

Anthropology of Gastronomies

“Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are”

Savarin (1825)

These defining words spoken in a time of dynamic changes within gastronomy arguably shaped the ideological consumption of food.

This book chapter aims to discuss how the anthropology of gastronomies as a concept has always been of significance. It is only recently that the subject has risen from the fringe of academic inquiry to a more prominent position within the discipline, moving away from the simple listing of the constitutive aspects of the diet. (Herrmann and Gruneberg, 1993; Shimp, 1994; Sternberg and Grigorenko, 1997; Straughan and Roberts, 1999; Wagner, 2003; Wells, 1993).

Furthermore, the chapter will show how food anthropology is embedded within cultures and has differing ideologies and meanings. Levi-Strauss, (1966) suggested that cognitive ability and consumption is based upon the tribal knowledge and examination on cultural habits such as behaviour and the way people think, classification patterns and their knowledge is a reflection of their collective experiences. The chapter aims to discuss the current and potential further implications of anthropology of gastronomies using 3 key themes/questions:

- Can gastronomies be simply classified under an anthropological umbrella?
- Is there a picture of our concern or apathy when it involves food?
- If they can be proved can we truly determine anthropologies of gastronomies on a planet which now expresses personal representation and national identity with the food policy and the food it consumes?

Food anthropology is not strictly limited to investigating one particular food ritual and its interaction with culture. Many studies have focused on fast foods and fast food restaurants and issues of globalization, trans-nationalism and offering of a contrived product described as authentic.

Representations of gastronomies are also identified in the hermeneutics of its text (Tressider, 2011), (interpreted in several ways based on an individual's ethnocentrism and experiences)

Keywords: Anthropology; gastronomy; culture; cognitive psychology; identity; representation; hermeneutics.