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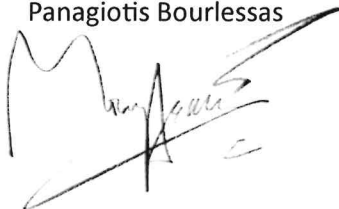
Oggetto: attribuzioni "Foodscape as reconnection. Reflections from a site-specific artistic intervention in Florence's Sant'Ambrogio marketplace"

Con riferimento all'articolo scientifico "Foodscape as reconnection. Reflections from a site-specific artistic intervention in Florence's Sant'Ambrogio marketplace", pubblicato sulla rivista *Berichte Geographie und Landeskunde* il mese febbraio del 2023, gli autori Panagiotis Bourlessas e Matteo Puttilli, e l'autrice Mirella Loda, consapevoli che chiunque rilascia dichiarazioni mendaci è punito ai sensi del codice penale e delle leggi speciali in materia, ai sensi e per gli effetti dell'art. 46 D.P.R. n. 445/2000, dichiarano che:

- le sezioni "Conceptualizing foodscape through reconnections" e "Fostering food reconnections through art in marketplaces" sono state scritte da Panagiotis Bourlessas;
- le sezioni "Introduzione" e "Conclusioni" sono state scritte da Matteo Puttilli;
- e la sezione "Creating a site-specific artistic intervention in a historical market: context, methodology and final output" è stata scritta da Mirella Loda.

In fede,

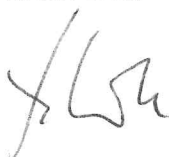
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Foodscape as reconnection

Reflections from a site-specific artistic intervention in Florence's Sant'Ambrogio marketplace

ABSTRACT: Foodscape is a concept internally diversified and open to different conceptualizations. This paper seeks to take advantage of this mutability so as to highlight, and elaborate upon, the importance of reconnecting the different components of a local foodscape in terms of sustainability. Two elements identified as characteristic to how foodscape is conceptualized in literature become central here: the material-immaterial interrelation, and interscalarity. Empirically, we draw from the case-study of a site-specific video-art installation, as geographical research dissemination practice, inside the Sant'Ambrogio historical marketplace of Florence, Italy. The installation, precisely, performs the reconnections of material and immaterial food elements, of different scales of production and distribution, and of the spaces and practices involved in all the above, generating a food-centered geographical knowledge, which can eventually contribute to a broader food pedagogy based on sustainability ethics.

Keywords: reconnection, local foodscape, marketplace, video installation, Florence.

Introduction

How can an academic research project centered on innovation, care for the local territory, and food quality and safety, become consolidated into a video-art installation as a form of public engagement? And how might a video-art installation foster food-geographical knowledge and consciousness in the direction of promoting more sustainable food chains and reconnections between consumers and producers at the local scale?

Within the framework of the special issue, this contribution presents the case-study of an academic product in the form of a site-specific video-art installation located inside one of the two historical marketplaces of Florence, Italy, that gives visibility to five small local producers belonging to the wider foodscape of the city. Through the construction of knowledge about the personal stories, techniques and places of production, we argue, the installation raises awareness and advances consciousness regarding the importance of reconnecting production and consumption at the local scale so as to promote more sustainable food systems. The local marketplace acquires, in this perspective, the role of a space of reconnection where the local foodscape – in its different dimensions and components – is reconstructed, redescribed, and made recognizable. In terms of conceptualization, we engage with the variegated and inter-disciplinary broader debate on foodscapes, aligning simultaneously to the neopragmatic framework suggested in the

introduction to this special issue. In regard to the latter, our contribution precisely gains momentum from the suggested re-description of foodscapes (KÜHNE 2022, 3), which emphasizes the epistemological, ontological and methodological mutability of the concept. As we will illustrate throughout this paper, this mutability allows us to put into use two main characteristics of the concept of foodscape – namely the material and immaterial, and the interscalar – so as to reveal the potential pedagogic capacities of a video art installation towards a local food system based on food awareness, quality, sustainability, and care for the local territory. Indeed, the capacity of the concept of foodscape to keep together such dimensions can be applied in order to stress the importance of locally reconnecting the usually disconnected elements that constitute actively any food system – first and foremost, the relations between consumption and production, and the complex dynamics involved in local production rendering it possible.

Overall, the aim of this paper is threefold. First, to put into practice the notion of the *foodscape* in a non-academic context, taking advantage of new technologies and artistic media in order to engage with the public and diffuse food-related geographical knowledge. Second, to explain in detail the logic and practicalities of a video-art installation as a research product of public engagement aspiring thus to become inspiration for other initiatives of public engagement in marketplaces and urban contexts different than those discussed here. And third, to bring together the practices of geography, art, and public engagement as a potential form of culinary pedagogy and learning of the territory.

The article is structured as follows: In the next section we review the literature on foodscapes to provide a practice-oriented framework based on two main characteristics of the concept, namely the material and the immaterial, and the inter-scalar. Theoretically, then, the section proposes that a conceptualization of foodscape in terms of reconnection can point towards increasing food-related geographical knowledge and generate a wider local food pedagogy. Then follows a brief description of the Sant'Ambrogio marketplace, where the art installation has been placed as a form of research dissemination and public engagement, and the research-artistic project is described in detail as the empirical case study of this contribution. The section after offers an interpretation of the way in which the installation performs the reconnection of the different components of the local food system, raising awareness of and for the local foodscape and linking all this to a pedagogic potential. The article concludes with a final section which sums up the overall argument.

Conceptualizing foodscape through reconnections

In his 1996 book *Modernity at Large*, Arjun Appadurai (1996, 33) suggests that the suffix *-scape* indicates that a thing, such as a *landscape*, is not a set of predefined and objective relations but, instead, a set of constructed relations. The suffix *-scape*, thus, reveals relations: a constructive and complex togetherness of elements. Among all the other *-scapes* that geographers (more or less traditionally) deal with – from the landscape to the soundscape – the *foodscape* is increasingly gaining substantial ground in the field

(MIKKELSON 2011; VONTHRON et al. 2020). Indeed, geographers mobilize the term *foodscape* so as to explore the various relations between place, space and food, the latter in its endless multiplicity (from production to distribution and consumption, and from its physical-material aspects to the cultural and symbolic ones).

In its conceptual multiplicity, a foodscape can be about food-related experiences in tourism (BJÖRK & KAUPPINEN-RÄISÄNEN 2019) or about retail settings and culinary behaviors of the emplaced consumers (LINDENBERG et al. 2018; KESTENS et al. 2010). It can be useful in investigating issues of food sustainability, social justice and public policy in urban settings (MORAGUES-FAUS & MORGAN 2015), issues of access to quality foodstuff (CUMMINS & MACINTYRE 2002), as well as issues of racialization and colonization (BLAKE 2018). Finally, a foodscape can function as an analytical framework so as to understand the wider transformations of local and national food systems (SAGE 2010), the corporatization of organic foodstuff (JOHNSTON & MACKENDRICK 2009), and the ethics of the localization of food production (MORGAN 2010).

The above -thematic, theoretical, and empirical- multiplicity is indicative of the term's inherent conceptual mutability that, regardless of its possible drawbacks that are not going to be discussed here, allows us to work on the term in new directions both in theorizing and equally in practicing foodscapes, the latter aspect being particularly important to our paper. To go beyond this mutability and to take advantage of the possibilities it possesses, we have selected two other specific qualities of foodscape, as identified in our literature review, to focus upon, that is, the material and immaterial aspects of a foodscape; and the intersection of different scales within a foodscape.

Regarding the first aspect, that of the material and the immaterial, we would like to stress that the foodscape concept allows us to combine both material and immaterial food elements in an analytically productive and holistic manner. On the one hand, a foodscape's material aspects rest, among others, within the very materialities, physical qualities of, and physical access to, foodstuff (CUMMINS & MACINTYRE 2002), within the material surroundings of food service and retail spaces (LINDENBERG et al. 2018), and within the material practices of engaging bodily with food (SURMAN & HAMILTON 2019). On the other hand, its immaterial aspects rest within the destination imaginaries and touristic mental constructions (BJÖRK & KAUPPINEN-RÄISÄNEN 2019), within policy making (MORAGUES-FAUS & MORGAN 2015), within the cultural and ideological ideas surrounding specific foodstuff (JOHNSTON & MCKENDRICK 2009), and within aesthetic (KORSMEYER & SUTTON 2011) and behavioral perceptions (MIKKELSEN 2011).

Regarding the second aspect, namely, the capacity of a foodscape to hold various scales together -which translates into the possibilities offered by the concept for multi-scalar spatial analyses- a foodscape is where global and local narratives intersect (MORGAN 2010), where the governance schemes unfold connecting the urban scale with the local and the global ones (MORAGUES-FAUS & MORGAN 2015), as well as where the dialectic relation between local settings and extra-local mobilities materialize (BJÖRK & KAUPPINEN-RÄISÄNEN 2019). Such examples allow us to approach foodscapes as

multi-scalar spatial and analytical entities, and, simultaneously, as material-immaterial and mutable arrangements.

For the purposes of this paper, we mobilize these two major relational dimensions of foodscapes in the direction of promoting local food chains as more sustainable forms of food production and consumption. Indeed, a well-established debate on food geographies, and food studies more generally, has highlighted the importance of reconnecting consumption with production for promoting a turn towards sustainability in food systems (for a review, see: CHIFFOLEAU & DURIAN, 2020). As the literature on alternative food networks and sustainable short supply chains has demonstrated, such a reconnection takes different forms (DANSERO & PUTTILLI 2014; MORGAN 2009; SONNINO et al. 2019): First and foremost, that of tangible connections between consumers and producers in terms of direct transactions. Secondly, that of the intangible dimension of knowledge about the origin of food, as well as that of trust between local producers and consumers. Third and finally, that of keeping connected different places as expressions of different scales, such as urban centers of consumption and rural landscapes of production (MORGAN 2010; MORGAN & SONNINO 2009; SONNINO 2016).

A comprehensive and all-encompassing representation of these different local reconnections, we argue, might enable a local food-centered sensitivity and, in so doing, might contribute to a wider food pedagogy focused on local sustainability. The concept of foodscape, and that of *local* foodscape more precisely, allows us to emphasize the holistic and interrelated nature of local food systems, as it achieves to embed not just actual relations, but also all these immaterial elements (such as food awareness, behaviors and values attached to food) that might shape a broader imaginary of a local sustainable food system.

Marketplaces, we believe, might be approached as privileged spaces wherein to operate these necessary reconnections. Discussions on the exposure to food and food environments, and on its relation to eating behavior and food consumption tend to focus almost exclusively on domestic and schooling spaces (e.g. KESTENS et al. 2010; SURMAN & HAMILTON 2019). Marketplaces, the everyday, banal and often taken for granted public spaces wherein people get in touch with foodstuff both physically and symbolically, are never approached as micro-environments of food exposure that can have a significant impact on food perceptions and consuming behaviors.

In the same vein, we suggest that an artistic intervention (as a type of public engagement) located inside a marketplace can drastically influence perceptions of culinary products by constructing transparency for small-scale, local, and sustainable food production rendering it thus visible and, therefore, knowable. For as nodes where different scales, territories and modalities of food production intersect with consumption practices, perceptions, and behaviors, urban marketplaces can be the public spaces in and through which the different components of local food systems can become reconnected so as to promote local food consciousness, transparency and geographical knowledge (MORRIS & KIRWAN 2010; see also CAVALIERE 2017). By and large, and in line with literature on food pedagogy (see, for example, FLOWERS & SWAN 2015), we would like to suggest that this specific food and geographical knowledge can function as an artistic

form of *informal* food pedagogy (FLOWERS & SWAN 2015) that can gradually build up to a more general “food consciousness” (ABARCA 2015) sensitive to the local dynamics and challenges.

Our thesis here considers the centrality of urban space in general (POTTINGER 2013) and of marketplaces in particular (BLUMBERG 2015) to the practices and discourses of food reconnection. Moreover, in this way we attempt a move away from recent approaches that see marketplaces -only- as gentrification frontiers (BOURLESSAS et al. 2021; GONZÁLEZ 2020), providing a more nuanced picture, in which the marketplace can have positive transformative capacities for and of the local foodscape, being a constitutive part of it as a major – and more variegated – local distributional node.

Creating a site-specific artistic intervention in a historical market: context, methodology and final output

The historic center of Florence houses two built historical markets, both constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century. The biggest of the two structures, that of San Lorenzo, also known as “Mercato Centrale” (in English “Central Market”), is located into a large two-storey building designed by Giuseppe Mengoni in the homonymous neighborhood close to the Santa Maria Novella railway station. Sant’Ambrogio, designed by the same architect and inaugurated in 1873, is smaller in size and lies in a more decentered area, at the eastern border of the UNESCO area of the historic center, at the heart of Sant’Ambrogio quarter. While in the last years San Lorenzo underwent some major regeneration processes that have progressively turned it into a main tourist attraction related to food¹, Sant’Ambrogio market still operates, to a large extent, as a place where residents use to go for their daily grocery shopping, especially during the weekend; as a result, the market of Sant’Ambrogio is strongly associated with the local population and the local character of the broader neighborhood.

The market is home to 67 external stalls and 20 internal workstations, including also some refreshment points, precisely one café and one restaurant. The external stalls are dedicated to a varied offer including clothes, fruits and vegetables, and houseware, while butcheries, fishmongers, bakeries, and dairies are located in the interior. Even if the Sant’Ambrogio food market is a popular and considerably lively space, for a long time the shopkeepers have shared their concerns about the decrease of daily customers due

1 During the last decades of the xxth century, the affirmation of large-scale distribution and the decrease of residents in the historic center connected to the processes of suburbanization, the central market had entered a profound crisis, that mainly concerned the fruit and vegetable sector. In 2014, the first floor of the building was leased to and reopened by local private investors that launched the “Mercato Centrale” project. The renovated space of 3,000 m² is now home to over 20 food stalls and workshops presenting specialties from different Italian regions, cuisine schools, events and initiatives related to food. Through the years, the project expanded as a franchise in Rome, Milan and Turin. As a result, and spillover of the project, also many of the shops and stalls at the ground floor of San Lorenzo have been progressively converted into gastronomic venues targeted mostly to visitors and tourists.

to the decline of residents in the area, as well as about the lack of public interventions for the improvement and requalification of the building; a plan for the renewal and upgrading of the market was longly invoked and awaited, and in 2022 an executive project for the redevelopment of the shelters that surround the structure, flooring and services inside and outside the market was finally approved by the Municipality of Florence.

Since 2017, the market shopkeepers have been involved in the project titled “Il Paniere di Sant’Ambrogio”, funded by the *Regione Toscana* and implemented by the *Laboratory of Social Geography (LaGeS)* of the University of Florence. The main target of the project has been to support and expand the reconnection between consumers, market operators and small producers in the rural areas surrounding the city of Florence, precisely within a radius of 70 km from the city center, and precisely from the market of Sant’Ambrogio itself². In this framework, two main types of initiatives have been envisaged: Firstly, on a tangible dimension, to support the establishment of commercial agreements between market operators and local producers, so as to generate economic opportunities for both parts through the distribution and valorization of local agricultural and livestock production. And secondly, on a more intangible side this time, to launch an action of public engagement aimed at shaping consciousness and raising awareness regarding the benefits of local food production in terms of environmental sustainability and care for the local territory, of economic development and well-being, emphasizing the local market as the distributary place where local food can be found and purchased. The idea to center both initiatives on the market stemmed from previous empirical surveys conducted on Sant’Ambrogio by the *LaGeS* (2018), the results of which revealed that the market is a preferred place for daily, direct purchases with regards to their large-distribution counterparts, namely supermarkets, because it appears to facilitate the establishment of personal relationships with shopkeepers based on mutual trust, and that it is generally associated with the idea of local food.

A site specific artistic installation was thus envisaged and carried out within the framework of the project “Il Paniere di Sant’Ambrogio”. The choice of an artistic installation has been justified by the relevance of the ongoing debate on the expanding collaborations between geography and the arts. Indeed, within the wider creative turn in the discipline, geographers have stressed the ways in which geography and art can come into a common, productive dialogue (HAWKINS 2013; JELLIS 2015), whereas others direct attention precisely towards the importance of the visual in the art-geography relation (HAWKINS 2010). At the same time, both within and outside of the discipline, the pedagogical and educational sides of art are being recently investigated with encouraging results (JELLIS 2015; SCHUERMAN et al. 2012). In this framework, a sensitivity to space and place, when geography embraces art, is necessary (JELLIS 2015; HAWKINS 2013), while, as Hawking (2011) argues, geographers need to move beyond

2 According to the Italian regulation, 70 km is the maximum distance allowed for agricultural products to be officially labeled as of “local origin”, and consequently to access to specific funding opportunities. In the case of the project, the 70 km area included the whole province of Florence, the provinces of Prato and Pistoia, and the Chianti area.

art spaces so as to foster the shaping of other social spaces where art and geography can work together (2011, 470). In the case of Sant’Ambrogio, the installation has been titled “Sguardi sul territorio” (in English “Gazes over the territory”) and has been conceived and realized in a scientific-artistic collaboration with *Studio Azzurro*, a creative studio based in Milan and specialized in developing interactive and immersive video and multimedia installations for museums, expositions and various events³.

The idea at the heart of the installation has been to present five producers belonging to different Tuscan provinces (Fig. 1): *Azienda Agricola Le Roncacce*, *Uffiziatura i Piani*, *Podere Le Fornaci*, *Fattoria il Cassero* and *Fattoria Valdastra*.

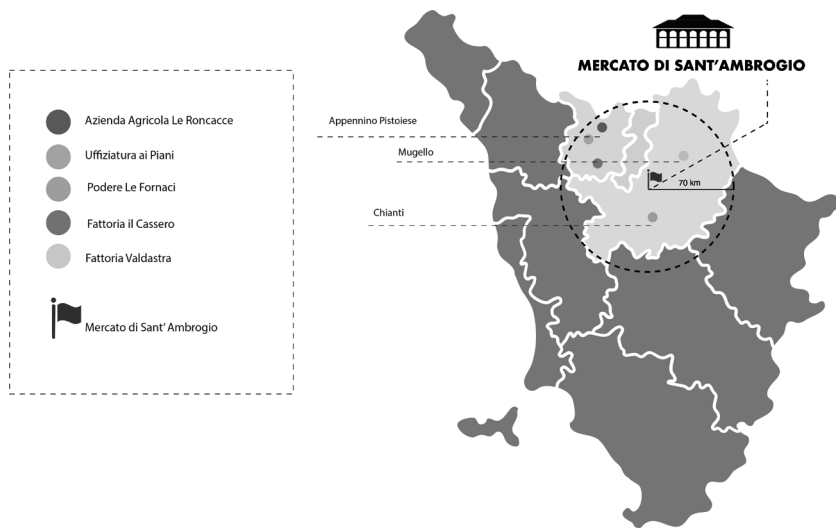


Fig. 1 – The location of the five producers involved in “Sguardi sul territorio”. A comprehensive view of the market-centered local foodscape, with the Sant’Ambrogio historical market of Florence, as essential infrastructure of distribution, in its center. Source: LaGeS, 2022

The five producers have been selected among those taking part in the project because of their highly differentiated nature in terms of production mode, organization, geographical location, and size (tab. 1). Indeed, the installation’s principal aim has been to illustrate and narrate stories of producers that, although in diverse modalities and following different production and distribution trajectories, could be assembled under three main values related to agricultural practices:

1. innovation: to be intended extensively as the capacity to introduce technological or organizational innovations into the production, distribution and marketing process.

3 Since 2018 the *Laboratory of Social Geography* and *Studio Azzurro* are associated into a Joint Laboratory at the University of Florence named “Audio-visual techniques for the analysis of intangible cultural heritage”.

2. caring for the local territory: that is the ability to recognize, manage, protect and enhance local environmental and social resources, thus contributing to the economic wellbeing of the territories where the farms are located.
3. food quality and safety: to be intended as the attention paid to quality certifications, choice of raw materials, and so on, in order to ensure physical and psychological wellbeing through healthy food.

Name	Description
Azienda Agricola Le Roncacce	Le Roncacce is a family business located in Cutigliano, at 1,300 meters a. s. l., which makes it the farm at the highest altitude in all of Tuscany. Le Roncacce produces different types of cheese, mozzarella, yogurt, and milk. Le Roncacce is strongly committed towards animal well-being, as many improvements and innovations are continuously carried out in terms of stables and animal feeding. The farm is also involved in agritourism activities and land maintenance in the area.
Podere Le Fornaci	Podere le Fornaci is a farm created by three young people in 2000. The farm owns fifty heads of goats and produces goat cheese, milk and meat. Strongly committed towards sustainable production and animal wellbeing, Le Fornaci carries out only natural-based breeding techniques. The company promotes a strong relationship with its customers, also through innovative solutions such as the adoption of goats by the customers, in order to allow the company to face expenses during the non-productive season.
Fattoria Il Cassero	Fattoria il Cassero is a farm consisting of twenty-five heads of cattle, vineyards and olive trees. The cattle are fed with self-produced organic feed. In respect of traditions, the animals are raised free in the woods. The company produces red and white wine, olive oil, and meat. The farm is also involved in agritourism activities.
Fattoria Valdastra	Fattoria Valdastra is a large farm involved in organic agriculture in an area of more than 300 hectares. The farm has more than 400 heads of Limousin cattle and uses self-produced organic feed and cereals to feed the animals. The cattle are kept free for the most part of the year, and microchips are used in order to locate the cows in the farming area.
Uffiziatura I Piani	Uffiziatura ai Piani is a small family run activity in the mountain area of San Marcello Pistoiese. It produces various products from the wood such as strawberries, chestnuts, and potatoes. The farm also prepares some products belonging to the local Tuscan tradition like strawberry jam and necci (crepes made with chestnuts wheatmeal)

Tab. 1 – The five producers presented in the installation. Source: elaborate by the authors.

From a methodological perspective, the creation of the site-specific installation followed several progressive steps. In the first phase of the project, the five activities have been the subject of a detailed video-photographic documentation run by *Studio Azzurro* and *LaGeS*. This phase included a series of recorded narrations in the form of in-depth video interviews with producers, and the detailed filming of the various stages of the production process, in constant relation to the surrounding natural environment, wherein production takes place.

Particular attention has been paid to three main dimensions: places, people, and practices. First, images and footage were aimed at reconnecting the different, often fragmented in their ordinary representations, geographical environments to which the companies belong: the high mountains, the hills, the lakes, the woods, the plains, the rivers. At the same time, through the interviews these different environments have been explored equally from social and economic perspectives, and have been addressed as places and landscapes with their own resources and challenges. Secondly, the interviews aimed at bringing out the personal and family stories of the producers, their motivations, daily difficulties as well as the satisfactions related to small-scale production, so as to bring to the fore, and reconnect, the human, emotional and relational dimensions behind the production of food (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 – A moment from the video footage at *Le Roncacce*. Source: *LaGeS*, 2022.

Finally, voices and images have been also aimed at detailing the farming practices and activities, so as to generate visual knowledge of the techniques, machineries, skills, tools, ambiances, and temporalities related to food production, elements that might often remain invisible to the wider consuming public. As far as possible, the interviews and filming have taken place in the most suitable season to document the activities in the fields, the breeding of livestock, or particular productions such as the harvesting of chestnuts or the processing of olive oil.

Once the documentation phase came to its conclusion, the collected visual material has been edited and reviewed by the research team so as to guarantee the scientific

validity of the product and its coherence to the main lines guiding the research project overall. In order to represent the different realities involved in the project, a staircase with six screens on each side was designed by *Studio Azzurro* to be installed at the center of the Sant’Ambrogio Market (Fig. 3). The installation was opened to the public from May 15th to June 14th, 2022, performing a notable alternation of the micro-foodscape of Sant’Ambrogio.



Fig. 3 – The staircase within the Sant’Ambrogio Market. Source: *LaGeS*, 2022.

The choice of the staircase as the materiality that has given shape to, and has sustained, the installation, has been justified in various ways: at a practical level, stairs are a versatile and indispensable tool for the management of farming activities, but also for the preparation of installations and expositions in any different ambiance; at more metaphorical level, the staircase can be considered as a threshold and a junction between elements otherwise distant, between different geographical scales, and tangible and intangible beings (see also previous Section). In the specific case of the “Sguardi sul territorio” project, the staircase has been intended to create a relation between the market space, the production activities and the different landscapes represented in the screens. In between the rungs, the monitors have been designed purposefully so as to narrate a vertical and dynamic story -guiding the gaze upwards and downwards, resembling the gaze during harvesting- as images unfold from one screen to another and the stories continue beyond the strict borders of the screen frames.

Through the videos, the three major values that have guided the entire research activity and artistic production are made visible and recognizable to the audience. First,

different definitions of innovation are presented, in terms of innovative machineries, processing infrastructures, and new experimental cultures in traditional agricultural production. Circularity, intended both as the direct relation between producers and consumers as well as the commitment towards self-production and recycling of waste is described as the main type of organizational innovation. Consequently, the image of local farms stemming from the installation is that of diverse dynamic and active realities, strongly committed towards the introduction of sustainable innovation.

Secondly, the five farms have been represented as being strongly involved in the territories to which they belong. Being all located in remote and peripheral areas, the farms appear to play a crucial role that goes well beyond the sole dimension of agricultural production, involving a constant everyday struggle against isolation and the gradual depopulation of the territory. Producers located in mountain areas affected by continuous depopulation – like *Le Roncacce* and *Il Cassero* – play a pivotal role in terms of demographic strongholds, and extra-agricultural activities like agritourism are essential in activating new, and sustaining existing, local economic circuits that contribute to the local societal well-being as a whole. However, taking care of the territory is not only about stimulating and supporting people to move into remote areas, but is also related to preserving land from abandonment or -in lowlands and plains- from expanding urbanization; in other cases, taking care is equal to harvesting and putting back to use previously non-productive lands.

Third, and finally, the research participants local farmers appear to be strongly attentive to the quality and overall safety standards of the foodstuff that they produce. All farms refuse chemical products that can impact the environment and consumers' health, and some of them cultivate and produce organic foodstuff. The focus on animal well-being is referred to as a main guiding principle in all cases, and quality certifications are often used as a guarantee for the safety and provenance of products. Also in this area, direct contact with consumers is considered essential in order to share information on products and knowledge on the added value offered by locally produced food in terms of sustainability, quality and safety.

In the following section, we turn to the idea elaborated in the previous, theoretical section that the aforementioned elements constructing the art installation can increase in the public the knowledge and the consciousness of the conditions and characteristics of local food production and, consequently, transform the marketplace into a space of reconnection of the different components of the local foodscape.

Fostering food reconnections through art in marketplaces

As illustrated in the previous section, the installation materially intervenes to, and therefore alternates, the physical micro-environment of the marketplace by introducing a staircase invested with screens at the center of the market. This change affects the material practice of consumption, precisely the stage of purchasing, inside the marketplace: a pause is created in the client's/visitor's movement throughout the place, which trans-

lates into a temporary stasis so as to get in (visual) touch with the stories, characters and places narrated in the videos. Drawing from works that emphasize the role of the visual in the perception of foodstuff and foodscapes (KORSMEYER & SUTTON 2011; MIKKELSEN 2011), we argue that, mobilizing visual narratives, the artistic installation can contribute to constructing knowledge and reinforcing consciousness of local food production processes and related social, economic and environmental implications, thus stressing the urgency and the importance of more equitable, just, and sustainable food systems.

Consequently, we also argue that, through the installation, the historical market of Sant'Ambrogio is actually turned into a space of reconnection, through which the local foodscape is visually reconstructed in the multiple tangible and intangible interconnections between Sant'Ambrogio as a place of popular food consumption and the wider territory of Tuscany as the space where small-scale, quality, and locally specific food production come together (see Figure 1). Pratt (2007) has argued that food reconnections of how and where food is produced, and the knowledge elaborated around it, are based on several "discursive connections". Then, centering our analysis firmly around reconnection, we emphasize the role of *visual* connections to suggest that the local foodscape as a concept can be intended as both a *re-presentation* of foodstuff, its spaces, practices and discourses, and a *practice* of relating (in diverse ways) to these foodstuff, spaces, practices and discourses. As representation, foodscape has the capacity to bring together the spheres of production and consumption in one single representational space -in our case, that of the video-art installation inside the marketplace, and foodscape is therefore reconnected representationally. And, then, as practice (in our case, that of an act of academic public engagement) foodscape has the capacity to put the consumer ideally and practically in contact with the spaces and practices of production.

Going into more detail, here it is possible to distinguish between three different levels of reconnection, which take shape through the installation in the market space.

The first level is related to the material-immaterial interplay. In the installation, the tangible and intangible components of foodscapes find expression, contributing to the construction of a comprehensive and holistic imaginary of the local foodscape centered on the local dimension. As we have mentioned in the theoretical section, a foodscape is a multidimensional concept made up of material elements like local environments, machinery, techniques, raw materials transformed into products; but all these material elements are not deprived of complex social dimensions but, instead, are enriched with personal stories, motivations, values, which are all embedded organically in the local foodscape, intersecting with it. Consequently, the installation communicates the fundamental message that buying and consuming local food is also a way to reconnect with these values and these stories, thus contributing to sustain them socially, economically and culturally.

The second level of reconnection concerns the relations between spaces and practices. Through the installation, spaces and practices of production and consumption, usually invisible and artificially detached one from another, find a material and symbolic re-placing inside the spaces of the market, where they are made recognizable, visible,

and transparent. All this emphasizes the role of the market as a public and relational space: being much more than a place for consumption only, the market becomes a space in which to learn through encounters with others, with places and people with whom one is not in direct contact and has no direct knowledge of. Indeed, contemporary food systems comprise infrastructures that remain largely invisible to the wider consuming public (PROST et al. 2021).

The third and final level of reconnection concerns the relationship between different geographical scales. Bringing to the fore practices that take place in the wider regional territory, the installation emphasizes the links between urban centers and rural spaces, actually overturning the usual hierarchical relationship that sees the former as more important than the latter. Rural spaces, often considered as marginal or peripheral, are presented here, thanks to the transparency of the re-constructed foodscape, as crucial components of a more sustainable local foodscape. Indeed, these spaces are not only the places where food is produced, but they have other fundamental functions as well, for example in terms of land preservation and social cohesion. In such a way, the complexity and multidimensional nature of the concept of food sustainability is also made evident, spreading consciousness in the public of the multiple socio-spatial consequences of consumption choices.

Finally, in interpreting the agency of the artistic installation created at the Sant'Ambrogio market, it is important to reflect on the role of art – and more precisely of a site-specific intervention – in public space. As already mentioned, we can argue that the artistic installation has emphasized the public nature of the marketplace in two interrelated ways. On the one hand, for the period in which the installation was exposed more people and different than usual has visited the marketplace, and for different reasons than the purchase of goods; similarly, regular customers were able to come across an unusual use of the internal spaces of the market. All this has helped to underline the character of the market as an open and multiple public space, in which many unforeseen and unpredictable events and situations can and do happen. Indeed, in our empirical case, the artistic intervention into the marketplace transformed the latter into a “contact zone” between consumers and the numerous, complex yet interrelated aspects of the local food system (PROST et al. 2021).

On the other hand, constructing awareness of the local foodscape by making its -often invisible- spaces and practices visible, a food pedagogy through and of public space is also put in place. The marketplace as a public space is not only the place where we can purchase local food and become actually part of the local foodscape, but it is also a space of learning, where we can learn about food, sustainability, and local practices through encounters and interactions with others. The, often unexpected, encounter with the artistic installation and with the local foodscape that it performs, facilitates a sort of “lay knowledge” that relates to the valorization of local food (FONTE 2008). If the installation represents a peculiar and out-of-the-ordinary moment – or what Fonte would call and “experiential circumstance” (ibid., 210) – in which this pedagogy is most evident, at the same time the market is also a context in which similar learning can occur

in the normality of daily relationships and encounters between operators, consumers and producers.

Lastly, it is significant to note how the choice to locate the art installation within the marketplace gives to commercial spaces a renovated role within the debate on the development of food sustainability and, more specifically, of alternative food networks. Indeed, at the basis of many strategies connected to short supply chains there is the idea of avoiding intermediaries, putting producers and consumers in direct connection (this is the model at the basis of direct sales solutions, farmers' markets, etc.). Through the project "Il Paniere di Sant'Ambrogio", it was instead hypothesized that commercial spaces like historic markets could play a crucial function in the construction of a more sustainable foodscape, that can be complementary – and not alternative – to other forms of more sustainable food consumption.

Conclusions

This paper has embraced the wider creative turn in human geography, and the various possible collaborations of the discipline with the arts, in order to elaborate on the concept of foodscape and suggest that such a collaboration centered around the idea of reconnection can lead towards shaping a food pedagogy based on the wider and variable principles of sustainability at the local scale. The suggested elaboration has been achieved on two interconnected levels, one theoretical and one empirical, the latter materializing in an (artistic) act of public engagement within a wider geographical research project.

On the theoretical level, a literature review throughout the various different disciplines that mobilize analytically the concept of foodscape has resulted in the identification of two specific elements that render foodscape a powerful notion both in terms of theory and in terms of practice, with transformative capacities. These identified elements are: the material and the immaterial, and the inter-scalarity. Then, throughout the entire paper, we have sought to utilize these elements, together with the concept's inherent mutability, in appropriate ways to support our arguments. Precisely, mutability refers not only to that of the term itself, which allows us to devise and advance theoretically, but equally to the actual practice of intervening into the local foodscape so as to transform it in positive ways. Then, the material-immaterial interplay refers to the tangible and intangible dimensions that are usually kept apart but foodscape, when practiced in terms of reconnection, is able to hold together. Finally, and following a similar logic, inter-scalarity refers to the ability of (again *practiced*) foodscape to connect various scales and keep them together.

To relate the above elaborations to practice, and to test them at the everyday level, we have drawn empirically from an act of public engagement within a wider research project that we have been actively involved in as *Laboratory of Social Geography* at the University of Florence. The main focus of the project has broadly been the valorization of local food production, relating simultaneously with values regarding the local territory as a comprehensive foodscape to be protected. The public engagement and

research dissemination part of the project has taken the form of a site-specific video installation located at the center of the Sant'Ambrogio marketplace in Florence, Italy. The installation, we have argued, materialized in actual space the idea of foodscape as re-connection, a materialization that can have a food pedagogic potential for the local consuming population.

The three major re-connections performed by the video installation -namely, between tangible and intangible foodscape elements, between food spaces and food practices, and between various scales of food production, distribution and consumption- reconstruct (or re-*describe*, to align to this special issue) the local foodscape as a transparent foodscape wherein all the aforementioned elements, conventionally being kept either hidden or separate, re-connect one with another and gain visibility. It is this very transparency that, when encountered (in our case by attending the installation in the marketplace), has the capacity to generate food-centered geographical knowledge. And such a knowledge can become incorporated into a wider food pedagogy of both formal and informal nature.

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