

Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies

Paper 150

**Pigs, herring, and Bornholm on a table:  
A high-end restaurant's construction of  
authenticity**

by

*Martha Sif Karrebæk<sup>©</sup> & Marie Maegaard<sup>©</sup> (University of Copenhagen)*

martha@hum.ku.dk

mamae@hum.ku.dk

November 2015



This work is licensed under a  
Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.  
To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/>

# Pigs, herring, and Bornholm on a table: A high-end restaurant's construction of authenticity

Martha Sif Karrebæk & Marie Maegaard

## Abstract:

This paper focuses on constructions of authenticity in a high-end restaurant in Copenhagen, Denmark. The restaurant is labelled 'Bornholmian'. Thereby it creates a link to the island of Bornholm, approximately 160 km from Copenhagen. Bornholm is introduced discursively as an interpretive universe, and as part of the restaurant's claim to value. We show how authenticity is performed, created, and treated reflexively. We focus particularly on the waiters' authenticating discursive moves and their crucial role in guiding the guests' attention to the relevant elements, and we point out that authenticity seems to be a potential that does not always materialize fully. The restaurant's construction of a comprehensive semiotic experience includes food as well as décor, photos, tableware, and narratives. Dialect features are used to heighten the intensity of the experience for the guests, we argue. We build the study mainly on Coupland's (2003, 2014) semantic *dimensions of authenticity* and Coupland & Coupland's (2014) *frames of authenticity*. Tradition, or *historicity*, and place of production, or *ontology*, are the most important dimensions, and frames of cultural, recreational and material authenticity also play a role. We draw on a data set consisting of interviews with staff, recordings of waiters at work, visits to the restaurant webpage, and ethnographic field-notes and photos.

## *Introduction*<sup>i</sup>

During the Noma<sup>ii</sup> and New Nordic Cuisine era the Danish capital Copenhagen has become a city with an abundance of high-end eating-places, competition is hard, and restaurants need to be creative to attract guests. To quote a professional Danish foodie:

“It<sup>iii</sup> seems to be a widespread trend in the Copenhagen restaurant environment that you need to have a strong sale gimmick, a brand if you want, in order to fill the tables. There are now so many fine eating places that it is no longer enough to serve good

food in order to win the battle for the hungry customers. The DNA of the restaurant needs to be clear, easy to decode, and possible to explain in a (newspaper) headline.” (Timm Vladimir’s blog; 17-09-2012)<sup>iv</sup>

According to Vladimir the fine-dining scene in contemporary Copenhagen is difficult-because-saturated. A restaurant needs a brand that is easy to understand and which incorporates elements believed to add specific meaning, distinction and, thus, value, to the restaurant. A common part of creating such a brand is by claiming a nationally or regionally based culinary authenticity, as e.g. a Japanese, French, or Italian restaurant. We consider authenticity a meaning that can be attributed to different types of phenomena, for instance by anchoring it in time and space (history, tradition) (Cavanaugh & Shankar 2014), and which is based in an ideology where ‘original’ (real, genuine) is of higher value than reproduction or (re-)interpretations. In the fine dining scene a claim of regional authenticity has to be carried out in a creative or special way in order to add the unique flavour that Vladimir asks for. In this paper we focus on Restaurant Koefoed, a high-end restaurant in Copenhagen, which identifies as Bornholmian. Bornholm is a Danish island, some 160 km away from Copenhagen (and the rest of Denmark) in the Baltic Sea. Koefoed is (and is recognised as) a typical Bornholmian name, according to the restaurant website they serve “Bornholm on a table”, and Bornholm and Bornholmness is thematized in media promotions of the restaurant: “Now you can get Bornholmian produce in a good modern interpretation at Restaurant Koefoed” (Politiken 01-02-2007), “Restaurant Kofoed [sic!] sells itself as –and is– a Bornholmian restaurant. No doubt that the heart of this place lies in the middle of the Baltic” (Vladimir 17-09-2007) and “everything from the produce to the glassware celebrates the island of Bornholm” (Guide Michelin<sup>v</sup>). One task of the high-end restaurant is to ensure that what we may term its universe of interpretation, here Bornholm, is understood by (potential) guests, and Restaurant Koefoed seems to succeed here. Another task is to create distinction. Restaurant Koefoed is one of only two Bornholmian restaurants in Copenhagen (the other one is the Michelin star Kadeau); in itself this makes it somehow special. Yet, there is no such thing as a well-established Bornholmian cuisine, and only few widely recognized Bornholmian food products and dishes. Thus, the questions we pursue in the following are how a ‘real’ and ‘genuine’ – or ‘authentic’ – Bornholmian restaurant is understood, in what ways the restaurant makes these meanings available, and what role the restaurant guests and waiters play in the construction. In accordance with prior studies we see that authenticity is a performed construction rather than an immanent quality (cf. Coupland 2014: 16), and that the

performance is usually accepted and even encouraged by the guests. In addition, we show how the authentic character of the restaurant and its product – the restaurant experience – depends on the waiter’s establishment of a universe of interpretation, and his (both waiters in our study are male, and therefore we use masculine gender to refer to waiters in the following) indications to guests of where to look (and implicitly what to ignore). There are differences between encounters in how salient authenticity becomes, and how much there is added to the meaning of Bornholmness. Thereby authenticity is only part of the construction of value, distinction and meaning in the restaurant. In addition, rather than just food, high-end restaurants sell experiences organised around meals (cf. Pardue 2007: 67; Trubek 2000: 50f), and the creative exploitation of potential meanings is highly important. Restaurant Koefoed uses a range of elements to index Bornholmian authenticity. In addition to food and other material objects (décor, silver- and tableware), language is central, and what we focus particularly on. Theoretically we draw on Coupland’s (2003, 2014) “dimensions of authenticity” and Coupland and Coupland’s (2014) “frames of authenticity”.

#### *Bornholm as value?*

In public discourse, peripheral areas of Denmark (in relation to the capital), known as *Outskirts Denmark* ‘Udkantsdanmark’, are associated with low income, low educational levels, high unemployment, outward migration, i.e., overall negatively defined cultural characteristics. The island of Bornholm, situated in the Baltic Sea, is such a place (see map in Figure 1).



Figure 1. Map of Denmark (white), showing parts of Southern Sweden, Northern Germany, and North-Western Poland. Bornholm is the island furthest to the east on the map.

Bornholm is one of the poorest areas in the country. The economic decline has been steady for decades (Rauhut *et al.* 2008), and tourism the dominant source of income for at least half a century (Østergaard 2010). Yet, during the last 10+ years there have been strategic attempts at creating an image for Bornholm as a place of high quality products and unique experiences. Local businesses and politicians cooperate with national agents like *the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Interior*, and individual businesses, regional organisations and networks like *Bornholm Forum for Growth* ‘Bornholms Vækstforum’ and *Regional Food Culture Bornholm* ‘Regional Madkultur Bornholm’ are involved. According to Bornholm Forum for Growth globalization causes traditional workplaces to move out of Denmark, yet the demand for luxury lifestyle products and uniqueness is increasing. In a report on their strategy they write:

“The aim is to create a brand for Bornholm that will achieve a degree of

noticeability at the same level as other strong Danish brands, and that will visibly signal quality and creativity.”

([http://www.w2l.dk/file/7152/Erhvervsudviklingsstrategi\\_Bornholm.pdf](http://www.w2l.dk/file/7152/Erhvervsudviklingsstrategi_Bornholm.pdf); our translation)

Here, the Bornholm Forum for Growth aims at creating a *place brand* for Bornholm (Lucarelli & Berg 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). This is becoming an increasingly more common enterprise in post-industrial societies, especially where former industrial cities get redefined and reimagined (Short & Kim 1999). The same processes can be observed in this island society where the economy used to be based on fishing and agriculture. Conditions have changed, and Bornholm needs to find a new ‘identity’. As part of a general trend among smaller islands in contemporary Denmark, food becomes an important part of this. Kavaratzis and Hatch view place branding as dialectic processes of “dialogue, debate and contestation” (2013: 82). Stakeholders both benefit from and take part in branding, and Kavaratzis and Hatch argue that stakeholders are the most important agents in place branding (ibid.). Restaurants (like Restaurant Koefoed) may be highly important stakeholders.

An increasing association between Bornholm and high cultural value seems to be partly the result of strategic work, such as the efforts made by Bornholm Forum for Growth. Larger resistance ideologies – anti-globalization and anti-industrialization – are probably also relevant to the understanding of the paradox in transforming economic and cultural defeat into high social and economic value. In the following, however, we will concentrate on how a specific restaurant participates in the place branding of Bornholm both by presupposing that Bornholm indexes value when it constructs a relation, or relations, to Bornholm, and by reaffirming this value in the same process. Notice that the association between Bornholm and high quality is never questioned in our recordings. Naming something as Bornholmian creates and validates this value, and the consensus even constitutes a premise for the success of the restaurant.

### *Authenticity*

Human beings monitor their “lives against criteria of ‘truthfulness’, ‘reality’, ‘consistency’, ‘coherence’ and so on” (Coupland 2003: 417). All of these, as well as the related ‘heritage’, are somehow subordinate to the concept of ‘authenticity’ (ibid.). Authenticity seems to grow in importance in this globalizing world driven by capitalism. Heller & Duchêne (2011:8; also Heller

2014: 138) argues that this is because traditional markets are saturated, and one strategy for increasing profits is to create new added value. Widely consumed products like cheese or beer can gain higher value if their place of production is indexed and is indexed as 'authentic'. Thus, authenticity is highly meaningful and it is commodified to a large extent (Heller 2014: 153). Coupland also argues that under the conditions of late capitalism producers and consumers often engage with authenticity in a way that is "neither wholly cynical nor naively accepting" (2014: 30) but rather reflexive and tuned to current goals. From a contemporary sociolinguistic point of view authenticity is to be treated as a discursive construction, associated with high value, and achieved through social action and performance (Coupland 2014: 16; see also Blommaert & Rampton 2011; Eckert 2003; Bucholtz 2003; Coupland 2003, 2014; Heller & Duchêne 2012, etc.). Clearly language plays a special role in contemporary commodification and construction of authenticity (Heller & Duchêne 2012 and others).

Regarding the creation of "Bornholmness" in a Copenhagen restaurant, authenticity is a key element, since presenting the restaurant as genuine Bornholmian draws exactly on authenticity. The restaurant experience and other food consumption rituals transform 'raw material' into meaning, including meaningful social relations. The very acts that identify food as part of heritage are also what give them higher value as commodities to gourmets and cultural tourists (Wilk 2006: 20). Wilk argues that this seem like a paradox, but it is actually common, as pointed out by Coupland (2014) and others. At a high-end restaurant waiters may evoke authenticity to suggest particular, recognizable or presupposed meanings associated with high quality to their product ("sauce espagnole is a traditional French sauce", "we import these *katsubushi* flakes directly from the Tokyo fish market"; French and Japanese are generally of high value in the food (and *haute cuisine*) area); guests visit high-end restaurants in order to experience a contrast to their consumption in everyday life (from 'food' and 'eating' to 'cuisine' and 'experiencing'; see also Trubek 2000: 37), and for this experience to happen they take part in waiters' constructions on the restaurant front-stage (Goffman 1959). All participants are (probably) aware that the emergent authenticity has a less-than-essential character - but at the same time it just needs to suffice for their common endeavour: to create a good restaurant experience.

We show in our analyses that authenticity may be highly staged and performed, but still acknowledged and accepted by guests. At the same time the degree to which authenticity is salient differs from one encounter to the next. It is a potential that may or may not be realized, and its

commercial exploitation is never reducible to a strategic introduction of a particular meaning dimension by the producer (see also Cavanaugh & Shankar 2014). In some cases, it is never even suggested, taken up, accepted as relevant or as an appropriate framing.

Coupland (2003) suggests a way of analyzing authenticity in terms of five ‘semantic dimensions’: *ontology* – that is, intrinsic claims to existence; *historicity* – i.e., the longevity of a phenomenon; *systemic coherence* – concerning the importance within a certain institutional framework and the licensing in relation to a normative center; *consensus* – relating to the authorization and (high degree of) acceptance within a constituency; and *value* – the (personal and social) importance of authenticity and the observation that some cultural elements are revered and regarded as cultural anchoring points (Coupland 2003, 2014). The dimensions are interdependent; *systemic coherence* makes sense only in relation to social *consensus*, to an understanding that a particular phenomenon has special *value*, and to the ideas that features selected for systemic coherence are the correct ones, those that index value, e.g., those that have *intrinsic* claims to authenticity or a long *historic* dimension within a certain *licensing community*, etc. On Restaurant Koefoed’s website and in encounters between waiters and guests, much attention is devoted to historical, material and ontological dimensions of food produce. Produce has grown in Bornholmian soil or been manufactured on Bornholm. Other dimensions evoked are culture and tradition (*historicity*) – a dish or drink may be claimed to be ‘traditionally Bornholmian’ – or even the personal insight into the place – waiters tell anecdotes or situate locations to help guests into an understanding of Bornholm (*ontology*, licensing, attempting to create *social consensus*). The *value* of these specific relations to Bornholm is usually presupposed and left implicit, but it is drawn upon to create the value of the entire restaurant as a high-end eating place.

In addition to the semantic dimensions, authenticity can be created with relation to different *frames* (Coupland & Coupland 2014). Each frame “mobilises a distinctive value system in which authenticity has some specific salience, and brings into play different forms of symbolic capital and different subject positions” (Coupland & Coupland 2014: 8). The frame of *material authenticity* has focus on physical space and objects (i.e. *materiality*). The *cultural authenticity* frame brings in the history of certain practices and lifestyles, i.e., in the study by the Couplands, stories told by mining guides about their experiences as miners. The Couplands treat the frames as in competition, yet we see that they work together, as a form of lamination. As Coupland mentions, people do not necessarily see authenticity (heritage etc.) as contrasting with the commodification of

it. At Restaurant Koefoed cultural authenticity is a *potential* enabled through the preferred employment of staff with Bornholmian roots, it is *suggested* when the waiters talk about Bornholm's history, Bornholmian traditions etc., and it is *realized* when guests accept the waiters' discursive construction. A frame of *performative authenticity* can be activated, e.g., by guided tourist tours, and in our case by the waiters' performance of Bornholmness when waiting tables. Last, the frame of *recreational authenticity* acknowledges that in heritage tourism 'heritage' is an object of consumption.

At a restaurant the waiter is responsible for making relevant information accessible to the guests. In order to interpret objects as signs of Bornholmian authenticity or other it implies that the waiter guides the guests into the necessary interpretive frames (as in Couplands' study), universes of interpretation and semiotic ideologies, the latter defined by Keane (2003: 419) as "basic assumptions about what signs are and how they function in the world." Not all qualities can be seen as immediately accessible and naturally occurring, and in such cases the very existence of the properties "must usually be relayed to the consumer discursively from an expert to the consumer through a discursive chain of authentication" (Manning 2012: 21; Silverstein 2005). For instance, it is not always relevant to see produce as (indexical) signs of place or as embodying essential qualities of place (icons). This depends on contextualization to be interpretable. This means that it is not evident that a pork dish, a bottle of wine, or a fish cake in a smoke-filled jar are representations of or index Bornholm. It depends on a certain amount of pre-established knowledge, a semiotic ideology or guidance.

### *Terroir and the New Nordic Cuisine*

*Terroir* refers to how a specific climate and soil create distinctive flavours, and much of Koefoed's authenticity work relates to produce grown in Bornholm. *Terroir* posits an inherent and qualitative relationship between taste and place, according to which produce from one place has significant and essential differences from produce from elsewhere. Thereby it can be invested with affective significance and material relevance (Paxson 2010: 446; cited in Weiss 2011). Non-industrial aspects of production are valorized (Manning 2012: 24), and it is often related to products and production methods which are imagined not to have changed for a long time (Paxson 2010: 445; Weiss 2012: 615). As a notion, *terroir* includes the senses 'local', 'artisanal', 'material', 'tangible' and 'sensuous' which together suggests a proximity between the producer, consumer and origin of the produce: "it links a series of places ... with the animals raised on the farm, and—crucially—

includes the audience within this sensory field” (Weiss 2010: 448; also Manning 2012: 24). At Restaurant Koefoed some of the served products have a long Bornholmian pedigree (e.g., marinated herring), others not (e.g., Bornholmian wine). In some cases, the understanding of terroir as an immanent ‘taste of place’ makes immediate sense – wine, beer, pork, lamb, vegetables, flour, milk, cheese can all be argued to develop specific qualities depending on the specific environment, soil and production. In other cases the notion of ‘terroir’ is more contestable, e.g., the herring is imported and only manufactured on Bornholm (as the sea surrounding Bornholm is polluted and therefore subject to fishing restrictions). Regardless of all this Restaurant Koefoed’s waiters point to certain source-identifying indexicals (signs that identify the source of the product; Manning 2012: 20-24), these may be presented as and interactionally become icons of Bornholm. Thereby they participate in the production of authentic Bornholmness. The nostalgia, intimacy and valorization of a taste of place are identifiable meaning aspects in our data; we will show this in the following.

The terroir-based concept at Restaurant Koefoed is wide-spread on the contemporary Danish restaurant scene, due particularly to the influence of the *New Nordic Cuisine* (NNC) movement. NNC was created principally by the Danish gastronomic entrepreneur Claus Meyer, along with like-minded food professionals, with sources of inspiration such as Slow Food (Petrini 2003), locavores (see e.g. Meneley 2004; Weiss 2011: 439), and Gastronationalism (DeSoucey 2010), all anti-industrialization and anti-monopolization movements. In a manifesto from 2006 Meyer<sup>vi</sup> called for producers (and thereby consumers) to re-connect to land and soil, for sustainability and re-appreciation of the seasons, through a focus on produce traditionally grown and elevated in Denmark, and for the use of local resources “that express the territory they derive from.” (Meyer 2010<sup>vii</sup>). This, of course, is terroir. Historically sedimented practices were referred to in a call to “Unite the best Nordic methods of production and culinary traditions with impulses from the outside” (our translation), and develop “new uses of traditional Nordic foods” (our translation). Meyer explains: “we want to explore and renew the traditional Nordic recipes and cooking methods. We will listen to the wisdom of old people, in the periphery and wherever else it is found.”<sup>viii</sup> (our translation). Notice the attention paid to ‘the periphery’ where the ‘traditional’, i.e. authentic, food wisdom is found; this is compatible with the creation of Bornholm as a special place, perhaps even a ‘hyper-place’ (Pietikainen and Kelly-Holmes 2014: 223) food-wise. Of course, NNC builds very little on ‘tradition’ in the sense of historically sedimented practices, and professionals working within NNC are very creative (cf. Paxson 2010). NNC is emergent authenticity and to a large extent a discursive construction (also Byrkjeflot et al. 2013; Trubek

2007: 40).

At Restaurant Koefoed the owner claimed to have had too much of the NNC discourse, yet he added that they had been part of this trend from before it was even labelled. The restaurant was in fact more local than the New Nordic (paraphrased from interview). But regardless of the owner's distancing the inspiration is evident. Restaurant Koefoed values terroir, locality, a peripheral Danish area, seasonality, and non-industrial methods. As we shall see Koefoed also exploits other dimensions than those pointed out by Meyer, e.g., the staff's relations to the place, interior decorations, and cultural narratives. In this way, Bornholm becomes a universe of interpretation, rather than just an 'authentic' cuisine, and the restaurant embellishes the meaning of terroir by creating new connections between food, place and tradition.<sup>ix</sup>

### **Data and methods**

This article is based on data collected over six months with a particular focus on the Copenhagen-based, Bornholmian high-end restaurant Restaurant Koefoed, recommended by the Guide Michelin (<http://www.restaurant-koefoed.dk/>). The study was developed in association with a larger project on dialect use in peripheral areas of Denmark, incl. Bornholm, and we have data from other food entrepreneurs such as a wine-maker on Bornholm (cp. Monka et al. 2015; Scheuer et al. 2015) and a Michelin-starred Bornholmian restaurant also in Copenhagen. After a few years of hardship on Bornholm Restaurant Koefoed moved to the capital, but the owner continues to participate actively as a food entrepreneur on the island. Restaurant Koefoed is located in the city centre, close to expensive hotels and tourist attractions. We interviewed the owner, chatted with the waiters, took pictures at the restaurant, browsed through their website, collected reviews and discussions in public media (social media, newspapers, magazines). In addition we were allowed to make audio-recordings twice, once during lunch (4 hours), once during dinner (6 hours), and this constitutes the paper's main data. At each session approximately 15 tables were served, and the recordings contain interactions between waiters and guests, the waiters' communication with the kitchen staff, or each other, and lots of noise. We have transcribed relevant (and audible) parts with one waiter (Lars) whose recordings were most lively. All examples have been selected from here.

The data pool is of course relatively small pool but it was not evident to get the permission, and we would not push to get more. We consider the recorded interactions between waiters and guests if not representative then at least typical; we have no evidence that they weren't. They are also highly interesting as they offer a rare glimpse into the (attempts at) discursive

constructions of authenticity and the creative exploitation of available resources during the everyday life of the cultural institution ‘a restaurant’ (cf. restaurant studies in Berris & Sutton 2007; Goffman 1959).

The two waiters Lars and Simon carried out the recordings. Both waiters are originally from Bornholm, and both are central staff members; Lars is even ‘restaurant manager’. We instructed them to inform the guests about the recordings and ask for their consent, and we placed an informative pamphlet by the front door and cloakroom. The guests were both sojourners and locals. Particularly the dinner recordings had a high number of non-Danish background guests – German, Austrian, British, Irish, and Scottish– but both recording sessions contain conversation in different languages. The staff did not wish to be anonymized, in the few cases where guests are identifiable, we have concealed their identities. All examples preserve the original language, and when needed they are provided with English translations.

### **The restaurant website**

Restaurant Koefoed’s website may constitute a first encounter with the restaurant, and it can be crucial for potential guests’ decision to book a table. The aspects that serve to distinguish this restaurant from other restaurants therefore need to be communicated clearly. The visitor is early on presented with the claim that at Restaurant Koefoed you get a taste of Bornholm. On the main page of the website the restaurant’s logo is placed in the top left corner, highly visible (Hartson 2003: 325) and it reads “Restaurant Koefoed - Bornholm på et bord” (*Restaurant Koefoed - Bornholm on a table*). The restaurant’s relations to Bornholm are made central in the section “About Bornholm”, which contributes to a construction of uniqueness and familiarity through a terroir discourse. The main body of the page is a large frame alternating between different photos from Bornholm – rocky landscapes and sandy beaches, pigs, sheep, and cows grazing in forests, hills, or fields. Whereas the rocks are unique in a Danish context, the rest can be found elsewhere in Denmark. The introductory text reads:

“We salute the amazing produces from the sunny island<sup>x</sup> and the concept is a tribute to Bornholm. We focus on the island's many small producers of specialty products of high quality. Bornholm has a unique climate, with many hours of sunshine and a fantastic nature.

The inspiration for the rooms comes from the distinctive round churches of Bornholm with their raw, whitewashed arches and vaults.”

Bornholm’s nature, landscape and traditional architecture is celebrated, and the small-ness and the unique-ness is highlighted; even the exceptional medieval round churches are claimed to be a source of inspiration. From an authenticity point of view this text draws on the frames of material authenticity (the Bornholmian produce) and of cultural authenticity (decorations inspired by historical sights). Furthermore, the text’s vocabulary choice - words like “salute”, “focus”, “inspiration” –implies an interpretation of what Bornholmness is and means, and an agency in the restaurant’s execution of this.

The website contains a section on animals used at the restaurant. A photo shows some sheep in a green field under a blue sky – no stables, machines or other industrial farming material. The location is an iconic heritage site (Hammershus). Whereas the picture suggests the relation to Bornholm, and to places with a particular Bornholmian value, the text constructs a link between the animals and nature as such. The sheep spend time in places that would “otherwise have to be mowed by machine or hand”, and they are therefore part of nature (they eat it and participate in a local eco-system) and a counter-influence to prevalent industrialization. It is also stated that the sheep are fed with a special blend “created by Koefoed’s own chef” which “contributes to the lambs’ fantastic meat quality and completely unique flavour”. Finally, the website presents us with the farmer and his dogs –all named– which establishes a relation of proximity and familiarity. Close connections between producers, produce, and landscape are clearly valued as important aspects of the production of high quality terroir produce (Weiss 2012: 615).

All of this establishes Koefoed as a restaurant that values authenticity. Authenticity is communicated through use of non-industrial production methods and localizable produce, acquaintance with the terroir of the produce, intimate engagement with the process of production, proximity between hosts, guests, and producers, and a concern with animal welfare. Uniqueness is established by situating the restaurant as part of special Bornholmian places and through its care for environment, animals and guests. Guests and animals get an even extremely intimate relation as the animals consume special food, created by the restaurant, and the guests then incorporate the animals.

## **The restaurant encounters**

In this section we will analyse recordings made by the waiter and restaurant manager Lars. As mentioned the restaurant experience needs to satisfy a specific recreational purpose. The guests visit the restaurant to experience something special, including (and focusing on) high-end cuisine, and they are presented with a particular universe of interpretation (Bornholm). It is in relation to this that the creation of authenticity becomes relevant, available, valuable and possible (cf. Wilk 2006: 20).

The restaurant visit has both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects: talking, eating, drinking, reading the menu; plates, glasses, decorations, food, servings (cf. Pardue 2007). The assumed and demonstrated expectations of the guests guide much of what happens during the encounters. We focus on three particular themes: contextualizing information, mostly in the presentations of the restaurant concept, talk about herring, and talk about pork and pigs. Whereas the presentations establish the universe of interpretation, herring and pork have long histories in Danish food culture.

### *Context and presentations*

During the dinner recordings all tables receive an explanation of the restaurant's 'concept', as the waiter Lars formulates it. This includes that the restaurant concentrates on ingredients from the Danish island of Bornholm and facts about the island. In example 1 the waiter asks a newly arrived female guest who has just revealed that she has been to the restaurant before if she has introduced the island to the other members of the company:

#### Example 1: Presentation of the island

01 Lars: have you talked a little bit about the island already

02 Guest1: no not really I

03 Lars: okay

04 Guest1: I was just about to but you can do it

The "already" suggests that 'talk about the island' is a recurrent part of a visit. As someone with a previous experience with Restaurant Koefoed, Guest1 could know that, and Lars' question can be seen as both a way to acknowledge her special status – as a 'regular' – and to probe discretely into whether the required task – presentation – has been accomplished. In her response Guest1

recognizes the presupposition. She claims that she was “just about to” but hands over the task to Lars: “but you can do it”. As this is a recreational experience rather than, e.g., educational or legal one (where repetitions may be appropriate), Lars would want to avoid repetitions. So he makes sure that he will bring new information to the guests. At the same time the information in the presentation is important as this is where the waiter points out the universe of interpretation. He suggests some of the potential sign values, the universe of interpretation or the indexical field (Eckert 2008), which help explain how Bornholm is “presented, performed, consumed and interpreted in the present” (Coupland & Coupland 2014: 9). This is necessary before he can re-contextualize and authenticate the (appropriate elements of the) meal. Therefore it is an essential part of the “discursive chain of authentication” (Manning 2012: 21). In this way, the presentation sequences evoke the frame of *recreational* authenticity, as they occur in order to satisfy the visitors’ needs as authenticity consumers *and* as restaurant guests (with a slight reformulation of Coupland & Coupland 2014).

Some elements in the presentation sequences are only offered occasionally, such as the distance to Copenhagen: “hundred and twenty kilometres south east (.) direct line and it takes a little (.) a little less than three hours to go there and with the plane (.) thirty five minutes”. This helps the waiter underline the symbolic difference between the two locations. Distance in geographical space represents distance in symbolic space (although the mere 35 minutes by plane in a humorous way questions the importance of this distance). It is also because of the distance that it becomes relevant to argue for the restaurant’s authenticity at all. We are not at Bornholm – and yet... Other informations are always present. These include that the restaurant deploys mainly ingredients from Bornholm: “we get most of our ingredients from the island ah but we we s: we do need to have supplies in Copenhagen as well o:r in Sealand”<sup>xi</sup>. The restaurant depends on the ontology, or provenience, of the produce being (mainly) Bornholmian to argue for the authentic Bornholmness. At the same time, more interestingly maybe, Lars announces that some elements that the guests will meet during their visit have no value in the construction of authenticity; “most” rather than “all” ingredients are from Bornholm, others are merely “supplies” from elsewhere. This information is constructed as dispreferred, prefaced by hesitation and “but”, but simultaneously it informs the guests that the waiter is an indispensable ‘guide’. He will point out what is and what isn’t worthy of attention during their visit, as the guests may not be able to detect the ‘source identifying indexicals’ without him (cf. Manning 2010: 22). It is also a reflexive statement as it foregrounds “the reality that the sites, despite their material and cultural authenticities, are selective

and to various extents scripted representations of cultural histories, constructed partly for economic purposes.” (Coupland & Coupland 2014: 9). Thereby it situates the encounter within the Couplands’ performative frame. That the restaurant visit contains both Bornholmian and non-Bornholmian elements rarely receives any significant responses. We will return to a few exceptions.

In one presentation the waiter explains why Bornholm is a Danish territory despite being geographically closer to Sweden than Denmark. He uses this to present the Bornholmian people as devout Danes:

#### Example 2: Koefoed the local patriot

- 01 Lars: you see it here it's actually closer to Sweden than the rest of Denmark a:hr (.) in the  
02 sixteenth century for a short period it was Swedish but e:rh (.) the general wan- was  
03 killed (.) a man called Koefoed (.) a local patriot  
04 Guest18: he is a hero  
05 Lars: he is a hero on the island they named a boat after him and everything ehm: (.) no and  
06 then after the Danish and Swedish king had to ah (.) drop the deal (.) so: the southern  
07 part of Sweden (.) became Swedish again and Bornholm became Danish again

This narrative positions the waiter as knowledgeable about local history, etc. Also, the restaurant’s name –Koefoed– is identical to that of the ‘local patriot’, and although the restaurant (to our knowledge) is not named after him, the identity between the names creates an intertextual relation between the cultural narrative and the restaurant. The name Koefoed (however spelled) is turned into something other than an unspecified indexical cultural reference. Many Bornholmian people are named Koefoed, and if your name is Koefoed, you are sure to have a relation to Bornholm. The correlation has rendered the name emblematic for Bornholm, and on a second order of indexicality (Silverstein 2003) it may signify true and authentic Bornholmness.

The story of Koefoed the patriot is a relatively realistic narrative; other cultural narratives are not. In example 3 the waiter shows the guests a tourist souvenir, the troll Krøllebølle:

#### Example 3: A Bornholmian troll

- 01 Lars: actually we do have trolls in Bornholm there is one called Krøllebølle he see this way  
02 because he lives (.) under the ground  
03 Guests: hahaha

04 Lars: it's a it's an old (.) story  
 05 (.)  
 06 Lars: I have a I have a little a: I have a little statue of him (.) [ah  
 07 Guest2: [a troll  
 08 Lars: yeah a troll krøllebølle  
 09 Guest2: xxx  
 10 Lars: one second  
 11 Guests: hahaha  
 12 Lars goes to fetch the figurine and returns after less than a minute  
 13 Lars: this is Krøllebølle  
 14 Guest2: o:h [cute xxx  
 15 Guest1: [oh my Go:d  
 16 Guests: hahaha

The waiter self-identifies as a true Bornholman, compare the use of the first prs.pl. *we* (do have trolls), and by the same token he inserts himself as an essential part of the restaurant's Bornholman authenticity. He is the material embodiment of Bornholm, and he performs as a cultural authority within the frame of cultural authenticity. The guests' laughter may acknowledge the performative frame that his enactment also highlights. In addition, they may laugh because trolls are not usually relevant in a restaurant setting. So, the information is somewhat a surprise. The waiter is subsequently asked about the truth-value of the story:

Example 4: myth or fact

01 Guest1: it's like a myth o:r is the e:h  
 02 Lars: nononono  
 03 Guests: hahaha  
 04 Lars: that's (.) that's the f:act

This is a rare example of the guests (mildly) challenging the presupposed validity of the waiter's statements. Rather than a concern about truth as such, we suggest that their question regards to what extent the waiter is willing to take part in creative constructions of authenticity and cultural heritage. In return the guests receive a sign of full endorsement. Although trolls do not figure in

most world-views, this did not make them question Lars' reliability. Their unconditional acceptance may be related to the prior demarcation of the universe of interpretation ('Restaurant Koefoed is a Bornholmian restaurant'). There is no such thing as a well-known Bornholmian cuisine, and it is located in Copenhagen. Several factors thereby tune the guests into cancelling ordinary criteria of evaluation and we observe that they willingly participate in a creative and humorous co-construction of Bornholmian authenticity. In this sequence recreational authenticity seems to have high priority (Coupland & Coupland 2014) and outdoes questions of truth and reality.

In one instance the waiter's insistence on the restaurant's dedication to Bornholmian produce is received slightly critically. What about in the winter, a guest asks:

#### Example 5: Vegetables in the winter

- 01 Lars: and: we have most of our ingredients from there (.) everything used in the kitchen is  
02 Danish (.) most of it from the island  
03 (.)  
04 Guest15: [what do you do in the winter  
05 Lars: [and the  
06 Lars: a::h  
07 Guest15: the fish is obviously there (.) the vegetable  
07 Lars: a::hm (.) everything is grown in Denmark eh all year there's these houses called e:h (.)  
08 so everything is grown e:h grown in Bornholm eh in Denmark and Bornholm  
09 so we can get pretty much everything (.) all of the year (.)  
11 but in winter time we have more (.) beets (.) ehm: (.) xxx everything that grows in the  
12 ground ehm: (.) so we have different seasons eh use a lot of berry (.) very soon when  
13 they a:re (.) are ready [so ehm  
14 Guest13: [good

Guest15 suggests that there is a potential incompatibility between the restaurant as Bornholmian, using mainly Bornholmian produce, and as a high-end restaurant. The problem is that very few vegetables grow in Scandinavia in the winter; the guest may expect a wider selection of greens all year. The waiter argues that they get what they need from "these houses", probably green houses, which is somehow at odds with the restaurant's (gastro-)ideological approach (orientation to seasons, dispreference for industrialization). He subsequently retreats and claims that in the winter

they serve more beets and root vegetables (“everything that grows in the ground”), which is locally available. This shows that not everything goes in the construction of authenticity; trolls, historic heroes and produce imported from other parts of Denmark are treated as acceptable, appropriate and relevant elements but green houses are not.

Curiously we do not find a presentation of the preference for Bornholmian food produce in the lunch-time recordings. There may be many reasons for this difference between lunch and dinner. One could be that the ‘Danish lunch’ or *smørrebrød* ‘buttered-bread’<sup>xii</sup> is a culturally well-established phenomenon (there is no such thing as ‘Danish dinner’), and when one looks at Restaurant Koefoed’s website under Lunch, this is exactly what they offer:

”Restaurant Koefoed’s *smørrebrød* is a retelling of the classic, Danish open sandwiches, for which we have upgraded the ingredients with foie gras, truffles and caviar and deconstructed the servings in contemporary style.” (<http://www.restaurant-koefoed.dk/lunch.html>; accessed on the 14-08-2015)

Notice that there is no emphasis on the Bornholmian identity (and authenticity) that we find elsewhere. The lunch menu includes one choice where *Bornholm* is used as attributively, namely in “Bornholm and other Danish cheeses”. In addition, one can order *sol over gudhjem*, an emblematic dish which we return to in the following. It is not, however, explicitly labeled Bornholmian. In all, Bornholm seems to be much less necessary and relevant as a universe of interpretation at lunch. The keywords are ‘traditional’ and ‘Danish’, although in a creative, i.e., ‘contemporary’ interpretation. The *smørrebrød*-lunch is a much more culturally salient and wide-spread concept than Bornholmian cuisine, and this *smørrebrød* is treated as central for the lunch guests’ visits.

Another observation corroborates the interpretation. It is not only the presentation of the preferred origin of produce that is absent from the lunch time recordings. General talk about Bornholm as a spatial and cultural context is also rare. In one instance an elderly couple pays attention to a representation of Bornholm printed on the menu and in the bottom of the glasses. As they fail to identify locations correctly, the waiter corrects them:

#### Example 6: Locations

01 Guest22: Snogebæk (.) det hernede

*Snogebæk (.) it’s down here*

02 Lars: arj (.) de: øh ik helt rigtigt (.) det helt hernede

- noh (.) i:t eh is not entirely correct (.) it's all the way down here*
- 03 Guest22: xxx
- 04 (.)
- 05 Lars: ja det ligger fak:tisk (.) ja det ligger faktisk ø:h lige heromkring  
*yes in fa:ct it is (.) yes in fact it is e:h round about here*
- 05 (.)
- 06 Guest22: ja  
*yes*
- 07 Lars: Nexø heroppe  
*Nexø up here*
- 08 Guest22: nåhja xxx  
*oh yeah xxx*
- 09 Guest21: det så lige før I ska tegne på xxx  
*it's almost as if you should draw on xxx*
- 10 Lars: ja  
*yes*
- 11 Guest22: xxx
- 12 Guest21: og xx (.) det heroppe hahaha  
*and xx (.) it's up here hahaha*
- 12 Lars: det rigtigt  
*that's right*
- 13 (.)
- 14 Lars: altså Gudhjem lige i midten  
*and so Gudhjem right in the middle*

When the guests talk about Bornholmian geography (Gudhjem, Nexø and Snogebæk are Bornholmian towns) it suggests that for them Bornholm is a relevant meaning element. The waiter exploits the fact that the couple demonstrates this interest to present himself as an authority on Bornholm. Thereby guests and waiter co-construct Bornholm as both relevant and salient in the specific restaurant visit. This points to a more general observation, namely that in lunch recordings such contextualising information is only offered on (explicit or implicit) prompts. Later the couple

motivates their interest in Bornholm, and this offers Lars an opportunity to demonstrate not only Bornholmian authority but also authentic Bornholmness:

Example 7: The friend from Bornholm

- 01 Guest22: jeg er oss veninde me:d en fra Bornholm [hun  
*I am also friends (with a woman) from Bornholm [she*
- 02 Lars: [ja  
*[yes*
- 03 laver sommetider saltstegte sild det smager godt  
*sometimes makes salt-fried herring it tastes good*
- 04 (.)
- 05 Lars: vi er vi e:r øh et par lokale (.) ø::hm (.) Simon der min kollega han er oss  
*we're we a:re eh a couple of locals (.) e::hm (.) Simon who's my colleague he is also f*
- 06 fra: vi er begge to fra Rønne  
*fro:m we are both from Rønne*
- 07 og så Michael der ejer restauranten er fra Allinge (.)  
*and then Michael who owns the restaurant is from Allinge (.)*
- 08 og så har vi ø:h så har vi faktisk oss et par kokkeelever fra Bornholm (.)  
*and then we have e:h then we also have a couple of interns from Bornholm*
- 09 Guest22: ja
- 10 Lars: så vi e:r vi er lidt lokale  
*so we a:re we are a little local*
- 11 Guest22: ja  
*yes*

Guest22 tells that she has a good friend from Bornholm who cooks a traditional dish also served at the restaurant (salt-fried herring). Lars replies that several of the staff members are Bornholmian: 'so we a:re we are a little local'. To establish this relation is to connect the restaurant to the island on a personal and ontological level and to validate the position as an expert on Bornholmian matters. It is also a rare example of the creation and performance of Bornholmian authenticity in the lunch-recordings. We will return to the effects of the couple's demonstration of interest.

### *Food produce*

In terms of authenticating the restaurant experience as Bornholmian the waiters' most important work concerns the food. In all recorded encounters the waiters point out Bornholm as the place of origin of some of the food elements served. Yet the food presentations exhibit curious differences in the types of relations suggested by the waiter between the object's sign value and its value as a food item. We will look at two recurring elements in the servings: herring and pork.

### Herring

Herring used to be caught in great amounts in the Baltic Sea, it is one of the few emblematic Bornholmian culinary specialities, and marinated and smoked herring is still closely tied to the island, although the fish is no longer caught there. This is not generally unknown, but not common knowledge either.<sup>xiii</sup> At Restaurant Koefoed it is never made relevant where the fish is caught.

At lunch herring is included in two different traditional servings – marinated herring and salt-fried herring; we will only look at the marinated herring. This is a very conventional (obligatory even) part of the set menu of *smørrebrød*. Restaurant Koefoed serves Christiansø sild, a nation-wide known brand of herring, produced at<sup>xiv</sup> and associated with Bornholm; yet this is never made salient discursively:

#### Example 8: Marinated herring

- 01 Lars:       og ø::hm hvis vi starter fra venstre så har I Christiansøpigens kryddersild (.)  
                  *and e::hm if we start from the left you have Christiansøpigens marinated herring*
- 02               der er kapers skalotter syrnet fløde til  
                  *there's capers and challoottes soured cream to it*

A general awareness of the indexical relation between herring and Bornholm may be the very reason for the waiters not making more of this product that is even named after a Bornholmian locality. In example 8 the guests are Danish. Yet even the foreign speaking guests do not receive the information. Consequently the Christiansø herring's potential to contribute to the authentication of the restaurant is not exploited explicitly. If it works to this end, it is only if the guests are aware of the traditional associations.

As herring is emblematic for Bornholm it would be an obvious choice to serve it both at dinner and lunch. (Marinated) herring however has a particular cultural affinity to lunch and the

herring dishes on a traditional dinner repertoire are not exceedingly popular. As a solution Restaurant Koefoed introduces herring as a pre-dinner *amuse bouche* for dinner. The appetizer is named *Sol over Gudhjem* ‘Sunshine over Gudhjem’ (Gudhjem is a Bornholmian town), which is the name of the probably most famous Bornholmian dish. The traditional interpretation consists in a hot-smoked herring served on (Danish style) rye bread, on the bone with raw egg yolk and chives, as an open-face (lunch-time) sandwich. Koefoed re-interprets this. The herring is made into a fish cake, fried and accompanied with a dehydrated egg yolk, thin radish slices and a sauce based on smoked cheese cream (another regional Danish speciality, although not from Bornholm). It is served in a jar, filled with smoke, which recalls the traditional dish’ *smoked* herring (see illustration 1). The serving indexes both Bornholm and the modern Danish (New Nordic) cuisine with its creative re-interpretation of the local, regional, and traditional. In example 9 Lars is serving a German speaking group:

Example 9: geräuchert Hering; Guest? = unidentifiable guest

- 01 Lars: so here comes (.) erst mal ein kleines (.) Appetizer (.) ein bornholmer Spezialität  
*so here comes (.) first a small (.) appetizer (.) a Bornholmian specialty*
- 02 (.) geräuchert Hering (.)  
*(.) smoked herring*
- 03 (3)
- 04 Lars: mal kom es mit viel Beine (.)  
*it comes with a-lot-of bones (.) (i.e., it has a lot of bones)*
- 05 ein ganz (.) a:h Hering mit a:h (.) viel Beine  
*a whole (.) eh herring with e:h (.) a-lot-of bones*
- 06 Guest?: ahah
- 07 Lars: un dann ah müssen Sie (.) die Beine a:h wie sagt mann auch  
*and then you must (.) what do you say the bones*
- 08 a:h (.)
- 09 Guest?: xxx
- 10 Lars: ja (.) und dann (.) un: scw Schwarzbrot (.) und ein Eiergelb (.) und Zwiebel  
*yes (.) and then (.) a ry rye bread (.) and an egg yolk (.) and onion*
- 11 Guest?: okay (.) xxx
- 12 xxx

- 13 Lars: xxx hier komm das ohne Bein (.) e:hm geräuchert und (.) gebraten  
*xxx here it comes without bones (.) ehm smoked and (.) fried*
- 14 Guest?: wauw
- 15 Lars: und dann ein geräuchert Käsekrem Schnittlauchöl a::h getrockne Eigelb  
*and then a smoked cheese cream chives e::h dried egg yolk*
- 16 das a:h die kleine Gelbe wie sagt ma:nn (.) a:h grated over  
*the e:h the small yolk what do you say (.) grated over*
- 17 Guest?: mm okay



Ill.1: Picture of Sun over Gudhjem-serving, smoke already gone; taken by MSK

The waiter explains the dish's indexical relation to Bornholm; it is "ein bornholmer Spezialität" 'a Bornholman speciality'. Authenticity is created with reference to a historical and ontological dimension but it has been subject to creative re-interpretation. The dish has been deconstructed and re-created preserving essential elements and using modern cooking techniques and presentations. This is pointed out by the waiter. Thereby the dish is both utterly inauthentic – with little resemblance to the traditional version – and authentic – preserving exactly the elements that render it genuine. Notice though that the (assemblage of these specific) components does not guarantee that the Koefoed serving is recognized as (a re-interpretation of) Sunshine over Gudhjem, and thereby that the authentication of the restaurant succeeds. The most important work to secure this is done by the name. Thereby this dish shows how the meaning and distinction of the restaurant

emerges through the creative invention of authenticity, through a unique interpretation of tradition, rendered linguistically.

### Pork and pigs

Whereas herring has a particular (traditional) relation to Bornholm, pork is basic in the traditional Danish food repertoire in general. Pork is also a recurrent element at Restaurant Koefoed. At lunch we find a so-called Bornholmian *ristepølse* ‘roast sausage’ from a named butcher on Bornholm; again we meet the elderly couple:

#### Example 10: roast sausage

- 01 Lars: hvordan ø::hm ken har har I smagt riste*how e:hm d have have you tasted roast sausage from the Hallegård Butcher*
- 02 Guest22: nej det har vi ik xxx  
*no we haven't xxx*
- 03 (.)
- 04 Lars: det har I ik (.) nej men det er han e:r han er helt fantastisk til pølser (.)  
*you haven't (.) no but it is he i:s he is amazing with sausages (.)*
- 05 øh og det er egentlig det blevet sån en bornholmsk specialitet (.) og det e::r m  
*eh and actually it is it has become a Bornholmian speciality and it i::s m*
- 06 kommer med syltede rødbeder o:g og m born rørt bornholmersennep (.)  
*comes with pickled beetroot a:nd and m Born stirred Bornholmian mustard (.)*
- 07 den har vi oss som tilvalg hvis man vil ha noget lunt på øhm  
*we have that too as an additional choice if you care for something warm on ehm*
- 08 på den her med [øhm  
*on this one with [ehm*
- 09 Guest22: [det ka godt være vi sku prøve det ik  
*[it could be that we should try it right*
- 10 Guest22: hehe
- 11: Guest21: ska vi prøve så[n en  
*should we try one [of those*
- 12 Guest22: [ska vi ik prøve det ja ja (.) jaja  
*[shouldn't we try it yes yes (.) yes yes*

- 13           (.)
- 14 Lars:     så blir det heller ik mere bornholmsk  
               *then it doesn't get any more Bornholman*
- 15           (.)
- 16 Guest21: nej (.) hahaha  
               *no (.) hahaha*
- 17 Lars:     glimrende  
               *splendid*

The roast sausage is presented as something that has *become* particularly Bornholman (1.05). The authentic (historical) Bornholman character of the roast sausage is apparently debatable or not so well-known. Yet, the specific sausage is from a Bornholman butcher (*Hallegårdsslagteren*), and thereby ontologically authentic Bornholman, and when the couple decides on it, Lars responds: “then it doesn’t get any more Bornholman”. He refers to the fact that the couple has added the two optional elements for the set menu –salt-fried herring and roast sausage- which are both explicitly labelled Bornholman as well as the allegedly *very* Bornholman aqvavit *honningsyp*. Lars’ comment directs the attention to the universe of interpretation that is so salient in the dinner recordings and much less so at lunch. However, as mentioned, this couple entered into the creation of the restaurant visit as a Bornholman experience from the beginning. The waiter’s metareflexive comment thereby both points to his interpretation of Bornholm as relevant here and evaluates them to succeed in their creation of a Bornholman lunch. The guests respond with laughter. Maybe this is yet another reflexive sign, indicating awareness of the entire event as a creative and performed construction of Bornholm, and recognizing the waiter as signalling the frame of performative authenticity.

The sausage is attributed with even further importance when Lars returns with the serving. He presents it with the distinctive Bornholman pronunciation of *ristepølse* [ˈʁæsdə.pøls], with [æ] instead of standard [ɛ] (Thomsen 1908: §53). In this way Lars does more than just serving a sausage dish; he adds a metapragmatic comment suggesting and at the same time creating this sausage as particularly Bornholman. Also, in addition to authenticating the sausage, as a serving with a historical relation to Bornholm and hence a genuinely Bornholman name, his Bornholman pronunciation simultaneously both authenticates himself, as he is able to perform this Bornholman dialect, and the restaurant, which accordingly becomes authentic Bornholman through its staff and menu choices. This is the only instance in our recordings where the waiter uses Bornholman dialect

features (other than the intonation pattern). It is performed only for this couple who displayed particular interest in the general Bornholmian concept, and who went for the ‘full Bornholmian experience’. Whether or not it is a coincidence, the dialect performance certainly tops it up.

The Bornholmness of the roast sausage was constructed through historicity, within a frame of cultural authenticity, and with reference to ontology (produced by a named Bornholmian butcher). The pork served as an evening main course is presented differently:

Example 11: forest pork for main course

01 Guest12: og hva sir du til hovedretterne hva hva er din favorit

*and what do say about the main courses what what is your favorite*

02 (.)

03 Lars: grisen!

*the pork/pig!*

04 Guest11: er den god

*is it good*

05 Guest12: aha

*mhm*

06 Lars: ja skovgris (.) a:h den kommer ovre fra noget der hedder Vasagård

*yes wood pig (.) a:h it comes from something which is called Vasagård*

07 og det e:r langtidstilberedt nakke (.) og så er der

*and it i:s slow-cooked shoulder (.) and then there's*

08 syltede kantareller og rødløg (.) kartoffelskum

*preserved chanterelles and red onion (.) potato-foam*

The type of pig from which the pork is sourced is pointed out as particularly delicious. The superior quality of the meat is not only related to Bornholm (from a named, ‘local’ farm), but also to its superior life quality; it is a wood pig. All of this is illustrated by poster-size photographs on the walls and in Lars’ further explanation: “and we have a picture of the pigs here (.) how they (.) live in a forest most of the year (.) if the weather is to it ten months a year they are outside.” (illustration 2).



- 06 Guest?:           [nå øh  
                          *[well eh*
- 07 Guest12: den solgte vi meget godt  
                          *we sold that very well*
- 07 Lars:           ja (.) godt  
                          *yeah (.) good*
- 08 Guest?:   hahaha
- 09 Guest?:   godt  
                          *good*
- 10 Guest12: nu ved vi (jo/heller) ik hvor oxen kommer fra  
                          *now we also don't know where the beef comes from*
- 11 Guests:   hahaha
- 12               (.)
- 13 Guest11: vi føler næsten vi kender grisen  
                          *we almost feel that we know the pig/pork*
- 14 Guest12: ja(ha)  
                          *ye(ha)ah*

The work promoting the pork dish (using the posters) is recognized laughingly as successful when all the guests ask for pork. Attention is drawn to the business element of the encounter by a particularly engaged guest: ‘we **sold** that very well’, but also to the creation of intimate relations as the guests claim to almost ‘know’ the pig. The large photos are treated as icons of the represented pigs (assuming image-identity), which makes them more familiar. Of course, the guests are probably not eating the particular pig that they see – this could also discourage some guests from choosing it. There is a limit to the how close to the raw and uncooked material one can bring the guests, as the owner remarked to us. The guests’ laughter may indicate that they are aware of the sensitive elements in the creation of a personal relation to the Bornholmian pigs, or that they acknowledge that this is a performed and constructed relation. In both cases their laughter is meta-reflexive.

A last point concerning the construction of the meaning of pigs and pork in Restaurant Koefoed is made relevant by a text on the door of the ladies’ room. It reads: “Did you know that Koefoed’s pigs come from Svaneke [a place in Bornholm] where they “make pigs” as in the old

days?” (ill. 3). A line is drawn from the text to a drawing of a pig; the text reads: “a small forest pig”. Tradition is singled out, and pork as a central part of traditional Danish food culture. As contemporary pork production is infamous for its abuse of penicillin and the poor condition given to the animals, this is a counter-discourse and an attempt at re-valorization of the contested meat. Restaurant Koefoed underlines the high-quality of life of ‘their’ pigs, they facilitate the establishment of proximate relations to these pigs, and through this to pork as a high quality as well as a ‘local’ meat choice.



Ill. 3: Toilet door poster

The pig/pork thereby has multiple functions and sign values. All are part of the authentication of the restaurant and build on a presupposed consensus of Bornholm as a predicate that adds value. All are also creative and used reflexively in humorous ways. This adds distinction to the place. One element in the process of authentication concerns the indication of the adoption of traditional (Bornholmian) modes of production (*historicity*). Another is the illustrated and discursively (re-)constructed ontology of the produce; to make sure that everybody gets it, the place where the picture was taken is marked at the bottom of the posters. A last element concerns both the authentication and creation of uniqueness. This is the attempt to create more intimate relations between guests, on the one side, and island, produce and restaurant, on the other.

## Conclusion

As part of the attempt at gaining (and keeping) a foothold in the difficult-because-saturated market for fine dining in Copenhagen Restaurant Koefoed has adopted the island of Bornholm as its universe of interpretation. Bornholm is used as an offset for the creation of distinction, and authenticity is recurrent as a relevant parameter in their construction of meaning. This is evident already on the restaurant website where Koefoed presents itself as an authentic Bornholmian restaurant. Yet, at times what could be used to create authentic Bornholmness is not exploited but left as a mere potential. We see that at some occasions Bornholm is not taken to be the most relevant meaning – or universe of interpretation - to introduce. In general the more enthusiasm shown by guests, the more signs of authenticity is performed by the waiter. In that way, a Bornholmian restaurant turns out to be more or less Bornholmian in different encounters, and the authentic Bornholmian experience includes slightly different elements in different encounters.

The restaurant experience is multi-dimensional and phenomenologically different features are used to index Bornholm. Relations between the food, the restaurant, the staff and the island include tradition, or *historicity*, and place of production and rootedness, or *ontology*. But the important relations and meanings are all made available discursively. As everything needs to be done with attention to the expectations and needs that guests may have, a frame of recreational authenticity is at work and potentially relevant at all times. The different expectations of guests is probably also one reason why we see the Bornholmian potential being played out to very different degrees and in different ways in the encounters between the waiter and the guests. At lunch it is generally less relevant than at dinner – but in both cases authenticity and Bornholm as a universe of interpretation may be down-played or upgraded. The waiter plays a crucial part, as he guides the guests' attention to relevant objects (e.g., food made from Bornholmian produce), semantic dimensions (history, ontology), interpretive frames (performative, material etc.), and cultural narratives (trolls, language, patriots). In our case, the waiter takes an even more central role as a mediating figure; he is both a cultural authority and knowledgeable person on Bornholmian matters *and* a material manifestation of Bornholm being from Bornholm himself. Thereby the authenticity of the restaurant relies on rather different types of semiosis. Surely, not everything which the guests meets contributes to the construction of the restaurant as Bornholmian. Not everything has a particular relation to Bornholm. But this is not a problem, as excessive narration of authenticity could jeopardize the whole issue of constructed authenticity by making it overdone, too much, too exaggerated, “enough is enough” (Blommaert & Varis 2013).

The particular case examined presents a number of apparent paradoxes. One is the tension between authenticity as a construction and as an immanent quality. Yet, similarly to other studies, we find that although authenticity seems to be important for the creation of distinction and value – as something ‘real’ and ‘genuine’ in contrast maybe to the fast-changing and moving everyday life – people accept and orient reflexively to the performance and creation of authenticity. There certainly are limits to what is compatible with an authentic Bornholmian restaurant. Trolls are, but green houses are not. Related to this it may seem like a paradox that there is no such well-known thing as a Bornholmian cuisine. The creation of this is a contemporary phenomenon in line with the New Nordic Cuisine. However, the manufacturing of locality is a global phenomenon, and “(i)t took more *globalization* to bring local food out of the kitchen” (Wilk 2006: 166). An authentic Bornholmian restaurant in Copenhagen does not need to draw on well-established traditions, as long as it can present a (systemic) coherent, creative and relevant interpretation of what a contemporary Bornholmian restaurant could be. The restaurant draws on available resources such as global discourses on terroir and more local ones, e.g., the New Nordic Cuisine. It also seems like a paradox, in the absence of a (well-established) traditional Bornholmian cuisine, why one of the only well-known Bornholmian dishes – Sunshine over Gudhjem – is object of a thorough deconstruction. But it makes perfect sense. In order to argue for Bornholmian authenticity, the restaurant needs to reconstruct relations to Bornholm, but in order to create distinction (and be a fine dining place) it needs to do this in a creative way. Creativity of course only makes sense when it can be recognized as such, that is, with reference to something which is re-created, re-interpreted, re-invented. Here Sunshine over Gudhjem is an obvious candidate. In fact “(c)ultures may temporarily fix or freeze a particular food or ingredient, like the American Thanksgiving roasted turkey, in a ritual context that defines important ideas of identity and cultural membership, but even iconic dishes are always changing” (Wilk 2006: 18). The fourth and last paradox we will touch upon concerns the fact that Restaurant Koefoed is a high-end urban restaurant but Bornholm – their universe of interpretation – is an impoverished peripheral island. There is a fascination in urban contexts of the rural, unspoiled, ‘natural’, where you can get close to nature. This is non-industrial, non-global, traditional, static, and thereby the opposite of the city. Bornholm is, or is constructed as, such a place. Such destinations lend their charm to marketed products but are unpopular to live in. We want to buy it, but we don’t want to live it. This, we believe, is certainly a real paradox.

## References

- Alsudani, Farah & Matthew Casey. 2009. The effect of aesthetics on web credibility. In: *Proceedings of the 23rd British HCI group annual conference on people and computers: celebrating people and technology, BCS-HCI '09*. Swinton: British Computer Society. 512–519.
- Barham, Elisabeth. 2003. Translating terroir: the global challenge of French AOC labeling. *Journal of Rural Studies* 19: 127-138.
- Blommaert, Jan & Piia Varis. 2013. “Enough is enough”: The heuristics of authenticity in superdiversity. In Joana Duarte & Ingrid Gogolin (eds.), *Linguistic Superdiversity in Urban Areas: Research approaches*. Hamburg Studies on Linguistic Diversity. UK: John Benjamins, pp. 143–160.
- Blommaert, Jan & Ben Rampton 2011. Language and superdiversity. *Diversities* 13 (2): 1-21.
- Bucholtz, Mary. 2003. Sociolinguistic nostalgia and the authentication of identity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7 (3): 398-416.
- Byrkjeflot, Haldor, Jesper Strandgaard Pedersen & Silviya Svejnova. 2013. From Label to Practice: The Process of Creating New Nordic Cuisine. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 11:36–55.
- Cavanaugh, Jillian & Shalini Shankar. 2014. Producing authenticity in global capitalism: Language, materiality and value. *American Anthropologist* 116 (1): 51-64.
- Coupland, Nikolas. 2003. Sociolinguistic authenticities. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7 (3): 417-431.
- Coupland, Nikolas. 2014. Language, society and authenticity: Themes and perspectives. In Véronique Lacoste, Jakob Leimgruber & Thimo Breyer (eds.). *Indexing Authenticity: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. 14-39.
- Coupland, Bethan & Nikolas Coupland. 2014. The authenticating discourses of mining heritage tourism in Cornwall and Wales. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 18(4): 495-517.
- DeSoucey, Michaela. 2010. Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union. *American Sociological Review* 75 (3): 432–455.
- Eckert, Penelope. 2003. Sociolinguistics and authenticity: Elephants in the room. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7 (3): 392-397.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Goffman, Erving. 1972. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Northeastern University Press, Boston.

- Hartson, H. Rex. 2003. Cognitive, physical, sensory, and functional affordances in interaction design. *Behaviour & Information Technology* 22(5): 315–318.
- Heller, Monica 2003. Globalization, the new economy, and the commodification of language and identity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7 (4): 473-492.
- Heller, Monica & Alexandre Duchêne. 2012. Pride and profit: Changing discourses of language, capital and nation-state. In Monica Heller & Alexandre Duchêne (eds.), *Language in late capitalism. Pride and profit*. New York: Routledge, pp. 1-21.
- Heller, Monica. 2014. The commodification of authenticity. In Véronique Lacoste, Jakob Leimgruber & Thiemo Breyer (eds.), *Indexing Authenticity: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. 136-155.
- Keane, Webb. 2003. Semiotics and the social analysis of things. *Language & Communication* 23: 409-425.
- Manning, Paul. 2012. *Semiotics of drink and drinking*. London, New York: Continuum.
- Manning, Paul & Anne Meneley. 2008. Material objects in cosmological worlds: An introduction. *Ethnos* 73 (3): 285-302.
- Meneley, Anne. 2004. Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Slow Food. *Anthropologica* 46 (2): 165-176.
- Monka, Malene, Marie Maegaard & Jann Scheuer (forthc.). Den autentiske dialektalende – bornholmsk dialekt som vare i turistindustrien. In Frans Gregersen & Tore Kristiansen (eds.), *Hvad ved vi nu - om danske talesprog?* Copenhagen: The LANCHART Centre.
- Pardue, David. 2007. Familiarity, ambiance and Intentionality: An investigation into casual dining restaurants in central Illinois. In David Beriss & David Evan Sutton (eds.), *The restaurants book: Ethnographies of where to eat*. New York, N.Y.: Berg, pp. 65-78.
- Parmentier, Richard. 1994. *Signs in society: Studies in Semiotic Anthropology*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Paxson, Heather. 2010. Locating Value in Artisan Cheese: Reverse Engineering *Terroir* for New-World Landscapes. *American Anthropologist* 112 (3): 444–457.
- Petrini, Carlo, William Mc Cuaig & Alice Waters. 2003. *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rauhut, D., R. Rasmussen, J. Roto, P. Francke & S. Östberg. 2008. *The Demographic Challenge to the Nordic Countries*. Stockholm: Nordregio Working Papers. The Nordic Council.

- Ray, Khrishnendu. 2008. Nation and Cuisine. The evidence from American newspapers ca. 1830-2003. *Food and Foodways: Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment* 16 (4): 259-297.
- Scheuer, Jann, Malene Monka & Marie Maegaard (forthc.). Det sælger bedre hvis det er på bornholmsk - om vin, svin og dialekt i turistindustrien. *Danske Talesprog* 15.
- Silverstein, Michael. 2003. Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language and Communication* 23: 193–229.
- Silverstein, Michael. 2005. Axes of eval: Token versus type interdiscursivity. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15 (1): 6-22.
- Thomsen, Vilhelm. 1908. Bornholmsk sproglære. Lydlære. In J.C.S. Espersen (ed.), *Bornholmsk Ordbog*, Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri. 1-67.
- Trubek, Amy. 2000. *Haute cuisine: How the French invented the culinary profession*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Trubek, Amy. 2007. Tasting Wisconsin: A chef's story. In David Beriss & David Evan Sutton (eds.), *The restaurants book: Ethnographies of where to eat*. New York, N.Y.: Berg, pp. 35-43.
- Weiss, Brad. 2010. Making pigs local: Discerning the sensory character of place. *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (3): 438–461.
- Weiss, Brad. 2012. Configuring the authentic value of real food: Farm-to-fork, snout-to-tail, and local food movements. *American Ethnologist* 39 (3): 614–626.
- Wilk, Richard. 2006.
- Zheng X. S., I. Chakraborty, JJ-WW Lin. 2009. Correlating low-level image statistics with users – rapid aesthetic and affective judgments of web pages. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems, CHI '09*. New York: ACM, pp. 1–10.
- Østergaard, Martin Zahle. 2010. *Turismens Økonomiske Betydning 2010*. Copenhagen: Visit Denmark.

---

<sup>i</sup> We thank Nik Coupland, as well as the editors, for the time devoted to this work. The argument was certainly approved thanks to their reading.

<sup>ii</sup> The restaurant NOMA (NOrdisk MAD 'Nordic Food') has been selected as the world's best restaurant four times by the influential Restaurants Magazine.

<sup>iii</sup> All examples are translated by the authors.

<sup>iv</sup> <http://timmvladimir.dk/besog-pa-restaurant-koefoed-i-kobenhavn/>

<sup>v</sup> [http://www.viamichelin.com/web/Restaurant/Kobenhavn-1301\\_K-Koefoed-253207-41102](http://www.viamichelin.com/web/Restaurant/Kobenhavn-1301_K-Koefoed-253207-41102)

---

vi

[http://www.clausmeyer.dk/da/claus\\_meyer/faglige\\_engagementer/det\\_nye\\_nordiske\\_koekken/manifest\\_fra\\_nordisk\\_koekken\\_symposium.html](http://www.clausmeyer.dk/da/claus_meyer/faglige_engagementer/det_nye_nordiske_koekken/manifest_fra_nordisk_koekken_symposium.html)

<sup>vii</sup> Quoted from a speech manuscript, originally delivered in Paris Dec. 2010, and sent to the first author, by Meyer's secretary. Title: "New Nordic Cuisine and the potential for a transformation".

viii

[http://www.clausmeyer.dk/da/claus\\_meyer/faglige\\_engagementer/det\\_nye\\_nordiske\\_koekken/manifest\\_fra\\_nordisk\\_koekken\\_symposium.html](http://www.clausmeyer.dk/da/claus_meyer/faglige_engagementer/det_nye_nordiske_koekken/manifest_fra_nordisk_koekken_symposium.html); compare also from the Slow Food manifesto: "Let us rediscover the flavors and savors of regional cooking and banish the degrading effects of fast food." (Petrini et al. 2003: xxiv)

<sup>ix</sup> Thanks to Jillian Cavanaugh for this insight.

<sup>x</sup> Bornholm has the widely used nick-name "the Sunshine Island".

<sup>xi</sup> Sealand 'Sjælland' is the island where Copenhagen is situated, and the part of Denmark closest to Bornholm.

<sup>xii</sup> *Smørrebrød* is usually translated as 'open-faced sandwiches'. It denotes slices of Danish style rye bread which are buttered, added different toppings (cold cuts, paté, herring, potatoes, chicken salad, etc.) and often served with elaborated decorations.

<sup>xiii</sup> A critical television program in the spring 2013 about food and food production (*Bitz og Frisk*) featured Bornholm as a theme, and here this information was presented. But this is not the first time it has been made public.

<sup>xiv</sup> In fact, not all Christiansø Sild are from Bornholm or more precisely from Christiansø – a tiny island next to Bornholm. Some are from a Sealand based factory, some even produced outside of Denmark. Yet they continue to carry the name of the Bornholmian locality.