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Engendering Food Meaning and Identity for Southern Sudanese Refugee
Women in Brooks, Alberta

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the food practices of Southern Sudanese refugee women in Brooks, Alberta, illustrating how foodways (Long, 2004) impact and reflect women's conceptions of themselves as gendered, multinational citizens. These women's relationship to food is an ambivalent one; simultaneous food maintenance and re-creation represents women's understandings about themselves within intersecting cosmopolitan and local identities. Women use food to connect them to their Southern Sudanese, Canadian, and cosmopolitan identities, and therefore embody 'actually existing' cosmopolitanism (Robbins, 1998). Women demonstrate agency in their foodways as they utilize cosmopolitan praxis to gain status, address quotidian challenges, and question established gender norms. Ultimately, transnational foodways represent freedom for Southern Sudanese women as they indicate their willingness and ability to move through the boundaries of identification as needed. The result of this movement is not without tension and as women appropriate transnational foodways they negotiate the power encompassed in ethnic and national gendered identities.

Keywords: Southern Sudanese, refugees, gender, food, identity, cosmopolitanism

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Chapter One: Introduction

"No one asks us about our culture, the everyday stuff, and food is very important

to us."

This quote from Aloya[1] signals some of the conflicting meanings around

Southern Sudanese women's relationship to food. Food is a part of 'the everyday';

daily cooking is considered one of the more mundane aspects of life and its

significance is therefore often overlooked. However, food *is* significant. It holds

meanings that are at once deeply symbolic, sensuous, psychological, social, and

cultural. The layers of meaning invoked by food come from its ability to fulfill

basic physical needs and evoke important physiological associations, namely our

senses, emotions and memories. Family and friendships are created during meals

as we share "food, tastes, values, and ourselves" (Counihan, 1999, p. 6).

Nonetheless, the social, cultural and symbolic meanings of food have been largely

overshadowed for Southern Sudanese as their homeland has been entangled in a

brutal war for the majority of the last half century. This war has resulted in the

destruction of millions of lives, homes, and families. Food for this group has often

been conceptualized in the context of food insecurity. However, a small number

of Southern Sudanese have come to Canada, migrating specifically to Brooks, a

small, meatpacking boomtown in southeast Alberta. Here, they are rebuilding

their lives while working at the Lakeside Packers beef processing plant just

outside the city. Nonetheless, they are continually defined in their new homes by

the images of war, violence, and poverty that make up their pasts (as is clear if

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[1] All names in this study are pseudonyms.

one searches 'Sudan' or 'Sudanese in Canada' on the internet or other media). As Aloya's quote alludes to above, no one inquires about what makes them unique, what they are proud of, or what they have to celebrate. Little is known in Canada about Sudanese food; there are no Sudanese cookbooks and very few restaurants. My thesis moves to remedy this and instead celebrates, beyond the hardships and the challenges that this community has faced and continues to face, the vibrant cultural traditions that continue to connect the Southern Sudanese community both to their homes in Sudan but also to their new homes in Canada.

Specifically, in this thesis I investigate the role of food in shaping identity for 17 Southern Sudanese women in Brooks. This included ethnic and national identity, but also gendered identity. Food is an integral symbol of identity because we incorporate not only the literal, but also the symbolic properties of foods as we consume them (Fischler, 1988). People's likes and dislikes are dependent on the values wrapped up in food, which become entangled with people's affiliations to gender, ethnicity, and other social groups. As we eat, we are absorbed into a culinary system in which our eating habits are bound up in complex cultural norms, rituals, and rules that are situated within broader worldviews of the societies that surround us (Counihan, 2004; Richards, 1939). Due to their association with identity, food is encompassed in peoples' ideas about home. Food practices are daily rituals that people enact in order to connect them to, or construct 'home' and the normalcy and security encompassed in it.

Nonetheless, 'home' does not necessarily evoke normalcy and security for all people, including many of the women in this study. People's search for home

does not necessarily translate into a search for the place where they grew up. More so, 'home' is evoked as a component of identity, a space of belonging, safety, emotional support, and comfort which can be actively created within any space, or even multiples spaces. Contemporary forces of globalization and migration facilitate this form of home-making with increasing ease and prevalence.

In this thesis I therefore also investigate the creation of home among this group of Southern Sudanese women in Brooks. Much of the literature on Sudanese in North America projects a sense of alienation from mainstream western society (Abusharaf, 2002; Simich, Este & Hamilton, 2010). Rogaia Abusharaf (2002, p. 128) discusses the loneliness of Sudanese life as it is expressed in the idea of the *ghorba*:

> Sudanese refer to life away from home as in the *ghorba*, an Arabic expression denoting more than physical separation or even exile, for it has powerful psychological dimensions. It is an antonym for *gurba* or *garaba*, which means nearness, proximity, and kinship. For the Sudanese, the *ghorba* evokes loneliness, loss, uprootedness, nostalgia and yearning for the familiar. It refers to a psychological state as well as sense of alienation one finds away from family and friends back home.

While the Southern Sudanese women in this study certainly expressed similar feelings of liminality characterized by Abusharaf (2002) and other scholars of refugee identity (Malkki, 1995), they also embodied a simultaneous sense of worldly cosmopolitanism. This thesis therefore focuses on the ways in which refugees act as agents to dismiss this liminality and 'categorize back' (Malkki, 1995), creating belonging and identity within the diversity which defines their experiences. Women embody this diversity through their foodways as

women actively use food to connect them to their Southern Sudanese, their Canadian, and their cosmopolitan identities. Therefore, these Southern Sudanese women's relationship to food is an ambivalent one, demonstrating how cultural boundaries overlap, shift, and change within the diversity of refugee experience.

I use Lucy Long's definition of *foodways* throughout this thesis, to talk about the "network of behaviours, traditions, and beliefs concerning food, and involves all the activities surrounding a food item and its consumption, including the procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation, and performance of that food" (2004, p. 8), but I also adapt it to what I term *transnational foodways*, which I use to evoke the global connections which also define food and food practices, and which are ever present in the foodways of migrant women.

Nonetheless, both food and identity also hold power, and the above network has consequences for Southern Sudanese women's status within their families, communities, and wider Canadian society. Identity is a product of classification; perceived similarities and differences between individuals and groups organize the interrelationship between them. However, classifications between and among people are never uniform, predictable, or without hierarchy (Erikson, 2002; Jenkins, 2008). Food becomes entwined in power because its physical and symbolic associations make it one of society's most valuable resources; those in power dictate authority over others through the allocation and control of food. Hierarchies between social groups (based on class, caste, gender, and ethnicity) are "manifest through rules about eating and the ability to impose those rules onto others" (Counihan, 1999, p. 9). However, as Sylvia Fererro

writes, when people negotiate new modes of existence, "categories of power blur and create new spaces of action where the relations between the dominant and the subordinated, the self and the other, must be reconfigured" (2002, p. 195).

Therefore, I also investigate in this thesis how women's transnational foodways encompass agency because they open up spaces for them to gain status, address quotidian challenges, and question established gender norms which define them as inferior to men. Southern Sudanese women's transnational foodways define freedom for them because they symbolize women's renewed ability to cook *what* they want, *when* then want it. Nonetheless, the reality of this freedom is questionable due to prevailing ideologies which still burden them with the majority of the food work. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates that when men and women navigate questions such as *what to cook*, *how to cook it*, and *who will do that cooking*, they negotiate their gendered, ethnic identities.

Negotiations over identity and belonging are particularly relevant at this time because on January 9, 2011, a referendum took place in Sudan where the South overwhelmingly voted to secede from the North. As such, Southern Sudanese both in Sudan and in the diaspora are currently in a state of reconceptualization, of the nation and of their place within it. If peaceful independence for South Sudan is realized, it will provide migrants with an opportunity to return home. The 'myth of return' is a prevalent one among scholars and refugees alike, with many considering whether refugees will return home upon the materialization of peace in their home countries. This thesis shows that refugees' relationship to their homeland is not straightforward; I therefore

question whether return is in fact inevitable, in addition to the extent that it may also be gendered.

This thesis therefore contributes to anthropological work theorizing refugee belonging by analyzing it through the lens of everyday lived experiences of gender. It responds to the call by Alice Julier for scholarship investigating "how gender, race, and class collide to create both the local and the global" (2005, p. 179). It does so while also addressing the gap in literature theorizing the African diaspora. As Wisdom Tettey (2005) among others have noted, there is scant literature addressing African migrant experiences in Canada or the west more broadly. This is glaringly obvious in the literature on migrant foodways. Apart from some research into African American foodways (Clark, 2009; Williams-Forson, 2006; Witt, 1999), there is very little on African diasporic foodways in the social science literature. While there are countless works theorizing Indian, South American, and Asian food practices in the west, there is only one article dedicated to African immigrant foodways (Tuomainen, 2009). This is a critical absence which my research begins to remedy.

Food as a Topic and a Tool

This thesis is about food; however, it is also about identity, gender, and belonging. I use food in this thesis as both a topic and a tool. Food practices are an important topic in and of themselves; however, because food is a marker of identity it is also a nice medium to talk about who we are and where we came

from. As Arlene Voski Avakian writes, "a daily material practice, cooking and eating, grounds the discussion of multiple, intersecting positionalities and resistances in lived experience that is at once concrete and symbolic" (2005, p. 258). Food has also provided me with a comfortable entry into the Southern Sudanese community. Sharing food is an obvious and easy way to reveal oneself, and people build bonds through commensality (Counihan, 2005; Mauss, 1967). Eating together at a table signifies intimacy, equality, and inclusion. Therefore, cooking was something that I immediately had in common with my participants and this was something that we could easily bond over.

By studying food, I also aim to highlight its importance among those I work with. As mentioned, food is often considered mundane because it is so engrained in everyday life; women's work in the kitchen is likewise often undervalued. However, food research forces people to take it out of the realm of unconscious practice and reflect on how they feel about it. Doing so may reveal previously unconsidered meanings. And this has impacts for gendered power. Carole Counihan reveals how food research impacts peoples' perceptions of the value of food and food work: "because food is so often the domain and language of women, focusing on it emphasizes their importance" (2005, p. 201). This research therefore has the potential to increase the status of food and food providers in peoples' minds. This project therefore falls within broader feminist research working to reclaim and validate the voices and the experiences of women. Because silence has been an integral component of women's oppression, providing an outlet for them to speak publically facilitates a form of

empowerment. The women in this study embody strength and perseverance on multiple levels; they have come from violent and painful situations and yet still fight to create happiness, love, and peace in their lives. By recognizing and focusing on the challenges and the successes they encounter in their daily lives, I work to empower them. While this is a small effort, it holds the possibility to be significant for some.

By focusing on the minutiae of everyday experience in this specific group, this study also works de-universalize the figure of 'the refugee'. Liisa Malkki (1995) has highlighted how 'the refugee' has come to be represented as a generic, ideal type characterized by powerlessness and devoid of personhood. Refugees embody 'bare humanity', "stripped of the specificity of culture, place, and history" (Malkki, 1995, p. 12). This universalization obscures the reality of the specific socio-political circumstances of particular refugees. This study counters this by analyzing Southern Sudanese refugee women's experiences as situated within the specificity of their personal histories as well as their current socio-political contexts.

Some Notes on Terminology

I use the term diaspora in this thesis to discuss Southern Sudanese in Canada; however, it is useful to clarify this term, as it is used in diverse ways throughout the literature. Following Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (2006) I feel that there are certain characteristics which set diasporic subjects apart from other

migrants: diasporas encompass members from one country spread out through multiple locations throughout the world; due to the largely involuntary nature of their migration, diasporic subjects encompass a fundamental ambivalence as they look both to a historic cultural identity and to the country of relocation. However, as cultural minorities, their identities are always constructed against a backdrop of 'majoritarian' rule. I feel that this concept gets at the multiplicity which defines identity for the women in this study. However, the significance of diaspora theory is also in its understanding of the west not as an ending point to which all the world aspires but as only one of many 'diasporic switching points'. Migration is conceptualized as a process always in flux, always changing (Braziel and Mannur, 2003). Diasporic subjects are thus marked by duality and hybridity. As Stuart Hall explains, the diasporic subject "is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives in and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity" (2006, p. 438).

While writing this paper I had difficulty determining what identity it was exactly that Southern Sudanese women were talking about when they talked about their 'Southern Sudaneseness'. It is a national identity to some extent because it is asserted politically, as distinctly separate to 'North Sudaneseness'. While the emergence of nationalism and national identity are becoming stronger as the South prepares to separate from the North, I do not see it as yet comprised of a coherent 'national identity'. When people talk about their Southern Sudaneseness, they are often referring to the practices of their ethnic, tribal or familial collectivities, rather than any sort of prescribed nationness. I do not yet see

coherence to these practices that are distinctly separate from Northern Sudanese. I therefore use the term 'ethnic identity' to refer to the collective consciousness surrounding Southern Sudaneseness at this point, while also acknowledging that encompassed in this consciousness are varied assemblies based on national, tribal, clan and kinship ties.

The use of the label 'Sudanese food' is a good illustrator of this. I use the term 'Sudanese food', as opposed to 'Southern Sudanese food' in this thesis following the terminology of my informants. While they identified themselves as 'Southern Sudanese' they did not label their food as such. This illustrates both the infancy of the Southern Sudanese nation, and perhaps some challenges to nation building in Southern Sudan because ultimately, informants all commented that food was relatively similar across the country.

Nonetheless I also capitalize North and South Sudan in this thesis to denote the distinct self-identity of the Southern Sudanese people as separate from the North in the recent 2011 referendum. While this distinction is not always based on obvious differences in practice, it is more so based on the economic and ideological inequality which pervades its history. The use of this capitalization also thus serves as a form of academic activism to show my support for the peaceful formation of an independent Southern Sudan.

Thesis Overview

In chapter two of this thesis I introduce the context in which Southern Sudanese foodways are placed. I offer background into the history of war in Sudan as well as explain some common trajectories Southern Sudanese women have taken to get to Canada. I also provide an overview of Sudanese migration both to Canada and to Brooks and introduce some of the adjustments that women often navigate in settling in a new country. I then relate this to identity and explore the literature relating to Southern Sudanese identity both in Sudan and in the diaspora. Lastly, I relay some Sudanese foods and food practices as they have been transmitted to me by my informants in Brooks.

Chapter three outlines the methodology used in this study. In this chapter, I consider the methods I used and the methodological choices I made when conducting my fieldwork in Brooks; I introduce the participants of the study and outline their demographics; I also reflect on my position as a researcher, in addition to the politics and ethics encompassed in doing anthropological work.

In chapter four I focus on the role of food in ethnic identity for the women in this study. I illustrate the ambivalent nature of food as both a stable pillar of identity and a variable in constant flux and recreation. I show how food at once connects women to their 'Southern Sudaneseness' while also evokes the cosmopolitan nature of their identities.

Chapter five engenders these identities, investigating how Southern Sudanese women's choices about what to cook reflect their attitudes towards

gender norms and freedom. Gender is deeply entwined in ethnic identity, and challenges to identity hold implications for gendered power. Southern Sudanese women's transnational foodways are therefore enactments of agency because first, they offer women status and resources to confront life's challenges, and second, because they are encompassed in more broader attitudes towards change and the rejection of roles which they determine to be oppressive.

In the concluding chapter, I relate these questions about identity and belonging specifically to the question of return and discuss some of the ways in which foodways help us to understand women's motivations for returning or not returning to Sudan should a peaceful independence for the South be realized. I then propose some possible directions for future research into Southern Sudanese women's foodways. Ultimately, this thesis shows how Southern Sudanese women use food to define and defy boundaries of identification, while highlighting the agency of women to move within and through culture to find spaces of power and belonging.

Chapter Two: Sudanese Migration in Context

The women in this study come from histories marked by violence, insecurity and transition; but despite these experiences, women eagerly situate themselves in the present, and look to the future to make sense of their new homes in Canada while still maintaining their ties to Sudan. Nonetheless, this is not an easy process and many Southern Sudanese women struggle to negotiate the multitude of adjustments that arise from both their past and present experiences. In this chapter, I will introduce the social context that frames Southern Sudanese women's experiences. My exploration of the social context begins with an overview of Sudan's history of conflict that provoked the substantial out flux of refugees from the country. I then examine then phenomenon of Sudanese migration both to Canada in the broad sense, as well as to Brooks in particular; I also describe some of the common trajectories refugee women take in coming to settle in the country. These social settings profoundly shape self-identity; I specifically explore self-conceptions of ethnic and national identity among Southern Sudanese both in Sudan and the diaspora. The final important context for this study is Sudanese food and food practices which I relate as they have been told to me by women in Brooks in the final section of this chapter. This chapter therefore provides important contextual consideration for theorizing Southern Sudanese women's food practices.

History of Sudanese Conflict

      Sudan is the largest country in Africa and its population of over 41 million belong to over 570 distinct ethnic groups and speaks more than 130 languages (United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), 2011). The largest of these are groups identify as Arab, Dinka, Beja, Nuer, and Nuba. Although a heterogeneous country, Sudan is often represented through binary social categories on the basis of geography (north and south), ethnicity (Arab and African), and religion (Muslim and Christian). These are oversimplified dichotomies which do not represent the diversity found within. Sudan is an official Islamic state, and Arabic and English are the two official languages. Seventy percent of the population is Muslim with the remainder holding Christian or animist beliefs. Nonetheless, it is important to note that social demographic information on Sudan is incomplete and some statistics may be out-dated; nonetheless, they provide an approximated outlook into the broader breakdown of Sudan (United Nations (UN), 2008).

      Sudan's history is marked with divisions. Prior to the colonial era, Sudan encompassed hundreds of small kingdoms and city-states allied by kinship and common culture. Centuries of trade and migration resulted in kingdoms in the north identifying with the Arab Middle East while southerners associated mainly with the pastoralist tribes of East Africa and remained relatively uninfluenced by Islam. Over time, this grew into a linguistic and cultural divide that was utilized and exacerbated by the subsequent British-dominated Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (administered as a British colony). This administration facilitated the maintenance of racial categories by trafficking slaves from the south to the

north and west. Additionally, North and South Sudan were governed as separate political units. As part of a strategy to prevent the spread of northern cultural and religious practices to the south (namely female circumcision, the Arabic language, and Islam), the British administration pitted peoples with an established history of ethnic division, against each other (Deng 1995; 2010; Johnson, 2003).

Since independence from Britain in 1956, Sudan has been at almost constant civil war. The majority of this war is understood as a conflict between the majority population in the North, identifying as 'Arab' and 'Muslim', and the marginalized population in the South identifying as 'Black African' and increasingly 'Christian'. There is some truth to this view but, more explicitly, the war is fuelled by resistances to the concentration of wealth and power in Khartoum by the immensely impoverished peripheries who desire greater regional autonomy. Among the more powerful economic elements driving these conflicts include the oil reserves near Dinka and Nuer regions in the South, the abundant gold deposits near the southern territory of Equitoria, and the strategically important headwaters of the Nile for port access (Deng 1995; 2010; Johnson, 2003). This must be added to the "profiteering of thousands of gangs, soldiers, aid workers, international oil companies, merchants, warlords, and politicians who have gradually transformed Sudan's war into a self-perpetuating industry" (Hutchinson, 2005, p. 131).

Civil war in Sudan is generally described as divided into two parts. The first war dates from 1955- 1972 and was fought between the central government and the Southern Sudanese Liberation Movement (SSLM); the second took place

between 1983 and 2005 between the National Islamic Front (NIF) government and the opposing rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A, hereafter SPLM). There is no statistical data projecting the causalities of the first civil war; estimates rank the total casualties from the second war in Sudan at over 2.5 million (Hutchinson, 2005). This war has resulted in 5 to 6 million (largely Southern) Sudanese displaced internally, in addition to the at least 400,000 refugees who are currently displaced outside of the country (UN 2009), although this number is likely very low due to reporting limitations. Jani Kani Edward (2007) predicts that more realistically, about 1.5 million are externally displaced.

Civil war between the North and the South officially ended in 2005 when the Islamic government and the SPLM signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Since the signing of the CPA, Sudan has experienced relative peace, as the agreement "laid out a framework of wealth and power-sharing to address the inequality between periphery and centre at the heart of the war" (UN 2008, p. 18). The agreement marshalled in greater investment in the peripheries and more autonomous Southern and regional governments. The CPA also encompassed stipulations for government elections to be held in January of 2010 (which were wrought with fraud allegations), and a referendum which took place in January of 2011. This referendum provided the conditions for Southern Sudanese to vote on their potential succession from the North. Among a 98% voter turnout, 99% of Southern Sudan voted to secede from the North (United Nations Mission in the Sudan, 2011). Southern Sudan is scheduled to declare

independence from the North on July 9th, 2011. While the NIF government has publically declared that it accepts the results of the referendum and will work toward a peaceful transition, it remains to be seen whether this will in fact be realized. Military pressure is very tense along the proposed border regions, particularly in Abyei, which holds significant oil reserves and is claimed by both Northern and Southern ethnic groups.

Additionally, while the CPA ushered in a period of relative peace in Southern Sudan, conflict continues in contested areas and among competing ethnic groups. In 2003, as the war in the South was subsiding, violent conflict broke out in the west in Darfur between rebels and the government backed by the Janjaweed militia, and persists today. Additionally, extreme differences in wealth and access to basic services such as education, health care, and sanitation are common throughout the country (Deng, 2010). Sudan rates 154 out of 169 on the United Nations Development Programme's 2010 Human Development Index. A large part of this has to do with the intense disparities in wealth, infrastructure, trade, and industry still existing between the center in the North (largely in Khartoum) and the peripheries in the South. It is estimated that, as of June 2009, 2.3 million internally displaced people returned to Southern Sudan after the signing of the CPA. Also, the country has been hit hard by natural disasters (largely droughts and famines) which have disproportionately affected those already vulnerable from prolonged conflict. Wealth disparities, movements of large numbers of people, and natural disaster have therefore put an immense strain on an already underdeveloped infrastructure system (UN 2008; 2009).

Sudanese in Canada

As noted in the above section, the extensive conflict in Sudan has resulted in massive amounts of both internal and external migration. Along with the United States and Australia, Canada is one of the primary resettlement countries for Sudanese refugees in the west. While the 2006 Statistics Canada census lists 12,640 Sudanese permanent residents currently residing in Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) (2009) posits that, more realistically, between 25,000 and 30,000 Sudanese are currently living in Canada. Sudan also figures prominently in the Canadian government's foreign affairs and development policy and programming. Since 2006, the Canadian Government has dispersed over $670 million for Sudanese humanitarian and development assistance in addition to military support (DFAIT, 2009). Sudan is one of the primary recipients of Canadian Official Development Assistance even while Canada's overall assistance focus shifts from Africa to the Americas (DFAIT, 2009).

Sudanese settlement in Canada and the United States is a relatively recent occurrence. Sudanese migration to North America was very rare prior to the late 1980s; instead Sudanese migration existed primarily as labour migration to oil producing countries in the Gulf region (Abusharaf, 2002). However, when war reignited in Sudan in 1983, there was a dramatic increase in Sudanese migration to Canada, the majority of whom were Southern Sudanese. These Sudanese predominantly arrived as Government-Assisted Refugees, privately sponsored refugees, or as Family Class migrants (DFAIT, 2009). Sudanese in Canada largely

congregate in urban centers such as Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton; however, a significant number also come to Brooks, Alberta. Fanjoy, Osman, Khoury, & Ingraham's study of Sudanese refugees' expectations of migration from Egypt documented an official at the Canadian embassy in Cairo noting that "for the majority of [Sudanese], Canadian geography is Toronto, Brooks and Calgary. They think Toronto is the capital and that Brooks and Calgary are the other two important cities in the country" (2006, p. 81). Clearly Brooks is significant in Sudanese migration.

Brooks is a distinctive community because despite its relatively small size, it has a large newcomer population (2080 immigrants and 125 non-permanent residents in a population of 12,498 [Statistics Canada, 2006a]). The unique demographic composition of Brooks comes from its proximity to the Lakeside Packers beef processing plant in which many of its residents work. After the 1994 multinational acquisition of Lakeside by the US based company, IBP Inc. (since sold to XL Foods Inc.), the plant increased its production and rendering capacity such that by 1996, 2000 new employees were hired to help staff the updated facility. However, jobs in the meatpacking industry are generally unattractive to Canadians because the work environment can be dangerous and unpleasant (Broadway & Stull, 2008; Sinclair, 1906). Lakeside Packers therefore looked to Canada's refugee population to staff its expansion. Since that time, approximately 2000 newcomers have made Brooks their home. Meatpacking is an attractive option for newcomers looking to stabilize their financial base as it pays relatively high wages for unskilled work. As a result, since the mid-1990s, Brooks has

turned into somewhat of a multicultural boomtown (Broadway, 2001; 2007; Stull and Broadway 2004).

According to the Statistics Canada census in 2006, 455 Sudanese were living in Brooks. At that time, they were by far the largest non-European or Canadian identified group in the city. The second largest ethnic group at that time was Chinese, of which the census identified 245. In 2006, 335 of those 455 Sudanese were male and 120 were female. This gender disparity is typical of migration patterns to meatpacking boomtowns; meatpacking towns such as Brooks generally attract a large number of single males due to factors such as companies' recruitment strategies and word of mouth (Broadway, 2007).

Nonetheless, the demographics of Brooks have undergone a relative shift in the past five years. Speaking to workers at settlement agencies as well as to Sudanese community members, the number of Sudanese in Brooks likely stands at around 350 at the present time. While at one time a majority among immigrant workers at Lakeside, by 2011, many Sudanese had left the company and Brooks. Due to the harsh nature of work at Lakeside, most newcomers conceptualize Brooks as a temporary place to improve their financial situation and move on; however, there is also a growing group who are putting down permanent roots in the community, many of which are represented in my study. Therefore, the number of Sudanese men and women in Brooks has likely evened out somewhat as women move to Brooks to follow their spouses, or search for work themselves. Ethiopians are likely the largest ethnic group now living in Brooks, while there are also a significant number of people from the Philippines, Asia, and South

America due to Lakeside's recent recruitment shift to employ temporary foreign workers.

Brooks is therefore a relatively distinctive community due to its temporary nature as well as the multitude of newcomers living and working in the same space. It is important to stress that although many of the experiences of women in this community are relevant to the broader Southern Sudanese Canadian experience, findings from this group must be understood within the particular context of Brooks.

Migration Experiences

The Southern Sudanese women in this study have come from Sudan to Canada via diverse paths. Many have spent time in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, some became international students in Cuba or Egypt, others left Sudan as labour migrants to countries such as Libya and Italy, while a few stayed in Sudan, waiting in the violence of war for the eventual safety of resettlement to Canada. While these trajectories are diverse, they all have in common the goal of leaving Sudan for peace in the west. Nonetheless, there are difficulties which also plague Southern Sudanese after resettlement such that women's migration histories entail adjustment and perseverance.

After the second civil war broke out in 1983, many Sudanese fled to Ethiopia because the head of the SPLM at the time, Dr. John Garang was allied with the then leader of Ethiopia, Mengistu Haile Mariam. Individuals and groups

who were loyal to the SPLM fled to Ethiopia for fear of attack, rape, and enslavement by the NIF government militia or pastoralist raiders. In Ethiopia, most Sudanese resided in refugee camps, particularly the Itang camp run by the UNHCR (though the extent to which the UNHCR had control of this camp is questionable; to a large extent, this camp was run by the SPLM). Disease and malnutrition are well recorded among the experiences of refugees in Itang (Burr & Collins, 1995). Nonetheless, Southern Sudanese were forced to flee Ethiopia in 1991 because the Mengistu government was overthrown and the refugees were deemed loyal to that government. Upon leaving Ethiopia, Southern Sudanese fled back through Sudan towards Kenya or Rwanda. Close to 100,000 people fled, trying to escape the Government Arab militia or the by then conflicting factions of the divided SPLM. Along the way they encountered not only militia but also wild animals and hunger; thousands did not make it out of Sudan. Of those that made it out of the country, most fled to Kenya where the Kakuma refugee camp was set up by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in response to the large influx of Sudanese. Here, many have lived for as long as 20 years.

This group includes the well-publicized 'lost boys of Sudan', a cohort of approximately 20,000 orphaned young boys who apparently reminded aid workers of the lost boys in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. These boys in particular have received considerable media attention and were made a priority for resettlement in the west, particularly in the United States. While the west's commitment to resettling this group is commendable, there are numerous problems with their representation. As Melinda Robbins (2003) has shown in her analysis of

newspaper coverage of their arrival, the lost boys have been largely depicted as 'blank slates' coming from an ahistorical cultural setting to an American 'Promised Land'. Narratives of the lost boys' experience are infused with national myths of rugged (masculine) individualism in the face of wild adversity.

Additionally, Lynette A. Jackson (2010) calls attention to the plight of girls in this situation, questioning what happened to the girls with similar experiences to the lost boys. Why had no one mentioned their existence, or even noticed their absence? Jackson reveals that it was considered inappropriate for unaccompanied girls in the camp, often victims of rape, to remain alone and so they were often 'adopted' into existing households in the camps, as pseudo or extended kin. Often they were treated as servants or sources of future wealth upon marriageable age. As a result, these girls never formed a distinct group as the boys did, and instead disappeared from sight. Jackson subsequently calls them 'lost twice': separated initially from their families, and then again from other lost boys and girls upon reaching the camp. Stephanie Beswick (2001) has shown that women in Kakuma have therefore had to make various 'hard choices' such as marrying undesirable men in exchange for protection.

Not all refugees left Ethiopia for Kakuma. Some 619 Southern Sudanese youth, kin of SPLM leaders and other 'privileged youth', left Ethiopia for Cuba in 1985/1986 to learn socialist ideals and be educated for an eventual return as 'the vanguards' of an envisioned independent, secular and united Southern Sudan. This group of youth (the majority males, 60 girls) left their homeland at an early age (as young as 6 and as old as 22) and lost contact with their families only a few

years after their departure due to the chaos in Sudan and the factions dividing the

SPLM. The youth spent 13 years in Cuban boarding schools and adopted Cuban,

Latino culture in addition to their pan-Sudanese identities. In the late 1980s and

early 1990s, 350 of those youth were sent back to Africa, while 250 of the

'Cubans' who were the particularly privileged (those who were enrolled in

academic rather than technical or military programs) were sent to Canada in the

later 1990s (Berger, 2001).

Egypt is another common country of settlement for Southern Sudanese

fleeing their war-torn homeland. Egypt and Sudan have been geopolitically and

ideologically linked through migration, trade, and settlement for centuries. Due to

its historically welcoming attitude towards Sudanese migration, Egypt likely

holds the largest population of Sudanese outside of Sudan. Contemporary

migration to Egypt is generally divided into two populations: those who migrated

between 1980 and the early 1990s and those who came in the late 1990s and later.

Most Sudanese migrating to Egypt in the early period came as labour migrants or

as students. Sudanese students attended post-secondary schools in Egypt under the

"Egyptian scholarship for Sudanese students" which was jointly funded by the

Egyptian and Sudanese governments after the signing of the Addis Ababa Peace

Agreement in 1972 between the NIF and the SSLM. It was believed at the time

that funding Southern Sudanese students to attend school in Egypt would expose

them to Arabic culture and language and quell their desire for an independent

state. This program continued until 1992 when the Al-Bashir government took

over power in Khartoum. The termination of this agreement required Sudanese

students to return to Sudan at that time; however, economic difficulties and instability in Sudan resulted in many Southern Sudanese remaining in Egypt and many more moving on to permanent resettlement in the west. Similarly, the *takamul* (integration) of the Nile Valley agreement signed in 1974 between Egypt and Sudan granted Sudanese people the right to live in Egypt without a residence permit; consequently, Egypt was an attractive site for Sudanese labour migration in the early period. However, after Sudanese Islamists attempted to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in 1995, Egypt revoked the *takamul* treaty. Those Sudanese who were in the country prior to the dissolution of the treaty were allowed to stay in Egypt; however, those newly entering Egypt are now allowed to enter only on one month tourist visas (Edward, 2007; Fábos, 2008).

Nonetheless, since the late 1990s there has been a sharp rise in Southern Sudanese coming to Egypt, most of whom seek asylum or resettlement in other countries. Those coming during this period largely come from Khartoum where they have been internally displaced and are desperately seeking a way out of the country. During this wave of migration, Egyptian attitudes towards Sudanese shifted such that they faced increasing harassment and, as mentioned, the removal of rights to residency, mobility, and education. Nonetheless, they also faced increased access to claim asylum and seek resettlement through refugee protection programs. As such, the Sudanese situation in Egypt shifted from one where Sudanese integrated into Egyptian labour and education systems with relative ease to one which forced their movements to become increasingly informal. Most lived in Cairo, in low income areas, and worked in the informal labour economy as taxi

drivers (males) and domestic servants (females). Some women also carried out income generating activities such as basket weaving, knitting, or selling food (Edward, 2007; Fabos, 2008). Due to the historically reciprocal relationship between Sudan and Egypt, a disproportionately large number of Southern Sudanese have come to Canada via this country.

Not all Southern Sudanese refugees in Canada have spent large amounts of time in countries of first asylum. Some (those not linked with the SPLM) waited in the chaos of war and famine, often migrating to cities such as Khartoum and Juba (deemed safer than villages) for their displaced relatives to get approval for them to follow to safety. As is common in the above experiences, families staying in Sudan have very likely been separated. Some men proceed ahead of women to countries of first resettlement, or they may be away from their families to fight in the war or to train. A large number never return. According to Mary Anne Fitzgerald (2002), during the heat of the second civil war about 66% of the population in Sudan were female; that number rose to 75% in conflict zones. Extended families are also separated in Sudan as kin flee conflict areas in different directions; some are killed, others move to cities or abroad. Women are oftentimes forced to take on the financial and caretaking responsibilities for themselves and their children without assistance from their husbands or kin. Nonetheless, they are also resilient and develop ways to survive, forming collectives with fellow women, joining religious institutions for social and spiritual support, and gaining education from NGOS throughout the country

(Fitzgerald, 2002). Many women wait in situations similar to this for their relatives abroad to gain approval for them to follow to Canada.

Resettlement and family reunification in Canada are both long processes ranging from at least one to three years. Long stays in countries of first asylum can lead to large gaps in education and work experience for many Southern Sudanese refugees. This, in addition to low international recognition of foreign degrees, poor English, and little economic capital mean that many often live in low socioeconomic conditions (Mulder and Korenic, 2005). However, once government-assisted refugees arrive in Canada they receive a number of services. The Resettlement Assistance Program provides refugees with monetary support until the refugee or their family becomes self-sufficient, for up to one year. Refugees in need of greater assistance (those with medical disabilities, elderly, single mothers, or victims of trauma and torture) may receive support for up to two years. However, it must be noted that these amounts are very limited, covering only basic costs for the determined time period; they are also expected to be repaid. Additionally, like many other immigrants in Canada, resettlement creates enormous pressure from family and friends still in Africa for remittances. The pressure to send money home has been identified as an immense source of conflict within Sudanese refugee families, and has been cited as a major barrier in gaining financial stability in Canada (Akuei, 2005; Johnson & Stoll, 2008; Leng, 2006). High rates of economic hardship have therefore been reported among this group (DFAIT, 2009; Simich, Este & Hamilton, 2010; Simich, Hamilton & Baya, 2006).

Along with financial pressures, Sudanese in Canada face a number of adjustments centering around changing gender and age roles, the shifting nature of kinship and community relationships, and unfamiliar attitudes towards things such as time and schedules. For example, in addition to economic hardship, Simich, Este and Hamilton (2010), found that Sudanese in Canada were deeply concerned with family problems, specifically those relating to family reunification, gender and marriage relationships, and parenting. This group found that ultimately, a lack of social support, inability to fulfill social roles and obligations, conflict within families, and balancing Sudanese and Canadian customs were the primary factors negatively affecting Sudanese refugee mental well-being. Due to challenges such as these, Rogaia Abusharaf (2002) contends that Sudanese kin, friends, and neighbours as well as religious practice play a pivotal role in migrant social adjustment.

Sudanese Identity

While identity is not the primary foundation of the North/South war, it is nonetheless an important one; one which determines how people, both in the past and today relate to and understand each other in Sudan and the diaspora. Additionally, the referendum in January 2011 was a significant milestone in Sudan's history as it represents an opportunity for Southern Sudanese to freely celebrate their collective identity within the formation of a new nation. This referendum has implications for Southern Sudanese in the diaspora because many

migrants are currently reconceptualising their transnational citizenship, specifically whether they would like to return to their home country should a safe opportunity present itself. It remains to be seen whether or not this opportunity will be realized peacefully; however, the overwhelming vote for succession among Southerners strongly indicates that this group will not put up with Arab hegemony much longer. Due to its particular relevance at this point in history, in addition to the relevance that it provides to the later analysis in this thesis, I feel it is important to give some background on Sudanese ethnic and national identity.

Sudan's ethnic heterogeneity as well as its history of cultural exchange, migration and conflict mean that Sudanese identity is complex. Since independence, Sudanese parliamentary and military governments have portrayed a national identity based on the Islamic culture within which the government situates itself. This is evident in the education system which developed between the 1950s and 1970s to enforce Islamic history, conversion, and the promotion of Arabic as the national language. Additionally, the government changed the national day of rest from Sunday to Friday. In some parts of urban Sudan, children were given Arabic names. Preferential treatment (such as recruitment into top political and administrative positions) has also been awarded to Sudanese people claiming Arabic descent and identity (Edward, 2007). While the extent to which this has been enforced varies throughout history, its legacy and residual outcomes remain nonetheless important today.

Many within Sudan do not adhere to the national identity portrayed by its government and this has caused obvious resentment on the part of non-Muslims in

Sudan. In resisting Arab hegemony militarily and ideologically, Southern

Sudanese have developed their own identity based on shared experiences of war,

oppression, and displacement. In response to the Arab identity, Sudanese in the

South define themselves as African, with the conviction that Southern Sudan is

not part of the Arab world (Edward, 2007). This has led to a situation described

by Francis Deng as a continuous feedback loop, where "the more the north asserts

its Arabness the more the south asserts Africanness as a counter identity" (1995,

p. 4).

This has varying transference to the diaspora. Many have discussed the

similarly fractured nature of Sudanese migrant identity. In a report published by

the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) (2009, p. 4),

researchers noticed that:

> Wherever measurably large numbers of Sudanese-Canadians reside in a
> metropolitan centre, the norm, rather than the exception, is for the population
> to divide and organize itself into separate 'Sudanese' (read, northern) and
> 'Southern Sudanese' components. However, to further complicate matters,
> Sudanese-Canadians also organize themselves along a myriad of subregional,
> tribal, sub-tribal, and religious lines that do not necessarily cohere neatly with
> the standard north/south division.

Martha Fanjoy (2008) contends that Sudanese identity is fluid and

constantly reconfigured according to social situations. It oftentimes challenges the

modern conception of the nation-state as the dominant basis of identity. In

observing the difference between what people say and what people do, Fanjoy

argues that the most commonly recognized identity categories remain tribal and

religious (as opposed to national) even after migration to Canada. When looking

at involvement in Sudanese community associations that initially seemed to

promote a pan-Sudanese identity, Fanjoy found that most of their participation was actually focused within one sub-section of the population (Southern Sudanese). She affirms that even in the presence of new Others, migrants reaffirm their symbolic ethnic boundaries, as identity is tied to their sense of belonging to that group.

When looking at Carol Berger's (2001) work on Cuban educated Sudanese in Canada, it becomes clear that investigations into identity must also take into account how the specific circumstances of certain groups translate into their understandings of themselves and their position within society. From this, one can also investigate how diverse patterns of identification interact within the diaspora. While living in Cuba, Berger's group of Sudanese developed a unified, pan-Sudanese identity (as projected by the then SPLM manifesto) in the face of many different and competing groups, particularly other Africans. However, once in Canada, this notion was challenged by prevailing views among Sudanese already in Canada. Those who had travelled directly to Canada from Africa maintained strict ideological and physical separation based largely on tribal affiliations. This plays out in real life conflicts including work, apartment hunting, and gang membership. This group had trouble adjusting to this disparate outlook and their identities were further complicated by their time spent in Cuba; in migrating to Cuba at a young age and spending their developing years in Cuba, they identified primarily as Latino, which further isolated them from other Sudanese in Canada.

In spite of this diversity, Rogaia Abusharaf (2002) contends that there are still elements of identity which unite this group under a common 'Sudaneseness',

and these are strengthened with migration. In the face of new groups of Others, migration to North America creates new identity categories that are broader and more inclusive than those used in Sudan. Abusharaf argues that in Sudan, people identify largely on ethnic or linguistic levels, but once in North America, begin to identify nationally. According to Abusharaf, "more than any other factor, Sudaneseness and Sudanese identity define the country's migrants and exiles in North America and allow them, in spite of differences, to come together in the 'ghorba'" (Abusharaf, 2002, p. 133).

DFAIT also recognizes areas in which the community is striving to come together under a common identity noting that despite ethnic division "there is a strong will on the part of many community leaders to build bridges between sub-communities and work towards pan-Sudanese unity in the diaspora" (2009, p. 4). DFAIT recognizes that the Sudanese diaspora remains closely connected to events at home in Sudan, keeping updated on politics within the country, maintaining close connections with friends and family still in Sudan (DFAIT, 2009). One could posit that a common passion for Sudan could be a uniting force among Sudanese in Canada.

Based on the above literature it seems that, while Sudanese in the diaspora may be making attempts to unite around the aspects of themselves that they have in common, these efforts cannot dissolve the centuries of estrangement and conflict which mark their difference. Histories of conflict combine with diverse migration histories to create a plethora of experiences coming together in the diaspora. As such, refugee identity cannot be amalgamated into a single view;

methods of identification vary not only among groups, but also within individuals, as people define themselves not only based on group affiliation but also within the relevance of social situations, and relationships with others (Erikson, 2002; Jenkins, 2008).

Sudanese Food

Unfortunately there is very little literature explicitly discussing food history or culture in Sudan apart from the context of famine. Peroline Ainsworth (2003), Anita Crofts (2010), and Joachim Theis (1999) are the authors of the only three articles on contemporary Sudanese foodways. Therefore, most of what is discussed in this section comes from the knowledge shared with me by Southern Sudanese women in Brooks. I am thankful to them for sharing their wealth of food knowledge with me in order for me to begin to bring some of this knowledge outside of the community. As I will delve into in the following chapters, these women demonstrate huge amounts of resiliency by honing and developing this food knowledge outside of Sudan. Their wisdom could fill books, though of course, those books would never quite capture the essence, the personal touch, what Meredith Abarca (2006) calls *sazon*, which women infuse into their cooking. This section therefore does not aim to capture all these intricacies, nor provide a comprehensive look at Sudanese cuisine; more so, it offers a brief introduction to 'typical' Sudanese foods and food practices, as they are predominantly understood by women in Brooks.

Sudanese food represents a microcosm of the history of the nation and the many groups that have settled in the country. Sudanese food, like all other cuisines has been guided by its history of trade, colonization, conflict, and movement. It represents a mixing of influences from nearly 600 ethnic groups as well as the French, English, Arabs and Italians who have had colonies in the region. Geographic extremes in Sudan ranging from sandy desert to tropical forest also influence food availability and peoples' subsistence patterns. Sudanese food is therefore a collection of the diverse, dynamic backgrounds of the peoples who have influenced its history.

As is common almost the world over, cooking is a female practice in Sudan. Knowledge about foodways is transmitted from mothers to daughters starting from around the age of ten and then also later between female relatives. Food knowledge is reproduced and passed down orally. Writing down and transcribing recipes is still very uncommon in the country as well as in the diaspora. Both cooking and eating are very communal practices which families partake in together; however, in certain ethnic groups males and females of the household eat separately. Food is generally served on a large serving tray, a *sinea*, and people eat together out of the various dishes on the tray.[2] Sharing food from the *sinea* is representative of Sudanese social norms surrounding eating and commensality; Sudanese place great importance on families eating together and oftentimes meal times are structured such that all family members can attend.

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[2] This practice is beginning to change for some in Sudan, due to peoples' awareness of germs and the spreading of bacteria and viruses orally.

As is common in much of the Arab world, hospitality is very important in Sudan. It is bound up in social norms surrounding sociality, generosity and propriety which will be discussed in the following chapters. In Sudan, houses are considered open and people are welcome to come and go within them at any time. When guests arrive they are always given food and drink (the best the household has) by the female host, the act of which also reflects the generosity of her male counterpart. I experienced much of this in my fieldwork in Brooks where I was always given the largest piece of meat, always served first, and often given food or drinks when the host themselves were not having any. Amna talks about the automatic nature of generosity among Sudanese:

> for us, you don't need to prepare. Whatever you have at home, you give to people. You don't worry about what to give to people, what to make for them, no. Everything in your house, the small thing, you just bring for the people, and they will feel happy.

Clara goes into more depth about the obligations of a Sudanese host:

> Sudanese, they don't need to call. They don't need to call you to come to your house, they will just come, and come, you know, you have to open the door. You can't open the door and say sorry, I'm not home or it just was my time to go to sleep. As long as you are at home, just open the door and let people sit. And then you can't ask them to leave. They can sit until whatever time they want (laughs). And when they come to your house, if they're hungry, they will say, we are hungry, we want to eat. It doesn't matter whether you have something in the fridge or not, you have to give them something. You have to respect that. If they are hungry they will be like, we are hungry, can we have supper? Can we eat? Can we have tea? Can we drink? No I don't drink tea, I drink juice. And you have to do; it's part of your responsibility, part of your obligation. Like Sudanese are very generous. If the guests come to your house, you have to give them everything that you have. Like the best thing you have. Make sure they are comfortable, make sure they are not hungry, make sure they don't go away hungry. Some people they don't ask, but you can see they are hungry- just go and start cooking, right away. It doesn't matter whether you were preparing to go to bed, like you were trying to get on your p.js. (laughs)

However, hospitality includes more than just the obvious acts of proving food and accommodation to guests; it also includes more nuanced gestures which indicate the respectability and sincerity of the host. These nuanced gestures all contribute to making guests comfortable. A proper host does all she can to make sure that guests have an appetite for as much food or drink as possible. While as Amna says above, whatever one has, no matter how small, is always accepted and appreciated, there is also pressure, particularly among the middle and upper classes in times of prosperity, to serve to the highest standard possible. The more appealing the food and its surroundings are, the more comfortable guests will feel and the more they will eat and drink. This includes how one prepares a certain dish as is exemplified in Naya's description of making *falafels*: "We put salt and garlic. And you eat it. If you eat this one [with salt and garlic], you will feel like you want to eat more." Cleanliness is also a part of this, as Clara reveals when talking about serving tea: "you have to make sure your glasses are dry and clean, like super clean. If you make sure everything is clean, it will give them [guests] an appetite for tea." Proper hospitality also includes paying attention to the type of gathering one is hosting and the specific needs of the guests:

> If you already had tea before or if we're gonna sit here for a long time, for hours and hours… they will use those small cups. That way, you don't lose your appetite for tea because it's so small. You drink it and after 30 minutes you feel like drinking more. They will go on, and go on, and go on, it's a socializing thing. [Clara].

Tea is therefore drunk multiple times a day. Sudanese tea consists of cardamom, cloves and cinnamon served with either black, red, or green tea, depending on the preferences of the drinker. Tea is commonly served with

zalabia, or Sudanese donuts; however, *pasta*, Sudanese phyllo pastries with melted butter and sugar drizzled over top, and *pitufin/pitufor* or light cookies are also common. These desserts often include plenty of sugar as Sudanese are known for their sweet tooth. Sudanese also drink coffee, though this practice varies greatly within the country. The eastern regions of Sudan are particularly known for their *jebena* coffee. This coffee is often encompassed in ritual, for example, when groups of women come together to braid each other's hair or apply henna.[3] Here, coffee beans are fried in a special pot over charcoal and then ground with cloves and other spices. The coffee is steeped in hot water and served from a *jebena*, a little coffee pot that strains it through a special tresh grass sieve. It is then drunk from tiny cups. Due to large internal migration, many Southern Sudanese women throughout the country are increasingly taking up this practice.[4]

Tea is generally the only thing consumed first thing in the morning, with a larger breakfast occurring later at around 10 am. This consists of light, milk based porridges or bread with broad beans (*ful*, originally from Egypt though now a staple in the cities). The largest meal of the day takes place during the mid-afternoon, around 3 pm. This meal generally consists of flatbreads/porridges and sauces (*mullah*) consisting of vegetables and meat. This meal is also followed by tea. Meals in the evening time (around 9pm) are light, usually leftovers from the day, or a glass of milk.

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[3] Henna is the art of temporary tattooing common in the Middle East and Africa.
[4] Many women consider this ritual to be Ethiopian due to the fact that the practice is shared among many eastern Sudanese, Ethiopian and Eritrean groups. Sudan is home to refugees from Ethiopia, and Ethiopians, in addition to eastern Sudanese who share this practice within the cities of Sudan.

As mentioned, the largest Sudanese meals consist regularly of flatbreads/porridges and sauce (*mullah*). The most common staple dish eaten in almost all of Sudan is *aseeda*, a porridge/flatbread made from either millet or sorghum flour, though increasingly also with wheat flour, and combined with milk, butter and sugar. The reason why I label *aseeda* as a porridge/flatbread is because the consistency of *aseeda* varies according to the region of Sudan in which it is made; it ranges from a custard consistency to dense enough that it must be cut with a knife. *Kisra* is another common flatbread eaten throughout most of Sudan; it is a very thin, spongy bread with a slightly bitter taste. Northern areas also consume *gurrasa* which is relatively thick and dense in comparison to other varieties. *Madida* is a variation of *aseeda* and is served as a thick drink, primarily for nursing mothers, though increasingly drunk by diverse groups and accompanied with fruit. Dinka people in the South make another type of *aseeda, aseeda* k*uin duing,* which is a sweet, desert porridge made from boiling yogurt, butter and milk for varying periods of time.

Sudanese also consume large amounts of cassava. Cassava is boiled and served with peanut butter, honey, or green onions; it is chopped and put into *mullah* (both the leaves and the flesh are commonly chopped into *mullah*); it is also mashed in water with a mortar and pestle to make *fu fu*; it may also be ground into flour.

Aseeda, kisra and *gurrasa* (with the exception of *madida* and desert *aseeda*) are eaten as edible platters or utensils, where *mullah* is scooped into the mouth with the bread. The bases of these *mullah*, or sauces, usually consist of

frying a chopped onion in oil, then adding meat and varying amounts of water.

Commonly consumed meats include beef, lamb, chicken, and goat. Dried meat

(*sharmoot*) or fish is also commonly added to *mullah*. After letting the meat boil,

chopped vegetables including okra, molokia,[5] eggplant, and kale are added to the

pot and set to simmer for long periods of time. Dried, ground okra powder, or

wayca, is also often used as it is an easy additive when fresh vegetables are

scarce. Fresh meats and vegetables are consumed in varying quantities depending

on availability and the wealth of a consumer. Depending on the type of *mullah*

being made, tomato paste or peanut butter may be added in small amounts to the

pot. Yogurt may also be added to make *robe* varieties and gives *mullah* a tangy

taste. Commonly used spices include garlic, salt, cumin, galingale, cinnamon,

cardamom, and Maggi meat stocks. *Shata*, or hot sauce made with chillies give

mullah a kick. Two bicarbonate, baking soda-like substances, *kombo* and *atrun*

are used specifically in Southern Sudan. They are made from collected ash and

give *mullah* an elastic, 'slimy' consistency. Some believe that these substances

also enhanced the colour and the flavour of food while others are sceptical of

these properties.

Not all Sudanese dishes include flatbreads and *mullah*. Sudanese also

commonly fry fish and chicken, they make *khoftah*, or meatballs, *maschi*, or rice

and ground beef stuffed vegetables, *falafel*, or fried balls of ground chickpeas, and

sambosas, or baked triangular pastries with a savoury filling. Tomato salads are

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[5] Molokia is a green, leafy vegetable grown in Africa and the Mediterranean similar to spinach.

commonly consumed which include sliced tomatoes and cucumber (optional) topped with oil, lemon juice, and salt.[6]

The above presents a snapshot of Sudanese food. Of course, Sudanese cuisine is not a distinct, easily definable entity as people constantly change, adjust and transform food within their daily lives, as will be explored in detail in chapter four. Food knowledge is similar to how Joy Adapon describes it:

> Knowing how to make certain dishes or how to combine foods is learnt by repeated observation and practice, from consulting with others, from the experience of growing up within a particular gastronomic culture… Culinary knowledge is often passed on without recipes or precise measurements. Rather fellow cooks are expected to be able to draw upon a 'stock of knowledge' that is stored in their heads, hearts, hands, noses and mouths. (2008, p. 14; see also Sutton, 2001)

Sudanese food is therefore less an exact set of rules and ingredients, and more a dynamic concept. Sudanese food is something that Southern Sudanese women conjure up when they think about their homes in Sudan, their memories, and their families there, something that links them to a collective identity, which they use to define themselves in relation to others (Douglas, 1966; Gabaccia 1998). Like all food however, Sudanese food is not without influence from the global movement of people, products, technologies, and ideas (Appadurai, 1996). As such, Sudanese food is constantly changing both inside and outside of Sudan as it borrows from and recreates diverse cultural foodways (Crofts, 2010).

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[6] The recipes for 5 Sudanese dishes are included in Appendix A to provide a deeper look into what some of these dishes entail.

Conclusions

In setting the context for Southern Sudanese women in Brooks I have outlined the history of their homeland as well as how that history has impacted collective identity; I have discussed some experiences common to refugees as they flee Sudan on their way to Canada, as well as the adjustments women face upon resettlement in the country; I also provided some background on Sudanese food and food practices. In doing so, I have presented a brief portrait of the socio-political circumstances which frame women's action and thought. Before proceeding with my analysis of how women work as agents within these circumstances to improve their lives socially and materially, I explain the methodology used to capture these understandings.

Chapter Three: Fieldwork, Methodology and Reflexivity in Brooks

Over the summer of 2010, I conducted informal and semi-structured individual or group interviews with 17 Southern Sudanese women. I interviewed all women at least once though many women invited me back to their homes multiple times after the initial interview to learn more about the specifics of certain foods, meanings, or cooking techniques. As a whole, I was welcomed with open arms into the community such that I also conducted extensive participant observation outside of the more formal interview setting. While conducting my fieldwork in Brooks I also worked with three settlement agencies to integrate myself into the community, to learn about settlement services in Brooks, and to meet and recruit participants.

By striving to participate in as much of community life as possible, I worked to integrate myself into both the Southern Sudanese and the Brooks communities. Because of its unique demographics, Brooks is an over-researched community, with many researchers collecting the data they need and leaving with little post research follow-up. This has left informants and other stakeholders feeling used and resentful in the past. The Sudanese community specifically had a researcher work with them a few years prior to my fieldwork who negatively affected their attitude towards research. The researcher was studying a sensitive topic within the community and handled it badly; many community members were left feeling insulted and angry. As such, it was important for me to build the trust and respect, the rapport, of both the women I worked with as well as the broader Sudanese and Brooks communities. I therefore was careful to build

rapport not only with my informants, but also with Sudanese community leaders and other stakeholders, such as settlement and service agencies.

Rapport has been discussed widely in the literature (Bernard, 2006; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Watts, 2006) often as a multi-dimensional progression developing slowly throughout the research process. It involves gaining the trust of informants so that they feel their disclosure will be kept confidential and will not be used against them. In building rapport, a researcher aims to integrate into a community such that people's conversations and behaviour remain open and ordinary, as opposed to rehearsed. While there is always some manner of performativity in action, which is often amplified in interviews, I strove to minimize my effect on performance in order to gain acceptance in the community and gain a 'truer' understanding of my research topic. Overall, I was successful in this endeavour for a number of reasons which will be explored in this chapter. They include being flexible, with my interviews' formats, demographics and with my time, in addition to participating in as much as I could, being humble and respectful, and demonstrating a willingness to 'give back' to the community. I also feel that my research topic was a factor in this success. As I mentioned in the introduction, food is intricately social. Food was something myself and my participants could easily bond over. Southern Sudanese are very aware of their negative image in Canadians and Brooks residents' minds and they were happy that someone was inquiring into the aspects of their culture that made them proud. Nonetheless, my attention to rapport also has numerous implications for the development of my research design. This chapter outlines the methods and

methodology utilized in this study; yet it also investigates the politics, power, and ethics surrounding ethnographic fieldwork.

Study Recruitment and Collaboration

When I arrived in Brooks I knew that I wanted to work with as many social service agencies located there as possible, particularly settlement agencies, in order to integrate myself into the community, to learn about the wider Brooks community dynamics, particularly in relation to settlement in Brooks, and to meet and recruit research participants. I ended up speaking with representatives from Alberta Child Services, the Red Cross, the Palliser Health Region, the Food Coalition Society, as well as Dieticians. Nonetheless, it was in closely working with three settlement agencies in particular where I built most of my contextual knowledge and recruited informants.

I initiated the process of relationship building in April when I went to Brooks to conduct a three day research assessment. During this initial trip, I started my investigation into settlement services in the city. I located three settlement agencies as well as popular newcomer meeting spaces. Therefore, when I arrived in Brooks permanently in June, I was able to immediately build contacts in the community. I set up meetings with the Language Center for Newcomers, the SPEC Association for Children and Families and Brooks and County Immigration Services (BCIS, a section of Calgary Catholic Immigration Services (CCIS)). These associations were extremely helpful in giving me

perspective into the newcomer situation in Brooks, providing me with

opportunities to become a part of the community through their organizations,

giving me advice on where and how to recruit research participants, and

introducing me to women in the Southern Sudanese community. Contact with

BCIS and SPEC were facilitated through the Prairie Metropolis Centre for

Newcomers in Edmonton, where I have been actively involved in their student

internship program. Marlene Mulder and Tracey Derwing at the Centre offered

me invaluable advice and resources which facilitated my movement into the

community with credibility.

I also recruited one participant through a Sudanese woman in Edmonton

named Nyanath. I became acquainted with Nyanath while conducting a project

proposal for an Urban Anthropology class in the Fall of 2009. Nyanath lived in

Brooks before coming to Edmonton and had remained friends with one woman in

particular, Mary, whom she introduced me to. Mary ended up becoming an

invaluable informant, a gatekeeper, and a good friend. Mary took me under her

wing while I was in Brooks; she introduced me to her friends and took me to

Sudanese parties and events. I therefore also met many participants through her,

through snowball sampling.

Participants

As I mentioned in the introduction, flexibility has been a primary

component of my methodological practice. This is evident in the demographics of

my participants. Specifically, the demographics of the women in this study came about as I conducted convenience and snowball sampling. I went into Brooks in June with little specifications relating to the demographic composition I was looking for in my project. I knew that I wanted to study Sudanese women and I knew that I wanted to capture a diversity of experiences which would be reflected in the different ethnicities, religions, employment backgrounds, migration histories, and household structures of women in Brooks. Due to the methods I used to recruit women, snowball sampling in particular, it turned out that I did not meet anyone from Northern Sudan while I was in Brooks. A cited drawback of snowball sampling in the literature is that it can limit the diversity of informants (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Nonetheless, mid-way through my fieldwork I decided to follow this demographic pattern because it became clear to me that Northern and Southern Sudanese have different experiences surrounding how and why they have come to Canada and determine themselves to be ideologically and territorially distinct identities.

Another criterion I set only after the fieldwork had begun is the generation of migrants represented in this study. All of the participants in this project were born in Sudan; however, all but one of the women in this study ranged in age from their mid-20s to their early-40s and so spent relatively little time growing up and socializing within the country. When the second Sudanese civil war broke out in 1983, these women were children; some were born into the war. Their families were disrupted, many moved away from their homes to the cities, or abroad. Some left at such an early age that they can hardly remember their homes; those

who stayed in the country waited in the chaos of war for their displaced relatives to get approval for them to follow to safety. All but the one exception to this generation did not stay in Sudan long enough to run their own households. They therefore represent a specific segment of the Southern Sudanese community in Canada as their histories are defined by their relatively limited experience in Sudan; however, they are also an important one as they represent the largest age category of Sudanese in Canada and they are raising the first generation of Sudanese children to grow up in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2006b). While this demographic focus is likely the result of similar methodological choices as those described above, I felt that the distinctiveness of this group also warranted restriction after learning about the specificity of their experiences.

Lydia, in her late 50s or early 60s, is the exception to this. Lydia was *mama Lydia*; she had earned the distinction of *mama* which Sudanese reserve for respected elder women. Lydia had insight into her experiences that was relatively absent from the other interviewees; she had experienced both civil wars in Sudan and had endured through them as an adult. When one participant, Estelle, arrived to our interview with Lydia, I was a bit thrown off. At this point I was nearing the end of my fieldwork and I had determined that my study demographics were to focus on the age set described above; nonetheless, I had to be polite and so I interviewed them both. Although I was at first concerned about moving out of my age demographic with Lydia, I soon noticed that her testimony echoed very similar themes as the others, and so I include it in this thesis. Another reason for her inclusion is because Lydia and Estelle's interview is one of the smallest

narratives in my data; I only met with them once, they were under a time constraint, and they preferred not to have the interview recorded. Additionally, I felt that it was important to recognize that Lydia wanted to participate in the study, and as such, I felt uncomfortable excluding her. Lastly, her testimony is also an important way to make some initial extrapolations of this thesis' findings. While my research background tells me that if I expanded the age set of participants for future research to include older women, the study might show a stronger desire to cling to traditional food practices, because, generally, older generations are more interested in preserving tradition than younger ones; however, Lydia's narrative contradicts this. She was as willing and eager to expand her food knowledge as the younger women.

Within these demographic constraints women represented a broad portrait of varying ethnicities, religions, employment backgrounds, migration histories, and household structures. These Southern Sudanese women identified as being from eight different tribes; most identified as Dinka (9), but women also identified as Bari (2), Azande (1), Nuer (1), Nuba (1), Fertit (1), Balanda (1), and Kreish (1). Women originated from both cities and villages in Sudan, and all except for one came to Canada via another country, largely Egypt but also Kenya, Ethiopia, Libya, Malta, Italy, the United States and Cuba (many had spent time in more than one of these countries). The majority of women identified as Christians, of varying denominations; however a large number were non-practicing. There were also three Catholics, and one practicing and one non-practicing Muslim. Most women lived in nuclear families with their husband's and small children (9);

however, some were single mothers (2), some lived with their husbands or

partners without children (2), two women's children had moved out of their

houses (after coming of age), one lived with her boyfriend and her children, and

one lived with her husband and son along with another renter in her basement.

Only two of the women did not have children. Except for the two women whose

children had moved out of the house, women had fairly young children, all

children were under thirteen but most were under eight.

The women in this study were also relatively well established in Canada,

having lived in the country between three and seventeen years. Consequently, all

interviewees were fluent in English and I conducted my interviews in that

language. This decision was not so much made based on methodological

considerations as financial ones. I made a choice before embarking on my

fieldwork not to hire the services of an interpreter, primarily because, as a

master's student, I had few financial resources to fund my research. This is likely

a limitation to this study because it narrows my research group to those who are

relatively well established in Canada. I met numerous women who were interested

in my study but were hesitant to participate due to their limited English skills.

Translation can also be problematic because layers of meaning may be lost

when people interpret what others are saying (Biro, 1981). For example, a

translator may summarize what is said by a participant, omitting small sayings

that may in fact be revealing. This can be remedied in various ways such as by

hiring a research assistant fluent in the interview language(s) to transcribe data

from a voice recording. Additionally, it is important to find translators who do not

have ties to the community so that participants feel comfortable discussing topics without fear of judgment or breaching confidentiality. This can be somewhat problematic in Brooks because the Sudanese community in Alberta is very close; finding someone totally detached from all participants would have been difficult. For future research I would like to learn the language of my research subjects prior to embarking on fieldwork and I am currently enrolled in my second year of Arabic classes to realize that goal. While Arabic is not the first language of any of these women, most can speak it fluently (and use it between each other) due to Sudan's history of Islamicization.

All but three of the informants lived elsewhere in Canada (Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa, or Windsor) prior to coming to Brooks. They came to Brooks predominantly for the purpose of employment, either for themselves or their husbands. During my fieldwork, nine out of the seventeen women were employed at the Lakeside meatpacking plant, three were employed outside of Lakeside, two were going to school, and three women stayed at home to raise their children. Four of the women not currently working at Lakeside had worked there in the past and one had applied to work there, though her husband blocked her employment. As is evident, Lakeside is very much the center of life for Southern Sudanese in Brooks. Almost all the women's husbands also worked at Lakeside and couples often took opposite shifts at the plant (one worked the day shift and one worked the night shift) so that they would not have to put their children in daycare. All of the women had had at least some schooling, in Sudan, in refugee camps, or abroad. Five had post-secondary training either in Egypt or

in Cuba. Four had Canadian technical training but only three were using them. One woman, despite training to be a nursing attendant was not using her certification because work at Lakeside paid more and worked better with her husband's work schedule. Almost all of the women I talked to were either actively taking English as a Second Language (ESL) classes on top of their current schedules or had taken these classes in the past. They were working to improve their English skills so that they could take better advantage of the opportunities provided by Canadian life, such as to get better jobs, or become more involved in their children's lives (about half of whom solely spoke English).

The amount of time each participant had lived in Brooks also ranged from two to twelve years, though most congregated along the edges of that range either having lived in the city for over ten years or for only a couple. This corresponds with the majority of discourse about Brooks; it is generally understood as a transitory place for migrants. However, there is also a growing trend of families building permanent homes there. This is also reflected in informants' polarized opinions about Brooks and Lakeside. Many women did not like the harsh work environment or the long hours at Lakeside but stayed there because they needed the money. However, many also expressed that they enjoyed working, saying that Lakeside provided a good work environment because they got to stand next to the same people every day in the slaughterhouse and developed strong friendships. Lakeside was thus seen as a social setting for some women. Ajak enjoyed working with other newcomers at Lakeside because of the social interactions she developed with others there:

> I saw it [Lakeside] as fun because there are a lot of newcomers there and people that don't know English well. And some people are doing funny stuff, because they just came to Canada from villages or from the country. But for people like me, because I was just born in the city and then moved from city to city, everything, when I came here, everything for me is normal, there is nothing new. But for other people, you will see- That's why maybe I would laugh every day, *every day* is funny. Like people doing funny stuff. Maybe that's why I like to be there, because I love, *every day* I was laughing. Sometimes fighting, sometimes laughing just. But it was good anyway. It was good, I learned a lot. And then we meet different people from different countries and then you talk, and you talk, and you talk, you learn, you take, you give. (original emphasis)

The community of Brooks was seen in similarly contradictory terms.

Some informants viewed Brooks, and its temporary nature, as a lonely place.

Because the focus of those living there is on work some people do not invest in

the social aspects of their lives. Ajak is a good example of this, despite the fact

that she liked working at Lakeside:

> I was just busy with work the past 7 years, so I didn't get to know the community that much so I can't say anything specifically about this [community life in Brooks]. Because I was busy with something else. Maybe now [that she has stopped working at Lakeside to stay at home with her children] I will see it. But before, cuz I was working, and then, it's really, like, you are busy. I just worked and came home, work, home, work, home, so I didn't get to know a lot of things. Even now, if I go, I don't know some places in Brooks, cuz I was just busy working, and I don't like to go out a lot.

However, this is not true for all women. Many women liked Brooks and the slow,

quiet pace of life that is common to small communities. Similarly, as people stay

longer and longer in a place, they build social relationships, and it starts to

become a home, as is happening for Angelina:

> When I first came here, I came for work. I have to stay here now even though I don't like it because I need money. But I get friends here, a lot of people, so I like it. And it's not busy like Calgary. It's getting big though- before it was better. But before I was also just working, but it's getting better now.

Ultimately, people's perspectives of Brooks and Lakeside depend on numerous factors including their constitution, their motivation for being there, and their social connections both upon arrival as well as which are built over time. This discussion ultimately reminds us that the experiences of these women, while holding some commonalities, are also distinctly heterogeneous. It is in navigating these differences and similarities that this thesis has developed.

Data Collection and Fieldwork

The data for this study comes from informal, semi-structured and group interviews as well as participant observation conducted with women in Brooks. Overall, I was flexible with which data collection method I used; however, I ensured that I conducted at least one interview with each person, which ideally would be recorded. A flexible methodology allowed me to build rapport with informants as well as work within the time constraints of the community.

A large portion of my field notes are comprised of semi-structured and informal interviews that I conducted with eleven of the seventeen Southern Sudanese women. Upon initiating an interview with informants, I went over the contents of my informed consent form (see Appendix C) that explained my research and its goals. Informants were not required to sign the form because the English reading and writing faculties of most were not strong. Instead, I garnered verbal consent from women prior to initiating the interview. Semi-structured interviews progressed following an interview guide (see Appendix B), yet at times

deviated from it, depending on which direction informants took the discussion. I framed my interviews as a series of open ended questions worded such as 'can you explain' or 'what is it like' which are well suited to exploring the subjective experiences of informants. I also adjusted my interview questions as the project progressed, depending on themes I saw emerging and questions that did or did not work. In an effort to make informants feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible, I generally allowed the flow of the interviews to proceed in the manner chosen by them, while ensuring that the informant addressed the topics outlined in the guide at some point. I found overall that many women had an idea in their head, prior to meeting with me about what they wanted to talk about, and the interview progressed in that manner, regardless of whether I tried to redirect it or not. Interviews were generally relaxed, sometimes occurring alongside cooking instruction. Women often interrupted the interview to show me specific ingredients or to offer me tea or a beverage. Many women's children were present during the interviews as well.

In order to ensure the comfort and therefore openness of informants, I insisted that they choose where the interview would take place. Most invited me to their homes, though I met with a few in a confidential setting at the settlement agency where we were introduced, and one informant chose to meet at a café. In three instances, participants requested that they bring a friend along to the interview, in which case I conducted the interview with both women. Similarly, I chose to conduct these in this way because my priority was to build rapport with informants; it was likely that women felt less intimidated with a friend. During

group sessions, I went through the interview guide as I would with the individual interviews and asked each person the question in alternating order. Informants responded to each other's answers and 'played off each other'. However, I was also cognizant to watch for one person 'controlling' the conversation. In all three instances, the conversation was relatively equal and I did not have to intervene at any point.

One of the individual and one of the group interviews were conducted in an informal manner. In the case of the individual interview, the nature of our relationship developed organically into one defined more by friendship than of a researcher and participant. While this informant knew, of course, that I was there as a researcher, to learn about or from her, our conversation never took a formal turn. I went over the consent form with her when we first met; however, I asked her all of the questions from the interview guide (and more) informally during our numerous daily encounters together. With the two women in the group interview, a similar relationship evolved: I went to one of the women's house to conduct the group interview with them both and, despite my fairly formal introduction and layout of the consent form, the two women took the interview in the direction they wanted, very informally, with cooking instruction and friendly gossip mixed in with my questions. We similarly became friends and while we did not get through all of the questions during the first interview, learning continued over a span of multiple cooking visits. In these two cases, I felt that a more formal interview would be detrimental to our relationship and lead to less openness on the part of these informants.

While food is a productive way to speak to people about themselves, it is also a difficult research area because it is not often verbalized. As Joy Adapon notices in her own research on food, "as with any other sort of skill, cooking is something that is enacted and embodied, not usually articulated" (2008, p. 14). When women heard that I was doing research on food, they automatically thought I was producing some sort of cookbook or wanting to learn about how they cooked. It took some explaining to get across to them that, while it was important to me to learn about how they cooked, what I really wanted to know was *why* they cooked. Regardless, even women's interpretations of this varied greatly. As mentioned, I found that women had an idea before the interview started, about what they wanted to talk about, and regardless of my questions, the conversation veered in the direction they took it. This is not necessarily a limitation because I feel that I received a very diverse discussion of varying elements of Southern Sudanese foodways. Some women spent large parts of the interview talking about gender roles and propriety, other women talked about food traditions, others wanted to talk about change and recreation. From this I received a well-rounded perspective of Southern Sudanese foodways in Brooks.

I brought a voice recorder with me to each of the interviews and asked the women if they would feel comfortable with me using it. Because many women come from situations of war and exploitation, in which their personal information may have been used against them or misinterpreted, I anticipated that some were likely to feel uncomfortable being recorded. Most women agreed to be recorded, though a few asked for me not to. Also, I did not record the informal interviews

because I determined that a recorder would change the informal nature of our relationship. Steven Taylor & Robert Bogdan (1998) write that the use of recording devices places informants in a more 'performative' rather than 'informative' posture. An informant may therefore change his/her answers based on their impression of what others may think of them. In the two informal cases above, I chose not to suggest the use of a voice recorder because I determined it would change the nature of the conversation and would take away from the content of the interview. Instead, I wrote detailed field notes which I then reflected on and analyzed after completing the interviews.

Throughout my research I also participated in numerous social activities within the Sudanese community, endeavouring to make research participants feel comfortable enough with my presence to observe and record their daily lives; in doing so, I employed participant observation, a foundational method in anthropology. In my case, participant observation took many forms. For the majority of women, talking about food is inseparable from making food and so many women either included cooking in the interview, or they invited me to return to their house at a later time to show me how to cook a cultural dish. As mentioned, I became very close to a couple of informants and spent many days, 'hanging out' at their houses, grocery shopping and cooking with them or learning about their day to day lives. I went with these women to numerous community events including 'prayer parties' (Christian gatherings where people come together to mourn the passing of a loved one in Sudan and pray for their soul to reach heaven), weddings, children's birthdays, births, and a Dinka 'welcome

ceremony' (conducted after the wedding, where the wife's family welcomes a new husband into their family so that he can 'eat in their house'). I also attended a few more informal women's gatherings such as group cooking and henna applications. I took field notes while attending these sessions to remember their details in addition to important quotes or recipes.

Participant observation is a valuable method for building rapport, for learning about the intricacies of a culture, as well as for complementing more formal data recording with examples of what people do and why they do it. As mentioned, people are generally not used to talking about why they cook and eat what they do. However, by standing next to someone as they cook, I was able to observe every detail of their practice and inquire as to why they are doing what they are doing. As other anthropologists working with the Sudanese community specifically have recorded, direct questioning is often less productive than observation if one hopes to gain an understanding of individual motivation and meaning (Berger, 2001). Similarly, participant observation was also a valuable way of gaining acceptance in the community and recruiting new participants. By continually attending group events and gatherings, I was able to demonstrate my commitment to and respect for their community. People therefore became increasingly familiar and accepting of my presence there and were more likely to learn about and be inclined to participate in my research.

I returned to Brooks for three days in January of 2011 where I met with fourteen of the seventeen informants to present them with the contents of my proposed thesis and garner their feedback. I was unable to meet with two women

because they had moved away from the community and I have been unable to garner their new contact information; one woman was unable to meet with me while I was there so I emailed her a copy of my proposal. While in Brooks a second time, I spoke to informants about the primary themes that I saw emerging from my fieldwork and asked them their impressions. All of the women were satisfied and encouraged by my observations and suggested no changes to my findings. Many women expanded on some of these themes in this second session, adding more specific examples of their experiences relating to them.

The primary challenge I encountered in recruiting and interviewing informants was that of time. The majority of informants worked at Lakeside, taking opposing shifts to their husband; during the time they had off, women were extremely busy taking care of their children, cleaning their houses, and cooking for their families.[7] The summer is also a particularly busy time for Sudanese in Brooks because Lakeside converts to six day work weeks from June to August (it is reduced to four during parts of the winter) to fulfill the increased demand for beef during barbeque season. This leaves women with one day to complete their household duties. Additionally, the summer months are largely occupied with events. Weddings are generally held in the summer, in addition to prayer parties, births and birthdays which take place year round. Because the Sudanese (and even wider multicultural) community in Brooks is relatively close, most women have some sort of obligation every weekend, and oftentimes have to choose between which of their friend's or family's events they will attend. This is also amplified

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[7] These caretaking duties were still largely the responsibility of women, despite the fact that they often worked outside the home as well. See chapter 5.

by the close kinship relationships between Sudanese across Alberta. I myself attended a wedding in Calgary and a welcome ceremony in Edmonton. Women are constantly travelling back in forth to events throughout Alberta and even across Canada to fulfill their family obligations.

Another challenge I encountered when conducting fieldwork also had to do with time; with differential attitudes or worldviews regarding it. While it Brooks, it became apparent that my notion of time was different than that of most of my informants. Most within the Southern Sudanese community do not plan ahead or meet at a pre-determined time as I normally do, but rather spontaneously gather based on when their schedules allow. I therefore had to be very flexible conducting research with this community. There were many instances when I would make plans to meet for an interview and my informant would call to cancel right before the scheduled time. Conversely, women would return my calls for an interview with 'can you meet now?' as their response. This was something that took getting used to, and certainly caused some frustration on my part. However, it was something that I was able to deal with because I was in Brooks solely to conduct research and so had a large amount of free time to be able to work with this attitude. An interesting exception to note is when I came back to Brooks for three days in January. While I was in Brooks for only a short time, fourteen of the women met with me because it was urgent. This is telling of the relationship I built with them already at this point, however, it also reflects the time of year I returned, and also follows the format in which they are used to socializing, on short notice.

A third challenge I faced was in negotiating my role. Because I strove very hard to integrate myself into the community and build rapport with informants, I ended up becoming more of a 'friend' or 'community member' than a researcher. While the advantages of this are significant as it allowed me accessibility and openness during my data collection, it also produced some challenges. Becoming a friend meant that I found it difficult to sit down with certain informants and ask them the specific questions I was looking for; therefore I conducted these interviews 'informally' as mentioned above. Another challenge accompanied by this sort of integration includes becoming wrapped up in community gossip and infighting. While the community never overtly sought to influence my social relationships, I was certainly aware of gossip surrounding some of my informants and was at times put in a difficult position when for example, I was invited to a party and they were not. Additionally, I met many women over the course of my fieldwork that were friendly and welcoming to me; however, they did not want to think of me as a researcher. They were happy to teach me to cook or invite me to parties but did not want to sit down for an actual interview. The reluctance on the part of many within the community to engage with me in this more formal manner also perhaps reflects their histories of mistrust in research or 'outsiders'.

Research Ethics

The University of Alberta Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board approved this project in April 2010. Overall, the risks of this study were not high,

though were taken into consideration throughout the research process. There was

potential for some informants to experience emotional distress as a result of

participating in the research. Many interview questions required informants to

recall memories of their homes, where they had experienced trauma surrounding

conditions of war. Also, some questions directly asked participants to recall food

insecurity, gender inequality, and forced displacement. Additionally, participants

were asked to reflect on their ideas of 'home' and what 'home' meant to them.

There was a risk that informants could experience psychological distress when

asked to recall these memories.

I mediated these risks by being attentive to the emotional state of

informants. I entered into difficult discussions with caution and did not proceed if

the informant was showing signs of discomfort. I also ensured that informants

were aware that they were not required to discuss experiences that made them

uncomfortable and that could withdraw from the study at any time. There was one

instance where an informant visually demonstrated a small level of distress;

however, this was provoked by discussion of her current liminality and alienation

from her Sudanese and Canadian identities, rather than previous traumatic

experiences. This distress was very small, apparent only through a small crack in

her voice, and was immediately covered up. I asked her if she was ok and if she

wanted to proceed, and she confirmed that she did. Overall, informants were very

aware of their emotions and only revealed to me what they were comfortable

sharing. As a whole, most of what my informants were asked to recall were

positive memories and interviews generally flowed along a positive tone. In the

following chapter, I will examine how informants showed high levels of resiliency in isolating negative experiences from their more general memories of their homes.

There was also a small risk that women discussing gender and inequality with me would face a loss of status or reputation. Topics surrounding the family can oftentimes be considered private, and Sudanese custom generally dictates that families and communities solve their problem 'from within' (Holtzman, 2007). Some Sudanese may therefore not approve of women talking about these issues with an 'outsider'. Additionally, these discussions took place within a context in which changing gender roles and women's bolder, more confident attitude in Canada were sensitive and controversial topics. In the Sudanese context, dealing with changing gender equality also involves negotiating practices such as abuse. Men in particular may worry about what women are saying about them and associate it with their bolder, disrespectful attitude. This places women at risk for a loss or status but also verbal or physical abuse should their husband's consider their discussion a reflection of their disrespect for their husbands.

This was mediated by ensuring the anonymity of informants. I conducted interviews in private settings, unless chosen otherwise by the informant. All interviews were private and confidential and persons involved in the group interviews also agreed to the confidentiality of the discussion. However, due to the extensive participant observation and snowball sampling used in this study, the identities of some of my informants could not be completely hidden. I also therefore use pseudonyms in place of participants' real names to provide

anonymity and ensure participants' safety. Pseudonyms prevent readers from

associating a particular phrase with a person. However, as Carol Berger (2001)

notes, there are sacrifices that come from using pseudonyms; Sudanese names tell

a story- who their father was, the order of their birth, the tribe they come from,

and their religion. Sudanese keep track of their names to the tenth generation.

These names determine social relatedness between people and in the diaspora, are

an important way of determining kin. Removing names in a thesis about identity

is therefore quite ironic, as doing so takes away identity. Also, identifying and

naming refugees is particularly important because it acknowledges their

humanity, and removes them from the anonymity of 'the refugee'; however, due

to some very real tensions that exist in the community surrounding changing

gender roles and the differential adoption of identity it was more important to

ensure the safety of participants. Nonetheless, I also talked with numerous men

informally throughout my participant observation, and they all held similar views

as women regarding what was happening with changing gender roles among

Southern Sudanese couples. All except one admitted tension around these topics

and were committed to working through them.

Data Analysis

 I transcribed, coded and analyzed my field notes loosely around the

concept of grounded theory in which I let themes emerge from the data while

being conscious of biases in my research method. However, this process was also

not free from my own preconceived ideas about what I would find, and my biases. Throughout this process of collecting and analyzing research data, I have gained valuable insight into the strengths and limitations of grounded theory methodology and the reality of letting 'data speak for itself'

After the interviews and participant observation, I recorded field notes where I reflected on what I did and saw, and make initial interpretations. I transcribed my interviews and field notes as soon as possible after recording them, using Atlas Ti software. While doing so, I developed familiarity with the interview content and began observing the emergence of themes. I coded the data using the Atlas software where I developed codes based on themes that emerged both out of interpretation and coding. Once all of the interviews were completed, transcribed, and coded, I copied and pasted the quotes according to their respective themes into Microsoft OneNote. I then reread the quotes assigned to each theme, and observed commonalities that developed within and between them. I created sub-codes and relationships specific to questions or issues that arose within and among the codes. This process led me to further observe themes running through the data. It also allowed me to narrow down the specific details within themes, and to formalize my findings.

I began my data analysis with a form of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), involving an analysis of data with no a-priori assumptions, existing research, or theoretical frameworks, instead letting hypotheses appear from the data alone. However, data analysis is now generally understood as a work of constant interpretation, embedded as much in the experiences of the

researcher as the informants (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Interpretation is naturally selective and therefore inherently affects how research is reconstructed and contextualized (Maynard & Purvis, 1994). Data analysis and interpretation thus go hand in hand, and are constant throughout the research process. If one looks at data analysis through the lens of constant interpretation, it would then seem impossible for hypotheses to emerge purely from the data; they are a reflection of the experiences and knowledge of the researcher up to and throughout the research process. Martin Bulmer (1979) has commented that theory is not so much 'discovered' but is part of a two way dialectical interchange between the data and the researcher's conceptualizations. Thus, grounded theory in its purest sense is idealistic and impossible. Any text holds a number of themes and can be interpreted in a number of ways; the researcher thus wields influence over which stories they tell and which they do not (Turner, 1981). A researcher's awareness of the biases and experiences that inform their research, as well as the strengths and limitations of the method is therefore crucial. Self-reflection is an important component of successful grounded theory research. To this end, I spend the remainder of this chapter contemplating my position as a researcher on the production of knowledge in this context.

Reflexivity

As mentioned, this research comes from a feminist perspective working to reclaim and validate the voices and the experiences of women. Encompassed in

this lies attention to method. As Barbara Dubois states, the goal of feminist

research is to "address women's lives and experiences in their own terms, to

create theory grounded in the actual language and experiences of women" (1983,

p. 108). This is exemplified in language. Marjorie Devault (1990) reminds us that

the language we use throughout the qualitative data analysis process reflects the

experiences of a certain dominant group. The language used in the research

process reflects male experiences; its categories of description are often

incongruent with women's lives. This is significant to qualitative data analysis

because how we read, code, and write about interviews is influenced by the

language of a male dominated society. In conducting qualitative data analysis

with women, it is important to recognize the topics that women (interviewees and

researchers) do not have an available language to describe, and attempt to

promote the further development of a language for it. As such, throughout the

research process, I was careful to be attentive of questions or experiences which

women may not have the vocabulary to express (this is of course also amplified

when working with informants whose first language is not English).

Nonetheless, it is also important to recognize that the political ends of

feminist research inevitably impact the data collection and analysis process. Some

have critiqued feminist research because it privileges women's experiences so

much so that it also ignores the impacts of their topics on men (Maynard &

Purvis, 1994). Others have noted that feminist praxis leads to certain data

interpretations which 'fit' with its predetermined objectives (to empower women)

(Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1997). As a woman concerned with female oppression

and feminist motivation, I am emotionally invested in highlighting the voices of other women. In building a theoretical foundation prior to my fieldwork, I read extensively on women's oppression in the kitchen and their simultaneous acts of agency within it. In doing so, I likely entered into my fieldwork looking for a similar relationship. It is important to be cognizant that this perspective influences the questions I ask and how I read peoples' actions. With such awareness, I can potentially limit the effect that it has on my research design.

I am also aware that my experiences as a woman differ greatly from those of the women I study. Specifically, over the course of my fieldwork in Brooks I was extremely aware of the privilege of my position as a white, middle class student researcher. My experiences have been very different than those of my informants and I have had many opportunities that they have not. Nonetheless, "power springs from many sources" (Lammers, 2007, p. 74) and wealth is not often usefully determined solely in a financial sense. I truly feel that these women are in many ways 'richer' than I am, particularly in terms of their social relationships. Their social relationships were so much closer than I had experienced before that I was shocked when first welcomed into their fold. In the two and a half months that I was in Brooks, these women taught me much more than just about what they cooked and why. They taught me about generosity, friendship, shared womanhood, perseverance, and the significance of kinship. I continue to feel humbled by these women's strength and by how much they have taught me.

As mentioned in chapter two, generosity is inseparable from hospitality and sociality; I was always given food, no matter the duration of my visit. With one particularly close friend, Mary, I visited her house usually three times a week, and she would *always* feed me, even when she herself did not have time to eat. This sort of generosity is very unusual for me, as my background comes from a highly individualistic Anglo-Protestant tradition common in Canada. I feel uncomfortable receiving gifts from people such that if someone gives me something I feel that I have to 'repay' them in kind. Therefore, I felt very uncomfortable accepting so much from people who had so little financially. However, I had no choice but to accept their generous food offerings because not doing so would indicate that I rejected their friendship, as Mary put it, she "could no longer call me her sister." So I smiled, ate as much as I could to be polite, and thanked them endlessly for their generosity.

Nonetheless, I still felt that is was important for me to give them something that they could benefit from. This took many forms including advice, favours, and small gifts. While some feel giving assistance to informants will compromise the 'neutrality' of the researcher and therefore distort the research process, or exacerbate power differences, I feel this view simplifies the relationship between the researcher and her informants into one which the informant is totally powerless and the researcher totally powerful (see Lammers, 2007 for discussion). As mentioned, people embody power in varying forms and it is important to recognize the more complex relationship between these varying forms of power. Anthropologists aim to create a relationship of rapport in which

informants feel comfortable in sharing their knowledge and opinions in a safe and open environment. This is done through nurturing trust and respect between researcher and informant. As Ellen Lammers (2007) discusses, this oftentimes includes entering into a relationship of reciprocity. Similarly, Taylor & Bogdan (1998) also note that one of the best ways to gain people's trust is to do favours for them. In Canada, it has generally become the norm to give honoraria to informants to recognize their contribution to the study and to provide a token of gratitude.

With these points in mind, I chose not to provide monetary assistance to my informants; this would regardless be conceived as 'charity' and they would not have taken it. I tried on a couple of occasions to pay or contribute to the grocery bill while shopping with informants for ingredients that were going into a dish we preparing together; however, my offer was always kindly refused. Therefore, I chose instead to provide women with advice, favours and, a small gift at the end of my fieldwork. As a token of gratitude, I provided all women with serving dishes which I personally chose for them based on their unique personal styles. In this way I could demonstrate my appreciation for their participation in a more personal way. In a couple instances, with women whom I developed close friendships with, I also brought them flowers; this was a foreign cultural tradition to them but one that I wanted to impart on them, to show them my gratitude for their friendship.

I also tried to share my own skills and knowledge of 'the Canadian system' with my informants. I shared Canadian recipes with numerous women. In

two instances, I provided informants with informal internet lessons. I helped one woman manage a 'Southern Sudanese' food booth on Canada day; I gave people rides, babysat, took pictures and videotaped events. In one instance, an informant's roommate had gotten into a car accident. The roommate, Sittina, whom I had met and conversed with numerous times had poor English and could not get across to the police officer what had happened and what was expected of her. Similarly, none of her friends had strong enough writing skills to write the police report. In this case, I acted as transcriber and translator between the parties. Sittina was scared and nervous to talk to the police in this situation, having negative experiences with authority figures of the kind in Sudan and in refugee camps. Here, I was able to explain to her (through the more sophisticated translation of my informant) what was going on, what she had to do, and that she was not in trouble with the law.

As a whole, I believe it is generally assumed that I am now linked with the Southern Sudanese community. We have worked together to build my project and I may therefore be called upon in the future to help them with theirs. This is a relationship I am comfortable with and have also perpetuated. This has shown through in two instances where I have been approached to help further projects aimed to benefit Southern Sudanese either in Sudan or in Canada. Two men, met over the course of my fieldwork have asked me to help their fledgling charity organizations, not financially, but with my knowledge and skills relating to the Canadian system. These projects are still in the building stages and I aim to help them with as much advice as I can as their organizations begin to grow.

Effects of my Research on the Community

My research itself also has a few tangible benefits for the Southern Sudanese community and informants. This research ultimately works to bring the Southern Sudanese community closer together with the wider Brooks community.

As I mentioned in the introduction, little is known in Canada, or the west more broadly about Sudanese food. There are very few Sudanese restaurants, no Sudanese cookbooks and this is due to a variety of factors which are beyond the scope of this thesis. Regardless, there is almost nothing to demonstrate to Canadians this integral part of Sudanese culture. Instead, what predominates the Canadian imaginary when it comes to Sudan is war, violence, and poverty. Discrimination and resentment are prevalent in Brooks, particularly towards African males, who were the initial migrants to Brooks and who brought with them negative practices such as crime, substance abuse, and depression (Broadway, 2007 discusses this trend as typical of the migration patterns of meatpacking towns). Clara describes how stereotypes and reality reinforce each other, as Lakeside perpetuates a certain type of worker:

> People, they will look at you sideways, there's more discrimination here. Because of Lakeside, Lakeside kindof brings bad people. People who, they are coming for work, they are kindof coming to fix their problems I guess. And just the environment at Lakeside can be bad, you are yelled at because they want you to be working harder. There's a lot of bullying. And apparently that kindof builds up aggression and builds up anger, and it translates. Because people, men, will live together in houses or apartments and there's stereotypes of them destroying the place, which are not necessarily unfounded. All that stuff, so there's just some bad stereotypes- but also coming from truth, which is built up in Lakeside.

In talking to community leaders and informants alike, there was a very strong interest in my research to counter these images. This ultimately can be done by creating a stronger awareness and more open communication between the Southern Sudanese and wider Brooks Communities.

My research therefore works to further inform Brooks' social service sector both about Sudanese foodways as well as the unique needs of Sudanese refugees in the community. This will lead to a better understanding of Sudanese experience among the service sector and hopefully facilitate subsequent improvements in the quality of those services. Many service agencies as well as local government in Brooks have shown interest in my research. I have committed to providing a report to these organizations upon completion of my thesis. Additionally, I am currently working together with the Food Coalition Society of Brooks to set up Canadian cooking classes for Sudanese women in order for them to integrate Canadian cooking skills into their culinary repertoire. Such classes will provide women with the knowledge on how to provide low cost, healthy and easy meals for themselves and their families. Through the theoretical and applied applications of my research I aim to connect mainstream Canadian culture with the Sudanese refugee community so that they may work together to build the community successfully in Canada.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have outlined the methods utilized in this study. However, I also have shown the unpredictability inherent in fieldwork and thus the flexibility required of researchers when conducting this sort of work. This chapter highlights some of the ethical considerations surrounding the power and politics encompassed in social science research. Ultimately, I dealt with these by focusing on building and maintaining trusting relationships throughout the research process. My goal for my fieldwork was to try to work collaboratively with both informants and service agencies and maintain these relationships as much as possible, and hope that they continue beyond the completion of my program. In doing so, I provided all informants with my phone number in Edmonton and maintained telephone relationships with close friends. I called all participants over the winter holidays, for Christmas or Ramadan depending on whether they were Christian or Muslim, and went back to Brooks in January to involve informants more closely in the research process. I also will be providing both informants and stakeholders with an executive summary of my research upon completion of my thesis. In July I will return to Brooks for a 'visit' and go over these summaries with informants and stakeholders.

Chapter Four: Sudanese Food, Sociality, and Recreation within

Cosmopolitan Praxis

While migration has been an enduring practice throughout history, new forces of globalization and transnationalism have brought about the global mobility of people, technologies, and ideas with increased ease. New ways of moving, seeing and living in the world indicate the dynamic nature of borders, identities and existences which are increasingly manifest in an era of globalization. While globalization has led to increased borrowing and diffusion of culture throughout the world, it has not, as some (Gordon, 1964; Park, 1928) have predicted, broken down the barriers between cultures. Cultures have not homogenized and identities have not been lost; in fact, some have pointed to a resurgence in ethnic and national consciousness as a reaction to the diffusion of western consumer culture brought on by globalization (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994; Jenkins, 1994). Similarly, others have shown how homogenous transnational commodities such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's acquire complicated local interpretations (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1996). While arguments differ regarding the extent to which these new spaces of global interaction determine the significance of varying forms of identification (nationalism, ethnicity, locality etc.), most recognize that they have had notable consequences for spatial relations. As Doreen B. Massey explains: "globalisation is not a single all-embracing movement" but rather "a making of space(s), an active reconfiguration and meeting-up through practices and relations of a multitude of trajectories" (2005, p. 83). As such, it is most useful to think about

social relations as existing among and between intersections in varying geographic scales, from the local to the global (Appadurai, 1996; Friedman, 2004; Hannerz, 1996). In this chapter I argue that forces of globalization and locality, of people's conceptualizations of the new and the old, and of 'modernity' and 'tradition'[8] are deeply entwined and interdependent ideas inherent in the ambiguity of global movements, particularly, in this case, migration. Following scholars such as Richard Wilk (2006), Jon Holtzman (2009) and Tulasi Srinivas (2006), I will examine the ambiguity of global flows through the lens of food: food practices simultaneously act as stable pillars of identity while also variables in flux, constantly changed and adapted as a result of shifting spatial relations in a globalized world.

For Southern Sudanese women in Brooks, food stands as both a marker of their past, rooted in notions of 'tradition' 'ethnicity' and 'home', and as an opportunity of the future, of something to be explored, created, and adapted in conjunction with their fluid, cosmopolitan identification patterns. The maintenance of Sudanese food practices are a way for Southern Sudanese women to feel connected to their homes as these foods invoke memories which situate their identities in time and space. Likewise, Sudanese social relations centered

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[8] I use the term tradition and traditional in this thesis not to evoke an essential notion of foodways, nor a linear progression of development, but solely to denote that there is a difference between how Sudanese cooked in Sudan, in the past, and how they cook presently in Canada. I use this in opposition to modern/modernity which I use to connote a reliance on certain technological advancements, for example microwaves and pre-packaged foods. I do not aim to present judgements as to which is 'more advanced' or 'better'. Similarly, the terms foreign and familiar are used as oppositions based on the experience and perspective of the eater- foods are not essentially foreign or familiar but are perceived as such by eaters based on their relational qualities. While I use these terms here in opposition, the discussion in this chapter problematizes these oppositions highlighting the ways in which they in fact interact in complex, relational ways.

around food serve to summon collective memories and with them, identities which further reinforce the comfort of belonging within a situation otherwise fraught with transition and stress. Nonetheless, these practices also occur alongside changing foodways, for women's perceptions of Sudanese food are reformulated in diasporic communities that entail a greater diversity of social interactions (i.e. with people from other regions of Sudan, Africa, and elsewhere). Interactions with the multicultural community in Brooks, as well as with wider Canadian society have introduced Southern Sudanese women to new ways of cooking, which underscore their cosmopolitan creations of identity and belonging. As such, Southern Sudanese women's relationship to food is an ambivalent one; in simultaneously maintaining Sudanese food traditions and re-creating them in the context of wider social relationships, women negotiate 'tradition' and 'modernity', the 'old' and the 'new', the 'local' and the 'foreign' in ways that highlight their position as subjects within multiple localities. Ultimately, Southern Sudanese food practices show how food is used by refugees to define and maintain symbolic boundaries of identification while simultaneously highlighting the porosity of those boundaries and the ambivalence of belonging.

Foodways, Migration and Transnational Connection in the Literature

As people migrate, they are introduced to new foods and with them, new ways of thinking, seeing and identifying in the world. This process introduces new sets of Others which force migrants to re-contextualize their relationships,

values, and beliefs on which their identities lie. In constructing their shifting

subjectivities, migrants rely on memories to generate temporal and spatial markers

which situate those identities in history and in locality. Because food is a symbol

of identity, it is an important resource for migrants to create belonging in both

their home and host countries. This section critically analyzes how the

anthropological literature has focused the relationship between food, memory, and

belonging among migrants. This literature ultimately highlights the ambivalence

encompassed in migrant foodways.

People use shared food practices and rituals to enact community

affiliations, group loyalties and shared identities (Douglas, 1966; Gabaccia 1998;

Harbottle, 2000). The maintenance of food traditions is a way for migrants to

ground their cultural identities in action, to remember their families back home,

and to keep their relationships to those families alive in a new country. For the

Armenian American women in Avakian's study, food is an important way of

displaying their ethnic identities. This was so much so that these women's

relationship to food was often marked by protectiveness, "a feeling of ownership

laced with a fear that if non-Armenians cook their dishes, their cultural value

would be threatened" (2005, p. 265). Food is a way in which migrants express

inclusion and exclusion from their host country and from other migrants. For the

Bengali migrants in Krishnendu Ray's (2004) study, refraining from meat

consumption defined their identities apart from Americans, while their

inordinately frequent consumption of fish and rice defined their difference from

non-Bengali Indians. These migrants felt that eating Bengali food naturally *made*

them Bengali; non-Bengalis could therefore never enact the exact precision necessary to create *real* Bengali food. Food practices are also utilized in addition to food choices as markers of ethnic difference. It is common for migrant mothers to define their commitment to feeding their family, and putting their family's needs above their own as a marker of ethnic identity; this commitment is seen by women as a way to separate themselves from western mothers who are perceived to 'spend more time on themselves' (Harbottle, 2000; Vallianatos & Raine, 2008).

The reproduction of familiar food practices is often understood as a way for migrants to enact culture in their everyday lives while conjuring up notions of 'home'. Food preferences along with language are said to be inscribed at an early age and are so believed to be relatively constant (Lupton, 1996; Rozin, 1987). Therefore, food and food rituals are bound up in conceptions of familiarity and tradition which people often relate with 'home', 'family' and 'community' (F. Collins, 2008; Choo, 2004; Rabikowska, 2009). These foods are incorporated into people's understandings of familiarity, as things which invoke senses understood as 'known' and which usually stimulate feelings of comfort and belonging for those experiencing them (F. Collins, 2008). As Thomas Hylland Erikson (2002) shows, ethnic identities embody a perceived continuity with the past, which may act in a psychologically reassuring way for individuals in times of transition or stress. For the Polish immigrants in Marta Rabikowska's (2009) study, food rituals reconstitute 'home', which is understood as a state of normalcy to be recovered in the face of the destabilizing conditions of migration. These foods facilitate migrants' desire to work towards a state of completeness and safety of

which the preservation of ethnic identity was encapsulated. Likewise, Malaysian food for Simon Choo (2004) becomes a connection to childhood and homeland in the absence of other cultural competencies such as language.

Food meanings are both defined through and embodied in memory, through the narratives and histories of both individuals and groups. The definition of memory goes beyond the spoken narrative most often conjured when thinking about the act of 'remembering'. Memory can be inscribed in multiple ways often involving sensorial, bodily experiences. Eating is very much an embodied experience; it holds power in the layers of symbolic, psychological, emotional, social, and cultural meaning with which are taken in when we eat. These layers of meaning are central to how we experience and therefore remember food. Food is thus a particularly evocative means for instilling emotional, vivid and enduring memories (Holtzman, 2009; Mankekar, 2002; Stoller, 1995; Sutton, 2001). However, Jon Holtzman (2006; 2009) also reminds us that experiences of sensuality and nostalgia are culturally determined; it is important to recognize the diversity in memory construction cross culturally and not unnecessarily project Western notions of it onto research subjects.

Food is encompassed in ethnic identity not only through its role in the sensory processes of memory, but also socially. Sharing meals or food experiences contribute to feelings of familiarity and belonging associated with particular foods. Therefore, eating traditional foods at parties, events, and barbeques is often considered to exude particular valence in reinforcing migrants' ethnic identities (Harbottle, 2000). Foodways are given particular significance

during celebration because they are encompassed in ritual; the continuity and consistency of food performance within these contexts elevates their symbolic meanings (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1988). Additionally, food holds particular meaning within sociality because cooking and eating together is integral to the creation and maintenance of social relations. Sharing food is an important signifier of relationships, and communities build social bonds through food exchange. As Marcel Mauss's classic (1967) study has shown, food sharing forms powerful linkages between groups based on reciprocity and mutual dependency, but also based on something intangible, but intricately personal (Adapon, 2008 also explicitly links food, reciprocity and giving). Likewise, Counihan (2004; 2005) has shown that commensality is a way to forge social relations as eating together invokes intimacy, equality, and inclusion. Lisa Law's (2001) account of Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong similarly shows how the senses invoked through food connect women to an idea of home, of which sociality, the shared experiences of eating together, is deeply engrained. As Francis Leo Collins reminds us, " we might recognise that familiarity is material and corporeal, but it is also social—it is about the engagement in practices with friends, family or associates that are known that makes them all the more significant parts of the life worlds we inhabit" (2008, p. 156).

Food activities are entrenched in collective community memories and narratives which construct morality for individuals and a community as a whole. Narratives of food are often told in a way that food becomes a metonym for community values and identities which either current members must strive

towards, or are lost in a nostalgic past (Sutton, 2001). For example, Lynn

Harbottle (2000) has shown that British Iranian women's concerns over the

pesticides and additives found in western foods highlight not only migrants' fear

of potentially harmful toxins infiltrating their bodies, but also broader suspicions

about the negative effects of an unhealthy (western) social environment on their

cultural norms, values and identity. This is a reason why many migrants seek to

maintain and protect the foods of their homelands. Migrants often repeat the

recipes of their traditional foods day after day, with the hope that if they keep

doing it, then they will not vanish; through repetition food beliefs and practices

become naturalized, unconscious habits encompassed in migrant's

understandings of their ethnic identities (Ray, 2004). Foodways in this sense are a

part of culture that can be "reified in terms of loss or fears of loss - something that

has to be consciously retained, produced, or disavowed" (Mankekar, 2002, p. 81).

While food memories are reified to varying extents as migrants become

increasingly distanced from their homelands, their memories are also influenced

by discourses of 'culture' and 'authenticity' which permeate their everyday lives

in their country of migration. In regards to food, culture is shaped explicitly

through things such as food products, grocery stores, and cookbooks (Appadurai,

1988; Mankekar, 2002; Roy 2002). These discourses present images of 'home'

which coalesce with migrants' memories, coming together to create ideas about

what home is and what it means to them. As Purnima Mankekar (2002) shows in

her analysis of Indian grocery stores, nostalgia evoked by food does not

necessarily include emotions rooted past experiences; in some cases, migrants'

representations of home are very much imagined. Imagination and memory are related processes allowing travel through time and space; however, they are also not indistinguishable. Migrants' imaginations and their ideas about home are shaped not only through their own past experiences but by images, institutions, commodities and discourses defining it as such in both their home and host countries (Appadurai, 1996).

The relationship between identity, food, and place, therefore, cannot be understood as static; instead it is important to look at how this relationship is disrupted and transformed due to shifting spatial relations (Appadurai, 1996; Massey, 2005). Global flows of commodities, people, and ideas all disrupt group boundaries, creating new levels of difference and/or blurring the distinctions which separate 'us' from 'them' (Heldke, 2008; hooks, 1998; Narayan, 1997). As foods are taken out of their local contexts and reinterpreted on national or global scales, the differences that distinguish them may at once become more defined, or they may become fuzzy.

Identity is a utility of difference and so people's understanding of 'their food' is relational to the cuisines which they define it against (Ray, 2004). Ethnic food "only becomes a self conscious, subjective reality when ethnic boundaries are crossed" (van den Berghe, 1984, 395 see also Erikson, 2002 in regards to ethnic identity more broadly). For example, 'Sudanese cuisine' is not in itself a definable entity; what people eat in Sudan varies across classes, regions and the like. 'Sudanese food' only exists as a relational category, as a contrast to 'American' or 'Other' foods as it becomes apparent in the eyes (and mouths) of

people as they move across space. Richard Wilk's (1999; 2006) influential work on globalization and the creation of national consciousness among local populations in Belize demonstrates how a cuisine, and with it, culture is infused with meaning through its contrast and comparison with foreign commodities. Contrasts between the old and the new, the local and the foreign, emerge with the introduction of global consumer culture. This new transnational arena affects local Belizean's perception of themselves through an increased consciousness of culture, and as a result, it's increasing objectification. Belizeans "learned to perceive and categorize differences as 'national' and 'cultural'. They have learned that foreigners expect them to be Belizean" (1999, p. 247).

Because relational proximities change as people migrate, regional food differences are oftentimes taken up under broader categories. For example, food that may have at one time been considered 'Dinka' or 'Nuer', may be reconstituted as 'Sudanese'. Arjun Appadurai (1988) has shown through a case study of cookbooks in India, that regional or ethnic differences in foods are oftentimes ignored when that food is presented nationally or globally. Likewise, for South Korean international students in Francis Leo Collins' (2008) study, Korean food *as a whole* became synonymous with home and familiarity, subsuming ethnic and classed differences under a national unity in a distanced social context; these foods come to stand for identities which come into existence primarily due to new social circumstances in the host country.

As migrants go about their daily lives in a new country, they negotiate these new social categories, and in doing so they navigate tradition and

modernity, the foreign and the familiar. Here, past foodways are counterpoised

onto new worlds which intersect and intertwine in unique ways; "narratives of

localism play hide-and-seek with claims of a wandering cosmopolitism" (Ray,

2004, p. 157). Many migrants hold ambivalent motivations in this regard; in one

sense they stress the importance of maintaining cultural continuity, and in another,

they are drawn into a world of global interaction in which they are presently a part

(Fischler, 1988; Gvion, 2009; Ray, 2004).   Migrants deal with this ambivalence

in diverse ways embracing aspects of foreign and familiar foods in varying

degrees.

As Jon Holtzman (2009) shows in his analysis of Samburu contemporary

food narratives, the old and the new, the foreign and the familiar are not obviously

distinct- food memories do not follow simple trajectories and may be at once

ambivalent and illogical, yet always interactive. Holtzman calls for research to

"account for memory in ways that acknowledge that the fundamental texture of

memory is not simply about a particular thing but more likely about many-

perhaps unrelated, perhaps conflicting- things" (2009, p. 46). In his analysis,

Holtzman describes how the Samburu's collective memory focuses on two food

narratives: one tells of the transition away from a pastoral diet as a form of

cultural decay while the other conceptualizes it as an embrace of the rewards of

progress. What is critical to Holtzman is the simultaneous opposition and

interplay of these two narratives. These counter-narratives take on specific

meanings *by virtue* of their relationship to each other as competing discourses.

'Modernity' and 'tradition', 'the past' and 'the present' are always salient in the act of eating for the Samburu.

Similarly, scholars have highlighted the ambiguity in how migrants conceptualize the familiar and the foreign (F. Collins, 2008; Duruz, 2005). Collins (2008) shows how "the foreign has become the familiar, [and] the different has been domesticated" for South Korean international students in New Zealand (Scapp and Seitz, 1998, p. 3). The students in Collins' study turn to Starbucks and McDonalds along with Korean fare to 'feel at home' in New Zealand, showing that, through the "normalisation of a global institution in the local environment… Starbucks is a familiar part of South Korean international students' everyday lives" (2008, p. 164). Jean Duruz also demonstrates that the familiar and the foreign are not mutually exclusive because "through imagination, it is possible to link the food from one's `traditional' childhood…with those of a very different, yet similarly `traditional', community in the `present'" (2005, p. 65). In their interactions with 'foreign' foods and peoples, the Australian and British women in Duruz's study enact both familiarity and difference in ways that demonstrate the porosity of the boundaries of belonging. Specifically, in talking about one participant Alice, Duruz shows how interactions with the foreign also conjure up familiarity: as Alice stands in an Indian food shop, images are brought to her mind, not of exotic, Indian food worlds, but instead a shop next to where she used to live as a child and often frequented with her grandparents. The smells of spices and peanuts in the Indian store conjured up memories of her home and experiences with her family there rather than an 'exotic Other'.

        This dialectic between food maintenance and recreation is not unintentional. Tradition and modernity are oftentimes intertwined in ways that are strategically utilized in the kitchen. Subjects may utilize traditional food practices to perform modernity as is described by Wilk (2006), or modern/foreign foods to enact tradition. Liora Gvion's (2009) study of Palestinian food practices in Israel highlight this nicely. The women in Gvion's study incorporate modern, foreign foods and cooking implements strategically such that they are able to present themselves as 'modern' women, but also still express their commitment to Palestian traditional identities. Similarly, Tulasi Srinivas' (2006) study of Indian mothers in India and in Boston highlights how the interaction between cosmopolitan and traditional food practices allow women to perform the role of the 'good Indian mother' while also participating in seemingly conflicting fast-paced employment environments. While the foodways of these women were fuelled by an anxiety of loss of their ethnic Indianness in the wake of their decreased time available for cooking, women utilized rapid 'heat and eat' varieties of Indian prepared foods to continue to prepare a 'home cooked Indian meal' for their families. Here, "packaged food becomes -in its familiarity and its distance- a mediating model for these cosmopolitan families and is, simultaneously seen as of a place and placeless" (Srinivas, 2006, p. 194). In utilizing these foods, cosmopolitan Indian women are simultaneously able to engage in employment, perform acceptable standards to femininity, and claim their ethnic identities for themselves and their families.

By problematizing the direct connection between food and the maintenance of ethnic identities, the majority of work on ethnicity, food, and identity therefore highlights the ambiguity of migrant belonging. Nostalgia cannot be understood as a simple, idealized longing for the past but often entails contradictory emotions surrounding belonging and return (Mankekar, 2002; Rabikowska, 2009). While some scholars define nostalgia as a simple desire to return to one's homeland (Naficy, 1993), many have problematized this idea. For example, the migrants in Rabikowska's (2009) study, despite their idealization of home as a place of safety, completeness, and normalcy, still do not choose to return to it. The ambiguity of these (any many other) migrants' positions thus lies in the sense of belonging attached to 'home' which is simultaneously separated from a real desire to *belong* to that home. Susan Stewart (1984) therefore aptly defines nostalgia as the "gap between resemblance and identity... nostalgia is enamored of distance, not of the referent itself" (as cited in Mankekar, 2002, p. 85). This has been discussed through the lens of food. For example, as one Iranian woman in Harbottle's (2000) study explained how she preferred the taste of her own Iranian cooking to her mother's in Iran, she confessed that she could therefore not consider returning to Iran to live permanently.

Throughout this section, I have demonstrated a couple of themes which emerge from literature on migrant foodways and identity. Firstly, that foodways are a way for migrants to enact group identity; familiar foodways ultimately conjure memories which instil a sense of comfort and familiarity with food. However, I have also shown how migrant foodways showcase the ambivalence

inherent in identification. Group boundaries are problematized as shifting geographic scales alter the significance and meanings contained in those boundaries; the global commodification of culture has defined a reflexive consciousness of culture for some, while *becoming* culture, or the familiar for others. Nonetheless, in choosing what to eat and how to eat it, migrants can be seen as active subjects negotiating constantly shifting boundaries of belonging. In analyzing migrant foodways, processes of boundary breaking, mixing and hybridization become apparent as "all cultural groups are `impure' and all cultural boundaries are potentially `porous'. And, in a similar fashion…all cuisines are `hybrid' and involved in `messy boundary crossing' rather than being `fixed' or unproblematically `authentic'" (Duruz, 2005, p. 67). The remainder of this chapter will investigate these themes among Southern Sudanese women in Brooks. First, I demonstrate how memory connects women spatially and temporally to notions of the familiar, rooted in a Sudan. Second, I show how this familiarity is facilitated through social interaction and the collective memories of the wider Southern Sudanese community. I thirdly demonstrate how Sudanese food is simultaneously recreated in the diaspora. Lastly, I investigate how women's conceptions of Sudanese food are influenced by transnational foodways which are developed as a result of their complex migration histories and the multicultural context of Brooks. Throughout the chapter I will show how Southern Sudanese women use food to create belonging and identity within multiple geographic spaces.

Space, Place and Hungering for Home

Southern Sudanese women maintain a concrete connection to their
Southern Sudanese identity through their foodways. Sudanese food practices
incite comfort and familiarity within daily actions as they invoke food memories
which connect women with their homes and their families through time and space.
However, the conflict permeating Sudanese history and the nature of women's
forced migration also frame the meanings women attribute to 'food from home'
and the comfort that home in fact evokes. Nonetheless, women demonstrate
agency by not defining their homes or their histories through this conflict, instead
choosing to highlight the beauty of their Southern Sudanese identities which are
celebrated through food.

As Southern Sudanese women struggle with the transitions and
adjustments inherent in forced migration and resettlement, cooking and eating
Sudanese food is a way in which they can feel grounded. Women perform
Sudanese foodways by shopping at ethnic grocery stores (there is a Sudanese
store in Brooks), cooking with ingredients they're used to (women were surprised
and impressed that they were able to find almost all the foods necessary for
cooking their dishes in Canada), utilizing familiar cooking instruments (of note is
the 'mafraga', a longish wooden stick with a crescent shaped base used for
'blending' foods), and sharing foods with their friends and families. Food
traditions are a concrete connection to their historic cultural identity which can be
enacted daily, and are thus a way for women to situate themselves as Sudanese
within their daily lives; food is a part of themselves that they feel they can keep in

order to connect them to their past, and the place they came from. Similar to the women in Gvion's study, "in exile, food turns into a means through which women make up for the feeling of loss of homeland and into a direct, authentic, and uncomplicated channel to an original world" (2009, p. 395). For Avakian and the other Armenian American woman in her study, "gathering around the kitchen to cook with mothers and grandmothers or around the table to eat with relatives provided not only stories, but a clarity about what it meant to be Armenian" (2005, p. 265). Likewise, food and identity are very much intertwined for Aloya who understands herself though her food and the connections it provides her to her history and her family: "Sudanese food, it means me. I see myself in my food. The smells, it reminds me of back home, when my mom and my grandma were cooking. There are lots of memories with it".

Cooking and eating Sudanese food invokes past memories and experiences with the desire and the goal of maintaining past cultural values and traditions within a context of transition and change, they "keeps things alive" as Aloya describes it. While in the process of cooking and eating in their homes, Southern Sudanese women conjure up notions of their pasts; contemporary food meanings are grounded in and understood through their past experiences. Particular foods conjure memories which link women to a specific time, place, person, or meal in history (Sutton, 2001). For Sara, a large part of the significance of Sudanese food is its link to memories that she holds of her past in Sudan and her experiences with her family there:

I grew up with it and it has, I guess historical connection to it, like you know, when you grow up you remember when, back when I used to fight with my brother over which piece of meat. We traded meat, like you'll give your piece to your brother and then later on in supper they will give theirs to you, that sort of thing. So it's just, nostalgia I guess, for the long, long years of being at home.

Food is also a way for Southern Sudanese women to connect and define themselves spatiality with Sudan. As Ray explains, "food locates us. Discussions about place steer us homeward, and home inevitably leads to the hearth- the focus of the household…Food is particularly potent as a place making practice because it links the land to the hearth and the hearth to the heart through the mediation of produce" (2004, p. 131-132). This connection was most obvious when I spoke to two Dinka women, Athina and Linda, whom upon first introducing themselves, defined themselves as 'Nilotic'[9] which to them meant that they raised (and ate) cattle, ate fish and drank milk. In this sense, particular foods become synonymous with home and define these women's ethnic identities.[10]

While not all foods (in particular, tastes) are able to be replicated in the diaspora, many can, because the global flow of food products has made available almost all ingredients necessary for creating Sudanese dishes in Brooks. Food experiences in the diaspora can therefore evoke memories which allow subjects to cross geographic boundaries, even if only momentarily. Food memories connect

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[9] The term Nilotic generally refers to a conglomerate of ethnic groups across Southern Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and northern Tanzania which speak Nilotic languages. The term is also used to denote ethnic categories under which varying tribal groups are subsumed (Nilotic people include the Dinka, Nuer, and the Shilluk) (R. Collins, 2008).

[10] The milk and beef described by these women are very specific varieties which are not found in Canada. These products' particular tastes are attributed to the age of the cattle and the processes the food undergoes after slaughter or milking: these women thought cattle were slaughtered too young in Canada and so tasted differently; similarly, milk in Sudan is 'pure' free from chemicals and preservatives added in pasteurizing so that it's "not the same thing" as milk in Canada.

Southern Sudanese women to their families and their homes abroad by invoking

shared experiences that transcend the distance between them. As Amna describes,

finding Sudanese food in the grocery store can instantly transport her back to

Sudan: "Sometimes we go outside, like for shopping, and we're just looking for

something from a long time ago and we can't find it. And suddenly you just get it

there; you find it in some place. Oh my God! How you feel! Oh my God! Like

you are really back home!" David Sutton contends that "there is an imagined

community implied in the act of eating food 'from home' while in exile, in the

embodied knowledge that others are eating the same food" (2001, p. 84). In

engaging with the familiarity of Sudanese food, women feel connected to their

homes, with the conviction that their kin are doing the same things in Sudan.

Food also literally connects families transnationally as women call their

mothers in Sudan or abroad to gain advice on foodways or to clarify the specifics

of a recipe. Food also travels across countries as families send their relatives food

from Sudan to Canada via mail or through common acquaintances travelling in

between the two countries. Of note are three implements in particular that are

difficult to find in Canada but are nonetheless important to the creation of

Sudanese food: the bicarbonate substances, 'kombo', 'atrun' and the cooking

stick, the mafraga, described earlier. Literal transnational connections are thus

mediated through food, enabling women in the diaspora to cook their local dishes

and maintain connections to their families abroad.

Refugees' meanings and memories around home hold unique

characteristics due to the forced nature of their migration (Malkki, 1995). While

some may assume that refugees' associations with home will be negative based on memories of trauma and upheaval, this view projects an essentialized, pathologized identity onto refugees in which trauma is an axis around which all else centers; by focusing on trauma, researchers takes away refugees' agency to define themselves apart from the negative experiences and memories of their pasts (Gemignani, 2011; Marlowe, 2010; Watters, 2001). Marco Gemignani's (2011) study of refugees from the former Yugoslavia shows how this group can at once neglect the past as isolated from their current identities as well as embrace it. Refugees bracketed their previous traumatic memories, not to protect themselves from them, but to isolate them, in order to embrace "future-oriented politics of memory" (Gemignani, 2011, p. 142). Additionally, refugees embraced positive memories of their homes, of 'the good life they once enjoyed', which provided psychological spaces of safety and comfort.

Southern Sudanese women exhibit similar ambivalence when discussing their memories of home. Experiences of war and hunger frame their ideas about food and its relationship to home; however, these are not the memories that women choose to focus on, or what define their identities as Southern Sudanese. The separation of families, destruction of familiar spaces, and the repression of identity all characterize women's associations with Sudan. For almost all Southern Sudanese in this study, experiences of hunger or food insecurity also frame the memories they hold of their home countries. Sara discusses how previous food insecurity shaped her initial impressions of eating in Canada:

> When the war erupted, everybody just took off and there was starvation, there was no food. And the things that you're used to, you won't get it. And if you can get it, it's very expensive. There was no money to get them. So you will settle for things, just whatever you can afford … It just, it changed a lot. And then, you're leaving your country and leaving all these things behind and now you're in a new city where things are like, whoa! We have all this, everything you need. So it changes *a lot*. So you feel like you have to eat all the time. You want to eat because you're hungry, but then you want to eat because you want to taste everything and it's available, it's there, because you can right?

Similar narratives of hunger infuse much of the literature on the Southern Sudanese diaspora experience (Coker, 2004; Goodman, 2004; Tempany, 2009).

Hasia Diner argues that it is important to consider hunger and food insecurity as a significant part of many peoples' migration experience because "as hungry people found food within their reach, they partook of it in ways which resonated with their earlier deprivations. How they remembered those hungers allows us to see how they had once lived them, and how they then understood themselves in their new home without them" (2001, p. 220–21). For some, such as the Irish immigrants in Diner's historical study, negative food memories end up defining migrants' ideas about what 'food from home' means. Recurrent famines and an almost complete reliance on potatoes (a food which was imposed on them) left too many painful memories for these migrants to positively remember and celebrate food. Diner argues that the Irish migrants in the United States therefore failed to develop a positive food culture; instead hunger and alcohol came to be what defined Irish collective identity.

Like other Sudanese in the literature (Goodman, 2004; Tankink & Richters, 2007), women in this study maintain high levels of resiliency, deferring their focus from negative memories of home to positive ones. Despite the

traumatic experiences that occupy Sudanese women's minds, women overwhelmingly celebrated their cultural identities, as is shown through their food narratives. None of the women in the study chose to center their understandings of Sudanese food on war and insecurity; when asked about the meanings of food for them, Southern Sudanese women never brought up these negative associations. Instead, all the women in Brooks focused on positive food memories and demonstrated a strong affection for Sudanese food; celebrating the tastes of their homeland was understood as indicative of their love for their country. Ajak describes the passion she feels for Sudanese food: "it tastes good, and I like it. I love it so much. Especially that kombo [a specific Sudanese dish], I love it so much". These emotions are rooted in the familiarity and comfort of Sudanese food as Sara describes: "For me, because I grew up in Sudan, I still have that feeling for the taste of my Sudanese food. Like when I eat, for example, Canadian food or any other food, you still feel like, it's not food". Like Gemignani (2011) I argue that women demonstrate agency by isolating their negative food memories from these current food meanings.

Throughout this section I have demonstrated how food embodies 'Sudanessness' for women in Brooks by evoking familiarity which locates Southern Sudanese women's cultural identity within a specific time and place. While these memories are also entwined in experiences of loss and hunger, women demonstrate agency by celebrating positive memories of cooking and eating in Sudan, memories which they choose to define themselves through. The following section will explore how these notions are bolstered through sociality as

women eat and cook together. Nonetheless, food narratives surrounding sociality also highlight the ways in which selected memories become representative of past community values and identities, which are seen as increasingly lost in a hectic, modern world.

Sociality and Collective Memory

Sharing Sudanese food is closely connected to socialization in the diaspora, bringing people together to share a reminder of their collective Southern Sudanese identity. Food in itself is a reason and an excuse to bring together friends and kin within their daily lives. When women cook a large feast of Sudanese dishes (usually on weekends for their families to eat during the week), they will often call their friends over to their house to eat with them. Shared meals are thus a form of social connection, affirming social bonds and a common cultural language (Counihan, 2004; 2005; Mauss, 1967). The connection of food with sociality goes back to Sudanese social norms and values surrounding eating, as Amna explains:

> You have to [share food] you know. For us, for our people's beliefs, food, they say that if you are in heaven and there are no people, it is hell still. So you need the people. You know sometime, you wake up in the morning and you don't have any appetite, if somebody comes to you and you just sit, you will eat! Talk like this, chat, and after that you feel like you want to eat.

Southern Sudanese community events are also an important way for women to engage in familiar smells, tastes, and activities which capture their Southern Sudanese identity. There are numerous events celebrated by the

community in Brooks including weddings and births, but most often people

congregate around 'prayer parties'. Prayer parties are Christian gatherings where

people come together to mourn the passing of a loved one in Sudan and pray for

their soul to reach heaven. Events are extremely common, particularly during the

summer months, and are a consistent way for the Southern Sudanese community

to come together to celebrate their cultural identity within the diaspora. Events

function to promote group solidarity and facilitate people's connection to their

shared history. Food is always an important component of these celebrations.

Clara describes how gatherings provide migrants an opportunity to step out of the

instability of their lives in Canada and connect to their culture:

> Clara. People are being exposed to different difficulties and challenges: first the challenges from where they come from and what they flee from, and now the challenges of adapting to this society. This kind of life where you have to be out to work, even if you don't feel good that day, you still have to go (laughs)…. and then, when there's a society gathering, whether it's a wedding, whatever, that's the only chance that people go and escape from all these difficulties. You kindof escape from the real life that you are living here and try to go back to your community or your way of living back home, before the war and those good times. You know, even if we don't know about them, but you try to, because you kind of, hmm, maybe when I was 2 or 3 years old, I remember people come to my house and people dance.
>
> Merin. and eat food.
>
> Clara. Yeah! And eat food! I remember one time… So people kindof have that in them, those, you know, good times. They have that knowledge, they have memories, and when people gather and then elder people talk about them again, it kind of reminds you, and it kind of increases what you have, and even makes you more connected to the rest of your family back home. And you feel like, ok, maybe that's not a bad idea, to go back sometime and feel reconnected again. So food is a big part of memories and kindof, just taking you away from the harsh realities of life in Canada. And you just have that one day off and do something great, and you are good, and it gives you more energy again to say ok, maybe I'm not going to perish here, let me just try my best.

In his ethnography of food and memory, David Sutton (2001) discusses how food memories evoke shared identities which connect members of a society through history. Memories reproduce collective identities as they "place an individual in collective life, where any individual memory is in fact a memory of the whole society" (Sutton, 2001, p. 61). Current food practices are encompassed in a community's history through members' shared memories of rituals and their transformation and/or stability through time. As Clara describes above, collective memories bolster Southern Sudanese women's individual memories, serving to situate them within not only personal histories but also the histories of 'a people'. These histories are a way for women to cement community bonds based on positive narratives of Sudan which evoke safety, comfort and stability within shared experiences of uprooting, transition and adjustment. A deeper analysis of the multidimensional nature of Southern Sudanese women's memories and relationship to their homeland will be explored in the following sections.

Clara's narrative also illustrates how sociality and collective identity are particularly important in the diaspora where lifestyle changes can be felt to be particularly harsh. Here, commensality is an important way to not only feel comfort in belonging to a community but also to feel connected to traditional values. Amna explains this well:

> My house is full. Like for our, we have our community. We are the [ethnic group] people, we have many people here. On all the weekends, like every weekend, they have to come to eat supper here. Yes, everybody comes and they just eat. You know here, sometimes the life, you can feel it's a little bit hard. And the way people are living, everybody's running, no time even to visit, no time to do anything. So the weekend time is the best time, you can share with the people, the life. You can't eat by yourself. Even some time you

cook everything in your fridge, but when you are alone you can't eat. But when there are a lot of people you can eat and you can talk, even then you feel better. That is the way in back home. That is what the people think, that you have to share the food. They say that the food for 1 person, 2 people can eat. For 3, 4 people can eat. That is the way they are living. The food is for everybody. You can't say this one is just for me, this one is not enough. You have to believe, the small thing will be big for everybody, and you can share.

Eating together is therefore a way for Clara and Amna to forget about the stresses of life in Canada and to reconnect with past memories and values. Sudanese food, "with its familiar taste, and associated symbolic value, is apparently vital, not only to nourish the body, but to satisfy the psyche and to strengthen the social body" (Harbottle, 2000, p. 45). However, I will demonstrate in the subsequent section that women feel that sociality is also threatened in Canada; women's narratives of their decreased ability to cook and eat together showcase their anxieties over western lifestyles which put less value on this practice.

Cooking, Sociality and Loss

Elizabeth Marie Coker (2004) argues that how Sudanese refugees understand the social and physical is integrally connected such that food will not 'work properly in the body' if one's social environment is not healthy. This perception is echoed by the narratives of Amna in the previous section, describing the connection between appetite and sociality. And this is influenced by migration. For the informants (refugees living in Egypt) in Coker's study, this connection was related to the loss of loved ones:

I have come here . . . from a very far place. Now, with the absence of my relatives, how can I be happy? How can one's mood be okay? Now, even if I

eat the food, I can eat until I am satisfied but at the end I will begin to think: where is this brother/sister of mine living now? And where are the rest? In this way, the food that you have eaten will not work in your body. (2004, p. 23)

Food narratives are also used to discuss the loss of values and traditions brought about by migration. Similar to the British Iranian women in Harbottle's (2000) study, Coker has also demonstrated how the complaints of these refugees over 'chemically-tainted food and water' were underscored by anxieties over the "loss of place, of home…and the subsequent loss of relatives and social stability" (2004, p. 23). Because social relations and food are so integrally connected in this sense, disruptions in one area will lead to disruptions in the other.

The food narratives of Southern Sudanese women in Brooks similarly center around anxieties relating to social relations, particularly the pressures on time, space, and economics in Canada which hinder people's ability to gather together. In particular, the idea of loss (of sociality, and the values, and traditions encompassed in it) reverberates in Sudanese discussions of cooking in Brooks. This is exemplified in women's discussions of kitchen space and the limits Canadian kitchens placed on their ability to cook with and for groups. The small kitchen space afforded to women in Canada hinders their ability to cook together, as they often would in Sudan, and also to cook multiple dishes to host large groups in their homes:

> You know the problem here: the stove. It is the one. You need to cook like different, 5 or 6 things. So they will tell you just to take your food to your home [and cook it]. But in back home, they're not cooking on the stove. They use the one with the coal, the big one, everybody uses it. Like 6 or 7 in one place. In one place, everybody cooks at same time. It is easier, but here it is hard. You can cook, and sometimes you know the stove just shuts down, cuz like of all the different food at the same time. They cook and it's too much for

your electricity, so it shuts down. Instead of that, they tell you just to take [your food] and go to your place- You make it. [Amna]

While women still cook together in Brooks, it is only for special occasions, as opposed to weekly, or even daily in Sudan. I will show that narratives such as that of Amna above are used to lament the Southern Sudanese community's decreased ability to congregate around food, which is intimately connected to their perceived loss of values and traditions encompassed in being Southern Sudanese. These narratives represent nostalgia for a both real and imagined time and community where women's social needs were cared for through food.

Similar to many women cross-culturally (Abarca, 2006; Counihan, 2005), cooking together provides Southern Sudanese women with social support and interaction. As women cook together they share not only recipes and cooking tips, but also values, concerns, and ultimately, themselves. Sara explains the social function of cooking together in the context of funerals and births: "people go and spend days at somebody's house and when they are there they cook together, they wash the dishes, they clean up, so those kinds of activities just get you more closer, so you feel not stressed right." Likewise, eating is a very communal activity, a space where families socialize, provide social support and resolve conflicts. Naomi explains:

> When we're done eating, then we sit around and we just talk… if somebody who shows up, you can see something happened, this week bad, or yesterday. They just issue out to this and just fix it right away… we share lunch, all of us, and when we're done eating- 'yesterday this happened, like this, me and my husband' or 'me and my daughter'. It's supposed to be solved, this, this, this, this at that time. There is lunch time, it is always making us start to fix the problems.

However, small kitchens limit women's ability to congregate around these activities. Similarly, small kitchens hinder women's capacity to cook multiple dishes at a time or, in doing so, make the entire house smell like food, which is a Sudanese social faux-pas. As such, traditional forms of socialization are strained in Brooks. The social support provided when cooking and eating together is lessened when women cannot cook together due to small cooking spaces or cannot hold large gatherings at their house.

These challenges are mediated in various ways, by barbequing in the summer months or cooking in a separate apartment (either a kitchen of a friend, or in one woman's case, a vacant apartment in the same apartment complex). However, for many, the practice has shifted to one in which people increasingly eat alone and women cook individually in their houses:

> Now I think what happened is if you have a function and you need some help we just ask ladies, you know, whoever wants to cook what and I just drop it at their house, they cook it and they bring it. Or some people say, hey I'm working I can't come and I will do this for you. I can cook tomorrow night and I'll drop it over in the morning, that sort of thing. So it's not really, it's still not getting together, it's just everybody doing the same thing in their own place. [Sara]

In this context, food narratives of loss become a metonym for the deterioration of social relations brought about by migration. In discussing their inability to cook and eat together, women highlight their discomforts with western values and traditions (Harbottle, 2000; Sutton, 2001). In comparing sociality and eating in Sudan and Canada, Amna expresses her discomfort in eating alone:

> [In Sudan] you can't say like, 'I just eat'. Like I see here, the first time I was surprised. I said what happened? Sometimes some people, they are eating and they never tell you like, 'come have a seat'- even if I don't want to eat- but that

is the way I learned back home. Yeah you don't want to eat but still, they tell you, 'you have to eat'. But here, it's little bit different (laughs). That was a surprise the first time I came.

These tensions highlight broader social issues of isolation and adjustment bound up in the migration process. As Amna explains, the busyness of life in Canada prohibits social eating: "the life here, it doesn't give you time to share [food]. No time to share. Sometimes you can't, you're too busy." Sara's discussion exemplifies concerns over social isolation echoed by the majority of the women in the study:

Women are, are very isolated. Because, of the environment and the work situation, and the children. So you don't see anything that connects them together. So people are in their houses most of the time, they don't go out that much. And if they go out it has to be to one of those functions. And their connection with the outside world is always by the phone. And because of that, so many things are being neglected. Like, women are on the phone all the time. They don't find that, you are so far away, cuz that's what they feel comfortable. …For me, there are a lot of deeper issues, when I think about them. Because first of all, when you are that isolated, every now and then you should be able to get out and talk to somebody right? And like, you know, getting a support system within your culture or within your community, people who can really know you and you can actually trust to talk about your things that you want to let out. But when you have issues as Sudanese women or other groups, you have no way of letting it out. Like the stress for example, when they are here, that's it, you don't get help, you just sit with it, talk to your friend who might not really support you, they might judge you, or they might say something negative and that was bad towards this. You know what I mean? So that context I think it's unhealthy. And when I look back in Sudan, it's totally different, the way, the environment is so different because all the houses are open, like you walk by, you see a neighbour you say hi, you have coffee with them, people could drop in and out anytime, we go and do our hair in a group and when you are there you talk about whatever, without criticizing or judging because you can relate to each other right? …. Whereas here, the houses are split apart, the houses are closed. You hardly see anybody unless you really go out or look out the window.

As this section has shown, talking about food can be a way for Southern Sudanese women to express concerns of broader issues of sociality, shifting social

values, and isolation that are increasing apparent in this community since migration. Nonetheless, women endure these challenges as a part of adjusting to new lifeways in Canada. Despite their decreased frequency and accessibility, cooking and eating together still very much encompasses Southern Sudanese cultural values and identity.

Recreation and Meaning

While women are connected to their home in Sudan both spatially and temporally through the maintenance of Sudanese food practices, their understandings about Sudanese food are also transformed in the diaspora as women seek to expand and develop their food knowledge. Southern Sudanese women in Brooks all seek to develop their knowledge about Sudanese food in the diaspora as forced migration has limited their food learning in Sudan, though to varying degrees. Interactions with women of diverse Sudanese origins broaden women's knowledge about ethnic and regional varieties in Sudanese dishes ultimately contributing to broader understandings of what Sudanese food is. As such, ambivalent discourses surrounding Sudanese food meanings are enacted by Southern Sudanese women in Brooks as Sudanese food is simultaneously attributed to cultural maintenance while also reconfigured and recreated as a result of their disjointed memories from home. Food is a part of culture which is not only:

> …the terrain through which the individual speaks as a member of the
> contemporary national collectivity, but … is also a mediation of history, the

site through which the past returns and is remembered, however, fragmented, imperfect or disavowed. Through that remembering, that decomposition, new forms of subjectivity and community are thought and signified. (Lowe, 1996, p. x)

Liisa Malkki has argued that the refugee holds a liminal position in regards to 'the national and cosmological order of things'. Refugees confront neat categories of identification as "a symptom of its own fragility and endangerment" (1995, p. 12). Refugees, as

…transitional beings are particularly polluting, since they are neither one thing nor another; or may be both; or neither here nor there; or may even be nowhere (in terms of any recognized cultural typography), and are at the very least 'betwixt and between' all the recognized fixed points in the space-time of cultural classification. (Turner, 1967, p. 97, as cited in Malkki, 1995, p. 7)

Malkki nonetheless warns against universalizing refugees as 'bare humanity' as somehow lost or separate from culture. Refugees 'categorize back', subverting models of identification and creating ones out of their own unique circumstances.

And Southern Sudanese refugees are no exception to this evaluation. While, as I have shown, women certainly garner powerful meaning from their 'Southern Sudaneseness', it would be amiss to say that their histories of conflict and transition have not had a bearing on how they understand themselves and their place in the world. Some women left Sudan at a relatively young age such that they hold few memories of their homes. Clara explains her memories:

Like for our generation now, we are not pure Sudanese, just because there has been a war in my country for a long time, past a generation and a half. And our generation was like, the generation that didn't see a lot in my culture- Like when war broke out, I was like, about 3, that's 1983. I never saw much of Sudan actually. I can remember a little bit but not that much because if you just didn't go out into the public. You are in your house and you don't know anything in the public, like you didn't go to school to Sudan, you didn't…

For those who did leave Sudan later in their adolescence, few have had opportunities to return due to the prolonged conflict there (though this has lessened recently), and to current economic circumstances. As mentioned, already low socioeconomic conditions of migrants (Mulder & Korenic, 2005) are exacerbated among refugees who come to Canada with interruptions in education, and work experience, a lack of initial economic resources, federal government debt, and remissions obligations to relatives back home (DFAIT, 2009; Fanjoy et al., 2006; Leng 2006). Therefore, many Southern Sudanese women's ability to formulate lasting memories from home and update their frames of reference has been limited.

Likewise, war has ravaged Sudan such that the places and people which occupy women's memories do not likely exist in the same forms and spaces. Gemignani talks about this as a disconnect, both symbolically and literally: "from a physical and relational perspective, the place they used to call 'home' has deeply changed and is now destined to exist only in memories" (2011, p. 132-133). Parts of most women's families no longer live in the homes they grew up, having fled to the cities of Sudan or abroad. This relocation affects how women relate themselves to their country, their memories there, and their families. Clara explains:

> People go different ways. Then they end up in different borders and from this, break up, and break up, and break up. And people will now, wherever you go, your parents they go and learn a different culture. You came here and learned a different culture. And we kind of, need to think, what did we do? Yeah, ok, we do this, we do this, [this is] Sudanese, ok.

As many women's literal connections to home are limited, they therefore rely on fragmented memories often facilitated through the collective memories, images, objects and discourses circulating throughout the wider Sudanese community in Brooks. As discussed in the previous section, cooking and eating together helps women cultivate their histories and the histories of 'their people'.

Women are very much aware that Sudan has changed since they emigrated. According to recent United Nations statistics (2009), approximately 5-6 million Sudanese have been displaced internally. Much of these internal migrants have congregated in the cities such that close to 43% of people in Sudan live in urban settings (UNSD, 2011). Crofts (2010) has documented the ways in which these changing social conditions affect food in Sudan. Perpetual civil war has left a large number of female headed households in Sudan. In order to support their families, women turn to what they know, food, and now sell their local dishes at street venders in Sudan's capital, Khartoum. Urban Sudanese eat these diverse cultural dishes and learn about the diversity of Sudanese food. Crofts sees a potential for these foods to then be adopted and adapted in different local contexts throughout Sudan.

Food changes such as these make their way to the diaspora through the constant flow of people coming to Canada from Sudan. These changes become incorporated into Sudanese diasporic food as women share food knowledge in their homes and in public. Naya describes the process of how these foods make their way to the diaspora:

We learn, every year, they invent new foods back home, and those that come presently, they have that so every time they have a party, they will make it and people will be like hmm, new kind of food? So who cook it? And people go around, who cook this? And they will say so and so, ok, they will start booking appointment with her, can we come to your place? So it's like learning things as you stay… people are borrowing from different people. Like right now that there is peace in Sudan, there's a lot of Chinese coming over, there's a lot of, you know different kind of the world, they are coming over to Sudan to work, like some people they just, I don't know, there's a lot of people anyway coming. And people learning new things every time. And they add that to Sudanese kind of food, so it's not pure Sudanese

Women develop their Sudanese food knowledge in various ways though mostly through their relationships with other Sudanese in Brooks. This often occurs when women cook together for Sudanese events. While communal cooking does not happen on a daily or weekly basis, as in Sudan, women still congregate in the diaspora where groups of 4 or 5 women cook for events. Customs dictate that women cook a dish to bring to the event which the group then collectively eats, and it is during this time that more experienced women teach others how to make various Sudanese dishes. These groups are usually made up of relatives; however, the notion of kinships is broad in this context due to the lack of close kin and the frequency of interethnic marriages in the diaspora.[11]

Food learning also occurs outside of kin groups as women from all over Sudan bring their local dishes to events. Women are expected to cook foods that are particular to their ethnic group and which they are (expected to be)

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[11] As a whole, Sudanese largely structure their relationships with others based on kinship. However, kinship is transformed due to war and subsequent migration such that families are separated from much of their close kin in the diaspora. Shifting household structures and familial relationship necessitates the extension of kinship boundaries, oftentimes drawing in distantly related family or friends into their inner circles (Abusharaf, 2002; Beswick, 2001b; Edward, 2007; Holtzman, 2007)

particularly skilled at cooking. Foods explicate social relatedness and social

distance as people can tell where a woman is from based on the food she brings.

Sudanese in the diaspora have no reservations about consuming a variety of

regional Sudanese dishes. Sharing the details of regional dishes are frequent

conversations between women at events. As mentioned, women from a variety of

ethnic groups attend these events, and so women learn about foods from all over

Sudan, not just the foods that they would have grown up with. Many women talk

about trying some Sudanese dishes for the first time in Canada.

While Sudanese food is a marker of culture, this culture is (to varying

extents) both imagined and recreated in the diaspora. Within this context, culture

exists less as a set of reified ideas and practices which people blindly reproduce

and more as a set of social processes which are imagined, adopted, borrowed and

recreated (Appadurai, 1996). Southern Sudanese women's knowledge of

Sudanese food is broadened in the diaspora; here, Sudanese food at a whole

becomes a marker of group identity as it is entwined in sociality and

commensality so integral to Sudanese social custom. I suggest that through this

process, women relate foods that they would not have necessarily been exposed to

in Sudan with home and the comfort and belonging encapsulated in being

Southern Sudanese.

Transnational Foodways, Cosmopolitanism and Belonging

As discussed in the previous section, women's connections to Sudan are, at times, tenuous. The violent nature of Southern Sudanese women's homelands and the forced nature of their migration create conflicting emotions of the belonging encapsulated in home. For example, safety is an important caveat for how women defined home, yet Sudan has not been able to provide them this in the past. Ajak's definition of home exemplifies this disjuncture: "The earth and everything in it is for the Lord. So yeah, anywhere can be your home, except just if there's no peace there, no happiness, no. But if there's peace and happiness and joy and *love*, that can be your home. You will be safe there" (original emphasis). Also, some women have lived in Canada for a number of years and find themselves disconnected from some Sudanese customs and worldviews. Tensions between conflicting Sudanese and Canadian worldviews and traditions are highlighted in Sara's narrative of returning to Sudan for a visit:

> When I went back, I was there in December. Because I was away from Sudan for 10 years, I was so hard for me to eat together [out of the same serving platter, the *sinea*] with everybody because I'm used to my own, to have my food in my plate. So I would just take two or three. When I saw everyone mixing their soups and everything I was like stop, I stop eating (laughs). I was out of Sudan for 10 years, so there is a great difference. I was just like no.

This narrative corresponds with the conflicted nature of Sara and many other women's existences to the extent that she revealed a sense of belonging to nowhere:

> I cannot call myself Canadian, I don't know why. It's so, like, I grew up in Sudan, I left Sudan when I was 27 or 28 so I don't have any attachments to Canadian culture or Canadian, you know, growing up in this culture, like I have nothing to say this is what I used to be, like I don't have any history, I

don't have any things to say I belong here. It's to me just a place that is safe, a place that I can take opportunities and things like that. But it's never, I dunno. It's so hard to answer that kind of question because I am Sudanese, yet I don't feel like a Sudanese. Like so many things have changed about me as a person, that is not Sudanese, but I still feel like I'm a Sudanese. Like I have no *place*. But I still feel deep inside that I'm Sudanese because of my upbringing I guess. (original emphasis)

Southern Sudanese women's relationship to their homeland is similar to Gemignani's interpretation of refugee memory: "home is at once a memory and a hope… The concept of home evolves into a symbolic analogy for the nostalgic feelings and memories of what used to be: for a land that exists only in narrations, for a home that perhaps was never there, and of which memory is impossible yet necessary" (2011, p. 148). As such, 'home' for Southern Sudanese women is a contested space associated with conflicting memories and emotions all of which do not necessarily provide an adequate sense of belonging in the diaspora.

Nonetheless, as Ray argues, "exiles are not only homeless but also worldly, and their aesthetic creativity apparently flows from that wandering cosmopolitanism"(2004, p. 137). Cosmopolitanism and loneliness, or exile, oftentimes go hand in hand as both involve a separation from the comfort of national belonging (Nussbaum, 1994). And from the unique socio-political contexts of refugees, unique, creative identities oftentimes emerge (Malkki, 1995). Creativity, taking ingredients from multiple localities and mixing them together in unique ways, is a part of any form of displacement; however, refugees' particular relationship to their homeland creates unique forms of duality and hybridity (Braziel & Mannur, 2003; Hall, 2006).

A primary theme which emanated throughout Southern Sudanese women's discussions about food in the diaspora came out when I asked them about how war had affected their relationship to food; women's responses echoed unanimously that the war had enriched Sudanese food because it had sent them outside Sudan where they learned new ideas and new things to add to their foods. Transnational connection specifically in the form of complex migration histories and the multicultural nature of the Brooks community have recreated Southern Sudanese women's understanding of food, providing women with spaces to create transnational belonging. Through incorporating multicultural foods into their culinary repertoires, Southern Sudanese women search for completeness within diversity.

All of the women in this study except for one had come from Sudan to Canada via another country, largely Egypt but also Kenya, Ethiopia, Libya, Malta, Italy, the United States and Cuba. Therefore, time spent in transit to Canada has all impacted how women cook, what recipes they know, and their knowledge about Sudanese food. Likewise, due to the multicultural nature of Brooks and particularly of Lakeside where 13 of the 17 participants either work or have worked in the past, women socialize with other international migrants, beside whom they work in the slaughterhouse. Because Lakeside does not have a cafeteria, women bring homemade lunches to work and eat together during breaks. In doing so, women share their personal and cultural culinary worldviews. At work, women gain extensive knowledge about how diverse cultures cook; many women are not shy about asking their friends how to cook their cultural

dishes. These two multicultural circumstances in particular have therefore, introduced Southern Sudanese women to new foods and new ways of cooking. Women are very eager to take these foods into their culinary repertoire such that many women's knowledge about multicultural dishes was quite extensive. Flora's attitude is common:

> Whatever food I see, and if I like that food, I can just ask you, how did you make it? Do you have any recipe for it? Because I just want to learn different stuff. And some, like, I have friends from Ethiopia, from Somalia, from this or sometimes like at work, they bring their food and when I try it, if I like the food, I'll just ask, how did you make it? Then they'll just tell me and then I can cook in my house.

Likewise, women showed a strong desire to learn about Canadian foods. Participants internalized a difference between 'Canadian food' and 'their own food', largely in terms of differences in 'freshness' and 'ease of cooking'. Canadian foods were determined to include more chemicals and preservatives, but facilitated easy, quick meals, tailored to fast paced Canadian lifestyles of which they were now a part.[12] Women's reasons for wanting to learn about Canadian foods, consequently, had to do with wanting to satisfy the desires of their children, wanting to save time on cooking, or wanting to explore new foods, and "not be boring" as Angelina put it. In addition, women associated learning about Canadian cooking with connecting to a Canadian identity and feeling 'Canadian'. As such, women sought out food to create belonging within their new country. By

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[12] It was pre-packaged foods such as Kraft Dinner, instant noodles, chicken fingers and pizza which women most regularly consumed and considered 'Canadian'. Nonetheless, 'Canadian food' also encompassed broader definitions depending on the person. Lettuce based salads were regularly considered Canadian in addition to foods such as banana bread and potato based dishes such as shepherd's pie and scalloped potatoes. The nature of these foods have definite implications for health, which women recognized but did not feel they could address due to their time constraints in their lives, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

including foods perceived as different, not familiar, and therefore 'foreign' in their everyday lives, women "transform abstract images, words and symbols into the familiar appliances of life. Through consumption, the foreign is made part of local existence" (Wilk, 1999, p. 247).

Women appropriate global foods as their own, which in turn creates a sense of transnational belonging. In their descriptions of how various cultural foods had influenced their cooking, some women provided me with the recipes for global dishes. This sharing demonstrates an appropriation of these dishes as their own, to the extent at least that they were comfortable enough to present them to me. Transnational foods were also adopted in some cases to the extent that differences between 'Sudanese' and 'Other' foods became unrecognizable. For example, one of the first times I met Mary, she served me what she called Sudanese food, left over from a barbeque she had had on the weekend with some Sudanese friends. I assumed that this was Sudanese food as she had introduced it as such and was incorporated to a Sudanese gathering, yet she told me the next time we met that this was actually Cuban food (she had spent most of her childhood in Cuba). Therefore, for Mary, Sudanese and Cuban food were blurred as both representative of 'food from home'. Furthermore, there were many instances when I asked women, 'do you cook Egyptian or Ethiopian foods in Canada?' (foods from their first country of migration). At first people respond, 'no, not really', but then after thinking about it they responded, 'oh yes there is this, this and this'. Therefore, these foods are in some ways taken up in women's knowledge and do not necessarily stand out as non-Sudanese; they encompass

broader food knowledge which, in its totality, creates belonging and familiarity within broader tensions of transformation.

In talking about food, women reveal their sense of familiarity and belonging to multiple nations. When I asked Ajak why she still cooked Sudanese food she explained that it was because she felt 100% Sudanese; similarly, when I asked her why she cooked Canadian food she went on to say that it was because she was also 100% Canadian. She explained her answer as such:

> All the earth and all in it is for the Lord, so what's my problem going to be? Like to feel not Sudanese anymore or to feel not Canadian? No, I still feel Sudanese 100% because this is where I was born and I grew up and everything so I don't have to forget it. And Canada, no I can't forget it because it's where I came and I settled down.

Nonetheless, identification goes beyond this. As Ajak continues to explain, she reveals her fluid identity, the ability to define herself based on whatever circumstances arise: "the good things, you have to love your things, whatever is local, however is it looks, or something. You have to love it and do something from it, try to make something from it, then other people will love that and then it will be yours." Similarly, Amna describes her identity as a symbiosis of the new and the old, the foreign and the familiar:

> We take from Canadian people or the other people, the communities, Ethiopian, Somali, and we have to tell them what we learned. Everybody, we complete each other…I need to take the good thing from here and I need to take the good thing from back home and put it together and use it for my life. There is no difference.

I argue that these women's willingness to engage in transnational foodways and their ability to create belonging within them demonstrates a sense

of cosmopolitanism. I understand cosmopolitanism as characterized by an

openness to culture and to foreignness:

> It entails...a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. To become acquainted with more cultures is to turn into an *aficionado…* There is the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting, and reflecting. And there is cultural competence in the stricter sense of the term, a built-up skill in manoeuvring more or less expertly with a particular system of meanings. (Hannerz, 1996, p. 103)

However, Ulf Hannerz (1990), along with many other cosmopolitanism

theorists, contends that most migrants and minorities are not cosmopolitan

because their relationship to transnational experiences is involuntary.

Cosmopolitanism is generally described as a phenomenon unique to the

privileged, (largely white) upper middle class in multiethnic settings who have

access to substantial cultural and material resources (Furia, 2005). Nonetheless,

there is a growing call among scholars of this topic (Beck and Sznaider 2006;

Cheah & Robbins, 1998; Devadason 2010; Landau & Freemantle, 2010) to

consider how cosmopolitan practices are accessed and encompassed by people

from diverse ethnic and classed groups and so, in many instances, develop out of

unprivileged and even coerced circumstances. This group argues that it is

premature to dismiss ethnic minorities and lower classes from cosmopolitanism

because their engagement stems from pragmatic concerns. Rather,

cosmopolitanism in the elitist, world travelling sense, presupposes an authority of

western experience (Appadurai, 1996) and therefore, it is necessary to take into

account the socio-political histories in which cosmopolitanism emerges from and

is embedded within. While acknowledging the inherent 'worldly' and

'unlocatedness' of the term, scholars of 'actually existing' cosmopolitanism

(Robbins, 1998) stress that cosmopolitanism is still located and embodied within the daily lives of diverse groups of people; it is "a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachment, and attachment at a distance" (Robbins, 1998, p. 3). This study responds to this call showing that, through their "struggles over belonging, the actions of migrants and minorities are major examples of dialogic imaginative ways of life and everyday cosmopolitanism" (Beck, 2002, p. 21).

While perhaps a product of forced displacement, the descriptions of open, creative and inclusive belonging in the above narratives showcase this sense of cosmopolitanism. Additionally, cosmopolitanism is also demonstrated in how women talk about food. Ajak demonstrates her cosmopolitan identity by talking about the similarities between foods globally: "in the whole world the food are the same, just kindof, recipes. You know this is the different things. But if, like all the people are using meats and vegetables, that's all! And flours and that's all! All the foods they are just kind of recipes, just kindof creating the recipes, that's the different things." Many women have very similar narratives to Ajak. They revealed that despite not expecting to find a certain foods or cooking implements in Canada, they did; however, implements were often used to cook slightly different dishes and foods were cooked in a slightly different manner. Many women also show complex understandings about their food and its characteristics compared to other types of foods. Amna, for example, went into detail to explain to me the differences between Sudanese food and other cultures' food: "For our food, you know it's little bit, like, different from other people, Somali, Ethiopian. Our food is well cooked. Like it has to be real cooked. It is not like half and half,

no it has to be cooked." While Ajak and Amna are conceptualizing food in

different manners (one highlighting differences in food while the other

expounding its similarities), both evoke a cosmopolitan knowledge about food,

about Sudanese food in particular and its relation to other food globally. These

cosmopolitan food attitudes and practices ultimately encompass Southern

Sudanese women's ability to impart new fields of meaning into their food and

with it themselves, creating belonging within foreignness, and turning it into

something familiar.

So as the varied transnational experiences and global influences in

Southern Sudanese women's lives introduce them to new foods, they more

broadly contribute to wider processes of identity formation and reformatting that

are taking place in Brooks. While women may at times feel disconnected from

certain cultural identities, they are also actively working to build belonging within

them in order to improve their lives and understand their place within multiple

geographic locations. Ultimately, these motivations come together to contribute to

a sense of cosmopolitan consciousness that is actively developing among this

group.

Conclusion

The narratives of women in this chapter have shown that the role of

Sudanese food in connecting refugees to their homeland is powerful, invoking

memories which root women's identities in time and space. Similarly, the role of

sociality and food within the wider Sudanese community are also significant to migrants who left their homes involuntarily and have few opportunities to return. Sudanese food, cooking and eating invariably invokes discourses and memories of home, family and tradition. Nonetheless, the Sudanese food which is encapsulated in those memories is not necessarily the reality of that food cooked in Sudan nor that which is reproduced by women in the diaspora. The food meanings of Southern Sudanese women in Brooks are recreated as women's cooking and eating habits are impacted by their interactions with diverse ethnic and cultural communities. Nonetheless, these recreations also highlight the conflicting nature of refugees' relationship to their homeland. Sudan cannot fulfill the needs of comfort, family, familiarity and belonging which define it as a home, and as such, home becomes more a narrative than a place. Refugees therefore engage in multiple, often competing place making practices through their food; cosmopolitanism, like traditionalism is taken up by women in their search for identity, for groundedness, and for familiarity within the diversity that characterizes their experiences.

Within this chapter I have identified various instances of agency which ultimately revolve around women's active use of culture and tradition to define themselves in dynamic and constructive ways. I have shown that while women have, and continue to endure less than pleasant circumstances, they continually work to define themselves and their foodwork through identities they are proud of, and which provide them with opportunities for personal enrichment. It is in

these instances of agency that women develop a sense of cosmopolitanism by creating belonging within multiple geographic scales and locations.

Chapter Five: Engendering Agency in the Southern Sudanese Cosmopolitan Kitchen

In the preceding chapter I demonstrated how Southern Sudanese women's food narratives showcase their open attitude towards multicultural foodways and highlight their search for identity and belonging cross-culturally. I demonstrated how refugee identities develop out of distinct socio-political contexts (Malkki, 1995). In this chapter I argue that these global identification patterns are also gendered. As many have shown (hooks, 1998; Landau & Freemantle, 2010; Wilk, 1999; 2006), there is power encompassed in global fluency; therefore, Southern Sudanese women's food choices are not without consequence for power and status within the family, community, and wider Canadian society. By looking at gender as a dynamic, intersecting facet of identification, it becomes clear how aspects of the self may be contested, resisted, and negotiated in different cultural contexts.

As Southern Sudanese women in Brooks appropriate transnational foodways, and with them, cosmopolitan identification, they negotiate the power encompassed in ethnic, gendered identities. Transnational foodways as it is encapsulated in cosmopolitan performance provide women with various practical benefits which they use strategically in their lives. In this sense, this work builds on emerging literature on 'actually existing' and 'tactical' cosmopolitism to understand how people utilize cosmopolitan attitudes and practices to address quotidian challenges and individual and collective objectives in day-to-day practice (Beck & Sznaider 2006; Landau & Freemantle, 2010; Cheah & Robbins,

1998). Consequently, women demonstrate agency through this tactical appropriation because in doing so, they alleviate a portion of the very real burden that foodways occupy in their lives.

Nonetheless, in this chapter, I also draw on Saba Mamood's (2005) interpretation of agency as existing not solely within resistance, but within modes of ethics, responsibility and affectivity to discuss a more nuanced interpretation of agency as it exists within these women's food practices. Agency in the form of transnational foodways becomes more clear when one looks at how Sudanese gender norms constitute women's subjectivity, as well as how women navigate through those norms to redefine themselves and their foodways in ways that provide them with opportunities. Southern Sudanese women's transnational food practices reflect their open-minded attitudes towards changing gender roles as they are encompassed in notions of freedom. The term freedom is used by Southern Sudanese women to describe the increased choices and opportunities provided to them in Canada, and subsequently, their ability to engage in these opportunities free from government constraint. While the reality of that freedom is restricted by the prevalence of intersecting cultures' gender roles which burden their time, it is important not to judge freedom as solely based in liberally defined movements but also as within the grammar of concepts defined by participants (Mahmood, 2005). As Mahmood (2005) suggests, freedom perhaps entails an ability to *choose* ones desires, no matter how illiberal those choices are. Transnational foodways then ultimately represent freedom of expression for Southern Sudanese women; in other words, freedom to partake and utilize diverse

aspects of belonging both in an ethnic or cultural sense, but also a gendered one. By defining their foodways, and by extension, themselves beyond static definitions rooted in notions of the 'traditional Southern Sudanese', women affirm both the power and the tensions encompassed in diverse forms of belonging.

Gender, Foodways, and Agency in the Literature

For countless women across time and space, the kitchen, and the food work conducted within it have represented sites of simultaneous repression and celebration. While much of feminism has critiqued gender roles which relegate women to the kitchen, many have also illuminated how a significant number of women conceptualize the kitchen as a space for the creation of identity, love, and creative expression. It is therefore important to acknowledge the diversity of significances women encounter when working within these spaces; in demeaning the role of food work as important spaces for meaning, recognition, and identity, we trivialize those women who do create agency within them. In this section, I will investigate how the anthropological literature positions women's relationship to collective identity as well as how this is enacted through food. While, women are often positioned precariously within discourses of culture and tradition, spaces of power and agency also emerge amidst intersections of identity. And this is shown through the foodways of migrant women.

In societies that place greater value on the financial responsibilities of a household than the nurturing, work in the kitchen, often coded as female, is

undervalued (Engels, 1972). It is in these contexts that the kitchen becomes a

space that limits women's social, economic, and personal mobility (Devault,

1991; McIntosh and Zey, 1998). The ideological premise behind women's

negative associations with foodways stems, in part, from western ideological

dualisms separating masculinity and femininity within a set of binary mutually

exclusive oppositions. This framework codes masculinity with dynamic processes

of 'progress', 'creating' and 'doing', and codes femininity with static

characteristics rooted in 'tradition' and 'stability' (Massey, 1994). Therefore, the

home, the kitchen, and food work done within it are conceptualized as fixed.

Work done in this space is often associated with nostalgia, traditional morality,

leisure, and authenticity. These qualities are not in and of themselves oppressive

yet become so when they are coded and enforced as female (Abarca, 2006;

Massey, 1994).

Nira Yuval Davis and Floya Anthias (1989) have aptly shown how women

become responsible for the continuation of ethnic and national groups, and as

such, the responsibility to sustain that continuation limits their agency. Women

are often responsible for the continuation of ethnic groups because they

'symbolize' the group, and therefore, bear the burden of representing its honour.

They are expected to literally bear the next generation of it, as well as propagate

its cultural values and traditions as 'symbolic border guards'. This expectation

encompasses reified, static understandings of gender and culture (Yuval-Davis &

Anthias, 1989; Yuval-Davis, 1997); however, nationalist and ethnic ideologies

still draw on these beliefs to naturalize, and therefore, enforce the traditional

gendered roles/inequalities that stall social change (Yuval-Davis, 2009). In times

of change (including migration), women are often either rejected as a marker of

the past (Witt, 2001), or controlled to preserve the values encompassed in what

was left behind (Yuval-Davis, 1997; 2009). This is a western ideological

perspective; nonetheless, similarities exist between western gendered dualisms

and Muslim notions of complementarity which, at times, place masculinity and

femininity within a similar relationship (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Mernissi, 1987;

Yazbeck-Haddad & Esposito, 1998).

In Sudan specifically, women have played an important role in the

national discourse of the NIF government as an "embodiment of the Islamic

nation" (Hale, 2001, p. 33). The image of the Muslim woman "authenticating a

place of 'belonging', a community of kin, a safe haven for family, a 'home'" has

been a powerful cornerstone to nation-building in Sudan (Tonnessen, 2008, p.

464). Sondra Hale (2005, p. 38) describes how gender rests at the symbolic heart

of Sudanese family and nation as it is encompassed in the Islamicization of the

country:

Islamists began to develop an authentic-cultural framework that verges on
essentialism, especially regarding women and the family. Women's behaviour
is circumcised by male-controlled religio-political institutions in order to
mould the ideal woman as the moral center of the 'ideal' Muslim family.

This gendered interpretation of ethnicity or nationalism is reflected in

migrant foodways. In the majority of the literature, women are generally

portrayed as motivated to preserve culinary continuity and the maintenance of

traditional cultural food practices (Harbottle, 2000; Rabikowska, 2009;

Vallianatos & Raine, 2008). This desire is manifest from expectations and

pressures on women to perform the role of 'the bearers of *food* tradition' within

the family and community. Because of their association with identity and gender

norms, food choices are a part of women's lives which may be controlled by

larger patriarchal structures to propagate the essentialized ideals of 'a family' or 'a

people'. The pressure to maintain traditional food habits can therefore be

understood as an oppressive element of migrant women's foodwork.

Nonetheless, Patricia Pessar & Sarah Mahler (2003) have shown that the

transnational movement of people, products and ideas works in diverse ways,

reproducing prevailing gender ideologies for some, and providing opportunities to

question hegemonic definitions of gender and ethnicity for others. Migrant

women utilize this movement in the kitchen by employing resources such as

foreign foods (Ray, 2004), pre-packaged foods (Srinivas, 2006), and modern

cooking implements (Gvion, 2009). These movements empower women in

various ways such as by diversifying their cooking skills which may garner them

prestige, or provide them with tools to move more efficiently through their lives.

Nonetheless, while these actions may provide women with tangible benefits, they

may fail to question established hierarchies of power. For example, when the

Indian women in Tulasi Srinivas's (2006) study use pre-packaged Indian foods to

help them save time on cooking so that they can engage in paid employment, they

empower themselves to expand their identities within the public sphere and make

their lives easier. However, their actions still work within established hierarchies

of power because their motivations for doing so are based on the desire to fulfill

appropriate gender roles as 'good wives and mothers' and on anxieties over the loss of 'traditional', 'authentic' Indian food. The use of pre-packaged Indian foods by these women facilitates the reproduction of values that perpetuate the role of the immigrant woman is as an authentic mediator of the past and tradition.

Like the example above, the majority of work investigating gender and foodwork describes the ways that women resist structures that limit their personal mobility or define their foodwork as inconsequential; however, few investigate the deeper relationships between power, norms, and ethics encompassed in women's actions. A good example of this includes agency as theorized as a reconstituting of consciousness.[13] Within this framework, women's agency involves recoding consciousness or action such that either, or both, disrupt cultural norms previously limiting the opportunities foodways provided them.

Ideological recoding takes many forms. For example, some have discussed how migrant women actively take control of the functioning, socialization and decision-making in the kitchen (as opposed to deferring to the decisions of their husbands) and in doing so, empower themselves to propagate values of their choosing and embrace the power that comes from food provision (Avakian, 2005). Counihan (1988) has shown how the giving of food by women to their families creates obligations such that women ensure that their necessity is asserted, and love, respect, and good behaviour are offered in return. Others demonstrate how women create agency through food by conceptualizing cooking

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[13] Mahmood (2005) provides an excellent critical analysis of feminist literature theorizing women's actions around reconstitutions of consciousness.

as a celebration of talent and creativity (Adapon, 2008) or a demonstration of love (Avakian, 1997; Vallianatos & Raine, 2008). Many women gain prestige from their foodwork, earned through preparing food for family members or wider communities (Harbottle, 2000). Women may also utilize the kitchen as a space of female trust and sociality (Avakian, 2005; Counihan, 2005). It is important to note that not all women who show agency through foodways necessarily have to enjoy cooking; those women who reject cooking as a sole pillar of their identity yet still respect the food work done by others still propagate the value in recoding foodways as a space for women's empowerment (Avakian, 2005; Counihan, 2008). Similarly, women who use the kitchen for economic mobility, cooking food that they later sell for profit, as well as those who welcome and legitimize men's food work both help break down the dichotomization of gendered divisions of labour which may limit their economic, physical or ideological mobility (Counihan, 2008; Pilcher, 2002).

In order to think about these themes in a more complex way I am introducing Saba Mahmood's (2005) call for a more inclusive understanding of agency. Mahmood contends that feminist interpretations of agency which pit instances of women's resistance against patriarchal domination reflect western analytic biases. She argues that the humanist desire for autonomy and self-expression in the midst of relations of subordination are not necessarily universal. She questions therefore whether it is possible "to identify a universal category of acts- such as those of resistance- outside of the ethical and political conditions within which such acts acquire their particular meaning" (2005, p. 9). Mahmood

posits a detachment of agency from the trope of resistance instead arguing for its meaning to emerge from "within semantic and institutional networks that define and make possible particular ways of relating to people, things and oneself" (Asad, 2003, quoted in Mahmood, 2005, p. 34). This framework allows for a more nuanced understanding the ways in which agency can be embodied, and reveals situations that may be otherwise viewed as submissive, to be in fact, agenic.

As Mamood notes, definitions of what constitute self-realization have been questioned by scholars in the past. Many have criticized the bounded, masculine, autonomous conception of the self, propounded in western thought, arguing for one that accounts for relational identities developed in interaction with social communities (Benhabib, 1992). Similarly, African American and Aboriginal scholars have questioned the turn against the nuclear family by white/middle class intellectuals noting how centuries of slavery, genocide and racism have prevented the formation of families for many outside this dominant group (P.H. Collins, 1991; Davis, 1983). For Alice Julier (2005), concern over the declining 'family meal' ignores issues of race and class, in which women of colour have historically worked both in and outside of the home, often cooking for white families. Therefore, by looking at how gender is conceptualized amid broader cultural norms, histories, beliefs, actions and thoughts, one can garner a more complex understanding of its meanings, and through which, reveal agency. When taking Mahmood's (2005) definition of agency to heart, it becomes clear that in order to more fully understand how this is enacted in the daily lives of

women, it is important to consider broader relations of ethics and power as they relate to culturally held ideals of gender.

In her book *Voices in the Kitchen*, Meredith Abarca (2006) takes the notion of ideological recoding a step further than others and demonstrates how Mahmood's (2005) understanding of agency is exemplified in theorizing food work. Abarca's investigation into why the ideological recoding described above are strategies of empowerment is more useful than simple description because she reveals the values, norms and assumptions embedded in foodwork. Abarca goes beyond solely explaining ideological recoding and instead expounds a rethinking of the eminence of foodways to demonstrate the wealth of intricate knowledge encompassed in everyday acts of cooking. For Abarca, a woman's *sazon* (or sensory way of knowing when food is done or what flavours it needs to be just right) "captures the finesse, the nuances, the flair of something that involves a specific chemistry between the relationship of food, its preparation, and the person preparing it, a relationship that leads to philosophical everyday observations" (2006, p. 54). Within this account, Abarca sees cooking as a language in which women convey the histories of their lives: as such, it is a 'discourse of empowerment'. Abarca rejects the western hierarchy of the senses which privileges sight and hearing over taste and smell. For Abarca, *sazon* is "the ability to 'seize power over one part of one's self' through the epistemology of all of our senses, which in turn helps us to regain the body as a center of knowledge" (Abarca, 2006, p. 76-77). Ultimately, Abarca shows that definitions of what constitutes knowledge need to be reconfigured to reveal the value, artistry, and

creativity within everyday work done in the kitchen. Abarca's work exemplifies a productive confrontation of the values underlying women's work in the kitchen in order to further our understanding of the choices migrant women make in their foodways.

Drawing from the awareness posited by Pessar and Mahler (2003) in addition to the conceptualization of agency put forth by Mahmood (2005), this study investigates the ways in which transnational foodways may open up spaces of empowerment for Southern Sudanese women while also considering how these foodways are encompassed in established gender norms and ethics. In doing so, it works to capture the fluidity of gender (Lorber, 1994; West & Zimmerman 1987), recognizing identities, cultures, and places not as static, bounded dualisms, but as existing within dynamic states of movement and intersection (Massey, 1994; Pessar & Mahler, 2003; Yuval-Davis, 1997).

The Southern Sudanese women in this study were very much aware of the ways in which foodways represented their history of gendered repression, as a space that limited their mothers and their grandmothers ideologically and physically, but also as a prevailing burden, a stress that was predominantly theirs to bear. I want to stress that for almost all women in this study, foodways were a burden which they felt constantly overwhelmed by. This came out most succinctly when I asked Angelina whether she liked cooking; she responded to my question that "I have to cook (laughs). Whether I like it or not, I have to cook." Empowerment is not an immediate association that these women make with food. And I will explicate why this is in future sections. Nonetheless, foodways are also

an integral part of these women's lives; and a part that women still embraced as something to celebrate and manipulate for their own means. It is important to highlight the agency encompassed in women's actions to show how they work as active subjects to improve their lives. These women's foodways incorporate diverse forms of agency that reflect their unique cultural and personal histories and differentially enable them to internalize, reconceptualise, and subvert various forms of oppression that limit them. Nonetheless, I will focus specifically on how women's openness to transnational foodways provides them with opportunities to improve their lives as well as how it works to subvert established hierarchies of power. This analysis will follow in two parts: first I will highlight the ways in which women gain opportunity from their transnational foodways; in the following section, I will build on this idea to demonstrate how these foodways are entwined in migrants' understandings of gender norms and freedom. In doing so, I will show how women challenge hegemonic gendered norms which they feel limit them.

Transnational Foodways, Cosmopolitanism and Power

In the previous chapter I discussed how Southern Sudanese women sought out and appropriated diverse culinary traditions to create belonging within their current circumstances. This in itself is agenic because it represents women's ability to actively take control over their identities; in this case, women do not passively accept their fractured connections to their homeland but instead actively

work to rebuild those connections both with Sudan, but also within diverse cultural identities. In this section I will build on this discussion to show that Southern Sudanese women's transnational foodways, a reflection of their cosmopolitan identities, also garner them power, prestige, and resources to improve their lives. Specifically, women's transnational foodways encompass a form of tactical cosmopolitanism that empowers them through a global awareness of culture; this awareness allows women to utilize their cultural capital to gain prestige among their peers as well as new resources to manage their daily lives.

Cosmopolitanism is a worldview, a way of conceptualizing the world based on ideals of universal humanity, respect for diversity etc.; it is also a practice, a series of actions and habits within day to day activity that embody the ideals described above; but it is also a performance, a way of interacting with others and presenting oneself in the world. Lorin Landau & Iriann Freemantle (2010) use the term tactical cosmopolitanism to refer to cosmopolitanism that has arisen from an individual's desire to achieve practical objectives rather than out of an appreciation of diversity or philosophical consideration; in other words, an activity or a performance distinct from worldview. To illustrate, Landau & Freemantle explore the experiences of migrant populations in Johannesburg who are forced to navigate their criticized existence amid the hyper-nationalist rhetoric of South Africa. These individuals, while not usually 'cultural omnivores' grounded in morals of openness and shared humanity, utilize cosmopolitanism to mitigate the xenophobia of the native South African population as such a

performance allows them access to that population while simultaneously distances themselves from it.

While I question the extent to which cosmopolitan worldviews and strategic performance are necessarily distinct, one can appreciate cultural diversity and still utilize it as a tactical strategy for self-improvement (whether that person is a white, upper class elite, or a working class migrant), Landau and Freemantle's work is useful for thinking about the ways in which people utilize cosmopolitanism for pragmatic ends. It contributes to broader ways of thinking about 'actually existing' cosmopolitanism as it takes place in the day to day lives of individual people and groups.

While not overtly labelled as such, food scholars have demonstrated some ways in which foodways are encompassed in tactical cosmopolitanism. In his (1999; 2006) work on national consciousness in Belize, Richard Wilk argues that a cosmopolitan food consciousness is a performance of power. Food is a way for people to engage in a performance of identity and with it, showcase their ability to manoeuvre within cosmopolitan spheres of existence. People project an intelligence defined by a 'mastery of self' through performances of identity such as those described by Wilk; cosmopolitan food consciousness asserts a recognition of culture and its ability to be manipulated (Hannerz, 1996). This is true because "mastering the performance and the role asserts a claim to categorical equality, to knowledge and power" (Wilk, 1999, p. 247). For example, Belizean's presentation of 'authentic Belizean food' to Wilk at their

dinner tables demonstrates a performance of global sophistication because it shows that Belizeans *know* that others expect them to be 'Belizean'.

Evidence of similar performances exist among Southern Sudanese women as participants demonstrated to me, an outsider, that they understood that they were a culturally bounded group by overwhelmingly wanting to show me their 'traditional' food. They took pains to explain their foods' significance for their community and the differences between ethnic and regional traditions. Through this self-presentation, Southern Sudanese women assert their knowledge of the significance of their specific culture, their location, within a wider global system of identities.

Similarly, Southern Sudanese women's engagement in the foodways of diverse cultures also demonstrates a desire to evoke global sophistication that is encompassed in the knowledge and experience of cultural difference (Heldke, 2008). It involves an allure of the excitement encompassed in diversity (hooks, 1998), as is shown by Angelina: "It's good to know about different [foods]. Like Canadian, I want to know Canadian cooking or Canadian food. Make a little bit, when you cook *every day,* something you know, it's like you're boring right? If you get something new, it's good. So I need new things to try" (original emphasis). However, it also involves the allure of prestige that is contained in knowledge and participation in that diversity. When women such as Amna and Ajak discussed with me how to cook multicultural dishes, or the differences and similarities between dishes cross culturally, they were in a sense 'showing off'. They were showcasing the diversity of their skill set which they saw as a

testament to their flexibility and acceptance. A taste for foreign food can therefore "be seen as a consequence of the desire to know more about the world, to become more sophisticated, to acquire new forms of knowledge, and to make that knowledge material" (Wilk, 1999, p. 248).

These forms of cosmopolitan food knowledge (knowledge of self, and knowledge of other) therefore evoke a sophistication which holds power in the transnational world. With an understanding of cultural capital, cosmopolitan subjects can showcase this sophistication and utilize it to improve their lives, either to gain prestige in their communities or to utilize it to materially improve their lives. Amna epitomizes the notion of tactical cosmopolitanism in her narrative in the previous chapter (p. 116), when she talks about utilizing diverse cultural traditions to create completeness in her life: "I need to take the good thing from back home and put it together and *use it for my life*" (my emphasis). As Liora Gvion has also shown, when displaced women:

> …welcome what they see as modern dishes and cooking methods, they are not passive recipients of novelties. Rather, women assign their own meanings and modes of consumption to novel food and use food to position themselves in their new society and develop their own ways of interpreting the world they live in. (2009, p. 395)

Harbottle shows how women gain prestige by virtue of their cooking:

> through their everyday and festive cooking [women] embody, concretize, and dramatize central elements of culture and faith. In the process, cooked food is infused with value and the women (or men) who prepare it…attain status and command loyalty, through the generosity of spirit and love embodied in the processed (cooked) food. (2000, p. 120)

Many migrant women gain status from their cooking in similar ways, due to its role in ethnic identity. However, contrasting with these women, it is not those

women in Brooks who are best able to cook traditional Sudanese dishes who gain status in their communities; instead it is women who are most successfully able to integrate transnational foodways into their daily lives that receive prestige in their community. Indeed, women known as particularly 'good cooks', whom people predominantly turned to on matters of cooking, were the ones who possessed a wide array of diverse food knowledge, both Sudanese and global. Those women who were able to mix and interpret transnational foodways in unique and tasty ways, while still presenting them as variations of Sudanese, were particularly valued in the community.

Women also utilize transnational foodways to decrease the burden of cooking in their day-to-day lives (Gvion, 2009). Canadian pre-prepared foods such as Kraft Dinner, instant noodles, and chicken fingers were used to quickly prepare dishes for their families. Also, boxed cake and muffin recipes were a welcome addition to children's birthday parties often consisting of hundreds of people. Health content aside,[14] within a situation in which time is extremely scarce, food that involves little preparation time decreases some of the burden of women's domestic duties (this will be discussed in greater detail in later sections of this chapter). Clara describes the differences between Sudanese and Canadian food and why she uses Canadian food in her daily cooking:

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[14] Families' increasing reliance on western highly processed foods in addition to the already high fat and salt content in Sudanese food has led many Southern Sudanese migrants to experience negative health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes. As mentioned in the previous chapter, women understood that their reliance on these foods was having an adverse effect on their health; however, many felt that they nonetheless relied on them to save time in their extremely busy lives. Many women talked about trying to make changes to reduce their fat and salt intake, though most still relied heavily on these dishes.

A lot of people enjoy cooking, but still, you don't have the time to do it, all this. Like most of Sudanese food is started from scratch. Most of Canadian food is like, throw everything together, all the ready food- especially like casserole, where you have to prepare food from leftover turkey. Or just get a can of cooked ham, or just go and get the can of tuna, just open it and drain it and put the mayonnaise there and make the sandwich and the food is done. No, with Sudanese food, you have to start from scratch, *everything*, like onion, oil, fry, you know…. (original emphasis)

Also, Southern Sudanese women used foreign cooking appliances, which preserved the production of traditional Sudanese dishes by easing their preparation. Barbeques, pressure cookers, microwaves, and blenders are all commonly used items in Sudanese households, which facilitate the cooking of traditional Sudanese dishes. Barbeques allow large groups to congregate because, as they move cooking outdoors, they provide a cooking implement which groups can gather around; pressure cookers quicken the preparation of foods that would have otherwise taken up women's time; microwaves and rice makers allow food to quickly be cooked and reheated so that women do not have to cook everyday- they can cook most of their meals on their days off and reheat dishes during the week. Participants thus utilized foreign foods and cooking implements to move more efficiently through their daily lives.

In this section I have demonstrated how women's transnational foodways evoke cosmopolitan identities situated in a knowledge and sophistication of culture within a global world. This knowledge allows women to improve their standing within their families, their communities and within wider Canadian society as well as navigate more efficiently through their daily lives. Oftentimes this knowledge is appropriated with an acute eye such that transnational foodways complement, rather than contradict, Sudanese food practices. However, as I will

demonstrate, this is not always possible because foodways are integrally defined within gender norms in the diaspora.

Specifically, cosmopolitan identification is gendered, as Southern Sudanese men were not understood to embrace cosmopolitanism as whole-heartedly as women in my study locale. Women were more likely than men to see themselves as 'Canadian' and be open to diverse culinary and cultural traditions. Within this context, differential attitudes towards transnational food practices can be understood as representative of broader negotiations of gendered identity within the family, community, and state. Drawing from Mahmood (2005), the rest of this chapter explores how transnational belonging is entwined in participants' understandings of the power encompassed in the gendered divisions of labour and of freedom more broadly. In making my argument, I first explore Sudanese ideological frameworks pertaining to gendered propriety and food, followed by my analysis of how these are reinterpreted and negotiated in Canada.

Sudanese Gender Norms and Propriety

Southern Sudanese women's food meanings exist within culturally defined customs relating to gender and propriety within Sudanese society. In order to understand Southern Sudanese women's relationship to food as it relates to these concepts, I will begin by providing some background on how they are understood in Sudan. Sudanese notions surrounding masculinity, femininity and the gendered roles within each contain certain similarities across the country. Commonalities

surrounding Sudanese conceptualizations of gender stem from the two sources of law that pertain to gender and the family in Sudan: Shari' a and customary law.[15] These similarities exist in part due to the nationwide influences of early British colonial patriarchy, as well as the subsequent Islamicization of the country by the Al-Numayri and Al-Bashir regimes. These two Islamic regimes militarily enforced their ideologies of assimilation imposing nationwide adherence (to varying degrees at different times) to the Muslim religion and Arabic language and cultural practices (Deng, 1995; 2010). As such, masculinity and femininity in Sudan are usually understood through the Muslim notions of complementarity and propriety. Arab and Muslim cultural and religious beliefs, though resisted by Southerners to varying degrees of success, have nonetheless made their way into broader Sudanese custom (Edward, 2007).

These ideas, particularly those of complementarity and propriety, which I will be focusing on in this section, provide a framework within which to understand Sudanese patriarchy and with it, gender relations. It is important to emphasize that both Arabic and Sudanese gender relations are not uniformly segregated and dichotomized (Hale, 1983; Fábos, 2001). The diversity of ethnic

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[15] Shari' a is the Muslim law based on the Quran which dictates the rules by which Muslim men and women must live. In 1983 Shari' a was declared by then president Jaafar Al-Numayri as the sole guiding force behind the law in Sudan, though it was not until 1989 when president Al-Bashir introduced an Islamic legal code on the national level that it was rigorously applied throughout Sudan. Since the signing of the Naivasha Agreement in 2005 which ended the civil war between the North and the South, Islamic law no longer applies in the South. Shari' a is supposed to only apply to Muslim men and women in the North, though also applies to non-Muslims living in northern cities such as Khartoum (Warburg, 1990). Customary law is the governing body in the south and is based on traditional customs and practices of each local ethnic group; it is determined and enforced differently within the ethnic groups, and is largely unwritten (Tonnessen, 2008). Both systems allow polygyny, grant the husband the right to guardianship and control over his wife, and discriminate inheritance on the grounds of gender (Tonnessen, 2008; Edward, 2007).

groups within Sudan means that norms surrounding gender and food vary from context to context. Nonetheless, Hale (2003) suggests that this view of ethics is nostalgic for Sudanese; a dichotomized, essential view of gender is not unlike that which is idealized as 'traditional' or 'typical' of Sudanese culture. I am conducting my analysis with the presumption that, despite a multitude of idiosyncrasies, there are common features among groups that are relevant to discuss in the context of gender relations and food. These common features reflect how Southern Sudanese women in Brooks describe themselves and their position as gendered individuals both in their homeland and in Canada. Despite the cultural diversity within my study population, their understandings of gender were remarkably similar. Nonetheless, the analysis that I provide in this paper is not meant to be exhaustive of gender relations in all Southern Sudanese societies, nor of all Southern Sudanese refugees in Canada.

According to Sudanese norms, 'natural differences' between men and women are understood to extend themselves to separate roles and behaviours for each sex; men/husbands occupy the public sphere and provide the family with financial support, while women occupy the domestic sphere where they look after the house and care for children. This is an idealistic framework and is enacted and resisted in different ways throughout the country (Bernal, 1994; Fábos, 2001). Nonetheless, the diversity that is held in regards to the relational status of men and women still largely falls under the notion that, "within the family and within society, women usually occupy a subordinate position compared to men" (Edward, 2007, p. 83). In analyzing both Shari' a and customary law, Liv

Tonnessen describes women's subjugation likewise: "Sudanese women have traditionally suffered from discriminatory customs and traditions, which relegate them to the status of 'lesser beings' and 'a commodity'" (2008, p. 463). Southern Sudanese women in Brooks understand their position similarly; however, as a product of marriage traditions. Generally, wives are understood to be 'bought' by their husbands, for cattle or money; here, it is the man who actively engages in the marriage ritual whereas the woman is considered passive, she *is married*. Therefore, women are considered to have less say and less status, they 'are a little bit lower', in the union. In some ethnic groups, women's status begins to equal that of men late in their lifecycle (Holtzman, 2002; Kandiyoti, 1988). Nonetheless, it is also important to recognise that a reciprocal nature of power exists within this framework such that when men hold formal power, women still influence them to obtain their own objectives.

The ideological separation of men and women is reflected in the Sudanese notion of *adab*, or 'propriety'. Propriety pertains to 'good manners' or 'politeness' and includes conceptions of morals and morality for men and women; as a whole, the concept encompasses behaviour which upholds the virtues of the larger Sudanese society (Fábos, 2001). This is used in a general sense to include "the sum total of his conceptions of what one should be and have and do in order to be good in the different roles one comes to play in life" (Nordenstam, 1968, p. 74). Tore Nordenstam (1968) posits that the main constituents to Sudanese ethics are courage, modesty, generosity, hospitality and a collection of interrelated notions relating to honour, dignity, and self-respect. Integral to this concept is the

distinctions of honour and shame. Sudanese say that a person 'holds no manners' or is 'impolite' if their behaviour is perceived to be improper; though this improper behaviour encompasses a broad range of actions ranging from undisciplined children to sexual harassment (Fábos, 2008; Fábos, 2001). Propriety is rewarded with family honour, respect and marriageability for a woman, and her sisters. Conversely, an unmarried pregnant woman is considered an embarrassment to the family name. In certain areas of Sudan, it is not uncommon for women in this situation to commit suicide, or be murdered by their family (El Saadawi 1980, p. 23). Propriety is instilled and reinforced through social relations, child rearing, rituals and ceremonies, religious practices, and daily conventions such as meals and socializing (Fábos, 2008; Edward, 2000).

The Sudanese notion of propriety is gendered, and proper behaviour for men and women often hinges on social interactions between the sexes. For women, propriety is largely assessed based on their ascription to and role within the home, while for men, it is based on their role in public. For women this includes the proper enactment of duties in the domestic sphere such as keeping a clean home, providing meals for the family, raising children, and providing hospitality to guests. Foodways are a very important component to this. If a woman cannot cook well people will say that "she is not a woman, she is just a man in woman's clothes" (in this instance Clara was talking about whether she had chopped kale small enough). Therefore, foodways are a very important enactment of female gender roles. A woman's propriety is associated with the presentation of her home due to her identity which is tied to it:

it's very important for [a woman] to make sure that the house is clean and she presents a good house, you know like she's a good housewife, she keeps her house clean and she possess a lot of, you know, good stuff right? So that way, you are, basically you are wealthy, you are taking care of yourself. So if somebody comes to your home, or whatever, you're gonna present it to them, and it has to be nice and neat- present it well right. So that's so important even here [in Canada]. [Sara]

Conversely, food preparation is generally prohibited for men. In some ethnic groups it is forbidden for a man to take food from an unrelated woman or prepare food himself; a man's failure to abide by this norm signals a lack of self-control, and therefore masculinity (Holtzman, 2007).

Traditional customs and values surrounding gender, marriage, and family have shifted severely for Southern Sudanese due to the pressures of war, poverty, disease and displacement, forcing them to "reexamine their perceptions and to adopt both social and economic roles, which are contentious or counter to socially and culturally accepted behaviors" (Edward, 2007, p. 133). Many factors including, increased commercialized farming, labour migration, and drought, for example, have impacted these gender norms in Sudan prior to war and displacement (Hale, 2005; El-Sanousi & El-Amin, 1994; Duany & Duany, 2001). Therefore, the changes discussed in this section had begun to take shape prior to the war in Sudan. Nonetheless, they are transformed again upon resettlement in countries of refuge and later in Canada. The various movements, disruptions, and relocations Sudanese experience all produce new social arrangements that call for a renegotiation of traditional gender norms. However, "new strategies and forms of consciousness do not simply emerge from the ruins of the old and smoothly

produce a new consensus, but are created through personal and political struggles, which are often complex and contradictory" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p. 286).

In particular, complementarity is difficult to achieve in Canada because, due to the economic pressures of Canadian life, many refugee families require two incomes to survive. As women work outside the home to supplement their husband's income, their workload doubles, as they are expected to perform both roles effectively (see also Counihan, 1988; Devault, 1991; Harbottle, 2000). Because women help men with the financial responsibilities of the household, they expect men to help with the caretaking responsibilities likewise; however, this is not always the case. Husbands helping with feminine household tasks require entering into tenuous territory in which negotiating household work involves negotiating more than just the labour itself. When men perform household labour, they question their identity as a Southern Sudanese men and the power that comes with that position (Edward, 2000; Este & Tachble, 2009; Holtzman, 2007; Rowe, 2009). Most women in Brooks talked about some of the concessions that their husband's had made in relation to the gendered division of labour; however, nearly all still bore the majority of housework themselves.[16]

Additionally, participants in Brooks did not have the same female domestic help as they normally would in their homeland. In Sudan, families do

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[16] The amount of help which husbands provided was very oftentimes seen as a reflection of their education and their migration backgrounds; for example, men who had come from Cuba were seen by many within the community as liberally minded and were more inclined to help with housework than those men who had spent more time in Sudan. However, it also is described in terms of the marital relationship itself: if a husband and wife are committed to each other and respect each other, they will work together to complete the domestic labour on mutually agreeable terms.

not live in nuclear households but live in either patriarchal extended families,

polygamous families, or nuclear families with the help of nieces, nephews or

younger siblings who move in once a couple has young children. Also, many

middle and upper class households employ maids. Therefore, housework is almost

never done alone by women. This represents changes in household structure but

also changes in lifestyles and values:

> I can say that the family here is not like back home. Like for you in the family,
> you can live, you, and your sister, your mom, everybody in the same house,
> everybody helps each other [with the housework]. So even after you're
> married, your sisters they can come sometimes to help you. That is different.
> Like here in Canada, everybody is busy, you know the life, no time. But there,
> the way for the life is a little bit different. You still can find somebody to help.
> But here they don't have…. There you have your sister, you have your brother,
> whatever, somebody, or your friend. And you see back home, even your
> neighbour she can come and help. We don't have a problem with that. She can
> help. Like if you have a baby, she can come cook for you, clean, make the food
> everything ready for you. Even your mom, she can come stay with you, take
> care of the kids. That is the difference here. [Amna]

When a woman must complete housework in conjunction with paid

employment, she likely does not have time to complete the household tasks

necessary of her as a respectable woman. Almost all of the women in Brooks felt

stressed and overburdened by their household responsibilities. Additionally,

women's propriety suffers when they are unable to fulfill her household duties to

normally accepted standards:

> My culture says the responsibility is just for women in the house, everything,
> the woman has to do it. And the real life says no, you don't have time to do all
> these things, how can you do that? Realistically you can't do them, you can't
> do them because you are a human being, you need to relax. So then tomorrow
> you can be able to do another 8 hours. And at the same time, cleaning
> standards is another issue because as a woman, you don't want people to come
> to your house and see all this shit on the floor. And they going to blame you as
> a woman, at that house, why don't you do your responsibility? And they view

you as a sesh [derogatory slang] woman, and you don't want that! You kind of want to protect your dignity and respect in the community. [Clara]

Therefore, changes in lifestyles, household structures and values all influence Southern Sudanese gender roles in Canada putting pressure on women's ability to perform these roles to the standards expected of her. Within this situation I argue that women may be more open to transnational foodways, and with them cosmopolitan identification patterns because, as I have demonstrated in the previous section, these things provide them with prestige and allow them to save valuable time within their daily routines; nonetheless, I will argue in the subsequent section that transnational foodways are also valued by women because they represent a movement away from gendered roles and norms which they believe limit them.

Gendered Freedom and Transnational Foodways

Discussion about gender roles with women in Brooks inevitably brought up attitudes toward change and, as a whole, women were understood to be more open to change than men. Ajak's description of gendered attitudes towards change is representative of the majority of women in my study:

I'm here, I don't have to live by the way that in Sudan, that we used to live. No, it's not going to work. It will affect all of us. We're already affected from the war so we should look for peace, we should look for happiness, we should look for something good. Not again just to be, to press each other down, to fight or to lock others because here, women can cook, men can cook, women can take care of children, men can take care of children, that's fine. That's not mean, if your wife goes to work and you just taking care of the children, that's not mean, you are not stupid, no! Because what she's doing is financially- in this country, this is a big problem, financially-so what she's doing is a big part,

like going to work every day and coming, this is a really big part, you should be happy. But no. Like the men, maybe I don't know, there is some, want you to go to work, and come from work, and cook and clean and having the children and go to work too. And they're just sitting and watching T.V., turning the remote. So I don't understand but in my opinion I think this country doesn't need that. Everything here, the system, the situation, everything will tell you that the way you used to live has to be changed.

It has been argued that migration is often experienced more difficultly by men than by women as it often threatens traditional gender roles and in turn, positions of authority within the family and community. Cross-culturally, migration has been shown to negatively affect men's ability to provide financially for their family; this is understood as a deficiency in their masculinity because masculinity is almost always linked to the financial provision of the household (Ong & Peletz, 1995; Pease, 2009; Rowe, 2009). Within this context, where men already feel as if their masculinity is being threatened, women's strategies for empowerment are oftentimes understood as a signal of 'moral decay' in which women no longer respect their husbands (Turner, 2000).

Jane Kani Edward (2000; 2005) describes these dynamics between Southern Sudanese couples in refugee camps in Kenya and northern Uganda, highlighting the factors which lead women to become more open to change than men. Edward shows that changes in household structure, family unity, the prevalence of disease, and educational opportunities brought on by war all lead women to question Sudanese cultural norms and values particularly as they relate to gendered power. Conversely, Martin Timothy Rowe (2009) found that, in the face of de-masculinizing circumstances in Cairo which make it difficult for men to fulfill their financial obligations within the household, their identities become

defined as inadequate or inferior; here, men commonly externalize their frustration and unhappiness. Men were shown to place the blame for their situation on the Egyptian government and society in addition to the 'system' of refugee assistance, as opposed to themselves (for instance, for coming to Egypt). Here, it becomes clear why men may be resistant to adopting foreign or modern practices or norms, as they become directly associated with the inferiority of their own identities; whereas women may be more open to this adoption because they reveal opportunities for self-improvement and empowerment which may have been veiled within traditional gender ideologies.

This has been applied to the acceptance of foreign or modern foodways. Scholars (Gvion, 2009; Pilcher, 2002) have shown how the adoption of foreign and 'modern' foodways is gendered, specifically because in negotiating modernity and tradition, men and women also negotiate the gendered division of labour. Technologically modern cooking implements often free up time for women to engage in activities outside the home, therefore breaking down the public/private dichotomy. Sometimes, it increases the efficiency of cooking such that it allows women to sell their food in public, bringing them into the market economy. Also, the adoption of modern technology and machinery may change the nature of food production such that it then falls under the realm of men's responsibility. Therefore, men oftentimes fear the implementation of modern foods and cooking practices because they alter the domestic division of labour and threaten their power over women (See also Lind & Barham 2004; Parkin 2001; Witt 2001).

This pattern is certainly true for Southern Sudanese couples. As understood through the narratives of my female participants, men associate changing domestic roles as an intrusion of foreign values into Southern Sudanese life. In Canada, where men are understood to conceptualize their position under the law as 'lower than dogs', the house and the kitchen within it are sites of stability, traditional values, and morality. Transnational foodways are encompassed within broader shifts away from Sudanese cultural norms. Men are therefore understood as less likely to celebrate changes within foodways and are not as willing to engage in cosmopolitanism in the same sense as women. Women's cosmopolitan attitude is interpreted negatively because it is associated with women's appropriation of western values, their 'bolder attitude' and therefore lack of respect for their husbands.

Conversely, female participants in Brooks understood Sudanese cultural norms to limit them ideologically, socially and materially. As previously mentioned, women understood Sudanese society to position them 'a little bit lower' than men due to established marriage norms. This has obvious consequences relating to women's expected deferral to, and respect for their husbands.[17] Women expressed displeasure over the rigidity of Sudanese gender roles which limited their participation in work outside the home, or when allowing workforce participation, still assigned responsibility to them to do the majority of

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[17] Many have discussed the complexity with which cultural norms in the 'patriarchal belt; have been facilitated by *both* men and women with varying degrees of subjectivity (Kandiyoti, 1988); the diverse forms of patriarchy that exist worldwide cannot be essentialized into a 'west is best' mentality. However, what I aim to portray is that Southern Sudanese women feel that their liberties are better recognized and protected in Canada than in Sudan.

the housework (as described at the beginning of this section). While women do

not necessarily all like working at Lakeside, they like having the *opportunity* to

work at Lakeside, even if that freedom is born out of financial necessity.

Nonetheless, not all women in Brooks were allowed to enter paid employment.

One woman, Arienne expressed a desire to work at Lakeside in order to gain

financial freedom, to own her own car and explore her identity through paid

employment or schooling; however, her husband did not believe she should do so

(based on his beliefs about traditional gender roles) and blocked her application to

Lakeside six times. Due to this, Arienne was currently separated from her

husband. She explained her situation as such:

> …all the Sudanese women, my friends, all work. They buy a house now. And I have other friends, they work. My friend, she worked at Lakeside, she bought a car. And I come here [to Canada]; I say I need to go to school. He [her husband] doesn't want me to go to school. He tells me no, no school, no work. Just you have to stay home to make the food, clean the food, wash my clothes, iron my clothes (laughs). But you're important when you work, it's good. Or you have to go school. When you learn English, you get the English language, maybe you get work. But you know, if you don't have anything, it's not good.

While women discussed female subjugation according to gender, they also

considered it in terms of tradition. Women discussed subjugation in terms of

being told or expected to cook certain types of Sudanese food which perpetuated

family traditions, but which also limited their freedom of expression and

creativity. This likely has to do with Sudan's history of conflict in which Southern

Sudanese ethnic groups were restricted from expressing their ethnic identities,

both within the direct discourse of government policy, but also indirectly, as a

more general outcome of the chaos of war that forces resettlement and adjustment

for families at every turn (Deng, 1995; 2010). Crofts (2010) has noted the culinary

conservatism that has developed in Sudan as a consequence of this, attributing it to a strengthened desire to preserve cultural tradition in the face of the destructive forces of war. Therefore, in this sense, women's associations with Sudan encompass deferring to men, but also to tradition. Due to limitations such as these, women generally considered change as positive.

Transnational foodways encompass participant's more broadly understood association with Canada: freedom. Women conceptualize their ability to engage in transnational foodways as one of the many freedoms that come from living in Canada. As Estelle expresses, "I want to learn Italian, Chinese, Canadian [food], so I can feel free". The theme of freedom is one that reoccurs in my interviews- it represents, most obviously, freedom from harm, but also freedom to express a multifaceted, or multinational identity within a safe environment. This gets at the power that comes from being able to choose who you would like to be, which may include being able to choose to be many (perhaps cosmopolitan) things. This is also echoed in my discussion with Angelina regarding whether she will teach her daughter how to cook Sudanese food:

> Yeah if she likes it. If she don't like it, I can't do nothing for her. But in Sudan you have to, whether you like it or not. But here, because a lot of kids don't like traditional food, they like Canadian food. So maybe she- They force us in Sudan, because if you get married you have to do the same that your mom did. But right now here, if you don't want to do Sudanese food, I can't force her because she's got a choice. Maybe she don't want it. If she likes it I can teach her.

Surprisingly, many of the women in this study hold similar attitudes to Angelina regarding whether or not it was important to them that their children know how to cook or like Sudanese food. While all women wanted their children to like and to

eat Sudanese food, a large number of them said that they did not feel it was essential; instead they stressed the importance of children being able to choose what foods best suited them and hoped they would come around to Sudanese food when they were older, as adults.

Freedom of expression is also gendered. Participants generally understood that Sudan, as a place and as an ideology, limits their gender roles to traditional norms which place them in the home as subordinate to their husbands;[18] whereas Canada offers them greater flexibility to define their identities within multiple spaces, whether that be through employment or through Canadian or cosmopolitan identities, a freedom which is enforced under protection of Canadian law. As Ajak's narrative in this first paragraph of this section reveals, these changes are integrally encompassed in the creation of belonging and the making of a peaceful home.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have shown how the performance of ethnic identity is negotiated through gender. Through my participant's narratives, I demonstrate how Southern Sudanese women's incorporation of diverse cultural foodways into their culinary repertoire encompass acts of agency because in doing

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[18] This conceptualization was common amongst most women in the study; however, it must also be understood in relation to my participants' specific socio-political location. Their opinions are not necessarily representative of all Sudanese migrants, which vary across time and space. Similarly, when women make these statements, they are not always attaching judgement onto them; moreso, it may be solely a statement as to 'the way things are'. As will be discussed further in the conclusion, this subordination does not necessarily translate into a 'worse life'.

so, women garner resources which provide them with personal and cultural capital to improve their standing in their families and in their communities. Ultimately, transnational foodways allow women to assert both their identity beyond traditional gendered norms, and their right to creative culinary expression.

Nonetheless, it is important to state that while women understood their location in Canada as representative of ideological and physical freedom, the reality of their everyday lives tells a more complicated story. While women felt that Canada offered them resources to work through their lives more efficiently and that as Canadians, they had more opportunity and more choice in their lives, many also felt that women's lives are easier in Sudan. Women's lives are more relaxed in their home country as they have less to do day-to-day with help from their female relatives and servants and less financial responsibility in the household. As such, Sudan, and their homes there are idealized for some as a place where women never have to cook, instead just 'lazing' around all day (at the extreme) or as a place where they live in harmony with their house (on a more realistic level). The reality of life in Brooks often involves heated conflicts between husbands and wives over cooking dinner or doing the dishes, arguments which ultimately come down to differential attitudes towards gendered and ethnic identities, specifically how they relate to respect and propriety. Clara describes this tension:

> In my culture, if you ask your husband [to help with housework] or even give
> instructions, it's not acceptable. It's like you order him, or command him to do
> things, which, in the house is disrespectful for men. They feel it is an insult.
> Why did you tell me to do this? Who's the wife in this house? Me or you? Or
> who is the husband in this house, to give instructions? And a lot of women that

came to Canada, they find it very, very hard, especially for people with kids and work. Because you need to bring income, like his income it's not enough, so you want to go and help too. So you kind of expect him to help you and at the same time, he's not responsible. Men- it comes down to your relationship and commitment- some men are like, why do I have to help? I don't care. Whatever, I don't mind what's happening, you know. And sometimes the woman gets, like after a long, long, long endurance, and sometimes she can't digest any more, and she will be like, you know what? I'm tired, I'm sick. I don't even feel myself anymore. I need rest! I need to come home and not feel stressed! And you kind of start to speak up, and that causes a lot of families problems in Canada and North America. You see women and men separating, and sometimes hiding, all this stuff. That's why we fight in Canada or North America. And that causes a lot of problems, *a lot* of problems. (original emphasis)

As such, divorce, addiction and abuse are very real realities of Southern Sudanese family life in Brooks.[19] These narratives ultimately get at the tensions inherent in how ideological shifts are materialized within the daily lives of migrants, in addition to the cost that comes from resisting tradition. Therefore, some may question the extent to which women's freedom in Canada is circumscribed by their financial obligations outside the home. I do not negate this assertion; however, I suggest that it is the opportunities which culinary, financial, and gendered freedom provide which participants recognize and appreciate, and therefor define as freedom.

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[19] John Holtzman (2007) provides an excellent analysis of the complex effects of changing gender roles on marriage and relationship between Sudanese husbands and wives in North America. His analysis is specific to the Nuer though is relevant to many within the Southern Sudanese diaspora.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In analyzing the complex meanings surrounding Southern Sudanese women's food habits, it is clear that foodways are an important avenue for studying identity. Food is an integral component of Southern Sudanese women in Brooks' ethnic identity as it situates belonging within the personal and collective memories of both individuals and groups. Yet these foodways become simultaneously recreated within the context of global migration and movement. Settlement in Canada, complex migration histories, and the multicultural nature of Brooks all contribute to openness, flexibility, and creativity in Southern Sudanese women's foodways such that they also evoke cosmopolitanism. As such, Southern Sudanese women's relationship to food is an ambivalent one; simultaneous food maintenance and re-creation can be seen to represent women's understandings about themselves within intersecting cosmopolitan and local ethnic identities.

Women demonstrate agency when they utilize food in this manner because while doing so, they dynamically create belonging within diverse cultural traditions. While women's memories and experiences in Sudan are wrought with violence and disconnection, women did not define their homes or their histories through this conflict; they showed resilience by highlighting the beauty of their Southern Sudanese identities while also actively looking to both the present and the future and defining themselves beyond it. Likewise, transnational foodways provide women prestige and allow them to address quotidian challenges and individual and collective objectives in day-to-day practice. In so doing, women also challenge prevailing gender norms and ideologies which they feel limit them.

While foodways cannot be wholly determined to be an empowering domain for Southern Sudanese women, they nonetheless create spaces of empowerment within their day-to-day food practices. As Abarca (2006, p. 36-37) has shown:

> while many women continue to challenge the ideological limitations imposed on their lives, to say that these social conditions can be completely erased, or transcended, negates the acute tension many of us feel as we struggle to negotiate (and sometimes distinguish) between our rights and our obligations, between our privileges and our responsibilities, between our desires for modernity and our grip on tradition.

While women conceptualize food work as a burden, increasingly endured in addition to paid employment, they nonetheless identified transnational foodways as an enactment of the freedom they feel in the diaspora. Transnational foodways represents women's freedom to partake in a diversity of foodways, gender roles and identities available in the Canadian diaspora. Transnational foodways signify their ability to be *both* Sudanese and Canadian, to take what they want from diverse traditions and make them their own, ultimately, to be cosmopolitan. While the result of that cosmopolitanism is not without conflict or tension, what is nonetheless apparent is that as Southern Sudanese women in Brooks appropriate transnational foodways, and with them, cosmopolitan identities, they negotiate the power encompassed in their ethnic, gendered identities.

Return

Because cosmopolitan identification is gendered, it would seem that Southern Sudanese women may hold different attitudes about returning to an independent Southern Sudan than men. And this is the case for this population.

When I returned to Brooks in January of 2011, the referendum in Sudan had just taken place and the question of return was on everybody's minds. I therefore chose to ask participants whether they could see themselves returning to Sudan if peace was realized. The majority of the women at that time said that they would not immediately return to Southern Sudan, while they said that their husbands or male relatives would. This is a complex decision involving numerous intersecting factors; nonetheless, women cited services and skills development alongside belonging as reasons for remaining in Canada for the near future.

Women felt that Canada offered them the best resources and opportunities to raise their children. They noted that even if there was peace in Sudan, it would still not have the infrastructure that Canada had to successfully raise their children in. Women cited education, healthcare, and road systems as three areas that still remain highly under-developed in Southern Sudan. Therefore, women wanted to stay in Canada to raise their children and take advantage of the high quality of services available in the country. Some women posited that they may return to Sudan once their children were grown and had skill sets to allow them to succeed on their own. Some women also noted that they would be required to return home when their parents reached old age because they would need to care for them as is customary in the area.

Women believed that Southern Sudanese in the diaspora had an obligation to return to South Sudan at some point to help the fledgling country grow and prosper; however, they felt that they personally did not have any money or skills appropriate for this project. Women felt that they had not yet been able to acquire

education or skills that would be needed in Sudan. Meatpacking is neither relevant

nor required in Sudan, nor is the caregiving work women who work outside

Lakeside perform. This hints at the tension in women's ideas about freedom

described in this thesis; women's ability to take advantage of the freedoms they

associate with Canada are constrained, often by their financial obligations to their

families. However, it also suggests some deeper gendered motivations and

meanings surrounding return. Men's skills were likely not significantly more

developed than women's as they too had mostly worked at Lakeside. It can only

be hypothesized then why men deemed themselves capable of returning to Sudan

while women did not: perhaps their physical power is determined to be more

appropriate for labour, construction, and military work likely important in

rebuilding Sudan; however, in reality, men's and women's physical abilities are

not significantly disparate. This decision therefore likely also has to do with

gender norms surrounding appropriate work in Sudan, in addition to deeper

motivations and desires for returning or not returning to Sudan.

And this gets back to my findings. Women's decision about returning to

Sudan also had to do with their feelings of connection or belonging to the country.

Women all felt attached to Canada for varying reasons, friends and social

networks, as well as adjustment and feelings of belonging encompassed in social

norms and customs which they are becoming used to. Generally, women felt at

home in Canada and maintained feelings of belonging to the country, perhaps

more so than men. As argued in this thesis, foodways are one component to the

creation of transnational, cosmopolitan belonging and the making of home. As

Clara explains, this is differentially gendered in Canada:

> The ladies try to search, like go out to the society, like the mainstream society, try to open up. They are so curious, the women. But the men are like, oh we came to Canada. We just came physically, but not emotionally, or not mentally. All our brain, all our minds are focusing back home, what's going on. But ladies came to this country, western countries and think, ok, I come here, I bring my family here, my kids are safe here. At least I know nothing's going to bomb us tonight or something like that. I know the police are curfewing the street. And if I fall, if something happens, I can call 911. At least somebody is there for me if I need help. Women say, ok, what is the definition of the healthy home, to live? I have all this security, I have peace of mind, what else do I need? That's the perspective of the mothers who came here, who bring their kids, especially having been through hardship for a long time. Eventually, this destination, they think, ok, this is a home. I will try to make sure I know about this society so that I know how people live. I know what people don't like, so that I can adjust. Because they see this as home and they want their kids to grow up in this society. It doesn't mean that they don't want to go back home. But it's like, I came here for a purpose. And why not? Canada can be a part of my life. It's part of my country. I'm Sudanese by birth but Canada is my second country. And so they try to take that privilege because the Canadian government tries to offer them equal rights as citizens.

Safety, freedom and equality are all encompassed in women's

understandings of Canada specifically and their homes there; however, if women

returned to Sudan they would likely be expected to relinquish some of the

freedoms they are used to in Canada. This was a concern running through the

women who determined that they would return to Sudan. For example, when

talking to Mary, she posited that she, as kin to many high ranking SPLM, was

going to return to Southern Sudan; however, she also posited that her husband

could take multiple wives once they returned (as is customary for men of money

and status). She expressed concern that she couldn't imagine having to share her

husband and determined that, if she had any say, she was going to remain his sole

wife. Gendered equality therefore may be a factor in women's decision about return.

In discussing belonging and return, women ultimately demonstrated the cosmopolitan nature of their identities. This is evident when talking to the women who determined that they would return to Sudan; these women established that when they returned to Sudan, they would not lose their connections to Canada. For example, Amna, who said that she will return to Sudan, will take her connections to Canada with her. She exemplifies her cosmopolitanism attitude by maintaining that she has 'two countries', Canada and Sudan, and that when she returns to Sudan, Canada will still remain her home:

> If ever we are back home or we are here, it's still the same. Maybe it's a different place, but it's the same thing. I think we still can make like, I don't know how to say it, but what I'm thinking is that we can put the same thing in the two hands like that. This one and the other are almost the same. Maybe we just have different places… Many people tell you I can't go back home, but for me, I can go back home. But I still, I have the things I take from Canada in my heart. And if you are alive, and if you have your mind, and if you have money, you can go anywhere. If I go back home and I have money, I can come here to visit. This is still my country, its open for me. They give me everything, they give me freedom. I still have rights here in Canada. So nobody can say like this one is forever like that, back home or Canada. Still we can come back and go. We need to go [to Sudan], we have our kids, we have our self too. You know, even if you come here old enough, still you can forget someday, if you just sit in one place, you can forget…Our place is a little bit in danger of war, but your place is your place. You can't forget. And Canada give us everything, our freedom, our life, our hope, everything! Nobody can forget Canada or the way we are here, everything, the food, the life, and the people.

'Having two countries' was a common theme for women in Brooks. Women felt that in an ideal world, they would travel back and forth, occupying homes in the both Sudan and Canada. This indicates again, the freedom which women find in their displacement. Women cherish the freedom to be both Sudanese and

Canadian; freedom to express their cosmopolitan identities and move freely

through them. Nonetheless, the reality of women to move totally free through

those identities is constrained by finances, something that perhaps cosmopolitans

in the more traditional sense are not as limited by. Women's decisions about

returning to Sudan or staying in Canada nonetheless depend on numerous, often

conflicting factors relating to how they define a home. All women felt that they

could not choose to spend all of their lives in one country or the other; their

choices surrounding the question of return instead revolved around where they

wanted their home to be 'for now'.

Directions for Future Research

This thesis raises opportunities for future research on emerging national

and multiethnic discourse in South Sudan, Southern Sudanese refugee

experiences, cosmopolitanism, and gendered freedom. Firstly, it will be

important for future research to investigate the implications of a peaceful,

independent South Sudan, if it is realized, on women, families, and their

foodways. Due to the projections put forth in this thesis, independence for South

Sudan will draw a large number of men home, leaving single mothers in Canada.

It will be important for researchers, government, and service agencies to be

attuned and aware of the needs or challenges of these women.

Additionally, it will be important to examine the effects of the return of

likely hundreds of thousands of largely multinational citizens from the diaspora

back to Sudan. It will be interesting to investigate how the experiences of these citizens outside of Sudan translate back to the country. One component of this is food. Aloya mentioned to me in our interview that a Cuban restaurant, *Little Havana*, has opened up in Juba (the proposed capital of South Sudan) offering Cuban food and culture such as salsa dancing. It will be interesting to examine how this and other instances of multiculturalism show themselves in the minds and practices of returning refugees.

Additionally, Caroline Faria (2010) posits that Southern Sudanese women are placed in a similarly contradictory position as the women in this study in regards to the discourse and development of a new Southern Sudanese nation. Like the women in this study, 'the new Southern Sudanese woman' must straddle the ideals of tradition and modernity, to maintain conservative gender roles as a mother to future generations of South Sudanese, yet also embrace educational and career aspirations in order to represent "the new nation as true to its South Sudanese values while also orientated, as the new Government of South Sudan is, to the West" (Faria, 2010, p. 225). More research will be therefore necessary to further investigate the impact of this discourse on the lives of women both in Sudan and in the diaspora while South Sudan develops as a nation.

Future research on this topic should also more rigorously investigate the diversity of Southern Sudanese refugee foodways in Canada. It will be interesting to examine whether the findings of this study are a product of the distinct socio-political context of Brooks and/or the age set of women or if they can be extrapolated to others within the Southern Sudanese diaspora in Canada. Future

research could broaden the demographics to include recent immigrant as well as elder women such as Lydia to investigate whether these participants demonstrate similar ambivalences in their foodways and with them, their identities. Further research on African foodways is essential to address the gaps in both the academic and popular literature on this topic (Tettey, 2005), as well as to challenge the stereotypes surrounding what and who a refugee or a Southern Sudanese refugee is (Malkki, 1995). Additionally, research from across Canada is necessary address whether the multicultural context of Brooks is significant enough to produce uniquely rural cosmopolitanisms.

Another component to developing a comprehensive understanding of Southern Sudanese refugee foodways includes the experiences of men. Research into this area could investigate whether the women in this study's assertions about men match Southern Sudanese men's understandings. The narratives of men are important as foodways are becoming an increasingly important part of their lives. For some men this involves negotiating gendered divisions of labour with their partners, and for others, it means engaging in foodways for the first time. As Southern Sudanese men initially seek refuge in Canada, they often come without spouses and with few relatives. Therefore, many men must cook for themselves with little to no prior experience or training. This is a serious adjustment as the film, *God Grew Tired of Us* poignantly shows. Research into migrant male foodways is necessary to develop a better understanding of gendered experiences of migration.

Additionally, it will be important to further investigate cosmopolitan practices among Southern Sudanese and other immigrant and lower classed groups. This is necessary to better understand the extent to which Southern Sudanese women's ideas and practices encompass 'actually existing', 'tactical' and more traditional forms of cosmopolitanism as well as what exactly distinguishes these forms. We need to better determine the relationship between these types of identities and the extent to which they are accessed and interpreted by varying ethnic, gendered, and classed groups (Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Devadason, 2010; Robbins, 1998).

Lastly, future research should address the relationship between power, agency and freedom within this population. There is a tension running throughout this thesis regarding how women define freedom, and the extent to which women are 'free' to participate in the opportunities they attribute to Canada. This tension should be further investigated to more fully understand how structure and agency work together to determine action within this context.

Ultimately, this thesis works with other research to investigate the meaning of migration, power, and identity through food. I have shown that this is not a straightforward endeavour as food meanings and practices vary by individual and by context, oftentimes gaining added meaning from their ambivalences. For Southern Sudanese women in Brooks, food signifies many things: it means tradition and stability, yet it also means diversity and innovation; it represents oppression and obligation but also freedom. These meanings, while seemingly opposing, mix and intermingle in unique and at times, complementary

ways in the lives of these refugee women. And it is in navigating these meanings that this thesis has materialized. Through the narratives of my participants, I have presented one piece of a vast and varied puzzle portraying what it means to be a Southern Sudanese refugee woman in Canada.

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Appendix A. Recipes

Kammunia

Kammunia is a sauce common throughout almost all of Sudan. It is a celebratory dish usually only made for special occasions. It requires a lot of time and energy to cook and groups of women oftentimes cook it together for this reason.

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Boil intestines of either lamb, goat or beef (lamb being the best and beef being the worst) in a large pot of water with a little salt and a little oil. Cook for approximately 1 hour. Drain and cut into small, square pieces. This can be done with a knife or with scissors. Keep the water that the intestines were boiled in.

Fry onion in some oil until the onion is soft and brown. Meanwhile chop beef shank into small, square cubes the same size as the intestines and add to the onion. Add salt and 6 cubes of knoor beef bullion. Cook until the meat is browned. Add the water that was left over from boiling the intestines along with a bit more salt. Cover and let cook for about another 2 hours or until the meat is soft.

At this point add the intestines back into the pot. Add 1 cinnamon stick, 3 pieces of galingale, 1 tbsp. of ground caraway, and a green pepper, cut in half. These are added to reduce the smell of the honeycomb and to add flavour. Cook for approximately another 30 minutes. Add 4 small cans of tomato paste. Cook for another 20 minutes. Add the mashed cloves of 1 bulb of garlic (this is mashed with a little bit of salt). Cook for another hour or more. Serve with aseeda, kisra, injera, or gurrasa, with shata if preferred.

Maschi

Maschi is an everyday dish common throughout most of Sudan and also in Egypt. It is composed of vegetables, usually tomatoes but also increasingly eggplant, zucchini, sweet peppers and potatoes stuffed with rice and ground beef.

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Cut the tops off of four vegetables. Remove the seeds so that vegetables are hollow on the inside with a small circular opening at the top. Prepare about 1 ½ cups of rice in 1 cup of water on the stove. Add a dash of salt and a drop of oil to the rice to boost its flavour. Cook it until all the water is dissolved but the rice is still a little underdone. Meanwhile fry 500g of ground beef over medium high heat with 1 grated onion, 1 tsp. pepper, 1 tsp. curry, 1 tbsp. salt, and 2 tbsp. chicken stock. Add 3 or 4 cloves of garlic midway through cooking. Cook until the meat is browned. Mix the meat with the rice and add a handful of chopped parsley. Stuff the peppers, eggplant and tomatoes with the meat/rice mixture.

In a large pot add a large amount of oil so that it is about 1 finger deep in the pot. Mix 1.5 small cans of tomato paste with some water and add this to the oil. Also add 1 stick of cinnamon and 1 piece of galingale to the oil. Place the stuffed vegetables in the oil/tomato mixture and cook over medium heat, covered, for at least half an hour, until the vegetables are soft. Stir constantly so that the tomato paste does not stick to the pot.

Khudara Mafruka

Khudara Mafruka is a green sauce made with molokia, a spinach-like vegetable. It gets its name from the vegetable (Khudara means molokia in Arabic) and the type of stew; a mafruka is a sauce made without tomato paste. It also gets its name from the utensil (the mafraga) used to blend it, giving it a smooth, stringy consistency. One can make Bamia Mafruka by substituting the molokia for okra, and not adding the atrun.

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Rinse and cut beef shanks into large cubes. Add to a pot with 2 chopped onions, ¼ cup of oil and enough water so that the beef pieces are close to but not quite submerged. Add 3 cubes of Maggi beef bouillon, 3 tbsp. of powdered Maggi chicken stock, ½ stick of cinnamon, 10 cardamom seeds, 1 tsp. of fresh ground pepper, and 2 tsp. of salt. Add 2 bags of frozen molokia. Cook for about 45 minutes over medium high heat, semi covered until the meat is soft.

Once the meat is soft, remove the cinnamon stick and the cardamom seeds. Remove the meat and set it aside. Blend the remaining mixture with either a blender or a mafraga so that the molokia is broken into very small pieces and the mixture is smooth. Add the meat back to the pot along with 2 tbsp. of mashed garlic. Add atrun to make the stew stringy and slippery. To add this, place about 1 tsp. of the atrun in ½ a cup of hot water and stir to dissolve it, pour the dissolved mixture into the pot while straining out the grainy, un-dissolved pieces. One may also add approximately 1 tbsp. of dill at this point if desired. Bring to a boil again and cook for at least 10 minutes.

Serve over aseeda, kisra, injera or gurrasa, with shata if preferred.

Khoftah

Khoftah are Sudanese meatballs.

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Form ground beef into small balls. To make meatballs, mix ground beef with dill, garlic, poultry seasoning, bread crumbs and a little bit of salt, cumin, and pepper. Roll these into balls the size of small golf balls or so.

Once meatballs are formed, fry 2 onions in oil and add approximately half a can of tomato paste. Add the meatballs and fry them with the onion, tomato and a little bit of water. Then cook it slowly in the oven on medium heat for at least an hour. During the last 2-3 minutes of cooking, add green onion, parsley and sweet pepper.

Salatat-aswoat

Salatat Aswot is an eggplant dish seasoned with peanut butter and lemon juice.

Peel and soften 3 medium sized eggplants either by steaming, frying it, or baking them. Once the eggplants are soft mash them.

Fry half an onion in oil. Add water and green and red peppers. After fried for approximately 30 minutes, add 2 tsp. of tomato sauce. Mix these together with the eggplant until it is a smooth, thick consistency. Then add 2 tbsp. of peanut butter and approximately 3 tbsp. of lemon juice in addition to a selection of spices, likely cumin, dill, cardamom, galingale or maggi stock if desired. If unsalted peanut butter is used then add some extra salt but if salted is used then it does not need any extra.

Sudanese Tea

This is how Sudanese tea is typically made in the diaspora. However, Sudanese have a strong sweet tooth and usually add between two and five teaspoons of sugar to it.

Bring about 2-3 cardamom seeds, 2 or 3 cloves and a stick of cinnamon to boil in a pot of water. It is good to rinse the cinnamon off in water to clean any debris from the stick. The cinnamon stick may also be broken into pieces if the drinker would like to drink the tea right away and likes it strong. Also, to more quickly release the flavour of the cardamom prick the bottom of it with a pin to so that it may more quickly release its flavour. Let the spices boil in the water for at least 5 minutes.

Once steeped, pour water over black, red or mint tea into clear, glass mugs. The flavour of the tea changes depending on whether the drinker chooses mint tea or Lipton, Red Rose, Tetley or Earl Grey teas. Powdered milk is served with the tea if it is the preference of the drinker.

Appendix B

Interview Script

1. Can you share with me your story of leaving Sudan and coming to Canada? (Probe: refugee camp, length of time in Canada, refugee camp(s))

2. Please describe for me what you would normally eat in a day in Sudan. (Probe: meal structure, snacks, who prepares food, with whom eat, food insecurity, food rules)

3. Can you explain to me how eating has changed since you moved from your home in Sudan to the refugee camp, and then to Canada? (Probe: changes in meal structure, new foods, lack of availability of some foods, changes in food preparation roles, refugee camps)

4. How does your household make decisions about what to eat and who will cook it? Has this changed at all? (Probe: role of children, elders if applicable, gender/age roles)

5. What is important to you when choosing what to eat?

6. How do you feel about the price of food in Canada?

7. Where do you go to buy your food here in Brooks? Why?

8. Can you explain to me how you feel about eating outside the home? (Probe: eating at friends/relatives, restaurants, how often eat out, kinds of restaurants)

9. I know there is a fairly large amount of people from Sudan here in Brooks. Can you describe what it is like to live in a small town with so many fellow Sudanese? (Probe: positive and negative consequences, south and north Sudanese)

10. Can you describe to me feasts or gatherings in which community members cook and eat together? (Probe: kind of events, frequency, how are similar/different from practices in Sudan)

11. What does it mean to be a woman where you come from? How has this changed with migration to Canada? (Probe: status, decision making, roles, impact of refugee camp)

12. Where do you call home? Why?

Appendix C

Interview Informed Consent Information Script:

Changing foodways: a gendered study of refugees in Brooks, Alberta

Background:

Since 1996, when a large multinational company took control of the beef processing plant in Brooks, Alberta, there have been a large number of people recruited to work in this factory, including many newcomers to Canada. This means that many newcomers now live in Brooks. The researcher, Merin Oleschuk will work with one of these migrant groups, Sudanese women. The study's research goal is to see if changes in the preparation, production and distribution of food have affected family roles and food practices, as well as how such possible changes fit in with the larger community customs.

Food is important to the study of culture because how, why and what people eat is a part of one's identity, such as their gender, age, culture and social class. As women are mainly responsible for feeding the family, they pass on cultural values through the food they put on the table. This role is felt in women's lives in many different ways ranging from pride, to power, to necessity, or oppression. As migration changes roles around household work, power relations and meanings surrounding them shift at the same time. Your participation in this study will add to the researcher's knowledge about the ways in which food functions in the family and the larger community.

Contact Information:

Researcher: Merin Oleschuk

Researcher's Supervisor: Dr. Helen Vallianatos

You are welcome to ask any questions, at any time, regarding any aspect of this study. You may ask **Merin Oleschuk, Phone: 403-363-9939**, Email: oleschuk@ualberta.ca, or

Dr. Helen Vallianatos, Phone: (780)-492-0132.

This study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact Dr. Marko Zivkovic at (780)-492-5352.

Study Procedure:

You will be asked to participate in an interview for this study. The interview will take about 1.5 hours. The interview may be tape recorded. The only person who will listen to the recording is the researcher, Merin Oleschuk.

Potential Benefits:

By participating in this study, you will provide important knowledge about your migration experiences to the researcher, to social service agencies, and to Canadian society. This knowledge can better inform Canadians of the needs and challenges of your community.

Potential Harms:

Participation in this research may cause you some inconvenience due to the time involved. Also, please be aware that some of the questions in the interview may be personal and sensitive. You do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with, and may refuse to answer any question you wish. If you feel worried or uncomfortable about your participation in this study, please tell the researcher as soon as you know. If this occurs and is a problem for you, the researcher can provide you with information on cultural support services.

Confidentiality

Measures will be taken so that your confidentiality can be assured to the extent of the law. Your confidentiality will be ensured in a number of ways: Any tapes, notes and interview records will be marked with a code number and/or false name, and stored in a locked filing cupboard. Your name will be recorded only on the voice recorder and/or on this consent form if you chose to receive a copy of the summary findings, and on one master list that links your name to your code number and/or false name. The oral consent, this consent form, and master list will be stored in a separate locked filing cupboard, accessible only to members of the research team. Any computer files relating to this research will be stored on secret word protected computers only the researcher can access.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may say no to participate or leave the study at any time. You have the right to withdraw at anytime without punishment. If you do decide to withdraw, the information you gave the researcher will not be used in any form.

Future use of data:
The information you provide in this study will be used by the researcher for her Master's thesis at the University of Alberta. The information from this study may also be used in research reports to social service organizations in Brooks, in order for them to understand your needs better.

Consent:
If you wish to receive a summary of the study findings, please complete the 'Study Findings' section below with your name and either your email or postal address.

Study Findings:

Yes, I would like to get a summary of the study findings. Please send the summary to this address (either an email or postal address):

Appendix D

Group Interview Informed Consent Information Script:

Changing foodways: a gendered study of refugees in Brooks, Alberta

Background:

Since 1996, when a large multinational company took control of the beef processing plant in Brooks, Alberta, there have been a large number of people recruited to work in this factory, including many newcomers to Canada. This means that many newcomers now live in Brooks. The researcher, Merin Oleschuk will work with one of these migrant groups, Sudanese women. The study's research goal is to see if changes in the preparation, production and distribution of food have affected family roles and food practices, as well as how such possible changes fit in with the larger community customs.

Food is important to the study of culture because how, why and what people eat is a part of one's identity, such as their gender, age, culture and social class. As women are mainly responsible for feeding the family, they pass on cultural values through the food they put on the table. This role is felt in women's lives in many different ways ranging from pride, to power, to necessity, or oppression. As migration changes roles around household work, power relations and meanings surrounding them shift at the same time. Your participation in this study will add to the researcher's knowledge about the ways in which food functions in the family and the larger community.

Contact Information:

<u>Researcher:</u> Merin Oleschuk

<u>Researcher's Supervisor:</u> Dr. Helen Vallianatos

You are welcome to ask any questions, at any time, regarding any aspect of this study. You may ask **Merin Oleschuk, Phone: 403-363-9939**, Email: oleschuk@ualberta.ca, or

Dr. Helen Vallianatos, Phone: (780)-492-0132.

This study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact Dr. Marko Zivkovic at (780)-492-5352.

Study Procedure:

You will be asked to participate in an interview for this study. The interview will take about 2.5 hours. The interview may be tape recorded. The only person who will listen to the recording is the researcher, Merin Oleschuk.

Potential Benefits:

By participating in this study, you will provide important knowledge about your migration experiences to the researcher, to social service agencies, and to Canadian society. This knowledge can better inform Canadians of the needs and challenges of your community.

Potential Harms:

Participation in this research may cause you some inconvenience due to the time involved. Also, please be aware that some of the questions in the interview may be personal and sensitive. You do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with, and may refuse to answer any question you wish. If you feel worried or uncomfortable about your participation in this study, please tell the researcher as soon as you know. If this occurs and is a problem for you, the researcher can provide you with information on cultural support services.

Confidentiality

Measures will be taken so that your confidentiality can be assured to the extent of the law. Your confidentiality will be ensured in a number of ways: Any tapes, notes and interview records will be marked with a code number and/or false name, and stored in a locked filing cupboard. Your name will be recorded only on the voice recorder and/or on this consent form if you chose to receive a copy of the summary findings, and on one master list that links your name to your code number and/or false name. The oral consent, this consent form, and master list will be stored in a separate locked filing cupboard, accessible only to members of the research team. Any computer files relating to this research will be stored on secret word protected computers only the researcher can access. Because other persons are present at the interview, your confidentiality can not be guaranteed. However, all participants will be asked not to talk about what was said in this interview to people outside of the group. Also, please do the same for your fellow research participants and do not discuss their details with others outside of the interview.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may say no to participate or leave the study at any time. You have the right to withdraw at anytime without punishment. If you do decide to withdraw, the information you gave the researcher will not be used in any form.

Future use of data:
The information you provide in this study will be used by the researcher for her Master's thesis at the University of Alberta. The information from this study may also be used in research reports to social service organizations in Brooks, in order for them to understand your needs better.

Consent:

If you wish to receive a summary of the study findings, please complete the 'Study Findings' section below with your name and either your email or postal address.

Yes, I would like to get a summary of the study findings. Please send the summary to this address (either an email or postal address):

Figure A
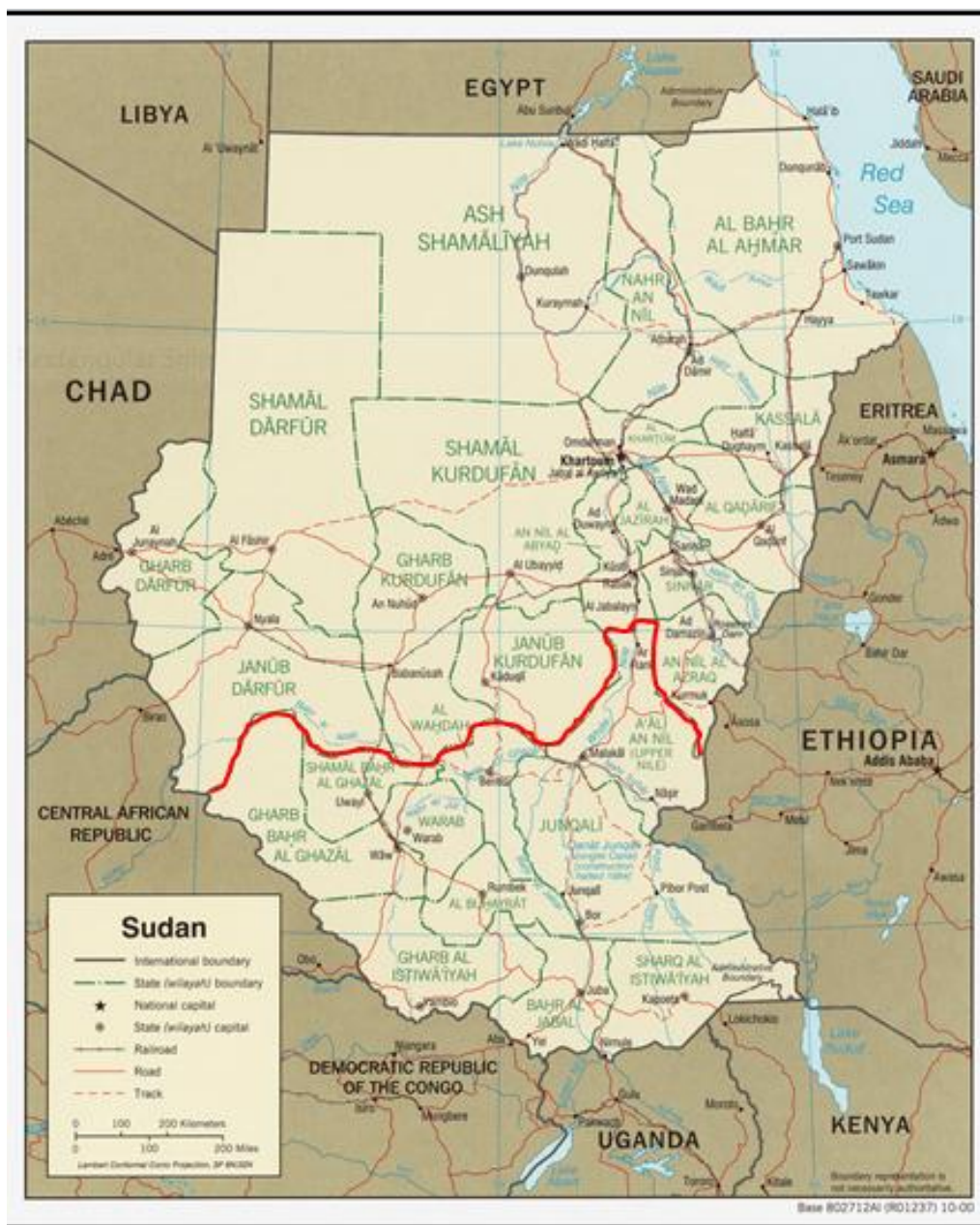
©Merin Oleschuk, 2011. Modified from: ©2000 United States.Central Intelligence Agency. G8310

Figure B

Edmonton

Calgary

Brooks

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