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The globalisation of taste

The case of salmon

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Table of Contents

Illustrations	IV
List of abbreviations	VI
Acknowledgements	VII
Summary	VIII
1. Introduction	1
Social connection to food	2
The foundation	3
Cosmopolitan food	6
Unevenness of (dis)connection	7
Turning foodstuffs into food: where quality begins	10
Food standards	11
Quality definitions	13
Conceptualizing consumers	15
Consuming actors	16
Global tastes	17
Problem statement	19
Research questions	19
Methodology	20
Fieldwork	20
2. Exploring the seas	21
Fluid resources	21
Exploiting the seas	22
Industrializing the seas	23
On the verge of extinction; the tuna	24
Fish on land	25
Wild vs. farmed	26
Salmon	27
The global catch	27
Global consumption	29
Producing quality	30
The ω 's (omegas)	31

3. Multi-sited research	34
Salmón Chileno; (re)creation	34
Civilizing the environment	34
Export quality	36
Exploring numbers	40
Salmon production in Chile	40
Fish consumption in Chile	42
NCD-risk factors	43
Case site	45
Nederlandse Zalm; what was once lost	47
History of salmon in the Netherlands	47
The Fish auction	48
Exploring numbers	50
Fish consumption in the Netherlands	50
NCD risk-factors	51
Case site	52
4. Manifestations	54
The market place	55
The supermarket	55
Modernisation	55
Construction of ignorances	58
Food policies numbing the senses	62
A global commodity	70
The organic market	72
Ethical concerns	72
Inequalities	82
The restaurant	84
Sushi	84
A global taste	84
The cosmopolitan	86
Class differentiation	96
Local use of salmon as a substitute	101

5. Discussion: Differing manifestations side by side	104
Lost in translation	104
Issues of categorization	104
Diversification through a global taste	105
Mediation of consumer's food fantasies	105
Defining wild salmon	106
Global taste vs. global standards	108
6. Concluding note	109
References	113

Illustrations

Table of Figures

modern, perfect and cheap food	3
Figure 2 The construction of counter movements to a dominant 'modern form' resulting in multiple n food realities.	
Figure 3 Global Capture production of salmon in tons from 1950 – 2010	28
Figure 4 Global Aquaculture production of salmon in tons from 1950 – 2010	29
Figure 5 Global approximate annual average salmon consumption	30
Figure 6 The chemical representation of the omega-3 fatty acids ALA, EPA and DHA	32
Figure 7 Map of Chile and different production zones in relation to the salmon industry	35
Figure 8 The Chilean capture of Coho salmon in tons 1980-1998	40
Figure 9 The Chilean Aquaculture of salmon in tons	42
Figure 10 General consumption of fish and seafood in Chile divided in three FAO categories	43
Figure 11 Mean body mass index of Chileans as a metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related deaths	44
Figure 12 Mean fasting blood glucose of Chileans as metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related death	ıs . 44
Figure 13 Map of the city of Valdivia, Chile	45
Figure 14 General consumption of fish and seafood in the Netherlands divided in three FAO categorie	s50
Figure 15 Mean body mass index of the Dutch as a metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related deaths	51
Figure 16 Mean total cholesterol of the Dutch as a metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related deaths	51
Figure 17 Map of the city of Wageningen, The Netherlands	53
Table of Boxes	_
Box 1 Conceptualisation of Food quality by the Slow Food organization	
Box 2 Translated article of 'Fl Austral' on an online fish farming forum about a salmon outbreak	68

Table of Photos

Photo 1 Fishing boats anchored at the Fish auction in Stellendam, The Netherlands	49
Photo 2 Sorting Plaice at the fish auction in Stellendam, the Netherlands	49
Photo 3 The total fresh fish section at the Albert Heijn, Wageningen	59
Photo 4 Cheap forms of salmon at the fresh fish section of the Albert Heijn, Wageningen	59
Photo 5 Exclusive forms of salmon at the fresh fish section of the Albert Heijn, Wageningen	59
Photo 6 Prepackaged salmon fillet from Super-salmon in the Chilean supermarket Unimarc	60
Photo 7 Advertising for 'fresh' salmon in the Chilean supermarket Lidr	60
Photo 8 Different varieties of deep frozen salmon in the Chilean supermarket Lidr	60
Photo 9 Salmon and other fish for sale on the Mercado Fluvial in Valdivia	65
Photo 10 The tourist attraction of Sea lions and pelicans waiting behind the Mercado Fluvial for left-of from the fish market	
Photo 11 Selling and onsite preparation of artisanal cold smoked salmon on a Dutch farmers market.	81
Photo 12 The process of cold smoking salmon and mackerel on a Dutch famers market	81
Photo 13 The sign of Cooperativa La Manzana next to the front door of their shop in Valdivia Chile	81
Photo 14 The sushi chefs working at the sushi-bar of Gohan in Valdivia, Chile	87
Photo 15 The sushi chefs working at the sushi-bar of Sushi-Strike in Valdivia, Chile	87
Photo 16 Served Chilean Sushi rolls (envuelto en palta) in Gohan	87
Photo 17 The all-you-can-eat sushi form and pen for customers of Watami sushi restaurant in Wageningen, the Netherlands	88
Photo 18 The sleek interior of Watami sushi restaurant in Wageningen, the Netherlands	88
Photo 19 Facebook advertising from Strike Sushi-bar	90
Photo 20 Facebook advertising from Minami	90
Photo 21 Homemade sushi rolls made during participant observation with Vicente	95
Photo 22 Homemade sushi pieces made during participant observation with Vicente.	95
Photo 23 The sushi take-away we bought with an Argentinian beer	98
Photo 24 Salmon ceviche at a sushi restaurant in Valdivia, Chile	102
Photo 25 The menu outside of a fish restaurant near the Mercado Fluvial	102

List of abbreviations

ALA Alfa-linolenic acid (omega-3-fatty acid)

BMI Body Mass Index

BSE Bovine spongiform encephalopathy or 'Mad cow disease'

CPRs Common Pool Resources

DHA Docosahexanoic acid (omega-3-fatty acid)

EFSA European Food Safety Authority

EPA Eicosapentanoic acid (omega-3-fatty acid)

EU European Union

FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

GMO Genetically modified organism

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

ITQs Individually Transferable Quotas

IUU Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
LCP Long chain polyunsaturated (fatty acids)

NCDs Noncommunicable diseasesNGO Non-governmental organisation

NVWA Nederlandse Voedsel en Waren Authoriteit (Dutch Food and Commodities

Authority)

TNCs Transnational corporations

UK United KingdomUN United Nations

US United States (of America)WFP World Food ProgrammeWHO World Health Organisation

ω Omega

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Summary

In a globalising world that is increasingly interconnected on many levels, the global food economy has become highly modernized, which led to an increasing need for food policies to mediate between people and food. Driven by processes of globalisation, modernisation and commoditisation this resulted in *modern food* (Sherwood, Arce et al. 2013) which disconnects worlds of production and consumption for many consumers. By exploring this social connection people have to food, this thesis aims to enhance theoretical contributions of food sciences. Arguing that the definition of consumer is too one-sided, we explore the notion of consuming actors in the case of salmon; acknowledging agency, beliefs, values, search for wellbeing and reality of consumers.

Specific cases of food production and the interaction with the larger global context are important to study to provide an understanding of how, in specific networks of food production and consumption, they are defined and contextualized. Allowing us "to incorporate the social life of commodities and see how they are constituted through actor's social practices, everyday experiences and actions" (Arce and Marsden 1993). The vehicle used to explore this is salmon. Using an ethnographic, multi-vocal and multi-sited approach fieldwork was carried out in Valdivia, Chile and Wageningen, the Netherlands. The culinary manifestations of salmon that were explored in both case-sites are those of the market place and the restaurant.

Focussing on the dominant food reality of the supermarket shows the efficiency and modernized structure giving space to global commodities like salmon. Regulated through increasingly international food policies it discourages many consumers in using their senses and allows for the construction of ignorances, both unwittingly as conscious. A second manifestation of the market place is the organic market, in which we see the deliberate connection of worlds of production and consumption. Driven by values, beliefs and ethical concerns consumers choose for organic food and some even venture in counter work to the dominant food reality of the supermarket.

Exploring the manifestation of the restaurant led us to the cosmopolitan food sushi. This global taste has been translated and reworked by many people to make sense of and to incorporate it into local culinary habits. The cosmopolitan (Beck 2002) is able to bridge multiple worlds through food consumption: Staying authentic within the borders of expectation of consumers, it partially portrays Japanese culture through fusion and hybrid versions of sushi. Furthermore, in the Chilean case of the salmon, it was often used as a substitute for 'traditional' food habits that have become impossible due to loss of certain fish species. Pride of the Chilean success within the salmon industry, but also the symbolic construct of place when it comes to salmon, have made it a popular substitute.

Quality for the consuming actor is constituted through values, beliefs, reality, and ideas of wellbeing. These interpersonal conceptualizations of quality are used as a foundation for daily-food-decision making in the current food reality. Counterworks, by consuming actors who cannot make sense of the dominant food reality, are able to live up to those inter-personal conceptualizations of quality and find, organise or create 'good food', given that they have a space within the dominant food reality to operate in. Further food related research would be able to deal with the complexities of people by incorporating these ideas of agency, their personal values, beliefs and search for wellbeing as has been done in this thesis.

Introduction

In a world where we have too much food and too little at the same time and we are unsure whether it is even safe to eat, some consumers are increasingly distancing themselves from one of the things most important to us: food. Policies are developed to mediate between people and food and define what food is, how it is made and what we can eat. The choice consumers are given when it comes to food from a globalized food industry is paradoxical and gives the impression of a homogeneous food culture; the "variety' you can see on entering a supermarket is only *apparent*, since the basic components are often the same" (Morgan K., Marsden T. et al. 2006:11). Some consumer groups are homogenizing to some extent, and as they demand more 'modern food' their choices are limited.

This thesis will describe the social connection to food and look further into what theoretical contributions can be made to better understand this connection. Secondly we will explore conceptualisations of quality used for daily decision-making about food. Using empirical data from case studies from Chile and the Netherlands we will analyse and trace the social connection and ideas of quality through one commodity found in both cases: the salmon. Both having a history in 'production' and 'consumption' will allow us to put the cases side-by-side and look at several manifestations of salmon and look at the, both positive and negative, social connections to salmon.

The question of 'how to feed the world in 2050?' is one the development world is still struggling with. Estimated is that in 2050 the world's population will have increased from 7 billion to 9 of which 6.5 will live in an urban setting and whose income levels will rise; this future highly urbanized and richer population will demand more food. A second issue is the 'Double burden of diseases' – under-nutrition and obesity side-by-side in the same country – which is increasingly prevalent in both 'the West' and 'the Rest'. At the same time we waste more food than ever; by reducing waste about a third of the global food supply could be saved, enough food for 3 billion people. Finally, food scares are reaching a highpoint and consumers are wearier than ever about what they eat. Currently, the answers to these issues are searched for in the domain of production-consumption. In this thesis we argue we should look closer to home and critically analyse the social connection to food we have as consumers, as this can be traced back to these global issues.

Starting with obesity and its possibly deadly consequences; since 1980 the obesity figures have doubled and in 2008 about 1.4 billion adults were overweight of whom 500 million men and women obese. The WHO emphasizes several causes for this global weight gain; 'an increased intake of energy-dense foods that are high in fat' combined with 'an increase in physical inactivity' results in a high BMI (body mass index). Consequences of this raised BMI are non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and several forms of cancer which are amongst the leading causes of death in the world. There are diseases that can largely be prevented through a good diet (WHO 2011; 2013). As consumers distance themselves from what they eat, they turn more to what WHO calls the 'energy-dense foods that are high in fat'. The food eaten is often highly processed and far from what we would consider to

be natural. Having a strong social connection to food can make consumers more aware of the food they put in our mouths and the consequences of it and reduce obesity. Secondly, the food insecure; an estimated 870 million people were chronically malnourished in 2010-12 and another 850 million are undernourished (FAO WFP and IFAD 2012). Highly intensified agriculture has provided the opportunity to produce mountains of food; however we waste a substantial amount of it by throwing it in the bin. Not only consumers waste good food; because of our ideas of quality, food is wasted even before it reaches the supermarket. "All the world's nearly one billion hungry people could be lifted out of malnourishment on less than a quarter of the food that is wasted in the US, UK and Europe" (Stuart 2009).

We can trace global food standards back to this global waste, as many contemporary consumers now lack the ability to judge what is 'good and bad food'. The senses are discarded and instead we look to government and policymakers to mediate this problem. Strict food policies are the result of it and expire-dates are now new forms of quality, but also the certification and labels we find on our foodstuffs today (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006; Morgan K., Marsden T. et al. 2006). However there is a grounded reason for these strict policies as "today's interconnected global food-chains" increase the risk of spreading "disease-causing-organism in food" on a global scale and about 75% of the new infectious diseases which are dangerous to humans started in animal products related to food production. The WHO further writes, what is needed are "strong food safety systems in most countries to ensure a safe global food-chain" (2009), emphasizing current policies are not strict enough. International food policies have been developed to ensure this food safety, however in the last somewhat 20 years the world has seen quite some food scares ranging from cucumbers and grapes, to beef and salmon leading to even stricter food policies, increased media attention and food anxiety amongst some consumers (Oosterveer and Sonnenfeld 2012).

In the next section we are going to explore the social connection to food and how it manifests in the daily life and food decision making of people.

Social connection to food

In this thesis we rely on a vision of the social connection people can have to food. When talking about the social connection to food, we aim at the social 'embeddedness' of food products into the daily lives of people (Hinrichs 2000). This can express itself in my ways, but is always based upon ones reality, values, beliefs and life history. However, increasingly "consumed commodities and their valuations are [being] divorced for and by consumers from the social relations of their production and provision through the construction of ignorances about the biographies and geographies of what we consume" (Cook and Crang 1996:135), leaving consumers disconnected from the food that they eat.

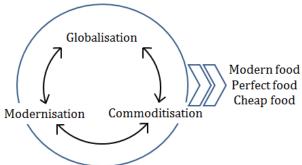
A consumer can be embedded in the social construction of food in different ways; gaining knowledge about production and provisioning, or perhaps buying directly from the farmer. In any way of being embedded, having a strong social connection to food informs a consumer about the geographies and biographies (=origin and processes of production, etc.) of what they consume. These interrelated knowledges inform consumers in the decision of when something is good food and how it is handled and eaten. This knowledge can prevent many food related issues such as obesity and food scares, as consumers are able to decide what is most healthy and good for their personal wellbeing.

In this chapter we trace contemporary notions of what 'good food' is to ideas and translations of modernity and globalisation. First we will take a look at the initial processes that have led to the current position of food in social life.

The foundation

In the early 20th century technologies made things that were once impossible possible and social life went through some drastic changes; globalisation, dreams of modernity and processes of commoditisation set the scene for this transformation (figure 1). Agriculture could be made highly efficient and intensified, to cope with the growing world's population. Ideas and dreams of modernity lead to the spread of these technologies and also the spread of neo-liberal belief in the market. Following this line of thought; the commoditisation of things was – and still is – regarded as the ultimate stage and manifests in a Western discursive modernity. In a time during which global interconnectedness is intensified, we imagine "a world full of movement and mixture, contact and linkages and persistent cultural interaction and exchange" (Inda and Rosaldo 2002). Ideas and beliefs of what is good and bad, traditional and modern, but also what is food and what is not, are influenced by these flows of different realities that have now become so interconnected. The interaction of these three processes drives most Western discursive economic and policy processes.

Figure 1 The interaction of processes of modernisation, globalisation and commoditisation leading to modern, perfect and cheap food.



In the 'realm' of food we have seen these processes of modernisation, globalisation and commoditisation drive food production mainly into the hands of food-related transnational corporations (TNCs) which "share the characteristic of having global investments in the food industry and controlling much of how food is grown, processed, distributed and/or purchased" (Phillips 2006:40). After the formation of the World Trade Organization and its neoliberal model of development, food retailers saw both challenges and opportunities. As before these retailers would operate within national borders, the opportunity arose to source from many different (developing) nations. This resulted into food retailing for the large part being economically concentrated into "three global supermarket chains - Wal-Mart, Carrefour and Royal Ahold" (Busch 2007). These newly formed TNC's were on the lookout for new territories, cheaper labour and new markets (Phillips 2006). Most food production is now optimized, efficient, standardized and as cheap as possible and thanks to global interconnectedness we are able to consume foods from all over the globe. Foods are to meet a certain standards of what is 'good food', leading to an optimal food form that is eventually considered perfect aesthetically and food safety wise (see chapter 'Food standards'). The locally-grown sits beside the 'exotic' - which is grown on the far end of the world - in the supermarket, giving consumers more 'choice' than ever. Mixing different ideas and conceptions of what food and culinary culture are through these exotic commodities "expresses an inter-penetration of culture and economy" (Quoted Robertson, 1991:74 in Cook and Crang 1996). Culture is to some extent being produced through these global commodities that traverse the globe, what Cook and Crang refer to as 'cultural materialisation of the economic', as "cultural diversity sells" (1996:134).

Notions of what modern food is have driven the food economy to this point. Sherwood et al. define modern food as a summary of historic discontinuities with pre-industrial era food production, circulation and consumption, reflecting "the speediness of urbanization, modernisation, and entry to global markets" (2013). As Phillips argues, "the concept of a 'modern' globe has been and is still tied to the consumption of particular kinds of foods, the adoption of particular food production regimes (e.g., industrial agriculture), and the acceptance of particular kinds of food knowledge" (2006:43). The conceptualisations of modernity have translated into an idea of what 'good food' is. Good food is nutritious, safe and healthy, but also available. Long-distance cool chains have made counter seasonal produce globally year-round available. However, this required a reassessment of the notion freshness on the consumer-side, as it no longer means the apple was plucked directly from the tree. The apple may still be considered fresh, even if it has been transported a week ago from the other side of the world. "The social usage of the term "fresh" has come to mean "not ostensibly processed" (Goldfrank 2005:4).

Modern food has over the years effectively squeezed nature out of the production process (Morgan K., Marsden T. et al. 2006) and the standardization of especially fresh produce has improved immensely. Slowly getting consumers used to shelves of identical and perfect (i.e. same colour, shape and size) potatoes, tomatoes and other vegetables. To such an extent that e.g. curved cucumbers will not be found in the supermarket or grocery shelves (see chapter 'Food standards')(Bingen, Busch et al. 2006). Being conditioned to seeing piles of perfect, identical, 'fresh' products in supermarkets, makes consumers' social connection to food deteriorate. As food related TNC's now define what good food is, consumers are quickly losing sight of what 'natural' food might be. As fresh produce ages in consumers' homes and begins to show the signs of its decay, consumers don't consider it to be 'natural', as this is not the sight provided in the supermarket.

Another aspect of modern food is the importance of price. Able to source globally and thus look for cheaper labour and resource costs, allows for food related TNC's to offer food cheap to consumers. The social inequalities that arise out of the production of modern food are pushing for more global regulation.

"With the expansion of neoliberalism the need for fairer international trade has become ever more pressing to many people in the postcolonial world. Free-market policies have brought millions of small-scale farmers into competition with industrial agriculture, which enjoys greater productivity because of its technological advantages as well as subsidies in the form of tax credits and price supports in the developed countries." (Moberg and Lyon 2010)

With the emergence of food related TNC's dominating the food industry and the "abandonment of longstanding multilateral efforts to regulate commodity prices" the gap between the small-scale farmers and industrialized food business has increased; worsened by the "consolidation of retail power" in the global North and started fierce competition for price between the retailers that are left in the food business (Moberg and Lyon 2010). The

consequences of neoliberal globalisation have been large scale urbanization and decreased living standards and wages for many of these cheap labourers. In essence cheap food does not weaken consumers' social connection to food, as most consumers' wellbeing is not directly affected by these inequalities on the producer end. What matters is that price has become a substitute criterion for the judgement of what is 'good food'. As Harvey puts it:

"We can in practice consume our meal without the slightest knowledge of the intricate geography of production and the myriad social relations embedded in the system that puts [food] upon our table. ... We cannot see the fingerprints of exploitation upon them or tell immediately what part of the world they come from." (Quoted in Cook and Crang 1996)

Goldfrank argues that most consumers do not want to know and rather stay ignorant to the social lives of the food they eat (2005). Instead "[a food] product's monetary value is increasingly associated with consumer knowledge about the commodity in question" (Arce and Marsden 1993:303). In other terms: people tend to focus on price as a parameter of quality instead of the food's processes of production and origin. Some consumers confuse good food as being equal to a high price and being 'expensive', while consumers with lesser financial means will perceive the cheaper foods available to them as 'good food'. The commoditisation of things has led to a new conceptualization of quality and although Bowker structures his argument around biodiversity and conservation, the same can be said for food consumption;

"Money is not the optimal symbolic form for bringing together the various actants in mutual accord. As currently being worked through, money discourse encourages the evacuation of event-based ontologies through the exclusion of just the sort of memory we should be exploring in order to deal with planetary management. In so doing, it settles the question of the mediation between inside and outside (nature and culture) in a way that is ineluctable ethnocentric." (Bowker 2008)

The use of monetary value to judge foodstuffs upon their quality and use, oversimplifies the food we eat. Money discourse takes food out of its social context and places it in one of neoliberal market and globalisation. "Consumers' knowledges about foods geographies [and biographies] are significant in both culinary practices and to the economics of the food industry" (Cook and Crang 1996:140). When economic value is put above these knowledges, the social connection consumers might have to food disappears and makes place for euros and dollars.

To sum up, TNC's are producing standardized, cheap food on a global scale. Some argue this leads to a global food culture, as even supermarkets are becoming more identical to one another on a global scale. 'Global foods' such as Coca-Cola, McDonald's burgers and Mars bars can now be found, bought and eaten in the most remote locations on the globe (Beck 2002; Morgan K., Marsden T. et al. 2006).

Although one might say this is turning the world into one global community, this does not necessarily disconnect consumers from the social meaning of food. Some food like pasta, sushi and pizza are now also considered as global foods. In the next section we explore the notion of cosmopolitanism and its meaning in the world of food.

Cosmopolitan food

"We can give our tongues a holiday because a world of 'foreigners' and 'foreign flavours' has come to cosmopolitan London" (Cook and Crang 1996:137). Different national cuisines are available in most of the urbanized areas on the world, Italian being a good example. Pasta and pizza are considered to be authentically Italian food; however throughout the time it has been translated and reworked into local cultural food forms. The "imported cuisines have been adapted to fit in with the availability of key ingredients and culinary expectations in their new settings" (Cook and Crang 1996:137; Feng 2006). This signifies the de-territorializing character of processes of globalisation and "what this idea implies is not that globalisation destroys localities [...] but that cultural experience is in various ways 'lifted out' of its traditional 'anchoring' in particular localities" (Tomlinson 1999; 2003:273). In this line of thought Beck refers to 'cosmopolitan perspective'; "an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities, which include the otherness of the other", being a cosmopolitan means "being a citizen of two worlds" or even multiple worlds (2002:18) and "identifying with the consumption of foreign food and appreciation of cultural difference" (Warde 2000; Cwiertka 2005:264). "Everyday nationalism is circumvented and undermined and we experience ourselves integrated into global processes and phenomena" (Beck 2002:28) and this includes the food we eat.

"Who today can still feed himself locally or nationally? The product labels may still try to make us believe it, but from yoghurt, to meat and fruit, to say nothing of the globalized hotchpotch of sausage meat, as consumers we are irredeemably locked into globalized cycles of production and consumption. [...] Take the supermarket around the corner. Today one finds on the shelves every possible kind of food that used to be eaten on other continents and in other cultures, albeit as industrially mass-produced articles." (Beck 2002:28)

Consumers find themselves with more choice as new foodstuffs from 'imported cuisines' are entering the supermarkets. Sticking exclusively to what is national and so to say authentic to a country is nearly impossible. Being a cosmopolitan and thus influenced by others realities is reflected in one's daily decision-making regarding food. As exotic foodstuffs are not only accessible in processed forms, but also in fresh produce, this has opened up a whole new world of food and cooking. Cook emphasizes the touristic quality of such exotic food constructions as cooking foreign cuisine at home is "promoted as allowing consumers to bring the experience of travel to their own domestic culinary regimes" (1996:136). Nowadays, being familiar with and enjoying ethnic and exotic cuisine is an "equivalent to a claim of social rank and distinction" (Warde 2000; Cwiertka 2005:264). Contemporary papers, magazines and television shows are bombarded with these culinary 'trips around the world', showing consumers what is culinary fashion.

"The result, nevertheless, is a ... cosmopolitan culinary eclecticism, which is meanwhile promoted and celebrated in cook books and TV food programmes as the new normality. So world society has taken possession of our kitchens and is boiling and sizzling in our pans." (Beck 2002:28)

Celebrity chefs are found daily on television, showing us how to prepare the latest 'food fashion'. This branch of what Ketchum calls 'food media' has proliferated immensely in the last 20 years (2005). Networks that have devoted themselves to cooking emerged all over the world, constructing consumer food fantasies. Relying on constructing a virtual reality much alike is done

through nonfiction on television, these food media's are able to construct consumers' food fantasies (Ketchum 2005). These consumer fantasies are then brought to life in restaurants and up to some extent in the domestic sphere when cooking at home. Restaurants "not only allow the digestion of foods but also practices of *flânerie* in which even if not eaten, constructions of the global and it parts can be gazed at and provide imaginary gratification" (Cook and Crang 1996:136).

Take sushi for example: traditionally Japanese food, but reworked and locally translated in numerous ways. Sushi's growing popularity has made it available in most cosmopolitan cities on the world (Bestor 2000; Mouritsen 2009; Sakamoto and Allen 2011; Edwards 2012). Although translated and reworked to local culinary expectations, this global commodity is still regarded as Japanese. "Foods do not simply come from places, organically growing out of them, but also make places as symbolic constructs, being deployed in the discursive construction of various imaginative geographies" (Cook and Crang 1996:140). In attempt to make sense of these new cuisines, foods are made sense of through their geographical identity and vice versa: Japan is made sense of through experiencing their cookery (Cook and Crang 1996; Sakamoto and Allen 2011; Ween and Abram 2012). Hence the sushi that is perhaps hardly to be considered as Japanese, remains Japanese and still gives consumers the idea of experienced something authentically Japanese.

Not every consumer has the access and ability to bridge multiple world's trough these cosmopolitan foods. For some consumers it is exactly this cosmopolitan edge that is beyond their means. Being a citizen of multiple worlds means abiding to the social and culinary practices that are associated with it. Restaurants thrive on the creation of new cosmopolitan foods and their increasing popularity, making virtual food fantasies of cosmopolitan consumers a reality. Considering the above described cosmopolitan food, we might say it enriches the social connection to food to some extent, as consumers are dipping their taste buds in far-away cuisines and often experiencing some parts of the originating cultures too. A partially disconnected world of production and consumption remains however, as the cultural aspects to cosmopolitan food seem to be a performance of sorts, expected by the actor consuming it.

Unevenness of (dis)connection

Although globalisation is converting some of the world into communities with many similarities, we argue "the experience of globalisation is a rather uneven process [...] not everyone and every place participates equally in the circuits of interconnection that traverse the globe" (Arce 1997; Arce and Long 2000; Inda and Rosaldo 2002:6). Different beliefs, values, cultures and histories of actors make different realities; able to translate and transform ideas of modernity into one they can make sense of and believe in.

The translations and reworking of modernity can result in something considered as counterwork (Arce and Long 2000), leading to new realities and values of actors (see fig. 2). Having to interact with the dominant food reality of modern, perfect and cheap food they create their own new food reality. Keeping the dominant food reality of modern food intact, we see the consumers that are embedded in the dominant idea of modernity and who can reflect their reality, values, beliefs and life history into these new conceptualisations of modernity, globalisation and commoditisation. By studying the multiple realities of consumers and their social connection to food we will be able to give a better insight in the multiple groups of consumers and their realities and ideas of modernity.

"It is important to identify differentiated practices of consumption in order to study the differential manifestation of global consciousness inside consumer groups. Studied together with actors' alternative and sometimes conflictive arrangement and rearrangement of objects, these differentiated practices may explain how people enclose themselves within parallel zones that are created by social divisions." (Arce 1997)

The process of enclosure allows for actors to understand and translate processes of globalisation into their life world. In this thesis we pay special attention to counterwork to 'modern food' as, argued by Arce and Long, is important for understanding the formation of these multiple modernities (2000). Some consumer groups have deliberately changed their daily practices in order to form counter-modernities to the one described and shown above (figure 1, p.3) that is most dominant in contemporary society. Here different notions of quality, food and health are formed according to different values, realities and modernities (see figure 2).

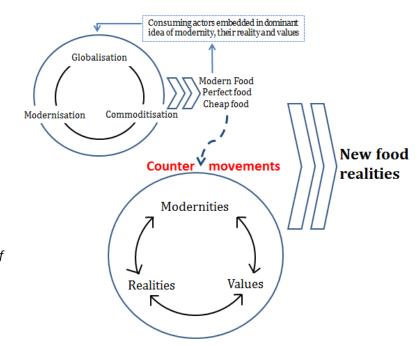


Figure 2 The construction of counter movements to a dominant 'modern form' resulting in multiple new food realities.

Motivations of these different consumers differ, as some may oppose to social inequalities that arise on the small-scale producer side of food production, while others oppose the view of modern food and its new notions of quality. Another different motivation to venture into counter work may be the environmental damage that is caused by highly industrialized food production. Consumers try to translate their values into the political action possible in their realities by redefining what 'good food' is. As organic produce might be good for the consumer troubled by environmental concerns, Fair Trade food will be a possibility for the consumer having ethical issues surrounding social inequalities. These varying consumer groups originating from different realities, values and modernities will have to play into the interacting circle of modernisation, commoditisation and globalisation or find different ways to produce their foods, thus resulting into new food realities. Countless movements, organisations and such have started projects in order to make their good food a reality.

Like the by now popular Slow Food¹ which advocates "an idea, a way of life and a way of eating" that are able to "link the pleasure of food with a commitment to community and the

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¹ http://www.slowfood.com/

environment". On their website they spell out their vision of 'good food' being "good, clean and fair" (see box 1). Numerous people have been able to identify themselves, their values and realities, to this redefinition of what good food is. However, not every countermovement is so clear about their definition of what food is as the *Slow* Food movement.

Good, Clean and Fair

Slow Food's approach to agriculture, food production and gastronomy is based on a concept of food quality defined by three interconnected principles:

GOOD a fresh and flavoursome seasonal diet that satisfies the senses and is part of our local culture; CLEAN food production and consumption that does not harm the environment, animal welfare or our health; FAIR accessible prices for consumers and fair conditions and pay for small-scale producers.

Box 1 Conceptualisation of Food quality by the Slow Food organization. (source: slowfood.org)

In the Netherlands we see campaigns about the 'forgotten vegetables'; vegetables from Dutch grounds, traditionally used, but now overcrowded and 'forgotten' by the appearance of other exotic vegetables. As an environmentally conscious public is increasing, the sound of good vegetables that are able to grow locally in Dutch soil seems very attractive. What is peculiar is that this predominantly young crowd of environmental conscious eaters are turning it into a new fashion-hype. Being sustainable is the new cool, hence these counter-movements reintroducing these forgotten vegetables are touching ground with cosmopolitan food; making sustainable fashionable. Trendy restaurants and also organic shops are welcoming the 'new' forgotten vegetables, reinstating consumers' social connection to these once normal vegetables.

Aiming to sustain local small-scale farmers who still produce these vegetables – and often organic too – this plays into several motivations to change eating habits. Nonini argues we should consider these 'social movements' more as an alternative pathway, as often it is primarily "a response to market demand by upper-class, professional, and entrepreneurial consumers for an expanded market in fresh, organic and 'natural' produce" (2013:270). Meaning organizations as *Slow Food* can be seen as an alternative pathway to a modernity that fits the life worlds of some more elite consumer groups, but not every consumer group. Many of these alternative pathways have the mission of improving the social connection to an aspect of food in general. It may be improving the labour conditions of workers on the production side or reducing environmental damage through organic produce. They all return food in some way to the social context it used to be in, retracing knowledge of production and origin.

Now we have explored some theoretical considerations of the underlying processes which lead to consumers arriving to their conceptualisation of 'good food'. What comes prior to this is establishing what exactly is considered as food and when it is edible. We will now explore this process of objects turning into food and how this can be retraced to food standards that are used all over the world.

Turning foodstuffs into food: where quality begins

"The eating of food, as we know, is one of the most intimate of relationships we, as corporeal beings and bodies, can have with the world, with others, with nature." (Goodman 2013:2)

Food is one of the most important commodities in our lives, as without eating it we cannot sustain our lives. What exactly is it we talk about when using the definition 'food'? This definition is used to portray "the 'thing' caught up in the process of being eaten by a consumer" (Roe 2006:112). But what makes this foodstuff edible and turn it into food? Where is the line between the fish being an animal and being food? This is mostly subjective and personal for any actor. Morgan et al. argue that "the transformation of natural entities into edible form" even in an era of globalisation is still "uniquely constrained by nature" (2006:8). However, technologies in the agro-food business have made incredible things possible and e.g. fish can now be produced on land (see chapter 'Fish on land'). Our changing relationship to nature makes many consumers redefine what they consider food, and perhaps not in favour of nature.

According to Roe for something to reach edibility, it requires a process or a performance, and not necessarily a process that requires rational or logical reasoning; how foodstuffs are handled by humans is what turns them into food, not their description or names (2006). In her paper she describes an art installation she had seen in Bristol in 2001:

"Live fish swimming in a tank. The fish are brought out, killed, prepared and eaten, one by one. This is a spectacle of the process by which things (animals, plants) become food. The fish's throat is cut and the fish wriggles for a minute or so. On seeing this, a young girl cries out, 'It's still alive', but the chef insists, 'It's dead now'. The fish-blood soaks the cloths and spills over the preparation board as the animal is skinned, filtered and prepared, before being passed to the chef, who transforms it into an ornate piece of designer food: sushi. Then the sushi is offered up for consumption to those people incorporated into this installation through observing this spectacle. Some people happily eat the sushi, others do not." (Roe 2006:109)

The fine line of edibility can be found somewhere within this story. For some consumers this line can be found earlier on in the story and for some not at all. This making of sushi signifies the social connection of the consumer and food. Goodman (2013) argues eating is one of the most intimate relationships we have with nature as we depend on it. However the agro-food business is well on its way of proving him wrong.

Much of the scientific literature is focussing on the "changing status of nature within the food sector" (Murdoch, Marsden et al. 2000:111; Goldfrank 2005; Morgan K., Marsden T. et al. 2006), which is slowly but effectively trying to squeeze nature out of the food equation. The following translation into commodities that consumers call 'food' bares the evidence of the removal of nature, as nowadays we mostly consume highly processed foods. A research on consumer motives to purchase organic food reveals some reasons of 'occasional consumers' not to buy organic food; because it is 'perishable' and 'not easy to use' (Zanoli and Naspetti 2002:650). Convenience and ease of use appear to be issues for consumers, but not for the regular organic consumer.

As described earlier, the organic food consumer has a different conceptualisation of food, probably one closer to nature than that of the 'normal consumer'. Secondly, the above described process of making sushi takes time, but turning a fish into edible sushi also requires knowledge and skills. Something most contemporary consumers lack or do not want to spend on food. Having knowledge of the "interrelated geographies that constitute the food-consuming worlds" informs consumers about the (natural) properties of food and how to prepare and eat them (Cook and Crang 1996:138). However, taking nature out of the foodstuff and producing pre-packaged, processed foods plays into the demands of consumers to consume convenient easy food. "We used to cook; now we just add water"².

This does not mean that the food industry has managed to displace nature by an industrial process. As Murdoch et al. write: "This is because nature displays what Ulrich Beck (1990) has termed 'boomerang' qualities: it has a habit of bouncing back in the wake of human modification" (2000:110). Using the example of Bovine Spongiform Encolopathy (BSE), they illustrate that the complexity of nature cannot just be outflanked/domesticated by industrial processes. The human health scares that originated from this bovine disease enhanced the sensitivity of the consumer to processes of food production. Health scares related to food resulted in the redefinition of 'good food' as being 'safe and nutritious'. By some consumers this redefinition is used to determine what is considered as food. Some counter-movements emphasize the reincorporation of nature in food production and consumption as being safe and nutritious. The materiality of the foodstuffs is what matters to these organic consumers. Using and/or linking knowledge about health, environment and social ethics they choose to consume e.g. organic food.

Events such as the BSE-crisis have led to a need for better regulation of the global food economy. In the next section we will focus on food standards for food safety as this is an important issue for the contemporary food industry and policy makers alike.

Food standards

International trade in food stuffs is happening on an immense scale, giving the need for international regulations and policies to ensure food safety and quality. As several global retailers are dominating the food economy, food consumption – especially in an urban setting – is on the way of being universalised when it comes to topics such as food safety, notions of food quality and food cosmopolitanism. However, a shift in regulation has found place as in the past national governments were the main bodies for the safeguarding of sufficient and safe food; "but nowadays, these authorities are faced with highly increased volumes of imported food, while the actors and institutions involved in its production, processing, trade and consumption are integrated in changing transnational networks" (Phillips 2006; Oosterveer and Sonnenfeld 2012:63). Capabilities of managing the national food economy is decreasing, as the influence a nation state can have upon the food industry is limited due to its international character. Conventional food policy used to have a main focus on the interaction between the nation state and the market, as most of the food economy happened within borders (Lang, Barling et al. 2009).

Now food trade has become highly international, different policy measures are needed, as the nation state can only influence what happens within national borders. Although governments are diversely organized, "similar trends can be observed in many part of the world"

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² Quoting Carolyn Steel from her TedTalk 'How food shapes our cities' at TEDGlobal 2009, in Oxford.

(Oosterveer and Sonnenfeld 2012:65). Instead, the function of regulation and control has been transferred to NGO's and private companies. The government still holds some responsibility within the food provisioning: Government institutions like the Dutch NVWA (Food and Commodities Authority) attempt to safeguard the regulations on food safety on a national level through supervision, inspection and risk assessment, as a highly industrialized and global food industry is at risk of spreading contagious diseases at a high speed. However, for the majority:

"National food provision includes larger ecosystems and wider social, political and economic networks, as problems with food are increasingly international and across several borders. Governments today can no longer determine their food quality and safety standards autonomously because global food trade requires their international harmonization [making] nation states and their constituent units ... compelled to adjust to globally agreed-upon regulatory arrangements" (Oosterveer and Sonnenfeld 2012:66).

Therefore institutions such as the UN and the WHO have been taken up these issues, in order to make intensive collaboration between the interlinked nation-states and the market possible. Through this 'multi-actor governance', problems within the global food economy can be addressed through various ways, often resulting in developing instruments like the labelling and certification of food. One example is the formation of the *Marine Stewardship Council* (MSC), which developed a label for seafood that is now being used on a global scale to stimulate sustainable fishing practices (Oosterveer and Sonnenfeld 2012). Another instrument to order the global food economy is setting food standards; 'creating order out of chaos' (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006). As the influence of the market is increasing and of the nation-state is decreasing, other organisations have dedicated themselves to regulate food production through standards. After the formation of the WTO the rules on tariffs and quotas on imported food products were changed and henceforth it was easier for supermarket chains to 'traverse the globe'. "All the larger chains source globally in ways they did not (and could not) in the past" (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006:3).

"Virtually every aspect of food and agricultural production, processing, transport, and retailing is subject to one or another set of standards by a myriad of government agencies and/or non-governmental bodies. This poses problems of multiple agencies with overlapping jurisdictions. Standards may also differ in scope and specificity." (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006:3)

Organisations overseeing 'good management practices', 'social accountability', 'good agricultural practices', and food safety amongst many other topics, are now regulating the food economy. However, there are many organisations that develop their own standards of food and some overlap or even conflict. Especially with fresh products, such as vegetables and fruits, there are many standards to be defined. Important are 'standards of size, shape and colour' that emphasize the perfection and superiority of products in contemporary advertising in international trade (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006). To meet these high standards of perfection when it comes to fruits and vegetables pesticides are used, raising safety concerns about the chemical and biological contaminants. "These two emphases create contradictory pressures within the fruit and vegetable industry: efforts to produce cosmetic perfection by applying high levels of pesticides result in concern about toxic effects of residues" (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006:12). As producers are trying to meet the cosmetic standards for fresh produce through pesticides it might, besides creating concerns about food safety, also have a bad impact on environment.

These health concerns about food safety have lead amongst other reasons to formulate standards in pesticide-use in order to protect farm workers and environment. However, this has made it impossible for small-scale farmers to compete and make their fresh produce profitable. Larger companies can decide to outsource production to other countries where regulations on pesticide-use are not as strict as in e.g. Europe or the US, leading again to more reasoning for the global regulation and standardization of issues surrounding pesticide-use and food safety (Bingen, Busch et al. 2006).

Although this highly interconnected food economy is making its regulation highly complex, most of the larger chain supermarkets can have quite a big influence on production and make sure the products (and especially fresh produce) they sell are the best. As a result, products found in the supermarkets today are all standardized and look the same. People doing their daily groceries at these places get used to seeing identical looking vegetables and fruits. These perfect looking fresh foods give the impression to these consumers that any fruit or vegetables that look different (in shape, colour or size) are not good enough. As supermarkets strive to have the best produce in their shops, consumers get pickier in what they buy. Leading to more stress on the production-side to grow and produce only fruits that look perfect. As these larger transnational retailers have a big impact of the global food economy they can put pressure on producers to grow exactly what they think the contemporary consumer wants: perfect food. A large part of the produced fresh foods are now thrown away because they do not meet these high aesthetic standards, leaving the contemporary consumer with an illusion of what food should look like.

The need for food standards is immanent, as food production and consumption on a global scale brings along some risks, amongst them an important one; food safety. As the impact the nation state can have has decreased, private actors have taken up some of their roles in regulating the global food economy by developing food labels, standards and preforming risk assessments. In the jungle of standards that results of it, the production environment becomes more competitive as transnational retailers make more demands in the name of the consumer.

Quality definitions

As emphasized in the previous chapter, food standards are important criteria for good food in the contemporary world. More criteria for food can be defined by the consumer and they are partly interpersonal. Consumer groups and the choices they make in for the consumption of food can be analysed through their conceptualisation of quality. Thinking of the word quality gives the impression it is a measured parameter, an objectively defined 'degree of excellence'.

"The Oxford English Dictionary defines quality as a degree of excellence of something measured against other similar things; different attributes make something what it is. In the case of food, these attributes include parameters linked to health safety, nutrition, sensory/organoleptic characteristics (taste, colour, freshness, appearance, smell), process (traceability, biotechnology, organic) and extrinsic factors (price, brand, or advertising). Food quality is assembled through time (seasonality) and space (geographical origin)." (Viteri and Arce 2013:128)

However, the definition of quality is rather subjective as it requires knowledge about properties of food stuffs and skills to test the knowledge and this may differ from actor to actor. Quality is "purely a social construction of what people like" by judging "a physical reality based on measurable characteristics" (Hébert 2010). Some quality standards have a closer social

connection to food then others, as they are better informed about the geographies and biographies of the commodities (Cook and Crang 1996). In relation to consumer groups and their differing conceptualisations of quality we shall take a social interactionist approach, such as Vitiri and Arce do:

"A social interactionist approach argues that quality and quality standards cannot be exclusively understood in terms of objective factors associated with differentiated measurement and technical methods and the reduction of transaction costs; rather, such problems are rooted in processes of negotiations between the making and growth of quality and the assembly and growth of practices servicing food to segmented consumer markets where the supply and demand of fresh food is historically and geographically produced and known (quality) as contingent practices to actors. In other words, quality comprises the practice and activities of consumer linkages and groups making assertions of grievances and claims to a multiplicity of material quality demands" (Viteri and Arce 2013).

A social interactionist approach allows us to cope with the complexity of consumers and their often very personal conceptualisation of quality. Not every consumer has the opportunity to ponder and doubt about food quality. Consumers having the agency to do so, often belong to a certain socio-economic strata. The connection between organic shoppers and elite has been established, as this type of food often is more costly than 'normal' food. The development of a certain quality standard often at the same time creates an inequality. Modern food is equal to perfect food and quality standards are a way to ensure the perfection of food. As qualities are being defined, it also hints to inequalities, as the possibility of consumers unable to consume foods that meet those standards is there, as for example easily happens with organic food:

"In their role as consumers with high levels of disposable income and, unlike the vast majority of the rest of the population, able to afford the latest certified free-range poultry, local and organic produce, and sustainably harvested seafood, many of them may represent the cosmopolitan globalizing elites committed to hybridity and consumer oriented multiculturalism that [...] occupy the postmodern identity position within the identity space of modernity" (Nonini 2013).

Organic food is not accessible to many consumers as it frequently too expensive, developing an inequality to those who cannot afford it. These different types of qualities thus form different consumer groups, and some consumers are not able to consume the type of products of all groups.

Throughout this thesis we view food, in this case salmon, as Cook and Crang do in their article; "not only as placed cultural artefacts, but also as dis-placed materials and practices, inhabiting many times and spaces which far from being neatly bounded, bleed into and mutually constitute each other" (Cook and Crang 1996:131). He uses the concept of displacement to give the idea of a geographical and interconnected world where "cultural lives and economic processes are characterized not only by the points in space where they take and make place, but also by the movements to, from and between those points" (Cook and Crang 1996:138). When considering this in the process of food consumption this might provide an understanding of food consumption as local, but contextual; these local contexts are translated, reworked and constituted through the social connections to food commodities. "Where imagined and performed representations about 'origins', 'destinations' and forms of 'travel' surround these

networks' various flows; and where consumers (and other actors in food commodity systems) find themselves socially and culturally positioned, and socially and culturally position themselves, not so much through placed locations as in terms of their entanglements with these flows and representations" (Cook and Crang 1996:138).

The translating and reworking of food are actively and socially constructed by its consumers. These processes are not new phenomena to the construction of food, as the mixing of culinary and cultural boundaries goes way back, but are more likely to be noticed in the globalizing modernizing world we live in (Cook and Crang 1996). Much like food quality, people negotiate, translate and rework the many flows of knowledges, cultures and food commodities that enter their locality. Here they come into contact with these interrelated geographies that can become part of their daily food decision-making: E.g., using food as a way to construct identity through a particular way of consumption or handling (see chapter Conceptualizing consumers).

Food standards are set to ensure global food safety and certain 'quality standards' have been defined, however "consensus over local food quality is embedded within sets of situated social interactions. These interactions are associated with an arena in which negotiations over quality standards take place between different actors" (Viteri and Arce 2013:128). As different consumer groups from their definition of quality based on differing social interactions, quality becomes something very personal. Culinary habits and food culture too are negotiated in an arena of flows of knowledges, cultures and commodities and inform consumers' knowledge about the interrelated geographies of food consumption. What a consumer perceives to be of quality and food culture is related to his/her values, beliefs, idea of wellbeing and reality, which leads a world full of multiple and diversified perceptions of different consumers.

In this thesis we will apply this thinking about quality and the construction of food culture in a global world to the case of the salmon in both the Netherland and Chile. Firstly, we will explore the notion of consumer, as this term is rather one-sided. However, consumers are to be found in many different shapes, sizes and forms and are hard to put under the unifying definition of consumer. We will explore a new way of thinking about this actor in the act of consumption.

Conceptualizing consumers

The focus of agro-food studies has for a long time been predominantly on the production side of things. In the recent years an academic turn was made in the domains of food consumption and the associated politics "to culture and the cultural in post-structuralist and post-modernist social theory, which contested the dominant optic of production relations, workplace politics, and associated conceptualisations of power" (Goodman and DuPuis 2002:5). Although this development in the theoretical domain is a good start, much of the debate is still influenced by production-centred theoretical frameworks. Addressing this imbalance, new progressive food politics can be theorized and developed. At the foundation of this lies the definition of consumer that is at its centre. An ambiguous term that is just hard to put your finger on. The sociological dictionary explains a consumer as the following:

"The unit of microeconomic analysis on the demand side of the goods market. Analysis of consumer choice is the basis for deriving market demand, [savings behaviour, and labour-supply decisions]" (Calhoun 2002).

A production-centred Marxian perspective on the agro-food business might do well with this view of consumers. As it argues the locus of power is found in production. Consumers are passive, firstly because they "interact only in the non-political sphere of circulation/the market" and are unaware of inequalities of power (Goodman and DuPuis 2002). The consumer is portrayed as a microeconomic unit instead of an actor making choices based on his/her values and beliefs in search of wellbeing. In this light the definition of consumer needs to be rethought in order to strengthen theoretical contributions to the scientific dialogue.

Firstly, using the singular term of consumer is hard when talking about the vast array of different consumers who are living in different life worlds and are informed by different beliefs, values and life histories (Arce 1997) and striving for their wellbeing. Secondly, the term consumer hints to a person that can make a rational choice when buying commodities, however in reality this does not always fit. Choice might for some be abundant, but some might not have access to choice and others cannot gather the needed knowledge to make a choice; can consumers truly make a 'rational choice' and should we be base our research on this definition? We argue that there is a need to rethink the notion of consumer and to integrate the context related complexity of different 'consumers'.

Consuming actors

As argued earlier, the multiple realities of consumers and there social connection to food are able to provide us with a better insight in the multiple groups of consumers and their realities and ideas of modernity. Using the definition of consumer makes looking at 'inter-consumer characteristics' hard, as it is first of all hard to establish what is the 'normal' consumer. Perhaps on paper or an economic model it is easy to pinpoint the consumer, however in real life, it would be impossible to indicate a person who is a typical 'normal consumer'. For what characterizes these normal consumers? Well, passiveness for one according to Marxian perspective. We argue that in order to cope with the complexity of consumers, the first step is to acknowledge their capacities and capabilities and to start looking at the consumer as an actor.

Several authors have already made this step and terms like e.g. the consumer-citizen have already been used to characterize the 'consumer' differently (Sherwood, Arce et al. 2013). However, for this thesis we do not focus on the act of buying commodities or lean toward political action as the consumer-citizen hints to. This thesis focuses on people in the act of consuming and their reasoning and beliefs behind it. In order to take a step away from the 'typical' definition of consumer and to be able to fit the aim of the thesis, we want to use the term 'consuming actor'. The term of consuming actor allows us to focus on "actors' alternative and sometimes conflictive arrangement and rearrangement of objects" (Arce 1997). Analysing what characterizes their choices, we are able to make certain groups of consumers that have similar beliefs and values when it comes to the consumption of food. "The consumption process is organized around the individual's practices of necessity and desire" (Arce 1997:183). In this thesis we shall try and categorize these consuming actors by the formulation of 'good food' and 'food quality', even though they possibly have rather differing life worlds. Even though categorization is nearly impossible, as actors differ tremendously and are hardly put into a certain frame, for future theoretical purposes we will attempt to do so. As even several categorization is a step away from the now uniform 'consumer' that is predominant in theoretical contributions.

Taking this new conceptualisation a step further we argue that consumption is a part of an actor's identity formation. Again, countering the argument of consumers being passive, consuming actors are actively engaged in the construction of their identity and wellbeing through food consumption, taking departure of Arce's point of view (1997):

"The movement of [food] objects, furthermore, creates 'trails' between social relationships, organizational linkages and networks of values. These trails, interests and networks become trajectories in the course of time, constructing diverse pragmatic views of the world which orient people's consumption practices. These views of the world establish processes of social differentiation and taste which, in their turn, can become signs and symbols with which to interpret the social order." (Arce 1997:183)

In line of this thought Bourdieu's 'habitus' helps recognizing 'high' and 'popular' culture through the social practice of consumption, but also 'common' conceptions of classes. Although Bourdieu does not focus on what actors might do or create with the food objects they choose, his work emphasizes "the importance of consumption in processes of social differentiation" (Arce 1997:184). "We need to focus on the varieties of connections and linkages that social actors have with objects in the conflictive global context of the contemporary world" (Arce 1997:184).

This will allow us to research manifestations of diverse consumption practices in attempt to study consumers differing approaches to modern food. As Arce neatly sums up: "We need to generate new forms of representing globally contested realities, objects, and people" (Arce 1997:184).

The consuming actor is an attempt to acknowledge the agency, diversity and complexity of different 'consumers' that participate in the global food economy, all having different conceptualisations of what they consider to be food and how they choose food. Consumption can be viewed as a part of the active construction of identity and wellbeing by a consuming actor, as food commodities leave social 'trails' which construct a actors view of the world and further steer their practices of consumption. We shall refer to the dominant food system as 'normal', thus actors consuming modern food will be so to say the norm. In this light we are able to identify counter-tendencies and perhaps even movements as they form different notions of quality, food and health according to different values, realities and modernities.

Global tastes

With a multiplicity of different consumers all over the world, having the agency to decide what food they like and what not, we now turn to the word taste. Quality might be regarded in food policies as an objective way of looking at food; tastes have always been looked at as the subjective characterisation of one's idea of good food. The dictionary shows a similar conceptualization of the word taste; conceptualizing taste as a subjective standard:

Taste: [noun]

- 1. The sensation of flavour perceived in the mouth and throat on contact with a substance
- 2. A person's liking for particular flavours
- 3. The ability to discern what is of good quality or a high aesthetic standard³

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³ http://oxforddictionaries.com/

In the definition the dictionary provides we see taste being an individual property, something that is linked to flavours and sensations. Secondly, taste is used as a tool to distinguish foods of good quality, pointing to the diversity of different quality conceptualisations consumers might have.

However Gronow argues that in the sociology of taste it is "reasonable to claim both that modern consumers make their choices on their own, often free from both physical and social constraints, following their personal wishes and whims, and that there are nevertheless some (semi-)objective aesthetic schemes, codes or guidelines of taste which help us to evaluate and choose specific objects of consumption" (Gronow 2004:45). In other words, even taste is a negotiation of (semi-)objective standards that are able to fluctuate from fashion and global tastes to personal values, needs and ideas of wellbeing. These (semi-)objective standards are partially socially constructed and negotiated while taking commercial standards into account, able to reflect local, national or global trends in tastes.

The idea of one's taste is central in this thesis and how this taste has been formed by a particular consumer. However, as Gronow indicates, some 'tastes' or pallets are becoming increasingly popular around the world, partially influencing one another (2004). Branded in the social world as being good or of a high standard, they are the foundation for a global taste. Foods like pasta, pizza, and hamburgers for example are becoming globally liked foods, although with their local variations. When it comes to foods and tastes, fashion is a topic that has not received much attention in scientific literature as of yet.

In this thesis we take an orientation that puts global taste as a subjective standard that is able to build the foundation for food fashion central. Taking up the case of the salmon we shall shed light upon the Chilean and the Dutch actor consuming salmon. The global force of a fashionable taste for salmon has generated a particular dynamic to explore and exploit the seas, but also to look for the incorporation of new places to supply salmon from. In Chile it has led to the development of aquaculture for salmon and eventually the end of some other fishes. What also makes studying of these global forces of taste interesting is its ability to generate dramatic changes in how market places are operating today.

Having this focus on a global taste central makes this thesis concentrates on specific singularities of the plural globalities and its different forms: How people experience salmon, but also how people experience the globally fashionable sushi. We will explore different definitions of quality based upon actors' differing realities, values and search for wellbeing, resulting in their daily decision-making when it comes to food.

Problem statement

Through processes of globalisation, commoditisation and ideas of modernity the social connection to food in the daily lives of some consumer groups is transforming. A strong social connection to food can help to prevent obesity, malnutrition and food scares, which are increasingly pressing issues on a global scale. In this thesis we will look at the manifestations of the social connections and to food and what this means for consumer groups. Within these groups we will analyse what this does to the conceptualisation of food and quality.

More insight into the manifestations of social connections allows for a different conceptualisation of the food network and perhaps leads to new future solutions. A better understanding of how people form judgements about food and handle them, forces us to rethink the basic understandings of what we consider to be food. Secondly, a new view upon the consumer debate can strengthen theoretical contributions, by being able to cope with the complexity and diversity of consuming actors.

Research questions

Applying this problem statement to the case of salmon in both the Netherlands and Chile allows for the following research questions and corresponding sub questions to be formulated:

General research question

What are manifestations of quality and social connections between consumers and the salmon in food realities in the Netherlands and the south of Chile?

Sub research questions

- How important is salmon in daily eating practices of the consuming actor in the Netherlands and the south of Chile?
- What different consumer groups and their social connections to food can be indicated in the case of salmon in the Netherlands and the south of Chile?
- What does the definition of quality mean for food decision making in different consumer groups in the case of salmon in the Netherlands and the south of Chile?
- How do consuming actors' countertending food realities fit into the contemporary dominant food reality?

The first sub question acts more as a descriptive question, as it aims to find out what social significance salmon has in the country: Looking at how national history and culture have influenced eating practices when it comes to salmon. The following sub questions are formulated as explorative and theoretically orientated research questions. They are aiming to establish a better understanding of people's eating practices and the decision-making that happens prior to eating.

Methodology

Through ethnography of the construction of food data was gathered for this thesis. As a methodological standpoint this thesis adopts an actor-oriented approach to research the social connection between consumer and salmon. This approach allows us to focus on different social worlds and their interfaces (Long 2001). Specific cases of food production and the interaction with the larger global context are important to study as this can provide an understanding of how, in specific networks of food production and consumption, they are defined and contextualized. Preferably allowing us "to incorporate the social life of commodities and see how they are constituted through actor's social practices, everyday experiences and actions" (Arce and Marsden 1993). By acknowledging the different life-worlds of these consuming actors we can analyse their experience and conceptualisation of food. As Arce and Long argue: "An anthropology of development must be multi-vocal, multi-sited, but also increasingly concerned with people's counter-tendencies to modernity" (Arce 1997; 2000:26).

Therefore we have selected two different sites surrounding the case of the salmon. Firstly, there is the case in the south of Chile where salmon aquaculture is booming and secondly we find ourselves in the Netherlands, were salmon fishing used to be possible in the rivers. As these two sites provide differing cultures, values, beliefs, life worlds and life histories, they can provide a good insight into the manifestations of the social connection to salmon. Also, as emphasized above, counter-tendencies will be a main focus, as they can provide an understanding of how people manage to translate and rework modern food in a local-global context.

Fieldwork

The methodological approaches described above required certain methods of data collection. Attempting to get detailed information about the cases necessitated a mix of participation and observation, interviewing and document analysis. Balancing these information sources will allow us to get relevant information that is able to cope with the complexity of the situation. Exactly what methods where used in the different case-sites is explained more detailed in the chapter of 'Multi-sited research' where we explore the case-sites in depth.

Increasingly available are documentaries and especially when it comes to the case of the salmon and fish in general. Documentaries and videos concerning the topic allow us to investigate how most people are informed about the topics this thesis is about, as visual media play a large role in contemporary society.

The fieldwork was carried out in two periods in two different locations. Firstly over a time period of 4 months, data was collected in Valdivia, Chile. From the beginning of October to the beginning of February various data collection methods were used to gather the needed information. After returning to the Netherlands, data was collected mostly in the area of Wageningen, but also in several other Dutch regions, spread over the months of March to July.

The next chapter will start by focussing on the commodity we shall use as a vehicle for the argument made in this thesis: the salmon. Starting with an explanation of the increase of use in marine resources and its regulation, we end with some specific information about salmon.

Exploring the seas

For ages one of the main human food sources has been fish. Up until the nineteenth century when modern times where upon society, fish was a luxury food only to be eaten by the upper-class. Fish became a product of the commons through industrialization, when new techniques for fishing where developed for the intensification and perfection of this practice (Bjørndal, Knapp et al. 2003). Fish has now become food for the majority of the world's population. Globally about 3.0 billion mouths are fed with about 20% of their needed protein intake by eating fish (FAO 2012). However, today there are multiple issues surrounding this important resource, like environmental and health concerns.

In this chapter we explore some issues surrounding this commodity. Firstly, we look at the property issues that arise out of the very nature of the fish and its habitat. The ocean and its resources are common pool resources, making it all the more difficult to form policies to regulate and conserve it. Following we continue with the exploitation of the sea and the crimes of the ocean. This leads to the next section of industrialization of the ocean and its effects, highlighted by the case of the Bluefin tuna that is nearing extinction. Fourthly we turn to the human attempt to domesticate fishes by farming them. This all providing the foundation to end with the case-fish of this thesis: the salmon. By looking at global catch, production and consumption levels we are able to place the salmon in the context of contemporary fish consumption and production.

Fluid resources

Fish is a mayor global food source, not surprisingly many people want to 'share' in the workload and the livelihood that can be made of it. However, as the sea is its habitat, it is a resource that is hard to own, as they migrate through the ocean crossing boundaries in the process. The mobility of the fish makes a fluid resource which brings property issues. Global awareness about the state of fish in the world's oceans have stimulated the debate on this common pool resource (Agrawal 2003).

"Common pool resources (CPRs) include natural and human-constructed resources in which (i) exclusion of beneficiaries through physical and institutional means is especially costly, and (ii) exploitation by one user reduces resource availability for others. These two characteristics – difficulty of exclusion and tractability – create potential CPR dilemmas in which people following their own short-term interests produce outcomes that are not in anyone's long-term interest." (Ostrom and Et al. 1999:278)

The number of actors fishing from this common pool resource called the ocean is increasing thanks to processes of globalisation. Hardin's thesis (1968) "tragedy of the commons" has driven the debate on sustainable management of CPRs as he predicted its overexploitation (Steins and Edwards 1999). Issues of overfishing, decreasing biodiversity, pollution and destruction are the main concern in this debate and underline the need for a global intervention. "Governing fisheries, however, is complicated essentially because fisheries' governance regimes have until recently been based on the concept of fish as an 'open resource'", until 1977 when exclusive economic zones (EEZ) were established and this turned several fishing grounds into "unrestricted"

'commons' areas, and the ownership of a fish is not allocated until the moment of capture" (Oosterveer 2008:797). Only in 1992 concrete guidelines were developed during the UN conference on Environment and Development to protect the existing fish stocks. This resulted in the FAO (voluntary) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995) and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (1995). However, implementation of these guidelines tends to vary from government to government, due to commitment or lack of capacity (Oosterveer 2008). "The solution [...] is to specify property rights in such a way as to limit access, provide market incentives for conservation, and encourage exit from overcapitalized industries" (Mansfield 2004). Thus, quotas have been established to manage over 80 fish species globally. These Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) are used to divide the allowed – sustainable – catch among fishing actors. This can be done at an international level – establishing a national quota – or within a country among fisheries.

"What makes ITQs different – and what make them a dimension of particularly neoliberal approaches to fisheries governance – is that they marketize allocation of fish catch. Individual fishers receive an initial quota allocation that represents a percentage of the total catch. Each year thereafter, fishers can then either catch that amount, or lease or sell their quota allocation to other fishers." (Mansfield 2004:320)

However Mansfield notes that this form of regulation is a rather 'peculiar' form of neoliberalism as it requires strong involvement of the state and secondly includes access to fish to a small group of actors. The sales of these quotas create a market for access and so many nations fish within boundaries of another nation by the hand of Individual Transferable Quotas (Mansfield 2004).

Exploiting the seas

The regulation and control of these quotas is a bigger fish to fry, as many overfish their quotas. Recently Interpol launched 'Project Scale'; an initiative to "detect supress and combat fisheries crime" (Interpol 2013). They point to rapid overfishing and depletion of the ocean — that is making "valuable species" go extinct — as a crime. Arguing that this "valuable commodity" is now the centre of some organized crime networks leading to a wide range of crimes;

"Fisheries crime undermines resource conservation; threatens food security and livelihoods; destabilizes vulnerable coastal regions such as West Africa due to limited law enforcement capabilities; and is linked to other serious crimes including money laundering, fraud, human trafficking and drug trafficking." (Interpol 2013:1)

Illegal fishing is happening on a global scale, even though quotas are set and regulations are made. Exactly to what extent it is happening is unclear; the estimation of the level of illegal fishing is difficult as much goes unreported (Agnew, Pearce et al. 2009). Arguably the fines appointed for overfishing do not outweigh the economic gains for fisheries to stop engaging in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Some fisheries even internalise the fines into their cost-benefit calculations; the price of the vessel is usually less than the profit of the catch, hence "abandoning that vessel once apprehension occurs is not a major problem for most operators" (Sumaila, Alder et al. 2006:701). As quotas have been set to regulate the world of fisheries, there are actors disregarding these regulations, as there are large sums of money to gain. This is just a small part of the crimes behind the scenes of fishing; however, it indicates the scale and difficulty of governance and control that has now become part of this business. Fish is

highly nutritious, profitable, exploitable, and – as we are increasingly becoming aware off – depletable.

Industrializing the seas

In the world of fisheries modern technologies are predominantly present too, as the oceans are efficiently industrialized by the help of state-of-the-art fishing technologies. The ocean is now being fished at an alarming rate. A number of organisations, mostly concerned with environmental impact, have dedicated themselves to creating awareness about overfishing and making it sustainable. Researchers in the documentary 'The end of the line' argue that if the fishing industry continues current practices the fish will be 'gone' by 2048⁴. Although government officials have stated repeatedly overfishing should be stopped as the fish stock is running out, it is still happening on a rather large scale.

"The fishing process became industrialized in the early nineteenth century when English fishers started operating steam trawlers, soon rendered more effective by power winches and, after the First World War, diesel engines. The aftermath of the Second World War added another 'peace dividend' to the industrialization of fishing: freezer trawlers, radar and acoustic fish finders. The fleets of the Northern Hemisphere were ready to take on the world." (Pauly, Christensen et al. 2002:689)

The policy management of these fleets was roughly described in the previous sections. However, this does not guarantee sustainable fishing practices. Biologists argue that the currently appointed exclusive economic zones (EEZ) for fishing of maritime countries cover most 'shelf' territories and thus cannot foster sustainable fisheries; "shelves generate the biological reproduction supporting over 90% of global fish catches" (Pauly, Christensen et al. 2002:693). When a country cannot fully utilize the fisheries resources in this EEZ it is obliged to make way for the fleet of other countries. Combining this with "eagerness for foreign exchange, political pressure and illegal fishing, [it] has led to all of the world's shelves being trawled for bottom fish, purse-seined for pelagic fishes and illuminated to attract and catch squid" (Pauly, Christensen et al. 2002:693). In order to replenish our oceans we need to leave approximately 35% of these shelved areas to recover, according to several biologists. The current regulatory system and the disregarding of it are making this a percentage that is hard to reach.

Secondly, problems arise due to the by-catch of these industrial fishing fleets. As the highly efficient trawlers scoop the bottom of the ocean, they haul in everything that is in their path. The same goes for purse-seine vessels, which often empty a whole section of the sea by drawing a large net in a circle and then closing it from the bottom. The regulations for this by-catch and other unwanted caught species are not well covered when it comes to the high seas (Sumaila, Alder et al. 2006). About "2.3 million tons of fish [is] discarded in the North Atlantic and the North Sea each year; 40 to 60% of all fish caught in Europe are discarded — either because they are the wrong size, species, or because of the ill-governed European quota system" (Stuart 2009). Scientists and biologists are now warning the nation leaders for the disappearance of the sharks; an animal at the top of the food web and an important link in the ecological system. Often caught as by-catch they are often discarded dead back into the sea. The valuable and edible by-catch is usually sold along with the actual target fish, as this sometimes harvests

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⁴ Documentary 'The End of the Line – Where have all the fish gone' by director R. Murray.

unexpected and rare fish species that are appreciated in the culinary world, making by-catch lesser of a problem to most of the fishermen.

Dutch fishermen see different trends in the overfishing of the sea. Dutch fishermen fishing offshore at the province of Zeeland account for the opposite:

"'Less seabed disturbance! Less seabed disturbance!' is what those environmental organisations say. However, we have seen the fish stock increase after the 1950ies. So perhaps it is not as bad as they say!" (Personal field notes 2013).

More environmentally friendly methods have been developed that are able to keep fishermen's livelihoods intact, like the *pulskor*⁵. However, only forty licenses have been given in the Netherlands to use this new system to the fishermen's discontent. Although these environmental benefits are found in a lowered carbon dioxide emission, they have not proven to be in any way better for the fish stock in the sea. However, the experiences of fishermen, like that of the fishermen in Zeeland, do not line up with experiences of biologists, who argue that the sea is better of when we stop fishing all together.

To conclude, although highly efficient, the industrial fisheries may prove disastrous for fish species and the oceans sensitive ecosystem, as biologists have predicted. In the meantime policies are meant to mediate between the advice of these marine biologists, demands of the market and the livelihoods of the fishermen. We will explore the case of a fish species that is said to go extinct if current fishing practices do not change; the tuna. A fish that is highly commoditized and wanted across the globe thanks to fashionable flows of food.

On the verge of extinction; the tuna

The majestic Bluefin tuna, the king of the fish; it can grow to be over 2.5m long and weigh 250kg. Both admired for its incredible power and loved for its raw, fatty taste. Thanks to the red meat of the tuna, sushi has made an entrance into most restaurants, supermarkets and kitchens. In the 1970ies the eating of raw fish was considered to be strange — and for some still is — however as health discourse took over the world, so did the lean and healthy sushi (Bestor 2000). Even though it was at first regarded as a luxury food for special occasions, it soon became affordable (Kurokura, Takagi et al. 2012). Now sushi bars are found in almost any capitol on our globe, either for take-away or a fancy dinner: sushi is taking over the world.

Thanks to its immense popularity the market for tuna is now booming and recently a record price of 155 million yen (\$1.7 million) was paid for a 222kg tuna. Surprisingly this does not necessarily relate to its size or meat quality, but more to publicity and setting a tone for the coming business year⁶. In the Mediterranean area tuna are now caught and raised in a net-pen, by the hundreds. All export quality tuna caught – raised or produced – end up on the world's largest fish market: Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market (Bestor 2000). From this point on they are inspected, auctioned, bought and transported all over the world, in order to most likely be turned into sushi.

There is some concern however; Bluefin tuna has become a highly profitable commodity and this is reflected in its diminishing population numbers. The western Atlantic Bluefin has

24

⁵ New type of trawler that uses electric pulses to scare up and numb fishes. It is said to be more environmentally friendly. However, this has not been proven yet, as they are relatively new to the Dutch fisheries

⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/news: "Japan blue-fin tuna fetches record \$1.7m"

"declined to a fifth of its former biomass" (Porch 2005:363) and the number of spawning females has decreased in the Mediterranean area (Medina, Abascal et al. 2002). At the current rate of tuna fishing the wild population of tuna is unable to recover and will soon go extinct. Many biologists are convinced that the Bluefin tuna will go extinct in the years to come and needs to be regulated strictly – or even not fished at all. This scientific warning is acted upon to some extent as the quota for Bluefin tuna has gone down slightly after an international conservation conference. Agreeing to cut the quota from 13,500 to 12,900 metric tons annually, making a 4% reduction (Murray 2009). Not enough according to environmental science. What the future of this king of fish and the sushi made of it will be is yet to be seen.

Many consumers and restaurants have taken up their ethical standpoint by refusing to eat, prepare or sell tuna. Although tuna consumption might be rather stable in Japan; consumption of this red, fatty fish is becoming increasingly popular on the rest of the globe, thus increasing the demand of this scarce commodity. Even at the local sushi restaurant in Wageningen the owner accounted to have had some level of repression from a local when it came to them selling tuna-sushi:

"Somebody living on the other side of the road, I think it was an elderly person, had left a note in our mailbox. It said something like 'Tuna is a protected animal species. Stop sushi.' It was a little unclear. ... But I think tuna is not really protected ... Everybody can eat tuna, in my opinion. In Japan they do have some protected fishes, but here we don't. Otherwise you could not buy them." (Personal field notes 2013)

Although what the owner of the Sushi restaurant in Wageningen says sounds logic: If the fish would be protected, they would not sell it and you would not be able to buy it. However, this is untrue. Even though tuna is on the most endangered species lists and is highly regulated, it is still for sale and being eaten and sold on a massive scale.

The tuna seems a clear example of what happens when the fishing industry is highly modernized and its regulation is complex and complicated, but still cannot cope with the reality. One attempt to 'save' tuna, or rather sushi, is the farming of tuna⁸, although unsuccessful so far. As within the world of sushi, the farmed tuna is frowned upon and is said to have bad taste. The farming of fish species is efficient and on a large scale and can be compared to, for example, the beef industry. Attempting to preserve species or to continue consumption as it is? These fish that are constructed and produced will be explored in the following section.

Fish on land

The practice of aquaculture has a long history and remains of the cultivation of fish have been found spread all over the world and can be dated back several millennia. Although not as technologically advanced as it is currently, the practice of raising and selecting fish has been around for a long time (Beveridge and Little 2002). Contemporary aquaculture has managed to take some fish species out of the water and on land, as the hatching and growing facilities are based on land. Here by making the farmed fish a virtual version of its wild counterpart swimming the river and seas. The domestication of the fish reached full circle and humans can manipulate the life of the fish in such a way that they can produce standardized fish.

⁷ http://www.guardian.co.uk: "Bluefin tuna still largely unprotected as conservation conference ends"

⁸ http://www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific: "Farming endangered blue-fin tuna"

The technologies involved are high-tech as for example under water cameras are used to monitor the fishes and sensors measure the levels of oxygen, carbon dioxide and other relevant levels in the water. Aquaculture can be divided into three stages when it comes to salmon:

- 1) Hatchery and fresh water smolt-rearing facilities.
- 2) Sea water fish farms.
- 3) Processing plants for slaughtering and packaging. (Blanco Wells 2009)

The process starts by hatching the eggs, which is a delicate process and is often done on land in a controlled environment. The fingerlings are taken to either cages in the sea or inland facilities containing salty water, where they become smolts. In order to ensure a healthy fish – as they are in net pens by large numbers – the fish get antibiotics and are closely inspected for sea lice and if needed medication is given to the fish (Lien and Law 2011). Fish feed is chosen upon the needs of the fish and so they can grow the most in the least time. After the fishes reach a certain size they are brought to the processing plants where they are slaughtered and packaged at an incredibly fast rate. The natural stages that a wild salmon goes through are imitated in the farming process, by allowing the salmon to experience both sweet as salty water.

Wild vs. farmed

Exactly what makes this fish so different from its 'wild' version is something Lien & Law explore: In Norway the escaped farmed salmon are deemed as "alien and unwanted", even though they are "only 7 generations removed from their ancestors upriver" (2011). It is only after the aquaculture started farming salmon that 'wild' salmon was constructed, in order to distinguish the farmed salmon from the salmon favoured by anglers and fishermen. "Hence the term [wild] is relational, defined in contradistinction with domestication, and draws on the idea of wilderness" (Lien and Law 2011:74). The difference between the two is human interference as alien species in Norway include "improved, indigenous species that have spread in Norway" (Lien and Law 2011:79). The farmed salmon is thus an outlaw in Norwegian natural environment, as it is considered unnatural and harmful for the natural Norwegian environment.

The farming of fish thus creates a dichotomy of farmed and wild; one cultivated by humans and the other made by nature. A distinction that is important to many consumers for various reasons: Some might argue that farmed salmon are the preferred version, as this allows for the oceans to recuperate from overfishing. Others favour the wild fish, as they have the least human interference and are the closest to nature. The environmental issues that are present in the production processes of both versions are possible arguments to prefer one over the other by a consumer. All depending on what actor is consuming and what their conceptualisation of good food might be.

Aquaculture can be seen as a method "to bridge the gap between supply and demand" because of declining catch quotas and even potential of helping to 'feed the world' (Pauly, Christensen et al. 2002:693). Still, there are issues of sustainability in this form of fish produce.

"The idea makes commercial sense, as the farmed fish fetch a much higher market price than the fish ground up for fish meal (even though they may consist of species that are consumed by people, such as herring, sardine or mackerels, forming the bulk of the pelagic fishes). The point is that operations of this type, which are directed to wealthy consumers, use up much more fish flesh than they produce, and hence cannot replace capture fisheries, especially in developing countries, where very few can afford imported smoked salmon.

Indeed, this form of aquaculture represents another source of pressure on wild fish populations" (Pauly, Christensen et al. 2002:693)

The fish feed made for the aquaculture of larger fish is made out of small wild fish that are caught exclusively for the farming of fish. It takes approximately 5kg of sardines to produce 1kg of salmon; hence a large portion of the fish population in our ocean is caught to feed farmed fish. Also, containing large populations of captive fish makes them highly vulnerable for diseases and pollution, which can then contaminate the wild population with if they are in close proximity. The nutrients that are left in the water (fish faeces or fish feed) saturate the water leading to an imbalance in the local ecosystem (Bjørndal and Aarland 1999; Fundación Terram 2000; Blanco Wells 2009). Imbalances in the direct natural environment like the examples mentioned are issues the aquaculture is still struggling with.

The farming of fish is a technological milestone, as we have managed to make something on land that can only live in water. However, exactly this might make this type of fish unnatural to some consumers and therefore perhaps inedible: Being able to select particular characteristics that are wanted in a fish or even to alter some innate properties of the fish like gene modification. Until now we have explored the world of fisheries mostly in general, from now on we will focus exclusively on salmon.

Salmon

Making a case of the salmon, we shall introduce this type of fish and some of its consumption aspects. Salmon has been on our menus for quite a long time, as emphasized before. During earlier times food was used as a form of class distinction and salmon was perceived as luxurious and belonging to the higher sections of society. Thanks to aquaculture technologies it has become a more accessible product. Now available for a bargain, this fish has become popular on the daily menus of many consumers. An increasingly important health discourse and the discovery of the ω (omega) fats has made salmon a healthy and loved replacement for meat. As the ω -fats cannot be produced in the human body, but are essential for our cardiovascular system, health conscious consumers have fallen for this food form.

The aspects of the salmon and its consumption will be highlighted in this chapter, however firstly we turn to some numbers and figures of salmon capture and consumption to indicate on what scale this fish is eaten.

The global catch

To see what is happening on the salmon market we turn to the global catch of salmon. Firstly, we must note that the global catch is divided into two parts, since salmon is no longer solely caught in the wild. In the 1980ies aquaculture technologies developed and grew to have a significant market share in the total contemporary salmon production. We therefore distinguish between the capture and production of salmon. Secondly, when we talk about 'salmon', we are talking about a large group of *Salmonidae*; for there are six main salmon species which are being caught and every one of them has their own – geographical – natural habitat. These six are the Atlantic salmon, the Chinook salmon, the Sockeye salmon, the Pink salmon, the Chum salmon and the Coho salmon (Bjørndal and Aarland 1999).

Firstly, we will look at the global capture of salmon. This salmon would be referred to as wild, a definition used to distinguish this salmon from its cousin farmed in aquaculture. In the earlier period shown on the graph, salmon capture was concentrated in the Northern

hemisphere. Of the six salmon species there are three who standout in the figures: As can be seen in figure 3 these are the Pink salmon, Chum salmon and the Sockeye salmon. Of these three, the Pink and Sockeye salmon are the ones used most for human consumption. Production of the Chum salmon is least preferred, since it has a low market value.

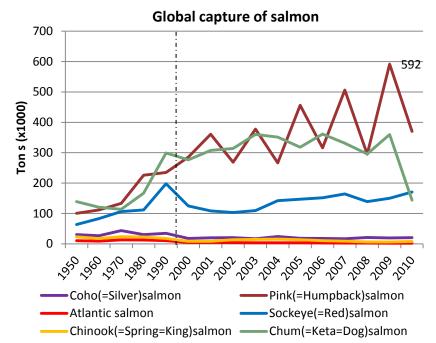


Figure 3 Global Capture production of salmon in tons from 1950 – 2010 (annual data from 2000 onwards, source: FAO Database)

The Pink salmon is the one commodity that stands out throughout the time period of 2000 to 2010. This fish can be caught naturally around the Northern parts of Europe and Russia. Its capture figures spiked to 592 thousand tons in 2009, but fell back just a year later. The lesser valued Chum salmon was caught around 360 thousand tons in the same year, being a fish that is caught on the other side of the world, around the North Pacific Ocean. The countries catching the most of the chum salmon are Japan, Russia, Canada and USA. The third significant catch is the sockeye salmon with its 144 thousand tons in capture volume it is a minor fraction compared to the pink and chum salmon. However, both of these last two species are at least in America – where most of their natural habitat is – listed as 'endangered species' (NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service 2012).

The second half of the global catch of salmon involves aquaculture, which has grown to become very efficient in salmon farming. In fact, when looking at the total production of all salmon species (2.3 million tons of salmon) aquaculture made up nearly 70% of the total produce. Starting with an upsurge of the salmon aquaculture during the 1980s, it has dominated the salmon market from 2000 onwards (Figure 4).

What can be seen in figure 4 is that the one salmon accounting for the highest percentage is the Atlantic salmon, whose original habitat lies in the Atlantic and the Barents Sea. This means that the Atlantic salmon can be found along the lines of Spain to Russia. Its natural habitat even stretches to the East coast of Canada, the Southern tip of Greenland and Iceland. Even though the Atlantic's spectacular adaptive skills, it accounted for 1.4 million tons in aquaculture production. Atlantic was produced most in aquaculture; about 62% of the grand total in the salmon produce – both wild and aquaculture. The second largest contributor to the total aquaculture production is the Coho salmon. About 180 thousand tons is a mere fraction of the farmed Atlantic salmon, but it is still more than the third most caught 'wild' Sockeye salmon.

The Coho salmon originates from the areas in the North Pacific Ocean, so surrounding Japan, Russia, Canada and the USA. However, this fish has been introduced in northern France, in the Great Lakes of America, Argentina and Chile in the 1970ies.

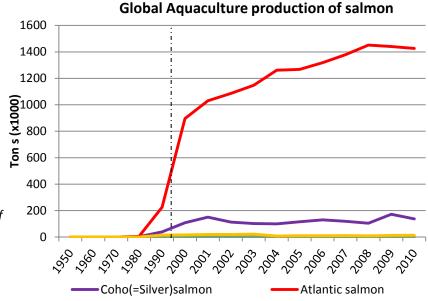


Figure 4 Global Aquaculture production of salmon in tons from 1950 – 2010 (annual data from 2000 onwards, source: FAO Database)

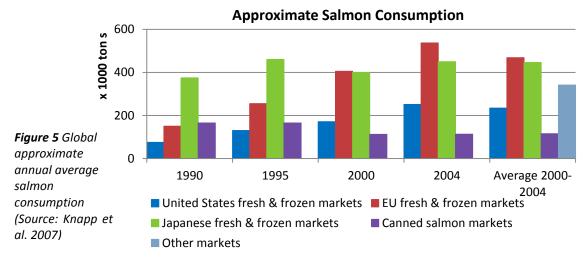
What we can conclude from these trends in salmon capture and production is that the total amount has increased dramatically in the last 10 years. Aquaculture of Atlantic salmon in particular has become very profitable and efficient with its highest production level of over 1.4 million tons. For future prospects we can expect an even higher production level of aquaculture salmon: even though Oceania did not take significantly part in the worlds salmon production until now, Australia is increasingly developing Atlantic salmon farms and New Zealand Chinook salmon farms (FAO 2012).

Global consumption

Now we turn from the global production of salmon to the consumption of this fish. Looking at the global production trends, suspected can be that the global consumption has increased dramatically too in the last decades and the years to come.

The figures about consumption are all from the report 'The Great Salmon Run: Competition between Wild and Farmed Salmon' (Knapp, Roheim et al. 2007). They emphasise that estimating the consumption level has a few challenges; the data about production and trade levels are often inconsistent; data needed to estimate consumption are often partially missing, re-exported products (salmon in Norway is often processed in Denmark and then re-exported) and varying product yields (the weight of a freshly harvested salmon is higher than that of one processed for consumption). Therefore the estimates they have made should be seen only as approximate.

The market for salmon consumption can be divided in five parts, according to Knapp (2007); United States fresh and frozen markets, EU fresh and frozen markets, Japanese fresh and frozen markets, the canned salmon markets, and other markets. In figure 5 we see the categories in salmon consumption and their approximate consumption levels. Interestingly, if we look at the Japanese fresh and frozen market, it stayed rather stable throughout the period of 1990 to 2004. Being a country with a high fish intake by nature makes the consumption level for the Japanese market stay stable around 420,000 tons annually.



A market area that has increased in the same period nearly 3.5 times is the European market for fresh and frozen salmon. Reaching over 500 thousand tons in 2004 makes it even bigger than the Japanese market. The U.S. markets have increased too; nearly as dramatically as the EU market, with an approximate 3.3 times increase. Still it is only half of the EU market in 2004. The canned salmon demand has slightly dropped ever since the fresh and frozen market started picking up thanks to new processing technologies and has come to a stable 110 thousand tons average from 2000 to 2004.

The last, 'other markets' is a sum of the markets in Canada, Russia, Eastern Europe, South America and the Far East. The only figure calculated of this category is the annual average for 2000 to 2004, since these numbers are less reliable. "They were calculated as residual volumes after subtracting volumes consumed in other markets and assumed yield losses in processing" (2007:83). But the estimation is that it is larger than the US market and smaller than the EU and Japanese market. However, this is a fast growing market category for farmed salmon. If the average of 2000-2004 of all the categories is added up, we come to a total of 1.6 million tons of salmon that is consumed annual globally. Comparing this figure with the average total global production of salmon in 2000 to 2004 leaves some questions. An average of 2 million salmon was globally produced in the period of 2000 to 2004. Some quick math will show that still 0.4 million tons of salmon has gone unconsumed. Where this fish has gone is the question, but is also easy answered. Most of the excess fish, of lesser quality, is made into fish meal and fish oil (FAO 2012). The aquaculture fish are mainly fed with fish feed based partly on fishmeal and fish oil.

However, we know that the production of salmon globally is about to increase, for in the year 2010 salmon production is already up to 2.2 million tons and about to increase even more due to development of more aquaculture in Oceania. The level of salmon consumption has increased alongside with salmon production however the exact figures are unknown.

Producing quality

A luxurious meal with salmon is made with quality fish. We can trace conceptualisations of quality salmon to the 'birth' of the salmon. Especially when producing a salmon in aquaculture and all stages of the fish's life are in the hands of the fish-farmer, the fish can be shaped to whatever concept of quality is defined. In a market in which salmon has become for the 'commons', the richer layer of society have made new definitions of what they find quality

salmon and the production has found ways to play in to that new definition. Lien and Law emphasize a characteristic of salmon important to Norwegian salmon farmers:

"Though traits such as disease resistance and flesh quality are also important, farmed salmon are bred with one main purpose: to put on weight." (Lien and Law 2011:76)

For the salmon farmer a good quality salmon is translated to a salmon that stays healthy and fattens quickly, as this is the type of salmon that is the most economically viable. In this stage of the salmon we see no senses coming to the fore to judge quality. The consumer however, will look at different traits of the salmon.

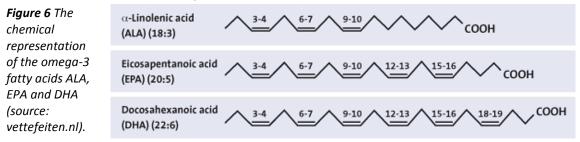
It is in the making of this commodity that there is a first need for a definition of quality. Quality is "purely a social construction of what people like" or "a physical reality based on measurable characteristics" as Hébert summarizes some views of quality (Hébert 2010:565). Being highly contextual and personal to an actor, there can be many conceptualisations of quality salmon. But concepts of quality need to be established in the salmon industry to guarantee a standardized product that can be sold. In the 'industry' quality will mostly refer to clear features of the fish. "Notably the absence of blemishes in the flesh like bruising or gaping, along with the harvesting and processing practices that help create this appearance, including fish chilling, bleeding and gentle handling" (Hébert 2010:565). From a producers' point of view, quality is found in the most profitable version of salmon; for the upper-class market. These conceptualisations of quality salmon involve no aspects of taste or nature, but fragility in order to create something luxurious.

The ω 's (omegas)

Medical and nutritional science contributed to the popularity of salmon by indicating the importance of the ω -fats and the presence of omega-3 in salmon. The health discursive West, aiming for eternal youth, eating cosmopolitan foods and idolizing the body type portrayed in magazines, embraced the salmon into their diets. Before the turn of the century red meats were immensely popular due to a growing middle-class in society. Red meats were the embodiment of this newly acquired status. However, the amount of red meats eaten at the time and the discovery of its correlation with cardiovascular diseases, made consumers wanting a new luxurious food. When the presence and impact of the omega-fats were made public, the consumption of this fish increased. This paradoxically lean, fatty fish was the cosmopolitan food of the time. We will explore the science of the omegas in order to see what the buzz is about.

The most well-known omega-3-fats are *alfa-linolenic* acid (ALA), *eicosapentanoic* acid (EPA) and *docosahexanoic* acid (DHA) (see figure 6). These fatty acids are essential for the body's metabolism to function, but cannot be produced from scratch by our bodies. The last two acids, EPA and DHA, are so called long chain polyunsaturated (LCP) fatty acids and are exclusively found in fish and seafood. Salmon is one of the most well-known containers of these LCP fatty acids. However, like humans, fish cannot produce these fatty acids themselves, for they extract it out of the algae they eat. This makes the fish a literal container of these omega fats. For medicinal and supplemental purposes, these LCP fatty acids are now also extracted out of cultivated algae. Eggs and meat can contain small amounts of the LCP fatty acids, depending on the amounts in the feed of the animals. ALA, the short chain of omega 3 can be found in other products than fish, for example rapeseed (canola) or linseed oil. Out of these shorter acid chains,

the LCP can be formed. Thus by eating sufficient ALA, the body can construct the much needed EPA and DHA fatty acids (Whitney and Rolfes 2008).



The Dutch nutritional centre - Voedingscentrum - recommends the eating of fish twice a week and at least one of those times, needs to be fatty fish⁸. This will supply the body with the recommended amount of fish fatty acids of 450mg a day. This all because there are "strong indications" that the consumption of ready EPA and DHA is important for the bodily functions and protection against cardiac and vascular diseases9. However, many health claims made by supplement and food producers are not scientifically sustained. The health benefit that the Dutch nutritional centre acknowledges is decreasing the risk of having a myocardial infarction, but no other significant health benefits. The harmful components found in some fatty fishes even outweigh the benefits of eating omega fats; salmon might be the container of omega-3 by consuming smaller fish that eat algae, they also build up on harmful components such as mercury. There are many other health claims made about omega-3 fats, such as: beneficial for pregnant women and babies; helps with the prevention of cancer and rheumatism; but also as having a positive effect on behavioural disorders, depression and dementia. However, none of these health claims have been confirmed until yet. There have even been study results showing an increasing incidence of prostate-cancer correlated to the consumption of ALA above the recommended level (Whitney and Rolfes 2008).

Health claims

Many health claims made are clearly unsubstantiated and many of the fish-oil supplements that can be found in supermarkets, pharmacies and drug-stores are the bearer of these; claiming to protect the taker of these supplements for dementia, heart-disease, cancer and even aging. The European commission requested the scientific opinion on a list of health claims made relating to DHA and EPA on some products that can be found on the market. Of the many claims only three were assessed with a "favourable outcome"; the effects of DHA/EPA on the maintenance of a normal brain function, the maintenance of normal vision and the maintenance of a normal cardiac function (efsa 2011). All other claims, such as beneficial for maternal health, mood enhancing and anti-inflammatory action, are rejected, mostly because claims have not been sufficiently defined.

Many consumers see omega-3 fatty acids and fatty fish as lifesavers, as magazines, papers and television shows portray them as such. They all interpret these health claims in different ways, probably because many of them are so unclearly defined. In reality, the health benefits are meagre and these fatty acids can also be found in products other than fish like salmon. Health discourse and the discovery of the omega-fats may have contributed to the popularity of salmon, but scientifically its contribution to human health stays vague.

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⁹ http://www.voedingscentrum.nl/encyclopedie/omega-3.aspx

This chapter has explored the business of fishing and the direction it is heading; the growing importance of fish farming and its consequences. Having a clearer image of salmon when it comes to production, consumption, types of quality and innate characteristics, we are heading towards the cases used in this thesis. In the next section we will look at case-specific data such as salmon production figures, fish consumption levels and general health data, to give context to the collected data.

Multi-sited research

As we explore the case of salmon as a vehicle for the social connection that consuming actors have to food, we will use two different sites. By investigating the different interpretations of salmon in these two differing sites we make this research multi-vocal and multi-sited (Arce 1997; Arce and Long 2000). Incorporating the social life of commodities we can explore how salmon as food is constituted through the practices, everyday experiences and actions of consumers.

In order to give context to the two chosen sites, Chile and the Netherlands, we will in this chapter look at the history of salmon in both countries and how general fish production and consumption are. Later we zoom in on some statistics of public health that are related to NCDs, as these are recognized as wealth-diseases on which salmon has a positive influence. The first section will focus on Chile and later we turn to the second site; the Netherlands.

Salmón Chileno; (re)creation

The first of our sites will be Chile, a country which has made the salmon aquaculture flourish within its Southern regions. Exactly how the salmon, a species not native to the Chilean waters, ended up being so successful is something we will explore in the next section.

Civilizing the environment

What exactly was the starting point of the introduction of salmon into the Chilean areas is unclear, however some clues are apparent. One reason might be the 'vacant ecological niches' that 'pro-western elites' indicated. "An idea that was widely spread in colonial regions of the southern hemisphere and it is still held by ecologists of naturalization" (Blanco Wells 2009:124). The introduction of salmon was held as a solution to these vacancies and also alleged to contribute to conservation of the fish. When salmon was introduced into the Chilean rivers, another motivation for the introduction of salmon developed: A country located on the Southern hemisphere that was the point of destination for many European immigrants made the introduction of the salmon interesting, as it would allow to recreate European angling practices. As local fish species lacked the 'aggressiveness' the salmon displayed when caught, this was another motivation to introduce this new species to the Chilean rivers (Blanco Wells 2009).

Many attempts to introduce the salmon were made and the first (recorded) attempt in Chile was in 1865. Although none of the attempts were truly successful, some salmon apparently survived as records and photos show increasing interests in angling in those specific areas. After many largely unsuccessful attempts being made the focus on the introduction of salmon into Chilean waters shifted away after 1943. Years later, in the late 1960s governmental agencies showed interest in "international cooperation to reintroduce salmon in the Chilean rivers this time derived from an interest in applying scientific knowledge in the construction of commercial fisheries based on ocean ranching" (Blanco Wells 2009:127). Some central actors in these new attempts were the Fishing and Hunting Division of the Chilean Agriculture and Livestock Service and the Japanese Cooperation.

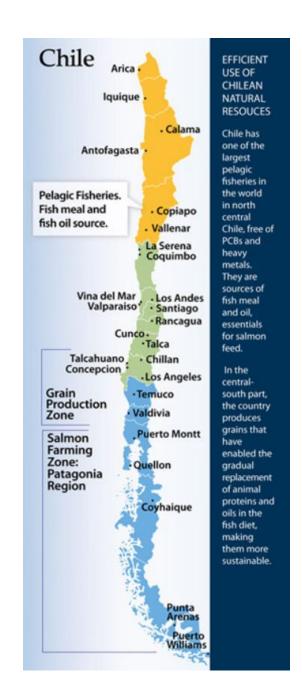


Figure 7 Map of Chile and different production zones in relation to the salmon industry. (Source: salmonfromchile.com)

"After examining many regions, jointly with Chilean technicians, Japanese experts decided to focus the attempts in Aysén, on the northwest of the Chilean Patagonia, a region regarded as having the most appropriate conditions for the release of four species of Pacific salmon: chum salmon, cherry salmon, coho salmon and pink salmon." (Blanco Wells 2009:127)

The aim of this attempt was to introduce a self-sustained population of salmon into the Southern regions of Chile, however this was "overshadowed by the rise of commercial fish farming" (Blanco Wells 2009:128). As the above targeted salmon ranching brought about issues of ownership of the fish, the more confined method of salmon farming became popular. The "versatile technology of confining fish into net-pens helped to settle this conundrum in favour of fish farming" (Blanco Wells 2009:128).

Nowadays, fish farms are found in many parts of the Southern regions (see figure 7). The high-tech technologies that have blown over from Norway and Japan have aided the Chilean fishermen in making a successful business in an atmosphere of neoliberal policies. However, a change in food preferences was the ultimate step to success:

"Farmed salmon and trout also matched some of the qualitative changes in consumers' behaviour in Europe, USA, and Japan that demanded food products whose attributed were adjusted to different lifestyles and the possibility of affording off-season supply" (Blanco Wells 2009:8)

As the 'Salmon and Trout Farmers Association' was brought into being in 1986, salmon farming had made its entrance into the Chilean economy: reaching a staggering 34% of the world's salmon production in 2008, second to Norway (44%).

The introduction of salmon was an attempt to fill up 'vacant' niches in the ecological system of that time which sparked angling practices in the 19th century emigrated Europeans, in an attempt to recreate their favourite hobby on the other side of the world. Salmon farming has ended up to be one of Chile's most important export activities. Exactly how successful is demonstrated by looking at some of the numbers and data found of the Chilean salmon capture, production, and consumption which will be done in the next paragraph 'Exploring numbers'. But firstly we will consider what the importance of export has done to the salmon on the Chilean market.

Export quality

Ever since Chile first ventured into the domestication of salmon, Chilean people have been coming into contact with this fish. Hence it appeared locally in cuisine and has grown out to become a fish that many Chileans resemble to be one of their 'identity-foods': Next to fruits and wine, Chile was also becoming known for their salmon, becoming part of the national exterior identity. Export quality is what the Chileans are after, when it comes to exporting salmon. Food safety standards of the designated export countries are monitored carefully in the fish as it is constructed in net pens in the fjords of Patagonia.

During an interview with the Chilean headquarters of an internationally based salmon-farm equipment manufacturer (to which we shall henceforth refer to as SEA) details about salmon on the national market came to light. The three men (one originating from Canada), who were managers within SEA shared some insights about both their personal opinion and of the salmon business.

"A couple of my friends, and I'm talking about people who live on the west coast of Canada... They've had *fresh* salmon in Canada... So what they are used to is probably fresh Canadian salmon. But when they're here in Chile, they eat salmon that has been frozen and they are saying how delicious it is" he said while smiling and continued: "...Implying that it is much better than they've had back home!" The three men start chuckling and another says: "But it is not the fish!" "No, maybe it is the atmosphere..." to which the other replies again: "And the Osorno volcano is lovely, the lake as well... and the wine is awesome! So the fish is the best that there is!" The men start laughing again. (Personal field notes 2013)

Chile has long since been a country for export and many authors have written about these Chilean global foods, such as grapes and increasingly salmon (Arce 1997; Barton 1998; Bjørndal 2002; Goldfrank 2005; Blanco Wells 2009; and more). What is typical in these exportnations is that the highest quality is send abroad, as it has the highest value, and the products deemed unfit as 'export quality' are kept within the national market. It is hard to notice this quality difference when buying salmon, as one of the manager at SEA also noted:

"We know where to get quality salmon. But what happens to the guy who doesn't know the characteristics of fresh fish and who goes to the fishermen at $Angelm\acute{o}^{10}$? When this guy sees a salmon, he asks for the price and buys it!" (Personal field notes 2013)

Food standards have become stricter due to processes of globalisation and can also be seen in the salmon industry. Salmon farms will have to obey to the food safety regulations of the country they are producing their salmon for. What is striking is that the salmon, this global food, appears less 'globally defined' than it seems. Although produced in Chile and exported to many different countries, none of the salmon are the same. Each country has different food safety regulations, but also preferences, when it comes to salmon. But it starts with the type of product that is produced, according to the demand of a certain buyer.

We sat in the air-conditioned conference room on the 15th floor, looking out over the harbour of Puerto Montt. The three managers that had taken the time for an interview with me, had just explained me the general function of the business and I started asking about different quality levels within the salmon industry: "The salmon farms have a sorting process when they are harvesting. After they have harvested the salmon, they sort them based on the appearance of the fish; skin, colour, and the average weight. They have some measures. ... But it all depends on the product. ... Perhaps today you are producing whole fish for Brazil, so then skin and weight are very important. When you sell whole fish, you want them to be big, like 5 or 6 kg's, and the skin needs to be clean and brilliant. However, when you are making, for example, portions without skin, you care most about the colour of the flesh, while this is not important when you are producing whole fish." (Personal field notes 2013)

Producing salmon is not just growing fishes in net pens. It means being able to deal with demands and preferences of export countries: Different characteristics are important for different salmon products. Within this products range there are still different quality levels and as the goal is to export quality only the best is good enough. Quality levels have long been used in the salmon business, a measure to indicate the value of the salmon and to what goal it is most appropriate for.

37

¹⁰ An artisanal market located next to the harbour in Puerto Montt: A place for local Chileans and tourists to get an affordable lunch, souvenirs or to buy fish. The three managers from SEA kept referring to the salmon from Angelmó to being 'unsafe'.

"There are four quality levels. First there is 'Premium', then 'Grade 1', third is 'Industrial' and last is 'National'." The three men chuckle a bit. As I respond a little surprised he clarifies: "Those are the names: Premium, Grade 1, Industrial and National. However, 'National' used to be called 'Rejected'". "Rejected?!" I ask him, even more bewildered. "Yes, some years ago, but now it is called 'National', because it is for the national market. They sell the entire fish, or they produce fillets, pulp or small pieces." (Personal field notes 2013)

Using quality levels to indicate different strata of the market is no surprise. As the highest quality, in this case 'Premium', is sold for the highest price to exclusive places. The 'Rejected' is turned into the category 'National' without making any changes to the production process. When looking up the word 'reject' in the Oxford dictionary we found the following:

Reject: [with object] dismiss as inadequate, unacceptable, or faulty. 11

Surprisingly, a commodity that was deemed as inadequate and unacceptable for export is now fit for the national market. The change in category transformed inadequate into quality which was more related to aesthetics than food safety or taste, as this was explained to me:

"Even though it is called 'rejected', it is still the same quality! The meat of the salmon is the same as that of the other salmon of the production batch. It is rejected for export, because for example, the colour is not homogenous. When the colour of the meat is not equal, it cannot be premium. The matter of the fact is, most Chilean people do not realize it and just buy the salmon here, in Chile: the nutrition facts are still the same. It is related to what you see and not to what you eat." (Personal field notes 2013)

Having the previously 'rejected' salmon now sold on the national Chilean market, is more of an aesthetic issue than taste or food safety. Allegedly, the salmon sold in the Chilean supermarket would in principle be the same as the exported 'Premium': Being raised in the same net pens, under the same conditions, receiving the same food and treatments. Still, none of these three managers bought salmon in the local supermarket; they all bought directly from the large producers where the 'Premium' was for sale.

Salmon is produced with a certain goal and country in mind: producing what they demand. It might be whole salmon, but it could also be fillets. Different characteristics, which are mostly aesthetic, are used in the sorting process. The highest quality is exported for the highest value and the lowest quality, commodities that do not live up to these aesthetic characteristics are left for the national market. Although it is still the same salmon as the 'prettier' version sold as premium, there is still a significant difference. This has to do with different food safety regulations in countries all over the world.

Companies have an export destination in mind, which will be sold for the highest profit; in that specific country there are specific demands. Every farm has its own approach using different timing and levels of antibiotics and colouring in the feeding. As some countries allow higher levels of antibiotics to be used than others, this gives some leeway for the farmers. Colouring is a more subjective demand, as consumers in Spain tend to prefer a lighter coloured salmon than consumers in Japan.

As we moved on the colour and taste of salmon the men explained the use of pigments: "The industry uses pigments, because of the needs of the market. For example: The

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¹¹ http://oxforddictionaries.com/

Japanese market is used to buying trout and coho with a high expression of colour." "And do all salmon farms in other countries add pigment? Like Norway, Scotland and Canada for example?" "Yes, of course! But none use the same amount. Every company has a different strategy!" (Personal field notes 2013)

So we end up with: Different companies, producing for different countries, using different pigment strategies and living up to different food safety regulations. Still the Chilean salmon farmers use the same methods and feeding as their colleagues abroad in salmon producing countries such as Norway, Scotland and Canada.

"The challenge for these salmon farmers is to reach the colour you need with the minimal amount of synthetic pigment, because this is very expensive! So the strategies are focussed on using the minimal quantity of pigment, but obtaining the expression of colour that they need..." I ask him: "The colour that the consumer of that particular market wants?" "Yes exactly." (Personal field notes 2013)

The difference lies in the strategies the Chilean salmon companies have. Not only regarding pigment, but also when it comes to the use of antibiotics, drugs that are needed to keep the fish healthy. A lack of consistency in regulations when it comes to antibiotics is giving room for more differentiation in the salmon business. The Quality manager explained this further:

"Producers have to reach a certain level of antibiotics in the salmon's muscles before it can be sold. There are limits of antibiotics for foreign markets. It is a little weird, but there are no limits for the Chilean market. It is a lack of consistency; in Germany for example they are worried about the levels of a specific antibiotic type..." A colleague added: "It is very distinct. Every market has its own limits; it all depends on the destination of the salmon. Furthermore it depends on the customer. Companies spend a lot of money on laboratory tests; to check if the salmon has the approved level of antibiotics in its flesh". (Personal field notes 2013)

As countries all have different approaches to the acceptance of antibiotics, salmon producers in Chile try to cater to the different needs of the respective markets. This leads to a highly stable and standardized product for one nation, as salmon farms stick to the limitations of antibiotics that are required. However, salmon that is deemed unfit for export, and is 'rejected', flows into the Chilean national market. As a result, salmon that reaches the national market can vary in food safety standards: As the 'rejected' salmon that was meant for Spain, as well as the 'rejected' salmon that was initially produced for Japan, end up on the Chilean market. All conform food safety regulations hence the fish is perfectly safe; however levels can differ on this national Chilean market.

Export quality is therefore meant only for the highest bidder and that is usually USA, somewhere in Europe or Japan. Salmon on the national market comes from the same farms, but does not qualify to aesthetic demands or has a standardized antibiotic level, unlike in many of the export countries. This same process is something that is reflected in other export products, such as fruits. Most Chilean consumers are not aware of what selection of salmon production ends up on the domestic marker. Certificates and marketing persuade people in buying salmon: The 'virgin Patagonian fjords' are one way to convince consumers to buy Chilean salmon. Like the following section found on the website from 'Salmon from Chile':

"What sets us apart from other salmon-farming countries: an abundant supply of pristine water. The Southern Patagonia region of Chile, an area that encompasses 40,000 km of coastline, includes fjords and bays that are fed from icy rivers that originate in the Andes Mountains." (Source: salmonfromchile.com)

Even though the salmon is a fish that is not native to Chile, they have managed to connect it to an idea of wild, natural and above all healthy food. Something produced in the pristine waters of the Patagonian fjords must be healthy and natural. The negative effects of aquaculture have been reviewed in the previous section 'Fish on land' and conclude on something slightly different than pristine and virgin. However, in marketing Chilean salmon this image is used nonetheless.

Salmon in Chile is meant for export and the production of salmon is based entirely on this export. Fulfilling the needs of these foreign demands is what the aim is, following different standards and wishes: Ending up with an inconsistent notion of quality in which rejected or 'National' flows into the domestic market.

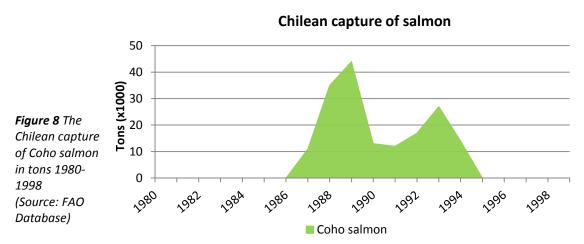
Now that we have a good idea of the history of the Chilean salmon industry and how the Chilean national market functions we go on to some numbers of production. Showing to what extent salmon is being produced in Chile and how this relates to the production and capture numbers of other salmon producing countries, but also levels of consumption.

Exploring numbers

In this section we will look at data and figures that can be found about salmon capture, production, consumption and public health in Chile. Most data is collected from online databases from the Food and Agricultural Organisation, the World Health Organization and some from the Dutch nutritional centre. We firstly turn to the reported numbers of salmon capture and production originating from Chile.

Salmon production in Chile

Chilean aquaculture salmon production has quite a large market share globally. This is especially interesting when we consider it is a species that is not native to the Southern hemisphere at all. However, thanks to southern Chile's climatic, marine and geological conditions it proved to be perfect for the salmon.



As emphasized before the first salmon was introduced into Chile in the 1970s. In the figures by the FAO we see this first attempt returning as there are records of the capture of coho salmon, minor but present. Multiple attempts to introduce the coho salmon into its fjords were

made and for a few years there was a yield of captured Coho salmon, as can be seen in figure 8, still it was a minor proportion of the Coho salmon capture globally at that time. This because, as explored before; it was an attempt to introduce salmon in Chile for purposes of salmon ranching and to fill vacant ecological niches.

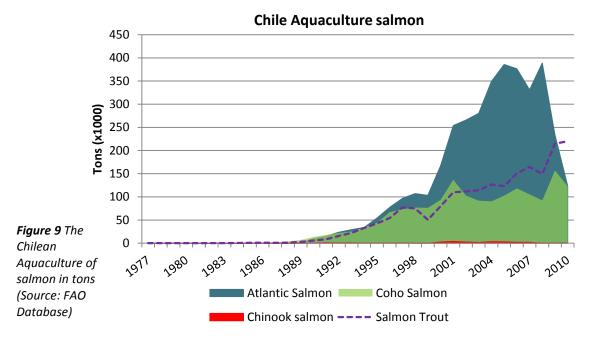
After 1994 no more salmon was caught wild in Chile. But around the time the capture of introduced wild coho came to a stop, the aquaculture in Chile took over. The Chilean aquaculture is concentrated in Patagonia and specifically around Puerto Montt and Chiloé Island in region X (Blanco Wells 2009). It has specialized into three fish species: Atlantic salmon, Coho salmon and salmon trout. There is also a small amount of Chinook salmon, but this is an insignificant amount (Bjørndal and Aarland 1999). As for Salmon trout (also named rainbow trout); it is of the genus salmon, but food wise considered being trout. We will explore some data of the salmon trout too, even though its categorization is a little ambiguous. However, during the research I have regarded the salmon trout as being associated closest with the trout instead of salmon.

Since Chile is located on the Southern hemisphere, its seasons are opposite to all the salmon producing countries of the Northern hemisphere. In the early years of the Chilean production this provided an advantage since the off-season of the American salmon industry overlapped with the harvesting season of the Coho in Chile. However, when the Atlantic salmon started to present a fair share of the salmon industry this advantage had gone, since the Atlantic salmon is harvested year round, unlike the coho salmon. Secondly, by exporting Coho salmon and Salmon trout mostly frozen, the advantage of an opposite harvesting season is weakened (Bjørndal and Aarland 1999).

The whole life cycle of the salmon has slowly been transferred to Chile, as in the early years of the aquaculture in Chile, they still relied heavily on salmon eggs from foreign suppliers (Bjørndal and Aarland 1999). From 1991 to 1994 the total egg import increased from 51 million to 114 million eggs. Import of eggs was mainly from the US, Scotland, Ireland and Norway. The import from foreign countries was quite sensitive to infectious diseases and regulations became a lot stricter in 1994. After 1996 the import of salmon eggs started to drop, when efforts were made to improve local reproducers. This would not only make the Chilean aquaculture more self-sufficient, but also less prone to infectious diseases from foreign salmon eggs. However, as Katz emphasises:

"Local specialists in salmon farming indicate that the production of salmon eggs and smolts has not been associated with a concomitant expansion of more basic research activities in fields such as biotechnology and ichthypathology (study of fish related diseases), both of crucial importance in salmon farming. This failure could be taken as an indication of the fact that the more knowledge-intensive areas of the global salmon-farming process are relatively less developed in Chile than in more mature developed countries. Visits of local entrepreneurs and technologists [...] to facilities for production, experimentation, and R&D in Norway, Scotland confirm that this is the case." (Katz 2006:205)

Even though attempts are being made, Chile still relies on foreign knowledge in its salmon farming business. By now a large part of the salmon eggs are produced in Chile, but still more than half are imported from other countries like Norway and Iceland.



As can be seen in figure 9, after Coho's wild adventure as a non-native species in Patagonia, its presence did not stop, instead now it was in aquaculture. This time in larger quantities than in the capture business as this went over 100 thousand tons. At the start of Coho aquaculture, the Atlantic salmon and later the Chinook salmon were also introduced to the aquaculture in Chile. The Atlantic turned out to be highly successful after 2000 onwards by nearly reaching 400 thousand tons. As emphasized before there is a minor Chinook salmon production, which can barely be seen in figure 9. The fourth production unit in the Chilean aquaculture is the Salmon trout or Rainbow trout. As is visible on this figure, its numbers have been rising sharply and are surpassing even the numbers of Coho production.

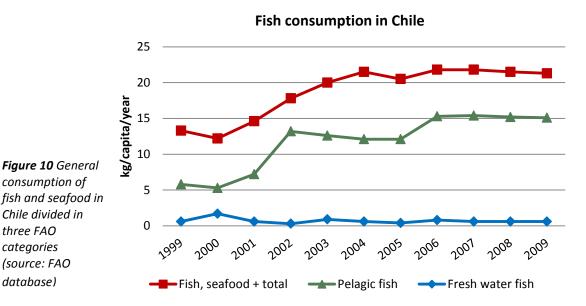
After 2007 production levels for all salmon species drop dramatically which was caused by an outbreak of the virus ISA in the Chilean aquaculture. Even though the numbers are not available, the word on the street is that the Chilean production is recovering fast and speeding to its previous high numbers of salmon production (Grunert 2002).

Fish consumption in Chile

First of all we take a look at the consumption of fish in Chile, doing so by the statistics of the FAO (2012). The FAO uses the food supply within a country to indicate a level of consumption. Food supply is used by the FAO as the basis for an estimation of food balance sheets, which is a comprehensive picture of a country's food supply pattern. Like the global consumption this would be more an estimate than an exact figure. However, figures solely on salmon are not available for Chile. Therefore we will have a look at some broad categories which give an indication of trends in consumption.

The broader categories we have used in figure 10 are 'Fish, seafood + total', 'pelagic fish' and 'Fresh water fish'. What is unclear is what category salmon is exactly a part of. However, salmon is a fish that is categorized in the domain of fresh water and diadromous fish, amongst with tilapia, trout and many other fish. However, in the data base diadromous fish are not mentioned. Therefore it is unclear if the category 'fresh water fish' includes or excludes salmon, since salmon belongs to the diadromous fish, which are fish that migrate between the sea and fresh water. The second category is pelagic fish, which entails all fish that swim in the upper

water level of the sea such as tuna, swordfish, mackerel and herring. In the third category of 'fish, seafood + total', the consumption of all fish and seafood are combined. Even though the categories are unclear, it gives us an indication of what the consumption level is in Chile, since it is measured in kg per capita per year.



In figure 10 we can see some levels of consumption in Chile. Overall we can see an increase of the total consumption of fish and seafood in Chile which has nearly doubled in the last 10 years (12.2 to 21.8). The same goes for the pelagic fish; this has nearly tripled in the time period of 1999 to 2009 (5.3 to 15.3). The amount of consumed fresh water fish is rather stable in Chile (0.6).

To conclude, we see an interesting rise in Pelagic fish of which salmon would logically be a part. This would mean that the Chilean public is getting more used to salmon in Chilean cuisine, thanks to the intensive salmon production in the country. Salmon allegedly is a healthy food since it is the source of omega 3, a compound that is beneficial for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Therefor we will have a short exploration of some public health figures, in order to see if this increase in healthy fish intake can be retraced to decreasing risk levels of NCD characteristics.

NCD-risk factors

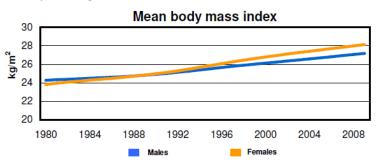
three FAO categories (source: FAO database)

To give an idea of the health status of the average Chilean, we turn to national health data and a country profile. By looking at figures such as BMI level, the level of food security and figures indicating the amount of NCD-related deaths, we are able to get an impression of what sort of country we are dealing with. The country profile and its related data are collected and processed by the WHO.

Chile is a long country located on the south-west side of Latin America, just west of the Andean mountain range. With a surface as big as 743,812km² it is about 18 times bigger than the Netherlands. Still they have about an equally big population - Chile is home to roughly 17.5 million people who are according to the WHO in the upper middle income group (2010). Chile is highly urbanized; about 88% of Chileans live in urbanized areas. The amount of NCD-related deaths comprises 83% of all deaths and up to 21% happens below the age of 60 (WHO 2009).

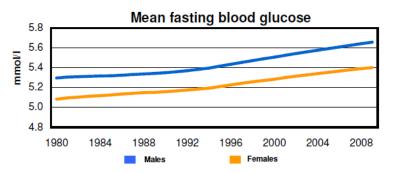
An upcoming middle class within a country is typified by a change in national average BMI. The WHO classifies a BMI higher than 25 as overweight and over 30 as obese. In 2008 an estimated 65% of the Chilean population was categorized as being overweight and of that amount another 29.4% as obese. Looking at the average BMI of Chile we can see an increase of approximately 4 BMI points in about 30 years (figure 11).

Figure 11 Mean body mass index of Chileans as a metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related deaths (source: WHO)



A rise can also be spotted in the mean fasting blood glucose levels from 1980 to 2008 (figure 12). Levels above 5.5 are considered to be an indication of prediabetes (Whitney and Rolfes 2008). Both the increasing of mean BMI and fasting blood glucose are metabolic risk factors for NCD-related deaths. One of the risk factors claiming the most NCD-deaths globally is a raised blood pressure and the WHO reports an increase of mean systolic blood pressure in Chilean men in the last 8 years even up to 134 mmHg (90-119 mmHg is the desired systolic blood pressure). The WHO report further indicates that about 50% of the Chilean population is suffering from raised cholesterol, although the average is stuck around 5.0 mmol/l, which is the desired level for total cholesterol.

Figure 12 Mean fasting blood glucose of Chileans as metabolic risk factor trend for NCD-related deaths (source: WHO)



These graphs and data indicate a country that has slowly rising levels of BMI, blood glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure levels, indicating the population is gaining weight and NCD-related risk factors are also increasing slowly. We can regard these as indications that diets are changing – perhaps higher in sugar and fats through processed foods – and physical activity levels are decreasing. When connecting this to the increase in pelagic fish intake, we cannot conclude that a higher intake in fish (and amongst them salmon) is beneficial for health and prevents NCD-related health factors.

After these general public health data we precede to the case site, where most of the data will was collected during the fieldwork. Unlike the data reviewed up till now in this chapter, the following information will be specified to Valdivia, where most of the empirical data was collected.

Case site

The data for the first case was gathered in Valdivia, a medium size town in Chile named after the Spanish founder Pedro de Valdivia. The city is located on the edge of the Patagonia, surrounded by rivers and lakes and is capital of the region *Los Ríos*. This was also the entry port for many German settlers who were given land in the 1950ies.



Figure 13 Map of the city of Valdivia, Chile (Source: Wikipedia)

Remarkable landscape is found in the whole of Chile as it is home to deserts, lakes, glaciers, volcanos and fjords, simultaneously indicating the location of Chile upon the earth crust; Valdivia has been struck by many earthquakes and some have been quite severe. In Darwin's journal he describes experiencing a larger earthquake in 1835. However, many years later in 1960 the most powerful earthquake yet recorded struck Valdivia, rating 9.5. This left much of the city in ruins and flooded for some time. Only during the rule of Pinochet in 1974 the city was politically and economically restated, hence much of the region and city is relatively new.

Even though approximately on the same height as Madrid, Spain, it has a rather different climate; temperate rainy climate with Mediterranean influences. With rivers and lakes all around (figure 12) the humidity is high year round. The city is split by the river Calle-Calle which disconnects Isla Teja from the main city. Many German immigrants settled on this small island of Valdivia. Isla Teja is also home to the university UACH and many restaurants and shops. Approximately 140.000 people live in the city of Valdivia. The presence of the university makes the city full of students, but also full with student facilities.

To conclude, the case-site Valdivia is a modern town, close to the sea. Home to many Chileans and exchange students and is influenced by European roots, from its foundation – Spanish – to arriving immigrants – German. Secondly it is on the edge of Patagonia and close to the heart of the salmon aquaculture (Puerto Montt).

Fieldwork

In Valdivia I have mainly collected data through conducting interviews and observing: Using contacts of my roommate and my in Valdivia located co-supervisor. Five intensive interviews were conducted with consuming actors, who also showed where they went about buying and picking salmon. I assisted one interviewee after buying salmon with making sushi.

Observations were carried out in several restaurants in Valdivia and in most of these restaurants interviews were held and food was sampled by me. Secondly, observations were done at the fluvial market accompanied by some semi-structured interviews.

During my time in Chile it proved unable to visit an actual salmon farm; however I did get an extensive interview with some managers of a salmon farm equipment manufacturer located in Puerto Montt. This also provided detailed information about the salmon industry and how they go about producing salmon. However, during a trip to Chiloé I did observe the industry, albeit from the shore line. The boats, net pens and works around the salmon farm combined with the interview with the managers at the equipment manufacturer have provided a clear idea and image of the salmon industry in Chile.

Lastly, as I had a restricted ability to interview on the streets, because of my limited Spanish, I interviewed mostly contacts from people I got to know. Hence most people interviewed are somehow connected to the university. Some short conversations in collectivodrives, at the market, the restaurant and anywhere I came across people willing to shortly talk about salmon, gave me a general idea of how salmon is regarded in the area of Valdivia.

In this chapter we have explored the history of salmon aquaculture and its present state. Consumptions levels of fish and national health data were used to paint a picture of the Chilean people and in the last section we shortly reviewed the precise site of the case, Valdivia. In the following chapter we will review approximately the same topics for the second case in this thesis; Wageningen, the Netherlands.

Nederlandse Zalm; what was once lost

A second case site was chosen in order to look at multiple interpretations in the case of the salmon. This second location was Wageningen in the Netherlands. The next section is dedicated to an exploration of some case-related information. We start by exploring the history of the salmon in the Netherlands, followed up by numbers of fish consumption and non-communicable disease-related risk factors, as fish — and salmon in particular — are said to have a positive influence in preventing these risk factors. Lastly we try to paint a picture of Wageningen itself, in order to give some more context to the consuming actors and the collected data.

History of salmon in the Netherlands

In the middle of the nineteenth century the Atlantic salmon were common and in abundance in the Rhine River which goes from the East to West Holland. At that point in time they provided "a basis for good valuable fisheries". Salmon was in fact so abundant in the rivers, that word goes that a law back in the days stated, an employee could only serve salmon once a week to his workers. At this point in time, salmon had gone beyond the point of luxury and was regarded as food for workers.

However, the Atlantic salmon disappeared at some point in time, because of "the construction of dams and weirs, loss of spawning ground and water pollution" (FAO 2010:184). Attempts were made to increase the number of salmons and in Germany alone millions of salmon fry and fingerlings were released annually. It was a failed attempt, since stocking alone did not work in preserving the Atlantic salmon in the Rhine. In the 1950s the last salmon was caught. Decades later the conditions of water got even worse through heavy industrialization around the Rhine river bedding.

"However, it was only after a chemical accident in Switzerland in 1986, when toxic water spilled into the Rhine River and killed tons of fish, that the riverine states initiated a comprehensive programme for rehabilitation of the Rhine River and its tributaries". Aiming to reinstate the natural ecology of the Rhine in such a way that "sensitive species like salmon and other migratory species could live and reproduce there again" (Id.:185). Once the ecological system of the Rhine was back to its old state, imported Atlantic salmon eggs were imported and formed the basis for a new salmon population. "The first record of returning salmon in the Rhine Basin since the species disappeared was in 1991, and in 1994 natural reproduction occurred again in the Sieg River" (Id.:185). Now hundreds of salmon annually return to the Rhine River to migrate upstream through the fish passes. Subsequently this means that there is no salmon production in the Netherlands, since the Atlantic salmon in the Rhine River is still on the endangered species list.

The Netherlands has an extensive history with salmon: Having it in abundance up to the point of culinary-boredom to rehabilitation programs in order to repopulate the Rhine with salmon. Although the Dutch fishers do not catch salmon in the Dutch waters anymore, it is still a fish that is familiar in the local cuisine. However, the Netherlands has internationally focused fisheries and auctions fish to the far side of the world. Therefore we went on a visit to one of several fish auctions in the Netherlands; the place where fresh fish lands ashore and is directly sold and transported to the highest bidder.

The Fish auction

In the province of Zeeland, a delta in the South of the Netherlands, fishing is one of the main activities. The sea has been their neighbour and at times their enemy. Fish and seafood are very popular in these areas and every year the start of the Mussel season is celebrated. In order to sell the fish that is caught during the week, the fish auction was developed. In Stellendam the fish auction is a busy place where fishermen, auction workers, international and national businessmen come together. During a visit to the fish auction, we explored the catch of that week that was prepared for the sale of that day:

Walking in the main hall of the fish auction, we have to watch out we don't clash into any of the forklifts that are speeding around, all carrying crates full of fish. It takes a few minutes to get used to the smell of fish. We step carefully on the slippery floor that is covered with melting ice, used to keep the caught fish cool. Three men are swiftly sorting the fish: *Plaice*, one of the most caught fishes in the Netherlands, are sorted to several lengths. The containers fill up quickly and before they even have to look up; a different man sweeps in and puts an empty one down. As we walk through the hall we see the containers full of sorted fish, labelled with a paper saying who caught the fish and what registration number it has: Ready for auction. (Personal field notes 2013)

The fish caught by the Dutch fishermen is brought into the fish auction (see photo 2). The fish are efficiently sorted, labelled and then registered into the computer: This all to make it ready for the auction. The auction can be followed and participated in through the internet; the auction clock can be operated from across the globe. Although there were many national buyers for the fish that week, we were told that a big importer for China also often logs in; he is never really physically there.

A man is explaining and showing the different fish types to us, all caught in the Netherlands! A woman notices: "I haven't seen any salmon? How come?" The man answers her: "Well, salmon is firstly caught in the river, that's why you don't see salmon here. Secondly, there is not much salmon... You cannot go out fishing for salmon, but occasionally the fishermen on the rivers catch a few. But these do not make it to the market; they are usually sold straight to catering or restaurants." (Personal field notes 2013)

The woman had found it strange, not seeing salmon in the sorting hall. Perhaps she had made the connection that fish from the market and in the supermarket was all from the Netherlands. In fact, most of the containers we were looking at did not stay within the borders of the Netherlands. The man also showed us a few containers with little crabs; something that was perceived as a pest in the Dutch waters and inedible, but a delicacy in China. The domestic market was no longer the sole objective for the Dutch fishermen; instead they also focussed upon international demands, like the little crabs for the Chinese.

The fish auction was a busy and efficient place and the fish that entered the auction hall was sold hours later. The fish turned into a commodity as they were sorted into the containers: An independent quality checker determined the quality of the fish which would indicate a certain price for the auction. Also the fishermen were well aware of distant needs and tastes and were able to turn something that is regarded as an invasive species in the Netherlands into a valuable commodity.

In the next section we will look at some consumption levels, to give an idea of the amount of fish the Dutch eat, and we will explore some NCD-risk factors of the Dutch.





From top to bottom:

Photo 1 Fishing boats anchored at the Fish auction in Stellendam, The Netherlands

Photo 2 Sorting Plaice at the fish auction in Stellendam, the Netherlands

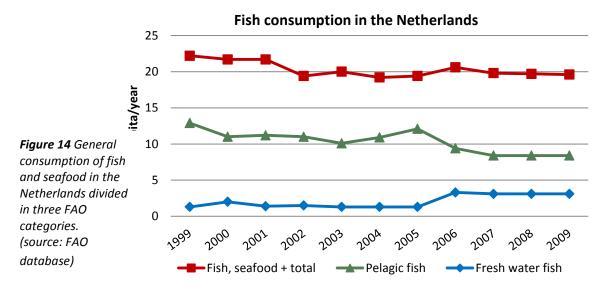
Exploring numbers

In this section we will look at data and figures that can be found about consumption and public health in the Netherlands. Most data is collected from online databases from the Food and Agricultural Organisation, the World Health Organization and some from the Dutch nutritional centre. As emphasized in the previous section, there is no salmon capture or production in the Netherlands; therefore we skip straight to the consumption of salmon. Later we shall turn to the NCD-related risk factors and how they have progressed in the last 30 years. These risk factors are allegedly influenced by the consumption of fish, and particular salmon since it is high in Omega3. First we turn to the levels of fish consumption in the Netherlands.

Fish consumption in the Netherlands

We are turning once again to the FAO statistical data to explore the consumption of fish, but this time in our second case: The Netherlands (2012). Like said above, the FAO uses the food supply within a country to indicate a level of consumption. This is used by the FAO as the basis for an estimation of food balance sheets, which is a comprehensive picture of a country's food supply pattern. Like the global consumption this would be more an estimate than an exact figure. Estimates for the consumption of solely salmon are unavailable; we therefore explore the three categories set by the FAO to give us an indication of the trends in food consumption.

The broader categories are the same as in the projection of Chilean consumption; 'Fish, seafood + total', 'Pelagic fish' and 'Fresh water fish' (figure 16). As described in the previous chapter about Chile; salmon is ambiguously categorized by the FAO. Even though the categories are unclear, it gives us an idea of what the consumption level of fish is in the Netherlands, since it is measured in kg per capita per year.



The three categories and their associated consumption levels in the Netherlands are portrayed in figure 16. Looking at the trends overall, we can say they stay rather steady, although there is a light decline in both the total and the pelagic fish. The amount of consumed fresh water fish nearly tripled (1.3 to 3.3). To sum this up; fish consumption has stayed rather stable, but there has been an increase in fresh water fish and a decrease in pelagic fish.

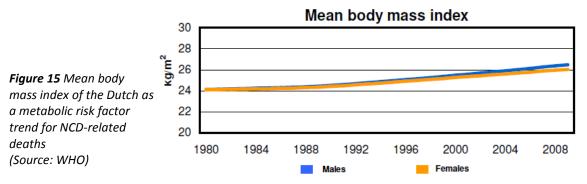
Fish consumption in the Netherlands has always been of a relatively high level, compared to the Chilean intake. However, the Dutch consumers have decreased their fish intake slightly and above all have shifted more to fresh water fish. As referred to before, fish intake is

said to have a positive impact on the prevention of NCDs, hence we will now turn to some public health facts of NCD-related risk factors.

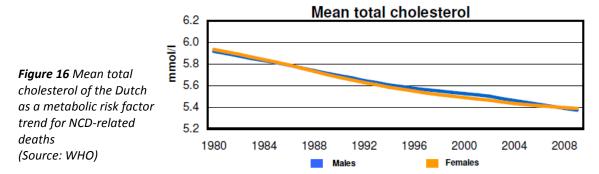
NCD risk-factors

Like done for the Chilean case, we want to give an idea of the health status of the average Dutch. To do this we turn to national health data and a country profile. Looking at figures such as BMI level, the level of food security and figures indicating the amount of NCD-related deaths, we are able to get an impression of what sort of country we are dealing with. The country profile and its related data are collected and processed by the WHO.

The Netherlands is a small country located on the west side of Europe. About 41.5 thousand km² is home to approximately 16.5 million Dutch people. Like emphasized above, this is about 18 times smaller than the country of our other case, Chile (2010). An estimated 80% of all Dutch people are living in urbanized area, not surprisingly with approximately 404 people living in an area of 1km². The amount of NCD-related deaths comprises 89% of all deaths and up to 13% happens below the age of 60 (WHO 2009).



This high income country has seen a decline in some metabolic risk factors. On average the BMI of the Dutch has slightly increased within the last 10 years from a mean of 24 to just over 26 in 2008 (figure 17). To clarify: The WHO classifies a BMI higher than 25 as overweight and over 30 as obese. In total 52% of all Dutch men and women were estimated to be overweight and of that percentage an estimated of 18.8% obese.



Mean fasting blood glucose has stayed steady over the last 30 years. And the average Dutch male has managed to stay below 5,5 in the last 30 years – levels above 5,5 are considered to be an indication of prediabetes (Whitney and Rolfes 2008). Over the last 30 years systolic blood pressure (90-119 mmHg is the desired systolic blood pressure) has come done for both men and women. The average male has seen a decline from above 140 to 133, while the average female decreased systolic blood pressure from 133 to about 124. As this is indicated as one of the main metabolic risk factors for NCD-related deaths, this is a positive trend line. Furthermore we can

also see a decline of cholesterol levels of 0.6 mmol/l (see figure 18), however, this is still 0.4 mmol/l higher than the Chilean mean. As the Voedingscentrum indicates that the desired total cholesterol should be below 5.0, this indicates that the average Dutch person has raised cholesterol.

As the graphs indicate, a decline in metabolic risk factors such as total cholesterol, blood pressure and fasting blood glucose are positive trend lines. Secondly the increase in BMI of 24-26 is not as severe as Chile's (24-28). It shows a population that is perhaps changing for the better by altering habits that are risk factors for NCDs, such as a bad diet, smoking and physical inactivity. However, fish intake has decreased making it unclear if these improving health factors are related to intake of salmon.

Having explored the general public health data we proceed to the case site, where most of the data was gathered during the fieldwork. Unlike the data reviewed up till now in this chapter, the following information will be specified to Wageningen, where most of the empirical data was collected.

Case site

The second case is in the Netherlands, but mostly in Wageningen. This town is home to a historic centre and has some remains from the middle ages. In the 13th century the city was granted with city rights. Although the city was partly destroyed in the World War II, it was also the site of the ending of the war in the Netherlands. Here the declaration of surrender was signed and since then Wageningen is the annual centre and symbol for freedom.

The city is located next to the river Rhine and borders with the Veluwe, one of the Netherlands largest nature parks. Home to nearly 37 thousand people of which a large part consist of students. Wageningen is home to the Wageningen University and is thus home to people of many nationalities. Politically, Wageningen is predominantly left-winged, which indicates somewhat the people who live there and their values and beliefs. This small Dutch city, located in the centre of Holland is home to many nationalities and surrounded by green all around. In the whole of Holland it is known as a left-winged, organic city – also due to the University. Although located on the side of the river, it is rather removed from the sea.

As Wageningen is also the town I live in, gathering information was relatively easy. Secondly, Dutch is my native language, which made interviewing a lot simpler. Through personal contacts I have gathered information, through semi-structured interviews and sometimes informal conversations. An in-depth interview was held with the local sushi restaurant and later visited a few times. Furthermore supermarkets have been observed and public documents about the salmon and produce sold there have been studied.

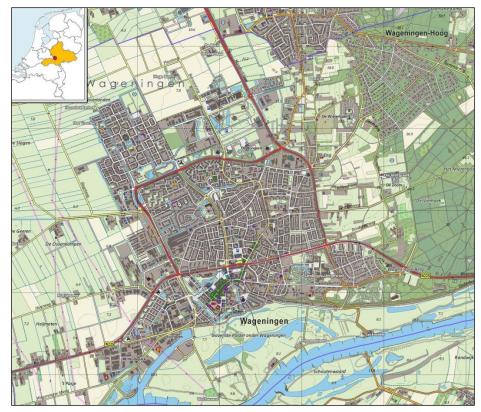


Figure 17 Map of the city of Wageningen, The Netherlands (Source: Wikipedia)

Also in Wageningen observations were carried out at the market, especially near the fish vendors. Here I also used some of my own previous experiences when it came to buying fish. Later I visited one of the large fish auctions in the Netherlands, were tours were given. Here I witnessed the whole process of catching fish at sea up until auctioning. Even though salmon is not caught anymore in the Netherlands, information about salmon was found and it gave a good insight of the Dutch fish trade.

Lastly an internet survey was conducted, in order to get a broader view of the salmon consumption in the Netherlands. This survey was filled in by 68 people, which gave a clear idea of how often people ate fish and for what reasons. The survey was made and conducted through the website Qualtrics.com which is specialized in internet surveys.

We will now explore the data that was found during fieldwork, drawing upon the framework and context we have explored so far. As emphasized before, we will focus on some manifestations in the case of the salmon. In particular we will look at the restaurant, the supermarket and the organic. Now that we have explored the case sites we are able to give context to the manifestations that will be described in the next chapter.

Manifestations

The previous chapters have served as a framework for the context of the sites we use when looking at the case of the salmon for this thesis. In this section we will look at some of the main manifestations of salmon in Chile and the Netherlands. By manifestations I mean to indicate the different ways through which salmon appears in gastronomy and cuisine. Although salmon is used in many different culinary patterns, we have decided to focus upon a few manifestations on which we will zoom in in this chapter. As we look for multi-sited manifestations, the chosen are that of the restaurant and the market place. These two ways of using salmon were present in both sites and provided interesting material and were selected for this reason.

Firstly, we will look at the manifestation of the supermarket and the signs of modernisation which in some cases have led to the construction of ignorances and the loss of use of the senses through food policies. The supermarket is the ultimate place for global commodities, such as salmon. Standardized all over the world we find almost identical large retailer, catering to every need of the consumer. When it comes to the case of salmon we see that standardization has resulted in perfect and cheap salmon. Identical products adorn the supermarket shelves and freezers. In both cases we see that the worlds of production of foodstuffs have been camouflaged, leading to the construction of ignorances by the consumers. Salmon is reduced to a commodity that is both beneficial for one's health as a luxurious foodstuff in an arena of convenience for modern consuming actors. In the first section we will review some material from both sites and see how salmon manifests in the space of the supermarket.

Within the case of the market place we also see the organic market place. Here we pay special attention to the incorporation of the geographies and biographies of food, in order words: the social life of the food. Ethical concerns might persuade people to switch to organic foods, but sometimes it is the lure of the 'traditional' that makes people return to organic food. What is valued is the most natural form of food, being closest to nature and unprocessed. In the case of salmon we see consumers who prefer to incorporate the social life of the salmon and look for origin, processes of production, leading to a preference for wild salmon. Interestingly, wild salmon is not available in one of the case sites, making consumers search for other options that are in line with their ethical concerns. The search for this knowledge about the social life of the salmon and sometimes more traditional ways of acquiring, preparing and eating is central to some consuming actors. We analyse the case of these ethically concerned actors and the way they go about salmon consumption in the last section of this chapter.

The second manifestation will focus on the restaurant and especially the cosmopolitan food sushi which is gaining popularity in both case sites. Restaurants come in many different forms and also seem class differentiated. Most new flows of popular foods and foreign tastes get in contact with consuming actors through the space of the restaurant. However, it is also a space for the local and culturally traditional food.

Global tastes roam across the world and the consumers of these tastes like to consider themselves cosmopolitans; citizens of multiple worlds (Beck 2002). Tastes that appear as

authentic for a certain culture, which allow it to be considered a cosmopolitan food. Eating this food gives the perception of bridging multiple worlds for the consumers. Salmon is highly popular as a sushi ingredient and many people also associate salmon with sushi. The quirky habits that come with eating sushi make it a global food that is inviting practices of flânerie (Cook and Crang 1996; Cook 2008). Eating with chopsticks in a foreign, yet trendy atmosphere provides that touristic quality that many cosmopolitans look for (Cwiertka 2005). Both cases have shown some interesting processes, where these exotic and strange foods have become reterritorialized in order to make it more appealing to people (Sakamoto and Allen 2011). It seems that being a citizen of multiple worlds still requires some comfort level for most consuming actors.

When looking at the space of the restaurant, we also see a different process when it comes to the case of the salmon. It is prepared in similar ways in both cases, but what is remarkable is that the salmon is mostly used as a substitute in smaller, local venues in Chile. Having no or limited access to other types of fish, such as *congrio* and *sierra*, has led to the adoption of salmon, which was widely available, as the substitute for the local and traditional fish. These different restaurant forms and the consumers visiting those spaces will be explored in the second section of this chapter.

This chapter is structured in a way that it includes both empirical data as their analysis. Exploring these cases will provide the base for answers to the research questions of this thesis.

The market place

The supermarket

In the case of the salmon in Chile and The Netherlands a clear manifestation was that of the supermarket: One of the main places to obtain salmon for consuming actors. The supermarket is highly embedded in the dominant food reality and in this chapter we will explore some of its effects on the social connection to salmon.

Salmon was in both supermarkets available in many different varieties, more than in any other places: Frozen, fresh, smoked; whole, filleted etc. For many consumers this is exactly what makes buying at the supermarket so convenient; having many different options to choose from and also within one type of product.

Modernisation

Convenience is one of the main characteristics of the supermarket. The presence of all commodities needed in a household in one space has saved time for many consumers, who ever more frequently have less time to spend on mundane activities such as cooking, cleaning and other typical domestic chores. Supermarkets early on saw their opportunity and potential and gladly provided these consumers with extra services. In this day and age, some of the larger transnational retailers have supermarkets as big as warehouses, becoming a central daily shopping space for many people.

Food being convenient is thus important to many consumers these days and salmon ticks the boxes. Available in many different forms and easy processible in the domestic environment, make it one of the favoured products in the supermarket. Processes of industrialization and standardization have made the salmon a reliable product. The fishes are cut and filleted in factory, making sure the consumers are saved time and trouble. Salmon processers can decide to add value to the pink fish by marinating, smoking or to process it into a

ready-made-meal, bringing diversity to the frozen section in the supermarket. The versatility and ease of preparing salmon in the cooking process is what many respondents favoured about this salmon, fitting well into the lives of modern consuming actors.

The Dutch supermarkets are loaded with salmon in countless varieties. When inspecting the 'fresh' section one can already distinguish several different versions of salmon (see photo 3-5). However, some people feel like they don't really have choice in the supermarket. One of the interviewees, Laura, who is a young critical consumer with a clear view of what she regards as food, added that she felt like everything was the same:

"I rarely buy salmon, because I'm just not so impressed by the taste of it... but when I do buy fish or occasionally salmon, I don't feel like I can make a choice. All I see is fillets. The only good thing about salmon actually, is that it is one of the few fishes you can buy with the skin on – even though it is still a fillet. So I go to the supermarket when I want to have a piece of fish that is quick and that I trust." (Personal field notes 2013)

What Laura said is confirming that some consumers feel like the choices they get in the supermarkets are apparent. Much of the same gives a lot of choice within one product range; however when looking closely everything is the same, except for the brand name and price.

Freshness

Besides a sea of choice, we see freshness becoming a rather stretched notion, as these fish have travelled quite a long way by the time they arrive to the supermarket shelves. Although fruit and vegetables and the notion of freshness have frequently been covered by scientific literature, this has not been the case for salmon or fish. But similar processes that radically changed the fruit and vegetable industry have also transformed the world of fisheries. Cool chains have made the availability of these types of products possible; however the notion of fresh has now become to signify "not ostensibly processed" (Goldfrank 2005). No longer meaning the fish has just been caught from the sea or river, it signifies a commodity whose shelf time has been stretched to the maximum through clever technologies. This was actually a reason for Laura to prefer to buy frozen fillets at the supermarket over the local fish market:

"At the supermarket I trust the fish to be well frozen. They freeze it and do not let it defrost. I prefer that over the fillets they sometimes sell at the fish market! Sometimes they even sell the same plastic bags of fillets you see in the supermarket, only at the market they slowly defrost... So you never know how many times it has been frozen again! When I buy it at the supermarket I trust they would not do that." (Personal field notes 2013)

Frozen products offer even more convenience, as they are often cheaper and can last for a long time in the home environment. Quick preparation and ease of preparing are important to many consumers, alongside the healthy character of the salmon, something that was appreciated by many of the questioned people. What an internet survey conducted for this thesis in May 2013 revealed is that out of the 68 people, 73% noted to buy at the supermarket. Mostly because of convenience, as they already did other grocery-shopping in that supermarket. Price only came second, indicating people do not have much interest in the price at the supermarket. Busy lives force consumers to do multiple tasks as quick as possible; hence most people are not bothered by a small price difference between shops. As today's supermarket has all products a consumer needs for offer, visiting one supermarket is enough. When looking at some national figures we

see that salmon is sold in many different forms and is non-surprisingly found in the top10 most eaten fish species in the Netherlands¹². What is noteworthy is that this top10 holds three different varieties of salmon (frozen, smoked and fresh) and has done for many years. It seems that salmon has become part of the modern consuming actor's daily menu, making salmon a favoured commodity in a modern food reality.

Also in Chile the importance of convenience was stressed: Having a busy life, but still wanting to cook something healthy and – above all – quick. The supermarket showed less variety than its Dutch counterpart, however there was enough to choose from: Ranging from Swedish inspired marinated salmon to salmon steaks. The 'fresh' salmon section (as we see in the Dutch supermarket in photo 3-5) is one that was mostly unknown in the Chilean supermarkets. The majority of the supermarkets sold only frozen, packaged fillets, salmon steaks and marinated salmon. Only one supermarket chain – the biggest in the area and also part of the large TNC Wal-Mart – Lidr had the pre-packaged, unfrozen fillets for sale (see photo 6-8). However, when joining Vicente, a young Chilean consumer who was studying medicine, to buy salmon for the sushi we were planning to make he said:

"They have fresh fish too, but it is no good... It is very old. The frozen is better, besides the fresh is very expensive for such a small piece of fish" (Personal field notes 2013).

Although price was Vicente's main concern, as he had stated, he knew very well what quality limitations there were in the supermarket. Going to the supermarket firstly had to do with convenience, but he did not trust everything that was for sale. To him the idea of having salmon 'fresh' for sale in the supermarket, like in the Netherlands, did not make sense: Considering it as old and thinking of the salmons 'food miles' before it was delivered to the supermarket to be sold as 'fresh' fish. To Vicente freshness was found in frozen fish, instead of fresh fish: Although the frozen might even be older than the 'fresh' salmon – as it was kept for a longer time in the freezer – he considered freezing to be a good strategy in preserving the fish.

Unlike in the Netherlands where people regularly buy this 'fresh' fish, in Chile it was rather uncommon. As only one supermarket had this type of fresh fish for offer, it could also be that Chilean consumers were still not used to buying fresh fish at the supermarket. In the meantime, Vicente did not (yet) consider the fresh fish for sale at the Lidr as being appropriate to make sushi with.

Processes of industrialization and modernisation have made supermarkets and global food commodities possible all over the world. Many supermarkets – especially the larger chains – are identical in both design and management strategies. Even supermarkets in both Chile as the Netherlands were rather similar, keeping some local variations in mind. The shopping routine was basically the same, hence any Dutch consumer could – even without speaking the language – make sense of the Chilean supermarket – and vice versa. The same can be said of foods sold in both supermarkets; having a big choice in products and in different varieties, but the choice here is only apparent. These modern consumers choose to go to these food spaces as they offer them convenience, trust, and versatility, perhaps unwittingly reinforcing the position of the transnational retailers in the dominant food reality.

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¹² http://www.visbureau.nl/

Construction of ignorances

Although convenience and versatility are reasons to go to the supermarket, the social lives of foodstuffs are so to say camouflaged at the supermarket. Consumers who do prefer the supermarket are at risk of being disconnected from the social lives of the foods they eat. This allows for the construction of ignorances and disconnecting worlds of consumption and worlds of production (Cook and Crang 1996). Partly because of the long chain the commodities go through before reaching the localities of consumers, this makes knowledge about the processes of production and origin hard to come across. Tracing steps back from 'fork to farm' seems impossible and hardly transparent. Goldfrank argues people do not want to know about the social life of these products (2005), perhaps because they might undo the aspects of convenience and versatility, sullying the daily meal with the 'fingerprints of exploitation' (Harvey in Cook and Crang 1996).

Indicating the origin of a product is mandatory and so is nutritional content. However, this information does not give a clue about the processes of production behind the scenes of the commodity. Solely Atlantic salmon is farmed in many places on the globe — Norway, Chile, Scotland, Canada, Ireland, Russia, and even Tasmania in Australia — and all production sites have their own practices of production. However, some consumers are not bothered by the information about the social life of the salmon they put on their plate.

Symbolic construct of place

All Chilean salmon comes from Puerto Montt, sometimes also referred to as 'Salmon capitol'. At least, that is what almost all the Chilean consumers spoken to assumed. This city on the edge of Patagonia was the centre of trade for salmon; however the actual salmon grows somewhere else. Many production sites can be found in and around the fjords and islands in the Chilean South, now part of the local landscape. Still, consumers in Valdivia regarded salmon to be from Puerto Montt. Here, the salmon was given – somewhat like 'Japanese' sushi – a symbolic construct of place in order to make sense of this fish. The actual localities and the social practices and labour that have resulted in this food commodity were ignored. However, when asking more about their ideas about the origin of the salmon they would eat, most consumers would have a second thought and reconsider their ignorances, admitting they had not thought about the true localities of the salmon. As the environment of the supermarket is designed in such a way – displaying products in one place, not given notice of their origin or production processes – it does not invite people to think beyond the locality of the supermarket.

When asking about the origin or production processes of the salmon, most consumers replied by saying they "never really have thought about it" (Personal field notes 2013). Some were even motivated to get to know more about the salmon, as if one simple question sparked their curiosity and salmon from Puerto Montt did not make real sense to some anymore. Although Gabriela, a housewife who lived in Valdivia, was clearly aware of the salmon farms and their environmental impact, but said:

"Do not look, do not think about it! [The farming of salmon] is going to happen anyway; if I buy it or if I don't buy it. So I try to think about it as little as possible. ... It is going to get sold anyway and that is really a pity." (Personal field notes 2013).

Gabriela argued that it was best to ignore the intricate knowledge of the social life of the salmon as she felt she could not make a change in the processes of production and distribution.



Photo 3 The total fresh fish section at the Albert Heijn, Wageningen



Photo 4 Cheap forms of salmon at the fresh fish section of the Albert Heijn, Wageningen



Photo 5 Exclusive forms of salmon at the fresh fish section of the Albert Heijn, Wageningen



Photo 6 Prepackaged salmon fillet from Supersalmon in the Chilean supermarket Unimarc



Photo 7 Advertising for 'fresh' salmon in the Chilean supermarket Lidr



Photo 8 Different varieties of deep frozen salmon in the Chilean supermarket Lidr

Although she had a clear idea and opinion about the effect of the salmon industry on the environment, she chose to ignore it, as she felt powerless and unable to make a positive change. Gabriela was quite aware of what was happening, as in Valdivia she lived relatively close to the location of the salmon industry.

Salmon coming from Puerto Montt also appeared attractive to tourists from the North of Chile. Knowledge about the production and origin of the salmon seemed limited and many Chileans from the North also like to eat the 'salmon from Puerto Montt'. Like Tomas, a young father, said:

"When you have visitors [from outside the area] you often eat salmon, because it is so beautiful and pink. But if you go and eat with someone from here, you are going to prepare Sierra, or something like that." (Personal field notes 2013).

The symbolic construct of place and origin of the salmon, being Puerto Montt, was enough for most people, and especially for these visiting consumers. The actual local origin of the salmon is overshadowed by this social construction of place and is satisfactory enough for many consumers, ignoring any further processes of production and localities. Salmon coming from Puerto Montt was at least funny to one of the Quality managers from SEA:

"Salmon from Puerto Montt... Puerto Montt is a city!" he laughed.

Still for many people salmon had become to signify Puerto Montt, becoming an identity-food for the area. The symbolic construct of place in the case of the Chilean salmon meant good business for any local venues, restaurants and artisanal shops who sold salmon. It sort of got the motto of: When in Puerto Montt, one must eat salmon. Although Valdivia is no Puerto Montt, salmon had a similar kind of popularity as it was relatively close to Puerto Montt and 'fresh' salmon was delivered almost daily to the local market.

Consciously ignorant

Origin of the salmon was neither a priority for most consumers buying their salmon at the Dutch supermarket. Most people know that salmon comes from Norway, as the 'fresh' section in the Dutch supermarket primarily shows Norwegian salmon. More diversity in origins is found in the frozen section, where Canada, Scotland and Ireland join the salmon collection. Like in Chile, most Dutch consumers are unaware of the social life of the salmon they buy in their local supermarket, not knowing about origin or processes of production. Although the mandatory origin specification is visible on the package, it hardly says anything about the actual salmon: Coming from one of the many places of salmon production all over the world, all with their own practices of production. Some people might be unaware of these facts and have not thought about it before, however some consumers are not really bothered by the origin or processes of production of the food they eat. "Too much knowledge of the exploitation of human being and/or the spoliation of nature required to satisfy those preferences could leave a bad taste in their mouths" (Goldfrank 2005:52). Preferring to be left in the dark, not knowing the impact food has leaves these consuming actors disconnected from food. The Dutch Sven frankly said:

"Most of the aspects of the contemporary food discussion are no concern of mine. I just want tasty salmon for an acceptable price..." (Personal field notes 2013).

He had no problems with the 'vacuum of meaning and knowledge' that is left by his preference to disconnect worlds of production from worlds of consumption; he was being consciously ignorant (Cook and Crang 1996). The supermarket and how it functions, respond to these desires by leaving the majority of the social life of the commodity hidden for the supermarket-shoppers.

Nonetheless, many Dutch consumers, like the Chilean, reconsider their ignorance after thinking twice about it: accounting the desire to know more about the origin, ways of production and sustainability of the salmon. Still up to a certain extent as none really go further than a general search on the internet as it might risk the convenience of buying salmon in the supermarket to be 'spoiled'.

Staying 'ignorant' in these local places of consumption is easy, as the environment of the supermarket reveals no traces of the localities of the origin or production site of the salmon. Some people are willing to do some work in order to become more knowledgeable about the food they eat, albeit only from the comfort and safety from their homely environment. The construction of ignorances about the social life of the salmon is a consequence of global food sourcing and the length of the contemporary chain of hands food goes through. Consumers become insensitive to the 'myriad of social practices' behind the food and become more focussed upon their own locality and context.

As salmon was a major part of the national economy, Chilean consumers were more aware of the practices behind the salmon, knowing generally where it came from (Puerto Montt). Still being in a vacuum of knowledge, disconnecting world of production and consumption, did not weigh up against the convenience of the supermarket. Many of the Dutch consumers, not having national salmon production, did not display very different knowledges found to be important and to be ignored. Most favoured keeping their meals unspoiled by any negative knowledge about production practices or origin of the salmon, as long as the salmon on their plates was tasteful and not too expensive.

Food policies numbing the senses

The hyper modern system of salmon aquaculture is well represented in the supermarket, where the fillets lay packaged and well in the freezer. In the process of making these products, the fish were caught and (in most factories) filleted, packaged and frozen within four hours. Perhaps this salmon can be considered fresher than its counterpart lying on the fish market – if we regard the process of freezing as a time-standstill in the freshness of the fish. Highly efficient systems in aquaculture make sure food safety, quality and price can be managed and standardized in a good way.

The need for the strict regulation of these global foods has been emphasized before (see chapter Food standards) (Phillips 2006). However, quality mediation by the ruling authority can result in food scares and a numbing of the use of senses. Although tightly regulated and salmon is sampled for toxicology, some incidents still happen. Dutch supermarket shelves were not long ago emptied from one certain brand of smoked salmon, as some toxicology reports by the Dutch Food and Commodities Authority showed it had a high level in salmonella¹³. Several consumers even died of the salmonella infection caused by eating this specific brand of smoked salmon, instantly reaching the news and papers. Food scares are highly influenced by the media, as they rage across the globe in the name of public health, playing well into what Beck described as Risk

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¹³ http://www.vwa.nl/

society (2000). Not being able to directly identify precisely the source of this salmonella infected salmon was, was the start of this food scare in Europe.

"Against the background of this growing unawareness and non-knowledge in the wake of the modernisation of knowledge, the question of deciding in a context of uncertainty arises in a radical way." (Beck 2000:217)

Beck argues that "there is no better breeding ground for risks than denying them" (2000:217), which was a lesson learned in respect to the earlier emphasized BSE case. This sort of health scares concern many consumers as the media covers them so generously. The way the risk society organizes in response to risks fits into the idea of the mediation of what is considered to be good food by governments and other organisations: As risks through food increase, all food is now considered to be containing risks and thus needs to be sampled and checked thoroughly.

How this mediation translates to consumers remains diverse. Some have trust and expect from their government to make sure that the food sold in their locality is safe and up to standards, while others prefer to take matters in their own hands.

Food safety first

Many of the Dutch respondents to the internet survey accounted to worry about the impact the food they eat might have on their health. They also accounted that these concerns originated mostly from learning about it in media and close social circles. Still, what was surprising to me, is that most of these same Dutch consumers firstly looked at price when buying salmon. This contradicts a little, as price seems an inappropriate method to judge how healthy a food is. Although health concerns are troubling the majority of the contemporary consumers they look at price and do not pose questions at what is sold in the supermarket, expecting for this salmon to be safe and healthy. Like emphasized before Laura felt like she could trust the fish in the supermarket:

"When I buy fish in the supermarket, I just expect that it is good. I trust it... because all the food has been sampled and checked" (Personal field notes 2013).

Many respondents to the internet survey had indicated the same expectation of the supermarket. What was secondly important to the consumers who responded to the survey was the 'freshness' of the salmon, however judging the freshness of salmon is done differently by all the consumers. Many of these consumers had no clear parameters in judging the salmon; most answered they wanted it to be 'wild', 'healthy' or 'organic'. Three characteristics that can hardly be judged when doing grocery shopping in the supermarket: What does a wild salmon look like? Or even better; what does a salmon that is good for my health look like? Only a few consuming actors accounted to look at colour and texture, some of the sensory characteristics (taste, colour, freshness, appearance, smell) that can be checked.

Arguably, this trust in the capability of the government and other organisations to look after food safety, made the use of the senses in looking for appropriate (healthy) food rudimentary: All food that reaches the supermarket is checked and should suffice to the food standards set in order to assure food safety. The supermarket has in many cases made it impossible to use the senses in checking food; fresh salmon is tightly sealed and smell is therefore unable to give an idea of quality. On the other hand, the consumer does not have the desire to verify quality through smell, as the supermarket is trusted in supplying quality and safety. Applying this train of thought to the frozen fish section; here the senses are truly

arbitrary. Texture, smell and sight are all concealed in the frozen state of the salmon and it is often packaged in bright coloured plastic, showing only the 'serving suggestion' — which often does not correspond with the food inside the package. As these sensory parameters are blocked in the search for quality in the supermarket, people need to trust their retailer in supplying 'good' salmon.

On the contrary to the Netherlands, concern about additives and metals in fish and especially salmon was definitely present in Chile, as many consumers said to purposely limit their salmon intake because of health concerns. Also many restaurants accounted to buy only from the larger chains, which also provide salmon for most supermarkets – like SuperSalmon. Also out of health reasons, not wanting to have anyone get sick from the food they serve. More than in the Netherlands, the Chileans were speaking about the hormones and other additives one might find in salmon. Having the salmon farms within their national borders made them more knowledgeable about these health facts of the salmon, as regularly information appeared in newspapers and magazines. Many restaurant owners chose the certified frozen fish, as a safety guarantee and as a sort of insurance. The owner of a local restaurant near the Mercado Fluvial¹⁴ explained his choice:

"[The Mercado Fluvial] can't give me *seguridad*. There is no *seguridad*! ... I just want to be able to, when something goes wrong, point to the factory. So I can say: Look, I bought it there. They are to blame." (Personal field notes 2013)

The man further explained how additives were used during the production process to raise the salmon. Safety was one of the most important characters to look for in salmon, since he was serving the fish to people. Similar arguments were made by other restaurant holders, but many were referring to the *freshness* of the fish. The following two comments were made by two different restaurant owners in the area of Valdivia:

"The salmon from here, from the Mercado Fluvial is very bad. Because it is dead fish and they save it on ice overnight and sell it in the morning, and the next morning, and the next morning. ...that is dangerous." (Personal field notes 2013)

"No, I never buy at the Mercado Fluvial, because it is not good fish. The truck that delivers the fish from Puerto Montt to the Mercado Fluvial only arrives on Friday... Not on any other day, only Friday! Not just the salmon, but all the fish that comes from Puerto Montt. So if you go there on Wednesday, the fish will have been there for all those days... okay in trucks on ice, but still." (Personal field notes 2013)

Even though many restaurant owners were concerned about the quality of the fish from the Mercado Fluvial, many Chilean people still bought their fish at this local market. Most consumers in Valdivia spoken to, knew about the additives that were used in the fish feed. While walking on the Mercado Fluvial talking about the food safety of salmon, Vicente said to me that the average Chilean will not eat fish too often:

"People in Chile eat fish once a week, so they don't consume too much of the antibiotics." (Personal field notes 2013)

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¹⁴ The local fish market located just outside of the side on the river. Many people go here to buy fresh fish, and seafood, but also fruits, vegetables and regional artisanal products. Over the years it has become a real tourist attraction – especially with the permanent residents the Sea lions (see photo 9 and 10).





From top to bottom:

Photo 9 Salmon and other fish for sale on the Mercado Fluvial in Valdivia

Photo 10 The tourist attraction of Sea lions and pelicans waiting behind the Mercado Fluvial for leftovers from the fish market Apparently this restraint was already culinary embedded, perhaps unconsciously out of food safety, but this explained why people had no problems with salmon and fish in general, when it came to their health. The men from SEA explained how national food policies and food desires in export countries lead to salmon farms in Chile having different farming practices:

"[The desired colour expression of the salmon] will vary even between companies. The strategies are different for each company. There are companies who start with a high amount of pigment and then lower it. But there are other farms who have completely different 'curves', some even add the same amount of pigment the whole time." (Personal field notes 2013)

The Quality manager talked about the different strategies fish farms might have to reach a certain colour expression in the meat of the salmon. As explained before in the chapter 'Export Quality' salmon is fish that is raised for export, but does not meet the quality parameters of the export destination, which will flow into the domestic market. Hence, export countries may receive a standardized batch of salmon, while the domestic market might receive the salmons which had varying feeding approaches. Arguably this would lead to a possible quality difference, in any way it will lead to an unstandardized product. This is knowledge that the majority of the Chilean population is unaware of and hence they do not make decisions based on this information when setting out to buy fish.

Fishing gold

More information about the salmon on the local market was found, which is unknown by most consumers, but gives a good insight into why the salmon on the local market might be considered by the SEA managers as 'unsafe'. We will explore that in this section.

When talking to Daniela – who worked for the regional government in the department of rural planning and policy – said something slightly contradicting to what the Quality manager from SEA had told me: The men at SEA admitted that the salmon that reaches the domestic market can vary, however Daniela actually said the domestic market is highly regulated:

"The salmon in the supermarket is all regulated and legal. This is all done through a transparent process which is traceable. Not like here at the Mercado Fluvial... At the market there are no rules or laws. It is mostly fish that was thrown away¹⁵, stolen or escaped salmon. Selling salmon at the Mercado Fluvial is actually not allowed, but we turn a blind eye, so to speak." (Personal field notes 2013)

Daniela here confirms the fear of the local restaurant owner quoted earlier, about the Mercado Fluvial not being able to give him a safety guarantee. Also the three managers from SEA told me that it had been possible to find stolen salmon on markets like the Mercado Fluvial or Angelmó:

"There have been some robberies at salmon farms in the past. I'm talking about armed people and gunshots. Like a gang... In order to take the fish, I think it was last year and 2010? I was not physically there, but I know about several cases, violent cases. It was during the crisis¹⁶ and post crisis, I think 2009 and 2010. Because there were a lot of people who did not have jobs, but there were the salmon... And the price of the salmon was so high, because of the lack of salmon. It was like fishing gold!" (Personal field notes 2013)

¹⁵ Salmon that are thrown away are not good enough for export or the domestic sales.

¹⁶ The crisis during which the ISA virus infected a many of the Chilean salmon farms and production levels plummeted, hence many workers of the salmon industry lost their jobs.

The salmon had during and shortly after the crisis become a highly valuable commodity, worth stealing. Apparently people were even taking aggressive and drastic measures to get their hands on these prized commodities. However, now that the salmon business in Chile is back on its feet, these extreme measures are unnecessary these days, like the managers from SEA continued:

"People had become desperate at that time. They had lost their job..." to which another one of the three added: "They had no work, the salmon were right there... and they had a boat." He laughed a bit ironically. "So why not? They just went to the farms and attacked." I asked them if that was still the case, but they replied: "No, prices are much lower and people are working. This happened during a time when half of the industry had lost their job. There was a very low amount of salmon available on the market because of the disease and they were valuable: Supply and demand. So these conditions are basically the opposite of what we have now: The price of salmon is low and people are working. So it is not necessary." (Personal field notes 2013)

Daniela, however, was talking about a less aggressive way of stealing that was still happening on a small scale. Without the use of guns people were according to Daniela still stealing salmon on a small scale:

"They steal the fish out of the traps in the sea and river. For example here in the river they have smolts. They live in the water where the sweet meets the salty water (brackish water). When they are ready for the next stage they are shipped to Log Lagos, Puerto Montt or Chiloé, where most of the salmon farms are. The problem is that these fish can be contaminated and contain a lot of antibiotics, because they were in these fishnets. The fish farms use a lot of antibiotics." (Personal field notes 2013)

Another form of stealing fish is taking the dead salmon – *la mortalidad* – which are meant for the production of fishmeal. Either to use as bait in hake fisheries (Blanco Wells 2009), or worse to be sold as fish for consumption. The latter could have been highly possible in the past, however these days the salmon farms are catching up and adapting their equipment, like one manager of SEA told me:

"Before we had the current ensilage system the 'Morts' were stored in bins and they added some product to them ...a green product to mark them and to identify them as mortality fish" the Quality manager said. "They did this from the crisis up to the ensilage-time. But before that time, it was easy to take the Morts and to sell them. Now they are sealed in this ensilage system and it is almost impossible to get them out." (Personal field notes 2013)

The salmon farms and their equipment manufacturers have adapted to the challenges they faced and to the regulations that are still becoming stricter. Although the chance of encountering a 'Mort' on the local market is now next to nothing in Chile, the salmon for offer on the local market is not as standardized as that for offer in the supermarket. Unlike the salmon that gets into the supermarket, which is highly regulated as Daniela emphasized.

However, still some problems exist as Daniela also mentioned the escaped fishes from the salmon aquaculture. Locally these are named *los escapados*, the salmon that for some reason have gotten out of confinement. It is these escapees that have become a problem for most companies, "as well as a serious concern for environmentalists and fishermen" (Blanco Wells 2009:143). Legally, these salmon are still owned by the company and fishermen are not allowed to fish or catch them. Secondly, these escaped salmon are the point of critique for many environmentalists, as they argue they will induce an "ecological catastrophe showing the decline

of certain endemic species and the extinction of others" (Blanco Wells 2009:144). Thirdly, they are said to be the cause for health problems for the people who consume these fish, since the half-life time of the injected antibiotics is not monitored and could pose a risk. Also in the area of Valdivia we can find evidence of an outbreak. The outbreak after an earthquake in 2010 is mentioned online on a fish farm forum that translated an article from a regional Chilean paper:

Escape after earthquake

14-4-2010

Due to the earthquake and after-tsunami that affected Chile in February 27th, 500,000 young Coho salmon between 80gr and 130gr escaped from their cages nearby Valdivia (210km to the north from Puerto Montt).

According to the local newspaper El Austral, this situation happened in the area of Tornagaleones after the tsunami causing the escape of fish to the waters of the Valdivia River. The regional director of the National Fisheries Service (Sernapesca) Guillermo Rivera said that "the number of escaped salmon is close to 500,000 fish. Although we thought that this number was bigger; a lot of fish died enmeshed in the cages that sunk to the seabed".

article of 'El Austral' on an online fish farming forum about a salmon outbreak fishfarmingxpert

Box 2 Translated

(Source:

.com)

He also explained that because of its size and weight the escaped fish do not pose a risk to the local species in addition to the high mortality-rate that occur outside the cages, which might be close to 50%. Finally, he detailed that the affected producer company complied with the environmental regulation for these cases which included a contingency plan and a catching program.

The outbreak of the salmon was not mentioned by any consumer I spoke to, however one restaurant owner did make a mention of it. Most likely because his restaurant was located very close to the fish farm in question:

"We have some aquaculture here in the river in front of us. When we had an earthquake and the river started moving a lot, the cages in the water broke. All the salmon escaped. So the normal cycle in the area has changed because of that: It is totally destroyed." (Personal field notes 2013)

The owner of the restaurant notes a change in his direct environment. In the article the regional director of Sernapesca stated the company in question launched a contingency plan and a catching program. However, when I asked the owner of the nearby restaurant what action was undertaken he said little had been done about the outbreak of salmon:

"I'm sure they did something, but I don't know what they did..." the owner said. "Here in Chile we know about the tragedies, but not so much about the solutions!" he laughed ironically. (Personal field notes 2013)

When interviewing the quality managers at SEA we also spoke about these escapados and the outbreak that occurred in the Valdivia River:

"The farmer has to try to recover the fish. The fish, when they escape from the cage... they remain next to the farm. Because they are used to eating there! They don't 'escape' immediately to other sites! They are trained to eat there!" the quality manager laughed. "I have seen that! You have to... this is by law... you have to take measures to catch the major possible quantity of fish that is around the site. But usually they cannot recover a huge amount of fish, because they don't have enough net pens etcetera."

As these managers say, capturing some of the fish is mandatory by law, so probably the owner of the restaurant nearby has not noticed the fish farmer trying to recover his fish. However the quality manager did continue by saying it is a very difficult job to catch the fish once they have escaped:

"If you have an outbreak of 100.000 fish you can recover 20.000 you know... And the rest you cannot. For example, if the event occurs at night, you realize it in the morning. Of course the fish are around the site, but not SO close to the site. Once they start swimming it becomes more difficult to catch them." (Personal field notes 2013)

Although it is stated by law that the owner of the commodity has to recover it and any other actor who captures it is stealing that commodity, it is in practice impossible to recover 100% of the escaped fish. Once these fishes have taken refuge in the river, they become part of the local fish and live in the working area of local fishermen.

"If you do have the 100.000 fish escaping in one place and they recover 20.000... for a local market this is a huge amount!" I note to the quality managers. "Yes and it is very usual" one of them answered: "When there is an outbreak; a huge amount of escaped fish... they arrive to the shore and everyone sees the fish. They will try to catch the fish and it is very easy, because they are not used to it!" One of the other managers adds: "Legally, the fish are still owned by the company..." "Yes, I know that!" The man answered again: "But the people don't care! The farm sites are in isolated places with a local population that is small. So they see the fishes and they fish them. With nets, because it is such a huge amount... I have seen this happening! It is like a jackpot for the fishermen and everyone else! It is like a party, a piñata of fish!" (Personal field notes 2013)

Regarding the outbreak in the Valdivia River, it is possible that some salmon that escaped have survived and are now living in that area. Explaining why every now and then a fishmonger at the Mercado Fluvial showed me huge, whole fish, unlike any of the other that were for sale on the entire Mercado. This happened several times, and when I asked where these fishes where from the fishmonger would explain they came from Niebla or Los molinos, areas that are close to the site where the outbreak of salmon occurred during the earthquake.

Although Chilean consumers have not expressed concerns about the way salmon reached the domestic market, what can be traced back to this and was emphasized before, several consuming actors have accounted to purposely buy salmon in the supermarket, as this would have a certificate. Expected is that few people know how these stolen salmon, *morts* and *escapados* have reached the local markets in the past and sometimes still do. Still many consumers indicated the supermarket as safer than the local market. What was very clear is that the background information about these different salmon is not locally shared knowledge and consumers usually do not base their daily-decision-making on it. Similar opinions were found in the Netherlands; salmon from the supermarket was safe, as these large retailers are obliged to sample the food on food safety.

Both cases show an almost blind trust in the supermarket and the foods they sell. As supermarkets sell their products in particular forms — mostly frozen — consumers can less depend on their senses in judging foodstuffs. Ready filleted salmon, frozen and ready to use, make it unable to use sensory parameters when looking for quality. In the case of the Chilean salmon there is some truth to it, as the regulated market was safer and standardized; while the local market had been the place for 'thrown away, stolen or escaped salmon'. Arguably when consumers trust the supermarket in supplying them with good food — as food policies and standards dictate to do so — the senses arguably become rudimentary in the search for quality food. Over time, the use of our senses are diluting until the majority of actors have forgotten how or stopped to use them.

Food policies and standards are numbing the senses of contemporary consumers of the supermarket; not having to use them on the basis of trust. The construction of ignorances surrounding the origin, production, and distribution processes combined with unused senses coincide with the wish for convenience; not having to think about food safety or the social life of the product. This is however, something that might come back to bite these consumers later. Our contemporary risk society has established a 'system' in dealing with risks, in this case food risks. However, like Beck argues: "the question of deciding in a context of uncertainty arises in a radical way" (2000:217). As demonstrated quite often, food scares can be the result of this not knowing and ignorances surrounding the geographies and biographies of foods. As contemporary consumers of the supermarket have gotten used to the luxury and safety of the supermarket, they are left clueless when a food risk is facing on them. In case of a food risk or health scare, these senses could be a tool for consumers to look for food safety.

A global commodity

Like emphasized before, the supermarket is a place for choice. And choice is what contemporary consumers are after. Here they can compare different brands of the same products and pick whichever one is according their wishes. Price is one of the characteristics people look at when trying to decide what product is the most suitable for them. Trying to get what they consider to be the best they can afford. Value of the commodity can thus trump taste, as people can get misled by prices. As the commoditisation of things has reached our supermarkets, value replaces quality for some. Monetary values are used to distinguish products amongst each other, quality wise, but also to distinguish different income classes consumers might belong to. Thanks to processes of globalisation, retailers source from foreign countries looking for the cheapest and middle-range products, in order to provide to a wide group of consumers. Someone having a small amount of money to spend on food will look for what is cheapest and acceptable. But for the wealthier supermarket shoppers, expensive is good quality and cheap is a low quality: The supermarket offers salmon for all.

Different types of the same salmon can be found in all supermarkets in the Netherlands. For example, multiple brands will offer frozen fillets all with a different price range. The first thing Dutch consumers look for when buying salmon is price. Most people consider this a valid parameter for what they buy, indicating that it is good food. Although salmon might be seen as a food for special occasions (Christmas, Easter, etc.) it can be bought rather cheap in the Netherlands. The salmon in the Dutch supermarket comes from many places on the world and until now Alaskan, Scottish, Irish, Norwegian and Canadian salmon have been spotted in freezers and 'fresh' areas. They might not all be the same species, but most consumers will not know, as

the salmon is filleted and ready to eat. Salmon is available and attractive to many income classes buying at the supermarket. For those of the higher income classes, more exclusive salmon forms are available, like wild salmon, of course with a corresponding price tag. Price remains an important parameter in the search of what consuming actors of different income levels define as quality.

Salmon on the Chilean market is not so well distributed amongst different income levels. For most Chileans salmon is still an expensive choice, considering the choice of other available fish, as many people have mentioned this to me. In the supermarket this is not one of the cheapest fishes to be found. Hence salmon is still regarded by most Chileans as a luxury food. Higher income level consumers however, see this the opposite way and argue salmon is not a luxury product as there is so much to be found in Chile. Like a local restaurant owner explained to me:

"Salmon is everywhere now. It used to be expensive and hard to get, but this has changed when the aquaculture really started picking up." (Personal field notes 2013)

The image of the salmon is thus quite the opposite when comparing ideas of lower income actors and higher income actors. As the vast majority of the salmon production is meant for export, it is made to be an exclusive, healthy salmon that can be sold to richer countries. The salmon's export character and high price contribute to the image of the salmon being a luxury product for consumers of the lower income levels. Higher income-level consumers — which might also be considered as cosmopolitan — like to indulge in this export fish as it is healthy. Richer consumers mentioned healthiness as a reason to eat salmon. The omega3 that is in salmon is said to prevent many diseases and the large majority of the consuming actors know it very well. It is a highly accessible health-aid that is at a reasonable price for high-income consumers. Chileans in the area of Valdivia thus seem rather divided on the product. Luxury product or not, it is still a class divided product, mainly because of its price. However, having the world's second largest salmon industry exporting to places all over the world is also a source of pride for some Chileans. Many of the lower income level consumers, who considered salmon a luxury product, were still proud of the Chilean salmon going across the world. Much like the Japanese feel about 'their' sushi, the Chileans do about their salmon: They eat *our* salmon.

Salmon is now being farmed in incredible amounts in highly efficient ways, making it able for producers to sell the fish for low prices. Still we can notice a large difference between products for sale in the supermarket, especially when regarding the price. Salmon is because of its price-differentiated nature available for many people. Some wonder where the price difference comes from, as the low price has to have its origin somewhere.

As salmon has reached supermarket shelves in both Chile and the Netherlands it has been largely made available to the 'masses'. Demonstrated in this chapter was that in the contemporary modern world we live in, processes of modernisation, globalisation, and commoditisation have made standardized, perfect, cheap salmon possible. Supermarkets 'supply' according to the 'demand' of the consuming actors and provide them with convenient, safe and cheap food, keeping the dominant food reality in place. These salmons go through the hands of many people and large chains are the result of it. However, the supermarket knows well how to conceal them, as the knowledge about origin and production might taint the products on their shelves. Not only supermarkets are to blame, as the construction of ignorances

also lies in the hands of the consumer, who rather stay concentrated upon their own local reality. In Chile, where consumers are closer to the social lives of the salmon, consumers are not necessarily more aware of it than in the Netherlands. Food standardization and food policies that have been developed in a time of risk societies on a global scale have made it simple for people to trust in the supermarket in providing safe, good food. In this process, the senses of some consumers have been numbed and have been replaced by value as a quality parameter, especially in the Netherlands where a diverse price range in products can be found.

Larger supermarkets might be the perfect spaces for convenience when it comes to daily food decision making, they have arguably made it too convenient. The social connection to food is lost in the disguises the supermarket has put on its products: Selling standardized, identical, nicely wrapped products that have been stripped from their origin of production and distribution, leaving people in the dark – for some a wishful state, but for others entirely unknown.

The organic market

Another market place that is becoming popular amongst consumers is the organic market. In times when consuming actors become globally aware of the state of the earth and its environment, people have started to return to less processed and industrialized ways of food production. Different reasons might be the foundation for the choice for organic foods; some consider it to be environmentally friendly, while others deem it healthier then the highly industrialized food sources.

Exploring both cases, we see the organic food movement gaining popularity and people state different ethical concerns. The sense of trust makes these consumers want to commit to this special type of food. This is often accompanied with a return to the 'traditional' ways, as before processes of globalisation, commoditisation and modernisation food was still produced, distributed and consumed locally. In this chapter we trace notions and ideas of consuming actors that feel identified by this conceptualisation of good food.

Ethical concerns

Sustainability

The dominant contemporary food reality brings about a type of food which does not correspond with the life worlds, values, beliefs and idea of wellbeing of some consuming actors. In the process of translating and reworking this dominant form, people construct a new countertending food reality. The misfit of the dominant reality and the consumer is mostly based upon ethical concerns. A consuming actor might disagree with the environmental impact of the social life of food, or social inequalities that might be part of the social life of a food. In this light we see consumers that are looking for food that is fair and sustainable: Food which has been produced by people who were fairly rewarded and which has been produced and distributed with the least possible impact on the environment. Hence, the geographies and biographies of the food are highly important to people with ethical concerns. What they construct as 'alternative' pathway is consumption of organic foods (Nonini 2013). Ethical concerns as such were certainly present in the Netherlands and Chile. In the latter especially, as processes of production are much more local and visible in the lives of some people. The Dutch, not being able to find this knowledge about origin and production within their borders, were concerned about such topics in general in relation to food, however not much in the case of the salmon.

The salmon had quite some ethical 'enemies' in Chile, as the ethically concerned consumers did not see room for existence for the salmon within Chile (unlike the earlier spoken about supermarket consumer, especially of the lower income levels, who were sometimes even proud of the Chilean salmon export business). Like Tomas, an environmentally concerned consumer who likes to know more about the foods he and his family eat:

"I like salmon, but I'm also a little ... reluctant, because they are cultivated. They come from plantas de cultivo, and especially for the impact they have on the environment, these salmoneras. I like salmon, but I also don't!" (Personal field notes 2013).

Chileans like Tomas indicate they would like to know more about the processes of production and distribution, in order to know what antibiotics are used on the fish and what farms do to minimize their environmental impact. Wild salmon would be the most preferred, however wild salmon is rather difficult to obtain. Secondly, one would have to consider whether that salmon was truly wild. Interestingly, Tomas said that he favoured the fish from the *Mercado Fluvial* over that of the supermarket, as this was less processed.

"I try to consume mostly salmon from the *Mercado Fluvial* and never from the supermarket, because there is a difference. I prefer it, because they arrive at the market fresh and are not so pink. They are from the *jaulas* (net pens), but are different" (Personal field notes 2013).

He preferred the salmon from the local market as they did not go through a factory which made them according to him 'less processed'. Being able to buy the whole fish gave him the idea the fish was more *natural* than the salmon's counterpart in the freezer of the supermarket. Another reason for him to buy at the *Mercado Fluvial* was that he thought the salmon sold there were the *escapados*. These escaped salmons were even worse according to Tomas, as these alien fishes were taking over habitat from other fish species:

"One of the many impacts of the fish farms is that when [the workers] 'leave' the salmoneras, salmon can escape and they make the surrounding environment their habitat. They take over from other native species... and the salmon is a carnivore." (Personal field notes 2013)

He argued that by eating these *escapados*, who were slowly pushing other native species out of their habitat, he was improving the natural environment. The ethically concerned consuming actors are rather knowledgeable about the food they eat. In the process of decision-making they value knowing about the practices of production and origin of the food they eat, hence many attempt to gather as much information about the topics they deem important. Tomas was clearly bothered by environmental concerns when it came to the food he ate. He was also part of a cooperative in Valdivia that aimed at supplying sustainable and responsible food. The cooperative in question did not sell any salmon, as it did not comply with their principles of good food. Still, the respondent sometimes bought and ate salmon, surprisingly mostly in the form of sushi. Similar responses were given by other respondents in Valdivia.

Another opponent of salmon was Daniela, a regional policy maker: When asking her if she liked salmon, she even pulled a disgusted face. Her reaction was rather intense, but it soon became clear as she explained her thoughts to me:

"Most Chilean people do not eat salmon, because it is too expensive. A fish that had the same qualities as salmon and was cheap was anchovies. This was very popular for Chilean

people, but this fish was used mostly for fishmeal. Now there are none left and you cannot buy them anymore. This is one reason why I don't like salmon. The people of lower classes cannot buy a fish with salmon-like qualities, such as omega 3, anymore, because it is used up to produce fishmeal for salmon aquaculture." (Personal field notes 2013)

Having a local fish species go extinct, by the means of the salmon industry made her decide to not buy and eat salmon. Both the environmental aspects – fishes going extinct – and the social injustice – people from lower income classes left unable to buy cheaper, yet healthy fish – are knowledge that she probably acquired through her work as a government policy maker: Knowledge that is not widespread amongst people in Chile.

"Most people do not know this, that a cheap and good product is being used for the aquaculture. Now anchovies don't have a real market anymore. While it is a local fish that was eaten quite a lot before. It is horrible... Before the anchovies, they used mackerel, but they cannot be found anymore in Chile either." (Personal field notes 2013)

When visiting the island of Chiloé the owner of a *hospedaje* (Bed & breakfast) who had lived there all her life told about the changes she had seen the island go through. Living in Chonchí, a place that was formerly a very important harbour for the salmon industry, she had been at the heart of the development of the industry. When I told her about my reasoning to be in Chile she pulled a face, much like Daniela had done, and indicated she did not like salmon. She started explaining:

"From the start I knew that the salmon industry coming to Chile was a bad thing. I have seen it from the very beginning, as I have lived her all my life. It has done nothing but bad things. That's why I don't eat salmon, like a lot of people in Chiloé." (Personal field notes 2013)

Living in the direct surrounding of the salmon industry, has made the implications of it very clear. Seeing the environment change, which was according to the lady from the *hospedaje* devastating, made her decide to boycott salmon.

"The island used to be so beautiful! It was just the nature, hills and the sea. The salmon industry has only brought bad things. It truly pains me to see the effects of it. ... It is sad, very sad." (Personal field notes 2013)

The closer I went to the location of the salmon industry, the more aware people were of the side-effects of the salmon industry. The economic gain for Chile was no longer central and made place for the visible change in the landscape. A tour operator in Ancud had a milder opinion than the lady from the *hospedaje*:

"Well... obviously it has brought change to the island. Before, there was not so much to do. It was just fields and potatoes. Although the salmon industry has not been good for the environment, it has also brought a lot of tourists to the island. So I cannot say it has only been negative, but I do think they should try harder in preserving the nature of the island. Perhaps they should spread out to some other places, just so it is not so concentrated around the island." (Personal field notes 2013)

In the Netherlands a language of food sustainability has also become highly popular and many organizations striving to convince other people of eating sustainable food are developing rapidly. Here we also saw people being aware of the environmental impact of the salmon farms, albeit if the farms were abroad. While for many consumers price might still be the priority,

sustainability is likely to be the second. Luckily, the Dutch food market offers many different products, as some supermarkets in the Netherlands even sell organic frozen salmon fillets. These organically farmed salmon fillets are mostly from Ireland, where production processes are different from those in Norway. Although these salmon might be 'organically' raised, they still have a considerate impact on the environment, as keeping such a large amount of salmons in one place is plainly said not natural. But what the supermarket freezer also offers is wild salmon, even bearing the MSC label, pointing to sustainable practices of production. Hence, the sustainability concerned consumers in the Netherlands can decide to buy from the supermarket. And if that does not satisfy, local markets and fish markets are another option. Even with all these options the Dutch Laura prefers to not buy salmon as:

"I would rather not buy salmon, as there are many other fishes that are more interesting, cheaper, tastier and local. But, in the fresh section I do always lean towards salmon as they sell it in more natural forms... It is one of the only fishes you can buy with the skin still on." (Personal field notes 2013)

Keeping 'nature' in the products they buy is important to sustainability concerned consuming actors. As it is closest to what comes from nature, it means it is least processed. Frederike, a long-time organic consumer even said to detest the *taste* of farmed fish:

"I can just taste the difference between wild and farmed fish. Really! It just has this really nasty aftertaste... I think it is the fat of the fish that tastes rancid. So I don't buy farmed fish." (Personal field notes 2013)

Being able to detect the fish was farmed through taste made Frederike buy wild fish, as this was more natural than the farmed counterpart. Keeping food closer to its natural form was also important to Laura; she argued she preferred buying a whole fish over "an anonymous piece". However, buying a whole fish in the Netherlands is getting rather hard, especially for towns that are more centrally located, like Wageningen. Not only was buying a whole fish a good way of checking if it was still fresh: "You see what you buy, you can inspect the gills and the eyes for example" (Personal field notes 2013). It was also fun, as she liked to cook: "I like seeing the whole fish and what can be done with all the parts" (Personal field notes 2013). Even though the whole fishes were for sale at the market, she was rather disappointed by these places and decided not to buy fish from this vendor anymore.

"The fish there is just not fresh... and the fishmonger knows very little! Once I bought a fish that just was not fresh. The whole house smelled of bad fish! I don't go there anymore..." (Personal field notes 2013)

What she had noticed is that they sell a lot of pre-packaged fillets and most of the fish has been frozen before and is now being sold as 'fresh'. Fish coming from the other end of the world that needed to be frozen in the meantime, for this and sustainability reasons she preferred fish from the North Sea. Hence, she had decided to reframe from buying salmon, as the salmon farms were environmentally unfriendly and she thought that wild salmon was not being caught sustainably either. When it comes to salmon, many sustainability concerned people are like Laura confused about where to buy salmon and which one. Looking for the most 'natural' salmon has become nearly impossible. This results in some consumers deciding to not consume salmon at all.

These sustainable consumers in Chile and the Netherlands looked for salmon that was closest to what was natural. As in the Dutch case this would often lead to 'wild salmon', in Chile there is not such 'easy access' to wild salmon. Hence, Chileans came up with different solutions, such as 'least processed', consuming those that are invading the habitat of other fishes or for some not eating it at all. Reasoning to go look for the nature in products is mostly out of environmental concerns, convinced the industrialized, modern way of food production – like the salmon farms – are bad news for nature. They construct their own food reality by reworking the dominant modern food reality of cheap, frozen and standardized salmon and look for alternatives. Alternatives such as whole fish, as this gives the idea of buying, preparing and eating something that is firstly natural and secondly because of that had less impact on environment. In the process of doing so these consuming actors are likely to reconnect with their senses, as they prefer to touch, smell and see the salmon, in order to judge the quality of the product.

Food safety

As organic ways of producing food step away from the use of chemicals, pesticides and synthetic additives, hormones and antibiotics, some consumers prefer organic food as it is healthier. As the food was grown/raised natural, the result is a natural product. Out of reasoning for food safety and health, people can decide to switch to organic foods that have been grown on a smaller scale.

Like emphasized before, many Chileans were quite aware of the additives in the fish feed and so was Tomas. Many have a rather clear idea of how the salmon farms work and Tomas explained the following to me about the fish farms:

"I have seen a fish farm and I've seen the cages. They change from cage when they are at a certain size... first in the lakes and rivers and later in water that is saltier. When they have a certain size, they inject antibiotic. They have additives too, some additives are made from grounded salmon and fish; fish meal. For us that would be like eating McDonalds hamburgers. To get fat, you know? So the salmon gets fat for sale, because people like it when it has a more fatty flavour. The additives and feed also have an impact on the environment, when the salmon are in the cages. It sinks to the bottom and ruins the marine environment... and the poop of the salmon too, when it reaches the bottom. That is more or less how they farm salmon." (Personal field notes 2013)

The story he told about the fish farm corresponds partially with the real process. However, he clearly feels quite negative about the whole process. The quick production of salmon with additives in the fish feed was not according to his conceptualisation of good food. Being rather far off from the natural process he was almost appalled by the way salmon was produced. Still he ate it, every now and then. But he had his methods of picking fish and deciding where to buy it and why. In his normal daily shopping he would lean very much towards organic foods; however buying organic salmon in Valdivia is impossible. Hence, as emphasized in the previous section, he had chosen to eat from the *Mercado Fluvial* as he believed he bought escaped fish that were a nuisance in the rivers. Buying at the *Mercado Fluvial* requires some skills as the many fishmongers all sell salmon and they are roughly sold for the same price. Tomas had his own ways of indicating what was good and bad fish:

"Alright, well I have some things that I look for, but that is just me! ...firstly I just have a look at the salmon and if it looks fresh... that means the eyes shiny, the texture... well without

touching, but it has to look a bit firm. If the fish can suffice to these criteria, I think it might be *fresco*. The second is smell. When you go to a place to buy fish... If I smell something bad, I'm not going to buy salmon there. I'm quite sensitive for smells, so... in the end, I will feel good about buying salmon when there is no bad smell. The last one is intuition." (Personal field notes 2013)

Going about choosing a salmon on the local market in a particular way, is how Tomas makes sure the food he and his family eat are safe. Being concerned with ways of production and their effects on both health and environment, made him gather more information about the food he ate. In the end he preferred buying whole and thus less processed salmon.

Concerns about food safety and environmental impact had made people in Chile and the Netherlands rethink their conceptualisation of salmon. Like Tomas, who saw it as an alien fish species that was fattened like a pig and the escapees as a threat to the native fish species. Or Laura who considered that is was tough in general to buy fish as it was hard to spot what was natural. Ethically concerned consumers often return to food that is as closest to nature as possible. The Slow Food movement, which we have referred to already in the first chapter, also has a specific department for fish: Slow Fish. Here we find a section called 'not on my plate', a webpage to educate ethically concerned consumers on what they can and should not eat in order to be a sustainable and responsible consuming actor.

"One of the keys to change, as in other areas, is collective consciousness from consumers. We want you to be at the front line of this movement and to decide, as a start, to no longer eat fish or seafood whose fishing or farming, as practiced today, is harmful to the environment." (Source: slowfood.com/slowfish)

Amongst the fishes that they would discourage you to eat we find: Out of only six fishes that they would like people to stop eating, Atlantic salmon is one, both wild as farmed. Apparently even the wild salmon, which would be most preferred by organic consumers, is unsustainable, according to Slow Fish's conceptualisation of good food.

Both Tomas and Laura were thinking along the lines of Slow Fish and were trying to find alternatives with salmon or without salmon to consuming sustainably and responsibly as their ethical concerns had driven them to this point. This led them mostly to whole foods and returned them to their senses in judging food. Using whole foods as this is still closest to what nature can provide and arguably has the least impact as it was less 'processed'. In the Dutch case, people would turn to wild salmon, as this is a salmon that has lived, spawned and grew naturally. But organisation like Slow Fish are encouraging people not to do so, as the Atlantic wild salmon is highly overfished. Luckily wild Alaskan Sockeye salmon is another alternative that is imported to the Netherlands, possible because of our dominant food reality of overseas food sourcing. However, this might make an ethically concerned consumer think otherwise, like Laura who thinks it is "ridiculous" to get food from so far away and decided to not buy salmon anymore. Tomas, representing the Chilean ethically concerned consumer has quite a different approach and looks for his own local wild salmon: Salmon that have escaped and are now trespassing in the rivers of other native species. All quoted consumers have made it quite clear they favoured the natural in products they ate and described how they used their senses in judging these products. Letting themselves be guided by the knowledge of the life of production of food they can go about their daily food decision-making, without compromising on the ethical concerns they have when it comes to food.

Sense of trust

Long food chains are usually resulting in food that was not produced locally. Some consuming actors see the solution to their ethical concerns in looking for local foods, shortening the food chain. This often makes consumers more aware of the origin and production processes of food, as they become more embedded in the social life of the food. This social connection to food is hard to feel in the supermarket and some people start to distrust the supermarket in being able to supply good food. Trying to lessen the impact they have on the environment or to lessen the impact food has on their health, they look for food closer to home.

This is how people end up with small food movements, as an alternative to the dominant food reality that does not satisfy some consuming actors. Like the in Valdivia located cooperative *La Manzana* that sold locally grown and organic foods. In Wageningen, organic foods, organic shops and local food initiatives are becoming more widespread. In the case of the salmon this might be hard to establish, for example in the Netherlands, where salmon is almost always imported from other countries. But also in the case of Chile, consumers have to negotiate compromise and translate the situation in order to establish this sense of trust.

As the salmon business was located in the South of Chile, the Patagonian area where the environment and climate complemented the life cycle of the salmon, consuming actors in Valdivia were still at the end of a rather long chain. Access to salmon was pretty easy; however the salmon had to travel quite some 'food miles' before reaching the city of Valdivia. The cooperative La Manzana did not sell salmon, as they felt salmon did not fulfil the criteria they have set for good food; sustainable and responsible. Another alternative some consumers have done; in the process of wanting to establish a shorter chain and getting closer to the actual food production, people have established connections with middlemen who were able to get fish directly from the fish farms, instead of letting it go through multiple hands and companies. Even though the men from SEA did not necessarily have environmental concerns, they did have health concerns and were quite particular about the salmon they bought. All three men made sure they obtained the 'premium' quality that was for sale directly from the fish farms since recently, as they were sure this was checked and safe and importantly had the optimum taste. As these farms produce export products, laboratory checks have to make sure the fish is according to regulations of that particular export country. One of the three even had a 'secret' spot where he bought escaped salmon that have lived for a while in a natural environment:

"It is not legal, but it is the best! It is good! And it is from people we know... who get them from the estuary in *Rio Puelo*. We have seen the fish and know it is clean and that it is good fish. ... They are recently caught salmon ... and you can see they are beautiful fish, they smell clean; they taste clean! We make ceviche out of it, we eat it raw: Because I know where it comes from... I would not buy from someone I did not know." (Personal field notes 2013)

The trust these consumers have in the source they buy from increases when the chain is shortest, like one of the SEA-managers shows. Tomas, for example, only bought his salmon at the *Mercado Fluvial* as this gave him the idea of buying local and more natural. Having one fishmonger he usually bought from, he 'knew' the guy and had not had a bad experience with buying fish there. Many of the restaurant owners told me they always bought from the same provider, as they trusted their products.

Similar importance was given to topics like trust by Dutch consumers. Salmon is hardly found local. The occasional salmon can be caught from the rivers, but all by accident, as the fisherman probably had a different target-fish. The salmon that he does catch, even if it is not on purpose, does not even reach the normal fish auction or market like all other fish. Fishermen are licensed to sell these local wild salmon directly to catering industry, as they are rather exclusive. So, local, wild salmon is possible, however not accessible to the average Dutch consumer. Shortening this chain of geographies for the salmon is thus quite hard. Raising the question of how Dutch people manage to trust the sources they buy salmon from. Laura had already 'shunned' one fishmonger on the weekly market, after selling her bad fish: She did not trust this vendor anymore and thought the fishmonger knew very little of what he sold. The supermarket she did trust like emphasized before. As the local supermarket chain in Wageningen had quite a large choice in salmon and also MSC labelled and organically farmed fish, she preferred buying it there:

"In the supermarket I just assume it to be good. It might not be the best taste, but it is good fish. I just trust the *Albert Heijn* in checking the food. Besides, most fresh fish sold on local markets has already been frozen before, so... I figured; why not buy it entirely frozen?" (Personal field notes 2013)

She questioned the local fishmonger, as he often sold the same type of frozen fish, pre-packaged and filleted, as the supermarket. The difference was that the supermarket did not interrupt the cool chain, while the fishmonger had them on display outside the freezer. Having had a bad experience and bad advice made her question the expertise of the fishmonger. We visited the particular fishmonger on the market square and asked him several questions about the salmon he sold. Noteworthy is that he looked bewildered when asking about other salmon species. He sold farmed fish, which was lighter in colour than wild salmon. Wild salmon was much redder of colour and that tasted a lot better: farmed fish was a lot fattier. The probability, however, is that the 'wild salmon' the fishmonger sold is not Atlantic salmon, but Sockeye salmon from Alaska. However, explained by one of the SEA managers: This is an entirely different species of salmon (both exterior and interior) and the meat is naturally darker than that of Atlantic salmon and less fatty. As Laura by now had done quite some research on fish and its seasonality, sustainability and cooking practices, she was quite knowledgeable about fish. The fishmonger might have convinced a lesser informed person, however Laura was not convinced by him anymore. In the end she argued that good fish was impossible to buy in Wageningen and she settled for less, but safe fish from the supermarket that had sustainability labels like MSC.

Being able to trust the fishmonger or retailer that a consumer buys salmon from is important. Trust is easily formed when salmon from a short chain is bought: Having the ability to gain easy insight in how the fish was grown or caught and later processed. Hence the men from SEA preferred going to their own 'sources' that were highly exclusive, but delivered steady quality. As Laura had lost trust in her local fishmonger, she felt like buying real good fish was impossible in her locality. In the case of salmon it is especially in the Netherlands hard to 'shorten the chain' as the fish to be imported from a different country. In Chile however, the escaped – naturally grown – salmon were accessible, albeit with the right connections.

The 'traditional'

Buying whole food products does not fit anymore in the dominant reality. Although this was the norm in earlier times, nowadays most foods are sold pre-cut and washed. However, when consuming actors decide to return to buying and cooking whole foods because of ethical concerns, their cooking practices often trace back to more 'traditional' ways of food production, preparing and consuming. By traditional we mean to say, the cooking and consumption practices that were locally and socially embedded in culinary practices several generations ago; unable to buy food sourced from the other side of the world, but having to work with local and seasonal ingredients. The campaign of the forgotten vegetables is one prime example; foods that can easily be grown local and used to be very common in the Dutch domestic kitchens. Now 'forgotten', but attempts of revival are on its way. As this is a clever way of sticking to ethical principles such as environmental impact (it is often locally and organically grown on a small scale), food safety (mostly organic) and issues of trust (grown by farmers in a nearby area).

When looking at fish we see people making a turn to whole fish, something that is becoming a bit unusual in the culinary practices in the home sphere. However, a considerable amount of consumers deliberately chose for whole fish, as this coincided better with their point of view of what good food is. As discussed earlier: buying good and safe whole fish in the Netherlands and Chile is becoming quite hard. Other 'traditional' options are also possible like artisanal smoked salmon sold on farmers markets or just by the seaside.

Artisanal cold smoked salmon, something you can buy on a Dutch farmers market. The farmers market is cramped with these 'traditional' foods, often products like 'grandma's rhubarb marmalade' are sold here, a cheeky homage to the past. Also salmon can be part of these markets and on a mostly whole foods and organically orientated farmers market, we found artisanal cold smoked salmon (see photo 9 and 10). Making the salmon last for a much longer time outside of the fridge or freezer, smoking is a clever technique in making food last. These are the type of cooking practices many of these consumers are interested in. Like Laura, who said the cooking itself was what she liked. Learning different methods to prepare fish and using the majority of the parts of the fish. Filleting is a technique she learned in the process of it, just like making broth with the rest of the fish parts and bones. "It is just fun!" (Personal field notes 2013). In the course of gathering information she usually uses the internet or cookbooks in guiding her through the new cooking techniques.

Also in Valdivia these artisanal products were popular. The road from Valdivia towards the sea was full of signs advertising to sell *salmón ahumado*. These artisanal smoked salmon were also for sale on the local market. Like the Dutch cold smoked salmon it was with a hint of memories to the past, usually sold with the words 'artisinal' next to it.

Whole foods are a way of shortening the chain of middlemen before the foods ends up on your plate. However, it does involve more specific knowledge and skills, as the appropriate product needs to be picked, prepared and later on consumed. Presumably many people are rather clueless on how to fillet a whole salmon, as it so easily ready bought. Slow Fish for example advocate exchanging culinary practices with other generations.

"Ask your fishmonger or someone from an older generation to help you discover or rediscover interesting local species." (Source: slowfood.com/slowfish)





From top to bottom:

Photo 11 Selling and onsite preparation of artisanal cold smoked salmon on a Dutch farmers market

Photo 12 The process of cold smoking salmon and mackerel on a Dutch famers market

Photo 13 The sign of Cooperativa La Manzana next to the front door of their shop in Valdivia Chile

They are focussing on those 'traditional' skills and knowledges about food that are essential when turning to the consumption of whole foods. Arguably this makes the social connection to food stronger, as consumers learn much about what Cook terms "the spatial structures of provision that stretch beyond places of food consumption but which are vital in their constitution, providing resources not only of foods themselves, but also of knowledges about how to value and use them, domestic technologies for their use, and non-domestic sites for their consumption" (Cook and Crang 1996:138). Tapping into the food memories of older generations keeps these skills and knowledges about food alive, as these consumers use this in their daily food decision-making and culinary practices.

Inequalities

Acting upon ethical concerns in the food provisioning system is a privilege, as many consuming actors do not have the means or access to do so. Organic foods for example, are mainly popular amongst students and elites due to heightened awareness and often income. Because of these particular and principle ways of production and distribution access is limited to some groups. Although organic food and living up to principles of sustainability, social justice and food safety might be a quality for these elite groups, it is an inequality for many. Like sushi, it is restricted by income, as these foodstuffs are often expensive.

The cooperative *La Manzana* (see photo 13) has beautiful products and principles; however this also makes it an inequality for many other people, as connections and income are needed to be included in this small club. Run mostly by volunteers, it is a small scale operation. Consuming actors that are part of this cooperative are mostly educated people and have a similar interest in sustainability and are likely to share a vision of what good food is.

Dutch consumers can have somewhat easier access to these ethical foods as more and more supermarkets are selling these products. Price difference is still noticeable, which restricts organic foods still to an exclusive group. However, the 'occasionally-concerned' consumer is easier convinced to buy these products as it fits in their daily food routine: not having to go to another shop and products are almost the same as non-organic products. The up side is that these products are so to say 'guilt-free'. Still, it depends on what conceptualisation a person has with 'sustainable' and 'good' food. These mass-produced organic foods might not satisfy all ethically consumed actors: Perhaps it is organically produced; it can still be imported from the other side of the world. Small local initiatives are countless in the Netherlands like *Willem & Drees* and in Wageningen *De Hoge Born*, which are all local organic initiatives.

Inequalities arise out of the formation of a quality, like sustainable, responsible food. Processes of production create this quality food, but also result in a high price, leaving people with a low income without access to these products.

What we have seen in this chapter is that these organic of ethically concerned consuming actors often turn to foods that are most natural and least processed, in order to step away from the dominant food reality and its processes of globalisation, commoditisation and modernisation. The Dutch consumers would mostly refer to wild salmon, while the Chilean who did not have easy access to wild salmon, referred to the least processed salmon: whole foods. Translating and reworking dominant notions of food they try to position it into their own food reality, which often result in whole fish, being a *natural* product. In the process these consumers use their senses and information gathered about the social life of the salmon to judge quality. Shorter

food chains are one result of buying whole fish which allows many of these people to have more trust in their fishmongers or vendors. Using skills and knowledges from food memories of older generations and experts is making sure these consumers know how to go about buying, preparing and cooking these whole salmons in somewhat more 'traditional' ways, like filleting and skinning.

Especially in the case of organic food we see inequalities arising out of the formation of a quality, that is in this case sustainable and responsible food. Not only knowledge and skills are needed, also access to these products.

In the next chapter we will turn to the space of the restaurant. Here we will zoom in on the culinary practices surrounding salmon in the sushi-restaurant and the use of salmon as a substitute-fish.

The restaurant

Sushi

When exploring the consumption of salmon, sushi fits the bill. Nowadays it is often made with this fatty fish that is described as the omega-3 bomb that is delicious and lean at the same time. Sushi is in both case countries a cosmopolitan food that goes beyond being food and is able to express to some extent one's identity. Before exploring the data of both cases, we will firstly look into the origin of sushi, to get some context for this type of food, and how this cuisine has become such a popular global food.

A global taste

Restaurants serving this raw fish tapas pop up out of nowhere over the world, after the sushi cuisine gathered momentum in the 1990ies through the hands of the new health-conscious global consumer (Cwiertka 2000; Cwiertka 2005; Bestor 2006; Mouritsen 2009; Sakamoto and Allen 2011). Peculiar about this global cuisine is its versatility and adaptability; as Japanese sushi¹⁷, the one logically to be considered 'traditional' and authentic, tends to differ considerably from the global translations found all over the world (Bestor 2000; Bestor 2001; Feng 2006; Sakamoto and Allen 2011; Edwards 2012). Chilean sushi for example, has a main focus on the use of salmon. Having the second world's largest salmon industry, makes a compelling argument for this choice. However, many sushi-fans all over the world regard these local variations as authentic and traditional Japanese. Many authors have shown the global status of sushi; salmon from Norway or Chile, tuna from North America, *nori* paper from China, rice from Italy and wasabi from England. This global commodity is an assemblage of many localities and materialities, but its imaginative geography remains Japanese, resulting in "not only 'authentic' forms but in multiple, creative, hybrid and fusion forms" (Cook 2008; Sakamoto and Allen 2011:99).

Sushi appears to be a foodstuff highly susceptible to a cosmopolitan status. The food for a citizen of multiple worlds; de-territorialized and re-territorialized in a new reality. Sushi has transformed its image "from an exotic, ethnic fare, to a fashionable style of dining, to a health-conscious fast food" (Cwiertka 2005:241). This exotic cuisine is able to allow consumers to experience travelling to the other side of world, stepping away from their own reality (Cook and Crang 1996; Cook 2008). Foreign, unknown ingredients and methods of preparation and even unfamiliar eating habits construct consumer fantasies as such (Ketchum 2005).

Local translations

In the process of reaching cult-status sushi has been translated and reworked in local contexts, as a mechanism for the consuming actor to make sense of the Japanese rice-snacks. Adopting local cooking techniques and locally available products the most exotic can be toned down into something locally accepted (Cwiertka 2005). Not long ago sushi was considered to be inedible. Bestor points to American magazines publishing sushi recipes, but shying away from the variations with actual raw fish (2001). As Feng writes: "As late as the 1960ies [...] a British guidebook to Japan would still in all seriousness offer travellers to steer clear from the 'stomachturning' Japanese habit of consuming raw fish" (2006:17).

¹⁷ A Japanese dish consisting of small balls or rolls of vinegar-flavoured cold rice served with a garnish of vegetables, egg, or raw seafood. (Oxforddictionaries.com)

In the case of Chile some typical culinary modifications were found on the menu of the sushi restaurants in drinks and some fusion forms of sushi. Fried sushi rolls were very popular – combining the Japanese cooking style *tempura* and *sushi* – something that is not mentioned in most of the sushi literature about the USA, Japan or Europe. Secondly, sushi is often accompanied by drinking a *Pisco Sour*, a typical Chilean sweet-sour, though strong, alcoholic drink. The menu did not display any of the traditional Japanese drinks such as *Sake* (rice wine) or tea; instead it contained many Pisco Sour varieties and other cocktails. Hard to find on a Chilean sushi-menu are vegetable dishes; an impressive array of sushi varieties is the norm and like any self-respecting restaurant in Chile they still have to serve at least steak or chicken, for the occasional visitor that does not like raw fish. Seeing to the needs of non-sushi-eating customers also proved important. In one particular Valdivian sushi restaurant the owner said to serve sushi with nori that was not made with seaweed, but with rice:

"The thing is... I don't advertise it. Those who say 'well, I don't like nori' or 'I don't like that black thing inside' ... We tell them: 'but, we can do it with something else!'. And some of them prefer the rice paper instead of nori." (Personal field notes 2013)

Sushi could upon request be served as something locally translated, even up to the point of having rice paper instead of *nori*. Another example was the sushi roll with meat: Stuffed with *teriyaki* chicken or covered in *Serrano* ham. If even that was too exotic for a customer, there was always the fish and meat *a la plancha* to fall back on, still enjoyed in the cosmopolitan environment of the sushi restaurant.

On a different continent, in the Dutch sushi restaurant in Wageningen, we also found hybrid and fusion sushi forms, all portrayed as Japanese. Much alike the Chilean sushi-restaurants, there were many sushi rolls on the menu. However, another discipline of Japanese cuisine called Teppanyaki¹⁸ is always fused into the Dutch sushi menu. This style of food "agrees more with the tastes and value-for-money concepts of the Dutch public" (Cwiertka 2005:245). Also the Chinese owner of the single Japanese sushi bar in Wageningen had noticed this Dutch preference:

"Besides sushi we also sell warm dishes. A lot of people, mainly older people don't accept sushi yet, so to say. So that is why we have small warm dishes and we have quite a lot of them on the menu. This is also quite popular in the Netherlands at the moment." (Personal field notes 2013)

Mediating between the exotic raw fish and the Dutch customary of cooking food, the menu consists of both cooking techniques. Consumers are able to choose from course to course whether they can 'endure' another round of raw fish or whether they need to tone the exotic down with some grilled vegetables and meat, because of the Dutch ordering system. Sushi varieties were less characterized by locally produced products than in Chile, as the restaurant featured eleven different forms of *nigiri*¹⁹ sushi. Use of fish did not seem bound to what was locally available, as the menu was the same all year round. Drinks to accompany the sushi were, like in Chile, alike what people would drink going out. However, the option for warm sake features on the menu of almost all Dutch sushi-restaurants, a drink that would be considered 'traditional' in Japan during eating sushi.

¹⁹ A Japanese sushi style which consists only of a lump of rice and a piece of fish (Mouritsen 2009).

¹⁸ A Japanese style of cuisine that uses an iron griddle to cook vegetables, meat and fish.

We see two very different approaches to the global taste of sushi when it comes to the Chilean and Dutch interpretation of sushi. As for Chilean sushi they stick more to "making use of ingredients that are familiar in the regional diners. Not only does this tactic have practical, cost effective results, it also appeals to the more risk-averse diners who tend to be more conservative eaters who stick with the tried, proven and familiar options" (Feng 2006:18). However, both restaurant formulas have considered "filling with vegetables and cooked fish or meat ... for customers who find raw fish too challenging" (Sakamoto and Allen 2011:101). These modifications and compromises made in the sushi are lowering the threshold for local consumers to try this new exotic foodstuff. But they are practical adjustments as well, as they can reduce production costs and guarantee freshness of products.

The cosmopolitan

In both Chile and the Netherlands the eating of sushi is becoming more popular by the day. In Valdivia sushi was immensely popular, to such an extent that people were preparing and selling it from their homes, sometimes even with an option for home delivery. New trendy sushi-bars were emerging everywhere in town; for a healthy, quick and trendy lunch or just for sushi takeaway. In the Netherlands we also see sushi slowly taking over the restaurant landscape. The once immensely popular Chinese take-away is slowly making way for all-you-can-eat sushi-bars and the rice-fish combination can now be found in the supermarket, freezer and even in the togo shop at the train station. And Asian supermarkets are stacking up on sushi ingredients imported from Japan, China and many other countries that produce Asian looking products for sushi.

What exactly makes sushi so enticing for people all over the world? Able to bridge multiple worlds through food preparation and eating habits the cosmopolitan consumer feels at home with this type of food. Being a citizen of multiple worlds and wanting to experience another place. As Cook argues this happens mostly through food as most people experience 'the exotic' during their holiday in local cuisine (Cook and Crang 1996). Cosmopolitanism can be described as an 'increasing identification between consumption of foreign food and the appreciation of cultural difference" (Warde 2000; Cwiertka 2005). Food media emphasize the opportunity to experience that holiday-like feeling at home by either cooking such cosmopolitan foods or going out to that one authentic restaurant. Most sushi restaurants adhere to this notion of cosmopolitanism and so did the restaurants in Chile and the Netherlands. The modern cosmopolitan, the new modern citizen is attracted to this form of food and its feel for design and technological gadgets.

Most Dutch sushi restaurants function through a system of all-you-can-eat, which is operationalized through a form that customers fill in themselves (see photo 19). Functioning almost like Spanish tapas, the customer of the Dutch sushi restaurant can try as many little sushi bites as wanted. Choosing a set amount of sushi per round per person and filling it in on the paper form which is seconds later swiftly snatched from the table by the quick waiters. However, this system is sometimes replaced by a more high-tech one, e.g.: placing orders on an iPad which are directly send to the kitchen, ensuring the minimal amount of contact with ensuring employees is needed. In search of wellbeing, consumers want to enjoy dinner in a 'fun' setting, which for some means being able to place orders with the all-you-can-eat-form. The question to why she ate sushi, Laura responded:





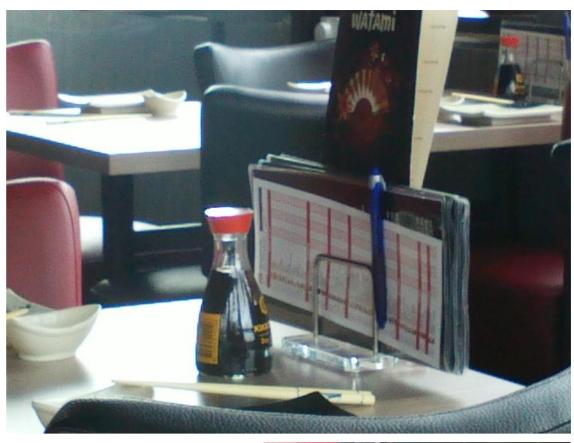


From top to bottom:

Photo 14 The sushi chefs working at the sushi-bar of Gohan in Valdivia, Chile

Photo 15 The sushi chefs working at the sushi-bar of Sushi-Strike in Valdivia, Chile

Photo 16 Served Chilean Sushi rolls (envuelto en palta) in Gohan



From top to bottom:

Photo 17 The all-you-can-eat sushi form and pen for customers of Watami sushi restaurant in Wageningen, the Netherlands

Photo 18 The sleek interior of Watami sushi restaurant in Wageningen, the Netherlands



"Why I eat sushi? ...because it is fun and tasty." When I asked here exactly why she thought it was tasty, she started thinking again. After a small pause she said: "...I don't really know. Actually I don't think I have ever eaten *really* good sushi before. I mean, I have been to the local sushi restaurant, but I don't think the sushi they serve is very good. But still, I like fish in general and this is a nice way to eat a lot of different types of fish." (Personal field notes 2013)

The quirky ways of ordering give the sushi-restaurant a modern and alternative feel to them, set in a neatly decorated restaurant, giving in to that idea of the hypermodern Japanese style; sleek, minimalistic and modern. But as Laura clearly points out, the Dutch sushi-restaurant offers customers the chance to sample many different types of fish. Even though she thought she never had tried sushi that was close to the 'authentic' Japanese version, she still liked eating it. She even said she thought the sushi she had was not really good. However, fun is a word that can be associated with sushi, as the whole experience of eating sushi is found to be fun to do. At the end of the day, consumers look for food that gives a satisfying feeling. Having an unconventional way of ordering makes visiting these sushi restaurants a different experience for consumers. All to accompany and fulfil the consumers' food fantasy surrounding sushi.

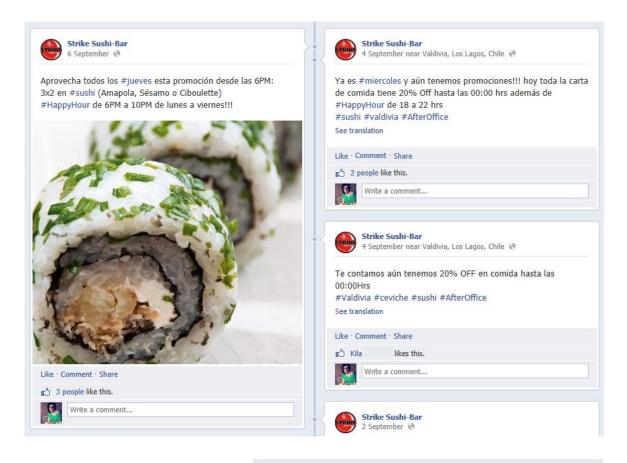
Consumers' food fantasies in Chile were more of exclusivity when it came to sushi as the menu was á-la-carte instead of the Dutch all-you-can-eat: A place for business-lunches and fancy diners having a classical restaurant setting, but most tables with a clear view of the sushi-bar and the sushi-chefs working behind it (see photo 16 and 17). In this next section a more detailed exploration of one popular sushi restaurant in Valdivia:

The all-wood exterior design stood out from the other buildings in the street. The only thing that gave its purpose away was the square next to the door saying: 'Gohan, sushi & shrimps'. At first sight the exterior really matched the sushi-bar, but I could not pinpoint what it was that made me feel that way: perhaps it just suggested a traditional Japanese diner room. However, when entering the restaurant you entered a different world; sleek and modern. Visible was the amount of attention that was given to the interior design, as different corners where designed to make every seating area feel special. The sushi-bar was open and two chefs were working behind it. Ingredients for the sushi were neatly laid out behind a glass case, where the chefs occasionally took their needed pieces of fish or vegetables. As we sat down, the waiter put the needed accessories to eat sushi on the table. The waiter was entirely dressed in black and had 2 flags on his shirt: one Chilean and one Japanese; although he did not look Japanese. (Personal field notes 2013)

Remarkable was the Japanese symbolic, something that kept returning in every restaurant and take-away. Chefs wearing aprons and jackets with both the Japanese and Chilean flag printed on them, fancy lettering that gave the impression of Japanese writing: as a constant reminder that the sushi about to be eaten was 'Japanese'.

Social media

All restaurants serving sushi in Valdivia lived up to this idea: Having that sleek interior design, used to create a Japanese atmosphere. Even interior design for sushi restaurants was reworked within Chilean context in order to satisfy consumers' food fantasies of sushi in Chile. Although most of the sushi bars incorporated a classical restaurant setting, communication was more 'high-tech'. Communicating mostly through social media such as Facebook, sushi restaurants comply with the modern and technical 'fantasy' of the Japanese cuisine, fitting well into the





From top to bottom:
Photo 19 Facebook advertising
from Strike Sushi-bar
Photo 20 Facebook advertising
from Minami

lifestyles of the new modern citizens that love cosmopolitan foods so much (see photo 14 and 15). Posting photos of the sushi variety of the week or offers of the month online, in a popular manner, and making it able for visiting customers to display to their social circles they visited that cosmopolitan restaurant. These social media updates came regularly a day, as can be seen in the snapshots from two sushi-restaurant's Facebook: Advertising with a 20% on all food on the menu. Many examples of restaurants using the same approach can be found on Facebook, but what is interesting is that the most popular sushi-bar, Gohan, did not use Facebook. However, it was well known in town that Gohan had discounts on their less busy moments and most lunch-times. However, Facebook advertising seemed to work, as many people had 'befriended' the sushi-restaurants on the social media page.

On several occasions me and my roommate had fallen for this exact same marketing trick at Sushi Strike, as this was conveniently located next to the building where we had our weekly exercising. What had convinced us was; firstly, being hungry after exercising. Secondly, the fact that you could get two Pisco Sour's for the price of one. Thirdly, there was also a 20% discount on the sushi and lastly, we did not have to cook. Having seen the advertisement on Facebook, we knew the details of the offer of that day. (Personal field notes 2013)

Most places in Valdivia (restaurants, bars, shopping malls and other public spaces) have free Wi-Fi, making the use of internet and social media related advertising practical. These free advertising options were used not only by sushi-bars, but also by other public places such as restaurants, clubs and coffee-bars.

In the Netherlands, on the other hand, the use of Facebook is a lot different. Restaurants and bars all have webpages and make sure all the information can be found there. However, a Facebook page is rarely used to advertise, present the menu or any other activities that are used in Valdivia by sushi-restaurants. Sushi remains fashionable and trendy food and the atmosphere needs to fit the bill. Especially in Chile we see this notion return, as popular social media is used to spark the interests of a young upper-middle class cosmopolitan crowd.

The 'authentic'

Although the Japanese philosophy might be long gone in the hybridised versions found in the Chilean and Dutch restaurants, it still is a cuisine that holds a strong feeling of nationality. The symbolic construct of sushi coming from Japan is used by consumers to make sense of the new exotic food, but also a source of pride and economic wealth in Japan itself.

"Sushi as a global food is thus often quite different from sushi as 'traditional' Japanese food as it has gone through a process of hybridisation and localisation; yet [...] the current 'sushi boom' overseas is often represented [in Japan] in terms of 'them' eating 'our' food, or even Japanese sushi 'conquering the world', suggesting the existence of culinary nationalism." (Sakamoto and Allen 2011:102)

In the fragment above, Sakamoto indicates a difference between global sushi and Japanese sushi. This 'global' sushi is likely to not be considered as sushi in Japan. *Uramaki* rolls were initially designed in California for consumers who did not fancy the sight of *nori* (sea weed paper). Hence uramaki literally means inside-out-roll, as the nori is disguised by the sight of salmon and rice. The now world-renowned *California roll* is being served in Japan as 'American sushi'. But Japan still claims ownership over all its "multiple, creative, hybrid and fusion forms". Sticking to that image of authenticity and that only Japanese products are 'the best', it is an

economic boost for Japan as 'authentic' sushi products are exported all over the world. Hybrid forms are created everywhere and also in Wageningen, even though regarded as Japanese:

During the interview with the local sushi restaurant, the owner guided me through their all-you-can-eat menu: explaining shortly the categories of sushi. I asked her if this was customary to have on the menu, to which she responded that it was. "But this one, we created ourselves", while pointing at one sushi. She pointed at the 'salmon cheese *maki*'. "I find it a little strange the combination of salmon and cheese, but it is actually quite nice!" she added." (Personal field notes 2013)

During the interview, I was surprised when the owner said this was their own creation as this combination was not new to me. I actually had seen it in several different countries as it was inspired from the *California roll*. On the whole it seemed like this menu was a copy of a 'blue-print' all-you-can-eat menu for Dutch sushi-bars; any sushi bar I had visited in the Netherlands had very similar menus. Apparently there is some leeway for individual sushi-restaurants to 'experiment' with ingredients and if wanted to create their own sushi (even though they might already exist somewhere else on the world). Hybrid forms of sushi are thus not strange on the menu, but what is needed to keep it cosmopolitan is an air of authenticity. Like the owner noted, salmon and cheese was a rather strange combination, but presented in the standard sushi-form it still looked the part.

Authenticity is important for a cosmopolitan food such as sushi in order to bridge multiple spaces through food and eating habits. It is all about eating *Japanese* sushi, with *Japanese* wasabi and pickled ginger, and *Japanese* chopsticks. As the Japanese cuisine has been de-territorialized and re-territorialized, the eating with chopsticks and eating in a restaurant setting have been necessary compromises and mediations in order to make the Japanese cuisine locally accepted. The sushi chefs in Valdivia all had Japanese flags on their shirts, as if they were from Japan. Most of the sushi chefs seen did not look like being Japanese or related to any Asian nationality. The sushi too, has gone through some transformations of its own. The favoured use of salmon even, does not have roots in Japanese culinary history. As Chile is home to a large salmon aquaculture industry the use of salmon is practical and cheap. The creative, hybrid and fusion version created are designed to fit into the Chilean culinary expectations.

The table is set and our sushi orders are placed. I have had sushi before, so I start shoving the objects on the table to my satisfaction: Yes, perfect. That is where I want my soy sauce to be. I stop and linger. Then I think about the first time I ate sushi...

Anyone's first time at the sushi-bar can be quite a challenge. Objects are placed on the table and when familiar with these, people start shoving them around the table: ordering the objects to commence the ritual. That is what eating sushi is to some, a ritual. Getting the exact sequence of using the objects right, perhaps even perfect. At first this might be a little confusing: Where do I put the soy sauce? What the heck is this green stuff? O no, I have to eat with chopsticks... But when one has been through the rite of passage and knows the ritual, it starts becoming fun! Now you know the *proper* way of eating sushi.

So I start shoving the soy sauce, wasabi and ginger around the table to my satisfaction and with chopsticks in hands I am ready for tonight's sushi ritual. (Personal field notes 2013)

Knowing the 'authentic' ritual of eating sushi makes it fun to eat. Like Laura already noted; even though she did not think the sushi she had eaten up to now was the ultimate quality, she still liked eating sushi because it was fun. Also in Chile, people were acquainted with

this ritual: many people had their own sets of chopsticks at home. If one ordered sushi for takeaway, it could be enjoyed with real, wooden decorated chopsticks. Not the ones you throw away after using them once. These little things are what make the eating of sushi feel like the real deal or so to say authentic.

However, in Japanese culture, what we will regard as being closest to being 'authentic', is that the Japanese sushi bars are usually small with only a few places to sit and are hardly decorated; it is mostly meant for a quick dinner. Pieces of sushi are often eaten by hand, as the nigiri sushi for example is most popular in Japan and this variety of sushi leaves the chopsticks aside. The use of chopsticks in Chilean and Dutch sushi restaurants is used as an exotic food habit to bridge spaces; bringing Japanese cuisine into Chilean and Dutch territory. The chopsticks are sufficient enough a performance to give the cosmopolitan the idea of having experienced Japanese culture through eating sushi in their own country. However, a disconnection of worlds of production and consumption remain, something Cook refers to as 'global miniaturization': "where postmodern time-space compression in embodied in various sorts of 'global collections' of which [sushi] would be a far from unique example" (Cook and Crang 1996:136). Having a touristic appeal to this dining performance that is offered in the sushi-bar is what makes it a perfect cosmopolitan food. Although it arguably ignores many of the "myriad social relations embedded in the system" that had made the pieces of sushi possible (Cook and Crang 1996:136; Goldfrank 2005), it is a source for diversification and (some) knowledge transferal. As selections are made of the cultural spectrum of a cuisine (in this case Japanese), some 'cultural' traits are transferred to cosmopolitan consumers, keeping a balance between what is locally acceptable, understandable, translatable, and what is considered to be 'authentic'.

The healthy and lean

What is increasingly important as a characteristic for fashionable foods is being healthy and nutritious. Sushi is considered as such, as it contains quite an amount of fish and unprocessed ingredients. Fish contains many good fatty acids and they are said to prevent people from developing coronary diseases. Having this image as being a healthy, yet cosmopolitan treat originating from Japan, is another reason for its popularity. Japanese women are considered to be among the healthiest on the world, with is often contributed to their high intake of fish. Female celebrities swear to sushi being their favourite healthy snack, during their never-ending quest to stay lean and fit. Popular magazines and papers follow their lead and advertise it likewise. But how healthy is sushi? An American nutritionist concludes in her book that one roll of sushi contains between 290 and 350 calories, which is about the same amount of carbohydrates in 2.5 to 4 slices of bread²⁰. As the average sushi-dinner exists of 3 rolls, the health aspect of sushi is diminishing rapidly as the average sushi-eater is approaching a meal above 1000 calories. Secondly, the amount of fish eaten in sushi is almost insignificant, as an average portion of fish would be 140 gram: in one piece of sushi there is not even 5 gram. The amount of fish consumed is thus rather limited. Thirdly, the rice is highly processed and polished, removing the fibres of the grain. This leaves a rice-grain that is only contributing to a high bloodglucose level, instead of being a good source of fibre. Also, because of the amount of soy sauce used sushi is often rather salty, which counterworks the health benefits of the fish rich in omega3. To conclude, the amount of 'healthy foods' in the sushi is rather limited, as pieces of vegetables and fish are tiny, making the polished, pickled (not per se healthy) rice the main

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²⁰ Rachel Beller - 'Eat to Lose, Eat to Win' (2013)

component of sushi. Sushi is not a 'light' lunch and not something health-conscious people should eat daily. Eating sashimi (pieces of solely raw fish), nigiri and seaweed salads is actually the best shot of a health conscious consumer at making the sushi-meal truly healthy. Forcing the consuming actor to leave aside all the various hybrid, fusion forms of sushi that have been created in localities all over the world in order to lower the threshold of sushi.

Advertising sushi on the streets as a perfect way to have a healthy, lean and light lunch was one strategy of one of the sushi-restaurants in Valdivia. Located in the main clubbing and dining street, it was aiming at passer-by's. The restaurant used to be a steakhouse, with a small sushi restaurant on its side. As meat was getting more expensive and sushi more popular, the sales of sushi gained more profit than the meat-restaurant. Although Chile is, alike other Latin-American countries, fairly meat-centred, sushi was outnumbering the steak restaurant. The two restaurants had become one big sushi-restaurant. The building stayed exactly the same, giving room for a non-smoking area and a smoker's area. Their approach to attracting new customers was through the use of Facebook and advertising it as healthy, lean and light. Ever since they had converted from the red-meats to sushi, their business had skyrocketed.

It was a warm summer's day around lunchtime in Chile and we had once again decided to eat sushi. We sat outside, as the weather was just too nice to sit inside. We ordered our food and drinks and a while later started eating. In the meantime, we had perfect view of the entrance and the people entering to pick-up or to go eat sushi. A slender, fancy dressed woman got out of a big SUV and walked inside. Moments later she returned with a plastic bag with (presumably) sushi in it. A group of women and a few men (probably on a business meeting, since they were all dressed in suits) sat down next to us and immediately started ordering sushi and chatting away. This repeated itself, as more groups (of predominantly women) entered to either eat lunch or to pick it up. Cosmopolitans seemed to flock to the sushi-bar to get their healthy and quick lunch. (Personal field notes 2013)

Even though sushi is not extremely healthy, it does have an image of being healthy. Concerns that existed were not about the caloric-intake but about the food safety. Several sushi-loving respondents interviewed in Chile emphasized that the eating of fish should be limited to once or twice a week, as every fish contains contaminants. Like Vicente — a medical student with whom I made sushi (see photo 21-22) — said that Chileans do not eat sushi too often to avoid eating too much antibiotics.

During the interview at SEA, a company selling aquaculture equipment all three of the managers said to never buy fish from local markets, knowing how the aquaculture functioned, they only bought the premium quality that was for sale directly from the bigger producers. All three of these men preferred eating the salmon raw; they only did so because they were assured of its healthy character: "Knowing the origin of the salmon; that is the most important to me." One of them said to also 'warn' family and friends for the salmon that is sold on the streets:

"Every time we have guests and we eat salmon, sushi or ceviche, we tell them it was made with certified salmon. They will ask me: 'Why? Why does it have to be certified?' and I explain it to them. I tell them about the salmon species, and most of my guests did not know there are more than one species of salmon. We talk about the use of antibiotics and the salmon that is sold on the streets and in supermarkets and just have a nice chat. They respond with: 'Wow! I always buy at Angelmo and I didn't know that!' Well, now they know and they will stop buying at Angelmo and look for safer places to buy salmon from..." (Personal field notes 2013)



Photo 21 Homemade sushi rolls made during participant observation with Vicente.



Photo 22 Homemade sushi pieces made during participant observation with Vicente.

Also the two other managers from SEA said to do the same sort of awareness creating in their personal social circles. Taking friends and family on a trip to buy salmon from the 'safe' place was no exception. They all knew exactly how salmon was processed and what 'dangers' might loom in the pink flesh of the salmon, especially when eaten raw. Still, they all ate salmon rather frequently and preferably raw. Appreciating the production process behind the scenes of the salmon and having the knowledge to keep consumption of salmon healthy, they consumed it mostly raw in the form of sushi and ceviche.

Although the general idea of sushi is that it is healthy, none of the respondents interviewed, both Chilean and Dutch, said to eat sushi because it was so. Although it is a popular way of portraying sushi, the rice-salmon combination in particular was not labelled by consumers as healthy, but as being delicious and addictive. The accompanying atmosphere that comes with sushi is what is most attractive. The 'practices of *flânerie*' that Cook refers to: Dressing up and eating exotic foods that many people still deem inedible because of the raw fish, 'providing imaginary gratification' (1996).

Class differentiation

A consuming actor can portray him or herself through organization of an individual lifestyle, starting with the choice of food objects. Sushi, being a new exotic foodstuff, is not accessible for everyone. In both cases sushi was regarded as luxury food and something special, as not everyone has the skills to make this foreign food. Mostly available in all the larger cities signals the elitist, luxurious status of this food type. Starting out in the 1990ies as the foods for presidents and businessmen, it is now gradually making its way into mainstream culture.

Unlike many 'classic' restaurant settings most people are used to, the Japanese sushi-restaurant functions in a different way. In a classic setting customers would sit in a larger space with several tables and a waiter would take a food order, after which food would 'magically' appear from out of the kitchen. The 'traditional' Japanese sushi-bar functions entirely different, as the main character in this play is the sushi, instead of the experience of eating at a sushi restaurant. Most restaurants are rather small, as the chef can guarantee quality better this way. Having a limited amount of seats in the sushi-bar, the chef has to similarly acquire a limited amount of high quality fish. And of the latter there is only a limited amount available on the fishmarket, as they all seek for 'the best'. Secondly, a quality sushi-bar is typified by seasonal sushi variations, showing the sushi-chef takes pride in his selection of fish, selecting only the freshest instead of the cheaper frozen fish — that is available year round. Customers are able to inspect the sushi ingredients as they sit at the bar, where the chef is preparing the sushi (hence the term sushi-bar). After having had a selection of freshly made sushi, the customers retreat to a booth to enjoy either a dessert or a drink (Mouritsen 2009). In the next section the dynamics of the 'traditional' sushi-bar are portrayed through the eyes of a sushi-lover:

"It is the ultimate slow food experience, in which you participate in the process in its entirety. You can place your order directly with the chef. You see the fresh ingredients and are able to evaluate their quality and follow with their preparation. You can observe the way the meal is presented, which to top it all off is served by the chef himself. There is more – you can even change your order mid-stream and ask the chef questions while he works. Simply put, there is no culinary culture that can offer an experimental chamber to rival the sushi-bar." (Mouritsen 2009:6)

As shown in the above section, conceptions of quality are highly important in the sushi-bar. The sushi-chef is confident enough to let his customers into the kitchen, by preparing the sushi right in front of his customers. In the sushi restaurant *Sukiyabashi Jiro* awarded with three Michelin stars: the average meal will take about 30 minutes during which the chef serves you 19 pieces of sushi in three courses. Although highly valued by the Japanese, this is a dynamic of eating that is not appreciated by most Western consumers. For this majority of Western consumers used to the more 'classic' set-up in a restaurant, the sushi-restaurants in Chile and Holland have altered their 'dynamics'. Mediating between the Japanese sushi-bar and a classic restaurant they have a mix that makes people want to visit the restaurant to have a cosmopolitan dining 'experience.

The 'experience of eating sushi is mostly exclusive to the upper-middle class of consuming actors in Chile. Sushi is still too expensive for the average Chilean and they are not able or willing to obtain this delicacy, as there are many other ways of preparing fish that are first of all cheaper and secondly locally embedded in practices of food consumption. However, there was always another alternative in between these two extremes as take-away were crowding the city in a rapid speed. Having many options for sushi take-away in one city (the restaurants also offered sushi for take-away) makes it also available to lower classes. Even solely take-away restaurants lived up to the idea of cosmopolitan sushi. In the next section a description is given of one of the many sushi take-away restaurants that recently set up shop in Valdivia:

"It was a small place called *Rio Roll* and a moped was parked outside. Located near the city centre and along one of the busier roads in Valdivia; many *collectivos* (shared cab) stopped around this block. There were some barstools inside, but it did not seem like a place for dining. It looked clean and tidy, but very minimalistic. Two girls were standing behind the counter, wearing a black apron and a white dress-shirt. Like in many sushi restaurants I noticed a Chilean and a Japanese flag printed on the shoulder of the shirt. An older man was already waiting inside for his order, happily chatting away that he loved eating sushi and that he did quite often.

The girls welcomed us kindly and told us this was the very first week they were open. We got a menu and sat down to decide what to order. In the meantime a guy with a helmet came from the back, holding a paper bag. He walked outside, stepped on the moped and drove off. A woman with a younger girl entered and like us, grabbed a menu and started staring at the long list of *nigiri*, *uramaki*, *maki*, *tempura*, *tempura* rolls and more. By now we had decided and placed our order: one tempura (fried) uramaki with shrimp, one uramaki rolled in sesame with cucumber, cheese and chives and lastly one uramaki with avocado on the outside and salmon rolled on the inside.

It didn't take long before the girls handed us a paper bag, with a plastic container with 3 perfect rolls of sushi, soy sauce, wasabi, ginger and chopsticks in them. With a smile on our face we walked out and hauled a collective." (Personal field notes 2013)

The take-away option for sushi was highly popular, as they often had good offers for customers, communicating them through Facebook. Such as buy 2 rolls of urumaki and get one tempura for free. Getting sushi from a 'Japanese-like' place, covered in Japanese symbolism (letterings, flags, colours etc.), but without the service and ambiance of the restaurant made this more accessible to another income levels of Chileans. However, regarding the price that was a lot lower than the fashionable restaurants like Gohan – seen as the best and most expensive sushi restaurant in Valdivia – some budgets cuts were expected to be made when it came to sushi ingredients. One cheaper restaurant even acknowledged buying salmon for sushi from the *Mercado Fluvial*, a place which was deemed unsafe by the SEA-managers:



Photo 23 The sushi take-away we bought with an Argentinian beer. (Described in vignette above on p96)

"I usually buy salmon where it is cheapest, so I don't have a fixed middleman..." the head chef said. "What about the *Mercado Fluvial*?" I asked him, expecting him to say no. "Yes, sometimes... If the salmon from other places is too expensive, then I will buy the salmon from the Mercado." (Personal field notes 2013)

Most sushi-restaurant owners showed me their invoices of their licenced middleman who sold salmon with a safety-guarantee. So I was rather surprised when the head chef of this sushi-restaurant bluntly told me he also bought from the Mercado Fluvial. Making sushi more available for different income-levels and offering it for a lower price needs compromises. Even if this means buying salmon from the local market, not knowing exactly how old it is or where it comes from. Having tried sushi from multiple take-away restaurants, there is a clear difference in the sushi. Sushi from the somewhat cheaper take-away restaurants, tend to have more spices or cheaper ingredients in the stuffing and less of the more expensive fish. Even though there was quite some differentiation between quality and price in sushi in Valdivia, all respondents agreed sushi was too expensive for the average Chilean and a popular food in the more elite and high income circles.

A collectivo stopped in front of me and I got in. I told him where I wanted to go, he nodded, I paid him and he drove off. My accent in Spanish gave me away and he asked me where I was from and what I was doing here, like so many people had done. So I told him the few lines I told anybody who asked me: "I am a Dutch student and I'm doing a research here on the gastronomy of salmon". What was funny is that many people, once I said I was investigating salmon, had the urge to tell me how they liked salmon best. And so did this collectivo-driver: "Salmón, que rico (so delicious)!" As I had many responses about sushi that day, I asked him if he liked sushi. "Sushi? No, not sushi!" he said while pulling a face. "I don't like it. I prefer it from the oven, Cancato is my favourite, or a la plancha." (Personal field notes 2013)

Sushi might be too expensive, it is for many also not regarded as food, in Chile as well in the Netherlands. This collectivo-driver even pulled a face when I asked him if he liked sushi, which is a reaction that is not uncommon, I can imagine. He preferred to stick within the borders of what to him was 'normal' cuisine, hence he noted Cancato as his favourite. Perhaps he had the money to pay for sushi; still he decided not to eat it.

In the Netherlands the system of all-you-can-eat has made sushi cheap and available for many consuming actors in the Netherlands. Most of these restaurants are converts from Chinese restaurants and are similarly managed by entrepreneurial Japanese. As sushi-maker Jun Tsujimaru emphases: "The Chinese just know how to do that. Japanese are not that smart"²¹. Arriving to the Netherlands in 1972 as a KLM employee to improve meals on flights to Japan, he started to sell sushi 14 years later. As Japan was going through an economic boom and selling high-tech commodities all over the world, Jun made bento-boxes with sushi for the Japanese businessmen stationed in the Netherlands. Attempting to also sell sushi to the Dutch locals at that time was a fail. However things have changed: "Who would have thought those same people where stuffing themselves with sushi 25 years later?" ²². Nowadays the Dutch *bitterbal* (fried meat snack) is driven off as a party-snack by sushi, especially at elite parties in the richer

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^{21,19} http://www.volkskrant.nl: 'Hoe sushi in Nederland de bitterbal verdrong'.

areas in the Netherlands such as 't Gooi. Jun now owns Sushi Ran, a large sushi factory producing ready-to-eat sushi for supermarkets and to-go shops at train stations. However, like the cheaper restaurants in Valdivia, there are budget cuts and they often trace back to the ingredients used for the sushi. For example, all the fish from the all-you-can-eat sushi restaurant in Wageningen was frozen, as this was the cheapest way to get quality 'fresh' and affordable fish. Not having fresh fish on the menu did not seem to bother most customers of this Dutch sushi-bar as a limited amount of €25,- was able to provide enough food to leave with more than satisfied feeling and consumers from different ages and backgrounds seem to think so.

Most tables were occupied in the sushi-restaurant and waiters were quickly delivering plates to the rightful owners. We sat down and got comfortable. As we looked around I noticed quite some elderly looking Dutch people, which surprised me. I always had in mind that people from older generations would not be interested in this food fashion and especially not something containing rice and raw fish. However, I was proved wrong as these people here seemed to have a good time eating sushi. (Personal field notes 2013)

Also the owner of the restaurant confirmed by observation; they had quite a diverse public visiting the restaurant. People from differing ages visited the restaurant to have a good meal. What adds to the 'low threshold' is the menu that is varied and gives the opportunity to try many different things, amongst which also *Tepanyaki* dishes that are closer to what the Dutch would consider food. Besides the all-you-can-eat formula in the Dutch restaurants, sushi is on an increasing scale available in supermarkets and train stations. Having ready to eat sushi available in the frozen section at the supermarket for a minimal price makes it definitely more accessible to lower income classes amongst the Dutch. Still some reservations, much like in Chile, remain as raw fish is still to some a bit too far off the normal, customary eating practices. The elitist cosmopolitan Dutch can always retreat to one of the few restaurants in Holland, like the Okura restaurant in Amsterdam (that is famous for having the best sushi in Europe) paying the accompanying price for the delicacy. But for the true 'Japanaficionado' there is a limited amount of places left to consume 'authentic' sushi.

Sushi fashion has reached both Valdivia and Wageningen and there are many traces of this global food found. In this chapter we have seen how this global commodity is an assemblage of many localities and materialities, all reworked and translated into a local context. The hybrid and fusion forms that result from this translation still hold a strong sense of culinary nationalism which contributes to its popularity as a cosmopolitan food. Its exotic and (by some regarded as) inedible character is what gives it a special and luxurious air and makes it prone to be food with a touristic quality, inviting the sort of practices of *flânerie* by cosmopolitan consumers. Still this is a food form that is class differentiated and access to this food stuff is often unwanted or impossible. Especially in the case of Valdivia, salmon manifests in a strong way through sushi even though in very limited elite circles. In the second case of the Dutch we see a sushi becoming highly accessible and making an entrance into the food landscape.

In the next section we will focus upon another manifestation of salmon when it comes to the restaurant. We will pay special attention to the use of salmon as a substitute, as this was common practice in Chile.

Local use of salmon as a substitute

When considering the restaurant, of course we see salmon return in more forms than just sushi. In this section we will focus on other manifestations in the case of the salmon. As indicated in the previous chapter, sushi is a cosmopolitan translation of salmon that attracts a certain consuming actor. However, salmon is also part of different consumption-patterns. In this section we explore one interesting use of salmon in Chile where it is used as a substitute.

Fish and seafood have long been embedded in the culinary habits of Chileans, especially those that live near the sea. A walk across the Mercado Fluvial confirms that, as fish vendors show all the different types of fish that are available in the area. Logically, the use of fish in cuisine has been embraced and the small restaurants near the Mercado Fluvial offer all sorts of fish in many different varieties (photo 9, p64). Some typical preparations like *frito* or *a la plancha* were offered accompanied by potatoes, rice, or salad. Here we see that salmon, although its culinary history is perhaps somewhat shorter than that of other fish types, is used as a substitute. Like several restaurant owners said the local fishes *Congrio, Corvina, Merluza* and *Sierra* are very popular. Still locally, other fishes are more popular than salmon, as one owner of a local restaurant notes:

"Salmon is not so popular. For example *congrio*, *corvina*, salmon are more.." he paused, and thought for a second: "...these are dishes that are a more special. *Sierra*, *Merluza*... these are fishes that are a little more normal. These are a little cheaper." His wife, who was sitting next to him added: "The other are more expensive and fine." (Personal field notes 2013)

Because salmon was not one of the dishes he sold most, unlike Sierra and Merluza, he did not buy it in large quantities; he preferred to offer fresh fish to his customers.

"I buy fresh whole fish, sometimes without the head, but in general I get the whole fish. Not frozen, nothing. I don't buy in large quantities either. I only buy what I need. I mean, I could put what is left in the freezer... but then I would have to unfreeze it. I prefer to have it fresh, it is better for the flavour." (Personal field notes 2013)

The couple accounted to not know much about the salmon industry in general, besides use of additives in the production process. Their son worked at a salmon farm and knew more about it, but they just needed to know how to prepare stuff. I asked them how they felt about the salmon industry in general to which the man smiled and replied:

"They are making it, the salmon! They are just making these things... So I would say that is positive. If it would be negative, we wouldn't have salmon." (Personal field notes 2013)

Salmon was a part of the menu in their restaurant, however it was not the most important item as the man had noted. Other fishes were more popular and sold better. This restaurant was one of the cheaper ones in the area. However, he did not think there was any quality difference between the fish that he received and fish that was served in the more expensive restaurants in town:

"The salmon is all the same, everywhere. In different restaurants I mean, for example *the Casino...*" while he pointed at Hotel Dreams, which can be seen from his restaurant window. "If you're going to eat there you get the same salmon I have, the same salsa margarita I have, everything the same. However it is 8.000 pesos. If you come here, you get the same: I have salmon *a la plancha*, salsa margarita and everything and you pay less than 4.000 pesos. And it is all the same!" (Personal field notes 2013)





From top to bottom:
Photo 24 Salmon ceviche at a
sushi restaurant in Valdivia,
Chile.

Photo 25 The menu outside of a fish restaurant near the Mercado Fluvial Although several restaurant owners said the local fishes *Congrio*, *Corvina*, *Merluza* and *Sierra* are very popular, salmon is still found on all the menus of small local restaurants. Salmon is used as a substitute for other fishes, as these have disappeared or have become more expensive. Salmon is prepared in more 'traditional ways' in local small restaurants with the usual side dishes, like one restaurant owner near the Mercado Fluvial explained to me:

"We have *a lo pobre*, *a la plancha*, *frito*, *ceviche*... and this can come with different side dishes: salad, boiled potatoes, mashed potatoes or rice." (Personal field notes 2013)

Most of the fishes they have for offer can be prepared by those methods, giving endless possibilities to their menu (see photo 25). Many Chileans, especially on weekends, eat these kinds of dishes as doing groceries is rather expensive in Chile, while going out for lunch is relatively cheap. Like the earlier quoted collectivo-driver noted, he did not like sushi, however cancato (salmon from the oven) was one of his favourite dishes. These dishes are in essence similar to one another, however by replacing a fish type by salmon a whole new dish is created, thanks to the differing taste of salmon.

Another restaurant located beside the river, that was more expensive than the latter one, had 'bittersweet' as a general theme throughout the menu and also served quite some salmon and year-round:

"All the recipes have some origin elsewhere, but all the recipes are created here. But for example, the salmon sandwich is something more general that you can find in more places. We got inspiration from a book with recipes in the category 'bittersweet', but we don't have recipes too strange, because otherwise the people won't want it." (Personal field notes 2013)

Although he gave a clear twist to the more 'traditional' idea of preparing fish, it was still within the borders of what the other restaurants served.

Another popular substitute dish is *Ceviche* (see photo 24). Originally a Peruvian dish and made with raw white fish, it is very common to eat as a starter in local restaurants in Valdivia and especially in the area of Puerto Montt. However, what is different in this ceviche is that the raw white fish is substituted by raw salmon, making it a totally different dish. In Angelmó, a locally popular place in Puerto Montt where you can have a cheap, (and if you pick the right one) good meal, every small restaurant serves Ceviche as a starter. This with lemon cold cooked salmon is gaining popularity rapidly and is also served in the more expensive restaurants.

Salmon is used in many local restaurants, albeit often as a substitute. However, most of the restaurants accounted to have salmon as one of their bestselling menu items. Salmon might be too expensive to consume in the home environment, it is clearly popular when going out for lunch or dinner. By using salmon as a substitute; replacing a familiar fish in a traditional dish by salmon, it is easily accepted by many consumers. Like the owner of a local restaurant, whose son worked in the *salmoneras*, many have positive feelings towards the salmon industry. A sense of pride, as this Chilean salmon is now eaten across the world, but also because of the many jobs that are provided and wealth it has brought to the country. Salmon may be relatively new to Chile, it has become one of its identity foods and many people are proud of that.

Discussion: Differing manifestations side by side

Here we will discuss some of the issues that arose during the research process and which are noteworthy to consider when it comes to the findings in the case of the salmon. Manifestations are the different ways through which salmon appears in gastronomy and cuisine and several have been explored in the last chapters, focussing on the spaces of restaurants and market places. This chapter functions as a discussion which will be followed up by the 'Concluding Note' which contains answers to the research questions stated earlier on in this thesis. First we explore some issues that were of influence in answering these questions.

Lost in translation

During the time of the fieldwork, language was a constant issue. As the level of Spanish I mastered was close to none when I arrived, I had to put a lot of energy in being able to communicate with people. After a while I managed to find a way of communicating with my limited knowledge of Spanish and sometimes using words from English. This meant that I could easily talk with people who had some knowledge of the English language. Simultaneously this meant that interviewing Chileans who went to public schools was difficult, as Chileans who have been to private schooling have been better educated in the English language (to some extent). In public schools however, the level of English teaching was poor and therefore most Chileans who went to public schools do not or only poorly speak English.

This meant a practical focus upon a certain sector of the Chilean society. Although I have a broad idea of what the consumers of the lower socio-economic classes feel like when it comes to salmon, it is insufficient to really base my argument on: Small talk at the restaurant and quick questions have given me a broad perspective of the people's views. The focus of this research has thus been mostly on people that are regarded to have a heightened awareness about environmental issues and such. Hence conclusions made in this thesis give an idea of how a portion of the population constructs and uses salmon in their daily lives.

Issues of categorization

In this thesis one of the goals was to form several consumer groups, based upon their interpersonal food quality preferences in the case of the salmon. As theory is often based upon larger categories, it seemed helpful to attempt to construct these. However, developing categories of these consuming actors proved impossible, taking all consumers diversity into account. Broad categories could be made; nevertheless many of people blend into several categories. In their process of negotiating and translating the dominant food reality they often end up with 'bits of both'. The categories in these cases provide a nice overview; however these categories do not fit other case-foods or other sites, making it highly contextual.

The cosmopolitan consumers for example, often belonged to the category of 'organic' consumers or to the convenient consumers who favoured the supermarket. What this means is that in their daily food decision making, they negotiate and compromise upon what they have conceptualized as being good food and what is possible in their contemporary reality. Hence consumer groups can be used as a sort of theoretical framework, in order to give some more

shape and depth to the world of consumption than merely 'consumers', however it is far from realistic as no consuming actor is the same.

Diversification through a global taste

As argued in previous chapters, cosmopolitan food can bridge multiple worlds for this new modern citizen of multiple worlds. De-territorializing and re-territorializing cuisines in a different reality creates a new form of this cuisine, a fusion form so to say. Like Sushi, of which many hybrid versions have been created, it is a quick and easy way for people to venture into a different culture and broaden their culinary horizon. What is needed is a certain degree of authenticity, like the use of chopsticks in the sushi-bar and having an interior design that fits the modern idea of sushi. However in the process, a food culture is being decontextualized in order to make these cosmopolitan consumers able to understand this exotic cuisine, and it is sometimes simplified into cliché forms. Cheapening relations with place and promoting a partial authenticity (Cook and Crang 1996:145). Although consuming actors are able to diversify their culinary repertoire, which gives them the idea they have experienced and lived that culture, it is actually a very one-sided and often cliché version of a culture.

The social connection to food in this case is more of the touristic kind as some cosmopolitan consumers 'go all the way' and want the full experience of exotic 'ethnic' foods and 'weird' eating habits as they are interested in the true biographies of these foods. However, like the all-you-can-eat sushi restaurant in the Netherlands, it is an exotic culinary experience with a very low threshold. Translated and reworked to what the Dutch are used to in their daily food practices; it is a simplified version of the Japanese sushi-culture: The sushi is not even prepared by Japanese, but by Chinese. "The majority of customers understand so little about Japan that they are unable to recognize the false experience" (Cwiertka 2005:258). It can hardly be seen as experiencing *Japanese* culture, but more as sushi becoming a truly global food and providing a global experience of Japan. Although Japan is keen on making sushi a national treasure, the world has taken ownership of sushi. This results in the many divers and hybrid sushi forms, which have a rather low threshold to consumption for many consumers. Perhaps the social connection to 'authentic Japanese' sushi is hard to find, the social connection to the global taste of sushi is not.

Mediation of consumer's food fantasies

The always convenient supermarket that was much discussed in this thesis has its pros and cons. The supermarket chains are well aware of these cons it seems, as for every 'problem' that arises out of this consumption system, the supermarket seems to have an answer. People lose touch with the geographies and biographies of food, as they buy heaps of processed foods. Perhaps 'consumer's food fantasies', which seem to be part of the cosmopolitan consumer, become very one-sided. In many of the Dutch supermarket chains an answer has been found: providing free recipe-cards and food magazines. In these magazines especially they help construct many 'food fantasies' as they firstly provide recipes and secondly have the chance to give some information about the social life of the food.

Supermarkets in the Netherlands are trying hard to reincorporate these knowledges about food back in to their shelves and using such a magazine is a clever step. Something that was exclusive for the larger retailers and somewhat more expensive supermarket chains, it is now practiced in all supermarkets in the Wageningen area. They offer recipes and information

for many interest levels: the 'organic' consumer and the more 'convenient' consumer can both find topics that interest them and sometimes even overlap. In this way the consumers who bought the processed food products get an insight into the origin of the food (not so much into the practices of production), as typical cultural foods is put into a 'cultural frame'. For the more ethically concerned consumer they will elaborate on their organic range food stuffs, where they come from, who the farmer is and how they have been produced.

What we can see is that the supermarket in the Netherlands is slowly taking over culinary decision-making up to some extent (providing recipe ideas in store) for some people and at the same time they are broadening their scope (providing more information, like origin, about some products). This allows them to reach more consumers and their conceptualisations of what good food is. It is a minor contribution to the knowledges 'convenient' consumers might gather, as it is like that 'global taste' a simplified version of what it is in reality.

The convenience of the supermarket is leading to consumers forgetting skills or for skills to become rudimentary in the lives of some consumers. As people get more used to these convenient products, skills are left to 'specialist' like the fishmonger, the butcher, or the greengrocer. But as we have seen happening to the fishmonger on the weekly market in Wageningen, he started selling 'supermarket-fish' and became less knowledgeable about what he actually sold. This transfer and exchange of knowledge about salmon and preparation skills for salmon are incredibly important for the social connection consumers can have with salmon. The magazines the supermarkets provide are an attempt to fill this vacuum of knowledge and meaning of the salmon, something the fishmonger in Wageningen fails to deliver to some consumers.

The transfer of knowledge about origin and production of the salmon and skills for the selecting, buying, preparing and cooking of salmon are essential for the social connection between consuming actors and salmon. As the space of the supermarket weakens the construction of consumer's food fantasies, they attempt to re-inspire through offering these free magazines and recipe-cards. Although the social connection that is established to a certain product might be limited in knowledge, in this way some knowledge about origin and production are still incorporated into the space of the supermarket.

Defining wild salmon

Throughout the research consumers kept making distinctions between farmed and wild salmon, which is a logic dichotomy. However, especially on the internet, but also by the fishmonger in Wageningen different species were appointed. Many people had the idea that wild salmon would be redder in colour, because of its lifetime in the wild. Farmed salmon on the other hand, had a lighter colour as it was produced and processed quickly. What I found is that many were putting two different salmon species side-by-side. The Atlantic salmon is usually used as an example for farmed salmon, logically as this is the species most produced in salmon farms. Its wild counterpart was always a lot darker, however what is likely is that this is the Sockeye salmon. A salmon, but nonetheless a completely different salmon, as this is like comparing two different types of beef from completely different cows. Logically what will differ is colour, texture, exterior and taste. What is characteristic for the Sockeye salmon is its dark red and less fatty meat. The Atlantic salmon, however, has a lighter pink and fatty meat. Wild Sockeye salmon is now one of the only salmon species that is commercially sold, while Atlantic wild

salmon is hard to find. So, when consumers argue they prefer the taste of wild salmon, they might unwittingly mean they prefer Sockeye over Atlantic salmon. However, it is like one of the SEA manager noted:

"If you have tried these fishes many times, you can notice the difference in terms of colour and taste. The taste of the one is much stronger than the taste of the other. However, if people do not eat salmon that regularly, they will not notice the difference" (Personal field notes 2013)

If consumers would perform a taste-session with the two different salmon species, one is most likely going to detect a difference in taste. Most people do not think about the different species of salmon. What was noteworthy, is the fishmonger who did not refer to the salmon species when talking about wild and farmed salmon, neither after questions about the possible species he might sell.

It does raise questions about 'wild' salmon; what exactly are wild salmon? Like Lien and Law emphasize, the term 'wild' salmon was only constructed after the salmon farming in Norway emerged. Used to distinguish these two salmons as the one was 'raised by humans' and the other was not. "The prefix [wild] establishes a kind of guarantee that this salmon is the 'real thing'" (2011:74). Questionable is the nature of this wild salmon, as the escaped farmed salmon 'mix in' with the wild salmon. The farmed salmon might be related to the wild salmon, it is still seven generations removed from the wild salmon. It has become such an issue for Norwegian marine researchers that they have labelled these escapees as 'alien'. As the Norwegian salmon industry has been functioning since the 70ies, escaped farmed salmon have had the opportunity of mixing their gene pool with their wild counterpart. The farmed escaped salmon were deemed as alien because their "dispersal is caused by humans" and "indigeneity rests on the separation [of] presence without people; nature without society" (Lien and Law 2011:78). As a report on the impact on escaped Atlantic salmon concludes:

"Negative effects include both ecological interactions and genetic impacts of inter-breeding. A large number of studies point to negative effects, and outcomes for wild populations are either mostly negative or at best neutral. It has been shown that inter-breeding of farm with wild salmon can result in reduced lifetime success, lowered individual fitness, and decreases in production over at least two generations." (Thorstad, Fleming et al. 2008:3)

Taking the previous conceptualisation of 'wild' and 'alien' into account, we might conclude that the 'wild' salmon is becoming alien too, as they are mixing with the escaped 'alien' farmed salmon. Finding what is truly natural and thus separated from people and society is becoming increasingly more difficult. What we consider to be wild is something that is dynamically constructed through time, influenced partially by human practices of domestication and food production.

Global taste vs. global standards

The title of this thesis, the globalisation of taste, aims at the mostly cosmopolitan taste buds that are spreading across the world. The definition of global taste leads us to the question if it is *taste* that is becoming global or whether it is the globalisation of food standards that is making foods more homogenous all over the world? As we have established taste and ideas of quality are highly interpersonal, subject to beliefs values, life worlds and histories; they are thus quite hard to put your finger on. Food standards however, are necessary in this day and age as international food trade is pushing the influence of the nation-state to a minimum. Regulations in order to guarantee food safety and quality are thus imminent; however it is resulting in rather similar food realities in terms of offer and quality.

However, I would like to argue that people still judge food upon their own preferences and conceptualisations of good food, thereby constructing their own personal 'taste'. No matter how strong the homogenizing effect of these global food standards may be, consuming actors keep negotiating, translating and reworking them in order to fit their view of good food and their contemporary reality. Hence the title 'the globalisation of taste' is meant to reflect upon these converging and diverging flows of food and tastes that are partially influenced by global food standards. Global food standards might steer things to a bland unity, it is through taste it keeps its heterogeneity.

Concluding note

Throughout this thesis we have explored aspects of modern food and how it is positioned in processes of globalisation, modernisation and commoditisation and countertendencies to this modern food reality in the case of salmon. Using data from Valdivia, Chile and Wageningen, the Netherlands we set out to find answers to the research questions formulated for this thesis: What are manifestations of quality and social connections between consumers and the salmon in food realities in the Netherlands and the south of Chile? In order to answer this question we have divided the main question into several sub questions which we will review in this chapter.

Importance of salmon in daily eating practices of the Chilean and Dutch consuming actor

Salmon is a food product that has a history in both countries, although different from origin. The Netherlands has a history in salmon capture, as it used to live in the Dutch rivers. In times of industrialization the rivers got polluted to such an extent that the Atlantic salmon disappeared in these areas. The history and memories of salmon capture have long been forgotten even though serious attempts are being made to reintroduce the salmon into the Dutch rivers. Historical importance is thus limited; culinary it has a bigger impact on the Dutch. Salmon is a luxury food and has been for many years (and ages). Even though it is a common product that is available for a rather low price nowadays, it is still seen as luxurious and used in recipe-suggestions for special events like Christmas and Easter. Known for its healthy character it is one of the most sold fish for consumption in the Netherlands. The upcoming sushi has a star role for salmon, also in the Netherlands. Second to that, eating good and nice food is becoming fashionable. To conclude, the salmon appears to be important in the culinary practices of the Dutch, its history does not: Making the salmon a sort of exotic, luxurious and healthy food that fits well into the lives of the modern Dutch citizen. In Wageningen salmon is rather embedded in culinary practices and , although a vacuum of knowledge and meaning is growing surrounding the commodity.

Chile has evolved into a major economic activity and has become the world's second largest producer of Atlantic salmon. Hence the historic connection of consumers to salmon is rather recent, certainly when compared to the social connection consumers might have to other native fish species. Chile has a long history of eating seafood which is culturally important and well embedded in food practices, as a large part of the country is on the seaside. Salmon is mainly seen as a luxury product and is still rather new ingredient in the Chilean cuisine. Different categories of consumers have adopted salmon in many different ways. Popular translations of salmon in culinary habits are sushi and salmon is increasingly a substitute for local fish species. Salmon is now the pre-dominant fish ingredient in sushi, unlike the Dutch sushi dishes where a diverse menu is the norm.

The consumption and use of salmon, either in the form of sushi or as a stand-alone dishes is increasing fast. As it is rather expensive, one could argue that there is a certain elitist dimension to the consumption of salmon. On the other hand, salmon for culinary purposes, is often used as a substitute for local fish species that have either disappeared or have become too expensive to buy. Consumers were also found being curious to just try salmon. In Valdivia it is quite common to perceive and experience salmon as a source of pride as it has had brought

wealth and employment to Chile. Even though they might not be 'touched' by the wealth of the salmon industry, they felt proud of the Chilean salmon going around the world. Other consumers in Valdivia, however, expressed their concerns and pointed at the environmental dimension of the salmon industry. The salmon industry consumes quite some antibiotics and the flora and fauna is said to be threatened.

Different consumer groups in the case of salmon in the Netherlands and the south of Chile

Based upon conceptualisation of good food and one's values and beliefs, we attempted to construct several consumer groups that experience salmon similarly. In the case of the salmon the two manifestations of market spaces and the restaurant were explored in depth, as these were rather typical. When talking about the sushi restaurant we notice a *cosmopolitan consumer* who is attempting to bridge multiple worlds through culinary experiences. When considering the market space there are two clear spaces in the cases of the salmon: the supermarket and the organic market. Supermarket salmon is mostly bought by convenience-searching and modern consumers, preferring the convenient and possibly cheaper options available in the supermarket. These actors are very money conscious and profit from the competitive supermarkets position in the food economy. In the organic market place we found *organic consumers:* the organic salmon attracts a consuming actor who is ethically concerned, because of environmentalism and food safety concerns.

Noteworthy is that all consuming groups emphasized health as a reason to eat salmon, as it was known for its positive health effect. It was expected have a very health-conscious group of consumers; however the collected data did not reveal such actors. Instead, knowledge about salmon being healthy was quite well spread and named often as a reason to eat salmon, but not as a prime reason. Secondly, omega 3 was less known or mentioned by consumers interviewed. People were generally aware of the healthy character of salmon and regarded this as an extra convincing reason to eat salmon.

Classifying consumers in distinct categories runs into methodological difficulties as these are not so distinct as they seem and potentially overlap. Being an ethically concerned consumer did not exclude favouring cosmopolitan foods. In the best case scenario they looked for a cosmopolitan alternative that also fulfilled their ethical concerns. The same can be said for the modern consumer who preferred the supermarket salmon; cosmopolitan food was not ruled out of their culinary practices. Consumer groups are an indication of what preferences of quality can be found when it comes to the case of the salmon. Generalising these categories to other food commodities will not suffice, as fish is a very typical food type, which would not correspond to foodstuffs such as vegetables or coffee for example, to which people will attach different values and beliefs.

Categorizing consumers based upon their ideas of quality, their needs and values is in my view a way to beyond focussing merely on income and (socio-economic) class. However, categorising consumers proves hard as any actor has his own experiences, values and ideas of quality which may differ mutually. From a social theory perspective, it is more relevant to treat consumers as social actors to whom we can attribute agency, implying that consumers experience food and thus salmon in many different ways which cannot be pre-classified in terms of class or socio-economic categories per se. Consumers as social actors runs counter to many

economic oriented theories that consider consumers as rational actors responding to price levels in order to describe food and consumption habits.

The meaning of the definition of quality for food decision-making in consumer groups

Consuming actors will use their interpersonal conceptualisation of quality for food in their daily food decision-making, but will need to negotiate this when it comes to their beliefs and values and their reality. A consumer will have a definition of quality based upon beliefs and values, but the decision made needs to fit into their contemporary reality – their daily practices and means – leading to their food reality. As the dominant food reality of the supermarket does not fit into some consumers' lives, they try to translate and rework these dominant forms into something that is acceptable and understandable in their reality, hereby constructing multiple new food realities. At the foundation of these food realities we find a consuming actor's definition of food quality.

As argued in this thesis, people, who are ethically concerned about the food they consume daily, are informed by knowledge about origin and practices of production. As this information is often hard to find in the space of the supermarket, these consumers are likely to turn to the organic market space, where this information is easily found. Another example are the convenient consumers who find saving time important: the space of the supermarket offers food that meets their criteria of what they find to be important when it comes to their daily food habits.

Fitting counter-tending food realities into the contemporary dominant food reality

Constructed counter-tending food realities need to be able to fit into the contemporary dominant food reality. Trying to find a space is vital in making a new food reality work. In the case of cosmopolitan food it remarkably fits in the middle of other food realities. Secondly sushi has eagerly been incorporated in the dominant food realities in the global food economy; sushi is now being processed on a large scale and eaten all over the world. Ranging from highly exclusive and 'authentic' in restaurants to cheap hybrid forms in the freezer section of the supermarket. Sushi as a cosmopolitan food has successfully found a space within the dominant food reality in order to make it successful.

When it comes to counter tending food realities such as organic food, we see a similar trend. Like the cooperative *La manzana* in Valdivia, Chile has found a space for its food reality. Still somewhat outside the dominant form as they operate in a completely different way than the supermarket. The cooperative is run mostly by volunteers and information about foods in available in abundance. However, most consumers who favour this conceptualisation of good food, are not able to meet their daily requirements for food through this alternative food reality. They are often forced to combine their ethical food habits with the less favoured means of the supermarket. Hence, they have found a suitable space, even though a small one.

The organic consuming actors in the Netherlands nowadays come in many shapes and sizes, as organic food really has taken up a large space within the dominant food reality. Keeping in mind, everyone has their own definition and ideas of organic food and some consumers will not regard the organic foods in the supermarket as such. So depending on the consuming actor's point of view, they can or cannot fulfil their needs in the supermarket. Providing such a large selection of organic food, makes this alternative food reality successful as it works together with the contemporary dominant food reality.

To conclude, in the process of making an alternative or counter tending food reality successful, gaining a space in the contemporary dominant food reality is vital. In the case of the salmon, the manifestation of sushi is a clear example, as it is highly embedded in the dominant globalized food reality and has resulted in a global food and perhaps even global taste for sushi.

Manifestations of quality and social connections in daily food realities in the case of salmon

In the case of the salmon we have seen two interesting cases that have rather contrasting histories and contemporary situations when it comes to salmon. The social connection to salmon has changed over time and in this dominant food reality the social connection to food is diminishing amongst many consumers. As this commodity is often bought in the supermarket, where knowledge about origin and practices of production of the salmon are disguised in packaging and through long food chains, a vacuum of knowledge and meaning starts to appear for many consuming actors. Countertendencies are present in the case of the salmon, and these consuming actors often lean to reincorporation of 'the natural' as this suites their ethical concerns. Here the knowledge about the origin and production of the salmon (and also other foodstuffs) are regarded highly important by consuming actors.

In the middle we find the global taste of sushi that is mediating between these two major forms: partially increasing the social connection, by spreading knowledge and for some even skills, herewith improving the spread of knowledge about the biographies and geographies. However, up to a certain extent, as the touristic quality of these exotic cosmopolitan foods easily leads to simplification of 'the real deal'. De-territorialized and re-territorialized, one is left to consider how much is truly left of the origin and processes of production of the sushi.

The significance of taste, as a global force that generates new 'materialities', in our globalising world is something that needs to be studied. As in the case of the salmon this global taste has resulted in the extinction of some fishes and production of substitute fishes, packaging and selling of salmon in Dutch and Chilean supermarkets, and different experiences of people experiencing sushi in restaurants. In this thesis we have identified a cosmopolitan consumer that was present in both the Netherlands and Chile. However some elements that are important to understand how these consumers see and experience these new realities are found in their background, such as their education, age and trade. Reflecting upon this, these cosmopolitan groups may be a knowledge minority in their respective national environment. However, similar 'cosmopolitans' have been found in both cases. Although methodologically this may pose some difficulties, the question remains if we should continue using universal categories in social science.

Improving knowledge about the social life of salmon will lead to an improvement of the social connection consuming actors can have to salmon. Awareness of how the salmon is best selected and used in the domestic sphere and the myriad of social processes in the production history, will improve food safety and arguably reduce food scares, as people become less sensitive to media-induced food scares. This can create insight into the global forces behind salmon as a commodity and their influences in generating specific environments for food commodity circulation.

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