gendered poverty, migration and livelihood strategies of female porters in Accra, Ghana. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography,* 62 (3), pp. 171-179.

Balirano, G. and Guzzo, S. (eds) (2019). *Food Across Cultures: Linguistic Insights in Transcultural Tastes,*.Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan.

Bashkow, I. (2006). *The Meaning of Whitemen: Race and Modernity in the Orokaiva Cultural World*. University of Chicago Press.

Barbieri, D. and Pantouvaki, S. (2016). Towards a philosophy of costume. *Studies in Costume and Performance*, 1 (1), pp. 3-7.

Baudrillard, J. (2000). *Simulacra and Simulation*. The University of Michigan Press.

Belasco, W.J. (1987). Ethnic Fast Foods: The Corporate Melting Pot. *Food and Foodways,* 2 (1), pp. 1-30.

Belasco, W.J. (2006). *Meals to Come*. University of California Press.

Belasco, W.J. (2008). *Food: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg.

Belasco, W.J. and Scranton, P. (2014). *Food Nations. Selling Tastes in Consumer Societies*. New York: Routledge.

Beoku-Betts, J.A. (1995). We Got Our Way of Cooking Things: Women, Food, and Preservation of Cultural Identity among the Gullah. *Gender & Society,* 9 (5), pp. 535-555.

Betts, S. and Goldey, P. (2005). A Multidisciplinary NGO: The Interface of Home Economics with Gender and Development. *Development in Practice,* 15 (1), pp. 106-114.

The Bible. https://biblehub.com [Accessed: 15.02.2021].

Bietti, L.M., Bangerter, A., Knutsen, D. and Mayor, E. (2019). Cultural Transmission in a Food Preparation Task: The Role of Interactivity, Innovation and Storytelling. *PLoS ONE,* 14 (9), pp. 1-19.

Bikketi, E., Ifejika Speranza, C., Bieri, S., Haller, T. and Wiesmann, U. (2016). Gendered division of labour and feminisation of responsibilities in Kenya; implications for development interventions. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 23 (10), pp. 1432-1449.

Bix, A.S. (2002). Equipped for Life: Gendered Technical Training and Consumerism in Home Economics, 1920-1980. *Technology and Culture,* 43 (4), pp. 228-254.

Bloch, M. (1999). Commensality and Poisoning. *Social Research.* 66 (1), pp. 133-149.

Boafo-Arthur, K. (1999). Ghana: Structural Adjustment, Democratization, and the Politics of Continuity. *African Studies Review,* 42 (2), pp. 41-72.

Boakye, E. A. (2021). Dr. Alberta Bondzi-Simpson releases indigenous Ghanaian recipe book. https://citinewsroom.com/2021/08/dr-alberta-bondzi-simpson-releases-indigenous-ghanaian-recipe-book/. [Accessed: 22.03.2022].

Bourdieu, P. (2010). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2007). Outline of a Theory of Practice. In: Seidman, S. and Alexander, J.C. (eds) *The New Social Theory Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 80-87.

Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (eds) (2007). *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.

Bryceson, D. (ed.) (2020). *Women wielding the hoe: Lessons from rural Africa for feminist theory and development practice*. New York: Routledge.

Bubandt, N. (1998). The Odour of Things: Smell and the Cultural Elaboration of Disgust in Eastern Indonesia. *Ethnos,* 63 (1), pp. 48-80.

Bush, B. (1986). 'The Family Tree Is Not Cut': Women and Cultural Resistance in Slave Family Life in the British Caribbean. In: Okihiro, G.Y. (ed.) *In Resistance: Studies in African, Caribbean, and Afro-American History*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts. pp. 117-132.

Butler, E. (2018). Tasting off-flavors: food science, sensory knowledge and the consumer sensorium. *The Senses and Society,* 13 (1), pp. 75-88.

Butler, E. (2019). Mouth work: bodily action in sensory science. *Food, Culture & Society,* 22 (2), pp. 224-236.

Butler, J. (1988). Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. *Theatre Journal,* 40 (4), pp. 519-531.

Buzard, J. (2003). On Auto-Ethnographic Authority. *The Yale Journal of Criticism,* 16 (1), pp. 61-91.

Cairns, K., Johnston J. and Baumann, S. (2010). Caring About Food: Doing Gender in the Foodie Kitchen. *Gender and Society,* 24 (5), pp. 591-615.

Caldwell, M. (2014). Digestive politics in Russia: feeling the sensorium beyond the palate. *Food and Foodways*, 22 (1-2), pp. 112-135.

Cappellini, B., Parsons, E. and Harman, V. (2016). 'Right Taste, Wrong Place': Local Food Cultures, (Dis)Identification and the Formation of Classed Identity. *Sociology,* 50 (6), pp. 1089-1105.

Casentini, G. (2018). Migration networks and narratives in Ghana: a case study from the Zongo. *Africa*, 88 (3), pp. 452-468.

Certeau, M. de (1984). Part III. Spatial Practices. In: Certeau, M. de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 91-110.

Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as Method*. London and New York: Routledge.

Chang, H., Ngunjiri F. and Hernandez, K.-A.C. (2013). *Collaborative Autoethnography*. New York: Routledge.

Chapman, G.E. and Beagan, B.L. (2013). Food Practices and Transnational Identities: Case Studies of Two Punjabi-Canadian Families. *Food, Culture & Society,* 16 (3), pp. 367-386.

Charmaz, K. (2000). Constructivist and Objectivist Grounded Theory. In: Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd Ed.)*, Thousand Oakes: Sage. pp. 509-635

Chevalier, S. (2015). Food, malls and the politics of consumption: South Africa's new middle class. *Development Southern Africa,* 32 (1), pp. 118-129.

Clark, G. (1989). Money, Sex and Cooking: Manipulation of the Paid/Unpaid Boundary by Asante Market Women. In: Rutz, H.J. and Orlove, B.S. (eds) *The Social Economy of Consumption*. Lanham: University Press of America and The Society for Economic Anthropology. pp. 323-348.

Clark, G. (2014). From Fasting to Fast Food in Kumasi, Ghana. In: Klein, J.A. and Murcott,

A. (eds) *Food Consumption in Global Perspective. Essays in Anthropology of Food in Honour of Jack Goody*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. pp. 45-64.

Classen, C. (1992). The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories. *Ethos,* 20 (2), pp. 133-166.

Classen, C. (1997). Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses. *International Social Science Journal,* 49 (153), pp. 401-412.

Classen, C. and Howes, D. (1996). Making Sense of Culture: Anthropology as a Sensual Experience. *Ethnofoor,* 9 (2), pp. 86-96.

Conquergood, D. (1989). Poetics, Play, Process and Power: The Performative Turn in Anthropology. *Text and Performance Quarterly,* 1, pp. 82-95.

Conquergood, D. (1991). Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics. *Communication Monographs,* 58 (2), pp. 179-194.

Counihan, C.M. (1988). Female identity, food, and power in contemporary Florence. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 61 (2), pp. 51-62.

Counihan, C. and Højlund, S. (2018). Making Taste Public. An Ethnographic Approach. In: Counihan, C.M. and Højlund, S. (eds) *Making Taste Public. Ethnographies of Food and the Senses*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 1-8.

Counihan, C.M. (2018). *The anthropology of food and body: Gender, meaning, and power*. London: Routledge.

Crang, M. (2003). Qualitative Methods: Touchy, Feely, Look-See? *Progress in Human Geography,* 27 (4), pp. 494-504.

Criado-Perez, C. (2019). *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men.* London: Penguin Random House.

Cresswell, J.W.J. and Cresswell, D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Csordas, T.J. (1990). Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. *Ethos,* 18 (1), pp. 5-47.

Cusack, I. (2014). Cookery Books and Celebrity Chefs: Men's Contributions to National Cuisines in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Food, Culture & Society,* 17 (1), pp. 65-80.

D'Sylva, A. and Beagan, B.L. (2011). 'Food Is Culture, but It's Also Power': The Role of Food in Ethnic and Gender Identity Construction among Goan Canadian Women. *Journal of Gender Studies,* 20 (3), pp. 279-289.

Daston, L. (1995). The Moral Economy of Science. *Osiris,* 10, pp. 2-24.

Daston, L. and Galison, P. (1992). The Image of Objectivity. *Representations,* 40

(October), pp. 81-128.

Davis, A. (1981). Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves. *The Massachusetts Review,* 13 (1/2), pp. 81-100.

Davis, D.-A. and Craven, C. (2016). *Feminist Ethnography: Thinking through Methodologies, Challenges, and Possibilities*. Lanham: Rowman & Litterfield.

Delalande, F. (2003). Sense and Intersensoriality. *Leonardo*, 36 (4), pp. 313-316.

Dench, S., Iphofen, R. and Huws, U. (2004). *An EU Code of Ethics for Socio-Economic Research*. (IES Report 412). Brighton: The Institute for Employment Studies.

Denzin, N.K. (2002). Much Ado about Goffman. *The American Sociologist,* 33 (2), pp. 105-117.

Denzin, N.K. (2003). The Call to Performance. *Symbolic Interaction,* 26 (1), pp. 187-207.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds) (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Der, B. (1974). Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940. *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* 15 (1), pp. 42-61.

Desjarlais, R. and Throop, J.C. (2011). Phenomenological approaches in anthropology. *Annual review of anthropology*, 40, pp. 87-102.

Destombes, J. (2006). From Long-Term Patterns of Seasonal Hunger to Changing Experiences of Everyday Poverty: Northeastern Ghana c. 1930-2000. *The Journal of African History,* 47 (2), pp. 181-205.

Devadason, R. (2010). Cosmopolitanism, Geographical Imaginaries and Belonging in North London. *Urban Studies,* 47 (14), pp. 2945-2963.

DeVault, M.L. (1991). *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

DeWalt, K. and DeWalt, B. (2011). *Participant Observation*. Plymouth: Altamira Press.

Domestic Bursars and Matrons Association. (2021) https://www.modernghana.com/news/180788/association-of-domestic-bursars-and-matrons-holds.html. [Accessed: 06.07.2021].

Donge van, J.K. (1985). Understanding Rural Zambia Today: The Relevance of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute,* 55(1), pp. 60-76.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Praeger.

Dunn, E.C. (2014). Humanitarianism, Displacement, and the Politics of Nothing in Postwar Georgia. *Slavic Review,* 73 (2), pp. 287-306.

Dunne, M. and Adzahlie-Mensah, V. (2016). Subordinate subjects: the work of the hidden curriculum in post-colonial Ghana. In: Wyse, D., Hayward, L. and Pandaya, J. (eds) *The SAGE handbook of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd. pp. 216-230.

Duranti, A. (2010). Husserl, Intersubjectivity and Anthropology. *Anthropological Theory,* 10 (1–2), pp. 16-35.

Durham, D. (2011). Disgust and the anthropological imagination. *Ethnos*, 76 (2), pp. 131-156.

Durmelat, S. (2015). Tasting Displacement: Couscous and Culinary Citizenship in Maghrebi-French Diasporic Cinema. *Food and Foodways,* 23 (1-2), pp. 104-126.

Eat Forum 2022 https://eatforum.org/learn-and-discover/qa-with-selassie-atadika-plant-forward-50/ [Accessed: 09.03.2022].

Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). What is food tourism? *Tourism management*, *68*, pp. 250-263.

Ellis, C., Adams, T.E. and Bochner, A.P. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research*, 36 (4), pp. 273-290.

Eriksen, T.H. (2001). Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences. In: Ashmore, D., Jussim, L. and Wilder, D. (eds) *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*. Oxford University Press. pp. 42-68

Esposito, E. (2019). Callaloo or Pelau? Food, Identity and Politics in Trinidad and Tobago. In: Balirano, G. and Guzzo, S. (eds) *Food across Cultures: Linguistic Insights in Transcultural Tastes*. Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 43-70.

Esterik E. van and Counihan C. (eds) (2013). *Food and Culture. A Reader (third edition).* New York and London: Routledge.

Ettorre, E. (2016). *Autoethnography as feminist method: Sensitising the feminist 'I'*. New York and London: Routledge.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1954). The meaning of sacrifice among the Nuer. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 84(1/2), pp. 21-33.

Fairtlough, G.H. (1991). Habermas' concept of "Lifeworld". *Systems Practice* 4, pp. 547–563.

Falk, P. (1991). Homo Culinarius: Towards an Historical Anthropology of Taste. *Social science information,* 30 (4), pp. 757-790.

Falk, P. (1996). Expelling future threats: some observations on the magical world of vitamins. *The Sociological Review* 44 (1), pp. 183-203.

Feagan, R. (2007). The Place of Food: Mapping out the 'Local' in Local Food Systems. *Progress in Human Geography,* 31 (1), pp. 23-42.

Featherstone, M. (1987). Lifestyle and Consumer Culture. *Theory, Culture & Society,* 4 (1), pp. 55-70.

Feld, S. (2005). Places Sensed, Senses Placed: Towards a Sensuous Epistemology of Environments. In: Howes, D. (ed.) *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg. pp. 179-191

Ferguson, P.P. (2011). The Senses of Taste" *American Historical Review,* 116 (2), pp. 371-384.

Fernández-Armesto, F. (2002). *Near a thousand tables: A history of food*. New York: The Free Press.

Ferzacca, S., Naidoo, N., Wang, M. C., Reddy, G., & Dam, R. M. van (2013). Sometimes they'll tell me what they want: Family and inter-generational food preferences in the food decisions of Singaporean women. *Appetite,* 69, pp. 156-167.

Fischler, C. (1988). Food, Self and Identity. *Social Science Information,* 27 (2), pp. 275-292.

Fortes, M. and Fortes, S. L. (1936). Food in the domestic economy of the Tallensi. *Africa*, 9 (2), pp. 237-276.

Foucault, M. (1982). The Subject and Power. *Critical Inquiry,* 8, pp. 777-795.

Förster, T., Heer, B., Engeler, M., Kaufmann, A.A., Bauer, K. and Heitz, K. (2011). The Emic Evaluation Approach: epistemologies, experience, and ethnographic practice. *Basel Papers on Political Transformation,* September (3).

Förster, T. (2022). Bodily ethnography: Some epistemological challenges of participation. *Ethnography*, *0*(0).

Gabaccia, D. R. (1998). *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gallegos, D. (2005). Cookbooks as manuals of taste. In: Bel, D. and Hollows, J. (eds) *Ordinary lifestyles: Popular media, consumption and taste*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. 99-110.

Gallegos, D. and McHoul, A. (2006). 'It's Not about Good Taste. It's about Tastes Good': Bourdieu and Campbell's Soup…and Beyond. *The Senses and Society,* 1 (2), pp. 165-181.

Gardner, M.P., Wansink, B., Kim, J. and Park, S.B. (2014). Better Moods for Better Eating?: How Mood Influences Food Choice. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 24 (3), pp. 320-335.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick Description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays.* New York, Basic Books. pp. 310-323.

Geertz, C. (2000). *Available Light. Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Geest, K. van der (2011). North-South Migration in Ghana: What Role for the Environment? *International Migration,* 49 (S1), pp. 69-94.

Geest, K. van der (2010). Local Perceptions of Migration from North-West Ghana. *Africa,* 80 (4), pp. 595-619.

Gennep, A. van, Vizendom, M., Caffee, G. L. and Kertzer, D. I. (2019) *The rites of passage*. Second edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Geurts, K.L. (2003). *Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Geurts, K.L. (2018). 'Bodily Ways of Knowing: Anthropological and Historical Approaches to Affect and the Senses' in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*. https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-320 [Accessed: 15.06.2021].

Ghana School Feeding Programme. (2020). https://schoolfeeding.gov.gh [Accessed: 14.02.2022].

Ghana Home Economics Association. (2021). *h*ttp://www.gheagh.org/pages/about_us.php [Accessed: 22.01.2021].

Giacoman, C. (2016). The dimensions and role of commensality: A theoretical model drawn from the significance of communal eating among adults in Santiago, Chile. *Appetite*, 107, pp. 460-470.

Giedion, S. (1948). *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gikandi, S. (2011). *Slavery and the Culture of Taste.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Gillespie, A. and Cornish, F. (2010). Intersubjectivity: Towards a Dialogical Analysis. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour,* 40 (1), pp. 19-46.

Gilman, C. P. (ed.) (2002). *The dress of women: A critical introduction to the symbolism and*

sociology of clothing. Westport and London: Greenwood Press.

Giroux, H.A. (2004). Cultural Studies and the Politics of Public Pedagogy: Making the Political More Pedagogical. *Parallax,* 10 (2), pp. 73-89.

Glaser, B.G. (2002). Conceptualization: On Theory and Theorizing Using Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 1 (2), pp. 23-38.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.

Goodman, L. (1994). The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance. *Theatre Journal,* 46 (1), pp. 151-153.

Goody, J. (1982). *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Goody, J. (2002). The Anthropology of the Senses and Sensations. *La Ricerca Folklorica*, 45 pp. 17-28.

Goody, J. and Goody, E. (1995). Food and Identities: Changing Patterns of Consumption in Ghana. *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology,* 18 (3), pp. 1-14.

Goody, J. and Buckley J. (1973) Inheritance and Women's Labour in Africa. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute,* 43 (2), pp. 108-121.

Graham, C.K. (2013). *The History of Education in Ghana. From the Earliest Times to the Declaration of Independence*. London: Routledge.

Green, G., Barbour, R.S., Barnard M. and Kitzinger, J. (1993). 'Who Wears the Trousers?': Sexual Harassment in Research Settings. *Women's Studies International Forum,* 16 (6), pp. 627-637.

Greenhouse, C.J. (1985). Anthropology at Home: Whose Home? *Human Organization,* 44 (3), pp. 261-264.

Groh-Samberg, O., Schröder, T. and Speer, A. (2023). Social Milieus and Social Integration. From Theoretical Considerations to an Empirical Model. *Köln Z Soziol,* **75** (Suppl 1), pp. 305–329.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (eds) (1997a). *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (eds) (1997b). *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field of Science*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press.

Hall, C. M., & Sharples, L. (2004). The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste. In: Hall, C.M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macionis, N. and Cambourne, B. (eds) *Food tourism around the world*.

London: Routledge. pp. 1-24

Ham, J.R. (2020). 'Every Day It's Tuo Zaafi': Considering Food Preference in a Food Insecure Region of Ghana. *Agriculture and Human Values,* 37 (3), pp. 907-917.

Ham, J.R. (2017). Cooking to be modern but eating to be healthy: the role of Dawa-Dawa in contemporary Ghanaian foodways. *Food, Culture & Society*, 20 (2), pp. 237-256.

Hamera, J. (2006). Performance, performativity, and cultural poiesis in practices of everyday life. In: Madison, D.S. and Hamera, J. (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. pp. 46-64

Hanna, J.F. (2004). The Scope and Limits of Scientific Objectivity. *Philosophy of Science,* 71 (3), pp. 339-361.

Haukanes, H. (2008). Sharing Food, Sharing Taste? Consumption Practices, Gender Relations and Individuality in Czech Families. *Anthropology of food*, (S3). https://journals.openedition.org/aof/1912 [Accessed: 13.02.2021].

Hayes-Conroy, A. and Hayes-Conroy, J. (2008). Taking Back Taste: Feminism, Food and Visceral Politics. *Gender, Place and Culture,* 15 (5), pp. 461-473.

Heiman, R., Liechty, M. and Freeman, C. (2012). Introduction: Charting an Anthropology of the Middle Classes. In: Heiman, R., Freeman, C. and Liechty, M. (eds) *The Global Middle Classes: Theorizing Through Ethnography (School for Advanced Research Advanced Seminar Series)*, Santa Fe: SAR Press. pp. 3-29.

Highmore, B. (2002). *Everyday life and cultural theory: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

Highmore, B. (2008). Alimentary Agents: Food, Cultural Theory and Multiculturalism. *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 29 (4), pp. 381-398.

Highmore, B. (2011). *Ordinary Lives. Studies in the Everyday.* London: Routledge.

Hobsbawm, E. (2012). Introduction: Inventing Traditions. In: Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds) *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-14

Holtzman, J.D. (2001). The food of elders, the "ration" of women: Brewing, gender, and domestic processes among the Samburu of Northern Kenya. *American anthropologist*, 103(4), pp. 1041-1058.

Holtzman, J.D. (2002). Politics And Gastropolitics: Gender And The Power Of Food In Two African Pastoralist Societies. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2), pp. 259-278.

Holtzman, J.D. (2006). Food and Memory. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 35, pp. 361-378.

Holtzman, J.D. (2007). Eating time: Capitalist history and pastoralist history among Samburu

herders in Northern Kenya. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1(3), pp. 436-448.

Homan, G.C. (1941). Anxiety and Ritual: The Theories of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. *American Anthropologist,* 43 (2), pp. 164-172.

Horrigan-Kelly, M., Millar, M. and Dowling, M. (2016). Understanding the key tenets of Heidegger's philosophy for interpretive phenomenological research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15 (1), pp. 1-8.

Howes, D. (ed.) (1991). *The varieties of sensory experience: a sourcebook in the anthropology of the senses*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Howes, D. (2005). *Empire of the senses: the sensual culture reader*. Oxford: Berg.

Howes, D. (2010). Response to Sarah Pink: The Future of Sensory Anthropology. *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 18(3), pp. 331-333.

Howes, D. (2019). Multisensory Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 48, pp. 17-28.

Howes, D. and Classen, C. (2013). *Ways of Sensing: Understanding the senses in society*. New York: Routledge.

Howes, D. and Classen, C. (2017). Doing Sensory Anthropology. 2017. www.sensorystudies.org. [Accessed: 21.11.2019].

Howes, D. and Lalonde, M. (1991). The History of Sensibilities: Of the Standard of Taste in Mid-Eighteen Century England and the Circulation of Smells in Post-Revolutionary France. *Dialectical Anthropology,* 16 (2), pp. 125-135.

Hulme A. (2017). Following the (unfollowable) thing: methodological considerations in the era of high globalisation. *Cultural Geographie,* 24 (1), pp. 157-160.

Ichijo A. and Ranta, R. (2016). *Food, national identity and nationalism: From everyday to global politics*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ingold, T. (2000) *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London: Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2011). Worlds of sense and sensing the world: a response to Sarah Pink and David Howes. *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 19 (3), pp. 313-317.

Jackson, A. (1987). *Anthropology at Home*. Tavistock Publications.

Jackson, M. (1983). Knowledge of the Body, *Man,* 18 (2) (1983), pp. 327-345.

Jackson, T. (2018). *Multisensory Ethnography: Sensory Experience, the Sentient Body and Cultural Phenomena*. PhD thesis. Leeds: University of Leeds.

Jung, Y. (2014). Tasting and Judging the Unknown Terroir of the Bulgarian Wine: The

Political Economy of Sensory Experience. *Food and Foodways,* 22 (1-2), pp. 24-47.

Kahn, M. (1988). "Men are taro" (they cannot be rice): Political aspects of food choices in Wamira, Papua New Guinea. *Food and Foodways*, 3 (1-2), pp. 41-57.

Kalb, D. (2014). Class: The 'empty Sign' of the Middle Class; Class and the Urban Commons in the 21st Century. In: Nonini, D. M. (ed.) *A Companion to Urban Anthropology*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell. pp. 167-176

Kalenjuk, B., Tešanović, D., Gagić, S., Erdeji, I. and Banjac, M. (2015). Offer of authentic food as a condition for gastronomic tourism development. *The European Journal of Applied Economics*, 12 (2), pp. 27-34.

Kelly, J. (2016). The Ethnographic Turn. In: Hopkins, D. (ed.) *A Companion to Dada and Surrealism*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 319-333

Kemmer, D. (2000). Tradition and Change in Domestic Roles and Food Preparation. *Sociology,* 34 (2), pp. 323-333.

Kesselring, R. (2015). Experiences of violence and the formation of the political: embodied memory and victimhood in South Africa. In: Koechlin, L., Förster, T. *The Politics of Governance*. New York: Routledge (Conceptualising comparative politics), pp. 151–179.

Kesselring, R. (2015). Moments of Dislocation: Why the Body Matters in Ethnographic Research. *Basel Papers on Political Transformations,* 8.

Kevane, M. (2004). *Women and development in Africa: How gender works*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Kifleyesus, A. (2002). Muslims and meals: the social and symbolic function of foods in changing socio-economic environments. *Africa*, 72 (2), pp. 245-276.

King, J.C.H. (1975). Review of *Kwakiutl Ethnography; Indians Before Columbus* by F. Boas, P.S. Martin, G.I. Quimby and D. Collier. *RAIN*, *11*, pp. 12.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (2006). Making Sense of Food in Performance: The Table and the Stage. In: Banes, S. and Lepecki, A. (eds) *The Senses in Performance.* New York: Routledge. pp. 71-90.

Kittrell, F.P. (1948). Some Observations on Life and Education in West Africa. *The Journal of Negro Education,* 17 (2), pp. 192-194.

Kitzinger, C. and Thomas, A. (1995). Sexual Harassment: A Discursive Approach. In: Wilkinson S. and Kitzinger C. (eds) *Feminism and Discourse: Psychological Perspectives*. London: SAGE Publications. pp. 32-48.

Klein, J.A. and Murcott, A. (eds) (2014). *Food Consumption in Global Perspective: Essays in*

the Anthropology of Food in Honour of Jack Goody. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Klein, J.A. and Watson, J.L. (eds) (2016). *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Kloß, S.T. (2017). Sexual(Ized) Harassment and Ethnographic Fieldwork: A Silenced Aspect of Social Research. *Ethnography,* 18 (3), pp. 396-414.

Konadu-Agyemang, K. and Adanu, S. (2003). The changing geography of export trade in Ghana under structural adjustment programs: Some socioeconomic and spatial implications. *The Professional Geographer*, 55 (4), pp. 513-527.

Korsmeyer, C. (1999). *Making Sense of Taste. Food and Philosophy.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Korsmeyer, C. and Sutton, D.E. (2011). The Sensory Experience of Food. *Food, Culture and Society,* 14 (4), pp. 461-475.

Kuenyeheia, E.N. (2018). Barbara Baeta: 50 years of feeding the nation and its visitors. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@elikemkuenyehia/babra-baeta-50-years-of-feeding-the-nation-and-its-visitors-139bb5050bbc [Accessed: 15.03.2020]

Kuhn, T. (1962). Historical Structure of Scientific Discovery. *Science,* 136 (3518), pp. 760-764.

Küpers, W. (2013). A Phenomenology of Embodied Senses: The 'Making' of Sense in Organisational Culture. *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion,* 5 (4), pp. 325-341.

Langevang, T. (2008). Claiming place: the production of young men's street meeting places in Accra, Ghana. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography,* 90 (3), pp. 227-242.

Law, L. (2001). Home Cooking: Filipino Women and Geographies of the Senses in Hong Kong. *Ecumene,* 8 (3), pp. 264-283.

Lentz, C. (1995). 'Tribalism' and Ethnicity in Africa. A Review of Four Decades of Anglophone Research. *Cah. Sci.Hum.,* 31 (2), pp. 303-328.

Lentz, C. (1999a). Colonial ethnography and political reform: the works of AC Duncan-Johnstone, RS Rattray, J. Eyre-Smith and J. Guiness on northern Ghana. *Ghana Studies*, *2*, pp. 119-169.

Lentz, C. (1999b) Changing food habits: an introduction. In: Lentz, C. (ed.) *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America and Europe.* Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Lentz, C. (2000). Contested Identities: The History of Ethnicity in Northwestern Ghana. In: Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (eds) *Ethnicity in Ghana: the limits of intervention.* Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan. pp. 137-161.

Lentz, C. (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lentz, C. (2008). Hard Work, Determination, and Luck: Biographical Narratives of a Northern Ghanaian Elite. *Ghana Studies,* 11 (1), pp. 47-76.

Lentz, C. and Behrends, A. (2012). Education, Careers, and Home Ties: The Ethnography of an Emerging Middle Class from Northern Ghana. *Zeitschrift Für Ethnologie,* 2 (May), pp. 139-164.

Lentz, C. and Noll, A. (2021). Across Regional Disparities and beyond Family Ties: A Ghanaian Middle Class in the Making. *History and Anthropology,* 0 (0), pp. 1-18.

Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (2000). Ethnicity in Ghana: A Comparative Perspective. In: Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (eds) *Ethnicity in Ghana*. Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan. pp. 1-28

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966). The Culinary Triangle. *Partisan Review,* 33 (4), pp. 585-595.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (2013). The Culinary Triangle. In: Counihan, C. and Esterik, P. van (eds) *Food and Culture: A Reader*. New York: Routledge. pp. 40-47

Locher, J.L., Yoels W.C., Maurer, D. and Ells, J. van (2005). Comfort Foods: An Exploratory Journey Into The Social and Emotional Significance of Food. *Food and Foodways,* 13 (4), pp. 273-297.

Longhurst, R., Johnston, L. and Ho, E. (2009). A Visceral Approach: Cooking 'at Home' with Migrant Women in Hamilton, New Zealand. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 34 (3), pp. 333-345.

López-Pedreros, A. R. and Weinstein, B. (eds) (2012). *The Making of the Middle Class: Towards a Transnational History*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Lucy, J.A. (2001). 'Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis'. In: *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences.* Amsterdam: Elsevier pp. 13486-13490.

Macpherson, F. (ed.) (2011). *The Senses: Classic and Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Madison, D. S. and Hamera, J. (eds) (2006). *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*. Thousand Oakes, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Malinowski, B. (2001). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea [1922/1994]* (1st ed.).

London: Routledge.

Malinowski, B. (1935) *Coral gardens and their magic : a study of the methods of tilling the soil and of agricultural rites in the Trobriand Islands*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Mann, A., Mol, A., Satalkar, P., Savirani, A., Selim, N., Sur, M. and Yates-Doerr, E. (2011). Mixing Methods, Tasting Fingers. Notes on an Ethnographic Experiment. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory,* 1 (1), pp. 221-243.

Maquet, J. (1970). The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology. Vol. 1. *Technology and Culture,* 11 (4), pp. 613-615.

Marovelli, B. (2019). Cooking and Eating Together in London: Food Sharing Initiatives as Collective Spaces of Encounter. *Geoforum,* 99 (January), pp. 190-201.

Marte, L. (2007). Foodmaps: Tracing Boundaries of 'home' through Food Relations. *Food and Foodways,* 15 (3-4), pp. 261-289.

Mata-Codesal, D. (2008). Rice & Coriander Sensorial Re-Creations of Home through Food: Ecuadorians in a Northern Spanish City. *Reason*, 50, pp. 1-21.

Mata-Codesal, D. (2010). Eating Abroad, Remembering (at) Home. *Anthropology of Food*, 7, pp. 1-13.

Mauss, M. (1973). Techniques of the Body. *Economy and Society,* 2 (1), pp. 70–88.

Mberengwa, L.R. and Mthombeni, F.M. (2012). Envisioning an African-Centric Higher Education Home Economics Curriculum for the 21st Century. In: Pedergast, D., McGregor, S.L.T. and Turkki, K. (eds) *Creating Home Economics Futures: The Next 100 Years*. QLD: Australian Academic Press. pp. 195-206

McCann, J.C. (2009). *Stirring the Pot: A History of African Cuisine*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.

McLaren, M.A. (2002). *Feminism, Foucault, and Embodied Subjectivity*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McPhail, D., Beagan, B. and Chapman, G.E. (2012). "I Don't Want to Be Sexist but…" denying and re-inscribing gender through food. *Food, Culture and Society,* 15 (3), pp. 473-489.

Melber, H. (2016). *The Rise of Africa's Middle Class: myths, realities and critical engagements*. London: Zed Books.

Mennell, S. (1996). *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Messer, E. and Cohen, M.J. (2007). Conflict, Food Insecurity and Globalization. *Food, Culture & Society,* 10 (2), pp. 297-315.

Middleton, J. (2010). Sense and the City: Exploring the Embodied Geographies of Urban Walking. *Social and Cultural Geography,* 11 (6), pp. 575-596.

Miller, C. and Razavi, S. (1995). From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 11 (4), pp. 50-72.

Miller, W.I. (1997). Gluttony. *Representations,* 60, pp. 92-112.

Miller, W.I. (1998). *The Anatomy of Disgust*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Mills, J., Bonner, A. and Francis, K. (2006). The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 5 (1), pp. 25-35.

Mintz, S.W. (1960). *Worker in the Cane. A Puerto Rican Life History*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mintz, S.W. (1974). *Caribbean Transformations*. Chicago: Aldine Press.

Mintz, S.W. (1985). *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Viking-Penguin.

Mintz, S.W. (1989). Cuisine and Haute Cuisine: How Are They Linked? *Food and Foodways,* 3 (3), pp. 185-190.

Mintz, S.W. (1996). *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Power, and the Past*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mintz, S.W. (2010). *Three Ancient Colonies. Caribbean Themes and Variations.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Mintz, S.W. and Du Bois, C.M. (2002). The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 31 (2002), pp. 99-119.

Mitchell J.P. and Bull, M. (eds) (2015). *Ritual, performance and the senses*. London: Routledge.

Mondada, L. (2018). Multiple Temporalities of Language and Body in Interaction: Challenges for Transcribing Multimodality. *Research on Language and Social Interaction,* 51 (1), pp. 85-106.

Mondada, L. (2019). Contemporary Issues in Conversation Analysis: Embodiment and Materiality, Multimodality and Multisensoriality in Social Interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 145 (May), pp. 47-62.

Mondada, L. (2021). Orchestrating Multi-Sensoriality in Tasting Sessions: Sensing Bodies,

Normativity, and Language. *Symbolic Interaction,* 44 (1), pp. 63-86.

Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. London: Routledge.

Morris, M. (2014). Comfort Food. *Gastronomica,* 14 (4), pp. 81-82.

Moseley, W.G., Carney, J. and Becker, L. (2010). Neoliberal Policy, Rural Livelihoods, and Urban Food Security in West Africa: A Comparative Study of The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America,* 107 (13), pp. 5774-5779.

Murray, C. (1987). Class Gender and the Household: The Developmental Cycle in South Africa. *Development and Change*, 18 (2), pp. 235-249.

Naguib, N. (2015). *Nurturing Masculinities: Men, Food, and Family in Contemporary Egypt*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Norbeck, E. (1963). African Rituals of Conflict. *American Anthropologist,* 65 (6). pp. 1254-1279.

Nugent, P. (1995). *Big Men, Small Boys, and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology, and the Burden of History, 1982-1994*. London: Pinter.

Nugent, P. (2010). Do Nations Have Stomachs? Food, Drink and Imagined Community in Africa. *Africa Spectrum,* 45 (3), pp. 87-113.

Observatory of Economic Complexity. (2022). https://oec.world/en/profile/country/gha/ [Accessed: 25.03.2022].

O'Kane, D. and Scharrer, T. (2018). Anthropology and class in Africa: challenges of the past and present. In: O'Kane, D., Scharrer, T. and Kroeker, L. (eds) *Middle Classes in Africa*. Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 81-105

O'Kane, D., Scharrer, T., and Kroeker, L. (eds) (2018). *Middle Classes in Africa. Changing Lives and Conceptual Challenges*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Okely, J. (2007). Fieldwork Embodied. *Sociological Review,* 55 (SUPPL. 1), pp. 65-79.

Oldenburg, R. and Brissett, D. (1982). The third place. *Qualitative sociology*, *5* (4), pp. 265-284.

O'Neill, M. and Hubbard, P. (2010). Walking, Sensing, Belonging: Ethno-Mimesis as Performative Praxis. *Visual Studies,* 25 (1), pp. 46-58.

Ong W. J. (1991). The Shifting Sensorium. In: Howes, D. (ed.) *The varieties of sensory experience: A sourcebook in the anthropology of the* senses. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. pp. 25-30.

Osseo-Asare, F. (2002). 'We Eat First With Our Eyes': On Ghanaian Cuisine. *Gastronomica,*

2 (1), pp. 49-57.

Owusu, V., Abdulai A. and Abdul-Rahman, S. (2011). Non-Farm Work and Food Security among Farm Households in Northern Ghana. *Food Policy,* 36 (2), pp. 108-118.

Øygard, L. (2000). Studying food tastes among young adults using Bourdieu's theory. *Journal of Consumer Studies & Home Economics,* 24 (3), pp. 160-169.

Palmer, G.B. and Jankowiak, W.R. (1996). Performance and Imagination: Toward an Anthropology of the Spectacular and the Mundane. *Cultural Anthropology,* 11 (2), pp. 225-258.

Pearce, K. (2018). Philosophy and Trust in the Senses, From Montaigne to Berkeley. *Philosophy Mod Squad.* [Blog post]. 6 July 2018. https://philosophymodsquad.wordpress.com/2018/07/06/philosophy-and-trust-in-the-senses-from-montaigne-to-berkeley/ [Accessed: 17.05.2021]

Peirano, M.G.S. (1998). When Anthropology Is at Home: The Different Contexts of a Single Discipline. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 27, pp. 105-128.

Pfeiffer, J. and Chapman, R. (2010). Anthropological Perspectives on Structural Adjustment and Public Health. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 39, pp. 149-165.

Pink, S. (2009). *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pink, S. (2010). The Future of Sensory Anthropology/the Anthropology of the Senses. *Social Anthropology,* 18 (3), pp. 331-333.

Pink, S. (2012). *Situating everyday life: practices and places*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Pink, S. (2020). *Home Truths: Gender, Domestic Objects and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge.

Pink, S., Hubbard, P., O'Neill, M. and Radley, A. (2010). Walking across Disciplines: From Ethnography to Arts Practice. *Visual Studies,* 25 (1), pp. 1-7.

Pollard, A. (2009). Field of Screams: Difficulty and Ethnographic Fieldwork. *Anthropology Matters Journal,* 11 (2), pp. 1-24.

Portes, A. (1998). Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 24 (1) pp. 1-24.

Portincasa, A. (2019). Cookbooks and the representation of Italian ways of food. In: Sassatelli, R (ed.) *Italians and food*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 203-235

Pratt, M.L. (2007). *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. *Second Edition*. London: Routledge.

Proust, M. (1992). *In Search of Lost Time, Volume I: Swann's Way*. New York: Modern

Library.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. (1933) *The Andaman Islanders*. Cambridge: University Press.

Ranger, T. (1993). The invention of tradition revisited: the case of colonial Africa. In: Range, T. and Vaughan, O. (eds) *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-century Africa*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press. pp. 62-111.

Reed-Danahay, D. (ed.) (1997). *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social*. Oxford and New York: Berg.

Reed-Danahay, D. (2009). Anthropologists, Education, and Autoethnography. *Reviews in Anthropology,* 38 (1), pp. 28-47.

Reuters. (2022). https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ghana-cocoa/incoming-ghana-government-gives-cocoa-sector-chance-of-fresh-start-idUSKBN1481Q5 [Accessed: 09.03.2022].

Richards, A.I. (1941). Land, Labour, and Diet in Northern Rhodesia: An Economic Study of the Bemba Tribe: The Mrs. Will Gordon Lecture, *The Geographical Journal,* 124 (3), pp. 302-313.

Richards, G. (2015). Evolving Gastronomic Experiences: From Food to Foodies to Foodscapes. *Journal of Gastronomy and Tourism,* 1, pp. 1-14.

Rorty, R. (1991). *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers, vol. 1*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Roxbee Cox, J. W. (1970). Distinguishing the Senses. *Mind,* 79 (316), pp. 530-550.

Rozin, P.H.J., Haidt, J. and McCauley, C.R. (2008). Disgust. In: Lewis, M., Haviland-Jones, J.M. and Barrett, L.F. (eds) *Handbook of Emotions.* London and New York: The Guilford Press. pp. 757-776

Rudge, T. (2015). Julia Kristeva: Abjection, Embodiment and Boundaries. In: Collyer, F. (ed.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Theory in Health, Illness and Medicine*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 504-519

Rudwick, S. (2010). Coconut Notes: Discursive Constructions of Race Identity in South Africa. *Oriental Archive,* 78, pp. 55-73.

Russek, A. (2011). Appetites without Prejudice: U.S. Foreign Restaurants and the Globalization of American Food between the Wars. *Food and Foodways,* 19 (1–2), pp. 34-55.

Sabar, G. and Posner, R. (2013). Remembering the Past and Constructing the Future over a Communal Plate: Restaurants Established by African Asylum Seekers in Tel Aviv.

Food, Culture and Society, 16 (2), pp. 197-222.

Sanjek, R. (ed.) (2019) *Fieldnotes: the makings of anthropology*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Sanjinés, J. (2007). The Nation: An Imagined Community? *Cultural Studies,* 21 (2-3), pp. 295-308.

Schechner, R. (1989). *Performance studies: An Introduction.* London: Routledge.

Schildkrout, E. (2007). *People of the Zongo: the transformation of ethnic identities in Ghana.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schutz, A., Luckmann, T. (1973) *The Structures of the Life-World*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Sekimoto, S. (2018). Race and the senses: Toward articulating the sensory apparatus of race. *Critical Philosophy of Race* 6 (1), pp. 82-100.

Seremetakis, C.N. (ed.) (2019). *The Senses Still. Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*. London: Routledge.

Seremetakis, C.N. (1993). The Memory of the Senses: Historical Perception, Commensal Exchange and Modernity. *Visual Anthropology Review,* 9 (2), pp. 2-18.

Shanklin, E. (1981). Two meanings and uses of tradition. *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 37 (1), pp. 71-89.

Shilling, C. (2004). Physical Capital and Situated Action: A New Direction for Corporeal Sociology. *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 25 (4), pp. 473-487.

Song, H. (2017). James Clifford and the Ethical Turn in Anthropology. *Cultural Critique*, 97, pp. 176-200.

Sparr, P. (ed.) (1994). *Mortgaging Women's Lives: Feminist Critiques of Structural Adjustment*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.

Spence, C. (2017). Comfort Food: A Review. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science,* 9 (October), pp. 105-109.

Spittler, G. (1999). In Praise of the Simple Meal: African and European Food Culture Compared. In: Lentz, C. (ed.) *Changing Food Habits: Case Studies from Africa, South America and Europe*. Amsterdam: Harrington Academic Publishers. pp. 27-42.

Spittler, G. (2014). Dichte Teilnahme und darüber hinaus. *Sociologus*, 64 (2), pp. 207–230.

Spronk, R. (2014). Exploring the Middle Classes in Nairobi: From Modes of Production to Modes of Sophistication. *African Studies Review*, 57 (1), pp. 93-114.

Srinivas, T. (2006). 'As Mother Made It': The Cosmopolitan Indian Family, 'Authentic' Food

and the Construction of Cultural Utopia. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family,* 32 (2), pp. 191-221.

Stacy, W. (2010). The Comfort Food Fallacy: Avoiding Old Favorites in Times of Change. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 36 (6), pp. 950-963.

Stasch, R. (2006). New Release: A Society Through Its Other [book review]. *Anthropological Quarterly,* 79 (2), pp. 325-334.

Stiegler, B. and Roussow, J. (2020). Suffocated Desire, or How the Culture Industry Destroys the Individual: Contribution to a Theory of Mass Consumption. *Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy,* 34, pp. 52-61.

Stoller, P. (1989). *The Taste of Ethnographic Things. The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Stoller, P. (1997). *Sensuous Scholarship*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Stoller, P. (2004). Sensuous Ethnography, African Persuasions, and Social Knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 10 (6), pp. 817-835.

Stoller, P. and Olkes, C. (1986). Bad Sauce, Good Ethnography. *Cultural Anthropology,* 1 (3), pp. 336-352.

Strathern, M. (1987). The Limits of Auto-Anthropology. In: Jackson, A. (ed.) *Anthropology at Home*. London: Tavistock Publications. pp. 16-37.

Stringfellow, L., MacLaren, A., Maclean, M. and O'Gorman, K. (2013). Conceptualizing Taste: Food, Culture and Celebrities. *Tourism Management,* 37 (August), pp. 77-85.

Strudwick, R. (2020). Fieldnotes in ethnographic research. In: Hackett, P.M.W. and Hayre, C.M. (eds) *Handbook of Ethnography in Healthcare Research*. London: Routledge. pp. 259-263.

Sutton, D.E. (2001). *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*. London and New York: Berg.

Sutton, D.E. (2009). The Mindful Kitchen, the Embodied Cook: Tools, Technology and Knowledge Transmission on a Greek Island. *Material Culture Review,* 70, pp. 63-68.

Sutton, D.E. (2014). *Secrets from the Greek Kitchen: Cooking, Skill and Everyday Life on an Aegean Island*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Sutton, D.E., Naguib, N., Vournelis, L. and Dickinson, M. (2013). Food and Contemporary Protest Movements. *Food, Culture and Society,* 16 (3), pp. 345-348.

Sutton, D.E. (2018). Cooking Skills, The Senses and Memory: The Fate of Practical Knowledge. In: Esterik, P. van and Counihan, C. *Food and Culture. A Reader (Third*

Edition), New York and London: Routledge. pp. 299-319.

Synnott, A. (1991). Puzzling over the Senses: From Plato to Marx. In: Howes, D. (ed.) *Varieties of Sensory Experience*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. pp. 61-78.

Taussig, M.T. (1993). *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. New York: Routledge.

Therborn, G. (2012). Class in the 21st Century. *New Left Review,* 78, pp. 5-29.

Troisi, J.D. and Gabriel, S. (2011). Chicken Soup Really Is Good for the Soul: 'Comfort Food' Fulfills the Need to Belong. *Psychological Science,* 22 (6), pp. 747-753.

Troisi, J.D. and Wright, J.W.C. (2016). Comfort Food: Nourishing Our Collective Stomachs and Our Collective Minds. *Teaching of Psychology,* 44 (1), pp. 78-84.

Tsigkas, A., 2019. Tasting Ceylon Tea: aesthetic judgment beyond "good taste". *Food, Culture & Society*. 22 (2), pp.152-167.

Tuomainen, H.M. (2009). Ethnic Identity, (Post)Colonialism and Foodways: Ghanaians in London. *Food, Culture and Society,* 12 (4), pp. 525-554.

Turner, B.S. and Edmunds, J. (2002). The distaste of taste: Bourdieu, cultural capital and the Australian postwar elite. *Journal of Consumer Culture,* 2 (2), pp. 219-239.

Turner, V.W. (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Turner, V.W. (1988). *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.

Walker, D. and Myrick, F. (2006). Grounded Theory: An Exploration of Process and Procedure. *Qualitative Health Research,* 16 (4), pp. 547-559.

Warde, A. (2008). Dimensions of a Social Theory of Taste. *Journal of Cultural Economy,* 1 (3), pp. 321-336.

Warin, M. and Dennis, S. (2005). Threads of Memory: Reproducing the Cypress Tree through Sensual Consumption. *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 26 (1-2), pp. 159-170.

Weigley, E.S. (1974). It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement. *American Quarterly,* 26 (1), pp. 79-96.

Weismantel, M.J. (1988). *Food, Gender, and Poverty in the Ecuadorian Andes.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Weismantel, M.J. (1991). Maize Beer and Andean Social Transformations: Drunken Indians, Bread Babies, and Chosen Women. *MLN* 106 (4), pp. 861-879.

Weismantel, M.J. (2004). Moche Sex Pots: Reproduction and Temporality in Ancient South America. *American Anthropologist,* 106 (3), pp. 495-505.

Wilk, R. (1996). Learning to Be Local in Belize: Global Systems of Common Difference. In: Miller, D. (ed.) *Worlds Apart. Modernity through the Prism of the Local*, London: Routledge. pp. 110-133.

Wilks, I. (2002). *Wa and the Wala: Islam and Polity in Northwestern Ghana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Williams-Forson, P. (2010). Other Women Cooked for My Husband: Negotiating Gender, Food, and Identities in an African American / Ghanaian Household. *Feminist Studies,* 36 (2), pp. 435-461.

Williams-Forson, P. and Counihan, C. (2013). *Taking food public: Redefining foodways in a changing world*. London: Routledge.

Williams-Forson, P. (2014). 'I Haven't Eaten If I Don't Have My Soup and Fufu': Cultural Preservation through Food and Foodways among Ghanaian Migrants in the United States. *Africa Today,* 61 (1), pp. 69-87.

Wise, A. (2010). Sensuous Multiculturalism: Emotional Landscapes of Inter-Ethnic Living in Australian Suburbia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 36 (6), pp. 917-937.

Wise, A. (2012). Moving Food: Gustatory Commensality And Disjuncture In Everyday Multiculturalism. *New Formations,* 74 (74), pp. 82-107.

Wise, A. and Velayutham, S. (eds) (2009). *Everyday Multiculturalism*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wolfinger, N. (2002). On writing fieldnotes: collection strategies and background expectancies. *Qualitative Research,* 2 (1), pp. 85-95.

Worby, E. (1994). Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in Northwestern Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 20 (3), pp. 371-392.

Yaro, J.A. (2006). Is Deagrarianisation Real? A Study of Livelihood Activities in Rural Northern Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 44 (1), pp. 125-156.

Yi, L. (2016). The Sense of Chengdu: Embodied Heritage in Tastescape. PhD thesis. University of Illinois.