Jagiellonian University in Kraków

Faculty of International and Political Studies

Institute of European Studies

The (Re)Making of Georgianness: Culinary Glocalisation, Migration and Authenticity in Georgian Restaurants in Kraków

CEERES Master's Thesis

Ottilie Rose Tabberer

UoG: 2907843T

UJ: 1209402

This dissertation was written under the supervision of

Dr Kinga Gajda (Uniwersytet Jagielloński)

Dr Catherine Helen Gibson (University of Tartu)

August 2025

Kraków, Poland

Field of Study: European Studies

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of:

Magister (mgr) of European Studies (specialty: Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies), Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland;

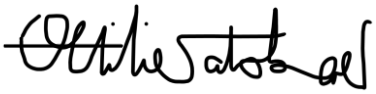
International Master's (IntM) in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies: University of Glasgow, UK;

Master of Arts in Social Sciences (MA) in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies: University of Tartu, Estonia.

Word count of the dissertation: 24,896

Authorship Declaration: I have researched and written this dissertation independently. All the views of other authors, as well as data from literary and primary sources, have been cited. Ethics approval is included in the Appendix.

Ottilie Tabberer



25/08/2025

Non-exclusive licence to reproduce the thesis and make the thesis public

I, Ottilie Tabberer ,

1. grant the University of Tartu a free permit (non-exclusive licence) to

   reproduce, for the purpose of preservation, including for adding to the digital archives of the University of Tartu until the expiry of the term of copyright, my thesis

   The (Re)Making of Georgianness: Culinary Glocalisation, Migration and Authenticity in Georgian Restaurants in Kraków ,

   supervised by Dr Kinga Gajda (Uniwersytet Jagielloński) and Dr Catherine Helen Gibson (University of Tartu) ;

2. grant the University of Tartu the permit to make the thesis specified in point 1 available to the public via the web environment of the University of Tartu, including via the digital archives, under the Creative Commons licence CC BY NC ND 4.0, which allows, by giving appropriate credit to the author, to reproduce, distribute the work and communicate it to the public, and prohibits the creation of derivative works and any commercial use of the work from ***25/08/2025*** until the expiry of the term of copyright;
3. am aware that the author retains the rights specified in points 1 and 2;
4. confirm that granting the non-exclusive licence does not infringe other persons' intellectual property rights or rights arising from the personal data protection legislation.

25/08/2025

Abstract

In recent years, Georgian restaurants have become a notable feature of Poland's urban foodscape, despite the absence of strong historical, colonial or large-scale migratory ties between Georgia and Poland. This dissertation explores how and why Georgian cuisine is travelling and transforming in the Polish context, focusing on the proliferation of Georgian-themed eateries and their possible roles as sites of cultural negotiation, belonging, adaptation and performance. The study draws on data gathered through several qualitative fieldwork methods, including interviews with Georgian and non-Georgian restaurant owners, Google Maps restaurant reviews and participant observation, using thematic analysis as the primary analytical method, to uncover how cuisines travel and how 'Georgianness' is (re)constructed and performed in another context. Using Kraków as the case study, this research contributes to broader discussions in transnational migration and culinary mobilisation and hybridity, offering insights into how cuisine becomes a travelling form of ethnic identity, oftentimes adapting and evolving to its glocal context.

Key terms: ethnic food; Georgian restaurants; transnationality; diaspora; glocalism; embodied space; culinary authenticity

Streszczenie

W ostatnich latach restauracje gruzińskie stały się charakterystycznym elementem miejskiego krajobrazu gastronomicznego Polski, pomimo braku silnych więzi historycznych, kolonialnych lub migracyjnych między Gruzją a Polską. Niniejsza rozprawa bada, w jaki sposób i dlaczego kuchnia gruzińska podróżuje i przekształca się w kontekście polskim, koncentrując się na rozprzestrzenianiu się restauracji o tematyce gruzińskiej i ich potencjalnej roli jako miejsc negocjacji kulturowych, przynależności, adaptacji i performansu. Badanie opiera się na danych zebranych za pomocą kilku jakościowych metod badawczych, w tym wywiadów z gruzińskimi i niegruzińskimi właścicielami restauracji, recenzji restauracji w Google Maps oraz obserwacji uczestniczącej, wykorzystując analizę tematyczną jako podstawową metodę analityczną, aby odkryć, w jaki sposób kuchnie podróżują i jak „gruzińskość" jest (re)konstruowana i prezentowana w innym kontekście. Wykorzystując Kraków jako

studium przypadku, niniejsze badanie przyczynia się do szerszej dyskusji na temat migracji transnarodowej oraz mobilizacji i hybrydyzacji kulinarnej, oferując wgląd w to, jak kuchnia staje się podróżującą formą tożsamości etnicznej, często dostosowując się i ewoluując w zależności od kontekstu glokalnego.

Kluczowe pojęcia: kuchnia etniczna; restauracje gruzińskie; transnarodowość; diaspora; glokalizm; przestrzeń ucieleśniona; autentyczność kulinarna

Acknowledgements

With my most heartfelt thanks to my brilliant supervisors, Dr Kinga Gajda and Dr Catherine Helen Gibson, for their invaluable support and inspiration. Their guidance and enthusiasm helped me to believe in my capabilities and this project. I also wish to thank the three interviewees who gave up their time and insights, especially the kind Owners of Restaurant A who continue to provide sunflower-seed baklava and lemon cream dessert on the house whenever I visit their fantastic restaurant. Finally, thank you to my flatmate, Abdelrahman Barakat, for the companionship and (mad) moral support; my love, Jonas, for the advice and patience; and my mum, who always listens and understands.

სტუმარი ღვთისაა (stumari ghvtisaa)
The guest is from God, Georgian proverb

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Relevance

In almost every European city, Italian, Chinese or Japanese restaurants are a common feature. Centuries of the movement of goods and people have increased ethnic diversity in cities, increasing the appetite for a more diverse range of ingredients and bringing about changing tastes and hybrid recipes (DeSoucey 2010). At the same time, globalised food networks have emerged due to various factors and differ from region to region. Depending on where you are, you might come across many Indian restaurants in the United Kingdom and French bakeries in Senegal, a result of colonial links, or Turkish supermarkets in Germany, a result of mass labour migration since the 1960s. In the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries, restaurants and markets often feature products from or inspired by the South Caucasus, Central Asia and the Baltic coast. More recently, however, tourism has been a major influence in diversifying food tastes (Mincyte 2011).

When walking through the streets of Polish cities today, one striking feature of the culinary cityscape is the numerous Georgian bakeries and restaurants. They sell typical products such as *khinkali* (dumplings), *khachapuri* (cheese-filled bread)*, lobiani* (bean-filled bread) and other specialities found in Georgia. Many establishments have the traditional clay *tone*, a deep, circular bread oven that produces *puri*, an elastic boat-shaped Georgian bread. In Kraków at the time of writing in 2025, around eighteen establishments sell Georgian-themed food; some are family-run, some are chains and one, though selling 'Slavic cuisine', includes Georgian dishes in its menu. While restaurants and bakeries are the most numerous, other Georgian presences can be observed in the city, like a Georgian man who sells homemade *tkemali*[1] in *Stary Kleparz*[2] or small *pierogarnia*[3] which sell *pierogi, pelmeni* and *khinkali*.

[1] Georgian plum sauce
[2] The Old Market, near the centre of Kraków
[3] Polish dumpling shops

Figures 1–2. The everyday presence of Georgian products in Poland.

Figure 1. A shop selling frozen products 'made by hand'. This is an example of *khinkali* being included with *pelmeni* and *pierogi*, the typically Slavic dumpling cuisine (own photo, June 2025).

Figure 2. An example of a packet of 'Georgian *khinkali* with chicken' from the frozen section of a small Kraków supermarket. Chicken is not a typical *khinkali* filling, perhaps appealing to Polish demand (own photo, April 2025).

Unlike globalised cuisines such as Indian, Mexican or Thai, which are widely diffused across European foodscapes due to empire, mass migration exchange (Timothy 2016) and the demand for culinary cosmopolitan variety (Koenker 2018), the emergence of Georgian cuisine over the past decade in Poland presents a curious case. This is particularly evident in Kraków, the focus of this dissertation, and is not readily explained by existing scholarship. While parts of the South Caucasus and regions of today's Poland were governed by the Romanov Empire between the 18th and early 20th centuries, Kraków and the surrounding region of Lesser Poland fell under Habsburg rule. Moreover, during the 20th century, Georgia was part of the Soviet Union, while Communist Poland remained within the socialist bloc (therefore outside the USSR itself), further limiting direct imperial legacies or cultural exchanges between the two countries. Hence, imperial legacies – a common explanation for gastronomic exchange in other cases (Bickham 2008; Porciani 2019; Polianichev 2023) – do not provide a

satisfying answer to the question of why Georgian restaurants are a prominent feature of the present-day cityscape of Kraków.

Migration-based explanations – another prominent factor mentioned in the literature (Farrer 2015; Möhring 2024; Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni 2020) – are also limited since migration from Georgia to Poland is not comparable to other mass migrations in history. Although net immigration to Poland has surpassed emigration since 2016, bringing increasing numbers of migrants from Ukraine and the South Caucasus, this phenomenon is recent and does not fully account for the culinary shift. Instead, the popularity of Georgian cuisine in Kraków appears to have been formed more by recent cultural and economic developments, such as easier visa regimes and tourism, demonstrating that this culinary trend in Poland is perhaps part of a more far-reaching, universal picture about migration and globalization in the modern world.

Notably, despite many Georgian food establishments in Kraków being run by Georgians, a great proportion are not, namely the restaurant chain Chinkalnia, founded in Ukraine in 2013 by the Ukrainian Vadym Kostenko (2018). Chinkalnia came to Poland in 2015, and the chain has since expanded to over one hundred restaurants divided between countries including Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Cyprus and Poland, with twenty-six in Poland and two in Kraków. Given that Ukraine and Georgia share a Soviet past, and that Poland has seen a significant influx of Ukrainian migrants since Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (with almost one million residing in the country's territory in 2024, and around 120,000 residing in Kraków), this brings about interesting questions about culinary transfer pathways and whether Ukrainians are contributing to, and functioning as intermediaries in, the globalisation of Georgian cuisine in Poland.

Furthermore, it is not uncommon to encounter traditional specialities that have been 'Polonised', such as *khachapuri* with aubergines or *lobiani* sprinkled with garlic and dill, raising questions about loyalty to culinary traditional versus the need to adapt products for economic survival. Therefore, the presence of Georgian family-run and non-Georgian-owned restaurants adds further intrigue to the narrative and raises questions about cultural reproduction, adaption and culinary authenticity.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This research emerged from the need to understand two issues. First, to examine why Georgian restaurants have become such a common sight in Poland's, especially Kraków's, streets, despite the absence of obvious and strong historical links between Poland and Georgia. Second, to understand the Georgian restaurant's role in Kraków's cityscape: whether it functions as a site of cultural negotiation and belonging for Georgian migrants and how it approaches culinary adaptation. Since the restaurant sphere can provide both intimate and public experiences, they offer a valuable lens through which to study how migrant networks and hybridised cuisine take shape against the backdrop of a globalised Polish city. By studying these restaurants, this dissertation contributes to the wider literature on globalisation, transnational hybridity, space creation, culinary migration, and the various roles food establishments, specifically restaurants, play in constructing space within an urban context.

1.4 Research questions

To broaden an understanding of this, this dissertation will answer the following questions:

Question 1: *What accounts for the proliferation of Georgian restaurants in Poland, particularly Kraków, despite the lack of strong colonial ties or migration history connecting these countries?*

Sub-questions:

1a) How has Georgian cuisine travelled and gained popularity abroad?
1b) What are the motivations and implications behind the prevalence of non-Georgian-owned Georgian restaurants in Kraków?

Question 2: *What are the roles of Georgian restaurants in Kraków?*

Sub-questions:

2a) In what ways do these restaurants function as 'embodied spaces', and for whom?
2b) How are notions of authenticity and culinary tradition navigated within the Polish context, and how do restauranteurs balance tradition with adaptation?

2c) How is 'Georgianness' performed within these restaurants? How do they differ between Georgian- and non-Georgian-run establishments?

1.5 Dissertation Outline

To address the above issues and questions, this dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents a review of the existing literature on the topic and outlines the conceptual frameworks used, which is split into three sub-sections. The sub-sections address the following: the role of globalisation, colonialism and tourism in disseminating culinary culture via Robertson's concept of 'glocalism'; food's role as a cultural anchor for diaspora through Longhurst's 'embodied space'; and how ethnic restaurants pose as sites of ethnic performance using Appadurai and Heldke's findings on 'culinary authenticity' and the notion of 'controlled Otherness'. The chapter then concludes by identifying the areas that the literature neglects, namely Georgian migrants, Georgian cuisine's rising popularity and the differences in ethnic versus non-ethnic-run restaurants in Central Europe.

Chapter 3 provides background on the empirical case study. It introduces Georgia and its cuisine, traces the globalisation of Georgian cuisine from the Romanov Empire through the Soviet Union and outlines the history of ethnic restaurants in Poland and recent Georgian migration to Poland.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology, detailing my data collection and analysis methods (interviews, Google Maps reviews, participant observation, visual textual analysis, thematic analysis), the four field sites (two Georgian-owned and two non-Georgian-owned restaurants), researcher positionality and ethical considerations. The chapter concludes by discussing the limitations of the chosen methodology.

Chapters 5 addresses the first research question, examining the different motivations of Georgian- and non-Georgian-owned establishments, while Chapter 6 addresses the second research question, uncovering how these establishments function as embodied spaces, how authenticity and adaptation are negotiated and how Georgianness is performed differently in Georgian- versus non-Georgian-owned venues.

Finally, Chapter 7 concludes by briefly discussing the key findings, limitations and identifying potential avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Frameworks

2.1 Introduction

All over the world, truly globalised cities offer globalised cuisines. However, even as global foodscapes expand, cuisines such as Italian, French, Chinese, Mexican and Japanese, despite being detached from their countries of origin, remain attached to national identities. 'An age of globalised, placeless cuisines has not arrived' (Farrer 2015, 1) writes Farrer, demonstrating that migrant communities continue to trade on their or another's group otherness and consumer demand continues to seek novel and 'exotic' tastes, whether it is truly 'authentic' or not. This chapter reviews the literature linked to the issues and questions mentioned in the Introduction. The first section, 'Glocalism: Culinary Globalisation and Colonial Legacies', examines how scholars have studied how cuisines travel and relate to globalisation, empires and immigration. It finds that the concept 'glocalism' is fitting for defining the hybrid nature of travelling cuisines and that the spread of a particular cuisine is often due to migrants who are not ethnically from the culture they sell. The second and third sections then look at studies of ethnic-minority restaurants' roles in a city. 'Migration, Diaspora and Embodied Space: The Construction of Ethnicity and Belonging' reviews the scholarship on how these restaurants shape spaces of belonging and construct spaces for transcultural exchange. However, such restaurants can also be a site for performing a watered-down version of the culture represented, leading to rigid definitions and criteria for ethnicity and authenticity, issues the third section, 'Culinary Authenticity: Ethnicity as a Performance', discusses. By examining these areas, this chapter builds a foundation for understanding the specific case of Georgian restaurants in Kraków and the broader relationship between globalising food, migrant experiences, restaurant spaces and global–local dynamics.

Before we start, it is important to define what I mean by 'cuisine' and 'ethnic cuisine'. Generally-speaking, cuisine is the transformation of natural objects into cultural products and linked to certain geographical locations and societies. It is a repertoire of edible items, recipes and rituals of sharing. Like language, a cuisine is a polysemic system of communication, which provides insights into a culture through its 'alphabet of micro-elements' (specific combinations of herbs, spices, vegetable/animal

products), preparation and consumption (Graf and Mescoli 2020, 467). 'Ethnic cuisine', so Berghe writes, moves in time with ethnicity and it exists because of and within culture, becoming 'a fully self-conscious product in the context of the multi-ethnic city' (Berghe 1984, 393). While restaurant cuisine from developing countries is often labelled 'ethnic' and those from Western Europe are not, this dissertation uses 'ethnic cuisine' to apply to restaurants that consciously commercialise a culture that is not Polish.

2.2 Glocalism: Culinary Globalisation and Colonial Legacies

National food cultures do not exist in isolation, nor does their dissemination happen by accident. Centuries of global trade, colonialism, migration and tourism have formed food practices, and today's increasingly interconnected world will continue to shape traditions and trends. Scholars have argued that globalisation standardises culture, eliminates differences and subsumes individual and societal enclaves, shrinking the world into a homogenised mass (Robertson 1995). In response to this, international UNESCO intangible heritage labels seek to preserve dishes and food production methods, like the artisanal methods of French baguette bread or the art of Neapolitan pizza-making, from being forgotten, while others are on the list in fear of destruction by aggressive powers. For example, Ukrainian borsch entered the list in 2022 because it is 'in Need of Urgent Safeguarding' (UNESCO 2022) due Russia's full-scale invasion, demonstrating the ongoing legacy colonialism still holds on cuisine.

The development of globalisation has led to activities that react to homogenising phenomena which try to establish a sense of stability and invariance against the constant developments of the modern world. Such activities, according to Hobsbawm, include the invention of traditions, which involve the selection and interpretation of specific fragments of a country's history to serve the needs of the present (Hobsbawm 2014). In reinforcing national values and behavioural norms and forging a continuity with the past, a country can legitimate its national identity. From a food studies perspective, the invention of national cuisines has formed a major part of nation-building – termed 'gastronationalism' by DeSoucey (DeSoucey 2010) – leading to countries promoting their own product brands and encouraging 'patriotic consumption' (Polese, Seliverstova, et al. 2020, 1024). For example, Riga's fine dining restaurants in the 19th century only served international cuisine, but after independence from Russia,

they began serving exclusively national cuisine (Porciani 2019). Oftentimes, however, embracing past traditions is less to do with nationalistic–historical pride but rather with the influence of widespread cosmopolitan trends which 'increasingly consider traditions as an antidote to the globalised, dehumanised, and unhealthy industrialised food system' (Bachórz and Parasecoli 2021, 112), a branch of food studies, while fascinating, is outside of the scope of this dissertation.

Returning to globalisation and its development, there exist other interpretations that challenge its homogenising power and instead promote the 'invention of locality' (Roudometof 2018, 3), whereby globalisation can be seen as a connector rather than a destroyer of these individual, local identities. Turner's 'enclave society' concept similarly argues that globalisation leads not to integration but to fragmentation, creating isolated enclaves that are connected, bringing about cultural and transnational hybridity (Turner 2007). In light of such perspectives, the most viable concept for understanding my case study is Robertson's theory of 'glocalisation' (Robertson 1995), in which the mixing of the local and global are no longer mutually exclusive but instead morph into a new cultural state.

The appeal of such an elastic concept is its ability to understand the hybridity of food spaces within cities. It recognises that global, regional, national and local influences overlap to form culinary identities specific to a certain country or city, preparing ripe ground for examining migration and cuisine, more specifically in this section, the colonial layer. To illustrate how colonialism influenced the early globalisation of cuisine and how this laid the groundwork for later glocal processes, we turn to the well-documented case of British imperial food culture.

Just as a museum displays rare artefacts, the British empire advertised 'foreign food' as an exotic prize, making them a 'digestible artefact' (Bickham 2008, 100) to be wondered at and sought after. The fascination with novelty was another way of displaying wealth in an empire and cookbook recipes had phrases like 'as in China' or 'as made in India' (Bickham 2008, 99) to highlight a faithfulness to authenticity. Bickham maintains that these cuisines' main selling point was not in their attractive appearance but rather in their 'authentic association with another culture' (Bickham 2008, 100). This example underscores that globalised cuisines are not transplanted from one place to another but rather reshaped through processes of adaptation that respond to local

tastes and product availability, a central argument of this dissertation.

For instance, though curry became popular in Britain during the colonial period in India (1757-1947), recipes written for British housewives were often adapted, promoting an "easier, and much approved' method for cutting both the preparation time and…growing ingredient list by half' (Bickham 2008, 105). This is how curry powder, a spice blend, was invented, offering a good case of glocalism for practicality's sake, adapting to the local pressures of domestic finances, tastes and need for convenience. The changes in consumption and emergence of modified dishes of foreign origin also indicate the increased interest Britons took in the empire, who wished to tour and taste it while staying within the confines of home (Bickham 2008).

A further example of this process is the invention of chicken tikka masala in Britain, a dish that highlights how glocalised cuisine can become embedded in national identity. In 1997, a British poll named curry and chicken tikka masala among the nation's favourite dishes, and in 2001, the British Foreign Minister, Robin Cook, announced that Britain's national dish was chicken tikka masala (Porciani 2019). Though meant to symbolise British multi-culturalism, Cook was criticised for ignoring the 'conditions of colonialism…which made it necessary for South Asian immigrants to enter into the business of making Indianness palatable to Western tastes' (Mannur 2010, 4). Interestingly, the main contributors to curry's promulgation were Muslim Bangladeshis, who today own 'between 85 and 90 per cent of Britain's "Indian" restaurants and takeaways' (Buettner 2008, 871), illustrating how migration contributes to the globalisation and glocalisation of cuisine, which we will discuss next.

The literature finds that while empires contributed to the spread of foods, many globally popular cuisines underwent some their most notable transformations outside of their national context. Möhring's study of Turkish cuisine in the German–Turkish diasporic context, specifically döner kebab, provides a strong example of how migrants can reinvent a dish into a glocal product, which shaped the culinary landscape of West Germany since the 1970s (Möhring 2024). Such a signature food item arose from the socioeconomic circumstances of Turkish labour migrants in Germany and became the epitome of Turkish diaspora food, becoming so popular that it also attracted non-ethnic Turks to participate in the döner kebab business, with Arab and Pakistani migrants playing a role in this sector (Möhring 2024). They also aided in its transcultural

ownership and globalisation. When döner became popularised abroad, it was categorised as a German–Turkish product, not only demonstrating hybridisation, but also nationalisation (Möhring 2024), like the tikka masala case.

Developing this, in his study of Asian cuisine, Farrer attributes the main contributing factors and the transborder promotion of cuisine to migrants who produce 'cuisines that are not 'their own" (Farrer 2015, 2). Using Fujian Chinese-run restaurants selling Japanese cuisine in New York in the 1990s as an example, Farrer and Wank found that the Chinese restauranteurs expanded the market for Japanese cuisine by adopting Asian–American fusion cuisine and cutting their costs when making sushi. While this raised concerns about authenticity and commitment to traditional skills, the authors concluded that the workers simply saw this as a way to use their ethnicity and customer gullibility to run a profitable business and support their families (Wank and Farrer 2015).

The next section looks at the theory of diaspora, the racialisation of foodways and how restaurants create meaningful spaces for migrant communities.

2.3 Migration, Diaspora and Embodied Space: The Construction of Ethnicity and Belonging

The term 'diaspora', which once historically defined certain groups like the Greek or Armenian trading diaspora, now encompasses words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker or ethnic communities (Brubaker 2005), reflecting the changing composition of the 21st century's globalised cities. Brubaker asks whether the porosity of the world's borders leads groups away from the nation-state, offering an alternative, deterritorialised experience (Brubaker 2005) where a diaspora redefines the meaning of belonging to a specific geographical location. Furthermore, since deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation have become so commonplace and obvious to a casual onlooker in any city in Europe, Appadurai goes further to describe these cities as 'global ethnoscape[s]' (Appadurai 1996, 65). Such a concept disregards the importance of geography and presents the cityscape instead as a constant flow of people, be they migrants, tourists or refugees, who are neither tied to nor defined by a certain territory and yet are still linked with a distant place, like the homeland they left behind. According to Appadurai, traditional boundaries between nation, culture, identity and territory are dissolving because multiple ethnic groups in one place create a type of non-spatial

geography (Appadurai 1996) where inhabitants occupy a liminal position between two or many cultures. This concept links well to Roland's theory of glocalism, giving migrants the simultaneous position of being part of global and local processes that are less constrained by space and rigid cultural considerations.

Building upon this when examining diaspora groups and their cuisine, the literature finds that national food is essential in enabling newcomers to make sense of change in their new surroundings. Like language, Barthes views it as a subtle 'system of communication, a body of images' (Barthes 2012, 21), which makes it a powerful emotional anchor and bridge between the 'imagined community' (Anderson 2016) of the former nation and the adopted land. Since the diaspora experience is at once negotiating different settings and cultural identities, its nature, along with its cuisine, is in a constantly changing process of becoming (Mehta 2018). This experience is defined, as Hall puts it, 'not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity...; by hybridity' (Hall 1990, 235). It is for this reason that the concept of diaspora or ethnic cuisine is problematic because it is only constructed according to its surroundings, depending on context and adhering to an abstract definition.

Arvela likens ethnicity and ethnic cuisine because both become 'self-conscious...when ethnic boundaries are crossed', since their 'difference makes them visible' (Arvela 2013, 2) in comparison to the host country's majority. When defined against difference, boundaries crystallise between ethnic groups, playing a large role in community formations, belonging and exclusion. According to Arvela and Parasecoli, food plays a central part in binding groups and providing a sense of stability. Seen as a 'tool of cultural survival' (Arvela 2013, 4), ingredients, dishes, preparation and consumption methods play 'an important role for the imagination and the cultural capital of migrants' (Parasecoli 2014, 424). Taking the Italian diaspora in the United States in the early 20th century as an example, it is interesting to note that despite the groups being from different parts of Italy and speaking different dialects, the main binder for this disparate community was the sharing of recipes and products available on the American market, employment in similar sectors and commensality. Food helped to forge networks and promote Italian-ethnic foodways even when Italy at that time did not have a coherent national cuisine (Helstosky 2005). While migrant culinary experiences are not linear, this example shows that migrant food practices often change rather than replicate their

original cuisine because the context and external/internal dynamics are the deciding factors of change. Parasecoli also writes that migrants can negotiate their unfamiliar surroundings and constant exposure to their otherness through the physical and emotional act of eating because they engage in reproducing culture. This facilitates integration and helps create a new shared identity.

Notions of community and home can extend beyond the private dwellings of an individual or family. For a minority community financially, gastronomic establishments can be a main employment niche (Grandi 2023), providing financial security for family members, entrepreneurs or general representatives from that group. In Möhring' study of the Turkish diaspora in Germany and Wessendorf and Farrer's study on immigrant-run eateries in Tokyo and London, it becomes clear that pressures of unemployment rates and discrimination in labour markets make choosing self-employment and opening a business the 'migrant's dream' (Wessendorf and Farrer 2021, 1) because it is one of the few ways to integrate into society economically. Termed an 'ethnic economy' (Strüder 2003, 5), these businesses typically employ co-ethnics who are often under-paid and low-skilled; yet, Farrer maintains that restaurant kitchens are 'primary training grounds' (Farrer 2015, 14) for transferring culinary skills across borders, showing how food further contributes to a tight-knit diaspora network of opportunity and solidarity.

In their study of Ecuadorian communities in Madrid, Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni found that restaurants run by Ecuadorians had a semi-public nature that enabled a 'source of domesticity' and provided a 'critical setting for migrants to negotiate a sense of home and familiarity' (Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni 2020, 1022-3). This is because a restaurant caters to different sensory experiences through taste and smell (food), sight (staff, interiors) and hearing (national music) (Grandi 2023) that can trigger memories or emotional reactions linked not just to a traditional recreation of home but also a continuity of customs that combine influences from the host society. This forms a specific 'spatial niche' (Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni 2020, 1023) that acts as an intermediary space between the private and the public, creating domesticated space for owners, workers and clients alike.

From this study, the concept of 'emplacement' arises, defined by Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni as a reshaping of boundaries between private (ethnic group) and public (host society) life. Low also echoes this with the theory of 'embodied space'. First coined

by Longhurst, this theory provides a nuanced insight into the emotional experiences of migrants (Low 2003) that connects larger socio-cultural processes of transnationalism. Applying it to food, Parasecoli develops the concept, writing that when migrants eat, they 'transform anonymous…spaces into significant and culturally meaningful spaces that blur the dichotomy between the global and the local' (Parasecoli 2014, 418), meaning that a global migrant can adapt and integrate into their immediate locality and become rooted to the spaces of everyday life.

As a final point, Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni maintain that while a restaurant indeed facilitates belonging, it is important to note that ethnic restaurants do not embody an inherently unchanging ethnic quality. Rather, they evoke associations that link to a flexible ethnic identity (Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni 2020). Brubaker agrees with this by saying that a 'diaspora…can also represent a non-territorial form of essentialised belonging' and warns against imposing homogenised 'groupness' of diasporas (Brubaker 2005, 12). Gaytán expands this by looking at the non-ethnic consumer whose 'gastronomical desire carries real colonising attitudes and implications that too easily essentialise certain ethnic groups' (Gaytán 2008, 318). Such 'colonising attitudes' link to the previous chapter's point about an empire's citizens indiscriminately hungering for exciting and novel items, delineating boundaries and power dynamics. It also leads us to the next section, where we will come across Heldke's conceptualisation of such practices as 'cultural food colonialism' (Heldke 2003, xv) in 21st-century culinary politics, where power discrepancies manifest themselves through globalised diets and the booming tourist industry.

2.4 Culinary Authenticity: Ethnicity as a Performance

Aside from mass media, ethnic-themed restaurants are possibly the next most powerful way people are introduced to and influenced by foreign cultures, turning such spaces into cultural ambassadors (Wood and Muñoz 2007). They are, therefore, a type of threshold through which a consumer can experience more than just food, and yet they can bring about rigid definitions which try to contain the slippery nature of group identity and cuisine. Varshaver and Rocheva define an authentic ethnic restaurant as adhering to three criteria: it serves national dishes; there are members of visible minorities among the customers; there are visible minorities among the staff (Varshaver and Rocheva

2014). Although a simplified definition, they argue that this is what one expects from dining out, whether one identifies with the community serving the migrant cuisine or not; it either provides a home-away-from-home or a way of experiencing an unfamiliar culture, a discovery of the 'Other'. This desire for an 'authentic' experience, however, often leads to the production of a controlled and marketable version of ethnic identity, where national stereotypes turn restaurants into sites or stages for performance.

The commodification and production of cuisine outside of its context makes a food establishment become an 'ethnic performance' (Möhring 2008, 13) or a 'staged authenticity' (MacCannell 1973, 589) that gives the impression of a backstage experience to the culture. In this way, these types of restaurants are termed a 'culinary contact zone' by Farrer, or a meeting point where different people, customs and cuisine can be experienced easily (Farrer 2015, 2), taking on a touristic quality. By using the unfamiliar aspects of a cuisine to attract customers, restaurants can claim to 'give their tongues a holiday' (Cook and Crang 1996, 137) and gently expose them to a world within the safety of their own countries. Along with the dishes, the menu, interior décor, music and waiting staff can all contribute to conjuring images of faraway, exotic lands, which Wood and Muñoz call 'eatertainment' (Wood and Muñoz 2007, 243). This process involves much selection and deliberation over what best represents a culture, and, in turn, these symbols simplify a culture, possibly pressuring a restaurant to become as stereotypical as possible.

Clients' tastes and expectations make restaurant owners adapt their menus and themes, creating a 'controlled otherness' (Grandi 2023, 3) filled with various stereotyped symbols like sombreros in a Mexican restaurant, waitresses in folk costumes in a Polish restaurant, or Pirosmani[4] paintings in a Georgian restaurant. Grandi further explains 'controlled otherness' as restauranteurs adapting menus to meet a client's expectations rather than selling more realistic parts of the cuisine: 'It is hard to imagine a Chinese eatery that served…chicken's blood porridge…pulling in the [Western] crowds' (MacClancy 1992, 205). Interestingly, studies have shown that these stereotypical adaptations of culinary cultures play a role in shaping diaspora identity (Grandi 2023) because they experience another version of their ethnic identities and flavours abroad,

[4] Niko Pirosmani is considered Georgia's most famous primitivist painter, with his paintings of rural Georgia and Georgian feasting rituals featuring in many food venues.

which has mixed with trends of the host country.

Although this essentialised representation is benign and provides an educational experience, associating a particular food with a particular country can oversimplify and geographically bind dishes, leading them to be rigidly associated with a certain nation. Such essentialising 'freezes cultures in amber' (Strohl 2019, 157) because outsiders expect it to perform and replicate itself to a limited set of criteria, in turn suffocating the developing nature of culture and cuisine. Alison Smith writes, 'even developed conceptions of national cuisines can shift over time, either by adopting new foods and norms or by rejecting older ones' (Smith 2012, 448), highlighting the ever-evolving construct of a nation's dishes.

The next part of this section focuses on debates revolving around culinary authenticity and genuineness because they are two key qualities restauranteurs choose to characterise their restaurants and dishes. There are several ways scholars have approached the concept of 'authenticity'; however, some scholars have boycotted it altogether because it is 'impossible to establish criteria of authenticity in a constantly changing tradition' (Guliaeva 2017, 282). Nevertheless, since authenticity is such a 'hot commodity' for marketing ethnic food and so widely used, I will use Heldke and Appadurai's discussions of culinary authenticity. Heldke defines 'authentic' dishes as tasting what they would for an insider to that cuisine (Strohl 2019). They are firm in stating that this does not mean striving to perfectly replicate a cuisine since that is a 'conceptual misunderstanding about the nature of cuisine' (Strohl 2019, 159). This is also because there is no such thing as 'purity' when speaking about a culture or ethnicity, and to expect a replica is to essentialise an ethnic 'Other', demanding inappropriate and uncompromising standards from a subjective lens of foreignness.

Appadurai explains authenticity as expecting a falsely transhistorical trajectory of cuisine: 'the idea of authenticity seems to imply a timeless perspective on profoundly historical processes' (Molz 2004, 54-5). Kuehn puts forward the idea that the source of the quest for authenticity lies in a 'platonic longing for the One True Thing – the one, true unchanging thing' (Heldke and Thomsen 2014, 8) that provides security and continuity in the idea of a pristine heritage, grounded in time and tradition. Thus, restaurant-goers may force upon a cuisine these ideals to make sense of and measure the unfamiliar culture: 'whatever is most not-me (most "foreign") becomes, by definition, what is most

representative of the Other' (Heldke and Thomsen 2014, 6).

In response to such subjective ways of perceiving authenticity and genuineness, Heldke categorises the ways in which people evaluate culinary authenticity to illustrate the constructed and negotiable nature of this concept. Firstly, it is based on aesthetic reasons, linked to cultural taste preferences and previous experience with certain foods which provide a baseline for comparison. The second category is linked to personal reasons of nostalgia because one either has roots in the culture or visited/lived in the country in question. Thirdly, someone may judge the food for educational reasons to learn about a different culture without travelling out of their immediate environment, simply out of curiosity for exploring. Fourthly, Heldke finds that there is a cultural importance of authenticity that is linked to national traditions and holiday foods, which migrant communities hold dear to facilitate the larger process of homemaking abroad and connecting to home. Finally, Heldke offers a social reason for assessing authenticity, one which signals an urban sophistication and cosmopolitan exposure (Strohl 2019).

Appadurai also agrees that authenticity is a vague measure of what something ought to be and asks questions which highlight the multi-layered meaning of this seemingly simple term. He asks, where is authenticity localised and who has the authority to evaluate it?: 'Who is its privileged voice: the connoisseur of exotic food? The tourist? The ordinary participants in a neighbouring cuisine?' (Molz 2004, 54). Molz also argues that culinary authenticity is constructed within the conditions of the particular social context of Western modernity and a post-colonial gaze.

Heldke's fifth and final categorisation of social reasons for evaluating authenticity is interesting because it instrumentalises ethnic restaurants as a currency with which to judge someone's cosmopolitan exposure, one which Hage points out as interest more in the 'market of 'foreign flavours' than with the market of 'foreigners'' (Hage 1997, 19). The literature also demonstrates that those who eat out in ethnic restaurants show an urban worldliness (Möhring 2008) and like to feel firmly placed in a globalised world (Derek 2017), leading to an insatiable hunger for a 'little secret, undiscovered, exclusive space' (Heldke and Thomsen 2014, 12). It is for this reason that the pursuit of authenticity has surged in recent years, constructed through the media as a touristic pleasure which portrays a 'broader aestheticisation of everyday life' (Cook and Crang 1996, 135).

Such touristic pleasure is critically termed by Heldke as 'cultural food colonialism'

(Heldke 2003, xv) because the quest for novelty exploits and only serves a personal end, indicating that colonialism has morphed into something less overt but equally pervasive. In this light, globalisation can be seen not as a rupture from colonial history but as its modern evolution. While traditional empires have dissolved, the mechanisms of control have shifted to economic, political and cultural spheres and the global appetite for 'authentic' cultural experiences, though veiled in appreciation and cosmopolitanism, may actually be another form of asymmetric power.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the various layers involved in the global circulation of cuisine, providing a solid foundational understanding and theoretical groundwork for analysing the position of Georgian restaurants in Kraków. Three broad themes emerge from the literature. First, the scholarship on globalisation and glocalisation demonstrates that cuisines do not simply travel as one entity but are continually reshaped through colonial legacies, migration, tourism and consumerism. When cuisines are translated across borders, they are negotiated locally and commodified, such as curry or döner kebab, showing how hybridised forms, once new culinary trends, become integrated into the cultural imagination of a nation. Roberton's notion of glocalisation provides a useful framework for understanding these hybrid processes and endless local–global conversations which inform the evolving nature of transnational cityscapes.

The second theme that has emerged is that studies of migration and diaspora emphasise food's role in creating belonging, community and reminders of domesticity in foreign contexts. It is a tangible medium that helps to root a migrant group. The restaurant space further aids in this rooting process, acting as a liminal, in-between place of public and private, familiar and foreign, giving rise to the 'embodied space concept'. These restaurants can become sites of emplacement where cultural identity is remade and, sometimes, transformed, highlighting that ethnic restaurants cannot ever exactly replicate the homeland, with the subjectivities of migration and host country influencing the individual outcomes of transcultural exchange.

The third theme regards authenticity and performance. The literature has revealed the extremely slippery nature of representation and that defining the realness of a dish brings about many issues of cultural ownership, loyalty and consumers' contradictory

perceptions. Non-ethnic diners often shape the end-product of a dish, perhaps reinforcing rigid boundaries or altering it due to taste preferences. The pursuit of the unfamiliar and exotic is also linked to personal pleasure and a globalised identity. Scholars such as Heldke and Appadurai therefore frame authenticity as a cultural commodity tied to unequal power relations and lingering colonial mindsets.

Despite such rich and varied research, the literature neglects several important points. Very little research has been conducted on Georgian migrants, their food practices or the growing popularity of Georgian cuisine in Central and Eastern Europe. It seems to be a cuisine that is globalising and spreading beyond Georgia's borders today (rather than just in the Imperial and Soviet eras) and such a study on new globalising cuisines, and who are the actors in its rising popularity, remain underexplored.

Moreover, this discussion also gains more originality and nuance when comparing Georgian-owned and non-Georgian-owned restaurants. While the literature acknowledges that migrants often commercialise cuisines that are not their own, the different strategies and narratives by ethnic versus non-ethnic restauranteurs requires further empirical attention. Further intrigue is added when looking at how nationals from countries with a Soviet heritage can contribute to the food landscape in a country without such a historical connection, namely Georgians and possibly Ukrainians popularising Georgian cuisine in Poland.

This dissertation addresses such puzzling gaps. By focussing on Georgian restaurants, this study assesses Georgian cuisine's path to globalisation, looking at how culinary culture is adapted and performed in a Central European city with limited historical links to Georgia. It explores whether these restaurants operate as embodied spaces for Georgian migrants or primarily as sites of cultural performance for Polish and international diners. It also investigates how notions of authenticity are navigated, and whether Georgian- and non-Georgian-owned establishments differ when reimagining Georgian cuisine. In this way, this dissertation plots Georgian cuisine within a broader framework that encompasses glocalisation, contemporary diasporas, space-making and cultural authenticity, while also extending the literature into a new empirical and geographical terrain.

Chapter 3: Overview of Empirical Case Study

Company Bego, Niko Pirosmani, 1907 (WikiArt 2020).

On the eighth day of Creation, God divided men into nations and told them to select a place for their country. After everyone was satisfied, God started home. On the way, He passed the Georgians, who were sitting around a table by the roadside. God scolded them. "While you sat here eating and drinking, singing and joking, the whole world was divided up. Now nothing is left for you."
They apologized. "It was very wrong, we know. But God, while we enjoyed ourselves, we didn't forget You. We drank to You to thank You for making such a beautiful world."
"That's more than anyone else did," God said, "so I'm going to give you the last little corner of the earth—the place I was saving for myself because it is most like Paradise."

The Georgian creation story, abridged version (Papashvili 1967, 143-4).

3.1 Introduction

While legends must not be taken at face value, Georgia's creation story colourfully illustrates how commensality and hospitality is entrenched in Georgian culture. Though the foundational myth casts Georgia as an isolated 'little corner', its history has been shaped by the country's position on the geopolitical crossroads of major powers, such as the Mongol, Persian, Ottoman and Russian empires. Exposure to such a network of international influences inevitably influenced Georgian cuisine; in fact, the origins of

emblematic Georgian rituals, like the *supra*[5], are said to be rooted in the Russian and/or Soviet context (Nodia 2014). However, Georgia's cuisine and culture is prized as unique in many ways, with national identity and pride entwined with belonging to the land and the food grown from and prepared on it.

Georgia's twelve distinct climate zones, including subtropical, alpine and desert conditions, support a rich cuisine central to national pride and selfhood. As Nodia notes, 'Georgians take some of their cuisine as an inalienable part of their ethnocultural identity' (Nodia 2014, 70). In the western Black Sea region, once part of the Ottoman empire, dishes such as baklava with sunflower seeds reflect culinary mingling. This region is also home to the Adjarian *khachapuri*, a boat-shaped bread filled with salty cheese and an egg at the centre. Other forms of *khachapuri* exist all over Georgia, forming the main components of restaurant menus. The eastern flatlands are home to the famous wine-growing region, Kakheti, and is also known for *khinkali,* a dumpling stuffed with meat, cheese or mushrooms, said to be introduced by the Mongols in the 13th century. Pomegranates, walnuts, aubergines and spices, like fenugreek and coriander, are commonplace ingredients in the cuisine, along with many others.

Given its culinary riches, Georgia is becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination. As outlined in the next sections, Georgian cuisine spread successfully throughout the Soviet Union and has left a legacy today in former-Soviet dominated countries, as well as Russia. Recently, international interest in Georgian cuisine has grown largely due to the expanding tourism industry in Georgia and its status as a "newly discovered' authentic cuisine abroad' (Gotua and Rcheulishvili 2019, 5). Georgian wine, recognised by UNESCO for its ancient fermentation method, is also attracting attention beyond its immediate neighbours. Once mainly exported to Russia, producers are now targeting the less politically fraught European and American markets, with the UK, China and Poland among the top importers (8Wines n.d.).

Gastronomically, the popularity and knowledge of Georgian food and drink are rising and spreading around the world. Politically, too, Georgia is gaining more attention, with their Rose Revolution of 2004 making it 'no longer seen as a distant mountain range but as a border of Europe on the Black Sea' (Brisku 2013, 165). More recently, its

[5] A traditional Georgian feast, featuring a *tamada*, a toastmaster, and copious amounts of food.

orientation towards Western institutions manifested itself in the official recognition as a candidate for European Union status in 2023; however, this EU accession process is now paused due to concerns about democratic backsliding and pro-Russian sentiment fostered by the ruling party, Georgian Dream.

In this context, this dissertation investigates Georgia's growing gastronomic presence, specifically in Kraków, and how Georgian restaurants contribute to the city's increasingly diverse foodscape. The following section applies the key concepts from the literature review (glocalisation, diasporic and embodied space and culinary authenticity) to the dissertation's empirical case, revealing how Georgian cuisine operates within a chain of globalising and localising dynamics. To understand the rise of Georgian restaurants in Kraków, we begin with the first link in the chain, that is, Georgian cuisine's historical development within the imperial Romanov and Soviet contexts and its contribution to shaping pan-Soviet cuisine.

3.2 The First Link: Georgia's Culinary Role in Imperial and Soviet Contexts

Much like Indian cuisine in the British context, Georgian cuisine and products like tea, citrus, wine and mineral waters were highly prized and celebrated in the Romanov Empire (see Figures 3–7 below). During the 19th century, imperial states influenced and inspired each other in pursuit of their own exotic paradises, involving what Polianichev calls the 'cross-fertilisation of ideas and policies' (Polianichev 2023). In this context, Georgia was to become Russia's invented tropical realm where exotic goods like tea, citrus, sugarcane and indigo were based on the models of British and Dutch colonial practices: 'Transcaucasia for us is just the same colony that Java is for the Dutch metropole' (Polianichev 2023).

McReynolds describes colonial restaurant culture as implementing Russian nationalism and showcasing superiority over subjugated nations. These gastronomic establishments were a romantic version of conquest and, so she writes, 'by the turn of the [19th] century, all major Russian cities had at least one dining spot named for somewhere in the Caucasus and Central Asia' (McReynolds 2003, 204). This culinary trend did not feature only in major cities for long and soon spread through all parts of the empire, including accounts of Georgians running successful railway buffets on long-haul journeys (Goldstein 2018, xxiv). By the beginning of the 20th century, specifically

Georgian food began to feature in Russian cookbooks (Smith 2021, 29), taking on a key role in popularising the cuisine in everyday kitchens. Later in the century, Soviet cookbooks and restaurants mostly emphasised the cuisines from the subjugated Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine. Koenker maintains that Soviet citizens' intense familiarity with these cuisines made them adopt them into their own culinary repertoires, reflecting the perception of an extended home, as shown in the incorporation of some dishes into private occasions: 'Soviet diners would be equally at home preparing the traditional fish in aspic for the New Year's celebration, Georgian *shashlik* on their cookouts, or offering Uzbek *plov*…to their families and guests' (Koenker 2018, 256).

Figures 3–7. Newspaper clippings from Riga, Warsaw and Kyiv during the Russian colonial period.


10-го марта 1900 г.

Кавказскіе
консервы.

ОВОЩНЫЕ:
Баклажаны въ томатѣ,
Баклажаны фаршированн.,
Баклажанная икра,
Перецъ фаршированный въ томатѣ,
Турецкія Бамьи въ томатѣ,
Кабачки фаршированн. въ томатѣ.
Цвѣтн. капуста въ томатѣ.

РЫБНЫЕ:
Осетрина и судакъ въ том.,
Московская солянка.

Винный магазинъ
А. Койлю,
Известковая № 2.
Телефонъ 1160.
510Б


Na święta
Handel Win, Delikatesów
i Towarów kolonjalnych
J. EVERT,
ZIELNA Nr. 1, róg Chmielnej
w WARSZAWIE,
poleca po możliwie przystępnych cenach:

Migdały gorzkie i słodkie od 40 kop. funt, **Rodzynki** sułtańskie od 15 kop., Elemskie Koryncki, **Szafran czysty**, **Wanillę**, **Cykatę**, **Skórki** Pomarańczowe, **Kwiat** Muszkatołowy, oraz **Gałkę**, **Goździki**, **Cynamon**, **Powidła** Węgierskie, **Oliwę** Nicejską, **Octy** francuskie winne i extragonowe **Musztardy** francuskie, krajowe, oraz inne. **Wina Węgierskie** wytrawne i słodkie, stare maślacze, zieleniaki, — **Francuskie**, **Reńskie** i **Hiszpańskie**. **Cognaki**, **Rumy**, **Likiery** pierwszorzędnych domów francuskich. Wina **Krymskie**, **Kachetyńskie**, **Gruzińskie** księcia Bagation Muchrańskiego czyste i naturalne.

Figure 3. An advertisement for a Caucasian shop in Riga, *Рижский вестник (*Rizhskii vestnik), Nr.57 (10.03.1900).

Figure 4. An advertisement for 'pure and natural' Georgian wines in Warsaw, *Kurjer Warszawski*, Nr.108 (18.04.1889).

Nr 89 KURJER WARSZAWSKI. — Dnia 30 marca 1890 r. 11

WINA GRUZIŃSKIE uznane za najlepsze z win Kaukazkich

KS. J. K. BAGRATION-MUCHRAŃSKIEGO,

znajdujące się we wszystkich znaczniejszych handlach na prowincji, oraz **Wina:** Węgierskie wprost od producentów sprowadzane,—**Wina** Francuzkie, Hiszpańskie, Reńskie, Likiery, Koniaki i Rumy zagraniczne, poleca skład hurtowy pod firmą

SCHOBER i ZAWADZKI, Senatorska 24. 485R

Figure 5. A Polish advertisement for Georgian wines, 'recognised as the best of Caucasian wines', *Kurjer Warszawski*, Nr.89 (30.03.1890).

Кахетинскія виноградныя натуральныя вина

...получены къ праздникамъ Рожд. Христова, въ большомъ выборѣ изъ собств. садовъ

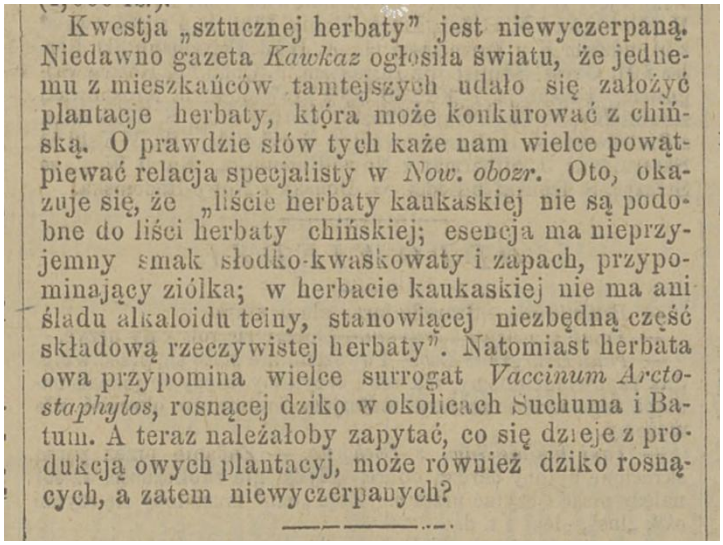
І. Г. БАБУНИДЗЕ.

Цѣна за бут. отъ 30 коп. до 2 руб.

Оптовымъ покупателямъ большая скидка.

Кіевъ, Крещатикъ, д. № 40. Петербургъ, Невскій пр. № 53. 86-100 Р7305

Figure 7. An advertisement in a Kyiv-based newspaper for Georgian 'Kakhetian natural grape wines in a large selection from our own gardens', *КІЕВЛЯНИНЪ (Kievlianin)*, Nr.355 (1899).



Kwestja „sztucznej herbaty" jest niewyczerpaną. Niedawno gazeta *Kawkaz* ogłosiła światu, że jednemu z mieszkańców tamtejszych udało się założyć plantacje herbaty, która może konkurować z chińską. O prawdzie słów tych każe nam wielce powątpiewać relacja specjalisty w *Now. obozr.* Oto, okazuje się, że „liście herbaty kaukaskiej nie są podobne do liści herbaty chińskiej; esencja ma nieprzyjemny smak słodko-kwaskowaty i zapach, przypominający ziółka; w herbacie kaukaskiej nie ma ani śladu alkaloidu teiny, stanowiącej niezbędną część składową rzeczywistej herbaty". Natomiast herbata owa przypomina wielce surrogat *Vaccinum Arctostaphylos*, rosnącej dziko w okolicach Suchuma i Batum. A teraz należałoby zapytać, co się dzieje z produkcją owych plantacyj, może również dziko rosnących, a zatem niewyczerpanych?

Figure 6. An article in Polish about an announcement in the Tbilisi-based newspaper *Kawkaz* (*The Caucasus*) about new tea plantations in the Caucasus that could 'compete with Chinese tea'. It describes the leaves having an 'unpleasant sweet and sour taste'. *Kurjer Warszawski*, Nr.108 (18.04.1889).

The romanticism from imperial times was carried through to the Soviet period. Arguably, it was due to the familiarity established already in Tsarist times that Georgian cuisine could become wildly popular during this time. Socialist narratives of food abundance and a land of plenty (to cover up the famine/near-famine conditions of many parts of USSR during the 1930s (Osokina 1998)) aligned well with promoting Georgia as a source of copious amounts of exotic products, as well as a sunny and restorative place for a holiday.

Tourism was another reason Georgian cuisine became popular during Soviet times with Soviet tourist literature portraying Georgia as 'a land of readily consumable marvels' (Scott 2011, 855). The right to rest had been in the Soviet Constitution since 1936, and from the 1960s, tourism to other socialist states developed rapidly as more citizens had disposable incomes and modern consumption abroad was strongly encouraged. Travel helped to dissolve geopolitical and culinary borders between the Soviet and Communist states and additionally facilitated the shaping of a sense of Soviet self: 'tourists came to define a particular Soviet cuisine as "ours" in opposition to the fare offered in their foreign tourist destinations' (Koenker 2018, 246). In many reports, tourists were dissatisfied with the cuisines of Poland, Hungary and Germany, describing it as 'not ours'; indeed, when taking part in a Mediterranean cruise, travellers were nostalgic for 'our beloved Black Sea' (Koenker 2018, 261), demonstrating the familiar relationship Soviet tourists had cultivated for the USSR.

As seen in the chapter reviewing the literature, while tourism promotes demand for one product, exemplified by an account of holidaymakers in Sochi who complained about the insipid food: 'Nobody here serves that spicy sauce that we are used to seeing in Georgian ethnic dishes' (Koenker 2018, 253), it can also bring about modifications to suit tourists' tastes. This is also exemplified in another report about a Soviet official in the 1970s requesting, for the tourists under his charge, more beef supplies 'because "tourists from Russia don't like lamb"' (Koenker 2018, 256), a major ingredient in Georgian cuisine.

Interestingly, mapping the Georgian restaurant culture of the Soviet Union marks a significant difference compared to ethnic restaurants that were set up in other imperial capitals around the world, which were generally considered to belong to the lower classes and a cheap, quick place to eat. The rise to prominence of Georgian

cuisine soon substituted the taste for French cuisine that was formerly served in Russia's elite restaurants (Scott 2011). Soviet Moscow's first 'national-themed' restaurant and iconic Georgian restaurant, Aragvi (Koenker 2018), on the other hand, was the most fashionable place for Georgian elites to dine, and to consume Georgian food and drink was seen to be socially aspirational. Georgian cuisine also gained the accolade as the most 'Soviet' in character and was promoted in a top-down fashion, moving from 'the halls of the elite dining establishment to the neighbourhood café, worker's cafeteria, and home dining table' (Scott 2011).

Moreover, Georgian cuisine's spread at this time could be due to those creating it, i.e., the chefs. Farrer writes that Japanese cuisine was popularised due to the training of non-Japanese chefs in Japanese restaurants in New York and London (Farrer 2015, 14). Regarding the Soviet Union, Scott reflects this phenomenon by writing that Georgian chefs helped train a whole generation of Russian chefs in Moscow to cook Georgian food. One organisation, the state-sponsored Public Food Service (*Obshchestvennoe pitanie*), funded exchanges with other Soviet republics, bringing Georgian chefs to Kyiv's canteens to teach Ukrainians how to prepare for a day which celebrated Georgian cuisine: 'Georgian-style *shashlyk*, the stew *chakhokhbili*, and cheese-filled *khachapuri* were introduced to Kiev's cafeteria menus' (Scott 2011, 84). This, perhaps, explains the spread of Georgian cuisine into other Soviet Union countries and lays the groundwork for understanding how Georgian cuisine, while historically peripheral to Poland, has entered the Polish food landscape via Ukraine.

Examining the food trends and restaurant culture of Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union in relation to Georgia, its colonised neighbour, in the South Caucasus is a good introduction our first concept in this dissertation's case study, 'colonial glocalisation', and how an imperial power absorbs and takes ownership of the colonised's foods. Just as curry was simplified and rebranded for British palates, Georgian cuisine was also selectively adapted. Scott writes that Aragvi's head chef altered dishes: 'adapting the recipe to Russian tastes, Kiknadze spared the hot pepper used in his native western Georgia' (Scott 2011, 74). Like Indian cuisine in Britain, Georgian cuisine was well-incorporated into the pan-Soviet repertoire as the epitome of Soviet gastronomic exoticism and exemplified a form of culinary hybridity and appropriation.

In Helen and George Papashvili's cookbook from the 1960s, *Russian Cooking,* they write in the introduction, 'one Russian cookbook – a multitude of cuisines' (Papashvili 1967, 6), referring to the Soviet Union's empire of nations which influenced Russia's gastronomic tastes. They continue by writing that Russia, paradoxically, is the country that has become gastronomically poorer because its eating habits are so influenced by the other countries of the Soviet Union: 'the most popular restaurants in Moscow [and] Leningrad now specialise in the cuisine of some non-Russian republic - ...Georgia, Uzbekistan or Ukraine' (Papashvili 1967, 7). Indeed, such was the emphasis of placing the empire's foods at the centre of a pan-Soviet cuisine, that some Soviet officials complained about the disappearance of "real Russian food", indicating that Soviet food policies flattened all traditions in their efforts to invent a unified culinary identity that served ideological and political goals over regional authenticity (Koenker 2018).

Conversely, it could be argued that it was due to the Soviet Union's fluctuating food policies, from ideas about a futurist diet of calories, not flavour (Koenker 2018), to aggressively promoting indigenous identity and cuisines (Wachtel 2016), that contributed to the deterioration and loss of many pre-Soviet era national dishes and solid boundaries regarding national gastronomic identity around the Soviet Union. Some scholars have argued that the lack of innovation in Georgia's cuisine today (Goldstein 2018) stems from the unimaginative public canteen system (*obshchepit*) that reproduced a honed-down, institutionalised version of national cuisines. Additionally, Soviet cooks who produced such canteen food are scorned as low-skilled and regarded to be 'the primary perpetrators of "false tradition" (Gotua and Rcheulishvili 2019, 7). For some food scholars, such actors in the Georgian gastronomic sphere continue to resist innovating the standardised recipes, a legacy from the Soviet era, and risk stagnating Georgian cuisine (Gotua and Rcheulishvili 2019).

From the above, it can be deduced that the food policies of standardisation and high levels of inter-Soviet tourism may have contributed to Georgian cuisine becoming popular in Ukraine and, hence, an intermediary in the culinary transfer from Georgia to Poland. Indeed, both countries share the Black Sea, and it is logical to infer that close geographical distances have contributed to intermingling. Geist further writes that Ukraine's cuisine suffered largely due to the proliferation of recipes from Russian Soviet

cuisine cookbooks[6] which were then dished up in Soviet canteens and restaurants (Geist 2023). Despite this, there were attempts to define a Ukrainian cuisine[7] by the Ukrainian branch of the Trade Institute which oversaw the development national cookbooks of the era, perhaps aiding in unifying it: 'now the residents of Kyiv and Kharkiv could familiarize themselves with the regional dishes of L'viv and Zakarpattia, and vice versa' (Geist 2023, 154). At the same time, however, such attempts to balance between 'national' and 'socialist' versions of a country were always limited and Soviet power blurred the distinctiveness of Ukrainian cuisine and spread the Soviet-approved version of it both within the USSR and internationally. As a result, Ukrainians began eating more dishes from other Soviet republics, while 'bureaucratic decisions redefined what foods Ukrainians considered "Ukrainian"' (Geist 2023, 160).

As a final point, and connecting with the Soviet Union–Georgia–Ukraine–Poland chain, Koenker's study charts the frequency of recipes featured from 1958 to 1973 and intriguingly finds that while Georgian recipes were the most frequently mentioned, 'appearing 55 times in 16 years' (Koenker 2018, 265), dishes from Ukraine and Belarus were the next to follow, with 39 mentions, respectively. More surprisingly, however, is the mention of Polish dishes because food from countries outside of the Soviet Union were not as popular: 'Recipes from abroad rarely exceeded 10 percent of the total…[yet] Poland topped the hit parade here with 30 recipes, followed by Bulgaria with 26 (Koenker 2018, 265)'. This is more evidence to suggest the mutual appreciation of each countries' respective cuisines, with regional, political and touristic factors contributing a cuisine's circulation.

This brings us to the next link in our chain, Poland, where the following section will briefly outline Poland's ethnic restaurant and gastronomic history, further highlighting how globalising forces impact the gastronomic-scape of a country.

[6] The Book of Delicious and Healthy Food (*Kniga o vkusnoy i zdorovoy pishche*) was first published in 1939 and underwent many subsequent editions, acting as the culinary bible of the USSR.
[7] The task of deciding which dishes could be labelled 'Ukrainian' proved a difficult task due to the country's multi-ethnic past. Geist writes, 'Which dishes were "Ukrainian", as opposed to Polish, Jewish, or Russian?' (Geist 2023, 150).

3.3 The Second Link: Poland's Ethnic Culinary Landscape

Ethnic restaurants have featured in cities throughout history, catering to and providing jobs for their own minority communities. Once upon a time, the customers of these restaurants, like the Jews in Kraków or Armenians in Lviv, Little Italy in New York or Chinatown in London, belonged to the same ethnic groups as the restaurant owners (Derek 2017). These examples point to how spatial clustering in urban space gave rise to entire districts devoted to ethnic cuisines, where food functioned not only as nourishment or livelihood, but as a marker of identity and a tool of community preservation. This contrasts to the more cosmopolitan palates of today, where curiosity about other groups is not only common but fashionable. Such curiosity is a relatively recent phenomenon; it was not until the 1950s that ethnic cuisine in Europe began attracting the widespread attention of patrons from outside the community it represented and become more mainstream. This shift also coincided with the post-Second World War boom in international travel and tourism, which played a major role in introducing Europeans to unfamiliar tastes and influencing them to seek these newly 'discovered' flavours back home. Attributing nationalities or ethnicities to foods also became an increasingly common practise around this time (Panayi 2008), helping to frame these cuisines as accessible yet exotic experiences within one's own city.

Poland's recent history of serving ethnic cuisines presents a different picture. While before 1945, its ethnic composition was more varied, the mass extermination of groups and border shifts during the Second World War and the subsequent Soviet occupation and repression of post-war Poland dealt a hefty blow to minority communities. Only about 10 per cent of the traditional settlements remained within new Polish borders leaving the nation one of Europe's most ethnically and religiously homogeneous (Grzymała-Kazłowska and Okólski 2003).

During Communist-era Poland (1947-1989), ethnic restaurants were almost non-existent. State policies limited their operations and state-recommended Russian, Cuban or Bulgarian-themed restaurants were few. Limited disposable income and the lack of options also made dining out uncommon where even regular restaurants in Warsaw were far fewer than in other regional capitals with 350 establishments compared to over 1,500 in Budapest or Prague. Poles also ate at home because food prepared outside was regarded as of 'poor quality, suspicious and unhealthy' (Derek

2017).

Post-communist Poland also retained striking ethnic homogeneity. The census of 2011 showed that 97 per cent of residents identified as ethnically Polish, while 2014 migration data recorded just 175,066 foreigners, primarily: Ukrainians (41,000), Germans (20,200) and Russians (10,700) (Derek 2017). Notably, despite significant immigration from neighbouring post-Soviet states, their cuisines long had minimal influence (Derek 2017), a paradox that makes the recent surge in Georgian eateries all the more intriguing.

Ethnic gastronomy began expanding in the 1990s, accelerating after Poland's European Union accession. Between 2003 and 2017, ethnic eateries grew by 4.5–5 per cent annually (Derek 2020), and there were more Mexican restaurants in Warsaw than Russian, Czech, Hungarian and Ukrainian ones combined. Derek's interpretation of this is that 'Poles seem to prefer to travel to the 'global village' rather than to Central and Eastern Europe' (Derek 2017, 232). What is striking, however, is how quickly the culinary landscape develops in relation to geopolitical changes that influence the characteristics of a cityscape. Between 2013 and 2017, the number of Georgian restaurants tripled (Derek 2020), disputing assumptions that post-Soviet migration left no culinary mark. Yet, since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Poland's immigrant populations are composed of large numbers of Ukrainians, with almost one million residing in the country's territory in 2024, and around 120,000 residing in Kraków, Poland's second-largest city. This brings about a key question: is it Georgian migrants who are globalising Georgian cuisine in Poland, or is it the growing Ukrainian diaspora, and its Soviet-era culinary familiarity with Georgia, that is driving this trend?

On the other hand, the spread of Georgian cuisine may actually be due to large numbers of Georgians migrating to parts of Central Europe in search of new economic opportunities, with Poland being an attractive prospect in terms of easy visa laws and more similar cultural dynamics. The next section details Georgian migration history in Poland and the rise in Georgian restaurants in Polish cities, indicating that Georgian cuisine is no longer just an imperial or Soviet leftover, and is becoming popularised by the Georgian diaspora themselves.

3.4 The Third Link: Tracing the Georgian Diaspora in Poland

After the fall of communism and Poland's accession to the European Union, Poland has evolved into both a source of emigration and a destination for immigrants. Georgians feature prominently among these newcomers. Unlike historically dispersed or persecuted groups such as Armenians or Jews, Georgians do not possess a longstanding diasporic tradition rooted in forced migration or trauma (Scott 2011). Apart from brief mentions of Georgian mercenaries serving in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth dating back to 1495 and an influx of Georgian soldiers and students into Russian-controlled Polish territory in the 18th century, the presence of Georgians in Poland has never been significant (Materski 2021). During the interwar period, Poland briefly hosted a small Georgian diaspora, including political exiles and military officers, but the Second World War and Soviet repression scattered this community. Unlike their South Caucasian neighbours, the Armenians, who formed cohesive communities in Poland, Georgians left few lasting settlements and remained numerically small.

In the last century, the push factor for Georgians to emigrate was driven by economic opportunity. Within the Soviet Union, the Georgian diaspora in Soviet Moscow was vibrant and Georgians were an overrepresented group in important cultural and political sectors, giving them a notability far beyond their small population nestled on the edge of the empire (Scott 2011). In Georgia after 1990, unemployment rates and economic decline, coupled with ethnic violence and political chaos, led to living conditions significantly dropping, in turn contributing to high levels of labour emigration to mainly Russia and Ukraine for men and Italy and Greece for women (Tukhashvili 2018). The Georgian diaspora in Poland grew after 2010, particularly due to an EU visa liberalisation policy, as well as the introduction in 2018 of a 'simplified procedure of access to the Polish labour market' (OECD 2022) for Georgians seeking temporary work in Poland.

In present times, Georgians have emerged as one of Poland's fastest-growing foreign-born communities, with more first-time residence permits being granted to Georgians than any other EU member state annually since 2018 (see Figure 8). This migration wave has seen the number of Georgian citizens with residence permits exceed 10,000, with work (96 per cent), family ties (2 per cent) and education (1 per cent) being the primary reasons for their stay (Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców 2021)

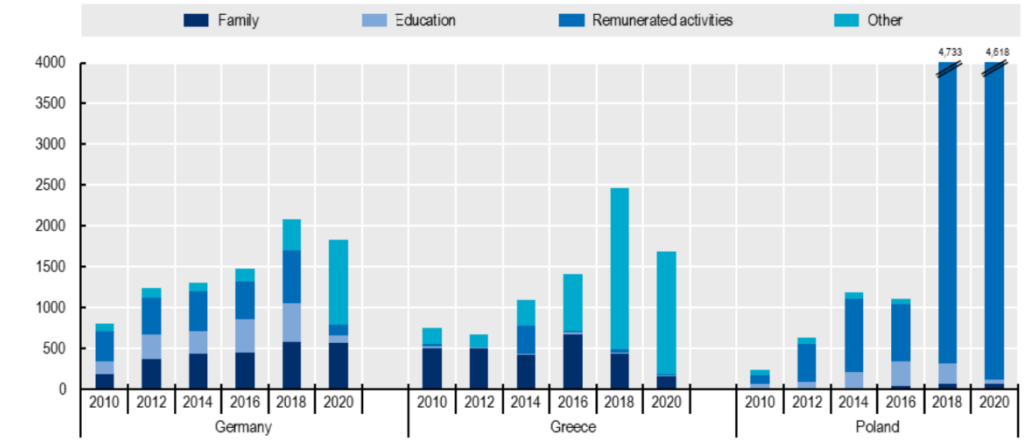
(see Figure 9). Furthermore, Poland's Social Security Institution (ZUS) released data in 2023 showing that Georgians accounted for 2.3 per cent of all foreign nationals registered in their system, ranking as the country's third-largest foreign community. Only Ukrainians (67.3 per cent) and Belarusians (11.5 per cent) had larger representations, while Georgians outnumbered other significant groups like Indians (1.8 per cent) and Moldovans (1.3 per cent) (Pennar 2024).

Such an influx is attracting media attention, with *Notes from Poland,* an English-language news outlet in Kraków, reporting on the omnipresence of Georgian cuisine on Polish high streets. An interviewee says, 'I was among the first people in Poland to explain what Georgia is, that it's another country, which has its own language, cuisine and traditions' (Pennar 2024) and regards the new Georgian bakeries as a marker of real change and one which will continue to grow. In large Polish cities, such as Poznań, Wrocław, Warsaw, Kraków, Łódź and Gdańsk, independent food establishments have been set up, along with chains like Puri (Bread), Chinkalnia, Gruzińska Chatka (Georgian Cottage) and Pan Gruzin (Mr Georgian), showing its popularity among Polish inhabitants. They also exemplify the concept of glocalisation, because some of the products are not exact representations found in Georgia, but a hybrid that has been either shaped by host-country tastes or the tastes of the non-Georgian owners, or both.

It also merits mentioning that while Georgian restaurants in Kraków may function as spaces of cultural expression and belonging, there is a darker, more seditious side of the restaurant space within a migrant community. Similar establishments elsewhere in Europe have raised concerns about exploitative practices and organised crime, such as money laundering and human trafficking. A 2022 study conducted in Finland uncovered widespread wage violations and exploitation in sectors like hospitality, construction and agriculture among third country nationals (e.g., Georgians and Ukrainians) under flexible visa schemes (Pekkarinen and Jokinen 2023).

Once, Georgian cuisine was linked to the internal Soviet diaspora and spread over the former Soviet-Union countries, adding a lasting influence on cuisines in the region. Nowadays, due to economic and political instability, as well as current political tensions with Georgia's controversial ruling party, Georgian Dream, Georgia's economy is unlikely to improve, potentially leading to more Georgian migrants, restaurants and influences on Poland's gastronomic landscape in the near future.

Figures 8–9. Georgian migration statistics.



Note: The data correspond to the first residence permits issued to Georgian nationals for all durations.
Source: Eurostat, 2020 (database "First permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship").

Figure 8. Residence permits issued by Germany, Poland and Greece to Georgian nationals by reason, 2010–2020 (OECD 2022)

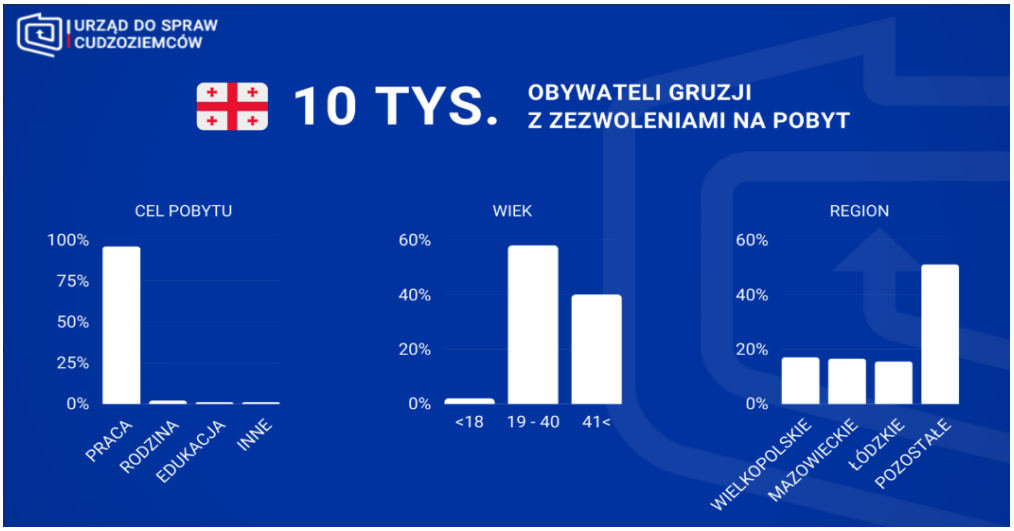


Figure 9. Over 10,000 Georgian citizens came to Poland mostly for work, with 82 per cent of males aged between 19 and 40 years old (Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców 2021).

3.5 The Loose Link: Georgian cuisine beyond Georgian hands

As mentioned in the chapter detailing the literature, cuisine and ethnic-themed restaurants can be used as a type of cultural capital. While outsiders to ethnic communities may exploit the representation of the Other, the establishment of ethnic-themed restaurants can also incubate food heritage, playing an important role in the cultural imagination of migrants. Scott finds that Georgians in the Soviet Union displayed their 'ethnic difference loudly and colorfully' and performed their otherness to

fabricate a form of cultural capital appropriate to the Soviet context: cultivat[ing] and manipulat[ing] the Soviet mythology of ethnic difference' (Scott 2011, 13,14). During this period, ethnic differences, which the Soviet state encouraged and developed, were employed as a strategy to not only preserve identity but also to provide 'a niche for Georgian culinary specialists' (Scott 2011, 184), helping them to survive and flourish in the multi-ethnic Soviet empire: 'among the Soviet Union's internal diasporas, no group was better at performing otherness, and at doing so for their own benefit' (Scott 2011, 14). Such culinary success is still evident, with Georgian legacies being reproduced and consumed in post-Soviet restaurants or supermarkets today.

In this way, the establishment of Georgian restaurants in Kraków by Georgian migrants may help to shape migrant identity and to transform spaces into meaningful, rooted sites of belonging. This introduces the next two concepts, 'diasporic identity' and 'embodied spaces', that will be used to examine whether Georgian restaurants create similar arenas for migrants in Kraków. However, this phenomenon becomes more complicated when a Georgian restaurant is not Georgian owned, bringing into question the issues of cultural ownership, reproduction and 'culinary authenticity', our fourth concept. Notably, some Ukrainian-owned establishments have increased since 2022, coinciding with Russia's war on Ukraine. This development reflects not only economic and migratory trends but also a broader regional context of solidarity among Poles, Ukrainians and Georgians, who share historical experiences of Russian domination and violence. While these dynamics did not emerge as a central theme in the interviews conducted, they nonetheless form part of the wider geopolitical backdrop and present a valuable direction for future research.

Of the four restaurants examined in this study, two were owned and run as small, family businesses, while the other two were operated by non-Georgian restauranteurs (Polish or Ukrainian), which were part of chains in Kraków and internationally. In brief, the main observations were that Georgian-run restaurants displayed their own, personal representations of Georgia whereas the non-Georgian-run restaurants accentuated pseudo-folk representations of Georgia, perhaps appealing to Polish or international interpretations of 'exotic East'. Developing the literature, this dissertation investigated the loose link in our chain, namely the intriguing rise of Georgian cuisine's

popularity and the role of Georgian restaurants, for whom they operate and the irregular notions of authenticity and Georgianness.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study adopts a disciplined single case study approach and uses a qualitative, interpretivist research design to explain the process of Georgian cuisine's globalisation process and how it became interpreted, presented and adapted within the context of Georgian- and non-Georgian-owned restaurants in Kraków. Since this research involves human subjects and restaurants which, by nature, are evolving undefinable cultural forms, 'charged…with…thoroughgoing ambivalence' (Beardsworth and Bryman 1999, 235), I appreciate that I cannot entirely control the research process nor claim to produce entirely neutral or objective knowledge. As Pascale argues, in such settings, certainty is elusive and nothing can be guaranteed (Pascale 2011).

4.2 Methods for Restaurant Analysis

Qualitative, interpretivist research is particularly well-suited to this project due to its emphasis on in-depth and intersubjective understandings of human experience. A combination of several complementary methods was employed to explore Georgian restaurants' role and Georgian cuisine's interpretation and adaption in Kraków's restaurant scene: semi-structured interviews, Google Maps restaurant reviews and participant observation.

All qualitative data collected through these methods were analysed using thematic analysis, an adaptable and popular approach for identifying, organising and interpreting recurring patterns which can be applied to other data forms, such as visual or textual material (Naeem, et al. 2023). Thematic analysis has been applied extensively in food studies, specifically, restaurant experiences (Ishak, et al. 2021) making it suitable for this study's aim of capturing the nuances of culinary adaptation and the performance of Georgianness in Kraków. This method allows the integration of multiple data sources (interviews, reviews, observational fieldnotes, photos) to produce rich, narrative data and provide a small snapshot into the lived realities of interview participants and Kraków dwellers or visitors from their own perspectives.

4.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews with Restaurant Owners and Managers

My primary method of data collection was semi-structured interviews. This method enabled me to conduct conversations that developed in a disciplined, yet creative manner that flowed organically. As Mulhall puts it, humankind is 'a kind of enacted conversation' (Brinkmann 2020, 425) because the human self exists only within the interactions it has with others. It is also useful in capturing the nuances of identity, authenticity and adaptation in transnational restaurant-scapes because it gives space for variation, contradiction and polyvocality, reflecting the changing nature of lifeworld phenomena (Brinkmann 2020).

Moreover, I specifically chose the semi-structured layout, as opposed to a structured or unstructured layout, because it allowed more leeway for the interviewer to direct the conversation thematically and for the interviewee to speak organically and unreservedly. Each interview was organised into the four thematic areas as follows:

1. Background: motivations for opening a Georgian restaurant in Kraków, previous restaurant experience, the employment of Georgian/non-Georgian staff and choices made about their restaurant name, its theme and menus;
2. Authenticity and adaptation: definitions of 'authentic' Georgian cuisine, origins of the dishes' ingredients and whether the Polish context has influenced menu selections;
3. Space and community: the clientele (are they mostly Georgian, Poles, tourists?) and whether the restaurant creates a space of belonging or contributes to a larger Georgian identity in Kraków;
4. Challenges: provided the interviewees with the opportunity for their own themes that may not yet have received sufficient attention.

This loose structure allowed for thematic comparability across interviews while also giving participants space to elaborate on their experiences and opinions in their own terms. A total of three interviews were conducted with two restaurant owners from two Georgian-owned restaurants and one manager from a non-Georgian-owned restaurant. A fourth interview with was planned with another non-Georgian-owned restaurant; however, despite much effort, it was never conducted.

As someone who has worked in many restaurants themself, I am familiar with

the high workload and irregular working times of hospitality employees. In this way, I was conscious of being as flexible as possible when making arrangements to conduct interviews and only made contact with the owners and managers during the quiet hours of opening times, such as lunchtimes on weekdays. Each interview took between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the complexity of their narratives and work-related interruptions, recorded with informed consent, transcribed using Google Pinpoint and then analysed thematically. The thematic analysis method was chosen for its ability to encompass a wide range of methods and give room for flexible interpretation of data patterns, with further details in 4.2.4. When writing up the interview data, I preserved the original meaning as far as possible, however, some small tweaks were needed to aid clarity.

The participants had the flexibility to schedule interviews at their convenience, and minimal disruption to their daily activities was ensured. While I considered face-to-face interviews to be the more suitable method in view of the target group, participants also had the opportunity to take part in online interviews via Microsoft teams. Out of the three participants interviewed, one agreed to have an online version of the interview. The participant received an invitation with a link by email and was interviewed under the same conditions as participants in face-to-face interviews.

From prior language-knowledge checks, English was selected as the interview language to ensure fluency and comfort on both sides, while also maintaining consistency with the language of this dissertation.

4.2.2 Google Maps Restaurant Reviews

To gauge public impressions of the restaurants under analysis, I gathered comments left by members of the public on Google Maps reviews. Also termed the 'electronic word of mouth' (Chik and Vásquez 2017, 4), this media genre has become popular over the last fifteen years, enabling anyone with an 'internet connection and an opinion to claim to be an 'expert'' (Chik and Vásquez 2017, 5), thereby informing (or warning) potential diners about their subjective experiences. Such a method is a branch of research known as 'netnography', which can help researchers understand puzzling social phenomena and 'assist…in developing themes from the respondents' points of view' (Rageh, Melewar and Woodside 2013, 130).

This content is multi-modal and informal, often using many emojis, colourful punctuation, humour and simple or slang language. Accordingly, I treated these texts not as academic writing, but as expressions of lived experience. I entered each restaurant's Google Maps review list and selected thirty reviews left for each restaurant[8] that were relevant to my thematic focus. For example, if a review said the phrases 'authentic', 'like in Georgia', 'home', 'reminds me of grandma', etc., it was included. Irrelevant, overly vague or unconstructive reviews were excluded.

As with the interviews, the reviews were analysed using thematic analysis, according to the themes as follows: the role of the restaurant as a space, culinary adaptation and impressions of authenticity. Thematic analysis has been used in prior research analysing online restaurant reviews (Le, et al. 2022) which underscores its appropriateness for interpreting how diners articulate their experiences and perceptions in an informal online context. In this study, these reviews function mainly as supporting pieces of evidence and supplementary material, which were particularly valuable for the restaurant from which no interview was secured. Similarly to the interviews, I preserved the content as far as possible and when clarity was impeded, I intervened with small grammatical adjustments.

4.2.3 Participant Observation in Restaurants

In addition to interviews and restaurant reviews, participant observation formed a part of the research design. Since moving to Kraków in May 2024, I became a regular customer in the Georgian restaurants under analysis which was important for building a rapport with the restaurant staff prior to formal interviews and for experiencing the restaurant's atmosphere and clientele at different times of the day and year. After visiting, I asked staff for the Owner's or Manager's willingness to participate in my study and for their contact details. While all subjects agreed initially, the reality of organising a date and time for meeting proved challenging. While it was sometimes necessary to be very persistent and return many times, others agreed to interviews quickly.

Becoming a familiar and unobtrusive presence in these environments helped to

[8] The total number of reviews varied per restaurant: Restaurant A received 873, Restaurant B received 1,122, Restaurant C received 5,550 and Restaurant D received 4,500. The earliest review used in this dissertation was seven years ago and the most recent was from the last month, i.e., May 2025.

reduce the issue of reactivity whereby people alter their behaviour when they are aware of being studied by outsiders (Bernard 1994). Inspired by Shelton's findings comparing fast food chains and finer dining establishments (Shelton 1990) and Parasecoli's observations on culinary codes (Parasecoli 2011), I observed the spatial design, clientele and their languages (English, Polish, Georgian, Ukrainian, Russian), and the performative elements of Georgianness, such as background music, interior décor, the menu and serving rituals and made fieldnotes in a notebook. This was to evaluate each restaurant's individual semiosphere and to understand how restaurant owners and workers interpret and perform Georgianness in a Polish urban setting.

I also took photos, with permission, of the restaurants' interiors with a mobile phone. These informal engagements provided context when it came to the formal interview. As an example, one interviewee specifically remembered serving me and my friends on one busy Saturday night and they appreciated that I had made an effort to know their restaurant before conducting the interview.

4.2.4 Thematic Analysis

The above three research methods – semi-structured interviews, online restaurant reviews and participant observation – provide a holistic picture of the issues at hand via varying subjectivities and experiences (Banyard and Miller 1998). These datasets were all analysed using thematic analysis, which enables flexible interpretation of the data, allowing for a rich and nuanced examination and the development of the above concepts, and helping to answer my research questions.

Deriving inspiration from the set of stages for thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir 2016), my activity briefly unfolded like so:

1. I transcribed the interviews electronically using Google Pinpoint, refining the useful material and discarding the superfluous parts of the conversation;
2. I roughly divided the refined material according to the three themes of the interview derived from my review of the literature using colour coding;
3. Once the interview data had been organised, I selected the appropriate Google Maps reviews from each restaurant's respective page;
4. I then refined the material further, identifying ways to use the reviews to supplement the interview data.

I decided that the reviews are flexible pieces of evidence to interweave with the interview and participant observation data (instead of dedicating a whole section to them), the two methods I decided to separate to maintain clarity.

4.3 Limitations

As with any study, this research carries certain limitations which merit acknowledgement. Initially, more interviews were planned, but time constraints and the participants' busy schedules limited this. Another restaurant declined despite many dogged attempts and multiple visits to secure an interview; therefore, this limited sample size restricts the generalisability of my findings.

Language also posed constraints, as all interviews were conducted in English, which served as a common but non-native language. At times, participants struggled to fully express themselves, though one received translation support from a partner, which aided communication. Although I have B2-level Polish and Russian (languages participants partly understood), my lack of Georgian language proficiency limited nuanced communication, hindering deeper answers to my questions.

4.4 Researcher positionality

A conversation between an interviewer and interviewee links to shared agency in meaning-making, requiring researcher reflexivity. I was aware of my outsider status; that is, I am not Georgian, do not speak Georgian and observed the restaurants not just as a diner, but as an active note-taker, making the process more staged.

However, having worked and travelled in Georgia from summer 2022 to autumn 2023, I have gained limited insider knowledge, cultural understandings and expectations, which helped to build trust during the interviews. Nevertheless, I had to avoid letting my experiences influence the interviews to allow participants to articulate their own meanings of Georgianness, authenticity, the role of their restaurants, etc. Moreover, since this study involves ethnicity and the authentic appeal of ethnic-themed restaurants, I was careful not to come across as a naïve western European adventurer with a fascination for 'exotic' cultures that are waiting to be 'discovered'. While I admire Georgian culture, I consciously tried not to project assumptions or idealise it.

In addition, this research explores the notion of hybridity between Georgian

cuisine and its possible adaptation to Polish food tastes and contexts. After thirteen months in Poland, I have gained B2-level Polish and a solid understanding of its food culture. Yet I remain neither a local nor a tourist, offering a mix of outsider–insider insight.

As a final point, this research design recognises the ethnographic nature of such a project as 'intrinsically incomplete' (Harrison 2014, 236), since it is conducted during specific interventions into the daily life of these restaurants and cannot wholly encompass a definitive experience of each restaurant owner and their patrons. It is not a final word on the role of Georgian restaurants in Kraków, but rather an open-ended set of interpretations grounded in specific voices and contexts.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from both the University of Glasgow and Jagiellonian University. All interviewees received a clear and comprehensive Plain Language Statement detailing the study's aims, purposes, the nature of the interview questions and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. This ensured that they were fully informed before consenting to participate (see the Appendices section for the relevant paperwork).

To ensure confidentiality and protect identities, all interviewees were anonymised and identifying details were removed. All data was stored securely on encrypted, password-protected devices in accordance with GDPR and university guidelines. When referring to statements in Chapters 5 and 6, I use Owner 1, 2, etc., and none of the restaurants are named; I simply used Restaurant A, B, C, D when referring to them.

Given the potentially sensitive nature of topics discussed (migration, identity, etc.), interviews were conducted in a respectful and supportive manner. Participants were made aware that they could skip questions or stop the interview at any point.

Chapter 5: Why Georgian Cuisine? The Motivations Behind a Culinary Trend

5.1 Introduction

The next two chapters present the empirical findings from my fieldwork on the selected four Georgian restaurants in Kraków. This chapter begins by introducing the Georgian restaurants under analysis, providing the results from the first theme of the semi-structured interview questions, i.e., motivations for opening a Georgian restaurant in Kraków. This chapter will then discus answers to the first question this dissertation addresses: *What accounts for the proliferation of Georgian restaurants in Poland, particularly Kraków, despite the lack of strong colonial ties or migration history connecting these countries?*

5.1.1 Georgian-Owned Restaurant A

GO Restaurant A lies in a touristic part of Kraków. It is a small establishment, run by a young couple (Owner 1a and Owner 1b) who come from the Adjara region of Georgia. They both worked in the service industry in Batumi, Georgia's second-largest city on the Black Sea's eastern shore, before they moved to Kraków in 2022. Their decision to migrate was motivated by economic difficulties following the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent stagnation in the hospitality sector, along with encouragement from a Georgian friend who was already working in food delivery service in Kraków. Restaurant A's owners saw an opportunity and took it, with Owner 1a working as a sous chef in a Polish kitchen and Owner 1b working as a food delivery driver; out of the seven friends who moved to Kraków together, they are the only ones who remained.

The idea to open Restaurant A in 2023 came about because Owner 1b became frustrated during their job as a delivery driver; for them, the quality of the Georgian food orders they were delivering did not adhere to their perceptions of Georgian cuisine:

> When I worked on delivery, I also had orders from other Georgian restaurants. The idea [for] this restaurant came from there because I did not feel like the Georgian cuisine I was delivering was really Georgian and I told [Owner 1a] that if

> there will be a proper Georgian restaurant [opened in Kraków], it will work for sure.[9]

During the first nine months, the couple worked alone, one in the kitchen, one front of house. The next person they employed was Owner 1a's mother, who emigrated from Georgia, and another two Georgian workers. Owner 1b's mother will also be moving to Poland to work with them in the coming months. For the owners, it is important to employ only Georgians:

> It's important for us now because Georgian cuisine is specific. It's not easy for everyone…for people who know Georgian cuisine, it's more easy for us and for service. It's also because many people don't know Georgian meals, for example, how to eat *khinkali* or *khachapuri* or something…I need to present a little bit how to eat them, what is inside, etc.[10]

Both the owners are learning Polish, but they further highlighted that they plan to hire Polish employees in the future who will work in the service side (not the kitchen) because better Polish language skills are needed. However, since they are still a relatively new restaurant, having a small, tight-knit Georgian workforce as their 'power' is crucial for building the right foundations to move forward. It is about trust and integrity:

> We are planning to hire Polish people, but at the beginning, [the] staff should be Georgians. We need some Georgian people who will be our power, and we could then trust them and they will work how we want when we are away. They have to work from [the] heart, you feel, guest feels it, this is our big motivation.[11]

5.1.2 Georgian-Owned Restaurant B

GO Restaurant B lies in a residential part of Kraków. It has the appearance of a small bungalow with a tumbledown garden, surprising the visitor when they discover its function as a restaurant, rather than someone's home. Owner 2 is from Tbilisi and moved to Kraków thirteen years ago to study. They were twice the *Młody ambassador*

[9] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.
[10] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.
[11] Owner 1a at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.

Gruzji w Polsce (the Young Georgian Ambassador to Poland) and before opening Restaurant B, they founded *Stowarzyszenie Most do Gruzji* (The Bridge to Georgia Association), a centre which promoted Georgian culture in Kraków from 2010–2020. In 2016, Restaurant B initially opened as a wine bar and then developed later into a restaurant, stemming from the desire to popularise Georgian cuisine among Poles:

> I import Georgian wine from Georgia to Poland, and [back then] I really wanted to make Georgian wine popular here [in Kraków]. This was the main reason to open this place, I just wanted to gather people with Georgian wine…I really think that every foreigner in a foreign country are ambassadors of their countries.[12]

The restaurant began as a group initiative with Owner 2's Georgian friends, with the goal of connecting Poles to Georgian culture; Owner 2 was surprised when Restaurant B started to attract a clientele further afield than the immediate locality:

> When we opened eight years ago, this place was mainly aimed at Poles, I didn't think that it will be possible that foreigners will come as well![13]

The staff of Restaurant B is a mixture of Georgian and Polish people, with a Georgian-only workforce in the kitchen. Similar to Restaurant A, Owner 2 began the business with Georgian employees and, over time, realised the need to employ Poles: At the beginning, we had more Georgians, but when you grow you need some Polish people too because, while Georgians are really nice, they do not know how to talk in Polish properly. And that was a problem. You know, not everyone is [a] foreigner, not everyone knows English.[14]

Owner 2 has moved to Poland permanently and speaks Polish fluently. They admit that founding a business in Poland has not been straightforward, but they hold this business close to their heart:

> Come on, it's like a war. Oh my god! It's really difficult to make a business here. I think that this is politics, they want to leave only the big businesses…I'm sure it's

[12] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[13] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[14] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.

> the same globally and not just Poland. But I love it and when you love something you really fight for it.[15]

5.1.3 Non-Georgian-Owned Restaurant C

NGO Restaurant C lies in the centre of Kraków and was opened 20 years ago. It is a big establishment, with two floors and a courtyard featuring a sprawling grapevine canopy in the summer. Other restaurants belonging to the same owner exist in Warsaw, the capital, and Wrocław, a city in the southwest of Poland. The Manager, speaking on behalf of Owner 3, informs me that Owner 3 is Polish but has connections to Georgian cuisine because they had a Georgian grandmother, inspiring them to open a restaurant in Kraków. The Manager has never been to Georgia, and while they would like to travel to there, the prices of the flight tickets are too expensive.

Restaurant C employs both Polish and Ukrainian staff for the waiting service and all the chefs come from Poland. In their answer, they allude to the large numbers of Ukrainians now in Poland due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022: 'In Poland now, maybe you noticed, we have lots of Ukrainians. So, in here we also employ them.'[16] NGO Restaurant C also employs one Georgian woman who makes *khachapuri* near the front door of the restaurant, making a pleasant display for visitors. The Manager emphasises that even though the staff are not from Georgia, she is careful to teach them about Georgian flavours:

> We have to teach them about the Georgian tradition of Georgian cuisine, of Georgian spices, tastes, flavours. If someone doesn't know anything about Georgia, then we need lots of time to teach them… when I started working here seven years ago, I was learning the menu over the course of one month. Oh my god, it was so hard for me! For example, one of the hardest names for me was *Sarajishvili*, the name of a Georgian brandy.[17]

The Manager continues by saying that Owner 3 is motivated by what is gastronomically popular in Kraków. Recently, an Italian restaurant became the newest addition to their collection of restaurants.

---

[15] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[16] Manager at NGO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[17] Manager at NGO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.

Despite this change in cuisine, Georgian cuisine is still popular in Kraków, mainly due to its unfamiliarity for Kraków inhabitants and tourists:

> Georgian cuisine is just interesting, people don't know about it and haven't even tried it, so when they see something new, they want to try it. This cuisine is just more interesting than, for example, Italian. You know, *pizza* and *pasta*, everyone in world knows, but the Georgian cuisine, probably not.[18]

According to the Manager, it is the unusualness of Georgian cuisine that attracts customers. However, they also add that Polish cuisine has similar traits to Georgian cuisine, perhaps indicating that the cuisine's attraction, in fact, lies in its unfamiliar–familiar combination:

> The wines are totally different from Italian or French wines; it's a totally different taste. But Polish people also really like this cuisine because it's [a] very fat[ty] cuisine with lots of meat; Polish people love meat and fat![19]

5.1.4 Non-Georgian-Owned Restaurant D

NGO Restaurant D is said to be the world's largest chain of Georgian restaurants, and the first restaurant was founded in Ukraine in 2014 in Lviv (2021). It has two different locations in Kraków and boasts, by a large number, the most extensive network of Georgian restaurants in Poland, totalling 26. Unfortunately, I did not manage to secure an interview, but research reveals that the first Restaurant D opened in Kraków in 2016. In a *wyborcza.pl* article, a journalist writes about the opening of this restaurant:

> Georgian food has arrived. They make it, they sell it, they shake hands with the Ukrainians. I am delighted by this eastern landing, what can I say; Ukrainians are everywhere. My favourite Sunday coffee? Ukrainian. The coffee closest to home? Ukrainian. And now, here we are, a Ukrainian chain with Georgian food. Having stuffed Ukraine with a dozen or so establishments, it has taken to the neighbouring market, ours. (Nowicki 2016)[20]

[18] Manager at NGO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[19] Manager at NGO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[20] Translated from the Polish by the author.

This chain seems to be popular in Poland because in many Polish cities there is a franchise restaurant. The chains all share the same interior style and serve Georgian food with a fast pace, giving it more of a bistro atmosphere rather than a place where you would stay for many hours. The writer of the *wyborcza.pl* article further expresses his delight at having Georgian food in Poland, brought by Ukrainians:

> They serve everything very quickly…which makes you understand that it's more of a fast-food restaurant…I am also delighted that [Restaurant D] is a Ukrainian chain and that there are more and more Georgian eateries in our country. There can never be too much Georgian cuisine. (Nowicki 2016)[21]

In another *wyborcza.pl* article, the Polish owner of one of the franchises in Kielce, west of Kraków, opened their restaurant in 2018 and maintained that Poles are influencing the Georgian cuisine popularity trend due to their trips to Georgia: 'Georgia is now very fashionable in Poland. A lot of people go to this country. They come back and miss the local flavours' (Wadowski and Walczak 2018). Such a comment is consistent with the findings in the literature review chapter, which revealed that one of the reasons for a cuisine's proliferation is the diversification of taste via tourism.

5.2 Discussion

The answers provided by the interviewees and findings above are subjective and mixed, showing that there is not a uniform motivation for opening a Georgian restaurant in Kraków. What is evident, however, are the differences in motivations between the Georgian-owned and the non-Georgian-owned restaurants.

The GO restaurants reflect the common pattern of migration described in the literature. For example, Restaurant A's Owners have successfully succeeded in bringing their family members over to Poland and employ them in their kitchen, providing in part an example of the 'ethnic economy', that is, 'self-employment by the representatives of a particular ethnic group' (Guliaeva 2017, 281). Moreover, the experience of Restaurant B's Owner is similar to Parasecoli's study, because they began as a joint Georgian endeavour that aimed to intermingle with the host community: 'the "collective" aspect of migrant culinary experiences is constructed through constant interactions…among

[21] Translated from the Polish by the author.

community members and the host community' (Parasecoli 2014, 421).

In addition, both Restaurants A and B show a personal attachment to their establishments and, to a certain extent, a sense of duty to represent and promote Georgian cuisine as they see fit. For them, it is crucial that their culture is translated well and that they expose it to those (especially Poles) who are unfamiliar with Georgia. This observation is consistent with the literature, where Wood and Muñoz write that, for the majority of the time, ethnically themed restaurants are the sole exposure consumers have with that culture, making these environments 'function as a "cultural ambassador"', and providing, for some, a 'stand-in for travel, or an enticement to it' (Wood and Muñoz 2007, 244). As we will see in the next chapter, a number of diners at each restaurant express their wish, in their Google Maps reviews, to visit Georgia as a result of their experiences in Restaurants A and B.

It could be deduced, on the other hand, that the NGO restaurants show less cultural interest in Georgia as a country and possess more drive for capitalising on the cuisine's distinctive qualities to attract customers who are, as some scholars name, 'culturally naïve patrons' (Ebster and Guist 2004, 43), or those who are unfamiliar to the culture and cuisine and seek something different to their own. It is also interesting to note the mention from both NGO restaurants about Ukrainians who either staff the restaurants or have contributed to opening the franchises in Poland. Restaurant C briefly touches on the point that since 2022, they employ more Ukrainians in their business, while the article, written in 2016, describing Restaurant D, indicates that Ukrainians open good businesses which are welcome in Poland. This possibly shows that the spread of Georgian cuisine has been slowly increasing over the past decade, with Ukrainian entrepreneurs acting as intermediaries for its popularisation.

That said, profit undoubtedly drives each business, with the restaurants stating that their motivations to open were also based in part on the following: 1) the gap in the Kraków market for authentic Georgian flavours (Restaurant A); 2) Georgian cuisine's unusual, and therefore attractive, flavours (Restaurants B and C); and 3) the demand for delicious and fashionable food (Restaurant D).

In sum, the Georgian restaurants under analysis all opened due to varying reasons. Generally, the Georgian-owned establishments were opened because of their previous experience in the gastronomic sector in Georgia and their wish to represent an

authentic version of their country; in contrast, the non-Georgian-owned restaurants opened because of business opportunities, the success Georgian cuisine was having in Ukraine and the increased Polish tourism to Georgia, showing that the flavours of Georgian dishes can appeal beyond Georgia's borders and accelerate in popularity if marketed astutely.

Chapter 6: Performing Georgianness: The Roles of Georgian Restaurants in Kraków

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data from the semi-structured interviews with Restaurants A, B and C, Google reviews and the participant observation findings, including the semiosphere, e.g., the interior décor and menu of each establishment. The content is organised thematically as follows: the role of these establishments in creating spaces of belonging, the negotiation of culinary authenticity and adaptation and the ways in which they 'perform' Georgianness. The main concepts, culinary glocalisation, diasporic/embodied space and culinary authenticity are also addressed, as well as the similarities and differences between Georgian-owned and non-Georgian-owned restaurants. This thematic structure provides a foundation for the critical analysis sections that follow each sub-sections' results, aiming to address the second question of this dissertation: *What are the roles of Georgian restaurants in Kraków?*

6.2 For whom?

One of the main themes explored during the interviews concerned which demographics were attracted to each restaurant and whether each establishment aids in creating communities in Kraków, specifically, Georgian migrant communities. It was resoundingly clear from the answers that a specific demographic in Kraków was neither the motivation for opening, nor the goal for the development of the business. In general, the owners and manager interviewed maintained that their restaurants functioned as educational spaces for Georgian culture (often performing ambassadorial functions), a place for locals to enjoy good food and wine and an opportunity for tourists to try something new.

As established in Chapter 5, GO Restaurant A was opened more recently (2023) compared to the other restaurants. The Owners are still in the process of developing their restaurant, and revealed that although not specifically aimed at Georgians, the presence of Georgian clients is a positive sign:

> Our goal is to make Georgian dishes more popular for Polish people and foreigners, not for Georgians. But, in the last three or four months, I don't know

> what changed, but we have more and more Georgian guests…we had compliments that [the] *khinkali*, for example, they had not tried even in Georgia…And when a Georgian says this, we know that we are on the way [to achieving] what we want.[22]

While also not directly aimed at Georgian minorities in Kraków, Owner 2 of GO Restaurant B maintained that Georgian social groups develop on their own and that their restaurant sometimes acts as a meeting place; however, it is not an instigator for these groups:

> When I opened, not a lot of Georgians were living here. It was not based for Georgians, absolutely. The networks happened by themselves, as a result of opening…now, Georgian people come…this is a place to gather them…but we meet each other all the time anyway so we didn't need a specific place.[23]

All three restaurants interviewed said that their main client-base were Poles, Ukrainians or tourists, and it mainly depends on the location of the restaurants. For GO Restaurant B, being located further from the city centre makes it a space for locals and only 10 per cent of the clientele are tourists. For NGO Restaurant C, since it is located very centrally in Kraków, the clients are incredibly mixed, and yet, so the Manager told me, the majority of their diners are from Ukraine:

> They [Ukrainians] really like it. They come here and feel at home; I think it gives them that kind of feeling. In countries like Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, even though they are different countries, they have one dish which every country knows with just small differences. So maybe this is why Ukrainians know this cuisine more than Polish people.[24]

The Manager continued by saying that while they teach Polish customers about Georgian cuisine, sometimes Ukrainian customers act as the knowledgebase and provide educational tips: 'But when we have Ukrainian customers, we don't need to teach them. More, they teach us!'[25] The Manager adds that such customers, along with

[22] Owner 1a at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.
[23] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[24] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.
[25] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.

Georgians, are useful for the business for positive validation or to point out areas of improvement, calling it an ‘exchange’:

> When Georgian customers come here, sometimes they want to talk with me about the cuisine and say, "Oh, that was really good like in my hometown, but this one, it's not so good and we don't make [it] like that”.[26]

GO Restaurant A repeated similar answers to the previous two restaurants, but added an intriguing observation:

> Most [of] our customers are local people and also tourists. Mostly Polish, Ukrainian and tourists from all countries. Italians too. Because Italians have also [a] wine culture, [a] big wine culture. They're looking [for] restaurants which sell good wine, and usually they do not know about it, and you teach them.[27]

This links to the point about Georgian wine gaining more recognition in western European countries mentioned in Chapter 3. It also perhaps supports the fact that diners often look for familiarity when travelling abroad. Regarding wine, it merits noting that Georgian wine, despite having a long history and being widely known in the region, is less known in places like France and Italy, whose own wine cultures have been idolised as the elite wines of Europe, obscuring other contenders in the broader European region (Marks 2011).

To further discover what role these Georgian restaurant spaces play, it is necessary to look at the Google Maps reviews. One of the prominent themes in the reviews mentioned how both Restaurants A and B create the atmosphere of home and remind reviewers of having a meal at a senior family member’s house. For GO Restaurant A, a review writes: ‘This place is amazing — it feels like visiting your Georgian grandma (in the best way possible)! Everything is super cozy and homey’[28]. Others reflected similar ideas about home, written as follows: ‘you feel like you are at your own

[26] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.
[27] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.
[28] Vika Androsova, Google Maps review, 2 months ago. Note: The published version of this dissertation has removed all links to the original quotes due to concerns over retaining the restaurants’ anonymity. Due to the way Google Maps displays its reviews, it is not possible to obtain an exact date of the review left for the restaurant. All reviews were accessed in May 2025. Data can be made available on reasonable request by the author.

home'[29]; 'Small and cozy place, like home:)'[30]; 'Feels like home'[31]; 'Absolutely felt like home and my grandma's recipes:)'[32] and 'Best Khachapuri in Poland,10/10 will take my mom!'[33].

Comparable comments were left for GO Restaurant B, with specific mentions about the green space: 'The place is unusual, it feels like you're at your grandma's in the village'[34]; 'I would come back here for the garden only. It feels like home, just [like] the garden I have [at] home with parents'[35] or '...the garden looks like your aunt's.'[36] Others are reminded of early childhood: 'It feels like home'[37]; 'Arranged as if by chance, in a homely way: "this is after grandma", "this is after grandpa"'[38] and "...as if you are visiting your grandmother and eating home-made food."[39]

The ubiquity of words like 'home' and 'grandma' reflect a feeling of nostalgia, demonstrating how these restaurants create semi-public spheres that enable an environment of comfort, familiarity and the opportunity to indulge in childhood memories. The country origins of the reviewers are also significant because this indicates a similar upbringing and perception of 'home'. Even though it is difficult to exactly determine the surname origins, it can be estimated that of the twelve comments mentioning home, two are from the South Caucasus, six are of Slavic origin (Poland, Ukraine or Russia) and one is from Kazakhstan[40].

For Restaurants C and D, there are less comments regarding home, apart from one diner likening *khinkali* to another type of Chinese dumpling that is evidently familiar to them, perhaps providing comfort: 'The Georgia[n] dumplings remind us of the Chinese soup dumplings *xiao long bao*.'[41]

Another recurring theme in the reviews for Restaurants A, B and D was related to

[29] Tuqay Abdullazade, Google Maps review, 3 months ago.
[30] Mikheil Potskhverashvili, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[31] Дархан Нурпеисов, Google Maps review, 1 month ago.
[32] temmuz şamcı, Google Maps review, 10 months ago.
[33] Måns Johansson Rüder, Google Maps review, 4 months ago.
[34] Pavlo Anichin, Google Maps review, 1 month ago.
[35] Ananastasiia Dobraya, Google Maps review, 5 months ago.
[36] Miki Vira, Google Maps review, 9 months ago.
[37] Wojciech Wilk, Google Maps review, 5 years ago.
[38] Olga Baca, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[39] Анна Гукова, Google Maps review, 7 months ago.
[40] A Google search can reveal the origins of surnames. Additionally, the languages in which the reviews were left were as follows: 5 in Polish; 4 in English; 1 in Ukrainian; 1 in Russian; 1 in Turkish.
[41] Marino Liauw, Google Maps review, 5 years ago.

how the experience either reminded diners of previous trips to Georgia or made them want to travel there. When speaking with Owner 2, they expressed their joy at being an inspiration to clients:

> I had a lot of people coming and they were so excited. They liked the food so much that they decided to travel to Georgia. For me, this is the biggest compliment. That's when you feel that you're really an ambassador of Georgia.[42]

The reviews for Restaurants A, B and D support this as follows: 'Amazing food…Now I guess I have to go to Georgia next…'[43]; 'Really delicious, feels like you traveled to Georgia without traveling there!'[44] ; 'And that khachapuri is…mind-blowing. It takes you back to nice bikepacking days and memories of a long forgotten trip to Kutaisi and Tbilisi'[45]; 'The quality of the khachapuri is just great…almost exactly as how I remember it from my days in Georgia'[46] and 'It makes me miss Tbilisi so much!'[47]

Owner 2 sums up the emotion of hearing these comments as 'pride' because it means to them people are curious to know more:

> I just feel really proud. I'm happy that people are interested in Georgia overall. Not only in food, not only wine, just in Georgia, the country.[48]

Regarding NGO Restaurants C and D, it seems that they draw a crowd that is less familiar or totally unfamiliar with Georgian cuisine. Some reviews speak of wanting to try something new while others express surprise. The reviews for Restaurant C were as follows: 'Surprised it was so good. Never tried Georgian before.'[49]; 'We definitely can recommend it to anyone who wants to try something a little bit different in Kraków'[50] and 'I had high hopes in trying new cuisine, I was disappointed here…I felt the food was a bit bland'[51].

The reviews for Restaurant D continue as follows: '…not the cuisine you eat

---

[42] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[43] Donnie Kolb, Google Maps review, 11 months ago.
[44] BOB BOBY, Google Maps review, 1 month ago.
[45] Dávid Stuller, Google Maps review, 2 months ago.
[46] Alexander Melo Gómez, Google Maps review, 2 years ago.
[47] Brittany George, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[48] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[49] Niels Nielsen, Google Maps review, 2 months ago.
[50] Agata J, Google Maps review, 6 years ago.
[51] Austin Costello, Google Maps review, 3 years ago.

everyday, but it was really interesting and worth a visit!'[52]; 'AMAZING. Never had Georgian cuisine before but this restaurant has made me an instant fan.'[53]; 'Was looking to try Georgian food and this one met my expectations. So many tastes, original food to try'[54]; 'Great place if you fancy to try something different'[55]. Worth noting also were comments on language and product origins: 'Nice service (English speaking, Russian speaking)'[56] and 'It's nice that there is Ukrainian beer'[57], demonstrating that diners appreciate having familiar features in an unfamiliar setting.

One review compared Georgian cuisine to that of India's or Pakistan's. For them, Georgian cuisine is not part of the European geography, showing perhaps that anything unrepresentative of 'European food' or eating practices (using a knife and fork), is unfamiliar and 'oriental':

> Dumplings with ajapsandali[58]. And the best part? You ate them using your fingers. Bit like they eating curry with naan and rice in Pakistani /India...If you're European you haven't had such dish in your life![59]

6.2.1 Discussion

The findings strongly indicate that Georgian Restaurants A, B, C and D in Kraków are not aimed at nor attract a specific group of people; this develops the findings from the literature, because the restaurants seem to operate for a wider transnational community, whether they be Polish, Georgian, Ukrainian nationals, international tourists and others. In these spaces, those who are familiar to the cuisine and culture have the chance to reminisce about childhood comfort food, home or a successful trip in Georgia. At the same time, those who are unfamiliar to it also have an opportunity to participate in a totally different experience.

The fact that these restaurants do not act as exclusive ethnic enclaves is significant because it attests the idea that national belonging or ownership is not fixed

[52] Manuel Ngo, Google Maps review, 10 months ago.
[53] Isabelle Schreuder, Google Maps review, 5 years ago.
[54] Dusan Milojic, Google Maps review, 5 years ago.
[55] Harry, Google Maps review, 2 years ago.
[56] Eli, Google Maps review, 6 years ago.
[57] Андрій Солонський, Google Maps review, 1 month ago.
[58] Georgian vegetable stew.
[59] Mateusz Petryszyn, Google Maps review, 10 months ago.

and can form part of an identity that adheres to another national identity, for example, those who share Soviet culinary heritage still have Georgian food preferences and influences today, giving rise to some cultural links with and nostalgia to the cuisine. This ties to and develops Appadurai's idea of 'ethnoscapes' in section 2.3 of the literature review chapter, exemplifying how flows of people with transnational identities (shaped by globalisation, i.e., colonial pasts, migration) decouple locality from a specific territory where it becomes reinvented in global urban communities (Kennedy and Roudometof 2002), unsettling rigid ideas of national belonging. These restaurants, particularly those run by Georgians (A and B), act as 'contact zones' (Farrer 2015, 2) where diners meet Georgianness from multiple subjective perspectives. Moreover, continuing the findings from Chapter 5, these restaurants create a space of cultural exposure, piquing curiosity for wider Georgian culture; this curiosity motivates the desire to know more (i.e., to visit real Georgia) or simply satisfies the need for experiencing something culturally different (the exposure in Krakow is enough, no more exposure is needed), supporting Wood and Muñoz's study that finds "the illusion of authenticity' is often good enough' for consumers (Wood and Muñoz 2007, 244).

The language relating to home and female family members in the Google Maps reviews reveals a collective nostalgia among the reviewers, who, importantly, are of Georgian and other national origins, indicating that notions of home and belonging are adaptable concepts. As Timothy writes, 'gastronomic personal heritage play[s] an important role in people's created identities' (Timothy 2016, 66), and mothers and grandmothers are the 'commonest family members associated with one's comestible past' (Timothy 2016, 67), which reflects how food is a highly influential and individual memory that can be triggered and re-experienced. This is consistent with the study by Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni (2020) that describes these domestic memories as the 'dripping' of home into the public restaurant setting, which transforms the space where human experience takes on material form (Low, Spatializing Culture: Embodied Space in the City 2011), adhering to the 'embodied space' concept.

Furthermore, the nostalgia reflected in repeated references to 'grandma's cooking', could also hint at an appreciation for Restaurants A and B's more simple approach to cuisine and dining. Both Timothy (2016) and Heldke (2014) find that the contemporary era of fast pace and movement accentuates feelings of rootlessness

with today's societies idealising the past as an unchanging and secure-making entity. Therefore, the ubiquity of fast-food joints and the common experiences of impersonal restaurant dining make food like 'grandma's cooking…masked by nostalgia, the most delicious food ever eaten!' (Timothy 2016, 67); thus, Restaurants A and B give diners the ability to locate and negotiate their positionings within the restaurant space, further discussed in section 6.4.

It is also pertinent to consider Ukrainian diners. The interviewees from Restaurants A and C mentioned that Ukrainians form a significant client base, not only because of cultural familiarity but also due to a shared Soviet food heritage. According to Restaurant C's Manager, Ukrainians 'feel at home' in their restaurant and often teach about Georgian cuisine. To them, Ukrainians have legitimate authority on Georgian cuisine and provide an educational function, along with Georgians. Restaurant D's reviews also mention that the staff speak Russian and that it serves Ukrainian beer. This hints at the ongoing Soviet legacy that lingers around Georgian restaurants, as detailed in Chapter 3. It also suggests that Georgian restaurants in Kraków provide a shared memory of post-Soviet cultural space, serving as a reminder of overlapping heritage, languages and cuisine.

Finally, some comments left for Restaurants C and D reflect the experiences of the culturally inexperienced, especially the one left by Petryszyn who likened Georgian cuisine to that of India's or Pakistan's. Although it indicates only one person's perspective, it nonetheless reveals a degree of geographic ignorance, such as the assumption that anything beyond 'Europe' is as foreign as South Asia, and the absence of a unified understanding of Georgia as part of Europe's geography. This returns to the 'cultural food colonialism' (Heldke 2003, xv) term where such a comparison links to Heldke's conclusions that unfamiliarity is measured by self-perception, because a diner defines a food against their own identity; what is unfamiliar is exotic and, therefore, authentic. This leads us smoothly on to the next section, which further reveals the findings of authenticity perceptions and the potential tensions between accurate representation and standardisation of Georgian dishes.

6.3 Culinary Authenticity and Adaptation to the Glocal Context

This section is split into two parts, detailing the responses and reviews about culinary authenticity and adaptation.

6.3.1 Culinary Authenticity

The next important topic during the interviews was about ingredients, where they are sourced and whether it is important that they come from Georgia. There exist a few wholesalers in Poland who sell a variety of Georgian products to gastronomic businesses which the restaurants interviewed use. Even having access to such goods, the Owners of GO Restaurant A were clear on their sourcing methods:

> Georgian foods really need real Georgian spices, and if you use different spices or ingredients, the smell is so *so* different. Our spices are from Georgia. We can buy them here, but we don't. It's important.[60]

The Google Maps reviews attest to the flavours being true to what they believe are genuine Georgian tastes and the word 'authentic' is repeated four times. Other significant reviews are as follows: 'The food was absolutely amazing, like you would taste in a Georgian house'[61]; 'This is a family run restaurant that shows so much love and effort regarding everything. The owner…told us exactly how we should eat everything to get the best experience'[62] and 'Your attention to detail, the artistry in presenting dishes, and the impressive taste of every dish left me with unforgettable impressions.'[63]

Owner 2 of GO Restaurant B describes authentic Georgian cuisine as being 'intense, pure, real', and while it is a main priority to have high quality products, they do not have to come directly from Georgia. They emphasised instead that the cooking methods were important for preserving authenticity:

> High-quality products are really important if you want [a] good taste, but it's not important that [our] ingredients are from Georgia. In Georgian cuisine, we think

[60] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.
[61] Andrea Petruccione, Google Maps reviews, 1 year ago.
[62] Robert Dahlström, Google Maps reviews, 2 months ago.
[63] Anka, Google Maps reviews, 1 year ago.

that you do not complicate the meals. Even *khachapuri* is [a] very easy thing; it's like cheese and bread. The beauty is in the simplicity.[64]

Once again, the reviews include five comments with the word 'authentic' and reinforce that the flavours are faithful to representing Georgia. Other reviews are as follows: '…worth a visit for those seeking a genuine taste of Georgia in Kraków'[65]; 'I have travelled a lot around Georgia and in many places I have had the opportunity to try the local cuisine…this place accurately reflects the cuisine and style of Georgian establishments'[66] and 'Me as a Georgian, can say that this is the best place in Kraków…to try the best Georgian wine and cuisine'[67].

NGO Restaurant C, on the subject of product origins, replied as follows:

> We order and import from Georgia. We can also now produce for ourselves these spices because spices like *ajika* or *khemli suneli* – it's just a mix of different spices and so you can make it yourself.[68]

Some reviews also applauded the authenticity of Restaurant C's dishes: 'The food is delicious, and as authentic as it can be (my family is from Tbilisi)'[69]. While this review states that their judgement is sound due to their Georgian family (like in the review for Restaurant B), another Georgian disputes this and recommends another restaurant instead, employing their Georgian authority to criticise: 'Go to [Restaurant X] instead! Amazing staff, better food! Georgian-approved.'[70] Similarly, other reviewers mention their relation to or knowledge of Georgian cuisine and seem disappointed: 'ate *khachapuri* made by a Georgian chef and this place was a huge downgrade…the dumplings tasted like they were frozen and bought in'[71] or '*Khachapuri* was a disappointment it didn't taste like a proper Georgian one.'[72]

Due the lack of interview, it is difficult to interpret Restaurant D. However, many

[64] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[65] Anubha Bhardwaj, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[66] Olga Baca, Google Maps review 1 year ago.
[67] Nino Okropiridze, Google Maps review, 7 years ago.
[68] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.
[69] Victoria Ter-Arsenian, Google Maps review, 9 months ago.
[70] Suliko Arjevanidze, Google Maps review, 5 months ago.
[71] Nik Burin, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[72] Kamila Kadyrova, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.

reviewers have commented on the lack of authenticity: 'food was OK not bad. But to say it's GE food or restaurant it's not fair at all'[73]; 'Don't they have a Georgian chef? Probably not! I felt disappointed at this place.[74]'; '...owner probably never visited Georgia in the first place, where dish sizes are HUGE.[75]'; 'Ordered *khinkali*, but the meat had a strong Indian food aroma, which was unexpected. Not the authentic taste I was hoping for'[76].

The final topic broached within the theme of authenticity with the Georgian-owned restaurants was about their opinions on non-Georgian-owned Georgian eateries and Georgian chains in Poland. Owner 1b believes passionately that Georgian cuisine is changing negatively at the hands of those who are not fully familiar with original Georgian cuisine. Before opening Restaurant A, their main worry was that non-Georgians, by eating food produced by these places, were not being educated properly, and one of their reasons to open Restaurant A was to set this error right.

> Most Georgian restaurants and bakeries in big Polish cities like Kraków do not have owners from Georgia. They don't mostly know what Georgian cuisine is...They're using [the] Georgian name and this so good for owners who make this business, but this is so bad for Georgian cuisine and for Georgian gastronomy.[77]

Owner 2 is more diplomatic with their reply and said that when they first came to Poland in 2012, there were few Georgian restaurants in Kraków and now, when they see Georgian culture becoming more visible on Polish streets, regardless of it being more commercialised and less authentic, they welcome it: 'I am really happy when Georgian things are popularizing'[78]. Owner 2 admitted however that, while the main Georgian chain in Poland is popular, the dishes could be truer to Georgian flavours:

> This is not a family business or something...I know the lady who owns that place and she is Ukrainian, and they try to be good, but I think that it will be better if

[73] Hassan Elsherif, Google Maps review, 6 years ago.
[74] marta Ziobro, Google Maps review, 4 years ago.
[75] Vladyslav Danin, Google Maps review, 2 years ago.
[76] Rezo Mamsikashvili, Google Maps review, 7 months ago.
[77] Owners 1a and 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, May 2025.
[78] Owner 2 at Go Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.

> they just invite someone, like [a] Georgian chef, and they will cook for them, and maybe they will teach [them] how to cook and they will cook definitely better.[79]

6.3.2 Adaptation and Glocalism

When asking GO Restaurant A whether they change their Georgian dishes to adapt to Polish tastes, the response was adamant:

> No. No. No. Never. Never. No. We try not to change anything, and our dishes must be like Georgia. It's our main goal to never let, for example, someone eat *khinkali* [with] a fork and knife. Never. I get really mad when someone [does this].[80]

Owner 1b's reasoning for this is that both the ritual and flavours of the meal alter if it is not eaten the traditional way, hindering the customer's perception of taste and judgement of the meal. This commitment to showing their customers how to consume Georgian cuisine in the correct way is reflected in several appreciative Google Maps reviews: 'The waiter…showed how to eat *khinkali* properly.'[81]; 'Thank you to the kind staff for showing us how to enjoy our meal the Georgian way!'[82] and 'The only Georgian restaurant in Kraków that's actually explaining to you how to properly eat *khachapuri*.'[83]

The other two restaurants were not as vehemently passionate about this topic. GO Restaurant B said that it is important to select rather than change the Georgian dishes they provide, highlighting that leeway is given to fusions for the sake of food–wine pairs: 'Georgian cuisine is very rich in variety and because of it I just needed to search for one which is good for Poles'[84]. That said, GO Restaurant B still writes a disclaimer-type note on the front of their menu to inform guests that they will eat like Georgians: 'For most dishes, we don't provide cutlery. We eat with our hands, just like in Georgia'[85].

NGO Restaurants C and D, on the other hand, evidently display adaptation to the Polish market (detailed in Section 6.4.3), with the Manager from Restaurant C saying,

---

[79] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[80] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, May 2025.
[81] Natalia Zakharchenko, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.

[82] Andrea Mulato, Google Maps review, 6 months ago.

[83] Andrea Petruccione, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[84] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, May 2025.
[85] The first page of GO Restaurant B's menu, observation by author, April 2025.

‘We can’t make totally 100 per cent Georgian dishes because we have to mix it for Polish tastes’.[86] Yet, a customer from Restaurant D expressed their strong disapproval: ‘I ordered 9 *khinkali* with cheese, and I don’t understand how there could be mayonnaise…Mayonnaise and garlic!!’[87].

Restaurant C’s manager explained that the main differences in the dishes are the quantities of spices, which change according to the customers. For them, if you tour Georgian restaurants in Poland, then you will taste the differences everywhere, the major and recurring example being coriander quantities because, for many Poles, this flavour is unpleasant.

> We have to mix it for Polish tastes because the Georgian cuisine is very strong and very exotic. People don’t like too much spice, we have to listen to our customers, it’s just a business at the end of the day. [88]

The final phrase mentioning business interests is an interesting point because it shows that, in order to maximise popularity and appeal to a more touristic audience, it is important to adapt. Moreover, the Manager of NGO Restaurant C added that they include a Polish menu during the high tourist season to cater to tourist demands for Polish cuisine:

> Depending on the season, from June to October, we have a Polish page in our menu and we have the most traditional Polish things like dumplings, (the whole world loves our dumplings!), sour rye soup served in bread and stuffed cabbage…most tourists arrive during this season.[89]

6.3.3 Discussion

Overall, the Georgian-owned and non-Georgian-owned restaurants exhibit differences when it comes to authentic tastes. The GO restaurant owners have strong a commitment to representing original Georgian flavours and the reviews recognise the personal care and attention that has been invested into their dishes. The NGO restaurants, while also attaining certain levels of authenticity, were more criticised by

[86] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.
[87] Катерина Друченко, Google Maps Review, 2 years ago.
[88] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.
[89] Manager at NGO Restaurant C, interview by author, June 2025.

the reviewers and GO restaurant owners who generally believed that there should be more Georgian influence on the recipes used. National origins also play a subtle but influential role in both production and reception of Georgian cuisine. Although Georgians are seen (by themselves and others) as the most authoritative judges of authenticity, the presence of knowledgeable non-Georgian diners complicates the evaluation of authenticity.

Significantly, much of the Google Maps reviews for all restaurants mentioned a personal connection with the cuisine which gave them a legitimate baseline for comparison and grounds for criticism. This aligns with the literature by Heldke (Strohl 2019) and Molz (2004) who have written that previous experience with the cuisine helps people to evaluate the realness of the foods they ate and when evaluating culinary authenticity, they 'apply this measuring stick, and they judge their own level of expertise' (Molz 2004, 62). However, even when a Georgian, supposedly the expert, gave their approval, this did not lead to a consistency in opinions, emphasising the negotiable nature of culinary authenticity.

The combination of national origins, personal connections and subjective culinary evaluations has been termed by some scholars as the 'ghosts of taste' (Stiles, Altıok and Bell 2010, 225), or the imaginary presence of people and places which authentically root a food to an ethnicity. This 'claim of authorship' (Stiles, Altıok and Bell 2010, 228) is more about symbolism, because a *khachapuri* made by a Georgian chef in Kraków is deemed to carry a different symbolic weight than one produced by a non-Georgian. In this sense, reviews likening the dishes to those that can be found in Georgia or a Georgian house are actively comparing and selecting which 'ghosts' are allowed to linger in the dining experience. Meanwhile, NGO restaurants downplay certain markers of difference, such as the 'very strong and very exotic' flavours mentioned by Restaurant C's Manager. These negotiations of otherness within the Polish foodscape ultimately highlight that authenticity in this glocal context is relational and comparative, rather than fixed or universally agreed upon.

Each restaurant has different values and approaches when it comes to adapting to the Polish context. Again, resonating with Wood and Muñoz's (2007) notion of the 'cultural ambassador', for GO Restaurant A, correct representation is a matter of deep personal commitment and alterations are out of the question. This approach turns

Restaurant A's Owners into custodians of Georgian gastronomy and risks freezing Georgian food culture 'in amber' (Strohl 2019, 157), where Georgianness is preserved and presented on the restauranteur's terms, leaving little room for development. Such an expressive refusal to adapt mirrors Parasecoli's findings about migrant food production and identity, whose 'visceral, instinctive' reactions form 'an emotionally important element in the…embodied experiences relating to food (Parasecoli 2014, 436)'. This also aligns with the literature on migration, where maintaining links and commitment to the homeland is called 'long-distance nationali[sm]' (Brubaker 2005, 2) by Anderson.

In contrast, for GO Restaurant B, it is more important that the dishes are selected to appeal to a Polish audience, rather than be completely altered, balancing between accessibility and authenticity, perhaps due to financial gains. This supports a study conducted by Narayan, who writes, 'communities may be happy to present a hybrid product to their customers if it contributes to their economic prosperity' (Frost and Laing 2016, 44). Moreover, unlike Owner 1b, Owner 2 also recognises that they cannot control the way Georgian food is remade by different actors and is satisfied that, at the end of the day, the popularisation of Georgian culture is positive.

Out of all the restaurants, NGO Restaurant C adapts their recipes the most, providing the strongest evidence for glocalism. The Manager referred to the 'exotic' Georgian flavours which need reducing for Polish tastes, as well as the need to attract a more international audience, given their location near the main square of Kraków. This is consistent with the literature, which found that flavours eventually change due to necessity, and since Restaurant C's Manager is not Georgian and has little connection to Georgia, they are willing to adapt recipes and create new, hybrid dishes, especially when proximity to tourist-heavy areas intensifies competition.

6.4 The Performance of Georgianness

This section is split into four parts, detailing the participant observation findings of each restaurant and evaluating the representation of Georgian culture.

6.4.1 Georgian-Owned Restaurant A

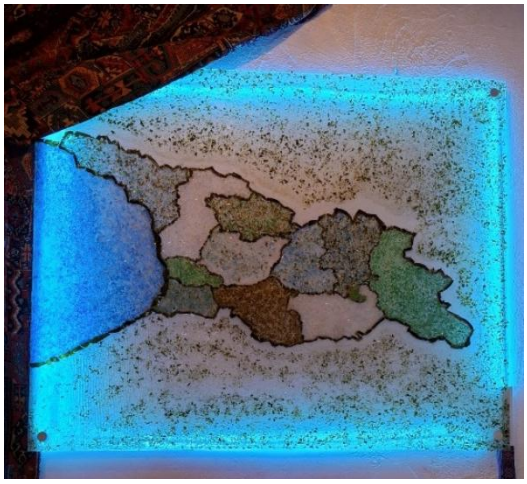


Photo 1. The map of Georgia (own photo, May 2025).

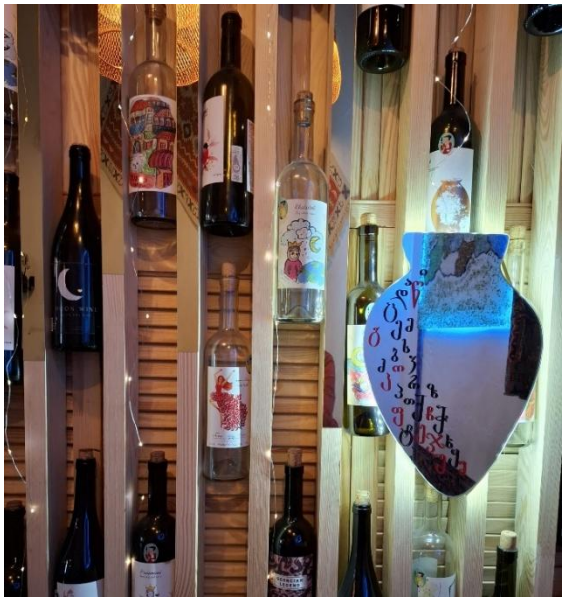


Photo 2. Georgian wine and amphora decoration (own photo, May 2025).

Photo 3. A collection of objects: traditional toy instruments, various drinking horns, mini clay amphora, candles, a book of Georgian wine, a plate saying 'tasty' in Georgian, Polish and English (own photo, May 2025).

Photos 4 and 5. Hand-painted Georgian letters (left), tablecloth with Georgian letters (right) (own photos, May 2025).

After having spent time in Restaurant A and spoken with the Owners, it was evident that their restaurant means a great deal to them; they have poured much money, time and energy into it. For example, the Georgian letters on a wall were painted by Owner 1b (Photo 4) and the tablecloths and carpets were imported from Georgia. Both Owners emphasised that they wanted the space to be an extension of home and every aesthetic decision had to be made by them, repeating the phrase 'with our hands' to highlight their dedication: 'We made all with our hands…after our shift we were here…we did it all with our hands, we didn't hire anyone to make it'[90].

On entering Restaurant A, a canopy of artificial grapevines trails from the ceiling and Georgian wine is displayed on racks. Small symbols of Georgia are everywhere, such as Georgian flags painted on napkin dispensers, the map of Georgia at the back of the restaurant (Photo 1) or a collection of traditional items on a shelf (Photo 3). When we met for our interview, Owner 1b even had the map of Georgia on their t-shirt. While some items are souvenir-like, the kitschier Georgian symbols, such as Pirosmani paintings, are not present, and the background music is not typical Georgian folk music either.

Restaurant A's menu is simple with no images or extra frills; the menu displayed outside is framed by corks from Georgian wine bottles. Apart from the purple and black logo, the dishes are printed in black-and-white, the font-type is standard and written in English and Polish. The word 'homemade' is repeated four times and an emphasis on the originality of certain dishes is repeated three times. The titles of the dishes are a mixture of transcribed and translated Georgian names. In the fridges, there is a selection of Georgian beers and waters with Polish-language labels.

[90] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.

6.4.2 Georgian-Owned Restaurant B

Photo 1. A wine cabinet displaying the wine Owner 2 imports from independent family vineyards in Georgia (own photo, May 2025).

Photo 2. An indoor table with folky scenes and traditional patterns on the tablecloth and chairs (own photo, May 2025).

Photo 3. The outside area with various eccentric ornaments (own photo, May 2025).

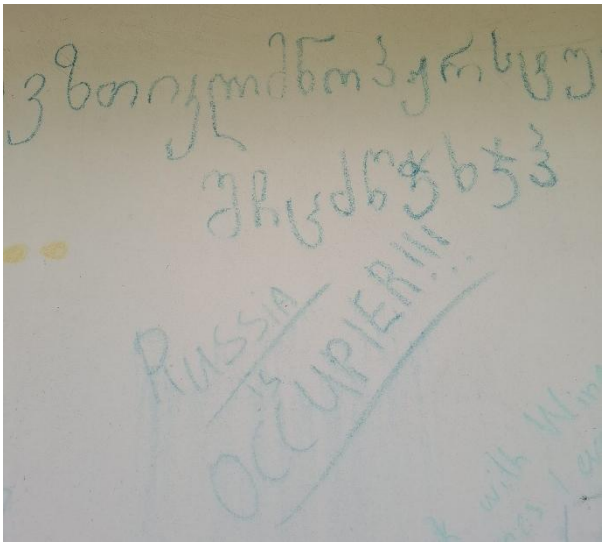


Photo 4. Writing on an outdoor wall. In Georgian: assortment of letters, no meaning (top), in English: Russia is OCCUPIER!!! Another fragment (not pictured, reads: 'We are from Georgia and my country is occupied by Russia' (own photo, May 2025).

GO Restaurant B also gives the impression that a lot of personal thought and attention has been invested in the curation of the interior and exterior. Given its location in a more residential part of Kraków, the laid-back ambience and the eclectic décor, the atmosphere makes one feel like they are in a family member's house. This extends to the crockery and cutlery too, which are colourful, do not match and seem like they were collected from second-hand shops. The languages I heard when visiting were mainly Russian and Polish.

Restaurant B is similar to Restaurant A because there is no obvious, stereotypical imagery of Georgia, and the music playing is contemporary and funky. When asking Owner 2 about their artistic choices, they say: 'I love Pirosmani's work. But it's started to be very pop. And also [Restaurant D] is using it in their own interiors'[91]. This reference to Restaurant D is noteworthy because it implies that they want Restaurant B to have a more original style and not to adhere to archetypal Georgian interpretations. Instead, they tell me, the décor makes customers imagine that they're in Georgia's capital, Tbilisi:

> When people come to [Restaurant B], they feel like they're in Tbilisi and I'm really happy because I'm from Tbilisi and I like the style of Tbilisi, it's an eclectic style. And I understand that my culture, Tbilisi, has its influence on me.'[92]

This reflects that Owner 2 has perhaps subconsciously constructed a space that embodies their subjective experience of their upbringing, reproducing the Georgian capital's locality in another, foreign space. This is shown in the garden of Restaurant B (Photo 3), which is a unique feature for a restaurant, and is appreciated by the reviews using words like 'enchanting', 'secret' or 'rustic'. One comment, left in Russian, likens it to a *dacha*[93], showing that Owner B's taste is not singular to them but can be reinterpreted and applied to someone else's memory of past times within their own locality. This also links to Section 6.2 which highlights the concept of 'home' shared by former-Soviet country members.

---

[91] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[92] Owner 2 at GO Restaurant B, interview by author, June 2025.
[93] A country house. This word is primarily used in Russian, but it is also used in several countries who made up the former Soviet Union, due to historical and cultural Soviet legacies.

Additionally, Photo 4 displays political comments written by Georgians. The fragments refer to the two breakaway regions in Georgia, which involved Russia's intervention with troops and occupation in the 1990s and 2008. These conflicts have never been fully resolved and are contentious in Georgia, further complicated by Russia's role. This photo encapsulates the concepts of glocalism and embodied space. This is because, while seeing these sorts of phrases are common in Georgia, they are non-existent on the streets of Kraków. However, within the confines of Restaurant B, there is a platform for expressing such political views, allowing for the 'clamor of particularisms' (Augé 2008, 28) to be seen and heard, and the desire to make a space representing Georgia more meaningful.

Some reviews for Restaurant B show that a few diners expect to find exact replicates of Georgia when a restaurant is Georgian-themed, leaving no room for adaptation to the local context: 'I certainly disapprove of the discriminating "no children" policy that's got nothing to do with genuine Georgian culture and hospitality'[94]. This comment illustrates how expectations of 'authenticity' can become rigid and singular, not appreciating that a restaurant is less a replica of a national identity and more a lived, evolving reflection of a restaurant owner's individual preferences in an adopted environment. The same goes for *khinkali* being served only on a Thursday, something untypical for a Georgian restaurant and surprising for many customers.

This leads to Restaurant B's menu, whose design is simple and informal, displayed on a wooden clipboard. There are hand-drawn illustrations that can also be found on the wine bottles. The first page has a few welcoming words in Georgian and then claims that this is a place that will 'momentarily transport you to Georgia'[95]. It also informs the reader that the wines (Photo 1) they sell are 'imported from small family cellars that you won't find anywhere else in Poland' and mentions that the 'traditional Georgian cuisine [is] prepared by Georgian chefs'[96].

Other notable features are the phrases 'traditional Georgian dish' being repeated nine times, the oft-mentioned Imeretian cheese, from the Georgian region Imereti, and mineral water and lemonade being described as coming 'straight from Georgia'.

[94] Ksenia Pushnova, Google Maps review, 1 year ago.
[95] The first page of GO Restaurant B's menu, observation by author, April 2025.
[96] Ibid., GO Restaurant B.

Furthermore, two types of tea are sold, described as follows: ‘Black tea ‘Guguli’ 2018, from Mr. Guguli’s plantation in Adzharia, Chakvi, a resort town on the Black Sea’ and ‘Green tea Paskunji (Paskunji is a mythical bird, and touching its feather heals wounds and restores health.)’[97]. All these tell the diner that they are sampling Georgian food that has real links to Georgia itself, promising that the taste is original.

[97] The drinks section of GO Restaurant B’s menu, observation by author, April 2025.

6.4.3 Non-Georgian-Owned Restaurant C

Photo 1. Pirosmani painting (own photo, June 2025).

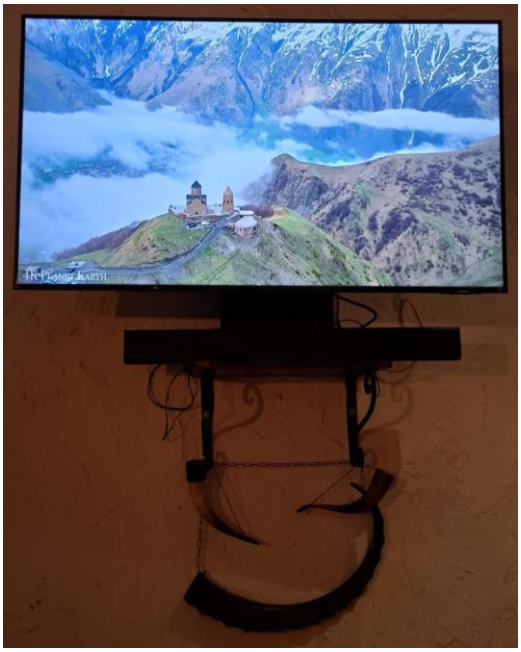


Photo 2. A TV displaying images of Georgia, ceremonial drinking horns (own photo, June 2025).

Photos 3 and 4. Photos of buildings in Tbilisi: balconies (left), Opera Theatre (right), decorative clay bottles with 'ГАМАРДЖОБА' (Georgian for 'hello') in Cyrillic script (own photos, June 2025).

Photo 5. Pirosmani painting (own photo, June 2025).

NGO Restaurant C differs from the GO restaurants in many ways, giving the general impression of 'performing' Georgianness for a more touristic audience. This is perhaps also due to its location, which is very close to the tourist-dominated centre of Kraków. The restaurant is spacious and has many tables, several copies of Pirosmani paintings (Photos 1 and 5) and pictures of the architectural sites of Tbilisi (Photos 3 and 4) on the walls. A TV screen shows a slideshow of the Georgian landscape (Photo 2) and Georgian folk music plays in the background. In the courtyard, a seating area is surrounded by clay amphorae, or *qvevri*, used in traditional Georgian winemaking. A big grapevine covers the courtyard, a living symbol of Georgian wine traditions.

The interior style emulates a large farmhouse with exposed brick-and-wood walls and dark lighting. Georgian wine and brandy are on display in glass-fronted cases and lit up dramatically from behind, making them look like museum objects rather than beverages to consume. The Polish language is the dominant language heard. Two interesting observations were as follows: 1) two customers eating *khinkali* with a knife and fork (an act akin to blasphemy according to the Georgian owners of Restaurant A!) and 2) a chef installed at the front of the restaurant makes baked dough items like *khachapuri*.

With regards to the menu, it is open-plan and there are lots of choices. Like the other restaurants, it is also simple but uses a font which perhaps aims to portray a traditional Georgian writing style. The word 'traditional' is repeated four times. Most interesting here are the dishes which reflect hybridisation and combinations that are not usually found in Georgia. For example, *lobio* (bean stew), usually served hot with corn bread, is in the starter section and served as a dip. There are also *khinkali* with spinach or *ajapsandali* or *khachapuri* with chicken or spinach, all hybridised versions of the original. Furthermore, there is an 'international' section featuring salads and fish, French fries and rice, further appealing to a broader audience. What is particular to Restaurant C, compared to the others studied, is that it offers a Georgian-style *supra*, which is important for Georgian celebratory culture.

6.4.4 Non-Georgian-Owned Restaurant D

Photo 1. Pirosmani painting (own photo, June 2025).

Photo 2. A plate wall hanging with pomegranates (own photo, June 2025).

Photo 3. Shelves with ornaments: clay plates and pots, drinking horns, *khinkali*, candles (own photo, June 2025).

Photos 4 and 5. NGO Restaurant D, panorama photo of the Narikala Fortress in Georgia's capital, Tbilisi (left), more Pirosmani paintings and mock embroidery patterns (right) (own photos, June 2025).

Since Restaurant D is a chain, all their restaurants adhere to a similar in-house style, that is, bright lighting, minimalist and modern. There are portable screens with Pirosmani paintings, along with Pirosmani paintings on the walls (Photos 1 and 5). The light decorations emulate woven baskets and there are embroidery patterns with wooden frames to give a folky, traditional aesthetic (Photo 5). On my multiple visits, I heard much Russian and Ukrainian spoken and I was always served by a Polish-speaking Ukrainian waitress. In addition, generic pop music often played in the background; however, one Google Maps review commented differently, which contributed to their positive experience: 'Good service and georgian music makes [a] cool atmosphere here.'[98]

Overall, the atmosphere was impersonal, with comments backing this up, such as: 'staff behind the counter were a bit cold, made us feel somewhat unwelcome'[99] and 'Please fire that soviet woman who thinks...she's allowed to be rude with clients'[100]. Despite this, one reviewer specifically commented on the Ukrainian employee who improved their experience: 'It's nice that they served in Ukrainian!'[101] and '...fortunately I had Ukrainian guest helping me to choose'[102].

Similar to Restaurant C, dough-making is on display, and many pizza boxes were stacked behind the chef, indicating an online delivery service. Popular drinks like Pepsi and Fanta were among Georgian lemonades and waters in the drink's fridge. On the menu's front is a cartoon picture of a *supra* festivity, with Georgian men playing traditional instruments, singing, drinking wine from horns and eating from a table piled with food. In the background are dancers and mountains. The menu style is also similar to Restaurant C in terms of the open-plan layout and font, but it also has more colour and traditional motifs.

Notable mentions are the dishes themselves. First of all, it serves more Polish food, such as *kiszonki*[103] and *bryndza*[104]. Secondly, the *khinkali* choices differentiate

[98] Vitalii krashchenko, Google Maps review, 7 years ago.
[99] Olya B, Google Maps review, 2 years ago.
[100] Oleksandr Tarasenko, Google Maps review, 3 years ago.
[101] Юлія Березенська, Google Maps review, 3 months ago.
[102] Danny De Ridder, Google Maps review, 5 years ago.
[103] A mixture of pickled vegetables, typically cucumbers and cabbage. Georgian cuisine does have its own pickle mixes but not these combinations.
[104] Salty mountain sheep cheese.

between those with herbs and those without, perhaps being wary that clientele are not fans of coriander. Moreover, some dishes have symbols indicating spice warnings. Thirdly, there is a sour cream–garlic sauce and a *khachapuri* with spinach is advertised as 'NEW'. All these examples are hybridised versions of Georgian cuisine, only found, as far as I am concerned, outside of Georgia.

6.4.5 Discussion

Restaurants A and B adhere to what Varshaver and Rocheva define as an 'authentic ethnic restaurant' because they serve national dishes, have Georgian staff and Georgian customers (Varshaver and Rocheva 2014). Their interiors have hand-done details and display the personal tastes of the owners, and the informality of the setting evokes a family atmosphere, reinforced by the language in the menus, using words like 'tradition' and 'homemade'. Restaurant A's semiosphere gives the impression that, while evidently 'foreign', it is the version of Georgia the Owners wish to portray, more through their own creative and culinary tastes rather than a prescribed or stereotyped version of Georgia. Researchers have called this 'objective authenticity' because the restaurant is largely based on a genuine and expert curation of the environment and food that is 'prepared by natives according to tradition' (Ebster and Guist 2004, 43).

Owner 1b also emphasised their desire for their restaurant space to feel 'homely', saying, 'people don't want fancy all the time, they want comfort'[105]. This emphasis on comfort over formality reinforces the sense that this restaurant is meant to resemble a lived-in Georgian home more than a themed venue, offering a curated yet personal version of Georgia. As Polese suggests, in a world where 'time is not a commodity that everybody has (Polese 2009, 78)', homemade food has become increasingly more valuable, not only because it is more 'genuine', but because it demands more time to prepare and obtain. Thus, Restaurant A embodies an inclusive space of domestic familiarity with a Georgian national filter, appealing to those who seek a slower and more deliberate form of cultural and culinary engagement.

Restaurant B is an excellent example of the ways the glocal, embodied space and culinary authenticity concepts interact; it is a setting where Georgian Owner 2's

[105] Owner 1b at GO Restaurant A, interview by author, June 2025.

personal tastes influence the restaurant space, developing the notion of Georgian authenticity and Polish localness into a new cultural form, that of 'glocal authenticity' (Roudometof 2015, 6), and creates meaning beyond national stereotypes. It does not always sell *khinkali* and excludes children (supposedly contrary to restaurants in Georgia) which does not align with some diners' expectations of the 'real' Georgia; yet, Owner 2 says that other diners feel as if they were transported to Tbilisi, the environment that shaped the owner, reinforcing the fact that, for a transnational migrant, although the nation state is always included in some capacity, the interpretations of it are rarely the same, having the potential for 'nearly infinite self-differentiation' (Curro 2012, 131). Therefore, Restaurant B is not a static replica of Georgian culture, but more of a 'spatial niche' (Miranda-Nieto and Boccagni 2020, 1023) or a material translation of Owner 2's own cultural embeddedness and a life lived in Poland (Parasecoli 2014), making the restaurant both sites of continuity and adaption within the host context.

Restaurants C and D, on the other hand, provide a performative version of Georgianness. Though Georgian national dishes are sold, Georgian clients and staff are not evident. The show of foreignness is self-conscious and contrived, for example, both display Georgian products as if in a museum or *khachapuri* being made like a form of entertainment. Restaurant C's website claims that 'The decor and organization was developed based on the many years of experience of the founders'[106], underlining the restaurant's connections with Georgia as a country; however, their interpretation of Georgianness leans on the more stereotypical side compared to the restaurants designed by the family-run, Georgian-owned restaurants. As opposed to the 'objectivist authenticity' ascribed to Restaurant A, one can judge Restaurant C as adhering to the 'constructivist authenticity' camp, whereby authenticity cannot be objectively evaluated and is shaped by context and interpretation (Ebster and Guist 2004). Therefore, it is possible that two different ethnically themed restaurants can be judged as 'authentic'; however, Restaurant C aims to appeal more to residents of the host country rather than to the people from the culture being represented.

[106] From Restaurant C's website, author's translation. Note: The published version of this dissertation has removed the link to this restaurant due to concerns over retaining the restaurants' anonymity. It was accessed on June 2025. Data can be made available on reasonable request by the author.

Similarly to Restaurant C, Restaurant D is popular, and yet the largeness and generic commitment to 'Georgian style' gives an impersonal impression. It exemplifies what Finkelstein describes as a 'parodic restaurant', where stylised décor, cartoon imagery and selective cultural motifs serve to create a 'reconstituted reality' aimed more at entertainment than authenticity (Beardsworth and Bryman 1999, 237). Elements like Pirosmani prints and folk patterns also adhere to 'reliquary theming', where the decorations are 'explicitly fake…emphasise the exotic and are usually constructed out of stereotyped versions of diverse realities' (Beardsworth and Bryman 1999, 241). While the restaurant offers a good range of Georgian food, it sidelines authenticity to prioritise familiarity and marketability, providing a stylised cultural performance that is 'safe' for non-Georgian customers.

Furthermore, Restaurant D, while not 'homey' like Restaurants A and B, can also be understood as a space of broader familiarity for Ukrainians. This is because it is already a popular brand in Ukraine, making it appealing for Ukrainians living and visiting Poland. Perhaps its attraction is not only about Soviet culinary legacies but also brand recognition, adding to the way global products (like Pepsi in Restaurant D's fridge or French fries on Restaurant C's menu) also appeal across borders, carrying recognisable and comforting flavours in a new place. The reviews left for this restaurant are also by Ukrainians, who take pleasure in being served by a compatriot, perhaps making it a site for community formation. At the same time, when one diner was helped by a Ukrainian customer, it shows that culinary knowledge and authority over Georgian cuisine can shift and move beyond 'native' boundaries.

What these NGO restaurants jointly illustrate is the process of what scholars call 'delocalisation' (Kennedy and Roudometof 2002), where cultures are lifted out of their original contexts and inserted into a 'global post-modern whirlpool' (Kennedy and Roudometof 2002), not anchoring Georgianness to a single locality but reconstituting it through performance and according to global consumer aesthetics. This resonates with the argument that in contemporary societies, locality and culture are increasingly delinked, especially in big cities, making cultural forms like cuisine acquire and morph into new meanings in host contexts.

Another notable point is Restaurant B's anti-Russian graffiti (Photo 4), the Cyrillic writing on Restaurant C's clay object (Photo 3) and the mention of Restaurant D's

‘Soviet’ waitress, described as ‘rude’. These observations signal that certain political, stereotypical and behavioural symbols are still live and reactive today, and, while the Soviet Union collapsed over 33 years ago, the run-offs – from nefarious Russian activities to Soviet service culture – are recognisable in contemporary Poland. Such an insight leads to the conclusion that the Georgian restaurants in Poland not only act as stages for Georgian culture but also a manifestation of small and lingering fragments of Sovietness, showing how cultural ties from the past, whether welcome or not, continue, and re-embed in new contexts, such as in Poland.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Concluding points

The impetus for this dissertation was the puzzling presence of Georgian restaurants in Kraków and whether they serve as spaces of belonging for Georgian migrants in the city. The data revealed, contrary to my initial expectations, that these restaurants are not significant spaces of Georgian hubs, a finding which is perhaps unsurprising, given the still relatively small Georgian community in Kraków. Nonetheless, this finding is revealing because it does not exactly align with the literature and builds on it, highlighting that Georgian cuisine in Poland does not primarily provide for a diasporic need but rather for a broader clientele.

Meanwhile, the contrast between Georgian-owned (GO) and non-Georgian-owned (NGO) restaurants gives an interesting insight into the forces on a cuisine that is on the move, and how it travels via different links in the chain of globalisation. The GO restaurants are exemplars of migrants carving out new lives, presenting a more personal, nuanced and committed form of Georgian culinary authenticity, while the NGO restaurants serve a more superficial and performative version of Georgianness that uses the exotic and the unfamiliar to draw in a less experienced crowd. One particularly intriguing link that was found in our chain were the non-Georgian actors, namely Ukrainians, who play a role in facilitating the transfer of Georgian cuisine. Due to cultural familiarity from the imperial and Soviet eras, regional proximity, a well-known Georgian franchise and large numbers who now live in Poland due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, they have brought such food preferences and therefore more demand for Georgian flavours to neighbouring Poland. As such, culinary globalisation can be a multi-actor process and comes about not only with the influence of nationals who have left their homeland.

The first research question asked why there is such a ubiquitous presence of Georgian restaurants in Kraków and whether there was a difference in motivations behind the Georgian-owned and non-Georgian-owned restaurants. Regarding the former, the differences were sharp. GO Restaurants A and B were opened by Georgian migrants who felt a sense of cultural responsibility to represent their cuisine faithfully. Family labour, trust and personal contributions form the basis of their businesses,

functioning as extensions of cultural identity and as ambassadorial projects to introduce Georgianness to the Polish foodscape.

On the other hand, NGO Restaurants C and D opened primarily from commercial opportunity since Georgian cuisine is unusual in this part of Europe and becoming more fashionable due to tourism. Restaurant C, owned by a Pole with Georgian ancestry, and Restaurant D, a Ukrainian-founded chain, both generally market Georgian cuisine to 'culturally naïve' patrons unfamiliar with Georgia, relying less on cultural fidelity and more on performative Georgianness and exotic appeal. Ukrainians, in particular, have functioned as notable intermediary contributors, either as staff, entrepreneurs or diners, and helped in the spread of this cuisine across Poland.

The second research question asked about the various roles the Georgian restaurants play in Kraków, examining concepts such as 'embodied space' and 'culinary authenticity' and comparing the GO and NGO enterprises. The GO restaurants evidently create environments that are evocative of a Georgian home, appealing to diners seeking intimacy, personal exchange, slowness and a more deliberate cultural encounter. These restaurants triggered memories of 'home', which emerged as a mutable yet shared imaginary that is linked to ideas of comfort, love, family and simplicity. A particular mention goes to members of post-Soviet or post-Communist countries partaking in a nostalgic memory of perhaps an extended home, either linking with pan-Soviet food culture or simply the way in which families organised their homes during this time.

NGO restaurants, conversely, provide more conscious and commercialised versions of Georgianness, such as staging *khachapuri*-making or displaying more stereotypical motifs. Nonetheless, the restaurant reviews showed appreciation for the flavours served and, while not exact replicas of Georgia, this underscores the fact that all four restaurants cannot be reduced to simple categories of 'authentic' or 'inauthentic'. Rather, each restaurant is a dynamic and hybrid space where cultural understandings are constantly reworked.

Importantly, the role of non-Georgian actors, particularly Ukrainians, emerges as a key finding. There is good evidence to suggest that Ukrainians acts as connectors between Georgian cuisine and Poland's gastronomic landscape, exposing a certain porosity between culinary and national borders and the influence of non-national actors, whether they be customers, employees, franchise managers or simply

educators for restaurants and diners alike. Their presence refutes the idea that ethnic identity claims sole ownership over a cuisine and that culinary authority and reproduction can flow (not without controversy) into different forms across borders.

This dissertation makes several empirical, conceptual and methodological contributions. Empirically, this dissertation contributes new insights into the underexplored case of Georgian cuisine in Poland, where no strong colonial or migratory ties exist to explain its popularity. By analysing and comparing both Georgian- and non-Georgian-owned restaurants, this study demonstrates that the spread of a particular cuisine can be due to several factors, such as Georgian migrants or non-Georgian restauranteurs who mobilise Georgianness as a marketable exoticism. The role of Ukrainian intermediaries further highlights how diasporic communities participate in the popularisation of cuisine to their neighbouring countries, complicating solid associations between cuisine and national ownership. This is helpful for understanding how culinary cultures diffuse in contexts where direct transnational links are relatively weak.

Conceptually, this dissertation contributes to the discussion regarding culinary authenticity and glocalisation. Together, these concepts have shown the irregular and interconnected landscapes of migration, cuisine and space-making, and have highlighted that a concept like 'authenticity' is not fixed but widely interpreted across a broad spectrum of subjective viewpoints. By contrasting the GO and NGO restaurants, this study also adds a more nuanced understanding of 'glocal authenticity' as an emergent cultural form that transcends the binaries of the authentic/inauthentic, applicable to any hybrid, transnational context.

Methodologically, the combination of interviews, Google Maps reviews and participant observation provided a holistic view of how Georgianness is enacted, consumed and contested in the restaurant space. Just as cities are not bounded static sites but plastic entities within global flows, restaurants serve as dense focal points to examine the interactions between the local, national and global. They are at once spaces of connection and disconnection, belonging and foreignness, authenticity and adaptation.

In sum, the Georgian restaurants of Kraków in this dissertation have shown that their establishments do not just serve food; they are orchestrated spaces that remake

Georgian culture, existing within a multitude of interpretations by those who hold personal, political or inexperienced views of what such an establishment *should* be. As Shelton maintains, 'if restaurants are text-like, there is not one text to be read but literally thousands' (Shelton 1990, 507) highlighting the multi-sided nature of not just the concept of national culinary culture, but also that of culinary authenticity and custodianship, especially when taken out of context. At the same time, the restaurants' place within Kraków's foodscape exemplifies the abstraction of glocalism, where each context produces multitudes of local and global interactions. In this sense, the trajectory of Georgian restaurants are part of what Hoenker has described as the movement of people and tastes, which have travelled from the imperial Romanov and Soviet periods that first dispersed Georgian cuisine internationally, to the current global path shaped by migration, tourism and consumption: 'they traveled, they saw…and they dined' (Koenker 2018, 265).

7.2 Limitations and recommendations for future research

As expected, this dissertation has several limitations which warrant attention. It is limited by its relatively small sample size, restricting conclusions about this topic's applicability to wider Polish or European contexts. Another limitation lies in the perspectives captured; using semi-structured interviews, the study prioritised the voices of the Georgian restaurant owners but did not include the voices of other Georgian migrants or restaurant clientele. Such an omission narrows the ability to assess whether Georgian restaurants function as spaces of belonging for Georgians themselves. Finally, the number of interviews was modest.

Future research could address these gaps by conducting a greater number of interviews across a wider pool of establishments, including comparative studies of multiple Polish cities and other non-Georgian-owned restaurants or bakeries. Researchers might also expand beyond owner perspectives to incorporate those of Georgian migrants and restaurant clientele, offering deeper insight into belonging, authenticity, and cross-cultural reception. While solidarity dynamics linked to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine did not emerge as a major theme here, this context nonetheless frames the proliferation of Georgian restaurants in Poland and could be

explored more explicitly in future studies of migration and the political crossover of cuisine.

Bibliography

8Wines. n.d. *Uncorking Georgia's Wine Boom: A Statistical Deep Dive and Exploring Key Regions.* Accessed 05 12, 2025. https://8wines.com/blog/uncorking-georgias-wine-boom.

Anderson, Benedict. 2016. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1986. "On Culinary Authenticity." *Anthropology Today 2* 25.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. "Part I: Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology." In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*, by Arjun Appadurai, 48-65. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Arvela, Paula. 2013. "Ethnic food: the other in ourselves." In *Food: Expressions and Impressions*, by D. Sanderson and M. Crouch, 45-56. Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press.

Augé, Marc. 2008. *Non-places: An Introduction to Supermodernity.* London and New York: Verso.

Bachórz, Agata, and Fabio Parasecoli. 2021. "Savoring Polishness: History and Tradition in Contemporary Polish Food Media." *East European Politics and Societies* 103-124, pg. 112.

Banyard, V.L., and K. E. Miller. 1998. "The power potential of qualitative research for community psychology." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 485-505.

Barthes, Roland. 2012. "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption." In *Food and Culture*, by Roland Barthes, 20-27. Abingdon: Routledge.

Beardsworth, Alan, and Alan Bryman. 1999. "Late Modernity and the Dynamics of Quasification: The Case of the Themed Restaurant." *The Sociological Review* 228-257.

Berghe, Pierre L. van den. 1984. "Ethnic cuisine: culture in nature." *Ethnic Racial Studies* 387-397.

Bernard, Russell. 1994. "7. Participant Observation." In *Research methods in anthropology : qualitative and quantitative approaches*, by Russell Bernard, 136-165. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bickham, Troy. 2008. "Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain." *Past & Present* 71-109.

Bickham, Troy. 2008. "Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain." *Past and Present, Vol. 198* 71-109.

Brinkmann, Svend. 2020. "Unstructured and Semistructured Interviewing." In *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, by Patricia Leavy, 424-456. Online edn: Oxford University Press.

Brisku, Adrian. 2013. "'Return to Europe', 'Closer to Europe': Post-communist Expectations." In *Bittersweet Europe*, by Adrian Brisku, 153-196. New York: Berghahn Books.

Brubaker, Rogers. 2005. "The 'diaspora' diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1-19.

Buettner, Elizabeth. 2008. ""Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism in Britain." *The Journal of Modern History* 865-901.

Chik, Alice, and Camilla Vásquez. 2017. "A comparative multimodal analysis of restaurant reviews from two geographical contexts." *Visual Communication* 3-26.

Cook, Ian, and Philip Crang. 1996. "The World On a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledges." *Journal of Material Culture* 131-153.

Curro, Costanza. 2012. "National Gender Norms and Transnational Identities: Migration Experiences of Georgian Women in London." *Slovo* 114-131.

Derek, Marta. 2020. "Ethnic Cuisine in Urban Space." In *Gastronomy and Urban Space: Changes and Challenges in Geographical Perspective*, by Andrzej Kowalczyk and Marta Derek, 225-238. Cham: Springer.

Derek, Marta. 2017. "Multi-ethnic food in the mono-ethnic city: tourism, gastronomy and identity in central Warsaw." In *In book: Tourism and Geopolitics. Issues and Concepts from Central and Eastern Europe*, by Marta Derek, 223-235. Wallingford: CABI.

DeSoucey, Michaela. 2010. "Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union." *American Sociological Review* 432-455.

Durmelat, Sylvie. 2015. "Introduction: Colonial culinary encounters and imperial leftovers." *French Cultural Studies* 115-129.

Ebster, Claus, and Irene Guist. 2004. "The Role of Authenticity in Ethnic Theme Restaurants." *Journal of Foodservice Business Research* 41-52.

European Council. 2017. *Visas: Council adopts regulation on visa liberalisation for Georgians*. 27 February. Accessed April 18, 2025. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/02/27/visa-liberalisation-georgia/.

Farrer, James. 2015. "Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia: Toward a Framework for Studying Culinary Globalization." In *The Globalization of Asian Cuisines: Transnational Networks and Culinary Contact Zones*, by James Farrer, 1-19. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Frost, Warwick, and Jennifer Laing. 2016. "Cuisine, Migration, colonialism and diasporic identities." In *Heritage Cuisines: Traditions, identities and tourism*, by Dallen J. Timothy, 37-52. Oxon: Routledge.

Gaytán, Marie Sarita. 2008. "From Sombreros to Sincronizadas: Authenticity, Ethnicity, and the Mexican Restaurant Industry." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 314-341.

Geist, Edward. 2023. "From Khrushchev's Kulish to Chicken Kyiv: How Soviet Power Redefined Ukrainian Cuisine." *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 143-161.

Goldstein, Darra. 2018. *The Georgian Feast: The Vibrant Culture and Savory Food of the Republic of Georgia*. California: University of California Press.

Gotua, George, and Nino Rcheulishvili. 2019. “"Everything New is Well-Forgotten Old": Tradition and Innovation in the Narratives of New Georgian Cuisine.” *Laboratorium: Russian Review of Social Research* 4-29.

Graf, Katharina, and Elsa Mescoli. 2020. “Special issue introduction: From nature to culure? Lévi-Strauss' legacy and the study of contemporary foodways.” *Food, Culture & Society, Vol. 3* 465-471.

Grandi, Lorenzo Kihlgren. 2023. “Branding, Diplomacy, and Inclusion: The Role of Migrant Cuisines in Cities’ Local and International Action.” *Societies 13, no. 7* 1-18.

Grzymała-Kazłowska, Aleksandra, and Marek Okólski. 2003. “Influx and Integration of Migrants in Poland in the Early XXI Century.” *Institute for Social Studies Warsaw University* 1-54.

Guliaeva, Evgenia. 2017. “What Makes a Restaurant Ethnic? (A Case Study of Armenian Restaurants in St Petersburg).” *Forum for Anthropology and Culture, No. 13* 280-305.

Hage, Ghassan. 1997. “At Home in the Entrails of the West: Multiculturalism Ethnic Food and Migrant Home-Building.” *Home/world: Space, community and marginality in Sydney's West* 99-153.

Hall, Stuart. 1990. “Cultural Identity and Diaspora.” In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, by J Rutherford (Ed.), 222-237. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Harrison, Anthony Kwarme. 2014. “Ethnography.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd edn)*, by Patricia Leavy, 223-253. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heldke, Lisa. 2003. *Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a Food Adventurer.* New York: Routledge.

Heldke, Lisa, and Jens Thomsen. 2014. “Two Concepts of Authenticity.” *Social Philosophy Today* 79-94.

Helstosky, Carol. 2005. *Garlic and Oil: Politics and Food in Italy.* New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Hobsbawm, Eric. 2014. “Introduction: Inventing Traditions.” In *The Invention of Tradition*, by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1-14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ishak, Farah Adibah Che, Norhabibah Mazlan, Nur Atiqah Lokman, Muhammad Shahrim Ab Karim, and Siti Fatimah Mohamad. 2021. “Exploring the Issues and Challenges in Managing Themed Restaurant in Klang Valley, Malaysia.” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 1121-1135.

Jang, Seoyeon, and Anita Eves. 2019. “Tourism and Tourism At Home: A Qualitative Study of Relationships between Tourism and Ethnic Restaurants.” *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management* 169-185.

Kennedy, Paul, and Victor Roudometof. 2002. “Introduction: Transnationalism in a Global Age.” In *Communities Across Borders: New Immigrants and Transnational Cultures*, by Paul Kennedy and Victor Roudometof, 26. Abingdon: Routledge.

Koenker, Diane P. 2018. “The Taste of Others: Soviet Adventures in Cosmopolitan Cuisines.” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 243-272.

Le, Truc H., Charles Arcodia, Margarida Abreu Novais, and Anna Kralj. 2022. “How consumers perceive authenticity in restaurants: A study of online reviews.” *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 1-11.

Low, Setha. 2003. “Embodied Space(s).” *Anthropological Theories of Body, Space, and Culture* 9-18.

Low, Setha. 2011. “Spatializing Culture: Embodied Space in the City.” In *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, by Sophie Watson Gary Bridge, 463-475. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Lupton, Deborah. 1996. *Food, the Body and the Self.* Sage Publications.

MacCannell, Dean. 1973. “Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings.” *American Journal of Sociology, Vol 79, no. 3* 589-603.

MacClancy, Jeremy. 1992. *Consuming Culture: Why You Eat What You Eat.* New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Mannur, Anita. 2010. “Introduction: Food Matters.” In *Culinary Fictions: Food in South Asian Diasporic Culture*, by Anita Mannur. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Marks, Denton. 2011. “Competitiveness and the Market for Central and Eastern European Wines: A Cultural Good in the Global Wine Market.” *Journal of Wine Research* 245-263.

Materski, Wojciech. 2021. “Gruzini na ziemiach polskich - historia i teraźniejszość (próba zakreślenia tematyki).” *Sprawy Międzynarodowe: Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk* 75-100.

Matson-Barkat, Sheila, and Philippe Robert-Demontrond. 2018. “Who's on the tourists' menu? Exploring the social significance of restaurant experiences for tourists.” *Tourism Management* 566-578.

McReynolds, Louise. 2003. “Chapter Six “Steppin’ Out” in the Russian Night at the Fin de Siècle.” In *Russia at Play: Leisure Activities at the End of the Tsarist Era*, by Louise McReynolds, 193-222. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Mehta, Sandhya Rao. 2018. “Introduction: Framing Studies in Glocalization.” In *Language and Literature in a Glocal World*, by Sandhya Rao Mehta, 1-11. Singapore: Springer Nature.

Mincyte, Diana. 2011. “Unusual Ingredients: Gastronationalism, Globalization, Technology, and Zeppelins in the Lithuanian Imagination.” *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 1-21.

Miranda-Nieto, Alejandro, and Paolo Boccagni. 2020. “At Home in the Restaurant: Familiarity, Belonging and Material Culture in Ecuadorian Restaurants in Madrid.” *Sociology, 54(5)* 1022-1040.

Möhring, Maren. 2024. “From Berlin to the Globe: The Transnational Story of Döner Kebab.” In *Routledge Handbook of Turkey's Diasporas*, by Ayca Arkilic and Banu Senay, 446-458. London: Routledge.

Möhring, Maren. 2008. “Transnational food migration and the internalization of food consumption: Ethnic cuisine in West Germany.” *Food and Globalization: consumption, markets and politics in the modern world* 129-150.

Molz, Jennie Germann. 2004. “Tasting an Imagined Thailand: Authenticity and Culinary Tourism in Thai Restaurants.” In *Culinary Tourism*, by Lucy M. Long, 53-75. Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.

Naeem, Muhammad, Wilson Ozuem, Kerry Howell, and Silvia Ranfagni. 2023. “A Step-by-Step Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model in Qualitative Research.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 1-18.

Narvselius, Eleonora. 2015. “Spicing up Memories and Serving Nostalgias: Thematic Restaurants and Transnational Memories in East-Central European Borderland Cities.” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 417-432.

Nodia, Ghia. 2014. “The Values of the Georgian Supra : Nationalist or Nativist?” *Porject Muse* 69-74.

Nowicki, Wojciech. 2016. “wyborcz.pl KRAKÓW.” *Nowicki. Chinkalnia i Good Lood. Kuchni gruzińskiej nigdy za wiele.* 22 05. Accessed 06 19, 2025. https://krakow.wyborcza.pl/krakow/7,44425,20115819,nowicki-chinkalnia-i-good-lood-kuchni-gruzinskiej-nigdy-za.html.

OECD. 2022. *A Review of Georgian Emigrants.* Talent Abroad, Paris: OECD Publishing.

OECD. 2022. *A Review of Georgian Emigrants, Talend Abroad.* Diaspora analysis, policy recommendations, Paris: OECD Publishing, 1-70.

Osokina, Elena. 1998. “Glava 1: KARTOCHKI I GOLOD — POChEMU?” In *Za fasadom "stalinskogo izobiliya." Raspredelenie i rynok v snabzhenii naseleniya v gody industrializatsii, 1927–1941.*, by Elena Osokina, 57-114. Moskva: ROSSPEN.

Panayi, Panikos. 2008. *Spicing Up Britain. The Multicultural History of British Food.* London: Reaktion Books Ltd.

Papashvili, Helen and George. 1967. *Russian Cooking.* New York: Time Life Books Inc.

Parasecoli, Fabio. 2014. “Food, Identity, and Cultural Reproduction in Immigrant Communities.” *Social Research, Vol. 81, No. 2, Food and Immigrant Life* 415-439.

—. 2022. *Gastronativism: Food, Identity, Politics.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Parasecoli, Fabio. 2011. “Savoring semiotics: food in intercultural communication.” *Social Semiotics* 645-663.

Pascale, Celine-Marie. 2011. *Cartographies of Knowledge: Exploring Qualitative Epistemologies.* Washington D.C.: Sage Publications, Inc.

Pekkarinen, Anna-Greta, and Anniina Jokinen. 2023. *Patterns of exploitation: Trends and modus operandi in human trafficking in Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Ukraine.* Helsinki: HEUNI Report Series no. 103a .

Pennar, Siôn. 2024. ““Bakeries are springing up everywhere”: Georgian migration to Poland booms.” *Notes from Poland*, 20 11.

Polese, Abel. 2009. “The Guest at the Dining Table: Economic Transitions and the Reshaping of Hospitality—Reflections from Batumi and Odessa.” *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 76-87.

Polese, Abel, Oleksandra Seliverstova, Tanel Kerikmae, and Ammon Cheskin. 2020. “National Identity for Breakfast: Food Consumption and the Everyday Construction of National Narratives in Estonia.” *Association for the Study of Nationalities* 1015-1035.

Polianichev, Oleksandr. 2023. *Dream of the Russian tropics.* 22 09. Accessed 05 13, 2025. https://aeon.co/essays/how-tsarist-russia-sought-to-make-a-tropics-on-the-black-sea.

Porciani, Ilaria. 2019. *Food heritage and nationalism in Europe.* London: Routledge.

Rageh, Ahmed, T.C Melewar, and Arch Woodside. 2013. “Using netnography research method to reveal the underlying dimensions of the customer/tourist experience.” *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 126-149.

Riger, Stephanie, and Rannveig Sigurvinsdottir. 2016. “Thematic Analysis.” In *Handbook of Methodological Approaches to Community-Based Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*, by Leonard A. Jason and David S. Glenwick, 33-43. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ritzer, George. 2003. “Rethinking globalization: glocalization/grobalization and something/nothing.” *Sociological Theory 21* 193-209.

Robertson, Roland. 1995. “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity.” In *Global Modernities*, by Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, 25-44. London: SAGE Publications.

Roudometof, Victor. 2018. “Glocal Religions: An Introduction.” *Religions* 1-9.

Roudometof, Victor. 2015. “Theorizing glocalization: Three interpretations.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 1-18.

Scott, Erik Ratazzi. 2011. “Chapter 1: The Georgians in the Soviet Empire of Diasporas.” In *Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora in the Soviet Union*, by Scott, 1-19. online edn.: Oxford University Press.

Scott, Erik Ratazzi. 2011. “Chapter 3 Edible Ethnicity: How Georgian Cuisine Conquered the Soviet Table.” In *Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora in the Soviet Union*, by Scott, 59-90. online edn.: Oxford Academic.

Scott, Erik Ratazzi. 2011. “Epilogue: The End of the Empire of Diasporas.” In *Familiar Strangers:: The Georgian Diaspora in the Soviet Union*, by Erik Rattazzi Scott, 176-186. online edn: Oxford University Press.

Shelton, Allen. 1990. “A theater for eating, looking, and thinking: The restaurant as symbolic space.” *Sociological Spectrum* 507-526.

Smaki Gruzji. n.d. *Sklep Tamada.* Accessed 06 21, 2025. https://skleptamada.pl/.

Smith, Alison. 2021. *Cabbage and Caviar: A History of Food in Russia.* London: Reaktion Books.

Smith, Alison. 2012. “National Cuisines.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, by Jeffrey M. Pilcher, 444-460. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stiles, Kaelyn, Özlem Altıok, and Michael M. Bell. 2010. “The ghosts of taste: food and the cultural politics of authenticity.” *Agriculture and Human Values* 225-236.

Strohl, Matthew. 2019. “On Culinary Authenticity.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 157-167.

Strüder, Inge R. 2003. “Do Concepts of Ethnic Economies Explain Existing Minority Enterprises? The Turkish Speaking Economies in London.” *Research papers in Environmental and Spatial Analysis Series 88* 34.

Timothy, Dallen J. 2016. “Chapter 5: Personal heritage, intergenerational food and nostalgia.” In *Heritage Cuisines: Traditions, identities and tourism*, by Dallen J. Timothy, 65-76. Oxon: Routledge.

Timothy, Dallen J. 2016. “Introduction: Heritage cuisines, foodways and culinary traditions.” In *Heritage Cuisines: Traditions, identities and tourism*, by Dallen J Timothy, 1-25. Oxon: Routledge.

Tukhashvili, Mirian. 2018. “Retrospective Comprehension of Post-Soviet Georgia's Population Migration.” *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences* 175-182.

Turner, Bryan. 2007. “The Enclave Society: Towards a Sociology of Immobility.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 287-304.

UNESCO. 2022. *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding: Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking.* 07 07. Accessed 04 27, 2025. https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/culture-of-ukrainian-borscht-cooking-01852.

Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców. 2021. *Obywatele Gruzji w Polsce - raport.* 03 12. Accessed 04 18, 2025. https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/obywatele-gruzji-w-polsce---raport.

Varshaver, E.A., and A.L. Rocheva. 2014. “Soobshchestva v kafe kak sreda integratsii inoetnichnykh migrantov v Moskve.” *Sotsial'naya diagnostika* 104-113.

Wachtel, Andrew. 2016. “A Tale of Two Heroes: Kyrgyzstan in Search of National Role Models.” *Region* 1-16.

Wadowski, Maciej, and Michał Walczak. 2018. “Poczuć smak Gruzji. Otwierają nową restaurację w centrum Kielc.” *wyborcza.pl KIELCE.* 27 07. Accessed 06 20, 2025. https://kielce.wyborcza.pl/kielce/56,47262,23724549,poczuc-smak-gruzji-otwieraja-nowa-restauracje-w-centrum-kielc.html.

Wank, David L., and James Farrer. 2015. “Chinese Immigrants and Japanese Cuisine in the United States: A Case of Culinary Glocalization.” In *The Globalization of Asian Cuisines: Transnational Networks and Culinary Contact Zones*, by James Farrer, 79-99. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wessendorf, Susanne, and James Farrer. 2021. “Commonplace and out-of-place diversities in London and Tokyo: migrant-run eateries as intercultural third places.” *Comparative Migration Studies* 1-17.

WikiArt. 2020. 11 11. Accessed 06 29, 2025. https://www.wikiart.org/en/niko-pirosmani/company-bego.

Wood, Natalia, and Caroline Kathleen Muñoz. 2007. “‘No Rules, Just Right’ or is it? The Role of Themed Restaurants as Cultural Ambassadors.” *Tourism and Hospitality Research, Vol. 7* 242-255.

2021. “Вадим Костенко: філософія з відчуттям легкості, яку повинні підхопити усі керівники.” *Бізнес-школа УКУ.* 12 10. Accessed 06 21, 2025. https://lvbs.com.ua/news/vadym-kostenko-filosofiya-z-vidchuttyam-legkosti-yaku-povynni-pidhopyty-usi-kerivnyky/.

2018. “Як побудувати мережу ресторанів грузинської кухні – досвід засновника мережі Хінкальня.” *RAU.* 16 03. Accessed 06 21, 2025. https://rau.ua/novyni/kak-postroit-set-hinkalnya/.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval

University of Glasgow
College of Social Sciences

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Notification of Ethics Application Outcome – UG and PGT Student Applications

---

Application Details

Undergraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☐ Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☒

Application Number: PGT/SPS/2025/005/CEERES

Applicant's Name: Ottilie Rose Tabberer

Project Title: *The (Re)Making of Georgianness: Culinary Glocalisation, Migration and Authenticity in Georgian Restaurants in Kraków*

Application Status: Fully Approved

Date of Review: 29/05/2025

Start Date of Approval 29/05/2025 End Date of Approval 31/12/2025

NB: Only if the applicant has been given approval can they proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.

Appendix B: Plain Language Statement for Participants

University of Glasgow

UNIWERSYTET JAGIELLOŃSKI W KRAKOWIE

Plain Language Statement for Participants

Research project title:

The (Re)Making of Georgianness: Culinary Glocalisation, Migration and Authenticity in Georgian Restaurants in Kraków

Full name, status of the research leader, e-mail address:

Ottilie Rose Tabberer; International Master's student of Central & East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (Universities of Glasgow and University of Jagiellonian); ottilie.tabberer@student.uj.edu.pl

Thesis supervisors:

Dr. Kinga Gajda, Jagiellonian University; kinga.gajda@uj.edu.pl

Dr. Catherine Helen Gibson, Tartu University; catherine.helen.gibson@ut.ee

University Faculty:

School of Social & Policial Sciences, University of Glasgow / Faculty of International & Political Studies, Jagiellonian University

Invitation to Participate

Hi there! My name is Ottilie Tabberer, and I am conducting research as part of my master's thesis at the University of Glasgow and Jagiellonian University of Krakow. I am interested in learning more about Georgian restaurants in Krakow. However, before you decide, it is important to understand why this research is being done and what it involves. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if anything is unclear or if you'd like more details. **It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part.**

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to explore motivations behind opening Georgian-themed restaurants by Georgians and non-Georgians, how these venues are authentic to Georgian cuisine and Georgian culture and the roles they play in creating community and cultural identity within the Polish context. By sharing your experiences, you will contribute valuable insights into our understanding of restaurants and their role in migration and cultural integration.

What will participation involve?

If you agree, I will interview you (30–40 minutes) in person or online. Questions will cover:

1. Your background: Why you opened a Georgian restaurant, your cultural/personal connection to it.
2. Authenticity: How you define and adapt Georgian cuisine for Polish non-Georgian customers.
3. Community impact: Whether your restaurant is important for Georgians or others in Krakow.
4. Challenges: Experiences as a business owner in Poland.

The interview will be confidential and conducted in a respectful, safe environment chosen by you. Absolute confidentiality, however, may be impossible to guarantee, since this study primarily focuses on a small-size sample of participants, namely Georgian restaurants in Krakow.

Confidentiality & Data Use

- Interviews will be audio-recorded (with your permission) and transcribed. Recordings will be deleted after transcription, but anonymised transcripts will be stored securely for future research.
- Your name and personal details will be anonymised in transcripts and publications. No identifying details (name, location, etc.) will be shared.
- Only I will access the raw data (notes, transcripts), stored securely on password-protected devices.
- Limits to confidentiality: Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.
- Findings will contribute to discussions on migration, cultural identity, and international food in Poland. If you're interested, I can share a summary of the results once the study is complete

Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal

- Participation is entirely voluntary. You can:
    - Skip any questions.
    - Withdraw during the interview or until June 2025 (before data analysis begins).
- Withdrawal will not affect you negatively.

This project was reviewed by the University of Glasgow's School of Social and Political Sciences Ethics Forum. If you have concerns about the research conduct, please contact Professor Gerda Reith, Ethics Officer by email at *Gerda.Reith@glasgow.ac.uk*.

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent Form for Research Participants

The (Re)Making of Georgianness: Culinary Glocalisation, Migration and Authenticity in Georgian Restaurants in Kraków

Contact Information:

Researcher Name: Ottilie Rose Tabberer

Email: ottilie.tabberer@student.uj.edu.pl

Phone: +44 7938 473 188

Supervisor 1: Dr. Kinga Gajda; kinga.gajda@uj.edu.pl

Supervisor 2: Dr. Catherine Helen Gibson; catherine.helen.gibson@ut.ee

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Ottilie Tabberer, a master's student at the University of Glasgow/Jagiellonian University. The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations behind opening Georgian-themed restaurants by Georgians and non-Georgians and the roles they play in creating community and cultural identity within the Polish societal context.

- Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary.
- You have the right to refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time during the interview and at the latest by June 2025 without consequences.
- Your name and identifying details will be anonymised in any research reports or publications.

- While there are no anticipated risks associated with participation, if you experience any discomfort during the interview, you may choose to end the interview at any time.

I agree to take part in the above study. Yes ☐ No ☐

By signing below, you indicate that:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet (or Plain Language Statement) for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
- I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by pseudonym.
- I agree to have the researcher record the interview for better evaluation of the data.
- The material will be retained in secure storage for use in future academic research.
- The material may be used in future publications, both print and online.
- I agree to waive my copyright to any data collected as part of this project.
- I understand that other authenticated researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.
- I understand that other authenticated researchers may use my words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.
- I acknowledge the provision of a Privacy Notice in relation to this research Project.

Name of Participant:

Participant's Signature:

Date:

Name of Researcher:

Researcher's Signature:

Date: