

**MEDIEVAL KITCHEN, FOODSCAPE AND CRAFT: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL
IMAGERIES FROM TWO BRAZILIAN ORGANIZATIONS**

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Introdução

This paper investigates technical, social and personal challenges fine-dining kitchen workers face due to sociocultural gaps through the notions of medieval modernity, foodscape and craft. While patrons tend to have high income, look for foreign cuisines and new eating rituals, kitchen staff tend to come from humbler backgrounds and their food-and-eating reflect local traditions. These restaurants also require specific techniques and labour-intensive work, usually performed by people with little schooling and no previous training, who learn skills on the job, with some improvisation.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

This research attempts to interpret fine-dining restaurants and their kitchen workers in the light of food-and-eating elements and their contexts, in foodscape with political, socioeconomic and cultural dimensions. To interpret whether and how this the organizational space and its people may replicate or enhance existing historical inequalities; and how symbols, practices, discourses and cultural imageries of fine-dining kitchens are manifested and impact on their workers' experiences within the organization and its context, either by adjusting themselves to it, ignoring it or resisting it.

Fundamentação Teórica

This paper is based on three notions: i) foodscape (Johnston & Baumann, 2010; Johnston & Goodman, 2015); ii) medieval modernity (Alsayyad & Roy, 2006); and iii) craft (Bell et al., 2018; Bell, Dacin & Laura Toraldo, 2021). Foodscape supports the multidisciplinary nature, social and political dimensions of food and eating. Medievality supports the analysis of multiple cultures, discourses, citizenships, fragmentation, displacement, exclusion and identify loss in an urban space. Craft supports arguments about features, limitations and opportunities in fine-dining professional kitchens.

Metodologia

This research used the ethnographic shadowing technique (Gobo, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Czarniawska, 2014) to collect its corpus. We accompanied the chefs of 2 fine-dining restaurants in Uberlândia, Brazil, for 2 months, in a total of 216 observation hours over 2 months, generating 309 photographs and 49 pages of field notes. The idea was to observe how chefs and kitchen workers interact in their daily-work routine, The notes taken and interpreted based on Gobo's (2008) 4 categories: (i) notes of observation; (ii) methodological notes; (iii) theoretical notes; and (iv) emotional notes.

Análise dos Resultados

This paper discusses three themes through qualitative analysis of empirical material on the production of a foodscape. They offer interpretations about social and political dimensions of interactions among fine-dining restaurants, their workers and organizational space, and food-making craft. Labour-intensive production in extenuating conditions is translated into heat and emotion. Despite it, the organization may become an unexpected place of refuge and freedom. And the fine-dining kitchen may be defined as melting-pot space of negotiation between one's nostalgia and its outsider workers.

Conclusão

Foodscape is as a dynamic imagery of cultural spaces and food-and-eating practices mediated within society by individual, collective or institutional agents through socio-economic and political dimensions. In this paper focuses on interactions among food-and-eating craft, fine-dining restaurants' kitchen and their workers. Results indicate that food-and-eating craft is impregnated with emotions, personal narratives, cultural elements and artefacts in an organizational context. Craft presents challenges and opportunities as a form of initiating non-skilled people into a profession and career.

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