Introduction

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Boycotts and protests, smashed shop windows, and even death threats . . . while wars rage between Russia and Ukraine, and Israel and Palestine, restaurant owners across the world fear for their livelihoods and sometimes their lives, simply because they serve the foods and tastes of their countries of origin.[1] Similarly, Chinese restaurants around the world suffered catastrophic losses of custom, and in some cases vandalism, during the COVID-19 pandemic due to associations some people made between Chinese food, uncleanliness, and the origins of the virus in China.[2] In moments of crisis like these, the linkages between people, food, and place become political and often violent. That peoples and their food tastes are fundamentally connected to their geographical places of origin is a pervasive and resilient idea with considerable visceral power.

While acts like smashing restaurant windows are highly symbolic, they also prompt us to question the meanings, discourses, and practices that people generate around food, taste, and place. Such stark acts may mask the fact that relations between people, place, and food taste are not givens but are rather being constantly made, or indeed unmade. As many Chinese American and British Chinese restaurateurs discovered during the pandemic, while they and their food became associated with the territory of China, their local histories, identities, and belonging in American and British cities were negated. These examples indicate not only how actors shape the ways that place is implicated in creating the taste of food, but also the reverse: how notions and practices of food taste create places, and people. And these configurations can have significant consequences.

This book therefore critically engages with terroir—an idea that suggests that place can be tasted in the foods to which it gives origin. Conventionally, terroir refers to the organoleptic discernment—that is to say, bodily sensing, for example, through taste, sight, and smell—of the physical production site of foods and drinks and asserts a higher-quality product. In English it has been dubbed "the taste of place" (Trubek 2008). Many may associate terroir with fine wines, reflecting the term's French origins and employment within the certification

and marketing of specialist foods and drinks, now not only within Europe but also well beyond. Terroir has also been the subject of much scholarly literature, through which we take a brief tour below.[3] The contributors to this volume engage with, extend, and challenge the terroir concept by exploring the diverse and shifting social and material practices through which taste and place are mutually constitutive.

To do this, we shift from taking taste and place as givens, to focus on practices of *making taste* and *making place*. This challenges the reification of taste—as organoleptic, physiological, and passive—and place—as territorial, stable, and enduring—and it necessitates attention to the actors involved, and their interests. Taste and place are thus better thought of as verbs, or processes, than as nouns, or as things. We build on anthropological approaches that interrogate how place and taste are made and experienced in order to explore their complex relationships. In other words, we ask how place is tasted, and how taste is placed.

How taste and place are created and related concerns not only the politics of food in moments of crisis, such as times of war, or the commercial production of elite foods and drinks, such as artisan cheese or fine wines. Taste-place relations also concern the social, economic, moral, cultural, and bodily dimensions of everyday life. In this volume we thus expand our focus to also include the perspectives, and foods, of those producers and consumers often sidelined by the focus on terroir products—for example, domestic cooks, small-scale producers excluded from terroir-based certifications, rural and lower income consumers, and migrant and mixed-heritage populations. We include a diverse range of ethnographic case studies, not only from terroir's traditional stomping grounds—such as French vineyards—but also far beyond, from Russia and Palestine to China and Ghana.

As the restaurant attacks mentioned above highlight, taste-place relations have direct consequences. In contexts of movement and change they can create senses of belonging, or exclusion; they can be mobilized to lay claims to place, or to resist such claims; they can structure and connect multiple temporalities—to remember the past and to make a life in the future. How place and taste are made in relation to each other therefore matters, especially in today's context of ongoing war and displacement, resurgent nationalism, climate crisis, bio-insecurities, and ever-expanding commodification. As the chapters in this volume elaborate, at stake here are the movements and transformations of peoples, foods, and boundaries, responses to the threats and devastation of conflict and climate change, problematic acquisitions of political and economic territory, and the pursuit of more secure futures in the context of a growing worldwide sense of uncertainty.

A crucial part of thinking beyond terroir is the exploration of other frameworks—other languages, values, and scales—through which people relate food to taste and place. A few years ago, a small conversation started among two of us when we compared our own research into the concepts of *domaće* food (in

Croatia) and *beldi* food (in Morocco), which both broadly translate into English as "homemade," "ours," or "local," and are widely considered superior in quality and value to their opposites—generally industrial or imported food, sometimes also certified terroir products (Colquhoun 2019, 2024; Graf 2024). We found that these everyday concepts have very different characteristics to conventional ideas and applications of terroir: they are highly contingent, difficult to define, fix and commodify, and are embedded in subjective, emotional, and bodily experience and knowledge. They are flexibly, sometimes unharmoniously, embedded in bodies, social relations, geographical territories, temporal periods, and production logics. In Croatia and Morocco, at least, they seemed better indices than the lens of terroir for understanding changing local material and social dynamics and their connections to broader political economies of food and taste.

Thus motivated, and in collaboration with the SOAS Food Studies Centre, we brought together a group of scholars, mostly anthropologists, whose research interrogates comparable food concepts elsewhere, including those whose research has engaged with the terroir concept itself. Following an initial two-day workshop to share our research directions, our group decided to produce this edited volume. It has been a collaborative project, including a retreat in Croatia to work on our chapters and to develop the book's main themes and arguments, and an internal peer-review process through which we commented on each other's draft chapters.

The result is a rich collection of comparative ethnographic case studies from around the world that demonstrate the diverse and shifting ways in which people, taste, and place are brought into relation. These include contexts of migration and displacement, colonization and war, poverty, cultural and material movement and mixing, and economic and environmental change. In some cases, the notion of terroir is employed, in others it is contested, and in some it is simply irrelevant. The chapters take us "beyond" terroir by decentering it—encouraging us to pay attention to how else people relate taste to place—and by shifting the focus from taste and place as givens to tasting and placing as acts and processes with far-reaching consequences. This volume therefore challenges narratives of essentialized relationships between people, place, and taste, and we hope it will encourage students, researchers, writers, practitioners, and policymakers to think "beyond terroir."

Terroir

The idea of terroir has risen to prominence in recent decades within Europe—and increasingly elsewhere in the world—in discussions of the relationship between food and place. The term, *terroir*, derives from the Latin *territorium*, referring to the lands surrounding a town (Parker 2015: 5). But terroir denotes a far more

substantial phenomenon than mere proximity or location. Contemporary usage of the term has emphasized how the defining characteristics of a particular place are expressed within the products emanating from it. Most notably, terroir discourse has long been prominent in the wine trade. Producers and enthusiasts alike have suggested that wines profoundly reflect the geographical features of the regions—even the individual vineyards, or parcels—upon which the grapes used in their making have been grown, including soil composition, slope, and aspect, as well as patterns of sunshine, precipitation, and temperature (Wilson 1998).

In recent decades the terroir idea has been applied to an ever-expanding number of products—from other alcoholic beverages to fruits, vegetables and herbs, grains, pulses, seeds and nuts, dairy products, meats, and even fish and other products of the sea (with reference to the latter sometimes using the term *merroir*—a mash-up of the French word for sea, *mer*, and *terroir*; see, e.g., Aistara, this volume). The terroir idea has even been adopted to refer to handicrafts associated with particular places, and to precious gems or metals such as gold.

The increased currency of the terroir idea has been driven in part by its close association with geographical indications (GIs). These have a long history. While referring to a foodstuff by reference to where it was or can be made was surely a practice among prehistoric people, and the ancient Egyptians, for example, indicated the origin of grapes on vessels of wine to be consumed by the pharaoh, such references were formally regulated as far back as the ancient Greeks. King Charles VI of France decreed in 1411 that the Roquefort name could only be applied to cheeses aged in the caves of Roquefort-sur-Soulzon, and five centuries later Roquefort was the first product to be granted an *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC).

Other western European countries followed suit, passing similar legislation that reserved the right to use specified place names to producers making these products within strictly delineated borders and adhering to specifications agreed upon by recognized producers. The Lisbon agreement of 1958 led to mutual recognitions among these states of what came to be called *Protected Designations of Origin* (PDO) and *Protected Geographical Indications* (PGI). With the formation of the European Union (EU) in 1992 and its subsequent expansion, this mutual recognition has encompassed an increasing number of states and expanded further still through unilateral agreements with additional non-EU member states. In parallel, the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights has afforded protection of geographical indications among all its member states, albeit for much more limited categories of products, such as wines and spirits (West 2013a).

As of 2023 there were approximately 65,900 protected GIs worldwide[4] (Crossland-Marr and Krause 2023: 7), including in South America and Asia. This expansion has been driven by the EU, which has lobbied the WTO for

international recognition of GIs for its own interests (West 2013a: 225), that is to say, protecting European producers in the context of industrialized and globalized agrifood systems (see also Welz 2013: 268–69). The conceptualization of food-people-place connections through the lens of terroir has also spread in the absence of GIs, being adopted, for example, by American artisan cheesemakers (Paxson 2010, 2013), winemakers (Black 2012), and chefs (Costa and Besio 2011)—a phenomenon that some scholars have encouraged (Trubek 2005, 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008). And the terroir logic has also been promoted by the Italian-born Slow Food organization, whose founder Carlo Petrini adopted a terroir strategy for his home region of Piedmont and then applied it to Slow Food's work globally (Laudan 2004).

This spread of the terroir concept has attracted scholarly attention. Research demonstrates that terroir's meanings and usages vary across time and space (Trubek and Bowen 2008; Paxson 2010, 2013; Demossier 2011, 2020; Black 2012; Cappeliez 2017; Gyimóthy 2017), prompting us to consider the "terroir of terroir" (West 2013a: 221). As terroir travels beyond its original French homeland, it finds more mixed success, requiring special efforts to find it, explain it, reinterpret it, or even "reverse-engineer" it (Paxson 2010; see also Tregear 2003; Meneley 2011; Black 2012; Belasco 2014; Besky 2014; Jung 2014; Weiss 2016). However, despite terroir's adaptability, at its core remains the assertion of important and enduring links between product, people, and place, which one of us has termed "the terroir triad" (West 2022).

If usage of the term *terroir* has historically been rather unequivocal about the essential relationship between places and their associated products, it has been somewhat more ambivalent with regard to people. French writers in the seventeenth century saw terroir as affecting the inhabitants of a place as much as its bounty—asserting that particular lands influenced the thought, language, and behavior, not to mention the identity and, by some accounts, even the physiological characteristics, of their inhabitants (Parker 2015). In other words, terroir shaped not only agriculture but also human culture. Such usages lent themselves in various contexts both to pejoratives (for example, through paternalistic categorizations of *ethnies*) and to assertions of regional and national pride (Bassett, Blanc-Pamard, and Boutrais 2007).

Recent adaptations of the terroir term have shifted focus away from how lands shape people to ask instead what role people play in the translation of places into particular products. Whereas some proponents of the terroir idea, with a focus on environmental factors, have tended to suggest that places essentially make products—see, for example, Bohmrich's account of *vignerons* who consider themselves mere "stewards of nature" and claim to "let the wine make itself" (Bohmrich 1996: 40)—scholars in the humanities and social sciences have of late asserted a more prominent role for people as the makers even of products profoundly

associated with place. To this end they have called attention to the importance of various forms of local knowledge and *savoir-faire* that enable people to craft goods that best express the places of origin in which they live and work (Bérard and Marchenay 1996; Trubek 2008; Trubek, Guy, and Bowen 2010).

Within this cultural turn in terroir discourse, some have highlighted the complex social dynamics at play in the exercise of such forms of situated local knowledge and in the contested claims associated with them. Here it bears reflecting upon how profoundly the terroir idea has become historically entwined with GIs in order to protect the intellectual property of the bearers of such knowledge and to reserve the use of recognized place names for those making products in the places for which these products are named (Barham 2003; West 2013a). How such arrangements work—who benefits from them, and who loses out—are often objects of intense contestation, as many have pointed out (see, e.g., Ulin 1996; Gade 2004; Guy 2007; Bowen 2015; Grasseni 2017; Demossier 2020). Taken together, these contributions have advanced the argument that there can be no terroir products without the active involvement of people as interpreters of the natural environment—that is, that terroir is as much a human construct as it is an environmental one. However, the very terms that Trubek has used to define terroir—"the taste of place"—remain relatively unquestioned within terroir discourse. In short, taste and place continue to be somewhat taken for granted.

We recognize, of course, that Trubek has called attention to the role played by "tastemakers" in the formation of a cuisine (Trubek 2000). But the complex—and sometimes fraught—relationships between producers translating natural factors into place-based foods, for example, and promoters of such foods cultivating demand for them, or various groups of consumers embracing them, is somewhat underscrutinized to date both within terroir discourse and within its critical examination in the literature.

Terroir discourse has also generally taken "place" for granted, treating it as a fixed starting point, not only to be translated into terroir products but also to be recognized and awarded protections. This is unsurprising, as many proponents of terroir have—in the face of ever-greater globalization of the food trade—been fundamentally concerned with challenging the idea that anything can be made by anyone, anywhere. But as one of us has recently argued, the very forces of globalization against which proponents of the terroir idea often orient themselves evince how thoroughly places are themselves constantly being made and remade by human hands—a fundamental element of ever-changing contexts of production with which terroir has yet to fully reckon (West 2022). Examples of this include the place name Gruyère being carried by Swiss dairymen to places like Kars, where it is now an appellation of a "traditional Turkish cheese"; and the reproduction of place-based products such as Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese today depending upon the *savoir-faire* of a workforce composed in significant measure of migrants from north African countries (West 2022).

Tasting Place and Placing Taste

Whereas "the taste of place" implies that taste and place are givens and thus passive, more active forms of tasting place and of emplacing taste remain less explored in terroir conversations (notable openings to this include, e.g., Paxson 2010; Weiss 2011). This volume advances critical engagement with the terroir idea by examining the diverse ways in which people not only make foods and foodways in, and of, particular places, but also, in the process, recreate their tastes as well as the places they inhabit. We therefore build on anthropological approaches to place and taste that foreground their multiple dimensions, their social and material construction, and their contingency.

Place

Since the 1980s, anthropologists have critiqued notions of "a culture," "a people," and "a place," and moreover, the mapping of one onto another (notably, Clifford 1988; Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 1997). Like cultures and peoples, places can be hard to pin down on maps, and their boundaries can be indeterminate and porous. And they are socially and politically imagined while also materially and subjectively experienced (de Certeau 1984; Lefebvre 1991; Basso 1996; Casey 1996). Anthropologists have therefore turned attention to place making. As something always in the making, or unmaking, *place* can be as much a verb as a noun.

Sites are made into meaningful places through acts such as naming, imagining, experiencing, and other ways of attaching meanings to locations (Basso 1996; Aucoin 2017). Such place making may operate on multiple levels: while institutions and structures of power may use "strategies" to generate "proper" places, people in everyday life use "tactics" to negotiate these "rules" in their own ways (de Certeau 1984). Actors have varying interests in shaping material and symbolic geographies, and varying abilities to do so. The success of place-making strategies may require the repressing of some voices, practices, or experiences, while foregrounding others. For example, places such as "the countryside" can be constructed in particular and exclusionary ways, which can be contested (Williams 1973; Murdoch and Pratt 1993; Murdoch and Marsden 1995; Sibley 1995; Holloway and Kneafsey 2004; Domingos, Sobral, and West 2014).

Places are therefore not static and enduring but characterized by movement and change. Today's increasingly globalized world makes this ever more apparent, as global flows of finance, people, products, and ideas impact multiple aspects of daily life as well as our experiences and imaginings of place. Our rapidly changing climate reveals the instability of material place, as dust storms relocate tons of sand, wildfires destroy vast landscapes, and species migrate in new patterns or become extinct (see, e.g., Baer and Singer 2025). Ongoing conflicts and wars, and

resulting displacements of people, highlight the impermanence of political borders and the fragility of human connection to place. Meanwhile, commercially and politically motivated attachments of particular cultural products to particular peoples and territories—such as in contexts of tourism or nationalism—rub up against realities of movement and change (see, e.g., Brown 2004; Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; Nyamnjoh 2010; Macdonald 2013; Coombe and Baird 2016; Salazar 2018; Porciani 2019; Cavanaugh 2023).

This begs the questions: What places do people taste in their food? And what places do people *want* to taste?

Foods are often said to express the lands that produced them: soil types detectable in some wines, sun-drenched Mediterranean gardens yielding intensely flavored tomatoes, herb-rich pastures flavoring grazing animals' meat, and milk, and so on (Trubek 2008). The imaginary here is rural and often bucolic. But ecologies of production are complex and, despite the pastoral imagery, often characterized by politics, conflict, and compromise (Ulin 1996; West 2013a; Grasseni 2017; Demossier 2020). Increasingly, we are aware of polluted land and seas. The fact that chemicals such as pesticides seep into our foods is well documented (Pretty 2005; Kalyabina et al. 2021). While second-generation ("non-persistent") pesticides are designed not to persist through to the point of sale, they can be more toxic at the point of application, affecting the health of agricultural workers (Wright 2010). And what of other sites of food production? Globally, more than half of the human population now lives in towns and cities. Much food acquisition, processing, cooking, and eating happens in these urban contexts, as does production with the rise of urban farming (Cockrall-King 2012; de Zeeuw and Drechsel 2015; Rosan and Pearsall 2017). Such urban places can also be tasted (Rhys-Taylor 2017; Edwards, Gerritsen, and Wesser 2021), although these tastes of place are not usually celebrated as terroir.

For many, desired tastes are redolent of home: the comforting taste of homemade food—often considered healthy and especially important for children (Cairns, Johnston, and MacKendrick 2013; Boni 2023)—or of food that reminds one of a past home, or perhaps an imagined one (Seremetakis 1994; Abranches 2014; Aistara 2014; Papacharalampous 2023). For some, however, these tastes of home may be associated with long hours of domestic labor or parental moral anguish, with both burdens notably borne by women, or may conjure memories of conflict or abuse (Charles and Kerr 1988; Paugh and Izquierdo 2009; Bowen, Brenton, and Elliott 2019; Le Moal et al. 2021). For others, this taste may be longed for but hard to achieve, for example, in contexts of migration or displacement (Sutton 2001; Ben-Ze'ev 2004; Abbots 2011; Raman 2011; Meneley, this volume). Sometimes we seek the opposite, the taste of "the Other" or the exotic (Molz 2004; hooks 2014), for example, in restaurants and (other) tourism sites (Heldke 2001; Long 2004; Caldwell 2006). Home is therefore an important place to taste but is far from straightforward. This place may be a particular kin or

household group, a domestic or nutritional ideal, a temporal period, or a physically distant territory or community. It may be something we seek to taste, or not.

Similarly, the idea of "local" food is powerful in many contexts. Often imbued with moral and ethical values, food grown or processed "locally" is considered by many fresher, tastier, and healthier (Nabhan 2001; Kingsolver 2007). "Local food" is also often considered "authentic," as a representation of place, being ecologically and/or culturally embedded—qualities that may be tasted (Caldwell 2010; Weiss 2011). However, as with home, this local place is neither a given nor unproblematic. It scales from the smallholding and microregion, via undefined notions of "near here," to the region and nation. At the latter level, food taste becomes important within strategies of "gastronationalism" (DeSoucey 2010) and "gastrodiplomacy" (Rockower 2012; Bestor 2014). At every scale, the "local" we seek to taste is a construct—a choice, often strategic, concerning not only its spatial extent but also its productive, cultural, and social makeup—and thus exclusive, and contestable (Hinrichs 2003; Feagan 2007; Sims 2010; DeLind 2011; Avieli 2013, 2016; Beriss 2019). At every scale, too, it exists in tension with the "global," or translocal—the ongoing movements of peoples, foods, and tastes—which at times may be welcomed and incorporated into the "local" (Watson 1997; Bestor 2001; Caldwell 2004), or considered superior (Jing 2000; Caldwell 2002), while at others resisted, denied, or obfuscated (Zaneri 2013; Cavanaugh 2023; see also Cook and Crang 1996).

Taste

Likewise, we approach the taste of food as something that cannot be taken for granted but instead requires interrogation. By our conception, taste is not merely a constellation of chemicals "out there," waiting to be "naturally" received by the body; it is also something that is conceived, made, and subjectively and socially experienced. Like place, *taste* is as much a verb—tasting—as a noun.

Taste is hard to pin down. On the one hand, it is the most subjective, private, and singular of all bodily senses. Yet on the other, taste is something that connects us to material, social, and ideological worlds, undeniably context-dependent, and able to be communicated and codified (Ferguson 2011; Vercelloni 2016; Counihan and Højlund 2018; Hedegaard 2018). Whereas taste has historically been treated as a lower, more animalistic sense (along with smell and touch)—and therefore a matter of the human body, not of the mind (Korsmeyer 1999)—contemporary social scientists have explored taste beyond a purely physiological response.

Bourdieu (1984) famously elaborated the social and aesthetic foundation and role of taste—the upper classes' taste for fine wines, for example. In this reading, good taste is a marker of social distinction, an ability to discern and appreciate certain tastes, which is learned from one's socially situated upbringing and displayed in order to maintain or improve one's class position (see also Gronow

1997). Others—notably Seremetakis (1994), Korsmeyer (1999) and Sutton (2001, 2011)—have drawn our attention back to the bodily experience of taste, arguing for it to be taken seriously as a cognitive, symbolic, and aesthetic practice, even as a "total social fact," relating to the whole cosmology of a culture (Sutton 2011). Within this work, considerable attention has been given to the relationship between food taste and memory. Taste can stand in for lost times or places (Proust 1913–27; Seremetakis 1994; Sutton 2001; see also Ben-Ze'ev 2004; Caldwell 2006; Dunn 2008). Scholars have also challenged the widespread idea that bodily taste resides solely in the mouth or nose. Tasting can also occur with the fingers, or in the stomach, and it often involves all bodily senses, including a sense of temporality (see, e.g., Sobo 1997; Mann et al. 2011; Graf 2022; Simpson Miller, this volume).

Meanwhile, others have stressed the social and discursive construction of taste. Not only can varying material qualities and tastes be created in food, but how they are recognized, experienced, invested with meaning, and valued by both producers and consumers is down to sociocultural processes. This has been demonstrated through work on, among other things, artisan chocolate (Terrio 2000) and terroir products in France (Trubek 2008), hummus within Arab-Jewish relations (Hirsch 2011), olive oil in Palestine (Meneley 2014), and pork in North Carolina (Weiss 2016). In other words, we learn what and how to taste. Taste is therefore not only historically and culturally specific, it is also shaped by a range of social and material practices—including technologies, languages, and experiences—of tasting (Silverstein 2004; Mol 2009; Everett 2012; Mann and Mol 2019; Graf 2022; Mol 2024).

Food tastes are also intertwined with the political economies of food systems. Tastes and tasting practices are often governed by national and international quality frameworks and technologies that categorize and organize tastes in global hierarchies (Cavanaugh 2007; Grasseni 2011; Welz 2013; West 2013b; Jung 2014; Meneley 2014; Besky 2020). Meanwhile, the sociocultural meanings carried by food qualities and tastes can affect foods' political and economic trajectories. For example, where quality is constructed as assurances of production conditions, such as organic farming, certifiers may capture surplus value, but where "good taste" is constructed as aesthetics and exclusivity, high-end restaurants can do so (Guthman 2002; see also Pratt 2007; Mol 2009). Aesthetic and safety standards also affect movements of foods across political borders and around the world, privileging some producers over others, with far-reaching socioeconomic impact (Freidberg 2003; Dunn 2003; Gille 2016).

As all these scholars, and others, demonstrate, tasting is an active practice. It is learned, requires effort, and creates outcomes. Some have therefore considered tasting to be a form of labor (Spackman and Lahne 2019). People's tasting bodies are implicated in the production of values, be they cultural (Weiss 1996), social (Bourdieu 1984; Weiss 2016), economic (Mintz 1985; Guthman 2002), or po-

litical (Caldwell 2002; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008). Food taste is thus best thought of not only as the result of food production processes, but also as a co-production, and much else beyond.

In sum, tasting necessarily happens in a particular time and space, and is shaped by actors with particular interests. Even when seemingly abstracted and objectified, taste still relies on people and institutions to locate it. Taste is therefore made in multiple sites: from oceans and fields to factories and domestic kitchens, from socialized bodies to globalized markets, and from nostalgic imaginaries to food standards specifications. And taste operates on multiple scales—organoleptic, emotional, bodily, social, cultural, moral, and political—often simultaneously. Tasting is thus a diverse range of practices bound up with class and distinction, ethnicity and nationalism, community and exclusion, nostalgia and future-making, pleasure and pain, labor and love.

Tasting Place and Placing Taste Beyond Terroir

Although the social science scholarship on taste contains ample references to the necessarily emplaced nature of practices of tasting, beyond explorations of tasting the nation (or "gastronationalism") (see, e.g., Caldwell 2002; Guy 2007; DeSoucey 2010; Monterescu and Handel 2019) it does not systematically engage with the diverse range of relationships between taste and place.

There are a few notable openings. For example, Paxson's study of cheesemakers in the United States highlights how, through crafting artisan cheese and appreciation for it, producers also attempt to craft themselves and the place where they live, both socially and ecologically (Paxson 2013). Weiss's exploration of pastured pork in North Carolina demonstrates how it is the networked social practices of breeding, husbandry, butchery, marketing, and cooking that establish the local taste and authenticity of this pork, revealing how these actors understand and make place (Weiss 2016). This volume builds on these works by bringing together both established and emerging scholarship on the taste-place nexus.

By putting tasting and placing in the gerund form, we shift the emphasis away from essentialized notions of taste and place toward a more complex understanding of taste and place as constituted by (human) practice and thus always in the (re)making. By pairing "tasting place" with "placing taste," we further emphasize how place and taste are dialogically constitutive and thus dynamic constructs. Paxson's and Weiss's ethnographies illustrate that while places and place-making processes can shape tastes and tasting practices, so, too, can tastes and tasting practices produce places in multiple ways. We consider both place and taste as generative: place making and taste making are implicated in each other.

This volume therefore represents a conversation with and around the idea of terroir—the relationship between taste and place. We expand, and thereby chal-

lenge, the terroir idea by explicitly moving beyond assumptions of the substantive nature of place and taste and by highlighting their co-constitutive relationship. The volume is therefore not a critique of terroir per se but rather a foray into the breadth of ways in which actors relate place and taste. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of the shifting and contingent relations between taste and place, accommodating, for example, situations of movement and change, or of innovation and destruction.

We take an explicitly comparative approach. By revealing the diversity of ways and sites in which people relate place to taste, we also move beyond terroir by decentering it: while in some contexts actors embrace, or develop, the terroir concept, in others it is simply unused and irrelevant. Furthermore, as terroir narratives increasingly travel around the world, as we sketched above, some actors implicitly or explicitly challenge terroir with other models or interests. This broad comparative approach shifts the focus away from terroir's traditional sites—that of commercial fine food and drink production in western Europe—to include sites, foods, and people often omitted from "taste of place" discussions, such as domestic cooks, degraded seas, conflict zones, and displaced populations. Thinking beyond the conventional terroir model allows researchers to engage with other taste-place languages, practices, and values, and thus attune to diverse situations and dynamics. The inflexible givens of "the taste of place"—not least the kinds of value they often enshrine—do not work in many contexts today, and maybe never did.

The contributors to this book highlight why the taste-place nexus matters and requires critical attention, for it is where and how places and tastes get remade. We pay attention to the range of actors involved—from microbes to international institutions—and what's at stake for whom. Concepts, narratives, and practices linking place and taste matter. Rather than being purely descriptive of a state of affairs, they can have considerable social, economic, legal, and political implications. For example, notions of taste in relation to place may be mobilized by certain actors to include or exclude (peoples and foods); to reaffirm gender, class, or other social relations; to create, dominate, expand, or restrict markets; to further regionalist, nationalist, or imperialist goals; or to resist or challenge such agendas. As the following chapters illustrate, tasting place and placing taste have wide-ranging consequences for human—and other—life.

Organization of the Book

While the theoretical scope of our approach and diversity of case studies included would allow this volume to be structured in multiple ways, we decided to do so by the "sites" in which taste and place are made in relation to each other.

Lands

We might most readily imagine the land as the archetypical siting of the taste of place. Yet the chapters in this section question how land is implicated in tasting place, and they find static, bounded notions of territory inadequate, or problematic. We learn how contingent, contentious, or even irrelevant land can be when relating taste to place.

Anne Meneley asks what happens to the taste of place when territory itself is contested. She describes ways through which Palestinians in Palestine and in the diaspora employ food cultivation, preparation, and knowledge to maintain a sense of belonging and shared identity in the context of forced displacement from their lands. Meneley shows that the nexus between food, taste, and land is vitally important for Palestinians—living on through shared memories and practices—but necessarily resembles something very different to the more conventional, often romanticized notion of terroir. The Palestinian "taste of place" that this chapter depicts is instead fraught with disconnection, destruction, and pollution, and yet it remains resilient as a fundamental element of Palestinian steadfastness.

Simon Pope and Harry West "beat the bounds of terroir" in their chapter on cidermaking in Devon, England. Their research project—a collaboration between an artist and an anthropologist—challenges the institutionalized understanding of terroir as the soil and climate of an area of land by bringing two seemingly opposed scalar perspectives into dialogue: the microbes involved in cidermaking and the folkways through which cider is celebrated. Proposing that these are both crucial elements of cidermaking's ecology of production, and moreover that they both move through space and change over time, Pope and West challenge the focus on bounded territorial place within terroir orthodoxy.

Guntra Aistara challenges the notion of land in another way. Her chapter explores the "taste of place" in smoked flounder in Latvia. While both Soviet and current-day political economic systems have separated and essentialized land and sea identities and livelihoods, with sometimes disastrous consequences, the making of smoked flounder, and its distinctive taste, has long relied on the intertwined features and livelihoods associated with both land and sea. Today its production is highly contingent due to ecological crises in the Baltic Sea, resulting from climate change, overfishing, and pollution, and due to socioeconomic change related to EU regulation, depopulation, and economic crisis. Aistara thus argues for "the taste of place" to incorporate shifting and precarious "amphibious" land-sea relations.

Sarah Czerny considers the apparent placelessness of European vegan cheeses—with their producers, recipes, and ingredients seeming to come from "everywhere and nowhere at the same time." This seems to contrast with the importance of place given to dairy cheeses, not least the terroir of the geolocation of

their production. However, Czerny argues that place is in fact also very important to vegan cheesemaking and -eating, and, as with dairy cheeses, makes both the cheeses and their consumers knowable. Rather than giving their cheeses (geo) localized identities, vegan cheesemakers emplace them in "the environment," a broader notion of place founded on ideological commitment. Czerny's chapter demonstrates the malleability of place, with actors foregrounding or obscuring certain aspects of it depending on their interests.

Melissa Caldwell explores what she calls the "terroirism" of *nash* (our) food in Russia. Caldwell takes a historical approach to show how *nash* has been implicated in oppressive political projects of colonialist national expansion, including the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine. Land and soil are central to this process of nashification, as they are felt to impart distinct qualities in foods and consequently in bodies, thus ideologically and viscerally uniting Russian people, Russian national identity, and Russian land. In this case, then, taste is not only implicated in symbolic place making but also in the material, and violent, acquisition of territory.

Laws

While geographical indications such as EU PDOs are presented as legally protecting preexisting taste-place relations, namely the traditional producers of distinctive "tastes of place," the chapters in this section outline how place and taste are brought into relation through social actors' invocations of a broader range of statutory and moral codes. These vary from informal social or individual moralities to formalized (inter)national certifications. We see how some actors attempt to standardize and control how taste and place are coproduced as well as how others (deliberately) work to retain ambiguity or flexibility, with consequences for shifting production methods and food qualities, and for market expansions and exclusions.

Anna Colquhoun's investigation of cured pork in Croatian Istria reveals how its transformation into a legally protected place-named product for an expanded market was at odds with small-scale producers' understandings and practices of making "good" cured pork. While the protected "Istrian ham" is founded on the imported idea of terroir, and territorial notions of place and taste, the latter is based on the concept of *domaće* (homemade) for which the social and moral dimensions of relations of production are more important. While making and appreciating the taste of *domaće* cured pork constitutes a moral critique of, and line of defense against, the political economy surrounding EU GIs, Colquhoun reminds us that informal food quality practices are also subject to social governance.

Marion Demossier demonstrates how the very rules meant to protect the distinctive terroir and wines of Burgundy, France, threaten their existence in the

context of environmental change. Here, in the heartland of terroir ideology, while some conventional producers uphold AOC standards and seek to reproduce the expected "taste of place" in their wines, others are adapting to increasing environmental uncertainty through *bricolage*—diverse approaches centered on care for land, plants, and workers—and challenging the rigidity of viticulture and viniculture imposed by the AOCs. These producers assert their wines' true expressions of place as fluid, flexible, and individual, which, Demossier suggests, might constitute a more sustainable and resilient approach to winemaking.

Greg de St. Maurice introduces us to the diversity of place brands in Japan and illustrates how a plethora of both legally defined place-named foods and more "fuzzy" brands for foods—which are not regulated, owned, or managed by a formal or legal entity—coexist and often mutually benefit one another. De St. Maurice thus demonstrates the flexibility with which people make and market relations between taste and place, and he also indicates why rigid "delineated place brands" do not work for some producers and consumers, who prefer instead the flexibility of "fuzzy" or "individual" brands.

Kunbing Xiao's chapter on Chinese black teas introduces the vernacular notion of *fengtu*—which denotes the natural environment and customs of a place—to illustrate the power of narration in creating and regulating taste and place in a globalized market context. Through tracing the development of Lapsang souchong tea in the Tongmu Nature Reserve in the Wuyi Mountains—a region not previously associated with prestigious tea production—Xiao reveals the tea's narrative transformation from a cheap drink produced for foreigners into a highly priced GI product for domestic consumers. Her chapter captures the sometimes accidental steps by which "local imagination" becomes "legalized reality," and her attention to the arising legal conflicts reminds us that the coproduction of taste and place always involves redefinitions and relocations of both.

Bodies

While the existing terroir literature attends to the work and skill of food and drink producers such as vintners and cheesemakers, here we introduce actors rarely associated with terroir discourse, such as low-income consumers and domestic cooks, many of whom are women. The chapters in this section describe not only how these actors use their skilled bodies to create food tastes but also how tasting and placing foods are embodied practices, relating to gender, ethnic, class, and other social relations, and the reproduction of cultural values. We also learn how these deeply personal embodied practices relate to the dynamics of large-scale political economies.

Katharina Graf elaborates on the role of the skilled body in reproducing individual and situated notions of taste and place. Graf introduces the notion of *beldi*—a widely used concept used to place and differentiate people and objects

across Morocco and the Arab region—to analyze how poor Marrakshi cooks make sense of and produce foods, tastes, and places in the absence of national quality standards and in the ever-looming presence of food insecurity. *Beldi* shifts attention to the largely hidden work of making taste and place in low-income homes, and thus grounds discussions "beyond terroir" in the context of poverty and increasing uncertainty.

Hanna Garth similarly highlights the role of embodied knowledge in making "Cuban" foods both in Cuban kitchens and in the Cuban diaspora in the United States. Through detailed ethnographic examples, she argues that, although most foods are imported, Cubans still consider their cuisine to have a distinct taste of place, which she locates in the embodied practice of combining ingredients. The ability to mix and create something new—including racial and cultural mixing described as *mestizaje*—has a long history in Cuba and the wider region and shapes the way Cubans relate to food and drink.

James Staples considers the relation of taste to place in India, which now boasts over 350 WTO-recognized GIs for food products, which, as elsewhere, define and protect products according to their geographical place of production. He finds that while these GIs are designed for transnational trade, they had little resonance for his interlocutors in southern India. Although consumers in India may denote regional affiliations through food, Staples argues that for many, foods' links to places are mediated by other concerns, namely ideas about the body, seasonality, gender, caste, and class. In other words, who eats what foods, when, where, and with whom is what matters to his interlocutors. Place is thus both physical and portable, as something embodied in people and carried with them.

Brandi Simpson Miller's historical account of *chop*—proper food—in Ghana demonstrates its past and current relevance to ecological, ethnic, and cosmological relations, and highlights the role of women in making taste, place, and people. Simpson Miller argues that it is women's embodied work of preparing *chop*, for which correct texture is paramount, that creates important social relations and emplaces people. *Chop* thereby emerges as a flexible category that accommodates the movements of peoples and foods across space and time while remaining crucial within people's claims to land, identity, and economic and sexual obligations.

Imaginaries

While conventional notions of terroir tend to stress the past—long-standing traditions honed over generations to suit local conditions—in this section we consider the ways that actors employ multiple imaginaries, and temporalities, in their relating of taste to place. In many cases people are grappling with contexts of movement, change, and uncertainty by combining notions of tradition and modernity, and of "here" and "there." Relating taste to place often becomes

an active future-making project rather than an expression of backward-looking nostalgia.

Charlotte Sanders analyzes Sudanese women's everyday food practices in Portsmouth, England, where—in the context of migration and displacement—they seek to recreate familiar tastes of a past home while also creating a new and future home. As border controls have become stricter, importing foods from Sudan has become increasingly difficult and unaffordable. As a result, these women trial new means of food provisioning and processing, and they collaborate across ethnic divides to continue reproducing Sudanese meals. Sanders thus encourages us to see women's domestic food work as powerful future-making and place-making practices.

Jakob Klein argues that British-born Chinese restaurateurs reinvent Chinese cuisine in the UK through what he calls the "politics of authenticity." Against the backdrop of changing patterns of migration from China to Britain over the last century—and of restaurant cuisines along with it—he recounts how second-generation British Chinese who grew up in the catering trade reinvent Chinese restaurant food using very personal visions, experiences, and identities as both British and Chinese. The resulting cuisine is fluidly emplaced in both China and Britain, conjuring both recognition and controversy among their diverse consumers.

Yuson Jung explores how Bulgarian wine professionals are having to engage with globally dominant wine quality standards, namely the terroir ideology that holds that high-quality wines reflect their geographical microregion of production in gustatory terms. Considering the practices and narratives of a range of wine professionals, Jung finds that in Bulgaria terroir wines are not the only "good wine" (*dobro vino*), and that Bulgarian "good wines" reflect diverse social imaginaries of place—from the home and factory to the region and nation—in multiple sensorial terms beyond the gustatory.

Cristina Grasseni focuses on a successful cheese business in Val Taleggio to demonstrate the very deliberate and political ways in which taste and place are coproduced to ensure a viable economic future in this remote region of northern Italy. Key to this strategy is the semantic packaging of cheesemaking, for which keywords such as *territorio*, *tipicità*, *tradition*, and *sustainability* are flexibly used to both sell cheese and assert belonging and sovereignty. In the context of climate change, global market consolidation, and depopulation in mountainous regions, Grasseni argues that while this entrepreneurship is about making money, it is also a reflective, performative, and political act that imagines and creates a future for the local community.

Finally, in their afterword, Heather Paxson and Brad Weiss draw out the range of analytical moves that take us beyond terroir: by detaching place from territory, by approaching borders and boundaries between places as thresholds, and, lastly, by emphasizing foods' capacities to remake the world. They respond to

our ongoing conversations by suggesting that we all engage with the "productive ambiguity of terroir"—to embrace it both as an ethnographic category *and* as a generalizable model, or as a quality in a product *and* as a goal toward which (or against which) people aim. Insofar as this volume's collection of case studies reveals how taste and place are made in relation to each other, in diverse and shifting ways, and with far-reaching implications, we hope to have both laid bare some of terroir's most interesting ambiguities and invited further examination of the varied goals that animate people's understanding of and engagement with taste and place—whether through, or "beyond," terroir.

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Notes

1. See for example: Pistol 2022; Reiner 2022; Clerkin 2023; Lynn 2023; Haboucha 2024.
2. See for example: Olson and Tang 2020; Ramirez 2020; Williams 2021; Yang 2023.
3. There is now a vast body of literature on and around terroir, so our review here is necessarily partial.
4. This is a World Intellectual Property Organization/Lisbon tally, pertaining to appellations of origin and geographical indications.

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