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Narrating Authenticity: Understanding Cultural Identity representations in Chef's Table.

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Abstract

This project uses Chef's Table as a platform to discuss the representations of the notions of Authenticity and Exotism as presented by Johnston & Baumann (2010) in the context of Netflix as a global entertainment platform. We argue that Authenticity, as a social construction, is negotiated in the flow between the Local & Global. We use a Multimodal Frame analysis to highlight the interconnectedness between individuals and their localities and how meaning is constructed from a global perspective. Furthermore, building on the signifiers of Authenticity, presented by the authors above, we uncover a further relation between how the individuals portrayed in the show, use personal notions of Cultural Identity, and how their individual trajectories, have placed them in a position that allows them to feel entitled to reclaim their cultural representation through cuisine. This new representation is conveyed through what Leer & Meldgaard call "the right kind of stranger".

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Introduction

This project will unpack the notions of Authenticity and Exoticism as presented by Johnston & Baumann (2010) in the context of David Gelb's "Chef's Table". Firstly we will revisit the concepts of Authenticity & Exoticism as socially constructed notions, building on Stuart Hall's theories Representation (1989). We will later discuss how Authenticity is articulated in the episodes portraying Alex Atala, Bo Songvisava and Musa Dağdeviren, and what role notions such as Cultural Identity play in the representation of the exotic Other. The construction of the exotic Other in Chef's Table is catered towards consumption of the Other's Cultural Identity as we will later develop.

To unravel these notions we will first try to understand Netflix as an entertainment platform and Chef's Table as a docu-series. We will later discuss the concepts of Authenticity and discourses of Exoticism within the Foodscape, to later build on bell hooks (1992) "Eating the Other", to gain a more critical understanding of said concepts.

Our analysis will be divided into three sections: the Individual, the Local and the Global. The sections are dictated by common topics and structures we observed within the chosen episodes, supported by our methodological choice. The first section will be the narration of the self: How do the chefs in question become the persona that is portrayed in the show? What steps did they take to become the

unique individuals they are portrayed as? We will illustrate this through the key themes presented in their personal narratives.

The second section will delve into the chefs' relation to local ingredients, cuisines and autochthonous understandings. How does the relation to local producers and the geographically specific goods add to the construction of Authenticity? This section will also tackle what makes something a desirable product over another. Why are some goods more socially valued than others?

The third and final section will distance itself from the previous local focus and try to understand how these localized and personal experiences are framed in a global context. Moreover, we will discuss how Authenticity travels, and how the meaning-making of Authenticity is negotiated in a global framework. How do the authentic and the exotic relate? What role does validation play within these chef's narratives?

Netflix as a mediaplatform

Netflix, a company created in 1997, expanded their business with a streaming-based media platform in 2007. By providing a wide selection of TV-shows, movies and documentaries on their streaming platform, which are accessed through subscribed memberships, Netflix is now in the forefront of the online entertainment business, with almost 150 million paid memberships in nearly 200 different countries (https://media.netflix.com/en/about-netflix).

Unlike movies and TV-shows, Sudeep Sharma (2016) argues that documentaries and docu-series are part of an on-demand content that viewers find interesting, due to the combination of education and entertainment. The emphasis on informational categories of media both have formed Netflix as a provider of quality cinema and differentiated them from other types of TV programming.

While Netflix is able to reach a global audience through streaming services, it is important to stress that the motivational background for offering its different material, including documentaries, is aimed towards commercial success in order to add value to the company or improve it economically. Therefore, we should consider the implications behind this documentaries educational value. If the educational content has to have entertainment value to be attractive to a viewer, it might be shaped by commercial motivations.

The commercial aspect of the enterprise makes Sharma (2016) argue that the common metaphor of Netflix operating as a library is misleading since a library is based on the need for preserving historical material and addressing scholarly needs and purposes. Sharma presents the more accurate metaphor of Netflix as a newsstand, since the material on the platform is chosen to fulfil viewer demands and are available on a rotational basis.

By viewing Netflix' streaming services as a newsstand, the emphasis is put on the filmmaker's ability to gain and maintain viewers. This is due to the selection of and the consequently shaping of documentaries, based on the demands of the audience.

Documentaries are a gateway to knowledge and learning, through insights on real-world settings and visualizing the realities of others. The premise of a documentary, which is to present a portion of the real world, Sharma argues, is to some extent an illusion since a documentary is *"as much an artifice as fictional filmmaking"* (Sharma, 2016, p. 146). Looking at Netflix as a newsstand, the documentaries content provided could, therefore, clash with the commercial objectives of Netflix.

Chef's table, the case

As the case for this project, we have chosen David Gelb's "Chef Table". The show was first aired in April 2015 on Netflix, the format of the show is a Documentary Series. Chef's Table narrates the life and ideas of chefs around the world. Every episode follows a different chef. The chef narrates his story in the first person and some food critics, friends or other celebrity chefs comment on their journey. The format is different from most other food programs in the market. The series does not revolve around competitions or guides to cooking as for instance Master Chef or Jamie Oliver's shows. Gelb uses food as a way to peek into some of the most famous restaurants in the world and narrate the ideas that make these spaces outstanding in a biographical mode.

Chef's Table focuses on food globally, presenting especially in the first seasons, chefs from around the world that focus on their local contexts. The protagonist of the show prioritizes their cultural heritage and the revitalization of what they believe to be their national cuisine. Their focus on tradition reinvented has granted all of the diverse individuals portrayed in Chef's Table the Foodscape's main institutions attention, the Michelin Guide, San Pellegrino Top 50 ranking and media in general. Chef's Table has now six seasons and a French-themed spin-off.

The themes treated on the series are varied, but we have found Authenticity to be a recurring one, a finding that will be elaborated in the Methodology section. To analyse this theme we have chosen three episodes that are tightly related to the subject. The first one features Alex Atala (Volume two, Episode two), owner of D.O.M. in São Paulo, the episode follows Atala's journey from a young punk immigrant in Europe as one of the most recognized faces in Latin American Gastronomy. The second episode we choose portray is Musa Dağdeviren (Volume five, Episode two), owner of Çiya in Istanbul. Dağdeviren is portrayed as a "food anthropologist", because he uses an ethnological approach to visit and research

every corner of Turkey to recover lost recipes, from Turkey's different cultural traditions and hold them together in his restaurant. And lastly, we choose Bo Songvisava (Volume five, Episode 3), co-owner of Bo.Lan in Bangkok. Bo is also concerned with lost traditions and the quality of ingredients and has been recognized as Asia's best female chef by the Michelin Guide, between many others.

Although their trajectories towards becoming successful chefs are very different and the circumstances where they learned and develop their skills are also very diverse, we think they have more in common in the ideologies that they represent that it might seem at first glance. All of the chefs focus on highlighting cuisines that are not traditionally associated with fine dining, like gourmet and luxurious restaurants. Nevertheless, they have, from their distant corners of the world, become embodiments of their national cuisine.

This is one of the reasons why we have chosen their individual episodes as our case. Not only their stories are compelling but the narrative that David Gelb has built around them create chapters that highlight the individuality of each chef. Gelb's storytelling frames these individual's stories within the Foodscape's discourses of Authenticity, but they are somehow relatable to viewers of the Netflix platform Globally. To understand Gelb's storytelling about these unique Chefs we need to understand the concepts of Authenticity and Exoticism in relation to food. We will develop this in the Theory section.

Problem Area & Questions

This paper aims to use the case of Chef's Table to investigate how the local understandings of cuisine, transcend to the global context through media representations of Cultural Identities. By doing so, it will look into how the narrations of Authenticity are constructed within the depiction of the exotic Other. This plays into the postcolonial field of studies, where hierarchies of taste are related to power dynamics between "the West and the rest" (Pacheco, 2003). Hence, we will use the

binary flows of the local and the global as central analytical elements, that will in itself be intersected by the postcolonial dimension mentioned above.

In order to address this problem area within the case of choice, we have formulated some questions to navigate our project towards the understanding of representations of Cultural Identity, through the narratives of Authenticity in the Foodscape.

-How is Authenticity narrated within Chef's Table?

-How do representations of Cultural Identity in chef's table narrate Authenticity?

- How is Authenticity constructed within the local and global Foodscape?

-How are these individuals claiming Authenticity through their understandings of cultural identity?

Relevance

As for the relevance and the corresponding field of inquiry, we find this topic particularly current and well inserted in the contemporary's foodie discourse (Johnsons & Baumann, 2010). In recent years we are seeing a panorama which is saturated with a large variety of documentaries and new types of educational programmes. Our interest is revolving around these new documentaries and how they are narrated and constructed to reach and engage with audiences, since these products are a source of information and used as personal enlightenment (Sharma, 2016).

At the beginning of our research project, in the process of our problem formulation, there was the desire to unveil which are the features and characteristics behind the complex notion of Authenticity. In our specific case, this notion is inserted directly in the above mentioned culinary program encompassing cultures, identities, individuals, food and dishes. The narration of every story behind one dish, the portrayal of a

culture in the mediated discourse as well as the primitive origin and history which the food carries, are all elements nurturing the concept of Authenticity structurally and from many different angles, constantly constructing and re-shaping the understanding of how we can construct meaning upon it.

In Chef's Table, the concept of Authenticity is constantly being challenged and disrupted, as we can see how culinary traditions and rituals are being reformulated. In this research, we want to question and further investigate this notion of Authenticity with all of the dynamics which are entailed.

It is exactly with this point of departure that our interest has then expanded towards the relation existing between the viewer and "the Other", the other being intended as someone who is not sharing the same world view and life perceptions.

As a massive streaming platform, Netflix has catered a product which has a balanced amount of Exoticism in order to be fully grasped by cultures standing on the opposite pole in terms of norms and traditions. Within Chef's Table, it can be argued that the notion of Authenticity is negotiated as it is meant to travel from a local understanding extending out towards a global scale, and it is with these assumptions in mind that we want to conduct our research project in order to have a clearer understanding of these constructions.

Theory

This paper uses the case of Chef's Table to examine the media's construction of Authenticity and Exoticism, and how these respectively contribute to the continued shaping of Cultural Identities. Furthermore, it aims to describe how these theoretical concepts are used as brushstrokes to paint a picture of the larger Cultural Representation and the idea of consuming the exotic Other that the show Chef's Table presents.

The theory that is used organize this project, is facilitated around the interrelated and dynamic notions of the Local and Global, with all the complexities that Globalization entails.

Zygmunt Bauman states that *"the global scene needs to be seen as a matrix of possibilities"* and that *"globalizing and localizing trends are mutually reinforcing and inseparable"*(1998, p. 43;45). The Local and Global have in recent times attracted wide scholarly interest and spawned various terminologies to define the different interactions, like Glocalization, Creolization, Domestication, among others. Appadurai (1990) has been a major contributor to the globalization discourse, introducing five disjunctive, complex and overlapping, global flows, or scapes (ethnoscape, technoscape, mediascape, financescape and ideascape). These illustrate how interwoven the globalized world is with all its dimensions. The technology and the media are key facilitators of these flows in the contemporary age. In this paper, all the theoretical elements involved are revolving around Netflix' show Chef's Table and it's construction of the individual chefs persona, and their local environment, in terms of Authenticity, Exoticism and Cultural Identity. These dimensions are narrated by Chef's Table, representing the global forces that both produces and consumes these narrated discourses, which the paper will clarify using the concept of Cultural Representation and the consumption of Other.

Unpacking Authenticity, between the Local & the Global

In this section, we will unpack Authenticity as a socially constructed concept. We will first look at it as understood by Johnston & Baumann (2010), to later discuss how tensions between the Local and the Global shape our understanding of what is authentic. Moreover, this section will describe how Authenticity and Exoticism are interrelated on a theoretical level. To unravel how Authenticity is constructed, we must first understand what role does it play within the Foodscape. The *Foodscape* is a concept that Johnston & Baumann developed building on Appadurai's Scapes of Cultural Flow (Appadurai, 1990) to denominate *"a dynamic social construction that relates food to places, people, meanings, and material processes" (2010).* Their

approach to the Foodscape as an fluid space where meaning is being negotiated and constructed is vital to our understanding of Authenticity. Because within this context, a reference point has to be defined in order to socially construct Authenticity.

The authors place the figure of the "Foodie" as the subject both articulating and consuming the narratives that comprise the Foodscape. The Foodie is the archetype of the food consumer as explained by the authors. The Foodie represents a complex figure. It is critical to have a basic understanding of this term since the Foodie is the central player within the Foodscape. Foodie is a contested term, it emerged as a way to separate people with an interest in food from more elitist terms like epicurean or gourmand. Those terms are tied to more old fashioned ways of relating to the food system, where the only standard of fine dining was Western European or the idea of a Michelin star (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Foodies can be people with different interest within the realm of food but have a couple of common characteristics. Everyone has to eat, but a Foodie is a person who thinks about food and spends time either buying specific ingredients to make a meal, researching new places to eat, growing their own food or travelling long distances to have a meal, thus being a Foodie is time-consuming. The Foodie uses food as one of the fundamental elements to define their identity. The Foodie used food to distinguish themselves from the rest, reproducing ideology in their food choices (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). We will not expand on the Foodie as a subject, but on some of the discourses that Foodie's embody, since they provide a point of reference for the Foodscapes we will look into. These foodie discourses are understood as the narratives pertaining the food industry and how meaning is created in relation to food. This means that while Authenticity can be a foodie discourse in itself, it can also be part of other foodie discourses, like the gourmet discourse.

Johnston and Baumann (2010) identify five frames within foodie discourses. The first two, that we will develop in this chapter are Authenticity & Exoticism. Third would be the Politics of food, for instance, looking at the political implications of the

preponderance of organic products, the decision to not eat meat or the rise of waste stores as Wefood in Copenhagen. Fourth, would be looking at Class and food democracy, how is distinction articulated within the Foodscape and lastly, Gender to look at the power dynamics present within these narratives that surround food and its consumers. It is important to understand these main themes within the foodie discourses even though they are not part of our theoretical approach. This is due to the considerate size of the topics, which unavoidably will be encountered within the analysis. This will be further elaborated in the section of Delimitation.

The Authentic

According to Johnston and Baumann (2010), categorising food as authentic or inauthentic is a way to legitimise the Foodie's choices. The distinction between what is presented as authentic and what is not, is crucial for understanding the narratives present in the episodes we propose to unpack. Authenticity is not inherent to objects or spaces, but its meaning is negotiated from its periphery. Its meaning is also constructed in relation to other objects. Authenticity can only be perceived when comparing two or more objects, it's a relational attribution. The authors distinguish five possible signifiers that are directly connected with the construction Authenticity: geographic specificity, simplicity, personal connection and ethnic connection. They can be individualised or seen as a group when assessing what is constructed as authentic (Johnston & Baumann, 2010).

Geographic specificity can be present in two ways: foods with appellation of origin like Parmigiano-Reggiano or Mezcal. Gastronomic products whose type and name are tied to a specific area of production. Mezcal can only be called as such if produced in Oaxaca, the same exact production technique being carried out in the region of Jalisco, could not carry the name "mezcal". But the other possibilities of associations for geographic specificity are techniques or flavours that are considered

typical of a region such as Cantonese Food or Korean BBQ but can be reproduced outside said region, without losing its connection to it.

Simplicity is also an indicator of Authenticity. According to the authors, simplicity is mostly related to small scale production, what is natural, organic or fresh. It is often linked to artisanal ways of doing things or just a straightforward presentation or method of production. Foodie discourse emphasises production techniques and their stories. Therefore, production becomes the source of interest and value for the consumer, enabling simplicity to be the critical denominator of what is an authentic product or food experience. Simplicity does not only need to refer to something that is easily executed, but it can also be understood as an unpretentious experience, like eating at a farm or a food-truck away from the traditional luxury of a Michelin starred restaurant. Simplicity, therefore, can be related to a setting, a presentation, a mode of production, storytelling or the producer or chef.

Personal Connection in Authenticity is especially important for the analysis we are proposing since the project revolves around the portrayal of Authenticity tied to three specific individuals. Johnston & Baumann propose to understand food, in this case, the same way we understand art. A mass produced poster bought in a store, would not be considered "authentic" per se, but a unique painting from a renowned artist would. Like in art, authorship in food is linked to Authenticity. A renowned chef cooks with intention and skill. Like a painting from Picasso, it can be enjoyed without previous knowledge. But a person who knows its background can, probably, appreciate it on a different level. The same happens with the Foodie, that understands the background knowledge behind the chef process and world view.

On the other hand, they propose an antipodal way of personal connection. Within foodie travel discourses, the figure of an anonymous exotic Other emerges as a chef in a remote location, a roadside or a hut cooking in basic conditions and creating an experience that is perceived as authentic. The unknown chef is always romanticized and the experience is highlighted over the identity of the cook, its precise embodiment of the Other as exotic that creates the authentic experience. We will

develop on the notion of Exoticism in the next section and go back to this theme in depth in the analysis section.

History & Tradition as most of the other dimensions, has two sides. What they both have in common is the emphasis that Authenticity is a relational quality. Something is called traditional when it reproduces a set of standardised characteristics. This conventions or characteristics that it can be compared against will reinforce an item's Authenticity or play it down. The first way of looking at this dimension would be the case of European high cuisine. Cooking dishes like risotto, that date to the middle ages in Italy, require the use of specific techniques for it to fall within the category of cooking said dish. The idea of how risotto is made has stood the test of time, thus, one can modify its recipe only while adhering to its basic principles, when it diverges from them it ceases to be considered authentic.

When it comes to ethnic food, where the Western foodie is not familiar with the processes involved in the makings of the dishes, history is used as a way to underline the connection between food and culture that is attempting to reproduce.

The last element that the authors identify is **Ethnic Connection.** The authors found in their research that a significant amount of their interviewees paired Authenticity with the origin of the chef. Some cuisines seem to be perceived as more authentic if the chef's ethnicity matches the food they are cooking, like a sushi place run by Japanese people, or a Peruvian restaurant where Peruvian people eat. This connection between the food that's being presented and the ethnicity of the person preparing it, is interpreted by the Foodie as "real" knowledge of how the food should really be prepared or should taste like. This creates a boundary between who belongs in the preparation of certain foods and who doesn't, but ironically the distinction is not stressed by the producer, but by the consumer.

Johnston & Baumann propose these five frames as ways to read Authenticity in foodie discourses. These frames might initially seem democratic since Authenticity is not located in any specific part of the world and it can include anyone. But the attribution of who decides what is authentic is made from the perspective of a

privileged eater, who uses their knowledge to distinguish itself and others, reinforcing hierarchies between them.

Authenticity is relevant in Foodie discourses, it helps reconcile nostalgia in the contemporary era, and this quality cannot be understated (Pratt, J., 2007). This line of thought is also developed by Stiles, Antiok & Bell in "The ghosts of taste: Food and the cultural politics of Authenticity". Building on similar terms as Johnston & Baumann (2010) they propose that food and practices that are catalogued as authentic are possessed by Ghosts of tastes. Experiencing food relationally enables the consumer to associate it with places and faces that connect these experiences and food to this third presence that is not the consumer or the object, anchoring food to said place or face. They use the term ghost to convey the invisible presences loaded with meanings carried by food, such as authorship or history. They conclude:

"The ghosts of taste are products of overlapping geographies, contradictory stories, and social relations that often brew conflict. Questions and fights over identity, belonging, and possession are negotiated in the construction of the ghosts of taste. The links we make between food, place and people have social implications beyond the immediate act of eating. These implications are the ghostly foundations of the real politics of taste." (Stiles, K., Antiok, O. & Bell, M., 2010)

These authors expand on the notion that Authenticity is socially constructed somewhere between the interaction of the Local and the Global. Taste, according to them, is a comparative act, tied to the power dynamics that characterise both spaces. Politics of taste within the Foodscape have political implications that are disguised behind the seemingly natural act of eating. The Local and the Global are central to the understanding of the construction of Authenticity. We will build on the notions they introduce of the Global Real & the Local Real, to later use them in our analysis section. In this context, Global Real refers to standardised quality, flavour and forms no matter the scale of production and food safety standards. The Local Real is associated with the farmer's face, a small local community and individual care. The Local Real, to become globally recognized, needs to meet to a certain

extent the standards of the Global Real. Therefore, they cannot be looked at separately, they are integral parts of the Foodscape. It is particularly relevant to our case to understand, how the Local Real travels, becoming in some cases "commodified Authenticity". We propose within Chef's Table: A Female chef from Thailand, a Brazilian and a Turkish Chef all of them are placed in a position that oscillates between being authentic and the exotic. We will now expand on the latter.

The Exotic

To understand the discourse of Exoticism, Johnston and Baumann (2010) continues the same procedure as aforementioned discourse on Authenticity, underlining exotic as something socially constructed when evaluating food, thus asking: *"If food is exotic, we must ask, exotic to whom?"* (2010: 86-87). In order to look at the construction of Exoticism, a contextualization of the involved power relations is needed, highlighting the questions of *culinary colonialism* and *culinary cosmopolitanism*, and the tensions that these interconnected perspectives add to the discussion of Exoticism in the Foodscape.

Underlying perspectives

Firstly, drawing on literature from post-colonial studies, constructions of the exotic Other is built revolving themes like Orientalism, consumer culture and tourism, as different shapes of 'Othering' that is both shaped by, and sustained by both historical and current power relations.

If the exotic Other is looked at as a cultural resource to be consumed by the culturally and economically better positioned members of the geo-political hemisphere, it has a certain colonial dimension that needs to be addressed. This is why it is important to include when talking about the Foodscapes.

In terms of foodie discourses, culinary colonialism is introduced as a neo-colonial perspective of culinary adventuring, the search for exotic cuisines. This is due to the

legitimate and economic accommodation of colonialism in the pursuit of exploring food cultures, resulting in the appropriation thereof, and also enforces power relations and social inequalities between the Global North and the Global South.

Addressing this culinary adventuring or these Foodies, is not to assert every food enthusiast as a colonizer of the exotic Other, but to put the theme of Exoticism in a historical and geopolitical context, since knowledge about cultures of food is also a parameter for social status in terms of cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1984).

Furthermore, by placing foodies into the notions of power relations, it is not to classify them as elites, but to recognize them in the participation of the foodie discourse, with cultural and economical advantages, that distinguishes them to the exotic Others; those, who are not able to participate in, and consume the same experiences as the Foodies, which underlines the inequalities and the neo-colonial economic relations of the Foodscape.

On top of the exotic food adventuring which is initially presented as harmful and negative in the light of neo-colonialism, it is important to stress that the colonizing aspect is only one perspective of the foodie discourse. The interconnected other side that constitutes the discourse, is the more positive notion of cultural Cosmopolitanism, which is based on the diametrical perspective of being more critical towards the Western culture and the Eurocentric ways, thus respecting cultural differences and appreciating cultural homogeneity (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). As explained earlier, a Foodie does not need to have a social elite status to participate in the foodie discourse, due to the economic barriers being lesser than, for example, the consumption of expensive foreign brands in the world of fashion. This makes the Exoticism of cultural foods a highly accessible path to achieve multiculturalism and participate in a form of culinary cosmopolitanism.

The appreciation of the different exotic tastes that are encountered by Foodies, can be seen as a gateway to cultural insight about different ethnicities and social groups distant to the consumer, and therefore contribute to the acceptance of the exotic Other through the basis of different cultural foods. Thus, by viewing culinary adventuring through the perspective of a cosmopolitan, the Foodscape is also

established as an arena of cultural inclusion and an opportunity for the Foodie to distance itself of cultural parochialism and Eurocentric beliefs.

Constructing Exotic

As presented through the culinary adventuring of foodies in the Foodscape, seeking the exotic Other can be viewed as both a notion of neo-colonialism, but also an act of cosmopolitanism. Presenting these fundamental understandings of culinary Exoticism is not to simplify the duality of contrasting ideas, expressing either the Foodie as elitist or culturally liberating, but to emphasize the important pull-push interrelation of these binary complexities that institute the foodie discourse.

Permitted by the increasingly flows of globalization, these two perspectives frames the discussion of partaking in the Foodscape as both forming and procreating specific neo-colonial inequalities, in the attempt to explore and possess the cultural resources of the exotic Other, while at the same time, intending to eradicate borders of exclusion, distinction and social status in the process of cultural inclusion.

Having clarified the ramifications of Exoticism, Johnston & Baumann (2010) defines two central dimensions in the process of characterizing and constructing food as exotic, one which addresses the **social distance**, the other is respectively concerned with the foods capability to be **norm breaking**. Before defining the variables of Exoticism, it is vital to provide a reference point in the foodie discourse, since the Foodie is usually attributed as a white, cosmopolitan, with certain amount of economic freedom, exotic is mostly associated with ethnicity and foreign foods in the perspective of an American or European, or more generally, a foodie from the Global North. This stems from the creators of the food discourse being dominated by the food media, that *"features some element of identifying new culinary trends and hot new foods, as well as identifying what foods and cuisines are considered passé"* (Johnston and Baumann, 2010: 99). These food magazines, documentaries, blogs, and in our case Chef's Table, are commonly created by and for the white, upper-middle-class audience with sufficient cultural and economic capital to embrace the exotic Other.

It is important to stress that the point of reference would navigate the foodie discourse in a certain direction, take for example rural French wine enthusiasts or Asian elites embarking on a food journey. These examples would provide a different Foodscape where the exotic Other is defined from respectively a French parochialist and an Oriental upper-class point of departure.

Utilizing a reference point is how 'exotic' is organized and is detrimental to the measurement of the degree of an exotic food, in terms of outlining how socially distant and 'norm-breaking' it is. Inspecting food from a certain reference point, a combination of ethnic difference, geographical distance and social class are used as means to evaluate the degree of social distance, in relation to the qualities of the exotic Other.

The equation of class, ethnicity and distance is interrelated, and to a large degree facilitated by the multiculturalism and globalism that covers the Foodscape. When looking at the geographical distance between two countries, e.g. Norway and Egypt, which are geographically close, the distance between the social classes and ethnic differences seems to follow more or less accordingly, but using a different example of Norway and Canada, provides an optic on two countries that geographically are more distant, while seemingly having more similarities and social understandings in common regarding ethnic difference and social class.

Looking at the aforementioned example, the social distance is calculated differently and asserts a valuation of Exoticism based on rarity. The rarity of exotic food is thus contextualized by an omnivorous culinary setting, meaning that the rarity is based on the consumption of the food or the exotic Other by the Foodie, including foods or impressions that are not rare by nature, or scarcity, but rare in the eye of the beholder. An example of this rarity could be the eating of chicken heads, a consumption which is rare in the Western Foodscape, but considered a delicacy in China. A chicken head is neither scarce nor rare in the daily life of an Western Foodie, but on the other hand the usage of the head as part of a meal is considered rare for the westerner.

Secondly, in the interest of measuring something exotic within the foodie discourse, is the food's capability to break the norms. This side of the spectrum consists of the food thought of as, outrageous, extreme, exciting and shocking to the mainstream Foodies; a food that disrupts the customs of cultural and culinary mainstream in order to receive attention as exotic. This type of food is often associated with experimenting the gourmet landscape and high-class food arrangements, but also in the ingredients and resources that are in violation and in contradiction of the norms and the world-view of the Foodie. An essential aspect to the dimension of breaking norms, is the globalization and the normalisation it carries in the Foodscape. Something groundbreaking, requires a certain continuation in order for it to remain norm-breaking, demanding that the manifestation of this exotic dimension is in a constant flux, altering through time and space. Take the example of molecular gastronomy, which initially had a forceful and shocking impact on the foodscape, but after this initial phase needs re-invention and further experimenting to stay contemporary and norm-breaking.

Using the dimensions of the exotic provided by Johnston and Baumann (2010), the exotic becomes distinguished between socially constructed levels of Exoticism from a certain reference point, by using the parameters of measuring something from normal to breaking norms, and socially near to socially distant. Thus, a tool is provided in order to classify certain foods as lesser exotic, and others as highly exotic, identifying or disregarding exotic to either valorize or deny foods within the Foodscape.

These dimensions of exotic is to be viewed in the light and tensions of the ideologies that frame the complex and contradictory foodie discourse as both democratic and distinctive. The omnivore's welcoming and solidarity of new foods and cuisines from exotic environments in a cosmopolitan perspective manifests the democratic ideology, while valuing food on the basis of strangeness and difference constitutes the standardization of distinguishing and the ideology of distinction.

Based on the analysis of Johnston and Baumann (2010), lesser socially distant foods are concluded to be more frequent in the Foodscape, because they provide a

factor of relatability in the case of the Foodie encountering the exotic Other. By limiting the social distance and categorizing food as lesser exotic, chefs and cuisines adapt the Foodscape to the Foodie by providing a more recognizable and familiar exotic, that the consumers can identify themselves with (Heldke 2003), a notion which will be elaborated in the following sections.

Cultural Identity and Cultural Representation

This section will present Cultural Identity and representation and shape the understanding of the concept, by considering it not only as theory or history, but also an ongoing process, as will be described below. To understand the theory, we are going to use Stuart Hall's (1989, 2001) "Cultural identity and cinematic representation" and "The spectacle of the other". To understand the basic concept, Cultural Identity is an identity or feeling of belonging to a certain group. Cultural Identity is a part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and its relation to the nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality and any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. It is both a characteristic of the individual, but also a culturally similar group of members who share the same Cultural Identity. The process involves learning, and accepting: traditions, heritages, languages, religions, thinking patterns and social structures of a culture. Cultural studies and social theory have discussed Cultural Identity and the understanding thereof.
The new form of identification that has emerged, distorts the understanding of the individual as a coherent entity within different cultural identifiers.

According to Stuart Hall, identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think, he writes: *"there is, however, a related but different view of cultural identity, which qualifies, even if it does not replace, the first"* (1989, p.70). Instead of thinking identity as an already accomplished historical fact, which the new cinematic discourse then represents, we should think identity as a production that never is complete. This

process is always constituted within, not outside representation. This means that the process of Cultural Identity will always be in process by representing its theme and its state of being. But this view problematizes the very authority and Authenticity to which the term 'Cultural Identity' lays claim. According to the author there are also critical points of deep and significant difference that constitute 'what we really are' or rather since history has intervened 'what we have become'. The author further adds we cannot speak for very long with any exactness about 'one experience, one identity' without acknowledging its other side- the differences and discontinuities which constitute precisely uniqueness. Cultural Identity in other sense is a matter of `becoming´ as well as of `being´. Identity and representation belong to the future as much as to the past. Hall (1989, p.70) writes that identity is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and the culture. Like everything that are historical, Cultural Identity and representation undergo constant transformation. The way we have been positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation were a critical exercise of the cultural power and normalization, because they are superficial. The author adds it has the power to make us see and experience ourselves as `Other´. The regime of representation is the regime of power formation and is internal not external. It is as one thing to place some person or set of people as the Other of the dominant discourse. Cultural identity is not fixed essence at all, neither lying unchanged outside history and the culture, nor it is some universal and transcendental spirit inside the history. It is something trick of the imagination and has its own history that has material and symbolic effects. Hall writes *"The past continues to speak to us. But this is no longer a simple, factual ´past´, since our relation to it is, like the child's relation to the mother, always-already `after the break´"* (1989, p.72). Cultural Identity is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and the myth. It is the point of identification and the unstable point of identification which is made or re-constructed within the discourses of the history and culture. And there is always positioning which includes a politics of position, that has no guarantee in an unproblematic transcendental 'law of history'.

Hall (2001, p.226) wrote that representation is a concept and a practice, it is the first moment in cultural circuit. According to the author, representation is a complex business and especially when dealing with difference, it engages the feelings, attitudes and emotions and it mobilizes fear and anxieties in the viewer at deeper level, which is then made sense of and simplified as a common representation. Representational practice is also known as stereotyping. In practice of representation the image is a very powerful one. Visual images are highly ambiguous because they can carry more than one meaning. If the content is unknown, then the observer might be tempted to read it as a moment of unqualified triumph, and would not be wrong to assume and accept a specific meaning from the image. A same image can carry several meanings, quite different, sometimes diametrically opposite ones. The image has a potential meaning but the meaning keeps on floating, it cannot be fixed. However, the attempt of fixing the potential meaning of an image is work of representational practices. So as Hall argues, rather than a 'right' or 'wrong' meaning, what we need to ask is, Which of the many meanings in the image are meant to be privileged? And Which are the preferred meanings? The meaning of an image does not lie exclusively, but the conjunction of the image and text does (2001). Further, Hall adds that the two discourses – the discourse of written language and the discourse of photography- are required to produce the intended fixed meaning. As the image carry many meanings and they all are equally plausible, the fact is that image present denotative and connotative meaning. Each image carries its own meaning, but it gets the meaning only in relation to the context. Diversely, images do not carry meaning of signify on their own. They accumulate the meaning or play off their meaning against one another across a variety of texts and media. In Hall's article, he explains that sometimes having the broader level of differences and Otherness is being presented in a particular culture. Meaning sometimes arises through the difference between the person and the negative side is that meaning cannot be fixed and one group can never be completely in charge of the meaning. The social groups impose meaning on their world by ordering and organizing things into a classification system.

According to the philosopher Jacques Derrida, one pole of the binary is usually the dominant one in which it includes the other within its field of operations. There is

always a dynamic power relation between the poles of the binary opposition, like we write black/white, modern/primitive, men/women and so on. Hall's text viewed that, everything we say and mean is modified by the interaction and the interplay with another person. Meaning arise through difference between the participants in any dialogue. The Other in short is essential to meaning. Culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different position within a classificatory system, and the marking of difference is in the basic of symbolic order called culture.

Symbolic boundaries are always central to all culture. According to Hall, marking difference lead us symbolically to close ranks, shore up culture and to stigmatize and expel what is defined as impure and abnormal. However, paradoxically it also makes difference powerful, it is strangely attractive precisely because it is forbidden, taboo and threatening to the cultural order. Therefore, socially peripheral is often symbolically centered. The subjective are formed through trouble, never completed, unconscious dialogue with the internalization of the Other. Differences is ambivalent and can be both negative and positive. Hall further argues that, it is both necessary for the production of meaning, the formation of language and culture for social identities and subjective sense of the self as a subject threatening a site of danger, negative feeling of splitting hostility and aggression towards the Other. On the other hand, representations are also idealized and sentimentalized rather than degraded while remaining stereotypical. Here, the stereotypical reduce people to a few simple essential characteristics represented as fixed by nature. Hall, views stereotyping in other words, is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. The representation is advanced and introduces a different stage, having relation to the different social and cultural aspects. Most cases can draw relation to social, biological, linguistic, racial or historical factors; for example ´The honey hunter in Nepal´. We can relate this case to different perspectives, socially their society provides them this duty of being brave and climbing the hills to feed their family and take their responsibility to earn from honey, if we try to see it from a biological or gendered aspect, then only men are considered to do this job, racially only the community living in that place, having the indigenous background from hundreds of years can do it. A dynamic can be presented in different view with a multi purpose. It has a relation to the power dynamic. Representation introduces new contents,

accepts and works with the shifting unstable character of meaning, and enters into struggle while acknowledging meaning can never be finally fixed and that it therefore will never reach a final 'victory'.

Consuming the Other, between Exoticism & Authenticity

The interplay between the Foodie consuming the Other, will be further developed in this section. Presenting the Foodscape in continuation of notions by Johnston and Baumann, a framework of the role of the media and how it interrelates with the representation of the exotic Other, will be provided. Using bell hooks "Eating the Other" as a departure point and Leer & Meldgaard's Stranger Fetichism analysis on Food travel shows (2015), we will unpack the perils of the commodification of Otherness. Taking the power dynamics into consideration, the action of the consuming of the exotic Other by the Foodie will be looked at.

As presented earlier, the Foodscape entails the two intertwined perspectives of both the awareness of Eurocentrism and Western criticism leading to cultural inclusion, but also the neo-colonial understanding of the Foodie's intention of conquering or consuming a certain unknown. The reasons to consume the exotic Other may vary, but the reproduction of Cultural Identities and representations have to be observed in a larger picture. This broader perspective includes a historical dimension, where the mingling between those of a high and low social status has been seen as a taboo, coexisting parties polluted by one another.

A notion which has gradually been changed to the extent that the power relation is underplayed and the contemporary Western Foodie's hegemonic position is rarely contested.

Furthermore, the media that accommodates a large part of the foodie discourses for the western Foodie, portrays qualities of Authenticity and Exoticism in the Other. Looking at these qualities in light of the previously mentioned geo and sociopolitical

perspectives, illuminates the Other as an entity that can be explored or exploited by the Foodie. Thus, providing a benchmark to incorporate Netflix with both the commodification and consumption of the Other. Johnston and Baumann conclude, based on their analysis, that chefs and restaurants seek the 'weak' exotic foods in order to allow the consumption of the exotic Other, sometimes requiring to shorten the social distance of a food to make it relatable for the Foodie. bell hooks applies similar arguments when explaining the commodification of the Other as a notion for the white supremacist to exploit the exotic Other from a capitalistic point of view.

In the case of the Foodie, a food needs to be connected to the eater, which requires an aspect of familiarity to what is determined authentic and exotic, thus interesting. The example of a chef cooking a stew that traditionally consists of chicken hearts and organs, but replaces it with cuts more approachable to the western pallet, demonstrates the intentionally diminishing of authentic and exotic in order to meet the consumer with something relatable.

"The commodification of Otherness has been so successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling. Within commodity culture, ethnicity spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture" (hooks, 1992).

bell hooks expands on the notion of the consumption of otherness. The consumption of otherness is framed as a way to get insight into the Other without relinquishing one's own position in a determined cultural group. The consumption of the Other or the desire for its consumption may denote to the consumer openness to the unknown, that has been considered taboo in previous times, almost a transgression act. Hooks (1992) relates this to power relations directly linked with colonialism. As Johnston & Baumann (2010) argue when explaining Exoticism in food, this neo-colonial relation might not be in the mind of the consumer when encountering the culture in question, but the action of consumption of the Other is parallel to the ones performed during colonial times. Especially the notion of the Othered culture being at disposal of the hegemonic group to choose when or if the other is worthy of consumption. For instance, making some ethnic cuisines more desirable in the

Global North than others. An example of these could be the generalised approval found when eating a kebab in contrast to eating dog meat. Bell hooks explains the metaphor of Eating the Other as a sexual act. From her sexual understanding of the consumption of the Other, she suggests that the commodification of this Other as a sexual object, can be consumed for pleasure, therefore allowing the consumer to reinforce its power position. A metaphor that is equally relevant when looking at the Foodies consumption of authentic and exotic within the Foodscape. The consumer does not only expect instant gratification from the encounter but to be transformed by it, thus expanding its knowledge or cultural boundaries.

To claim the Other as an unexplored territory, as in colonial times, reinforces the idea of the Othered culture as being primitive, untouched or authentic, therefore deserving the discovery by the Western consumer. Being seduced by difference is a way to revisit one's own position as belonging or being excluded by certain cultural groups. These areas of belonging are tied to the Local and the Global, and at risk of being repetitive with their historical power dynamics. The cases we propose within Chef's Table, have undeniable histories marked by their positioning within the colonial era. By this, we mean the discursive formation of the Other through narrative practices, resulting in time in the embedded characterization of the Other only by the gaze of the Global North (Said, 1978). We will discuss in our analysis section the extent the show reproduces some of these dynamics structurally and as tales from the main characters.

Leer & Meldgaard explore the ways media reproduces these power dimensions pertaining to the Global North's gaze on the Local and its implications. Their approach scrutinizing whether the shows they analyse reproduce neo-colonial power structures or "*manage to use the genre and food as a platform for "intercultural connection" and exchanges—and thereby create a platform for a subversion of a binary "old world"/"new world" power structure*" (Leer & Meldgaard, 2015) is particularly significant to shape this paper's ways to approach Chef's Table as a show and Netflix as a mediaplatform.

The authors propose that a strange culinary encounter should fall into the frame of what is expected. Strangeness needs to be different enough to be appealing, while lying within the expected framework of this stranger (Ahmed, 2000 as cited in Leer & Meldgaard, 2015). The "right kind of stranger" needs to be authentic in the imaginary of the viewer (Leer & Meldgaard, 2015). If it does not fall within these parameters it loses its capacity as exotic, making its otherness unappealing. Just like eating dog meat, it can go too far from the gaze of the West.

Bell hooks argues if the Other's difference falls into the desirable spectrum, its history and context are usually obliterated in order to be perceived as a commodity. Using narratives of the exotic Other as backdrops to add colour to white culture, or in her own words using ethnicity as a spice is where the resistance occurs, according to the author. The Others attempt to reclaim its appropriated cultural signifiers and narrate their own interpretation of themselves, is thus the manifestation of the resistance that is brought by the Others.

By revisiting the previous theoretical elements: Authenticity, Exoticism, Representation and discussing the notion of eating the Other; this paper aims to frame the following analysis, to be opened to discuss where does Chef's Table stand in the construction of Authenticity and/or Exoticism regarding these chefs? Do they enable a space for resistance and allow these chefs to tell their story in their terms? Or does the show reproduces neo-colonial structures of power?

Ontology and Methodology

Here we will briefly introduce where are the roots of this project, its ontology, our theory of science. In this paper, the lenses that we are availing ourselves with, in order to analyze the Authenticity dimension, falls under social constructivism; more specifically, in our case, the latter is also combined with a semiotic dimension. The intertwinement between these two interpretative and meaning formation theories can

be seen at the level where an individual has to make meaning of an object, and his given present within a context will also influence and shape the construction of it.

   "*While social constructivism is focused on the (social and cultural) construction of the meaning of the object for the individual, semiotics is concerned with the creation, use, and transfer or communication of the meaning with the help of signs, i.e., semiotics studies all cultural processes as processes of communication and signification*" (Helmhout et. al, 2009, p. 8). Our Multimodal methodology also has a deep connection with these theories as for its bond with the social semiotic approach and the subsequent study of the aforementioned modes. A Social construction is: "*a semiotic process in which signs are exchanged, classified, and ordered in the mind, i.e., signs are related to familiar systems or conventions*" (Helmhout et. al, 2009, p. 3).

Multimodality

   As for the methodology section, the way in which we want to proceed to unpack the different layers of meaning entailed in Chef's Table, and its implicit representations, is by adopting the holistic method of Multimodality. This method is build on several themes, or more specifically "modes", as Gunther Kress presents them (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2010). These modes within each given episodes are our "mirrors" in which we can reflect a given meaning and understand the dynamics of how these modes are constructed. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2010) are the founding fathers of the Multimodal method which expands its reach to all forms of visual imagery and language, spacing from: symbols, text, spoken and written language, colour, music as well as the study of the bodily gestures. Furthermore, this method has at its basis social semiotics, which is concerned with the meaning-making processes. Meaning as we intended, is a socially constructed attribute. Within a moving picture, there are several elements one has to bare in mind when proceeding into a thorough analysis. Already enclosed in the term Multimodal there is a sense of what this method is capable of exploring.

Already contained by the etymology and definition of the term Multimodal: *"the use or availability of several different modes, methods, systems"* (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.), one can understand a certain aspect, Authenticity in this case, as configured or carried out in various ways that uses more than one way to communicate. Referring to the etymology this paper argues that Multimodal is implicit to the way of communicating rather than the instrument. Consequently, television and cinema are two multimodal media, as they communicate through sound, through images and sometimes through texts; radio, on the other hand, is a single-mode medium as it communicates only through sound. The use of the term "Multimodal" proposes a change from the previous singular perspective of analysing media to a method with multiple dimensions (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). Multimodal, compared to multimedia, wants to affirm the need to investigate no longer on the vehicle or the technology of transmission, but on the way in which communication is conveyed, the way in which it is structured regarding the user.

It is important to bare these concepts in mind as it presents us fundamental paradigmatic shifts in terms of communication, diffusion and meaning formation (2001). Kress and Van Leeuwen explain how: *"We move away from the idea that the different modes in multimodal texts have strictly bounded and framed specialist tasks, as in a film where images may provide the action, sync sounds a sense of realism, music a layer of emotion, and so on, with the editing process supplying the 'integration code', the means for synchronising the elements through a common rhythm"* (2001, p. 2). We can precisely see with this quote, how the deciphering and encoding of a media product is nowadays always more nuanced, with the subsequent arrival at a stage where different meanings are formed in any given context through the outclass of monomodal channels of communication, drawing informations from variated *"semiotic resources"* (2001, p. 7).

The authors define communication as *"only having taken place when there has been both articulation and interpretation"* (2001, p. 8). In this project, the analysis of

both visuals and language, will be done by taking into account discourse, design, production and distribution as the four levels of domain, in which meaning is shaped.

The first level of socially constructed knowledge: Discourses "*have been developed in specific social contexts, and in ways which are appropriate to the interests of social actors in these contexts*" (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 4) However, those discourses need a plan on how to be communicated in a easy way. Design, as the second domain, will give us an understanding of that plan as a conceptual fact of expression, e.g. the elements they use to create the storyline. Later, the production of the message as a third level or "*medium of execution*" according to the authors, it is a resource that facilitates the analysis on how Chef's Table unpacks the storyline, this done by organizing modes that could be interpreted as the narrative, and how, in our case of interest, Authenticity is constructed and travels through this dimension. It is a level that aims to identify the way in which the show delves into different cultures (Thai, Turkish, Brazilian) and works in the contemporary Foodscape, presenting it as an original documentary far from the traditional culinary formats like "MasterChef", or" Hell's kitchen". These TV programs have the aim to show how to create a certain dish rather than narrating the whole story behind it.

Chef's table is communicating that story, showing what is going on behind a specific dish by focusing on the chefs' experiences within the industry and their cultural heritage. Finally, distribution as the last domain is referring to the digital landscape where the show is transmitted. However, we won't be focusing extensively on this level, as for in our specific research, we are not concerned with the audience per se, but are looking into what narratives creates meaning in terms of constructing Authenticity.

Materializing the meaning

After having presented the different levels where meaning is created, it is important to define which are the tools used to understand and interpret the show. The first step is to find the modes where each one is presented by the authors as an element which is a "*socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning*" (Kress et al, 2010, p. 52) The different modes within the multimodal method are shown in Figure 1.
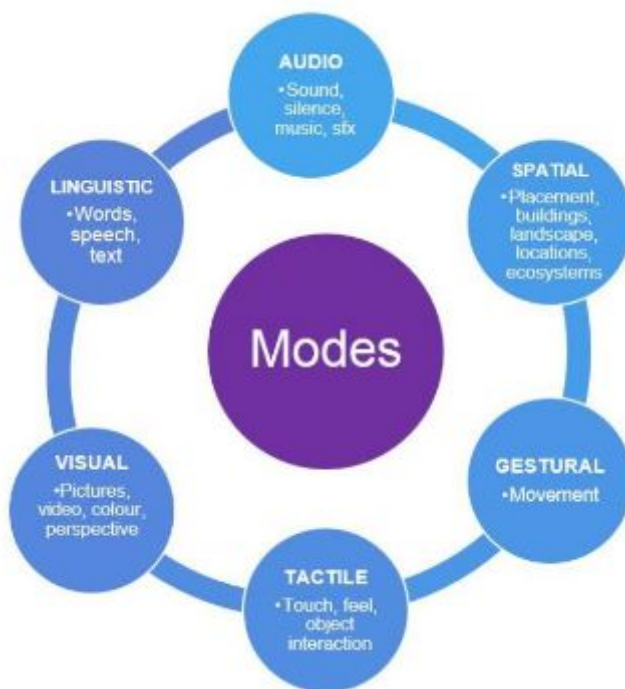
Figure 1. Modes' scheme. Copyright 2019 by Edith Cowan University

The second step is to use frames or means of framing, inserting a mode within an specific context, time and space. The third and last step is to make connections *"where discourse and mode are both articulatory phenomena, as other social practices, organisation and events"* (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 34).

Modes are part of the discourse content and enables the materialization of meaning by a Multimodal ensemble (2001). They do not work separately, there is the need of interaction and social construction. It is a meaningful aspect within the Multimodal methodology because a mode carries the ontological and socio-historical thoughts of a society and its culture within every sign. This is the reason why the

authors Kress and Van Leeuwen explain Multimodal as a resource to show meanings at every level and in any mode (2001)

Frames are the limit of the text that can be audiovisual or written. The means of framing help the interpreter to focus in one context and identify a mode. When this process happens the meaning represented is done in a clear sense. A frame *"shapes, present the world according to the interest and the principles of those who frame"* (2001, p. 148) thus to say that we will frame the modes in three different levels: the narration of the self, the local Foodscape, and lastly how is the experience sold globally. Concretely, we will apply this method observing how different levels of meaning are constructed, analyzing the narratives and discourses as well as the intertwined visuals and spatial dimension, and how these modes interplay one with the other shaping and conveying a further understanding to these processes.

While watching the episodes of Alex Atala, Bo and Musa we identified that the production of the Authenticity narrative could be developed. Starting by explaining how did they become the persona portrayed in Chef's Table, precisely their identity construction as well as the trajectories to become a "different/unique" individual. Moreover, the relation between the chef, the local communities and nature, will be emphasised. This focus is highlighted to create meaning within the relation between the viewer and the aforementioned triad.

Within this frame, we will use the concept of the local Foodscape in connection with a geographic specificity of the national borders of each chef. Finally, we will connect how these chefs aim to challenge Global understandings of their national cuisines and the representations thereof. This frame is developed as it enable us to see the interplay of the signifiers of Authenticity, negotiate their meaning in the fluctuating context presented by the global entertainment platform of Netflix.

Delimitations

Choosing three episodes within Chef's Table six seasons was a complicated task. We are individuals from five different parts of the world, distant to each other, but we

shared a common understanding of what we wanted to convey with this research project. Our criteria to select these episodes might seem random to the reader, but it took hours of debate. What sets apart the Chefs portrayed in the show is their vision and intentionality when it comes to thinking about cuisine. We found most of the individuals' visions to be compelling in a unique manner. Since we had decided to focus on Authenticity from the start, it became apparent to us that we would be focusing on individuals from the Global South. Chef's Table is a Western product and narratives about the Global South would potentially have postcolonial dimensions to it. We became very interested in at least four more episodes than the ones we ended up using for our analysis. To select within them, we thought the chef's we looked at should have clear personal beliefs about their cultural identity and how to translate them into food. There was also a concern with having a region and gender balance: South America, Asia and the Middle East. Within this areas we prioritised gender balance. This was a great concern since there is an evident gender bias in the series. Women are underrepresented, but it is also a reflection of their underrepresentation in the Industry. Gender is the biggest unexploited subject within our project. But there is a reason for this, we chose to focus on Authenticity & Exoticism from the beginning. To look at Gender to the extent the subject deserved would have been a different project design. Gender in the gastronomic industry and in Chef's Table are complex issues. In the show the narration surrounding female and male chef's is different and also has evolved from season to season. We decided not to engage with Gender in this project. Engaging with the ideas Chef's Table reproduces of Masculinity in the Atala episode, Bo's relation with her husband as co-owner or Musa as a Turkish man in the kitchen with the family women would have been superficial if it was a single chapter on this project. Therefore, we acknowledge that this dimension is absent. But it's a conscious choice to prioritize other sides of representation that were more relevant to the project design we intended.

Moreover, to return to the subject of episode choices and our group dynamic, we chose not to use episodes from the same countries our group members came from like Italy or Argentina. We thought that would create an unnecessary bias on the understanding of their discourses on cultural identity. Some of the episodes seduced

us as a group more than others, Christina Martinez, from Mexico and Gaggan Anand, from India were particularly complex to leave aside, we all connected to their stories to a personal level. But after reading Johnston & Baumann theory on Authenticity and Exoticism, we found that Gaggan lacked a connection with local goods and producers, that we highlight in the second section of our analysis. While Christina Martinez, had an ideological gap with the other chefs in terms of the scope of this chefs worldview. Though the notion of cultural identity is present at all times in her narrative, the intentionality in changing the representation of said identity that Songvisava, Dağdeviren and Atala share when it comes to designing their concepts, was not there. This were decisions that at the moment seemed complicated, but looking back on the process they have been the right decision for this analysis section.

Moreover, we need to address the difference between the audience of the show and the audience of the restaurant. The first intended audience is the one the chef cooks for, that can afford to go to the restaurant and participate in an embodied experience. The second audience is the shows viewer, that can access these luxury experiences from the comfort of their Netflix screens. This audience will probably never experience the restaurant physically, but can only experience them through the narrative that are being portrayed. Even if the chefs argue that they are reclaiming elements of their cultural identity that seem inclusive, their first intended audience of consumption is very limited. Class in this context, becomes a complex element, where the products made for the restaurants are intended to be consumed by a few people, but with the intervention of Netflix end up being witnessed by many. So both concepts must be taken into consideration when reading the analysis ahead.

Analysis

As we developed in the previous section, our analysis will be guided by three frames. These frames will be introduced as three separate sections. While these sections are separate, there is an interconnectedness that guides the analysis, a flow between

Local and global. We will start by looking at Alex Atala, Bo Songvisava and Musa Dağdeviren as individuals. We intend this section to delve into the personal strategies and events that led these individuals into becoming recognisable food personalities. In each of the stories, we will point out a specific event that made them change the way they related to food, a so-called moment of transformation, and how they narrate it. The second section of the analysis will unpack the chefs motivation to reclaim their culinary heritage. This section will expand on their relation to their national Foodscapes, which is dictated by the desire to represent said national cuisine from their own perception of what is authentic. Finally, the third section will unravel how this vision is negotiated in the global Foodscape, and what implications do the global narratives of Authenticity have within Chef's Table?

Section 1: Constructing the Self

One of the shows main narrative lines is anchored in understanding the chef's moment of transformation, the moment they realize what values will drive their world view. Understanding the different trajectories that drove them into a kitchen and finding themselves as chefs and the individuals they are, is vital to understanding these people motivation to express their cultural identity through food.

One of the most evident and reoccurring signifiers of Authenticity, when expressing themselves, was "Personal Connection". This signifier is tied to the chef's food narratives and personal experiences that constitutes their authorship (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). However, how did their identity as food authors came into being? In this section, we want to examine how chef's identity evolves through the episode to unpack these stories presented by Chef's Table about the chef's personal narratives. We will only look in this section at the Linguistic Mode (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2010), that relates to texts, words and speech as previously explained. Furthermore, we will exclusively focus on first-person narration in this section. We acknowledge that the director and the story producers have edited any narration that is made by the chefs. Regardless, the reason we will limit this section to their own

words is to give the stories told only by the protagonists of the show a predominant role. These stories, though they are about the self, are intersected and shaped through Spatial Modes. Both the place they are from, and the place that shaped them. These, in its terms, oscillate between the notions of the Local and the Global, which will be the frames driving the second and third part of the analysis.

The focus on this section will be the self, and these notions will be used only to support the chef's first-person narrative.

Alex Atala, Musa Dağdeviren and Bo Songvisava have many common points within their stories despite their geographical distance and diverse narratives. One of the main points they have in common, and the one that drives this chapter, is the moment each of them realised their national food was not being valued or put at the same level as most of European cuisines. Alex Atala's story is particularly significant to this section. Alex Atala was born in Brazil, as a child, he learned to fish and forage the Amazon with his family, two skills that would define him as a chef later on. However, sometime in his teenage years, he began feeling displaced, he becomes a punk and decides to give life in Europe a try. In Europe, he starts painting walls for a living but needs a visa to have a prolonged stay. One of his painter friends suggests going to chefs school to get a visa. That is how Atala steps into a kitchen for the first time, as a solution to get a residence permit. Atala finds comfort in the kitchen and begins to work at fine dining restaurants, refining his skills and getting some respect from his European colleges along the way. Unexpectedly, his girlfriend gets pregnant, and after a couple of years they decide to go back to Brazil, to raise "A Brazilian child". This is the first time he feels Brazil is calling him back, that away from Brazil he is not complete. At home, he starts working for some European style Restaurants, that he feels that away from their native Europe, these restaurants are "lacking soul". Atala argues, the fact that an Italian chef was cooking Italian food in Brazil, was not enough to be authentic, due to a certain feeling of geographical displacement. Atala here emphasised that Authenticity, in his understanding, has to root in more than just "Ethnic connection", thus challenging Johnston and Baumann in their arguments that a single Authenticity signifier is sufficient to promote Authenticity.

Atala shares at one point in the show, a significant moment where his boss, Erick Jacquin, a French chef, confronted him with the statement that, no matter how skilled he was, he could have never reached a level allowing him to fully master French culinary techniques, due to his different cultural background. In this story, Atala is denied his belonging based on his Nationality. By belonging here is implied that he was excluded from the claim to make authentic food that was French. The ethnic connection he disregarded in his previous statement is imposed upon him from a Cultural Hegemonic perspective. Johnston and Baumann argue that the right of knowledge production within the Foodscape is drawn by symbolic boundaries, between who belongs and who does not on the basis of food knowledge, this is the cultural background Jacquin is on about: Alex Atala, to him, was outside this boundaries. This interaction upsets Atala shaking him to the core. He retells the viewer he goes home and looks at himself in the mirror and comes to terms with who he was, a Brazilian man, an outsider, a punk and concludes *"If I was different, I wanted to be different. If I'm not able to make a French dinner as good as a French chef, nobody could do a better Brazilian dinner or a Brazilian experience than me."* (Atala & Gelb, 2016) This is the moment Atala decided to make his difference an asset and make his unique knowledge of Brazil and European technical knowledge, his identifier. According to hooks, *"Difference is thus used productively; indeed, in a social order which seems to know no outside (and which must contrive its own transgressions to redefine its limits), difference is often fabricated in the interests of social control as well as of commodity innovation"*(hooks, 2014: 369). Alex Atala was not trained to be a Brazilian food chef, he was trained to make European fine dining. Atala realises the same reasons that, in the gaze of Jacquin, prevent him from making authentic European food are the same reasons that enable him to make his local food as valuable as any type of European food. Conversely, this boundary placed by the culturally hegemonic chef to shore up Atala culturally is what moves him to seize his difference and claim that if he *was* different he *wanted* to be different. Atala, embraces his Otherness, transforming it into a valuable resource. Atala was assigned a differential position *"within a classificatory system"*. This

attributed meaning is used as a "symbolic boundary" to define this new found meaning in his own cultural identity (Hall, 1997).

Bo Songvisava story is different from Atala's. She grew up dreaming of being a chef, but her family told her she had to get a degree first. This family imposition, illustrates the lack of prestige the Thai community sees in the chef's profession. Following her families wishes, Bo got a bachelor's degree related to the gastronomic industry and after graduation found herself a job in a kitchen. While working in a Mediterranean restaurant in Bangkok, Songvisava encounters a Western chef, that wants to know more about Thai food since he is visiting Thailand. She then realizes she does not know much about it, she asks her colleagues and some of her acquaintances, to notice a trend -Thai people don't know very much about Thai food-. This baffles her and she feels the need to pursue her interest. With the help of her boss, she finds a job at Nham in London, a Thai restaurant created by the Australian David Thomson, who hires her because he was in need of a little bit of "Thai accent" to his kitchen (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018). Bo finds the London work pace challenging, she finds herself being the slowest of the team and not particularly knowledgeable. Bo works hard to catch up with the rest of the staff and quickly begins surpassing them. This is around the time she meets her husband Dylan Jones, co-owner of Bo.Lan., her restaurant. Songvisava says her time in London gave her the necessary foundations to approach Thai food.

The couple decides to move back to Thailand, and open a Thai fine dining restaurant, a task that at the time seemed risky. Bo confessed that she came back home with grand ideas -making an organic and zero-waste restaurant that took Thai food to a new level-. She claimed, "*I want to show the foreigners traditional Thai cuisine and to show Thai people that you can be proud of what you got*" (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018). Bo's statement has two sides. The first is showing that the Exotic Other -Thai people- have something to offer, that can be of quality too. Again difference is used to sell "commodity innovation", that is still exotic to the Western Foodscape. But the other side, is showing Thai people that their culture has value and finding value in their own culture is one of Bo's main drivers. Bo's look for the

"real" Thai cuisine is anchored mainly in one signifier of Authenticity, History and Tradition (Johnston and Baumann, 2010). As explained in the theory section this is related to standardised methods and procedures that have deep historical roots. When it comes to the exotic Other, these traditions tend to be further away from the Western understandings cooking and the consumption of food. Songvisava wants to look at the ancestral ways of doing things and reclaim them. She repeats, throughout her episode, she needs to fight for Thai food, and by this, she means, fight for what is taken for granted: The recipes, the traditions, techniques and the quality of the products that use to make Thai food. But most importantly, she means she needs to fight for Thai food's placement in the Foodscape of the Global North's imaginary map of what fine dining can be.

In the case of Musa's episode, the narrative of self is being portrayed as something having a richer complexity to it. Musa Dağdeviren was born in a small village of Turkey, precisely Nizip located in the south-east Anatolia outside Gaziantep. Due to the complexity of the Turkish socio-cultural and political situation, it can be observed how the story of this chef, carries with itself more dimensions, more "stories within one story". Precisely with this last metaphor, there is a clear distinction compared to the narratives of the previous two chefs, as they both had to leave their home country in order to rediscover and reconsider their cultural heritage. Musa, on the other hand started his process of discovery differently, as the political turmoil in his country forced him to flee his hometown, but without leaving the country. This situation gives him a distinguished position, where Musa can look into his heritage from a Turkish and geographically internal perspective.

As Stuart Hall states: *"Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narration of the past."* (Hall. S, 1997).

Exactly this dimension of the chef's past, when compared to the other two characters narratives, is majorly manifested. In some ways, it can be argued, that conversely from the two other characters, Musa is not seen in a condition where he

is trying to recover his past. In his case, he is pursuing a "quest" in order to survive and to pass on his identity and traditions throughout time. The direct dialogical relation with his family members, shown in a number of interactions that involve Dağdeviren and women of the family interacting with food and tradition, lead the viewer to understand Musa as the carrier of tradition, a protector of history. Furthermore, at first glance, the narration of the authentic self may be seen as being less compromised also because this episode is the only one of the three where the chef is talking in his mother tongue conveying an additional "truthfulness" through his words. Additionally, there is another very important aspect of this episode that reinforces the narration of the authentic self which is also connected with a signifier of Authenticity: "History and traditions" (Johnston and Baumann, 2010). Under these lenses, in this specific episode, the presence of this dimension is very strong. As previously stated in this section, the research of his identity with its correspondent external recognition comes from"within", from an "intimate circle". In the dialogical narration of the Turkish chef, it can be observed how the figure of the mother acts as an extreme motivational resource. As Musa being the last child of a copious family, he was the only one to get to spend more time in the kitchen with his mother, where he could grasp all of the recipes transmitted from generation to generation. Already at a tender age, to Chef Dağdeviren was assigned a well defined "mission":*"Your siblings don't see what you see. You are the seed. You're going to keep our traditions alive. This is your duty"* (Dağdeviren & Gelb, 2018). This powerful and emotionally charged comparison, was made to him by his mother, when Musa, as a child, used to take food from under the table before it was ready to be served. Musa uses his mother's voice to manifest what he wishes for himself, being the person in charge of keeping culinary traditions alive. The fact that he chooses, to bring up the moment, when his mother denominates him "the seed", has multiple dimensions. Being the seed, firstly implies being the embodiment of potential. The potential to grow and develop, to bloom and carry fruit. When placed in the context of a man who is trying to carry out a 'renaissance' for his cultural identity, he almost attributes himself a divine persona, through the seed metaphor. The one who has been chosen by something bigger than himself, to pass on tradition to younger generations of chefs. Musa believes rediscovering traditions is his duty. As can be reflected in his

words during the show for example when; *"I realized that I needed to compile the older generation's knowledge, so that the next generations will at least know about the existence of this culture. I thought I should write a book. It wasn't going to be a book prepared by scanning the internet and googling. It had to be done through fieldwork. We decided on about 40 villages"* (Dağdeviren & Gelb, 2018).

Musa aims to compile Turkish regional cuisines and make them available to the people that would like to delve into this topic. The idea that he has decided to call his compilation of localized gastronomic knowledge through food ethnography can be connected to Johnston and Baumanns reference within Authenticity to Ethnic connections. Food within the signifier is idealised, while the actual regional chef merges into the background context, this type of narrations according to the authors remind readers of classic anthropological narrations, where the Other was waiting to be discovered. Conversely, bell hooks argues that the "rediscovery" of the Other, or the local from the reference point of Musa, can be seen as a re-ritualization of imperialism through mass culture, where the Other's Exoticism is seductive and it's narrative becomes a thing to be possessed. *"This longing is rooted in the atavistic belief that the spirit of the "primitive" resides in the bodies of dark Others whose cultures, traditions, and lifestyles may indeed be irrevocably changed by imperialism, colonization, and racist domination"* (hooks, 1992).

The issue at hand here, is not to tackle Dağdeviren motives into compiling his book, but to highlight that he has positioned himself in a situation within his culture that he has the power to make localised knowledge have a larger audience. This is at the core of what drives Musa as a chef, advocating for regional communities in the Global Foodscape.

These three chefs share a common concern: changing the ideas that the Global and the Local Foodscape have about their national cuisines. Their claims to Authenticity or Exoticism are relational to Local and Global contextualisation. Therefore, in the following sections while unpacking these chef's narratives between the local and the global, we cannot fully separate these binaries, but we will frame them towards the understandings of either Local and Global respectively. Local and Global are

dynamic and intersected concepts within Chef's Table's narratives. These notions will be analysed in more depth in the following sections.

Section 2: The Local Foodscape

To begin with the analysis of this frame, the Linguistic and Visual Mode presented by Kress & Van Leeuwen (2010) will be an aid to identify how chefs tables' narratives are constructing Authenticity and Exoticism from their localised perspespectives. This part is a representational practice of what is Thai, Turkish and Brazilian. It is showed from the three chef's point of view (Musa, Bo, Alex), the journalists, food critics and other famous chefs that reinforce the three characters discourses and finally, the visual material used by the Netflix documentary.

To understand how the show enacts a local view on their respective national Foodscape is a way to identify the different discourses that could be building Authenticity and Exoticism thoughts. The frame of the Local is prominent, due to the similarities between Alex, Bo and Musa when figuring out that their own culture started to be unrecognizable within their community. In these conditions, there is a shared sense of their respective Cultural Identity being changed, based on the loss of history and traditions. Hall argues that a Cultural Identity is in a constant state of change due to representation, and in the case of the main characters from Chef's Table, the chefs local food cultures are being overseen and overshadowed by the dominant food cultures, such as the Italian and French cuisines, therefore not represented in the restaurants of the native countries (Hall, 1989).

There are several situations that illustrate the power relations represented by the prevailing food cultures and how they are affecting the Cultural Identities of the local people. For example, as the Brazilian food critic Luiz Américo Camargo said on Alex Atala's episode *"Maybe Brazilians didn't want to think of their cuisine as something with gastronomic value, worthy of ritual of dressing up"* (Atala & Gelb 2016). Rice,

beans, farofa, and steak are traditional Brazilian ingredients seen as Workers' Food by the standardized norms of the Global North, and not as something part of the gourmet culture or worthy to dress up for. In contrast, French cuisine is recognized in a completely different way. It is acknowledged as part of the elite food world (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). But, according Camargo, when Alex Atala connected his European background with the local, it was perceived as a modern touch in the Brazilian cuisine. Then, he managed to make the elite eat rice and beans because he presents his dishes in a sophisticated way with context. We will get to this point of connection in the following section.

A similar moment happens in the episode of Bo Songvisava, when she was working in the Mediterranean kitchen, someone asks her about her traditional food but then she realises that she and her fellow Thai-chefs do not have any knowledge about Thai food. Due to the restaurant industry in Thailand being subjugated by western food culture, the traditional concept of Thai food has been overtaken.The reality was that Thai food, was not regarded as fine dining in Bangkok, it was thought to be food that is eaten within the family home or as the cheap street food. The western or french food were standard and given priority. In fact she said that "*People in Thailand don't know how to cook things from scratch anymore.They use all industrial, processed products. Canned coconut. Packaged curry paste. Processed white sugar. The roots that we have are disappearing*" (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018). She realised that the importance of Thai food culture was neglected. The history and culture of thai food is not given the value it deserve.

The Turkish cuisine is also subject to the western standards, where Turkish chefs are trained on the backbone of highly regarded cuisines as the French, learning how to cook stocks and sauces (Mehmet Gürs & Gelb, 2018). A sequence in the episode of Musa, displays him asking a recently graduated and younger chef about his learnings at the chef school. Among other questions, he asks if the younger chef was taught Turkish techniques for cooking, where the answer is "*not really, only the main dishes, like dolmas*", verifying the overlying scheme of western food traditions having a more acknowledged presence in the local Foodscape. As such, Chef's Table describes a local landscape where the factors of Authenticity and Exoticism are

misplaced. It is creating room for an exotic Other to 'save' the local Foodscape by demonstrating their qualities of Authenticity, like their high regard for both history and tradition, ethnic connection, and more.

Authenticity is socially narrated by the interaction between the Local and the Global (Stiles, K., Antiok, O. & Bell. M., 2010). We can see the Local Real on several occasions when a farmer's face or individual care comes into play within the show. Individual care is, for example, Alex Atala working for the rainforest conservation through his constant contact with nature and indigenous communities, that help him gather local goods that are going to be cooked in his restaurant. Also, Bo establishes a relationship with an organic producers of palm sugar to avoid industrialized products as well as reassert the power in the hands of the people who cultivate it. By focusing on these producers, she aims to highlight local ways of production, that differ from Westernised methods. In Musa's episode, it is demonstrated in the sense of exploring Turkish regions to find both ingredients and recipes that are understood as traditionally Turkish, thus related to his heritage. In fact, within the show, he is referred to as "the archeologist of food" by a Turkish historian Ozge Samanci. This is an interesting attribution since an archeologist usually rediscovers past items to bring them back to light, this act is associated with the chef's treatment of food traditions. The interaction of these actors (the chefs, producers and critics) are reinforcing the narration of being authentic by working as a relational attribution. They show the history and tradition after getting a natural ingredient and using it in their restaurants. At the same time with every new creation of food there is a personal connection with the recipes.

However, the Local Real has to connect to a certain extent with the Global Real to exist. The latter, is, for example, the first time Alex Atala tried Tucupi and Caviar:

" I remember very well the first day that I tasted tucupi, the juice of manioc flour.
And I said, "Wow. This is, this is a new flavour. I don't know if I like it.
But if caviar is fancy and tucupi is not fancy, it's just because someone told me.
There's a cultural interpretation of flavors." (Atala & Gelb, 2016)

Tucupi is an extract from Manioc Flour, a Brazilian plant. However, Alex's first time trying those products is representing a socially constructed idea that has standardized the perception of something globally, where Caviar is recognized as luxurious. In the case of Tucupi, it is a foreign food from a plant that is not recognizable by everyone. It is part of the South American jungle, a place that few people dare to go and explore or even taste. But Alex does. He used palm hearts in one of the most important chef's contests in Madrid, Spain where he got to be recognized by Ferra Adrià, one of the most important chefs worldwide, because of the recipe he created with the plant. He used a local produce in a global space to represent the Brazilian cultural identity by reinforcing the feeling of belonging (Hall, 1989). It means, owning the recipe by relating it with his cultural heritage.

This connection between Local and Global creates Authenticity with the chef's personal source of creativity, their engagement with traditional cooking and perceptions of food producers and consumers. These aforementioned examples are exhibited to illustrate Authenticity as something not inherent to particular foods, but as a concept created by its characteristic of being socially constructed and relational (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). Authenticity comes into life through those representations of identities that, as previously quoted in the section of the self, are the categories we are used to give to different narratives of the past (Hall, 1989). Therefore, it is difficult to talk about just one identity or experience without recognizing that there is another side to it, another past or present.

However, some are used to think that the world is shaped only by a sort of collective one "true self" and the aspects that are socially constructed as something essential to any specific culture. For example, In Chef's Table, the chefs use ingredients such as Manioc or dishes as Kebab to denote what they associate with what is Brazilian or Turkish. But when they started to do something new or different to the traditional way of viewing their cuisine, like for example, Musa's idea on gathering all the regions' flavors in his restaurant and not just cooking kebab as the

only traditional Turkish plate, the notion of authentic starts to be more clear because the forbidden or taboo appears within the cultural "fixed" order.

As a result, the difference comes to play and it is crucial to create meaning as it starts a dialogue with the Other, the one that is out of the standardized positions and descriptions related to the "oneself", created by the Global North. Therefore, Chef's Table provides a representation of the chefs Cultural Identity being an exotic Other showing how Musa, Alex, and Bo connect their experience on the global context with their local goods that can be seen as something strange or norm-breaking because it is foreign, is not part of the meaning that social groups impose on their classificatory systems.

When Chef's Table shows the image of Aunt Jiang and Aunt Toom, Bo Songvisavas' producers of palm sugar, working in a farm and doing all the natural process to get the product traditionally used in Thai cuisine, connected with Bo's words about quality and Thai food defined by its complexity, it is reinforcing the idea of Bo as an exotic Other to the Netflix audience. The way Chef's Table illustrates how is the palm sugar processed, brings the uniqueness and quality of the ingredient. Uniqueness in the sense of nobody else knows how to do it but just the farmers, and quality as is coming from a non industrialized process. The place where the product is made or grown is also relevant as being from nature. These three are characteristics that highlight the interrelated discourses of Authenticity and Exoticism (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). Then, she is using that product to give her restaurant plates the ingredients that enable Thai food being relevant and complex. But the use of industrialized sugar can't. The latter is what, according to Bo's experience, the restaurants in her country use because *"one of the biggest pressures on Thai food, is people's expectation that it should be cheap"* (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018). She is not either doing or using what people are thought to in the local Foodscape. Then, the way of producing palm sugar conveys the plant as something exotic because is socially distant, based on rarity and because it is done by a natural process, that is foreign in the eyes of the audience.

Is socially distant and based on rarity on the sense of production, it's a product not industrialized. Is made by hand in a way that only craftsmans as Aunt Jiang and Aunt Toom know how to. The Visual Mode of palm sugar reproduces the process as something difficult to do by the viewer. It is rare and therefore new. Then, Chef's table portrays Bo as a woman who represents Exoticism through her passion on emphasizing the use of quality and unique ingredients characterized by being artisan creations.

Section 3: Authenticity, challenging Global understandings

After unpacking how these chefs relate to their Local Foodscapes and how they built their world view as the individuals portrayed in Chef's Table, we can now look at how the notions of the authentic and the exotic translate into the Global Foodscape. The frame we will develop in this section is the Global Foodscape, set up in the context of Netflix. We will look at a more diverse set of modes than in the previous sections: Exploring the Visual mode accompanying the Linguistic mode in the show (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2010). The visuals and words in this format are used to prioritize meaning within the chef's narratives (Hall, 1997). Thus, special attention needs to be placed within these combinations. The spatial mode will still be instrumental to understand the Local Foodscapes and how visuals related to spaces such as markets or landscapes reproduce conceptions of the exotic Other at a Global scale. As previously mentioned, the notions of the Local and Global Foodscapes are binary concepts, we cannot discuss one without mentioning the other. For these purposes, we will look at processes that might be anchored in the Local Foodscapes, that these chefs aim to transform. The driving factor between these innovations is not only to change the Local understandings, but to make these new notions of what is and what is not authentic, be understood from a perspective that sets Netflix's audience as the Westernised gaze.

A clear example of this interaction is the beginning of Bo Songvisava's episode, where she sits in the back of a canoe in the middle of an idyllic image of Thailand, surrounded by rock formations, on a rainy day under her umbrella. Bo enters a cave in the small boat to find fishermen walking with water up to their hips, in the sea collecting fish with their baskets, while we hear her voice narrating:

"Thailand is a hospitality country. Whatever you ask, it's "Yes. I can do that for you." Thais have been serving what the customer wants. They dumb down the flavours. But at my restaurant, we're not gonna do that. We want to show them the real thing. We keep the flavours as traditional Thai. We're not gonna make it less spicy because you can't eat spicy -People walk out from my restaurant-. But we are happier if they decide not to eat. Because if the mind is not going to open from the beginning, like, it's not going to work." (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018)

The statement above is the opening to Bo's episode, it's paired by visuals that reproduce ideas of the romanticised and exotic Thailand, with its beautiful landscapes. She sits in a paddle boat while being sailed into a cave that hides men fishing on a small scale, an artisanal way. The simplicity of the fishermen and the craftsmanship of their techniques instantly connects the viewer with the idea of the authentic (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). On the other hand, we can also see a visual contrast between the beauty of Thailand, the "hospitality country, and the visuals of the fishermen. The fishermen not only denote the artisanal and authentic ways of life, but also the hardships. Fishing does not seem like an easy task. Bo's words suddenly get a different tone, she is being critical of Thailand's complacent attitude. She aims to challenge this attitude she attributes to the notion of compromising just to accommodate the Westerner.

Songvisava reproduces a somewhat essentialist notion of Thai's cultural identity. As if there was a fixed way to be or to cook Thai food, that was located somewhere within the Thai culture (Hall, S., 1986). This, somewhat essentialized way of cooking, is what the people entering her restaurant will find. But this is where Bo, as an individual, stands in front of the Global Foodscape and proclaims that *"We are not*

gonna make it less spicy, because you can't eat spicy". Her uncompromising attitude is in direct opposition to what she attributes to her Cultural Identity, Thailand accommodating everyone else's needs. She is claiming that preserving Cultural & Historical Authenticity (Johnston & Baumann, 2010), that is so important to ethnic cuisines, is a priority over making her food more approachable to the Global Foodscape, that can't eat as spicy as the Thai. Her stance is important to understand her conception of Thai food within the fine dining Foodscape. Bo thinks that her restaurant should not follow the traditional steps of fine dining, where the customer gets one plate at the time does not work for Thai food. According to the chef, in traditional Thai cuisine, it's right to serve at least: soup, a curry, a stir-fry and a relish. Therefore, customers receive seven dishes in the first serving at Bo.Lan. She proposed that in order for them to appreciate the complexity of her food, it cannot be done through a Western frame, but through a Thai one.

Songvisava's desire to disrupt the idea of a pre-packed Thailand is reflected multiple times, but especially with her support to artisanal producers that do things the hard way, because it's the right thing to do. She worries that these cheap pre-packed curries and ideas about her country will erase the essentialized Thailand she holds dear. Through her cuisine, Bo attempts to stay away from what is industrialised, which she usually associates with what is Westernised. By emphasizing the importance of doing things the traditional way, "from scratch", she is attempting to reproduce the idea of an untarnished Thai culture, untouched by industrialisation. By doing so, Bo is building her values of Authenticity upon the traditions and history that she feels Thailand has to offer. Meanwhile, the accompanied visuals represent the Authenticity narratives of simplicity behind the hunter/gatherer profession that the fishermen displays in terms of hardship and the usage of natural environment.

She wonders: *"What, as a cuisine, are we gonna be? I feel this responsibility in keeping Thai cuisine the way that it should be. I have to fight for Thai food"* (Songvisava & Gelb, 2018). Here, she uses the word responsibility in order to incorporate a sentiment of duty to preserve the traditions that she believes embody the Cultural Identity. Bo wants Thai food to be as she conceptualises it, and if the

customer doesn't like it, she won't worry about changing her plate, she wants them to change their minds, to open themselves to a different conception of Thai food. Stiles, Antiok & Bell proposed that *"To taste is to transcend—to cross boundaries of body and space. Substances from elsewhere enter the here-and-now locale of our own embodiment. Eating is an extension, a connection"*(Stiles, Antiok & Bell, 2010). In Songvisava's view, this connection should be unadulterated and bridging the gap is not worth compromising the Authenticity of her vision. She embraces Tradition and History as the main drivers of what makes her authentic. But isn't defining herself as the "real" Thai cuisine, falling into the representation of the exotic Other, lost somewhere in an essentialized past, falling into the trap of commodified otherness? Somewhere between strangeness and romanticized nostalgic.

Alex Atlas idea of bridging the gap is different. His episode presents a sequence where Atala and a critic talk about D.O.M. while the viewer is shown for the first time the facade of the restaurant with a caption that announces this it is the 9th best restaurant in the world. The viewer gets a glimpse at the inside of the restaurant for the first time, to see Amazonian fish, native necklaces and industrial decoration style that contrasts with more artisanally produced items. Frame-by-frame the restaurant becomes alive and we start seeing images of the service and D.O.M.'s staple dishes such as the Amazonian ants or rice and beans. While we hear Alex and a local critic describe the space:

Critic(C): People who go to D.O.M. have to be open to seeing Brazilian products treated as delicacies.

Alex Atala(AA): Our chef's suggestion for lunchtime since the very first day of D.O.M. is Workers' Food.

C: The chef has managed to be subversive. He managed to make the elite eat rice and beans. But the presentation is so sophisticated and done within a context, people feel authorized to like it. They don't need to be ashamed of liking it.

AA: It is not necessary to use expensive ingredients. The luxury is in your hands, in your ability. (Atala & Gelb, 2016)

D.O.M., as we have been warned by the sign on its door, is one of the world's best restaurant. Therefore, it is a place frequented not only by the Brazilian higher class but by affluent Foodies from around the world looking for exceptional dining experiences. As in Bo.Lan, the chef wants the guest to be opened to approaching local food in a luxury setting. In the case of Atala, he treats Brazilian ingredients such as tucupi, the example we developed in section two, like delicacies. Authenticity in Brazilian cuisine, as presented by Atala is not just present in the process, but also the integrity of the materials, such as the ants being from the Amazon's or the Chili powders being developed by native communities. Authenticity is thus, constructed in a layered manner, signifiers intersect, making its construction multidimensional. Firstly, it is connected to tradition, because it reproduces the Amazonian tradition of eating insects. Secondly, it reinforced its Authenticity by its Ethnic connection, either as Brazilian or Amazonian, this is also regarded as exotic by the global Foodscape. Therefore, anything done in the frame of Amazonic cuisine is not questioned because it's considered too far from the Western cultural parameters, so it is accepted as Exotic (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). Finally, it's all framed in within the vision of a chef, whose authorship is uncontested.

Moreover, by de-contextualising the setting that typical workers food is served in, he enables a consumer, that would have been usually put off by this type of food in a situation where they encounter this dish as approachable. The setting here works as a space that bridges the gap between constructed Exoticism and the gaze of the global Foodscape. According to bell hooks, eating the other does not require to rescind one's hegemonic position. However, it can also be understood as a rite of passage were one gets transformed by the experience of consuming what seems distant. Also, this is the situation described by the critic, D.O.M becomes a transcendence space. Where a customer can go to eat otherness and ingest its ideological nourishment, but the restaurant becomes a safe space, where their positionality will not be challenged(hooks, 1992)

But, what makes D.O.M a safe space? The answer to this can be seen when Atala tells the story of how he became world famous. He says that his first years after

opening D.O.M. where hard, not many people had an interest in Brazilian fine dining. So in 2005, he decides to go to Madrid Fusion, one of the biggest chefs gathering in the world. Before going he ponders on what he can offer in his demo:

"So I started to think, What is the flavour from Amazonas?" I decided to show a concept that I call Amazonic terroir. I knew that everybody knew hearts of palm, but just in cans. Fresh hearts of palm was something really new for them. I took a kind of log and with a big knife, cleaned it and showed this beautiful, white heart of palm. I was claiming something Brazilian. People were fascinated. Ferran Adria comes up to the stage." (Atala & Gelb, 2016)

In this case, Atala indicates a strong resolve to use a Brazilian ingredient to showcase his native origins. He uses heart of palm, which is not considered exotic due to the mass-production and distribution in the Western Foodscape, but he serves it in its natural form, an arrangement that is rare in terms of consumption and thus exotic. By doing so, Atala creates a lesser exotic food, creating a resonance with the Western Foodie based on something they already know, making it both relatable and exotic at the same time.

Ferran Adria, head chef of elBuli and one of the XX century most influential personalities of the Foodscape, gets up on stage to engage with a young Alex Atala. This is the moment Atala claims changed his life and his work gained the instant respect of the food world. At this moment where Adria, acknowledges Atala's techniques, he is permitted to cross the symbolic boundaries that exclude and include cultural knowledge (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). His interpretation of Brazilian fine dining becomes part of what is socially recognized as fine dining in the Global Foodscape.

In the case of Dağdeviren, global recognition is harder to grasp or even measure. In the first place Dağdeviren understanding of the Local and Global Foodscape differs from the ones in Songvisava & Atala cases. Musa's talks about Istanbul as the global arena where all the regional traditions of Turkey come together. In the

middle of the episode it is narrated with the combination of visual imagery, some signs recalling the unison between the locality of every ingredient and tradition, and with the Global, always remaining within the same Turkish borders. Chef Dağdeviren is being filmed walking down one of the main streets of the bustling Istanbul's neighbourhood Kadikoy, as he is passing through the rich stands in the alleys putting the food close to his nose to fully grasp its aroma. Here, is where he tells about the culture shock he experienced when he had to abandon his small village to Istanbul due to political turmoils. *"At first, I experienced some kind of a culture shock. It was an enormous city, full of people. I noticed differences in restaurants from one neighborhood to another. Restaurants run by Albanians, Armenians, Circassians. People came from all over Turkey to Istanbul and they brought all of the richness from their regions. And those differences made Istanbul colorful. I slowly began to feel this richness as a part of who I was"* (Dağdeviren & Gelb, 2018) .

With this statement not only there is an embracement and acceptance of the diversity as being a constituent part of one's identity (Hall. S, 1997). Furthermore, there is also the intent to preserve these traditions and merge them into a process of inclusion within a same organ. Like a process of *autopoiesis*, where an any given organ starts an auto- healing process only availing itself of his own resources, in the case of Musa, there is a similar on-going process happening. In this episode, we can observe how Musa is trying to deliver the Turkish experience globally, as also delivering it in its own borders, this due to the rich cultural diversity present in Turkey. A process of internal healing where the reconceptualization of Turkish food would serve as a means for inclusion and reconciliation both at a Local and a Global scale.

After viewing the full episode, we can observe how there is also enmeshed a political dimension.

"Mehmet Gurs: *Going to Ciya is to rid of mental ethnic border, the religious border, the national border. We do not have to be enemies. We can have it together, that's what the richness of region is all about.*

Cemre Narim: You look at the table before and you say I have never seen that dish I have never taste that herb and when you bite into something you can not help but discover the sense of pride and identity" (Dagdeviren & Gelb, 2018)

With the journalist at the beginning of the episode that compares Musa to a *"food archeologist",* another juxtaposition that can be done is the one of seeing Musa acting as a "mediator" who through his understanding and rediscovery of the complexity of the Turkish cuisine carries an ideal that is aiming to abolish physical and mental boundaries. Furthermore, at the very beginning of the episode the chef narrates how in the 80's kebab was diminished under a global perspective. In the general mass culture's conception of that time, Turkish food was ridiculed, or as Musa states: *"It was considered food consumed by people without culture"* (,Dagdeviren & Gelb, 2018). Also, at the heart of this chef's narration, like in the other two episodes, these three individuals want to claim back the ownership of their cultures, changing its global perception, and as Stuart Hall would argue, they want to get rid of those *"superficial or artificially imposed selves"* (Hall. S, 1997).

Here, this project analyses three different episodes of Netflix show 'Chef Table' through the three frames of self, Local and Global, viewing them in relation to Authenticity and Exoticism. Going through different moments the analysis tries to fit into the frame mentioned above. The three chefs having different cultural background and having different personal experience, are recognised as referents of their national cuisines. They realize the importance of their food, and its need of recognition, their self-realization leads them to stand and advocate their food and its culture. Their personal connection to their local cuisine and ambition to do something for it draws the attention of the Foodscape. Alex, Bo and Musa all appear as the vital person for the transformation for their food and its meaning. Their awareness of their foods value change their lives. Their stories aim to inspire people to think about the value of their own traditional food culture. Food is not only a basic need instead it is representation of one's culture and identity. We have observed how, in different ways, these individuals aim to challenge the representation of their food on a Global and Local Foodscape, by changing the way they approach the national ingredients

and their local cuisines. In the discussion, we will further develop these points analysing this construction.

Discussion

In the sections above we have discussed how in different scenarios, these chefs attempt to claim their food as a representation of their cultural heritage. All three episodes that are being used in the case, contain narratives of chefs that notice their national cuisines are being diminished by more esteemed Western cuisines. The disregard towards the chef's own ethnic cuisine is what drives them to attempt to revitalize their respective Cultural Identity through their own perceptions of Authenticity, defining what is real and what is not from their point of view. By implementing their own personal voyage, they procreate different authentic qualities that have to be understood from the binary perspective of both the Local and the Global. In order for the different chefs to conduct themselves authentically, they accumulate a combination of local elements to declare their Authenticity, elements which are important in their definition of the Cultural Identity they want to represent. The Local understanding of, what cultural aspects are important to preserve or conserve, are guided by the influences of global forces. When the spectrum of Authenticity is contested in a global arena, the chef's local authentic assets becomes the basis, that the global audience defines Exoticism out of, and vice versa. Therefore, the chefs contribute to the Foodies understanding of the exotic Other, by underlining certain qualities like tradition and personal connection, among others, to narrate their own Authenticity in the pursuit of contributing to their cultural representation. The global dimension incorporates the perspective of a Foodie, or the Netflix audience, as a 'consumer' of the exotic Other and their socially constructed Authenticity, in terms of a cultural resource that can be used as a benchmark to manifest the transformation of the consumer. This transformation constitutes the consumption of an exotic Other and its Cultural Identity as a course for the advantaged consumer to gain cultural knowledge and assert certain power

relations. Thus, the transformation occurs in a global setting, where a privileged consumer can absorb the exotic chef's Authenticity as both a motion to distance themselves from Local and Western perspectives, by gaining knowledge of Other cultures and be inclusive of them, and also to gain and use knowledge in a neo-colonial approach to reproduce certain power structures.

In the section of the self, we have discussed how despite their different trajectories these chef's have managed to promote a version of what they envision as their local cuisine. Alex Atala's vision of Brazilian fine dining, that he constructs through the fusion of local ingredients and techniques combined with European Savoir-faire. Atala does not claim what he does is traditional Brazilian. By mixing and matching techniques and ingredients from the Brazilian landscape, and selling it as a luxury experience, it is new and original in its own way. By innovating in the manner he frames these local goods as luxury items he is attempting to penetrate the symbolic boundaries that guard what the global Foodscape frames as fine dining (Johnston & Baumann, 2010). By reframing food, like tucupi, Atala is reclaiming his heritage as worthy of attention in its own particular way. It may be argued that he is compromising tradition to fit the global standard of fine dining. But if so, he is being fully conscious of the process. We retold the story of Jacquin excluding him on the basis of his nationality because it's a critical moment in the formation of his worldview. This example illustrates him embracing his position as the Other, reclaiming this space and affirming his personal narrative power. Is his narrative of his Brazilian experience enough on its own? No. It had to be reinforced in a global context, by a person with enough Cultural & Social Capital to recognize his work as worthy of the Foodscapes attention (Bourdieu, 1984). So the parameters of comparison, framed within the local and global context, attribute meaning to the experience in question. Alex Atala might have instrumented it as a form of subversion, but Ferran Adria made it acceptable, repositioning D.O.M. as a place where the exotic is safe enough to explore.

In Bo Songvisavas' chapter, Chef's Table is highlighting her vision about Thai food by being something that shouldn't be industrialised, but something that needs to be

connected with the natural production process. It is the way she claims Authenticity by defining herself as the "real" Thai cuisine. Rather than worrying about the consumer staying in her restaurant despite the recipes being too spicy, she is waiting for guests to be open-minded and ready to feel the Thai experience. She relies on her idea of Thailand as a country characterized by uncommon products to the view of the Global North. However, she is recognizing that otherness, is being part of the representation which is too exotic to the viewer, due to a global audience being used to understand a cultural grouping as a fixed entity (Hall, 1997) Meaning that Bo is bringing difference to the way Thai food is understood by the Netflix consumer.

The interactions between Songisava and the farmers that produce sugar from the palm is constructing a narration of caring about the origins of the ingredients that traditionally were used in Thai cuisine. And here the word "were" is used because, as Chef's Table shows in this episode, the notion of traditions are being lost in the shadows of fast and easy production mechanisms. A point where the local imaginary and the global standardised rules are interacting. Bo is giving relevance to making things from scratch, for example, curry, but at the same time connecting those traditional aspects with her European experience by bringing creativity and the glamour that people are not used to seeing in their perception of traditional Thai food, like street food, as an example.

At the core of Musa Dağdeviren's narrations we could observe how many elements came together in connection with one another. His story is shaped upon its narration being slightly different from the other two episodes. As already mentioned in the analysis section, his narrative is mainly shaped upon two basic authentic signifiers which are the simplicity, the historical and traditional dimensions (Johnston & Baumann, 2010).

During the whole course of the episode, we can see how his food is not presented as an over-elaborated product, which is characterized by simplicity and respect for the traditions. As Musa's aim is more concerned with the discovery and reproduction of what it is supposed to be a historically authentic Turkish culinary

experience, he is not portraying himself as an innovator, his mission is to rediscover the complexities of what Turkish cuisine encloses, transmitting it on a Local and a Global scale. Moreover, at the very beginning of the episode, the chef's strong sense of pride is immediately revealed. The general global perspective revolving around Turkish cuisine in the last decades had a negative connotation, diminishing and ridiculing the richness this culture carries. However, under these lenses, after a deeper understanding of the notions, we could observe how, even in his case, there is a process of validation through Western standards. His attempt to gain back recognition for his Cultural Identity, and the right placement of cultural values, can always be measured as belonging to a hegemonic perspective prioritizing the Global North ideas.

A vivid example of these dynamics, can be seen in the episode's incipit, where Musa wants to return a proper valorisation of cultural foods, that are not usually associated with dishes like kebab. To elevate the cultural acceptance for those of a higher social standing, he chooses to play pieces of Chopin, that are identifiable and valued European pieces of music to accentuate and increase the level of sophistication by linking kebab to more Westernised forms of luxury.

Using Westernised elements or techniques to associate to the cuisines is a common denominator within these chefs. This points of reference to Western luxury serve as frames to anchor their audience, within what they already understand as a luxury item. This is how, these chefs, by using a familiar setting to the audience are able to convey successfully their novelty ideas about their national backgrounds. They are thus able to portray their world views as authentic because it's attached to their name and authorship; simple, because it falls into the universe of what the Global North viewer perceives as the simple life, the way things used to be; It has an ethnic connection, because its made by individuals that fall into the category of the Exotic Other.

Moreover, geographic specificity because everything they do is tied to national borders and history and tradition because they emphasize how their processes have deep historical roots that they are bringing to surface. All these anchors of

significance, that tie them to Authenticity, place them in a position where they are able to commodify their national cuisines as authentic in the global Foodscapes. They highlight the plurality of aspects that set them aside from the rest. But somehow, their originality does not position the chef in a place where they are seen as an Other, that the audience can't relate to. But, in a place of resistance, where they intend to write their own representation far enough for the West to be exotic, yet close enough to be a familiar stranger, the right kind of stranger.

The global dimension where the chefs are being constructed as the 'right kind of stranger' for consumption by the Netflix audience, is also shaped by the respective chef's personal perception of their position in their local surroundings. In the different episodes, there is a similarity in the views the chefs have about themselves and how they are feeling a personal responsibility towards representing their cuisine in a local Foodscape, where the native food cultures are neither being acknowledged by the locals nor by the West. The responsibility that they convey, comes across as motivated by a spiritual belief to conserve and represent their own perspective of the Cultural Identities that are being lost, almost as if they felt chosen by a divine entity. Furthermore, there is a resemblance in the fashion that the chef's presents their restaurants as a gateway into the native space where the cultural experience is consumed, an aspect that positions the chefs as the exotic and culinary guides to the authentic qualities of the local Foodscapes. So, while being the right kind of stranger from the consumer's point of view, the chefs also illuminates their perception of self as the right kind of local to represent the Cultural Identities of their nations, which through a spiritual dimension enforces the Authenticity they possess.

Concluding Remarks

We have started this project by discussing the power of Netflix as a platform and the importance of discussing knowledge production in said context. We have unpacked

the way Authenticity is constructed in this episodes through the different narratives of these chef's, who are attempting to show the importance of finding value in the different cuisines of the world and their traditions. By choosing to portray these packaged stories of diversity, Netflix is reinforcing ideas connected to cosmopolitanism, by promoting this acceptance of these cultural forms, promoted by the individuals discussed above. Thus, as explained by Sharma (2016), Netflix is a format that has given many documentaries and series a space that they would have not found anywhere else on traditional TV. But this space comes at a content cost, where the information transmitted has to be pre-packaged towards an audience that is willing to only get a certain level of otherness. Like in Bo's restaurant the audience can only take a certain amount of spice, but Netflix outlook is to be approachable for global audiences. So where does this leave our chef's claim of Authenticity?

Further Research

Chef's Table might have more frames that narrate Authenticity and Exoticism, for example, one related to gender and female interaction within the Foodscape. Another topic to develop further could be the use of memory studies as an aid to define the chef's cultural representation through some specific dishes in their restaurant. However, we defined ours by considering them the most relevant and practical to develop according to the timing this project has. Moreover, we could have go deeper on the research field by taking into account the audience's point of view. It means doing focus group to discuss how do they perceive the show narratives towards the main concepts of these project.

Conclusion

This paper uncovers the personal narratives presented by chefs, sustained by their individual drive to expose the cultural heritage of their native countries in a global

Foodscape. Through the use of different authentic qualities that are personally valorized, the chefs intent to display their own interpretation of how their cultural identity is defined. A main focus within these episodes is the reformulation of cultural history and traditions, that are developed within the context of the cuisine and the chef's personal and ethnic connection. They share a common sentiment about the underappreciation of the local values, in the perspective of both their local communities and from gaze of the west. As such, the chefs feel a certain personal responsibility to be the ones to represent the worth of their countries. They seem to be specially qualified by something bigger than themselves, the inheritance of both an ethnic connection, but also the right set of skills and experiences to carry on, define and claim what is authentic. This attribute of a certain spiritual belief, is a signifier that was missing, or at least, not specifically elaborated in the signifiers of Authenticity that the theory provided. Chef's Table provides many interactions between the chefs and their respective local environment to manifest the Authenticity they embody, which is highlighted through the simplicity, that the pre-industrialised settings and the contact with nature entails. This dimension also contributes to the representations of the chefs as an exotic Other from the point of view of the Netflix audience. This Exoticism is displayed by the chef's social distance, as they are presented in a local and geographic specificity that is rare to the viewer. Even though the chefs represent something exotic, they all share social understandings and techniques that derives from a Western framework, that makes the Exoticism they are attributed more familiar for the Western gaze. Thus, the chefs are recognized as the 'right kind of stranger', as they through their Cultural Identities and representations thereof, reduce their Exoticism to an extent where Netflix can commodify their Authenticity to cater Chef's Table as consumable to the Western viewer.

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