

Cartographies of food: paths through education in becomings, marks and affections¹

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ABSTRACT

This text consists of cartographic research that pays attention to what is possible to learn from food when it is felt, swallowed, digested and incorporated into different spaces. Through the encounter between bodies, subjectivities and food, a path composed of writings and images that travel through eating spaces is constructed, divided into four sections: eating in school and university spaces; eat at the mall; eat in vegetarian restaurants; eat at home. Food is thought of, therefore, as a possibility of engendering education through encounters between becomings, marks and affections that cross bodies, insofar as they also teach them.

KEYWORDS: Food. Body and Education. Desire. Meeting. Research on the Move.

Cartografias da comida: trajetos por educações em devires, marcas e afetos

RESUMO

Este texto consiste em uma pesquisa cartográfica que se atenta ao que é possível aprender com os alimentos ao serem sentidos, deglutidos, digeridos e incorporados em diferentes espaços. Constrói-se, através do

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encontro entre corpos, subjetividades e comidas, um trajeto composto por escritas e imagens que percorrem espaços de comer, dividindo-se em quatro seções: comer em espaços escolares e universitários; comer no shopping; comer em restaurantes vegetarianos e comer em casa. A comida é pensada, assim, como possibilidade de engendrar educações pelos encontros entre devires, marcas e afetos que atravessam os corpos, na medida em que também os ensinam.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Comida. Corpo e Educação. Desejo. Encontro. Pesquisa em Movimento.

Cartografías de los alimentos: caminos por la educación en devenires, marcas y afectos

RESUMEN

Este texto consiste en una investigación cartográfica que presta atención a lo que es posible aprender de los alimentos cuando se sienten, se tragan, se digieren y se incorporan a diferentes espacios. A través del encuentro entre cuerpos, subjetividades y alimentos, se construye un recorrido compuesto por escrituras e imágenes que recorren espacios de comer, dividido en cuatro tramos: comer en espacios escolares y universitarios; comer en el centro comercial; comer en restaurantes vegetarianos; comer en casa. La comida es pensada, por tanto, como una posibilidad de engendrar educación a través de encuentros entre devenires, marcas y afectos que atraviesan los cuerpos, en la medida en que también los enseñan.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Alimento. Cuerpo y Educación. Deseo. Encuentro. Búsqueda en movimiento.

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*It is through your mouth that you will eat the world,
and then the darkness in your eyes will no longer
lighten, but will become iridescent.*
Clarice Lispector, character Ulysses (2020, p. 107).

Figure 1: Cartographic: Encounters and lines.



Source: First author's record of a picnic meeting of UIVO: pack of studies in creation, art, and life (UFU) in a square in the city of Uberlândia, MG. Edited by Cássio Mota.

Introduction: food, gatherings and education

Clarice Lispector (2020), in *An Apprenticeship or the Book of Pleasures*, creates narratives of apprenticeships that take place in the encounters between her desires, pleasures, and desires. The romance of the book takes place between Odysseus and Lóri, the main characters of her stories. Odysseus, in response to Lóri, tells her that through his mouth he will be able to eat the world and make the darkness of her eyes shine (LISPECTOR, 2020). In the same way, in Figure 1, at a meeting of a research group, the lines between food, studies and education take place in becomings, marks and affections. The mouth is the entrance to food, a territory for tasting, savoring and nourishing. "The mouth that eats, that kisses, that loves, that shouts, that speaks, that sings, that cries with its eyes" (SALES; CARVALHO, 2022, p. 679). It is also the space of desire, of kissing, of the beginning of a passion,

of speech, of words, of the materialization of much of what is understood as education.

We realize that eating the world can be a tasting of the paths we take, the experiences we live, the encounters we are subjected to, whether with food or not. From the hunger that plagues the poorest regions of the planet, to the abundance and waste of agribusiness in times of high production to avoid devaluing its products, to fast food, street markets and religious festivals, food is present in our lives in multiple contexts. Feeding ourselves is perhaps a daily lesson that we have had since birth, and it is a way of learning and teaching with the body. Thus, "a body never ceases to be subjected to encounter with light, oxygen, food, sounds, and sharp words - a body is first and foremost an encounter with other bodies, the power to be affected," says Peter Pál Pelbart (2016, p. 32). In this way, we understand that

The food that reaches our mouths is savored, chewed and swallowed, nourishing and metabolizing an entire existence. Food, then, is an affective territory with the potential for subjective contagion. It is in itself an encounter between different human and non-human beings, between places, colors, smells, tastes, desires, and crossings. Through food, we encounter living beings such as plants, animals, fungi... Even bacteria and protozoa? Viruses perhaps? Food is a meeting point between pulsating lives, connecting different lines that lead to the environment, where everything happens (Sales; Carvalho; Rigue, 2023, p. 1063).

In the spaces permeated and constructed by food, we live through various bodily encounters. These encounters affect, shape, and transform us. Encounters with food, gustatory-affective-experimental, are the beginnings of

learning and teaching processes. "An encounter is the same as a becoming or a nuptial," says Gilles Deleuze in his dialogues with Claire Parnet (1998, p. 6). In becomings and nuptials, we create educations in encounters, through the affections⁴ that run through us. They are educations for life, for being alive, for the body.

Fernanda Rigue and Alice Dalmaso (2020) reflect on the powers of learning with/through life: "Being alive today has been, among other things, a process of learning to read the world and, why not, to feel what is going on in the world, what is going on in us, which calls us to look for new forms and ways of being alive" (Rigue; Dalmaso, 2020, p. 135). Living and learning from encounters. Learning from experiences, which, according to Jorge Larrosa, is "what passes me by" (2011, p. 4). Learning from life, from daily experiences and experiments.

This is a text based on the exercise of building routes in which it is possible to be attentive to the encounters between bodies - bodies-food, bodies-human, bodies-non-human, bodies-more-than-human... - and what vibrates within us as we move through different spaces, such as schools, homes, restaurants, and others. We become sensitive to intersections, to encounters in the world, to encounters with ourselves and with others, modulations, changes that affect our lives. We recognize that we learn from the sinusitis that life offers, with smells and tastes, in encounters.

Lines are constructed in multiple movements between the bodies and the food, as in Figure 1: sometimes hard lines, sometimes segmental, sometimes lines of escape, in movements of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, as Gilles Deleuze states in his dialogue with Claire Parnet (1998). When we think about these lines, we place ourselves in cartographic movements, as Deleuze states, "what we call by

⁴ "As for affection, this should not be confused with affection, affection, tenderness, which correspond to the usual meaning of this word in the Latin languages. This is not a psychological emotion, but rather a 'vital emotion', which can be contemplated in these languages by the meaning of the verb affect - to touch, disturb, shake, strike; a meaning which, however, is not used in its substantive form" (ROLNIK, 2018, p. 53).

various names - schizoanalysis, micropolitics, pragmatics, diagrammatism, rhizomatics, cartography - has no other aim than the study of these lines, in groups or individuals" (Deleuze; Parnet, 1998, p. 102).

This is the experiment of rhizomatic cartography. To think in rhizomes⁵ is to be aware of the multiple connections that are made through life, that penetrate and cross territories. Rhizomes germinate in streets, schools, cafeterias, food courts, restaurants, kitchens, tables, plates, forks, hands, mouths, minds, bodies, in different forces and directions. Different spaces are possible to experience food, to eat, to feel, to taste, to be affected by the mouth, the eyes, the nose, the skin, the heart, the stomach, the intestines, and... and... and... and⁶... thus allowing for multiple and rhizomatic experiences.

Mapping by deglutinating everything that passed us by and asked to pass through. Affections that cross a body through the mouth, tongue, hands, skin, nose, hair... Through the whole body, messing up the predefined boundaries that separate us from other bodies (Sales; Carvalho, 2022, p. 648).

In this sense, we have mapped some paths and experiences in the territories we have traveled, perceiving in food educational forces and powers that happen with affections⁷ and marks. These are commercial, public, private, urban and rural spaces, chosen through cartographic journeys, in a

⁵ In reference to the concept of rhizome, proposed by philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2019): "A rhizome neither begins nor ends, it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo.(...) Between things does not designate a locatable correlation that goes from one to the other and reciprocally, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that carries them from one to the other, a stream without beginning or end, that gnaws at its two banks and acquires speed in the middle" (p. 48-49).

⁶ Also inspired by the concept of rhizome: "[...] the rhizome has as its fabric the conjunction 'and... and... and...'. This conjunction is strong enough to shake and uproot the verb to be"

⁷ Suely Rolnik (1993, p. 242) states that the marks "generate in us unprecedented states, entirely foreign in relation to what the subjective consistency of our current figure is made of. The equilibrium of our current figure is broken, its contours tremble. We can say that each time this happens, it is a violence experienced by our body in its current form, because it destabilizes us and makes it necessary for us to create a body - in our existence, in our way of feeling, thinking, acting, etc. - that will embody this unprecedented state that has come about in us. And each time we respond to the demand imposed by one of these states, we become other" (ROLNIK, 1993, p. 242).

transdisciplinary and transterritorial research project, attentive to the processes that food goes through. In this way, we have chosen spaces for encounters, for eating, for edibility, for tasting. To savor them, we used cartography as a way of viscerally traversing the smells, tastes, and flavors served, in movements of devotion, allowing these essays and experiments to be written down.

We understand that food is not limited to organic elements such as fruits, vegetables, meat, carbohydrates, fats, and calories. Food is more... Food is an impact on oneself, it is a contact between nature, cultures, subjectivities, education, experiences, memories, it is a space for creations. Food is a connection with oneself and with many others. Food is power, movement, vitality. Food is desire materialized in encounters. And it can become cultural artifacts, artistic productions, manifestations of what happens in between. Art that can be savored, tasted. Ephemeral and striking art that merges with the organic and affective body of the eater, also dissolving the organization of the body, creating other possibilities for living and doing the body. With the body, to the extent that you learn from what you experience, you can eat the world, devour food, become porous to affections.

Food also materializes labor relations, permeates different spaces. To eat, products must have been prepared - planted, grown, dug, dried, cleaned, harvested, fished, slaughtered, cut, cooked, and... and... and... and... - by someone somewhere. A whole multiple and complex chain of production runs through food and the spaces in which it is grown, transported, produced and consumed. Economic, social, historical, geographical and affective cycles that produce and are produced (in) the spaces of eating.

We are taught how to handle cutlery, household utensils and even how to behave at a family meal. On the other hand, scarcely any people talk to us about the sensations that

pulsate in our bodies, our desires, disturbing emotions and uncertainties (Rigue; Dalmaso, 2020, p. 136).

In this way, we sat considering learning that takes place in these sensations that pulsate in the body and in uncertainties, as Rigue and Dalmaso (2020) say. These are desirous educations in smells and flavors, tasting the affections of living and finding oneself.

Figure 2: Connections.



Source: Photo of the first author recording the table at one of the meetings of UIVO: pack of studies in creation, art, and life (UFU), which took place at the Science and Biology Teaching Laboratory (LEN/UFU). Edited by Cássio Mota.

Trajectories: educations between bodies, food, and affections

To go through the path writings and research reports that follow, we were inspired by the cartographies outlined by Suely Rolnik (2016), which we can classify as autobiographical, "provided that by 'self' here we do not understand the individuality of an existence, that of the author, but the singularity of the way in which the forces of a given historical context pass through his body" (Rolnik, 2016, p. 22). Therefore, we perceive these autobiographical writings as something that is not limited to the closed experiences of a single life and subjectivity, but that leaks out, contaminating and being contaminated by other lives and subjectivities. "The cartographer

is first and foremost an anthropophagist" (Rolnik, 2016, p. 23). Thus, we set out to construct an autobiographical-anthropophagic tasting trail, a sensory, affective, and subjective project of self-tasting and experimentation with the other.

In this research, which is in motion and transdisciplinary⁸, we try to activate the vibrating body of the cartographer. A vibrating body, "a body sensitive to the effects of encounters between bodies and their reactions: attraction and repulsion, affection, simulation in matters of expression" (Rolnik, 2016, p. 31). With our bodies attentive, we walk around tasting and being tasted by the affects, forces, and powers we encounter, because the cartographer "accepts life and surrenders. With body and tongue" (Rolnik, 2016, p. 66).

In the journeys that follow, we think first about encounters with food in formal educational spaces, such as schools and universities; then about eating in shopping malls; then about vegetarian eating; about eating in encounters with other cultures; and finally about eating in Minas Gerais, in what we feel and understand as a possible home.

Eating in school and university spaces

What is education? What are the educational spaces? Educational philosopher Sílvio Gallo (2010, p. 1) states that "Education is the encounter of singularities". In dialog with this perspective⁹, I understand and defend that we learn a lot throughout our lives and in all processes, in multiple, varied ways.

⁸ On the ways of researching in movement that we mobilize here: "Writing to move. Acting out lines in order to become with them. To create narratives from our experiences. Becoming-with (Haraway, 2022) the many beings, times and spaces that we traverse and that are made up of our presences. Mapping our territories of life, our lines drawn in the daily work of educating and also learning" (Sales; Rigue, 2023, p. 4).

⁹ The paths that follow have been written in the first person singular because they were initially produced by the first author, based on his drifting along the paths taken, especially in 2019, in encounters with food.

Food also carries the potential to build knowledge through the encounters it makes possible. When I think about the encounters between lives through food, I notice many marks. Focusing on basic education, I realize that food has great importance in schools. Eating is perhaps as central as institutionalized curricula, the presence of educators and students. Could food also be a curriculum¹⁰?

Beyond the school as a formal educational training environment, educational processes and the production of subjects take place in all the circumstances and shades of living, passing through memories, values, cultures, times, subjectivities, and... and... and... A large part of these territories and processes are related to food and eating, an indispensable aspect for the nutrition of living beings. Therefore, the daily attitude of eating is also part of our learning process throughout life. Conversations, mouthfuls, colors, smells and tastes are all elements of a kaleidoscopic scenario of possible learning when it comes to food. Even the absence of food and hunger - so present in our still intensely precarious and unequal country - can mark bodies through pain and suffering. Food is one of these ways in which people learn, crossing the school and its canteens, the contents, textbooks, and academics teaching science and biology, as well as various other subjects, restaurants, parks, homes, families, streets, beliefs, and practices of all peoples (Sales; Carvalho; Rigue, 2023, p. 1069).

Thus, we see that eating is in itself a living process of possible learning, to the extent that eating is also part of formal education. Food is even part of the school curriculum, permeating different documents and acting in the

¹⁰ Regarding this discussion of food and curricula, we recommend the text *Bodies, food and curricula: education in Science and Biology minor* (Sales; Carvalho; Rigue, 2023).

experiences that take place on the "school floor" (Sales; Carvalho; Rigue, 2023).

It is common in Brazilian public schools for all students to receive free meals, known as "merenda". Occasionally, when I walk through the streets of the cities, I smell a delicious aroma first thing in the morning, and I know that it comes from a seasoned meal, prepared by hands that know what they're doing, that announces itself as tasty even from a distance; then I know that there is a school nearby, and that lunchtime is approaching. This food, often made up of dishes typical of the geographical region, nourishes the entire body of the school's students. José Bezerra (2009, p. 104) reflects that "lunch is food and eating. It therefore has an important meaning for the human being that goes beyond the mere satisfaction of biological needs" (Bezerra, 2009, p. 104). School meals bring energy to bodies and classrooms, with the power to transform the lives that consume them. It makes possible moments of fraternization, of eating and smiling, of laughing and playing, of talking and dancing. Among songs, queues, shouts, laughter, running, movements and attempts to contain them, school meals are above all potential encounters. Would it be possible to imagine school without encounters? So many events take place during recess, brief minutes set aside not only for eating, but also for interacting, talking, dancing, and so on. However, several social problems surround school meals, such as the lack of funds to provide quality meals - often mismanaged or involved in cases of embezzlement of this amount intended for the food that nourishes the school - as well as the fact that in many situations the food prepared does not please the students. This is a series of frictions and confluences.

Meals carry and produce various discourses and practices. Meals: a field of disputes and contradictions, a source of nutrients, energy, and the power of encounters between school and non-school subjects. One thing that is certain is that food at school marks students, teachers and other people who interact with it. Food that marks, produces memories, memories, and

affections. The tastes, smells, pains, and delights that come with eating at school. In addition to the meal itself, these are also the moments of building and nurturing relationships with the canteen workers and their colleagues.

During my supervised school internships, which I had to do when I graduated with a degree in Biological Sciences, something interesting I noticed was the strong relationship between us, the interns, and the school meals. We got emotional about these foods, feeling a "taste of childhood and adolescence", remembering the moments and meals we had in primary and secondary school. Some of my classmates were able to go back to where they went to elementary school, which was an intense moment of encounters between affections, memories, and other fabulations.

Affective meals that penetrate bodies, lives, and subjectivities. The meals prepared in the schools where we worked were served to students, teachers and other staff, as well as to us interns. It was a meal full of history, strong, heavy, dense: it had the necessary weight to nourish us. Its smell filled the whole school, its taste penetrated the whole body, arousing different emotions. Desire in many, disgust in some. Always present - and necessary - the snack was a source of energy for all who lived in the school, nourishing all who passed through its classrooms, courtyards, and corridors. School lunches have often been the victim of corruption scandals, embezzled, scrapped, and yet they remain resilient. Could a school exist without lunch? Through lunch, we experienced becoming: becoming students in memories, becoming teachers in the power to perceive ourselves as different.

I remember a visit I made, also as a biology student, to a night school that worked with Education for Youth and Adults (EYA). This school operated morning, afternoon, and evening shifts, but as the director told us at the time, they only received enough money for the morning and afternoon meals. What about the evening? The coordinators "found a way" because most of the students came straight from work and didn't have time to eat before class. Working students, tired students, hungry students. Hungry for what? Food,

knowledge, experiences? Tired of what? Exhausting working hours? Of neglect and abandonment? In the "gambiarras" and "jeitinhos" of the school administration - which I wish didn't exist - mechanisms of resistance and survival were created in difficult times and territories.

Inhabiting these school spaces also meant encountering so much of what I remember as a student. When I was in elementary school, food turned out to be something remarkable. At first, it was pleasant and ordinary. But as I gained weight, it became a desire and a martyrdom. To be a fat child meant to be the target of judgments while eating. In the movements of (self-)control, the demand not to get fatter, to have a so-called balanced diet, both at home and at school, took away my peace. How could I have balance with such violence? This pain, the result of prejudice, made me sick and changed my relationship with food. I would rather not eat. I stopped eating, both at school and in other places where I lived, searching for unbridled weight loss. So recess became a time without food and energy, just like the rest of my days, in and out of school.

After I recovered from these processes¹¹, this relationship with food took on new places in my life. I began to eat at school again, eating and interacting with my classmates. By the end of high school, I was taking required classes in the mornings and occasional classes in the afternoons. In the afternoons, when I didn't have classes, I studied. In the evenings I did "cursinho"¹². It was a time of much wear and tear, tiredness and exhaustion. School spaces often seemed to me to be hostile territories for life and desire. Since I was at school all day, I ate most of my meals there. Snacks, lunch, and sometimes dinner. These times of eating were usually times of talking, venting, flirting, and dreaming.

Something that really affected me at the end of elementary school was the bitter taste of coffee. It was a dark drink that kept me awake and gave

¹¹ I explored these dimensions in the text *Between emptiness and fullness: cartographies of anorexia* (Sales, 2022).

¹² "Cursinho" refers to preparatory courses for university entrance exams.

me energy to study, mixed with the bitterness of the anxiety of being a pre-university student, of losing part of the joy of a phase of my life to the stress of needing to go to university - for myself, for my family, for the many expectations placed on me - of living under constant pressure, of having to decide my future at the age of seventeen. I know that life has many tastes, and it was during this time that the bitterness of coffee left such a mark on me that I still can't drink it the way I used to.

I started university and studied all day because my degree in Biological Sciences was a full-time course, with mornings, afternoons and sometimes evenings. So most of my meals took place in the university environment. Since I studied on the campus of a university that had a university restaurant, affectionately named - or sometimes not so affectionately - called "UR" and "*bandejão*" by the academic community, I ate there.

The "UR" at the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU) offered various options, with the menu generally consisting of rice, beans, one meat and one vegetarian option, garnish, salad, dessert - usually fruit - juice, water and coffee. These options were developed and monitored by nutritionists. Between loving and hating the restaurant's food, I particularly enjoyed its meals which, even though they were produced in an industrial way, didn't lose a touch of home cooking.

Figure 3: University meetings.



Source: Photo by the first author taken at the university restaurant of the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU), Santa Mônica Campus, in 2019. Editing by Cássio Mota.

The industrial kitchen consists of the large-scale production of food. Devir industry through metal trays and bars. I thought that eating food from an industrial kitchen couldn't have the strength of food prepared at family gatherings, for example, but I was wrong. Affections of all kinds crossed the tables and trays of the university cafeteria. Feelings filled its queues, tables, murals, and plates. Inside the "RU" installation at the Santa Mônica campus of the UFU, there were photos and poems, such as those of the singer Cazuzza and the Uberland artist Grande Otelo. Outside, there was graffiti and murals with information about academic events, courses, parties, and university meetings. During meal times, these restaurants were filled with people. Together, they brought their stories, their joys, and their fears.

It wasn't uncommon to wait twenty, thirty or more minutes to eat in the restaurant because of the number of people. It was in the lines that the socializing began - or perhaps before, on the way there. Once inside, the collective tables gave way to glances, dialogues, knowledge, and recognition. This place was an affective territory, a meeting place for people, knowledge

and emotions, perhaps as much or more than the university classrooms and auditoriums themselves.

On special occasions, such as holidays and the end of the school year, the menu would change, with festive desserts, for example. When it's a student's birthday, it's not uncommon for his or her classmates to break into song to wish him or her a happy birthday; soon, most of the restaurant is buzzing with applause and collective celebration. An industrial restaurant that feeds thousands of people every day can also unite them in strength and affection.

The university restaurants of the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU) marked my academic education. Because they charged a price that was affordable for me at the time (R\$3.00 throughout my undergraduate, master's and doctoral studies¹³, between 2013 and 2022), I usually ate lunch and dinner there, instead of the other restaurants near the university, which were much more expensive. The "RU" was my meeting place with colleagues and friends, where I had countless long and intense conversations at communal tables. How many reflections were built up there after dense classes? How many criticisms, compliments, drifts, folds, and zigzags of thought? How many bonds were forged through shared experiences and outbursts? Bonds also with the staff. Bonds of intensity. Subjective bonds. Affective bonds, tracing paths. Organic bonds with food, nourishing bonds. Bonds that mark.

Ties in nature and cultures - everything together, uniting natural and cultural dimensions, inseparable, as Donna Haraway (2023) teaches us. These restaurants - in the Umuarama and Santa Mônica campuses of the UFU - have marked me more than any other during my time as a student at the UFU, especially during the five years of my Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences and two years of my Master's Degree in Education, giving strength to my studies and providing encounters in so many affections.

¹³ I did most of my doctorate during periods that were intensely affected by the covid-19 pandemic, especially in 2020 and 2021, which were marked by the in-person closure of a large part of this institution, as well as the restaurants that I had access to until then. As a result, I didn't have as much contact with these spaces during my doctorate.

As a student, food also characterized many of my classes, especially in certain undergraduate courses. Today, as a university professor, it is also gratifying to be able to create these spaces for learning and savoring encounters. These are times and spaces that make it possible to become a biologist through food, a teacher through affection.

Coffees, teas, cakes, snacks, cheeses, fruits... in my training - and currently in my teaching work - being able to mix academic and culinary tastes has brought a lot of joy to discussions and reflections, allowing the classroom to become an environment for paying attention to encounters and the lives that lived there and that spill over into other territories such as school, museums, etc. These shared meals allowed everyone to serve a bit of themselves because when we shared who would be responsible for the food and drinks, at different times someone would bring something prepared with their hands. I also participated in this movement of cooking and sharing my gastronomic creations with teachers and colleagues. Perhaps it was in these gastronomic encounters that we became as close as we were through the reading of many texts.

In 2019, while working as a teaching intern in the Science and Media subject of the Biological Sciences program at the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU), Umuarama Campus, we organized a celebratory class with a June party theme, filled with flavors typical of the month of June and the São João festivities: corn cakes, peanut sweets, hot dogs, among other foods that permeated our joyful encounters. I remember that after one of these classes with food and drink, I shared a photo on my social networks of the banquet table with food of different colors and tastes that permeated the notebooks and books, describing the moment as "the best class".

A few minutes later, a colleague who was graduating in engineering from the same university reacted with shock and asked me if this was really a "class". According to him, there were no such moments in his course. I thought that the presence of food, eating together and sharing moments and

food with others can break down the barriers of rigidity and coldness in classes, allowing us to get to know each other better, breaking down distances and impersonally.

Which teachers are willing to give up part of their class time to meet in intimacy and share their weaknesses? In the midst of movements of distancing and separation between teachers and students, this practice of allowing oneself to be affected and to be affected is not always common: one seeks to maintain a distance, a solidity, an indestructibility that escapes being alive. Peter Pelbart (2016) poses these questions:

How then to preserve the capacity to be affected if not through a permeability, a passivity, even a weakness? And how to have the strength to live up to your weakness, instead of remaining in the weakness of cultivating only strength? (Pelbart, 2016, p. 32)

Sharing a meal, experiencing a class, living a full-body encounter. These are ways of allowing oneself to be affected, of listening to our permeability, of living up to our vulnerabilities. I reflect that, in writing about all these past moments and memories, I am also living marks that are present in my life and in the lives of others I meet. Rolnik (1993) helps me to think about these marks:

Every brand has the potential to resonate again when it attracts and is attracted to environments where it finds resonance (in fact, many of our choices are determined by this attraction). When this happens, the brand is re-imagined in the context of a new connection, creating a new difference. And once again we are seized by a kind of "disquiet," as Fernando Pessoa aptly puts it in his book of the same name, when he refers to the sensation that this state produces in us. And once again we find ourselves called to create a body for

the existentialization of this difference. In other words, the sign keeps alive its potential for proliferation, like a kind of egg that can always produce other becomings: an egg of timelines (Rolnik, 1993, p. 242).

Writing about food, school and university, I realize how many traces I carry of my school-academic training and its connections with food. These marks are of pain and pleasure, longing, joy and sadness, visited at different times, permeating my life, my territories and other worlds to come. They carry the power to multiply through the experiments and creations I make on my journeys.

Food, at the center of many processes in our lives, is also an educational force, creating traces that will accompany us. I learn through the traces, in the traces and with the traces, in movements of signification and re-signification. I also learn during meals and with meals. Eating means connecting and creating marks, revisiting existing marks. Eating is creating, feeling and living. It's nourishing oneself with biochemical and affective elements. It's devouring memories and building knowledge. It's experimenting and educating with flavors.

Eating at the mall

In this map walk¹⁴, I visited a shopping mall in the city of Uberlândia and ate in its two food courts on different days. More than just eating, I paid attention to the movements that took place there. In these food territories, stories of consumption and commercial geographies are told. The people who venture into them travel along routes linked to the need to buy, but also permeated by different colors, smells and tastes that come from multinational networks and globalized inspirations. This mall is part of the daily lives of

¹⁴ These maps were made before the covid-19 pandemic, especially in 2019.

many people, whether they work there or visit to consume, and it keeps the capitalist wheels turning.

Are there any exits? To eat in the mall, in its food courts, kiosks and restaurants, is to feel full of possibilities. What experiences are possible there? There are different kinds of food and values, various smells and tastes that blend into something that reminds me of a mixture of fun fairs and fast food in the states. The logic built into a shopping mall is that of consumption, of buying and leaving quickly. Always walking around, spending, devouring and regurgitating, without pause. Always rushing to live, to exist. Hard territory built by the market. Desire is the target of incessant attempts to capture it in strategies that are constantly being perfected. The pedagogy of consumption is incisively taught to everyone who passes through: children, young people, adults, and the elderly. Can anyone escape the seductive lines of consumption?

Figure 4: Commercial empty spaces.



Source: Record by the first author taken in the food court of Center Shopping, Uberlândia, MG, in 2019, at a slow time. Editing by Cássio Mota.

Experiencing time in shopping centers is an experience that, despite certain patterns, crosses different people in different ways. Store workers, consumers from different social classes, the elderly, and children: each is permeated by different lines of capture and consumption. In this sense, the researcher Karyne Coutinho (2003) brings up interesting reflections on how these spaces have also been dedicated to the fields of children's education in spaces designed for these practices, reinforcing notions of education as a private good to be marketed, to the extent that certain types of subjects are manufactured. On these issues, the author states that

The implementation of educational practices located outside the school walls encourages me to consider the context in which this children's space is located: new configurations of educational practices that are born within institutions such as shopping malls, which are, par excellence, places for commercial practices - buying, selling, exchanging, and consuming. I believe that the fact that children are also educated in shopping malls is related to the "powerful" position of importance that market forces have occupied in our contemporary forms of social organization. It is not by chance that children begin to be involved in educational practices in a place like this, which is, among other things, a privileged place for the circulation of market strategies (Coutinho, 2003, p. 977).

The market and the privatization of life permeate our lives in different ways. In what ways might eating in a shopping mall contribute to other ways of relating to food, to nourishment, to mealtimes, and to our very existence?

A food court is usually a jumble of sounds and smells amidst the tangle of people in their movements of consumption. Devir-nomad, Devir-animal? As I write this, I realize that, at first glance, it doesn't seem so far removed from

large fairs and popular markets, places that are also geared toward commerce. Perhaps one of the things that makes it so different is that at the fairs you can find locally produced food at affordable prices, while at the mall you will find almost all food franchise chains, multinationals, and fast food outlets. Feira-linha-de-fuga, gambiarra, resistência? Shopping-hard-lines-captures?

At off-peak times, the tables are empty and silence practically takes over the space, as in Figure 4. I notice that these are the times when many of the people who work there go out for lunch and dinner. Usually, alone or in small groups, they use their meal breaks to rest, talk, and interact in other ways. So, who knows, these eating places could also be small sanctuaries.

Restaurants, kiosks, and fast food outlets use a variety of marketing strategies. Bright colors, people inviting you to look at the menu, smells, lights, coupons for promotions. The appeals are varied and come in all shapes and forms, constantly changing and looking for new ways to attract customers. Struggle for survival? Capitalist machines? Between the hard and segmented lines, there are also spaces for human bonds through food, both for those who sell and those who consume.

Eating in vegetarian restaurants

The movements around vegetarian and vegan diets and lifestyles have caught my attention, and I've been following them for decades because I sympathize with some knowledge and practices they mobilize. Regarding these ways of relating to food, to human and non-human life, Luciana de Lira (2013), when carrying out an anthropological study with people who follow vegan movements, notes a historical and social construction of perceptions of meat consumption - or not - and ways of relating to other animals. For the author, despite certain contradictions present in vegetarianism/veganism, it is recognized that:

Food, in this case, appears as a mediator of the relationship established between nature and culture from an integrative perspective and as an expression of an antispeciesist morality, which seeks to place human and non-human animals on the same plane of moral consideration. The movement aims to make a conceptual shift regarding the ontological status of non-human animals in Western society (Lira, 2013, p. 69).

I've noticed that pro-vegan campaigns such as "Meatless Monday" are being publicized around the world and adopted by restaurants all over Brazil, as in the case of Maní¹⁵, a famous restaurant in the city of São Paulo, which on Mondays offers a completely vegan option as a promotional executive menu. When I visited the city of São Paulo, I had the opportunity to visit the restaurant Pop Vegan Food¹⁶, located in the central region near Avenida Paulista, which on Mondays offers the possibility to eat à la carte for ten reais¹⁷, a price considered cheap and accessible for the central regions of the capital. When I visited the historic center of Curitiba, the capital of Paraná, I had the opportunity to try a vegan meal at even lower prices at the restaurant Semente de Girassol¹⁸, which offers lunch options starting at five reais¹⁹ and without any animal ingredients.

In addition to animal advocacy, it is usually possible to eat fresh food and light meals in these spaces. Many of the places I've visited give priority to organic, agro-ecological and local products. In the last few years, I've had more contact with agroecology and the consumption of agro-ecological products through Cesta Semeando Agrofloresta, a cooperative of regional agro-ecological producers that puts together a weekly basket that I buy, not

¹⁵ The restaurant's official Instagram page is <https://www.instagram.com/manimanioca/?hl=pt-br> (accessed December 20, 2019).

¹⁶ The restaurant's official Instagram page is <https://www.instagram.com/popveganfood/?hl=pt-br> (accessed December 20, 2019).

¹⁷ Route taken in the first half of 2019. Over time, the values have been adjusted.

¹⁸ The restaurant's official Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/SementedeGirassol> (accessed on January 9, 2020).

¹⁹ Route taken in 2018. Over time, the values have been adjusted.

as a customer, but as a "co-producer" who participates in the production and eats food free of industrial pesticides. Aren't we all co-producers of what we consume? Along with the food I receive each week, I also receive recipes that use locally grown products as ingredients. These foods are produced by hands, by people, by people, the fruits of agrarian reform, in dreams-revolutions-possible.

Agro-ecological movements and movements that promote the consumption of local products are often combined with vegetarianism. I also noticed certain links between some vegan and vegetarian restaurants and religious and esoteric issues. In the university district of Santa Mônica, in the city of Uberlândia, MG, there are vegetarian restaurants, as well as several establishments that offer vegetarian/vegan options. One of these restaurants, near the university, is called Ganesha, the name of an Indian deity that resembles an elephant. I've been going there from time to time for years, both for lunch and for events on various topics, such as esotericism and veganism. It's a welcoming place, with a small agroforestry garden, a shop selling Indian incense and utensils, as well as other vegetarian and vegan products and honey from local producers, among other things.

Figure 5: Life-green.



Source: Record of a meal at the Ganesha restaurant, taken in 2019.

Scattered around the restaurant are various signs with phrases such as "more love please," as well as information about the nutritional potential of foods such as broccoli and ora pro nobis (an unconventional food plant - UCFP), images of Catholic saints and Indian deities, mandalas, dream filters, hammocks, etc., in an attempt to sensitize customers to enter into reflective movements during their lunch breaks. It's a space that invites me to stop and feel the power of food with mystical, religious and political energies.

The food is light and colorful. Its taste vibrates in my body in sensations overflowing with energy and power. The audience seems to be mostly students and teachers of various ages, and I'm one of them. I feel at home, almost at home. They are people who, like me, want to have a peaceful and healthy lunch, whether they are vegetarians, vegans, sympathizers or just curious. People who might want to eat in peace and then lie in a hammock after their meal. Many may believe in a more vibrant diet that can enhance our lives.

I pause and reflect on what I believe about food, allowing myself to think, feel and learn. I realize that to be in these spaces, surrounded by nature and cultures (Haraway, 2023), is also to allow myself to learn with/in the midst of/for life (Sales; Rigue; Dalmaso, 2023):

An insane crossing between becoming-educator and becoming-scientist, a leap into the flows of thinking life, into what pulses in our bodies, in the world we inhabit and in the worlds we constitute in education, in the classroom and in the affective relationships that permeate educational relationships (Sales; Rigue; Dalmaso, 2023, p. 5).

Learning with, in the midst of, through life (Sales; Rigue; Dalmaso, 2023) is something that happens in the intense flows of an existence that can turn even a meal into a lesson: entering into a relationship with plants, with the food that nourishes us, with what pulsates and overflows in our bodies, proliferating in encounters with others that cross, penetrate, and compose us. In short, it's learning to live and die with, in multi-species relationships (Haraway, 2023), including food.

I realize that this restaurant, a place to eat, is also the site of political, mystical-religious discussions, cooking classes and therapies, among other things. It's a meeting place for groups, cultures, and beliefs. It's neo-esoteric, or neo-esô, as the urban ethnographer Magnani (1999) calls these contemporary territories where people, cultures, beliefs, and practices meet and interact, such as Buddhist, Hindu, ufological, vegan and yoga thinking. These neo-esoteric territories are places that participate in the lives of different people, with different intensities, mobilizing educations. They are places of food, brands and learning.

When I had lunch at the Ganesha restaurant, I realized that even though it resembles shopping malls and other commercial spaces in that it positions food as a commodity, it invites me to interact with what nourishes

me in a different way: to eat quietly, in my own time, to breathe and feel the flavors of food that is also alive and powerful. I am welcomed and greeted by the staff, which is practically an invitation to feel at home. I notice that people generally eat without rushing - a rarity these days. And even those who are in a hurry seem to be resting a bit. They drink herbal water after lunch. Couples and friends who want more privacy sit at the farther tables and lie down in the hammock stretched out in the open space.

Time flows according to each person's life, in contact with greenery - be it in the food, the decorations, the agro-ecological backyard, the plants scattered everywhere, and... - and with calm: a refuge amidst the urban chaos of a city of around 700,000 inhabitants, proliferating in multiple deglutable and incorporable pedagogies. Thinking about refuges in a world in ruins (Tsing, 2019) is a matter of urgency since, as Donna Haraway (2016, p. 2) told us, "right now, the earth is full of refugees, human and non-human, and without refuges". Perhaps in these other eating spaces, there are also clues as to how to find them - or perhaps create them.

Eating at home

Some time ago, I went to the city of Monte Carmelo, located in the interior of the state of Minas Gerais and with around fifty thousand inhabitants, to visit dear friends. As well as being great people, my companions were also wonderful cooks. I realized that much of the time we spent together was spent in the kitchen preparing delicious food, both sweet and savory, or while we were eating. We set things in motion, getting our 'hands on':

Hands that eat, that feel, that taste (...) Hands that transform lives into food. Hands that turn food into life. Hands that allow us to eat, live and feel, that prepare and carry with laughter and tears the food that nourishes our whole body (Sales; Carvalho, 2022).

Prepared with our hands and our whole bodies, food was the territory of encounters in which we mixed and crossed affections. Warmed by the wood stove, we ate a lot, also nourishing ourselves with affection, among smells and tastes, in warm contacts. Bean stew, fish stew, rice cakes, puddings, cocadinhas, dulce de leche... a mixture of flavors that, for me, were not only delicious, but also perfectly matched the local landscapes and could be translated into only one word: love. The pedagogy of the sensitive ran through me while I was there and nourished me so much. Inspired by what bell hooks (2021) teaches us in her famous book *All About Love: New Perspectives*, I reflect: would moments like these be opportunities to learn as we meet and nourish one another, imbued with love as an ethic of life?

Eating with love, loving the company of others, learning through encounters as an act of love. At the same time, I realized that to experience this Minas Gerais cuisine, considered traditional, rooted or redneck, was also to experience a contact with the geographies of the state, with cartographies of the winding and thought-provoking territories that I recognize as my house, my dwelling, and my home. The eggs from the free-range chickens in the backyard, the fruit from the orchard, the pumpkins, and chayotes that grow in the middle of the bush, the wood stove that uses branches from trees so old that they fall over and die... even the colors of the food reminded me of the landscapes of the region: the red of the beans or the brown of the sweet milk with the reddish earth, the deep yellow of the saffron and the egg yolk with the shades of the earth and the sunset.

Being in these spaces reminded me of the quilombola perspectives of Antônio Bispo dos Santos (2023), who affirms the importance of the community being together and thinking collectively in the co-creation of a territory. The author reflects on the theme of food and its presence in the life of the groups in which he lived and worked:

The architecture is also designed around the food. Food organizes the party, organizes the reception, everything is organized around food. When we make architecture, we think about food and partying, about shared forms of life (Santos, 2023, p. 64).

A lot permeates being together, cooking together, eating together. The house, the architecture, the desires, the dreams, the wishes, the hunger, the waiting, the expectation, the trial, the error, the eagerness, the satiety, the many human, non-human and more-than-human beings, the textures, the changes in physical and chemical states, the celebration of being able to share time, space, food: this is the communion of feeding, of living an encounter, of being nourished entirely, of being in a territory full of possible ways of learning and educating.

Figure 5: Heats and(on) affections.



Source: Photo taken by the author at the wood stove, in 2019, in the city of Monte Carmelo, MG.

I know that the reality experienced this weekend in this town in the interior of Minas Gerais could never do justice to all the meals in such a populous state - just as no narrative here has sought to create truths or

generalizations, but rather narratives of experiences and experiments, localized and limited, but also overflowing with marks, becomings and affections.

In these moments permeated by food, it was at the center of experimenting and creating spaces and our relationships with each other, with humans, non-humans, and more than humans. Food also kept us company and acted as the materialization of an encounter (Sales; Carvalho, 2020)²⁰, uniting us with spaces, stories, memories, and things that existed there, in processes of multiple affections. Eating made it possible to discover - and learn from - some living spaces, following paths through the possible smells and tastes to venture into a territory and into affectionate relationships with myself and others.

Final considerations

To revisit these writings is to be filled with emotion, nostalgia, and strangeness at the differences in the times and spaces we have traveled through since then. It is to perceive the smells, tastes, textures and blends that reach our mouths, fill our whole bodies, nourish us, teach us how to live, allow us to exist. The power of memories vibrates in our existences, activating our vibrating bodies (Rolnik, 2016) and leaving these cartographic paths open as they remain alive and pulsating. Re-encountering these paths means being permeated by smells and tastes that are still alive, and is an intense opportunity to perceive what remains of the marks, affections, and becomings

²⁰ We reflect on the dimension of the encounters that take place with food: "The encounters provided by food, cooking and eating are open to new sensations, experiences, captures, processes and disputes. Connective rhizomes make it possible to organize encounters in movements. Encounters with varying speeds that act on the lives that plant, harvest, create, produce, transport, sell, cook and eat. Different encounters occur in multiple possibilities, however, never alone - but through connections via food. These encounters are populated with other subjects, affections, other powers, pains, captures, other places, knowledge, other politics, other learnings, other histories, cultures... In movements that allow tasting encounters in the processes of eating and cooking, crossed by inconstant affections. Encounters that take place in the body and political encounters between hard, segmentary and vanishing lines, in movement, with varying speeds and directions, in multiple connections" (SALES; CARVALHO, 2020, p. 160).

experienced there. These traversed paths have taught us so much, showing us that to live is to remember, to mark experiences on the skin, and that to remember is also to create, resonating in our bodies and allowing us to perceive transdisciplinary ways of research in movement.

In this text, we try to reflect, to think, to fold, to zigzag on the education mobilized by the affections, the marks, and the possible becomings in gustatory encounters. Time has passed, much of what has been discussed has changed, but certain modulations continue to resonate in us because of what we have learned from them, because of the marks, affections, and becomings that have been generated in us. In this way, the narratives are situated between distances and bridges of memories and crossings, built by remembering other times, possible paths, and creating with them. And so we ask ourselves: what taste paths are possible today? What can we learn from the encounters between bodies and food in the world to come?

We recognize and affirm that food materializes multiple encounters (Sales; Carvalho, 2020): between humans, non-humans, more than humans, times, spaces and... and... and... that constitute intense territories for different cartographies. We eat - and learn - with our whole body (Sales; Carvalho, 2022): with our hands, mouth, eyes, skin that feels textures, digests, nourishes, excretes. To penetrate all these dimensions is to perceive a highly potent territory for experimenting with education that happens with/in the midst of/for life (Sales; Rigue; Dalmaso, 2023).

In a research project carried out in a transdisciplinary way and in movement, we were able to see that with the "gustatory crossings that permeate our bodies, we educate ourselves, form ourselves, transform ourselves, shape ourselves, making and remaking a life, a body, and a subjectivity based on learning about ourselves and the other that happens in the middle" (Sales; Carvalho, 2022, p. 694). When we walk a path - or rather, several paths - with food, we see in it the strengths and powers that come from encounters. This is how we recognize it:

The cartographies and their drifts along the routes materialize the learning experienced through encounters between bodies and foods, in rhizomatic educations that take place in the middle, in experiments, rehearsing other perceptions of the world, creating poetics of encounter, of desire that crosses body, time and space, in multiple connections (Sales; Carvalho, 2022, p. 693).

School, university, home, street, market, shopping center, restaurant, snack bar, wood stove, gas stove, homemade food, industrial food, vegetable, animal, mineral... bleeding flesh, anthropophagic flesh, devoured flesh, our flesh is produced, nourished, created, destroyed and populated by encounters with food. In short, we realize that these gustatory encounters are highly productive, nourishing, territories of brand creation, mobilizing affections and becomings.

"There is, therefore, education in everything that mobilizes thoughts, drives, affections, and actions. (Rigue; Dalmaso, 2020, p. 145). We understand food as a territory of education, insofar as it mobilizes us in affections, in vital forces, producing marks that shape, deform and transform bodies, inspired by Rigue and Dalmaso (2020) and Rolnik (1993). Food is a territory of marks, affects and becoming, of forces and powers of the future, which allows us to learn and educate in an unusual way.

"Food, as a space of encounter, is the possibility of learning and teaching, of educating for life, of becoming infected with the facets of taste, in the strength of colors, smells and tastes that nourish the whole body" (Sales; Carvalho; Rigue, 2023, p. 1079). It is a territory of mixtures, movements, contradictions, pains, and pleasures. It is in itself a territory of life. Food is life, it is strength, it is desire and, as such, it is a place where education takes place, learning about oneself, others and the world, in multiple smells and tastes that permeate being alive and thus recognizing oneself.

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