No pork, no life?

Exploring practices and negotiations of meat reduction in South Korea

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Picture by author. "No pork, no life" – a sign hanging outside of a barbeque restaurant that I passed daily when I lived in Seoul for my fieldwork which inspired the title of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

Meat production and consumption have been linked to human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, loss of biodiversity, human health concerns, and animal welfare issues. Accordingly, individuals have been called upon to eat less meat. Research and policy on the issue are highly dominated by the framing of consumers as independent decision-makers driven by motivation, knowledge, and values. Instead, this thesis uses social practice theory to explore the different social, material, and bodily factors that co-shape meat reduction. Most research using practice theoretical approaches to study meat reduction is done outside of Asia, even though several Asian countries, such as South Korea, have high meat consumption rates. Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to understanding what it takes to shift dietary habits away from meat-heavy diets by looking at practices and negotiations of meat reduction in South Korea.

Based on fourteen interviews with flexitarians in Seoul and Daejeon, this thesis seeks to understand what facilitates and complicates efforts of meat reduction in South Korea. The interviews with meat reducers were supplemented with four interviews with representatives of veg(etari)an restaurants, by doing observations of different food environments, and through partaking in different eating practices. The main findings indicate that meat reduction requires time, effort, and sacrifices from individuals. These efforts are limited by the social, material, and bodily elements in practice. Moreover, the findings show that flexitarians adapt their eating performances, often through intuitively conforming to different spaces of appropriate conduct. Thus, meat reduction was occasionally enabled without requiring conscious efforts from the flexitarians, but most often not. The research suggests that fundamental changes in dietary patterns seem unlikely to occur unless meat-reduced diets are increasingly normalized at the expense of meat-centric practices and food environments.

Key words: flexitarian, meat reduction, meat reducer, social practice theory, sustainable consumption, meat consumption, South Korea

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CHAPTER 1 Nice to meat you
Introduction

"Meat-eating is a fundamental human instinct, which means vegetarianism goes against human nature, right? It just isn't natural." (K. Han 2015, 23). This line from the award-winning novel *the Vegetarian* by South Korean author Han Kang shows one of the reactions the main character faces after she decides to quit eating meat. As the title of this thesis, "No pork, no life?" suggests, meat plays a central role in South Korean diets. In fact, South Korea now stands among the countries in Asia with the highest meat supply per capita (Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Database [FAOSTAT] n.d.).

In 2021, the South Korean meat supply per capita was at a striking 81, 5 kg – a quantity that is significantly higher than the world average of 43, kg, and some of South Korea's neighboring countries such as China with 63, 6 kg and Japan with 57, 2 kg (FAOSTAT n.d.)[1]. At the same time, it is becoming widely acknowledged that excessive meat production and consumption are central sustainability concerns (see, e.g., de Bakk er and Dagevos 2012; Poore and Nemecek 2018; Parlasca and Qaim 2022). The livestock industry contributes significantly to human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and loss of biodiversity (Gerber et al. 2013; Henry et al. 2019; Xu et al. 2021; Parlasca and Qaim 2022). Moreover, eating meat is linked to human health concerns and animal welfare issues (Grethe 2017; Godfray et al. 2018; Bonnet et al. 2020).

Accordingly, individuals have been called upon to reduce their meat consumption to contribute to a more sustainable future (see, e.g., de Bakker and Dagevos 2012; Willett et al. 2019; Ko 2022). Moreover, changes in dietary patterns among consumers have been portrayed as more beneficial than production-side environmental benefits (Poore and Nemecek 2018, 991). Opportunely then, consumers who do voluntary meat reduction are becoming more prevalent in South Korea (O. Han 2019; Gibson 2020; G. Lee 2021). Still, it appears that the growing interest in eating less meat has yet to translate into a significant decrease in meat consumption (FAOSTAT n.d.), as indeed also

[1] These figures also account for meat that was wasted, or for different reasons not eaten by people

found to be the case in many other affluent societies (see, e.g., Halkier and Lund 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023).

So, how can changes toward lower levels of meat consumption occur? Studies that only investigate a small number of parameters frequently dominate the rapidly expanding academic literature on enabling and constraining factors for meat reduction (Halkier and Lund 2023, 2). Yet, there seems to be little agreement on how to combine individual components to identify the factors that enable and constrain meat reduction on a more in-depth level (Halkier and Lund 2023, 1). Plentiful research shows that individual consumption 'decisions' are intricately linked to broader structural, social, political, and cultural configurations (Sahakian, Wahlen, and Welch 2022). In this thesis, I deploy a practice theoretical framework to get a holistic understanding of how consumers' ability to cut back on eating meat is shaped by social, material, and bodily factors.

Studies of meat reduction have largely focused on people who avoid meat altogether (see, e.g., Rosenfeld and Burrow 2017; Twine 2018) but a growing body of research is exploring flexitarians, i.e., people who are trying to reduce their meat consumption but still eat some meat (Dagevos 2021, see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Daly 2020; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Halkier and Lund 2023). Although meatless diets produce the least amount of greenhouse gas emissions (Willett et al. 2019), meat reducers comprise a larger part of the population compared to vegetarians and vegans (Rosenfeld, Rothgerber, and Tomiyama 2020). Thus, the promotion of flexitarian approaches may lead to considerable population-level cuts in meat consumption because adopting a meat-reduced diet is more accessible than eliminating meat completely (de Bakker and Dagevos 2012; Spencer, Cienfuego and Guinard 2018).

With a few exceptions (Yoo and Yoon 2015; Hansen 2018; Hansen and Jakobsen 2020; Korsnes and Liu 2021; Jakobsen and Nielsen 2021), most of the studies that look at the influence of political, socio-cultural, or material factors on meat consumption and reduction, is done outside of Asia (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Daly 2020; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Wendler and Halkier 2023). To my knowledge, few studies focus explicitly on flexitarians outside of Western countries. Therefore, I seek to contribute to filling this research gap through looking at the experiences of meat reduction in South Korea.

1.1 Research aims and questions

I aim to explore the motivations for, and the practices of, meat reduction among Korean and foreign flexitarians living in the cities of Seoul and Daejeon. Moreover, I aim to look at the influences of dominant eating practices in South Korea on meat reduction. With my work, I seek to advance knowledge of what it takes to shift dietary habits away from meat heavy diets. My two research questions are:

1. *What motivates meat reduction in South Korea and how do flexitarians perform meat reduction in everyday life?*

2. *How do dominant eating practices in South Korea enable and constrain meat reduction?*

Some clarifications on the research questions are needed. Firstly, the focus of the research questions is shaped by the theory that I have deployed. Simply put, social practice theory provides a framework for studying, among other topics, consumption patterns through looking at practices. Since, practice theoretical approaches see the world as made up by practices (Warde 2016, 134), studying the meat reducers' practices is a central part of my thesis. Social practice theory is further expanded on in chapter three of this thesis.

Secondly, the research questions seek to investigate the experiences of *flexitarians,* but what does this category entail? While total abstinence from meat is relatively straightforward to define, definitions related to reducing meat can be more complicated because they include people with vastly varying dietary patterns. Some studies therefore suggest distinguishing between different levels of meat reduction (see e.g., Dagevos 2021). Recent terms appearing in academic literature include labels such as 'meat reducer', 'flexitarian,' and 'semi-vegetarian', which are often used interchangeably (Derbyshire 2017, 1; Dagevos 2021). I will deploy a broad definition of meat reducers as people who say that they are "[…] cutting back on meat but are not avoiding it completely […]" (Malek and Umberger 2021, 2). Moreover, I will also use the term meat reducer and flexitarian interchangeably.

Lastly, I want to expand on my reasoning for studying meat reducers. Flexitarians are an interesting group because of the potential they hold in terms of meat reduction (de Bakker and Dagevos 2012; Spencer, Cienfuego and Guinard 2018). Furthermore, the non-binding nature of meat reduction approaches leads to several ongoing negotiations in daily life (see, e.g., Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). When the negotiations that the flexitarians do are explored, they can help shed light on dominant eating practices, and how these enable and constrain meat reduction. What is more, there are variations in the studies pertaining to flexitarians. Some research indicates that flexitarians consume less meat than traditional carnivores (see, e.g., Malek and Umberger 2021; Verain, Dagevos, and Jaspers 2022). However, studies also show that most meat reducers are not dramatically changing their eating habits (see, e.g., Dagevos 2021; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Therefore, it is important to explore how meat reduction can be realized for meat reducers, especially in a country such as South Korea with high meat consumption rates. Before I present the content and structure of this thesis, I will look at some of the existing literature pertaining to meat reduction.

1.2 Setting the table: Literature review

The section above touched on the backdrop of this thesis. Through this literature review, I will expand on some of the context that was presented above. Other contextual factors are discussed in the next chapter, which focuses on the background for meat consumption and reduction in South Korea. In this part of the thesis, I will outline some previous research on consumption and meat reduction. Then, I will go through some of the constraining and enabling factors for meat reduction that have been found in prior studies.

Research on consumption is diverse. Some research has highlighted consumption as fundamentally social, motivated by factors such as habituation and conformity (see, e.g., Shove 2023). These social aspects are less important in mainstream economic approaches to consumption, where instead of being portrayed as a social being, the consumer is described as rational (Hansen and Nielsen 2023, 6). The depiction of a rational consumer has made up a significant bulk of consumption studies and held great influence over policies related to sustainable consumption (Shove 2010; Jaeger-Erben and Offenberger). In recent years, economic approaches to

consumption have also been influenced by psychology (see, e.g., Avineri 2012; Clayton et al. 2016). This has created an expanding field of studies and policies based on behavioral economics, where the image of a rational consumer is challenged by notions of an irrational consumer engaged in habitual behavior. However, this approach, which often results in 'nudging' policies (Hansen and Nielsen 2023, 6), i.e., altering people's behavior in a predictable way (Thaler and Sunstein 2008, 6), has received criticism for being ethically questionable and too focused on individual behavior (see, e.g., Goodwin 2012). Consumption studies have also been greatly affected by culturalist approaches, which, simply put, tend to focus on the function of identity and symbols over practicalities in shaping consumption patterns (Hansen and Nielsen 2023, 7). Alan Warde (2014) points to how the portrayal of consumers as people who make well-deliberated and independent decisions has been apparent in both neoclassical economical approaches and cultural analysis of consumption.

Generally, the focus on individual consumption choices seems prevalent also in studies of sustainable food consumption (Vittersø and Kjærnes 2015). Montefrio and Wilk (2020, 3) discovered that studies of sustainable food in the Asia Pacific region typically concentrate on consumers' views, motivations, and decision-making instead of examining how aspects like politics and culture co-shape consumption behavior. Similarly, many studies of meat reduction point to the consumers' lack of insight into the environmental consequences of consuming meat as a main barrier to eating less meat (see, e.g., Tobler, Visschers, and Siegrist 2011; Vainio 2019). To my knowledge, many of the studies related to meat reduction in South Korea also focus on motivation and behavioral frameworks for consumer behavior (see, e.g., Ju, Kang, and Chung 2013; G. Kim, Oh, and Cho 2022; J. Park, Y. Park, and Yu 2022).

Attitudes and beliefs have been shown to influence meat consumption (Graham and Abrahamse 2017). However, only focusing on this perspective of consumers gives us a limited and distorted grasp of the routines and habits that shape consumption patterns (Warde 2017). Moreover, there exists a 'value- action gap' between the motivations of consumers and how they actually behave (see, e.g., Middlemiss 2018). This kind of cognitive dissonance is also captured by the concept 'meat paradox', which encompasses how some people who are concerned with sustainability and animal welfare still eat meat (Loughnan and Davies 2019). In South Korea, there seems to be growing interest among consumers in limiting or completely avoiding meat (O. Han 2019; Gibson

2020; G. Lee 2021), but the numbers show no significant decline in meat consumption (FAOSTAT n.d.).

Rather than pointing to one specific factor, previous research finds a number of factors to affect meat consumption and reduction. These influences include attitudes and beliefs (see, e.g., Graham and Abrahamse, 2017; Verain, Dagevos, and Jaspers 2022), food cultures (see, e.g., Hansen and Syse 2021), production systems and food environments (see, e.g., Hansen and Jakobsen 2020; Fuentes and Fuentes 2022), socio-cultural conventions (see, e.g., Yoo and Yoon 2015), social relationships and contexts (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Wendler and Halkier 2023), convenience (see, e.g., Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Hansen and Wethal 2023), and habits and skills (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and, Wethal 2023). As mentioned earlier, most studies on meat reduction in South Korea focus on attitudes and values and leaves a broad range of influences unexplored. One exception is Yoo and Yoon (2015) who looks at the social-cultural implications of vegetarian diets in South Korea. Still, many of the social, material, cultural and bodily factors that influence attempts at meat reduction are yet to be examined.

As mentioned, the rapidly growing academic literature on meat reduction typically consists of studies that highlight a small number of factors as influential for meat reduction (Halkier and Lund 2023, 2). In contrast to this, a couple of approaches, social practice theory and the COM-B model, have garnered in attention as a way to comprehensively study the interlinkage of factors that facilitate and hinder meat reduction (Halkier and Lund 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). The COM-B model has been emphasized as a holistic approach for studying transitions to more plant-based diets (see, e.g., Graça et al. 2019), and share commonalities with social practice theory. I have chosen to apply a social practice theoretical lens to meat reduction. This is because, even though the COM-B model calls attention to many important factors that influence meat reduction, the model takes individual decision making as a basis for action (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal, 2023, 240), and it dismisses the importance of looking at behavioral change in the context of day-to-day life (Halkier and Lund 2023, 2).

In this thesis, I seek to contribute to filling the research gap I have outlined in this section by deploying a social practice theoretical approach, which I believe can shed light on the plurality of factors, presented here, that have been found to co-shape meat reduction.

1.3 **What is on the menu?** Reader's guide

The thesis contains seven chapters. Chapter one has introduced some background information about existing research on meat reduction. Moreover, the rationale for my research project, research aims, and research questions, which will serve as guidance for the further investigation into the research topic, was presented. Chapter two provides contextual knowledge on meat consumption and reduction in South Korea. In chapter three, I will present a practice theoretical framework consisting of different concepts that I see fit to analyze my data. Chapter four consists of a presentation and justification for the methodological framework and methods. The chapter also consists of reflections on methodological challenges and ethical considerations. In chapter five and chapter six, I analyze and discuss my empirical results in light of the main theoretical takeaways from chapter three. Chapter five is dedicated to exploring facilitating factors for meat reduction, while chapter six looks at the factors that complicate meat reduction. Lastly, chapter seven summarizes the most important findings, and looks at the study's theoretical implications, broader implications and further research.

CHAPTER 2 Appetizer

Contextualizing meat reduction: Meat, development, and social change in South Korea

In the literature review, I presented various factors that have been found to influence meat reduction and consumption. To explore some of these impacts on eating practices and the food environments, this chapter seeks to give contextual knowledge on meat consumption and reduction in South Korea. The historical course of Korea has produced unique circumstances for the food environments and eating practices that we see in South Korea today. Traditional Korean food is different from the meat-intensive barbeque the country is known for currently. The positioning of meat in Korean diets took place along with the rapid economic growth and socio-cultural changes that occurred after the Korean War (1950-53) (S. Kim et al. 2016; Jolivette 2023). To be able to explore how the dominant Korean eating practices and food environments that exist today facilitates and complicates meat reduction, it is important to understand some of these historical facets.

In this chapter, I will first briefly look at South Korea's economic growth and climate policies. Then I will explore some of the factors behind the increased meat consumption in the country. After, I will examine how the soaring meat consumption rates have been challenged. Lastly, I will look at some of the social and cultural aspects that are important for eating practices.

2.1 Economic growth and climate policies

After the Korean War (1950-1953), South Korea was left in economic hardship and were reliant on food aid (Müller 2023). Today, South Korea is an economic powerhouse and one of the 20 largest donors to the UN World Food Program (World Food Programme 2018). In just a few generations, the country attained a 25-fold increase in GDP per capita (Gemici 2013; Thonstad 2018) and has attracted academic attention for achieving unprecedented average GDP-growth rates over time (Sarel 1996). South Korea's economic growth model is often characterized as a developmental state model. This entails that the state actively facilitated a strategic opening to the

market and invested in export-oriented industries (Gemici 2013; Holden 2016). Today, South Korea is well known for its cultural and technological influence, which is mostly attributable to the increased interest in Korean culture, including Korean food, and big businesses like LG and Samsung.

In tandem with South Korea's astonishing development, the country's greenhouse gas-emissions have grown at a similarly staggering rate (B. Park 2019; J. Lee and Woo 2020). From 2020, the country sought to strive for carbon neutrality by 2050 (McCurry 2020). To my knowledge, South Korea does not, for the time being, have specific policies to promote meat reduction on a national level. In 2021, the 2050 Carbon Neutrality Commission, put together by the government, presented a carbon neutrality policy scenario where dietary changes and increase in the production of alternative foods were mentioned ([2050 Carbon Neutrality Commission] 2021). Moreover, in December 2023, the Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural affairs is set to launch a strategy for supporting the nation's plant-based food industry. This strategy includes a number of measures, such as supporting the export of related products and creating a specialized research center for alternative foods (Song 2023). The Asia-Pacific market is a fast-growing region in the industry for alternative meats, and several Korean companies have invested in and introduced related products (Jo 2020; Song 2023).

Some measures related to meat reduction have been put in place at the regional level. For instance, the capital, Seoul, and the second largest city, Busan, have implemented meatless options in school cafeterias to become more environmentally friendly (Bahk 2020). Campaigns such as 'Meat Free Monday' have gained attention in South Korea, and is sponsored by among others, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (Meat Free Monday Korea 2023). The campaign is mainly framed as an initiative to encourage people to eat less meat by abstaining from meat at least once a week (Meat Free Monday 2023). Similarly, the Seoul Metropolitan Government started a campaign in 2022 to promote veganism by highlighting various food options and providing incentives for entrepreneurs in the field (Ko 2022). The measures are meant to either accommodate existing meat reducers or promote meat reduction among individual consumers. Thus, the primary focus seems to be on the potential for individual consumers to change production and consumption patterns to be more sustainable.

2.2 **Meaty beginnings:** The meatification of food environments and eating practices

There are associations between rising affluence and increasing meat consumption (Sans and Combris 2015), but there are also other factors that contribute to increasing meat consumption (see, e.g., Weis 2013; Hansen 2018). I will not go into a thorough exploration of the different causes for the high meat consumption rates in South Korea. Rather, I will present some contextual knowledge that I think can be useful for understanding the food environments my participants move around in, and the eating practices they partake in.

Along with vast economic growth, opening to the market, rising purchasing power, as well as meat becoming readily available in stores, meat became more accessible for consumers in South Korea. Significant changes in the food environments have taken place and have coincided with considerable dietary changes (Lee, Duffey, and Popkin 2012). The development towards more meat consumption in South Korea can be linked to what Weis calls 'meatification', a concept which focuses on the production side causes for the centering of meat in diets (2013). More specifically 'meatification' describes the "[…] dramatic shift of meat from the periphery of human diets to the center, something which is deeply embedded in everyday life and has been a powerful but underappreciated measure and aspiration of modernity, nourished by long-held views about the superiority of animal protein together with some potent cultural attitudes about meat." (Weis 2016, 8). Meat has become embedded in everyday Korean eating practices over the last decades. In the following, I seek to explore some of the facets of this embeddedness.

The traditional Korean diet contains relatively high consumption of vegetables, moderate to high consumption of legumes and fish, and low consumption of red meat (S. Kim et al. 2016, 27-28). Beef eating, for instance, has a relatively short history in South Korea. Koreans primarily used cattle for employment and transportation until the 20th century; only in the 1970s and 1980s, when beef became more affordable, did eating beef become more popular (L. Park 023, 105-106). So popular, that South Korea's beef supply per capita is higher than that of China and Japan (FAOSTAT n.d.). Gatherings, celebrations, or significant rituals typically involve family and friends sharing foods made with beef (L. Park 2023, 105-106). The most popular meat, however,

is pork, which accounts for a little under half of all meat sales in South Korea, followed by chicken and beef (FAOSTAT n.d.). Along with a rise in meat imports and fresh meat consumption, consumption of processed meat has also increased (T. Kim et al. 2018; Jobs 2021). Relatedly, meatification processes have been linked to the developments of convenience food (Hansen and Wethal 2023).

Another part of the explanation for the rising meat consumption might be the changes in the retail industry. Over the last few decades, traditional markets and family-owned food stores have seen their market shares diminish and be replaced by conglomerate-controlled domestic retail chains, foreign retail chains, convenience stores, online stores and food delivery services (K. Lee 2016; 2018). These kinds of supermarketization processes have been linked to the development of meat-intensive diets (Hansen 2018).

Processes of meatification in South Korea have also taken place in the livestock sector, a process that is at the core of Weis' meatification concept. Müller has labeled some of these processes of meatification as 'invisible' in the sense that an increase in livestock output was enabled by relying on imported feed, thus externalizing some of the environmental consequences of the increased meat production and consumption (Müller 2023). In fact, South Korea is very reliant on feed import and one of the biggest grain importers in the world (Müller 2023, 111). Beginning in the middle of the 1970s, the South Korean government actively promoted commercial livestock farming by providing funding for innovative production methods and research (Müller 2023). This state-led food supply program aimed to fulfill shifting domestic demands and reduce food aid from the United States (Hsiao 1983 in Müller 2023, 113). From 1975 to 2013, there was an eightfold increase in production of livestock (FAOSTAT 2018 in Müller 2023, 110), and livestock has become the most significant source of income in the agricultural sector (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute 2015 in Müller 2023, 110).

The labor market has also undergone changes over the past decades. One change is that more women have entered the workforce, thus leaving less time to prepare food for the family. Moreover, South Korea has some of the longest weekly working hours among member countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. South Korea also has a work culture where socializing after work is an integrated part of work life (OECD 2019). Relatedly,

dining out has become more common in Korea (Lim et al., 2022). Having less time to prepare food may be linked to the growth in meat consumption due to an increase in consumption of convenience food, as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, eating food outside of the home has also been associated with higher levels of meat consumption (Hansen 2018).

In sum, various processes in the food environments and changes in different eating practices has co-shaped the meat intensive diets that exists in South Korea today. What I have presented above, is not meant to be an exhaustive exploration of all the different factors that have contributed to these changes, rather it is intended to give some insight into the different provision side factors, as well as consumption side factors, that co-shape existing consumption patterns.

2.3 Contested consumption: Trends in de-meatification

Opposing the meatification processes, de-meatification is a term that "[…] seeks to reverse […] meatification […] (Weis and Ellis 2022, 197). In relation to this, the development towards more meat-intensive diets in South Korea has not gone uncontested – parts of the public have displayed, what Jolivette labels "[…] carnivorous growing pains." (2023, 122). An example Jolivette uses of such growing pains, is the 2008 candlelight demonstrations where the import of American beef was protested because of safety concerns. Jolivette also mentions meat-skeptical messaging in popular culture such as the book *the vegetarian* (Han Kang 2007), which the opening line of this thesis is from, and the movie *Okja* (2017) from *Parasite*-filmmaker Bong Joon-ho, which addresses the meat industry and animal rights (Jolivette 2023, 122-132, 134).

Generally, individuals who engage in voluntary meat reduction are becoming more prevalent in South Korea (G. Lee 2021). There are varying estimations for how many Koreans are interested in meatless or meat-reduced eating, but he Korea Vegetarian Union estimates that up to 20 percent identify as either flexitarian, vegan, or vegetarian (M. Kim, Hall, and D. Kim 2020; Jo 2020). The development of 'de-meatified' eating practices and food environments has also manifested in other changes on the provision side. There has been an increase in veg(atari)an eateries and a resurgence of traditional Korean Buddhist temple cuisine (O. Han 2019; G. Lee 2021). Additionally, the market for alternative meat products is growing.

The interest in meatless eating is not necessarily new in South Korea. As mentioned earlier, the centering of meat in South Korean diets is a relatively novel phenomenon, and meatless eating has cultural roots such as in Buddhist cuisine (Chong and Oh 2021). Regardless, these examples of de-meatification in South Korea display how meat-eating is a form of 'contested consumption' meaning consumption that is "[…] publicly questioned, debated and campaigned about […]" (Keller and Halkier 2014, 36). All this to say that, in addition to the meatification that has taken place in South Korea, there are also processes of de-meatification happening in parallel. It is likewise worth noting that, while changes in the South Korean food environments and eating practices have occurred over the last decades, with increasing meat consumption and foreign influences, many fundamentals from traditional Korean cuisine remains (Chung et al. 2016).

2.4 Social and cultural aspects

As noted earlier, cultural and social factors also affect eating practices and food environments (see, e.g., Hansen and Syse 2021). A traditional Korean meal (bapsang) usually consists of cooked rice (bap), soup or stew (kuk), side dishes (banchan), including kimchi, a vegetable side dish and a protein side dish like fish or meat. Additionally, namul, a flavored fresh green, and a sauce (jang, yangnyum) is included (Kwon et al 2015). An example of a bapsang is pictured below:

Photo from Kwon et al. 2015, 30

Korean food culture is influenced by yin and yang, or eum yang in Korean, and by extensions the dishes in a traditional Korean table spread are colorful and harmonious (Oktay and Ekinci 2019). These notions of harmony and balance might be integrated in the way Koreans eat and prepare food without it being a conscious process (Oktay and Ekinci 2019, 3). Moreover, the different elements on the bapsag represent different healthful properties (Oktay and Ekinci 2019).

Whether eating at home or in a restaurant, communal values are embedded in the Korean food culture. Collectivism, which, simply put, prioritizes the collective and its interests over individual ones, still has impact on South Korean society (Yao 2000; Yoo and Yoon 2015; S. Park et al. 2017). South Korean table etiquette also has collective elements. If you, for instance, go out to eat at a traditional Korean restaurant, you usually get your own rice, while the rest of the dishes are meant to be shared and mingled around the table. Some Korean restaurants have plentiful of side dishes to be shared, as put by Michelle Zauner in the bestseller *Crying at H Mart: A Memoir*:

> […] Korean restaurants that pack the table so full of *banchan* side dishes that you're forced to play a never-ending game of horizontal *Jenga*[2] with twelve tiny plates of stir-fried anchovies, stuffed cucumbers, and pickled everything. (Zauner 2021, 6).

Sharing food and meeting up for a meal at a restaurant is common among family and close friends, but also for other social gatherings such as work dinners. Moreover, food connects to aspects of care and social bonding (Yoo and Yoon 2015; Park et al. 2017). For instance, a Korean greeting is to ask the other person "Did you eat?" to inquire about the person's well-being. The prevalence of eating in groups and sharing food is also visible in the South Korean restaurant scene, with many restaurants only accommodating groups of people. Social harmony, as well as notions of hierarchy and respects towards elders are legacies from Confucianism, which has greatly, although to a declining degree, influenced South Korean society and culture (Yao 2000; Park et al. 2017). An example of how age and work status can influence social meals occasions, is through the notion of the highest-ranking member eating first, and potentially also deciding what the group should eat (Park et al. 2017).

This chapter has looked at some of the factors that influence the food environments and eating practices in South Korea today. Some of these impacts include the economic development and increased meat consumption that has happened in the country over the last decades. The meatification of diets is a result of processes on both the consumption and production side. At the same time, there are trends towards de-meatification, and meat has become a form of contested consumption. I have also looked at some of the policy measures in South Korea that relates to meat reduction, and social and cultural aspects that are important for South Korean eating practices and food environments.

[2] A game where you build a tower out of blocks, each player taking one brick out of the tower and subsequently adding it to the tower, resulting in an increasingly unstable structure.

CHAPTER 3 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will use social practice theory to develop a theoretical framework for recognizing and analyzing the enabling and constraining factors for meat reduction. Social practice theory is not a unified theoretical approach but rather a collection of theories that share familiarities (Halkier and Jensen 2011, 103). I have put together theoretical concepts from different scholars to develop a framework fit to analyze my data. Practice theoretical approaches are not free from criticisms, and some commonly identified drawbacks include a lack of attention to the influence of culture, political economy, and reflective individuals in the co-shaping of practices (Hansen 2022). Thus, the theoretical framework I present here will most likely not be able to capture all the factors that influence meat reduction. However, theoretical frameworks will always involve focusing attention on some factors over others (Warde 2017). Moreover, social practice theory has proven suitable for unveiling the interlinkages of the factors that influence consumption patterns (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Evans, Welch, and Swaffield 2017), and meat reduction (see, e.g., Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Wendler and Halkier 2023).

Current practice theories have long historical roots with some influential scholars, such as Pierre Bourdieu (1979;1997) and Anthony Giddens (1989) (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Warde 2016). Bourdieu's concepts of 'doxa' and 'habitus' have been influential for current practice theoretical scholars (see, e.g., Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). This is for, among other reasons, because they highlight how individual dispositions, which often operate on a subconscious level, shape individuals' behaviors and beliefs, which are in constant interaction with the social. These two concepts are further expanded on below. Giddens' (1984) 'structuration theory' is also pertinent for practice approaches (Warde 2017). In this theory, neither structure nor agency is given precedence. Thus, human behavior is a result of the recurring patterns that enable and constrain the possibilities available, *and* the individual's capacity for independent action (Giddens 1984). Accordingly, meat consumption and reduction would be examined as one of the social customs that emerge from the interactions between agency and structure.

Newer practice theoretical approaches are influenced by scholars, such as Schatzki (2002) whopresented an ontology emphasizing practice as the primary unit of analysis (Warde 2016, 38).

These practice theoretical approaches have greatly influenced studies of consumption (Hansen and Nielsen 2023). One attribute of how practice theories are used to study consumption patterns, is to view them as fundamentally social and embedded in everyday life, rather than merely an outcome of individual decision-making (Warde 2005; Jaeger-Erben and Offenberger 2014). Consumption behaviors are the result of the social world, comprising of settings, norms, values and institutions, material contexts, like technology and infrastructure, and bodily factors such as cognitive processes and physical dispositions (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28). Moreover, environmentally unsustainable consumption patterns are to a greater extent related to the collective evolution of what we perceive to be standard ways of living, than they are to individual consumers (Shove 2003). These normalization processes can be seen in relation to the processes of 'meatification' that Weis writes about, and that was discussed in chapter one, even though Weis is not a practice theoretical scholar.

This chapter begins with an exploration of what a practice is, and an introduction of eating as a 'compound practice' (Warde 2013). After, I will explain the difference between practices-as-performances, and practices-as-entities (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012), before introducing the notion of 'distributed agency' (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). Next, I will introduce the concept of 'scripted food environments' (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022; Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) and 'scripted social sites' (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), as well as 'practice biographies' (see, e.g., Greene and Rau 2018; Godin 2023) and 'coordination work'. Lastly, I will give a summary of some of the theoretical concepts presented in this chapter, that are most important for my analysis.

3.1 What is a practice?

As Sherry Ortner puts it, social agents "[…] are always involved in, and can never act outside of, the multiplicity of social relations in which they are enmeshed." (2006, 130). A practice approach is grounded in the understanding that everything is social and sees the social world as made up, predominantly, by practices (Warde 2016, 134). Simply put, practices can be characterized as "[…] socially shared ways of doing […]" (Greene et al. 2022, 216). A broader definition from Reckwitz is "[…] a routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one

other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge." (2002, 249). A practice here is a structured activity, which includes several components, referred to as elements, and these elements are connected in certain ways. Moreover, through being emotionally and motivationally driven, practices have a sort of end goal, although these ends do not have to be apparent to the individuals (see, e.g., Scatczki 2002). I will come back to these end-goals in the section about teleoaffective structures. The other elements that comprise a practice, and link practices together, are explored in the section about 'distributed agency'.

There are endless instances of practices, but some examples include eating, shopping, socializing, working, and parenting. Consumption, however, is not a practice. As put by Warde "[…] consumption is not itself a practice but is, rather, a moment in almost every practice." (2005, 137). Moreover, consumption are moments in practice that are executed for the sake of accomplishing practice (Warde 2005).

So, what sort of practice is eating? I will use Warde's (213; 2016) conceptualization of the 'practice of eating' to study meat reduction. Schatzki (1996) distinguishes between 'dispersed' and 'integrative' practices (91). Dispersed practices include "[…] describing, ordering, following rules, explaining […] and imagining" (91–92). To perform an integrative practice, one often needs only an understanding of how to carry out the act (Warde 2005, 135). Integrative practices on the other hand, are less straightforward. As defined by Schatzki (1996), integrative practices are **"**[…] the more complex practices found in and constitutive of particular domains of social life." (98). Examples include farming practices and cooking practices (Schatzki 1996, 98).

In an attempt to make the distinction between dispersed and integrative practices clearer, Warde (2016, 85) suggests that an integrative practice is something that can be learned, and something several people would be interested in learning. In this case then, eating is not an integrative practice because it is not something that is straightforward to learn. Moreover, eating as a practice is complex as it is "[…] subject to, and also a complex corollary of, the intersecting injunctions of several relatively autonomous integrative practices." (Warde 2016, 86). Warde therefore coins the term 'compound practice' and frames eating as practice that intersects, and forms a bundle of, at least, four integrative practices. The integrative practices are "[…] the supplying of food, cooking,

the organization of meal occasions, and aesthetic judgments of taste. These are in turn 'formalized' by nutrition, cooking, etiquette, and gastronomy." (Warde 2013, 24). This implies that to study eating, we need to look at the different practices and the elements that shape them. In this thesis, eating meat, and abstaining from eating meat, is then constituted by at least these four, separate but co-existing practices.

3.2 Social sites

In addition to the integrative practices that make-up eating, these practices are influenced by seemingly more distant practices. Practice scholars see the world as primary excising of a network of many practices, which is why it is important to study the interdependence of practices (Warde 2016). This interaction between multiple practices is captured by Schatzki's concept of 'social site' (2002), as '[…] the place where, and as part of which, social life inherently occurs' (2002, xi). For simplicity, and without going into depth of the ontology laid out by Schatzki (2002), the world is made up by practices, which as briefly mentioned, consists of elements. These different practices come together in different social sites, which again gather to make up the 'site of the social', which is the entirety of human existence (Schatzki 2002). The social site is not defined by time or space, but by the practices that come together in the site (Enger 2023, 31; Schatzki 2002).

An example of a social site is a university. Although a campus can be a spatially defined area, the practices that make up the social site of the university also exist outside of the campus. Take for instance the practice of working and the practice of studying – teachers can work from home, and students can study at a café outside of campus. Thus, the practices that make up the social site of the university, exemplified here with working and studying, are not spatially contained by the campus. The university, as a social site, is defined by the practices that co-exist and are conditioned by rules, admission requirements, curriculums, and so on. Moreover, different social sites can overlap, for instance the social site of a friend group, like a group of university friends, can exist both inside and outside of the university.

One of the merits of including social sites in the theoretical framework is that it can be used to analyze the different interactions of practices that take place in day-to-day life. Practices that

intersect can carry opposing or reinforcing ideas about what is appropriate behavior (Warde 2016), which can be studied through the concept of social sites.

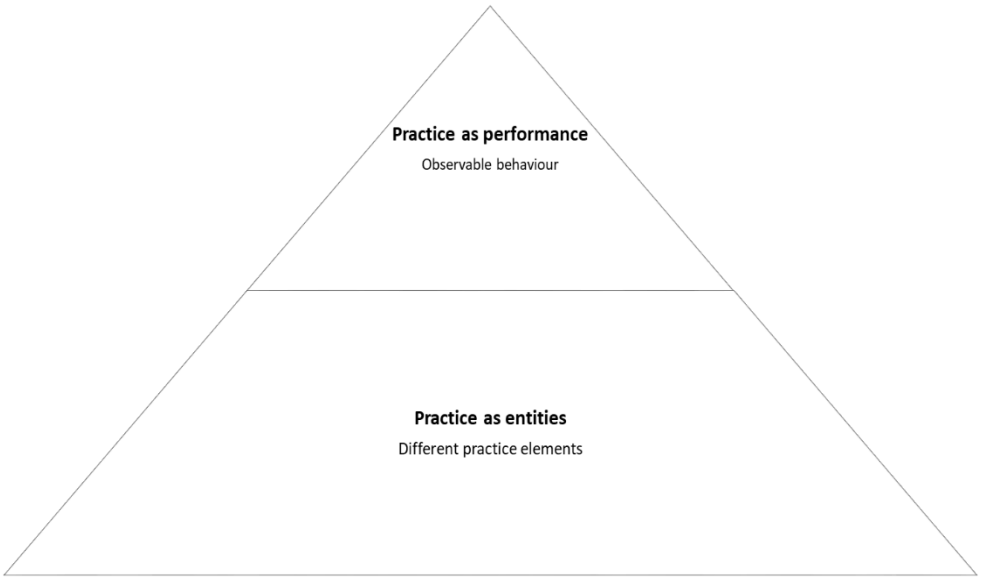
Practices, such as socializing and studying, can have opposing or compatible ends, which is also the case for different social sites, like a friend group and a university. An example of conflicting social sites can be a friend group connected to goals such as having fun, while the university can be connected to goals such as being studious and hardworking, these conflicting goals can make accomplishing certain tasks difficult for the practitioner. Accordingly, eating, in the sense of eating food without meat, can overlap with practices such as "[…] family practices, work practices, transportation practices, friendship practices, and many others." (Halkier 2022, 54). These overlapping practices can further complicate or enable meat reduction.

3.3 Practices-as-performances and practices-as-entities

To further scrutinize the enabling and constraining factors on behavior, a useful distinction is the one of practices-as-entities, and practices-as-performances (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012). A practice as performance is what you can observe the individuals doing (Spurling et al. 2013, 8), you could for example observe someone barbecuing pork on a grill in a Korean barbeque restaurant. Performances are "[…] necessary for the reproduction and development of a practice, that they are things that people, and other agents do, that they are not done in the same way by everyone – they are in many instances individual, innovative, improvised, as well as being context-dependent." (Warde 2013, 21). Thus, the actually 'doing' of the practice is what sustains it. Moreover, people's performances of practices always exhibit regularities (Schatzki 2002, 74). In a sense a practice can be thought of as a template of behavior, but performance also leaves room for variation between how the different practitioners perform practices, and for the individual practitioner to adjust or innovate the way they perform (Warde 2013). Most practice theoretical approaches make use of some variation of this concept of recursive process, which connects individual acts to the diversity of communal practice while avoiding the tension between structure and agency (Warde 2016, 40).

Underlying this observable behavior, are the elements that shape the practice and come together when a practice is performed (Spurling et al. 2013, 8). Going back to my barbequing example above, some of the elements shaping that practice could be the options on the menu in the

restaurant, the social group that are meeting up for barbeque, and a craving for eating pork. Below is an illustration of practices as performance and practices as entities.



Adapted from (Spurling et al. 2013, 8).

In terms of the grouping of these elements that make up the practice, several users of practice theory suggest a division between different elements (see Gram-Hanssen 2021 for discussion). In the following, I will use Sahakian and Wilhite (2014)'s three pillars of social practice which consists of the social, material, and bodily pillar. In addition to Sahakian and Wilhite's elements, I will be drawing on two elements from Schatzki (2002): teleoaffective structures and general understandings, because I think those two concepts are especially pertinent for the analysis. While Sahakian and Wilhite's (2014) pillars of social practice have overlaps with the two elements from Schatzki's that I will be using, I think it is useful to combine them. Sahakian and Wilhite's (2014) elements make for an easy way to identify the different elements that make up practices. Schatzki's (2002) elements are useful for looking at the interaction between different practices and social sites. Below is an explanation of the different elements.

3.4 Distributed agency

Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) define three pillars of practice. I will call these pillars elements according to the practice definition used in the beginning of the chapter. As mentioned, these three elements are: the body, the material, and the social "[…] the body – including cognitive processes and physical dispositions; the material world – including technology and infrastructure; and the social world – including settings, norms, values, and institutions." (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28.) Sahakian and Wilhite use Sherry Ortner's (1989) definition of agency to mean the "[…] capability or power to be the source and originator of acts." (2014, 28). If we are interested in change, we need to identify all of the agentive aspects of a particular practice, across each of the three pillars. Agency then is distributed among the body, the social, and the material.

The distributed agency approach is appealing as it expands the factors that influence consumption patterns by suggesting that: "[…] the knowledge embedded in body, objects and social contexts have the capability to influence our acts." (Hansen 2017, 383). It is important to note that the distinction between these elements is for analytical purposes. The three elements interact and can also be made up of smaller elements. Moreover, a change in practice can occur through changes in one or more of the three elements that make up the practice (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28). Additionally, I am using Schatzki's concepts of general understandings and teleoaffective structures, and understand them as also having agency.

3.4.1 Social factors

As touched upon earlier, the essence of practice theory is that everything is social, so even calling it social practices is a "tautology", as put by Reckwitz (2002, 250). The social world consists of settings, norms, values, and institutions, that all prescribe practices (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28). Some of these values and norms are tactically accepted and require little reflexivity from the practitioner. This notion is captured by Bourdieu (1997)'s concept of 'doxa', which is used to describe the "[…] tacitly accepted and unspoken." (Sahakian and Wilhite, 2014, 29). As touched upon earlier in this chapter, practice theoretical approaches explore how practices, such as eating practices, are stabilized by common perceptions of normality (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Warde 2016). Moreover, even though the practitioner has the capacity to reflect on practices, "[…] the

importance of deliberate thought in everyday life is exaggerated." (Warde 2016, 101). Some practice theory scholars, Sahakian and Wilhite (2014, 29) use Wilk (2002) as an example, pointing to the ability of breaking up the stability of a practice when taken for granted aspects of doxa get contested. An example of this can be 'contested' forms of consumption (Keller and Halkier 2014), such as eating meat (Halkier 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023). Parts of the discourse surrounding meat as a contested form of consumption was discussed in the background chapter.

Some of the social factors that influence meat reduction might be the norms for eating in the social circle you frequent, institutional factors such as dietary advice from government bodies, and other rules and norms that regulate eating.

3.4.2 Material factors

Many practice theory scholars argue that also the material world influences practices more broadly, and consumption more specifically. Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) write that cultural studies give a narrow understanding of how the material world influence consumption by focusing on how things and technologies have symbolic and communicative value. Objects technologies and infrastructure bring with them their own sets of dispositions, and ones taken into use, material objects have agency (29).

Food is produced through the help of technology, it is involved in international food networks, transported to different facilities, labeled, placed in food stores, and taken home to be cooked with kitchen appliances. Some examples of material factors that influence meat reduction can be which foodstuffs are available in different stores and what dishes are available in restaurants.

3.4.3 Bodily factors

Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) write about Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' when writing about the bodily element of practice. Habitus is relevant as it refers to "[…] a system of dispositions for thought and action that is constantly confronting and mediating new experiences." (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 27). In other words, habitus is the human internalization and reproduction of the social and cultural order that shape, for example, eating habits. Adding on the concept of habitus, the body, including cognitive processes, tastes, and competence, that are acquired through social

experiences, have agency (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). Wilhite (2012) put special importance on habits. Habits can vary in strength depending on factors such as how often they are repeated, how socially significant they are, and how many objects are involved in the habit. Especially strong habits can be tricky to change as they are agentive, formed through embodied knowledge, and do not require reflexive thinking (Wilhite 2012).

This notion does not exclude the existence of thinking individuals. As put by Warde "[t]he dispositions of agents to act within a practice are deeply entrenched *and* embodied; there are emotional and corporeal as well as cognitive bases of behavior" (2017, 90). Eating is a highly routinized activity (Warde 2016) but as mentioned, meat is also a contested form of consumption in society. Since consequences of eating meat for reasons such as, personal health, animal welfare, and sustainability, is something that often is brought up in public debate, it also increases the opportunity of the practitioners being reflexive and reconsidering some of their eating habit.

Some examples of bodily agency in eating meat are skills and know-how's related to how to cook meals, the different perceptions related to, for instance, what constitutes a healthy and fulfilling meal, and taste.

3.4.4 General understandings

Schatzki's concept of 'general understandings' encompasses accepted worldviews and ideas that motivate, and direct behavior (Schatzki 2002). General understandings can link the elements in practices but also link different practices together. Some examples of general understanding can be what constitutes health and sustainability. General understandings also encapsulate broader cultural beliefs that often connect different practices (Welch and Warde 2017). As Welch and Warde (2017) argue, such understandings can operate at both a reflexive and pre-reflexive level. These understandings translate into knowledge about different foods and eateries that contribute to shaping eating practices (Hansen 2022). An example of how a general understanding can influence meat consumption can be if there exists general understanding surrounding meat as healthy, meat-reduced eating can become difficult.

While general understandings as commonly shared viewpoints, can inform how practitioners think about things, general understandings do not belong to the practitioner, but to the practice or several practices (Schatzki 2002). To avoid confusion, I will therefore use perception when I refer specifically to the thoughts the practitioners have, despite the small differences in connotations between the words 'perceptions' and 'understandings'.

3.4.5 Teleoaffective structures

I have briefly touched upon teleoaffective structures without using the term when I wrote about social site and practice ends and goals. Teleoaffective structures relate to the idea that practices are purposeful in the sense that they have an end-goal that is related to purpose, moods or some sort of motivation (Welch and Warde 2017, 64). Even if the end-goal is not explicitly stated or intended, these cultural and societal expectations still have an impact on the behavior (Schatzki 2002, 80-81). An example of this could be brushing your teeth, which can connect to ends of the teeth feeling clean which is not necessarily something that one thinks about while brushing one's teeth.

3.4.6 Scripted food environments and scripted social sites

Returning to the notion of the agency adherent in the material (and social) element, I will now discuss scripted food environments and scripted social sites. Influenced by, among other areas, Science and Technology Studies, authors such as Akrich (1992), Latour (1992) and Verbeek (2006), use the concept of 'scripting'. The concept highlights how technological objects define a framework of action for the behaviors of the actors involved, like the play writer does the actors in a play (Akrich 1992, 208). While designing things, designers think ahead to how users will interact with them and incorporate either implicitly or overtly usage instructions into the materiality of the finished product (Akrich 1992). These technologies then "[…] are also scripted with a set of dispositions that have the potential to shape practices and in turn to be shaped by practices […]" (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 29).

Some scholars have expanded on the concept of scripting in practice theoretical approaches to study meat-eating and meat reduction (see Fuentes and Fuentes 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Inspired by these approaches, I will use the concept of 'scripted

social sites'. (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), and 'scripted food environment' (see also Hansen and Wethal 2023). With the understanding that the (socio-) material environment "[…] encourages and enables certain actions, framing these as acceptable, desirable or convenient, while simultaneously counteracting other actions, making the unacceptable, undesirable, and inconvenient." (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022, 524).

Although social sites are not defined by material elements (Schatzki 2002), and therefore are more removed from the traditional 'scripting' concept, interactions between the practices in the social site can create strong pathways for behavior (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Similarly, to how Hansen and Wethal (2023) use scripted foodscapes, I use 'food environments' to denote the socio-material environment in which my participants engage in when acquiring, preparing, and eating food. The scripting concept indicates that the practitioner to a high degree follows the given templet of behavior, but these scripts can also be negotiated by the 'receiver' (Akrich 1992).

3.4.7 Bringing in the practitioner

Through making practices the central unit of analysis, the individual is often put aside (Hansen 2022, 38). I seek to bring attention to individuals, by using the concepts 'practice biographies' and 'coordination work'.

Firstly, personal biographical experiences have a significant role in determining how they perform, reproduce, and evolve over time (see, e.g., Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012), still most practice theoretical approaches focusing on studying dynamics throughout time, have examined the histories of practices themselves (Greene 2018, 234). Therefore, some scholars using practice theory draw on biographical approaches to study the developments peoples' engagements in, and performances of, practice. For instance, Greene and Rau (2018) look at practitioners' practice biographies and careers-in-driving, while Godin (2023) looks at how individual biographies relate to transitions to vegan and vegetarian diets. I have not applied a longitudinal approach to studying my participants' eating practices, and how these related to changes in the participants' life paths, commitments, performances of other practices, and other socio-material developments (see Greene and Rau 2018). Still, I will draw on these different biographical approaches, and understand the concept of 'practice biographies' to denote practitioners' lifetime engagements in practice(s) and

how these relate to the temporal developments in embodied skills, knowledge, tastes, perceptions, and engagements in different social sites and practices (Greene and Rau 2018, 68). Since different practitioners have engaged with different social sites and practices, they are unique and can be said to have different practice biographies. In this way, the individuals remain distinct from one another because of the particular intersection of different practices that they embody and perform (Warde 2005). This can explain differences in performances between different practitioners, and how practitioners perform practices differently over a lifetime, which might make them more or less likely to succeed with meat reduction.

Secondly, studies of transitions in practice tend to overlook what these processes demand from the consumer (Wendler and Halkier 2023). One concept, although not a practice theoretical one per se, that has been introduced which highlights this is 'consumption work'. Consumption work calls attention to the role of the consumer in the division of labor (Evans 2017). The concept is defined as the labor "[…] necessary for the purchase, use, re-use and disposal of consumption goods and services." (Glucksmann 2013, 9-10; Wheeler and Glucksmann 2015). In studying transitions to a circular economy, consumption work has highlighted how changes in the economic system brings with it an inflow of new practices, such as repairing and recycling, which requires that the consumer has an active role in the transitions (Hobson et al. 2021).

Wendler and Halkier (2023) use a similar concept to consumption work in their practice theoretical approach to meat reduction. They use 'work' and 'social coordination work' to conceptualize the time and effort put in by practitioners in processes of change (2023). Wendler and Halkier (2023) distinguish between the "[…] development of new modes of shopping and cooking […]", and "[…] the maintenance and renegotiation of the social coordination of food activities." (6). Following the concept of 'distributed agency' (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014), I seek a holistic exploration of the different elements that co-shape eating practices. I will therefore introduce the concept of 'coordination work', which seeks to explore both the work done alone, and with others. Moreover, I try not to foreground one element, such as the social element, because practice performance always involves all elements (see, e.g., Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). Another aspect that distinguishes 'coordination work' from the concepts of Wendler and Halkier (2023) is that I use coordination work to highlight the work done by practitioners to *succeed* with meat reduction,

while they use ‘social coordination work’ to highlight the work practitioners do to ensure successful co-performance of eating practices.

My definition of coordination work builds on the concepts of consumption work from Glucksmann (2013) and Wheeler and Glucksmann (2015) and insight from Wendeler and Halkier (2023), I define it as: *the additional time, effort, and sometimes sacrifices, put in by individuals to ensure change in the performance of practice.* As mentioned, I will specifically use it to talk about the work put into ensuring successful meat reduction. Thus, change requires some intention from the individual. In this way, coordination work differs slightly from consumption work, which primarily has been used to look at how structural factors result in a workload for the consumers.

3.5 Summary: A theoretical framework

In this chapter, I have explored what a practice is, talked about eating as a compound practice, and explained the distinction between practice-as-performances and practice-as-entities. I have also introduced the social site, and the social, bodily, and material elements in practice, as well as general understandings and teleoaffective structures, which all have agentic powers, i.e., distributed agency, in performances of practice. I have presented the concepts of scripted food environments and scripted social sites, practice biographies and coordination work. Lastly, I will present a table with a short summary of some of the most important theoretical concepts for my analysis:

Table 1: Key theoretical concepts

Concept	Brief explanation
Social element	The agency inherent in the social world, including settings, norms, values, and institutions (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014)

Material element	The agency inherent in the material world, including technologies, and infrastructure (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014)
Bodily element	The agency inherent in the body, including cognitive processes, tastes, and competence (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014)
General understandings	Accepted worldviews and ideas that motivate, and direct behavior, and link different practices together (Schatzki 2002)
Teleoaffective structures	The end-goal of practices that relates to purpose, moods or some sort of motivation (Schatzki 2002)
Scripted social sites	Frameworks of action created by the practices that come together in the social site (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023)
Scripted food environments	Frameworks of action created by the socio-material environment where acquiring, preparing, and eating food occurs (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023)
Practice biographies	Temporal developments in practitioners' lifetime engagements in practice(s) (Greene and Rau 2018, 68; Greene 2018)
Coordination work	The additional time, effort, and sometimes sacrifices, put in by individuals to ensure change in the performance of practice

CHAPTER 4 Methods and methodology

As reflected in the theoretical framework, the foundation of this research is the understanding of eating as a bundle of social practices that are being shaped by material, social and bodily factors. Overall, this case study is aimed at exploring the motivations and practices of meat reduction in South Korea. The data collected consists of interviews with 14 meat reducers, four interviews with representatives of veg(etari)an restaurants, observations of different food environments, and partaking in different eating practices. A qualitative approach was chosen as it can provide detailed explanations of intricate phenomenon (Thagaard 2018), such as meat reduction and consumption. The search for how different elements has influenced these dietary patterns has guided the research process and the methodological choices.

The research design is best described as abductive, and based upon unexpected research findings, I developed a concept: coordination work. Although social practice theory informed the choice of methods and analysis, the collected data also shaped the analysis (Tjora 2017, 33). The theoretical underpinnings and methods have remained intact, although changes have been made to the theoretical framework and research topics as new data has been obtained, and analytical concepts have emerged. Moreover, the analysis strategy was informed by the stepwise-deductive-inductive (SDI) approach which combines inductive and deductive elements by letting themes emerge from the data while also testing the data against the theory (Tjora, 2017). To assess the data quality, I have used the four assessments in the trustworthiness criteria by Lincoln and Guba 1985: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as presented by Bryman (2012, 49).

In this chapter, I will outline and reflect on the methodology and methods of the thesis. The goal of this chapter is to explain the decisions behind the research design and discuss the research method in a transparent and reflexive manner. I first discuss the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of my research project. I then go on to explain the research design and offer my thoughts on the selected design. After that, I will detail the data collection procedure. Here, I outline the various data components, describe how they were gathered and analyzed. Lastly, I explore the project's quality and ethical concerns, including issues relating to the creation of knowledge in a foreign country and positionality.

4.1. Ontology and epistemology

Ontology is "[t]he study of what exists, and how things that exist are understood and categorized." (O'leary 2021, 6). As touched upon in the theory chapter, practice theory makes practices the primary unit of investigation, and sees the world as made up by practices. Practice theory differs from analysis that takes the individual as the primary mode of investigation by studying how individual engage in "[…] socially shared ways of doing […]", i.e., practices (Greene et al. 2022, 216). Moreover, practice theoretical approaches diverge from the typical micro/macro level analysis where the micro level consists of individual actions and interactions and the macro level consists of higher-level entities such as institutions and social structures. Since practice theory sees practice as the fundamental unit of the social world, there are no levels above or below the practices. Practices are laid out on a single level and are treated as the primary component in the formation of social phenomena. Therefore, practice theory has a flat ontology (Schatzki 2016; Shove 2023).

Epistemology is "[h]ow we come to have legitimate knowledge of the world […]" (O'leary 2021, 6). Similarly, to several practice theoretical approaches, this thesis is tied to assumptions related to constructivism (Haliker and Jensen 2011). Constructivist approaches emphasize the word as " […] constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation". (O'Leary 2021, 8). Assuming "[…] multiple, constructed, subjective truths and complexity […]". (O'Leary 2021, 9). Social practice theory views the world as constructed through practices and their social sites (Schatzki 2002). This ties together with a constructivist's assumptions that "[…] social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors." (Bryman 2012, 33).

4.2 Research design

The research design of this thesis is a qualitative case study of self-declared meat reducers in South Korea, more specifically in the cities of Seoul and Daejeon. As defined by Yin, "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." (Yin 1994, 13). This case study is based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with meat reducers,

which accounts for the main data, and is supplemented by interviews with four representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants, observation of food environments and partaking in eating practices.

The in-depth interview format was chosen as it allows for exploration of the meat reducers' experiences and attitudes, in other words explore the world from the meat reducers' point of view. Moreover, in contrast to the survey format, it allows for an exploration of nuances in experience (Tjora 2017, 114). Interviews were semi-structured, as I wanted the conversations to develop in a natural way, but still have ground for comparison. After all, what I was interested in was the realities and experiences of my participants, and so I wanted to hear about the things they deemed relevant. The semi-structured nature of the interviews gave the participants the possibility to talk about what they considered important, while also covering some predetermined themes (Bryman 2012).

4.2.1 Case selection

I chose to undertake this research in Seoul, because it is the cultural, economic, and political capital of South Korea, with a little under 10 million people, accounting for about one fifth of the country's population (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2023). Moreover, Seoul is home to the majority of vegan and vegetarian restaurants in South Korea, and the Seoul Metropolitan Government has initiatives to promote plant-based eating and lifestyles (Ko 2022). These factors made me consider it to be easier to recruit both meat reducers and representatives from vegan or vegetarian restaurants in Seoul. In addition, the people in my existing network in South Korea, were all based in Seoul.

During my fieldwork, I was also open to expanding the field sites. This was the reason why I included people living in Daejeon in my sample of participants. Daejeon is the fifth largest metropolitan city in South Korea, with a population of about 1,5 million people, making the population noticeably smaller than in Seoul (Daejeon Metropolitan City 2023). Still, Seoul and Daejeon are both populous, urban cities, making the food environments similar. Moreover, food environments will naturally vary both between and within largely populated cities. For instance, the number of vegetarian and vegan restaurants differ between the various districts in Seoul (Seoul Metropolitan City 2021). I tried to get some insight into these differences by doing observations of

food environments in different areas of Seoul and Daejon, and by asking the meat reducers about the food environments they enacted eating practices in.

4.3 Methodology

As discussed in the theory chapter, social practice theory is a collection of theories with similarities (Halkier and Jensen 2011). By extension, and as with many other theories, there are discussions surrounding which methods are the best suited (Shove 2017; Jonas, Littig, and Wroblewski 2017). A lot of practice theoretical approaches use a combination of methods to explore the 'doings' of people beyond their 'sayings' (see, e.g., Hargreaves 2011; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Observations are often favored over interviews, with some scholars questioning whether people can accurately talk about their mundane and routinized behaviors (Shove 2017).

I argue, in line with Shove (2017) that using practice theory does not prompt using a specific method, or combination of methods. Rather the choice of methods should be based on the (preliminary) research questions. To answer my research questions, I attempted to understand people's 'sayings' and 'doings' (Halkier and Jensen 2011). Interviews have been paired with an ethnographically oriented approach to eating practices, with an epistemological starting point that values the necessity of knowing local contexts and participating in the daily lived experiences of participants (Hansen 2018, 58). Interviews were chosen to explore the meat reducers experiences and attitudes, in other words explore the world from the participant's point of view (Tjora 2017, 114). Moreover, it is possible to study practices through interviews by asking about the "[…] seemingly obvious" and "[…] mundane aspects […]" of daily life (Hitchings 2012, 66)- In this case, this entailed getting the meat reducers to reconstruct different scenarios related to eating.

To shed light on the provision side of consumption, I decided to interview representatives of vegan and vegetarian restaurants. By looking at different actors, and the two different sides to consumption – consumers and providers, I explore the interconnectedness of factors that influence meat consumption and reduction. Although the restaurants only represent one small segment of the food environments in South Korea, it allowed for a more extensive exploration of the material side of practices.

4.4 Collecting and analyzing data

I purposefully executed my fieldwork in the beginning of the master's project to allow the data to inform the development of my thesis. My fieldwork took place from June to September 2022. For the first 10 weeks of the stay, I attended a Korean Language and Culture Program in the capital, Seoul, where I spent most of my time. I also took two trips to the city of Daejeon. Interviews accounted for the main portion of my data collection. I did interviews with 14 meat reducers and four representatives of vegetarian or vegan restaurants. Throughout my fieldwork, I also did observations and took pictures of food environments and participated in eating practices. I noted observations and reflections as field notes which were important for making sense of the data and starting to develop the analysis (Thagaard 2018). Moreover, the pictures and field notes allowed me to step-back into the field after returning from fieldwork. I did not experience any major setbacks in the field but there were some aspects, especially related to recruiting participants, that were challenging. These challenges, along with a detailing of the data collection process, will be expanded on below.

4.4.1 Sampling and reaching participants

4.4.1.1 Recruiting meat reducers

I sought to get in contact with self-declared meat reducers, understood as people who are "[…] cutting back on meat but are not avoiding it completely […]" (Malek and Umberger 2021, 2). To recruit participants, I relied on a combination of snowballing and purposeful sampling (O'Learly 2021). I used my existing, and new, network in South Korea to make connections. The people I met in person sometimes referred me to new contacts, or I would try to reach out to new people, and they would connect me to participants.

A potential pitfall of the snowballing sampling is to end up with a limited group of participants with similar background, experiences, and opinions (O'Learly 2021, 223). This was something I paid attention to, and sought to minimize the effect of, by seeking a range in age, living situation, gender, and education. I did this by reaching out to as many of my acquaintances as possible. The

recruitment process also led me to interview some foreigners living in South Korea, which gave a useful outsider perspective on meat reduction in South Korea.

Having studied in Seoul as an exchange student in 2018 and worked as an intern in Seoul during fall 2019, I was fortunate enough to already have a network of people I could get in touch with when I needed participants. Still, recruiting meat reducers was difficult in the beginning of my fieldwork. I did not make any interview appointments before coming to South Korea, but I did reach out to my existing network in hopes of finding participants. I also signed up for a Korean language class and lived in a Gosiwon, a small single room with shared kitchen, in an attempt to expand my network in Seoul.

When I told people about my research project, I was met with comments such as: "I don't know any of those kind of people [flexitarians]" and "Koreans love meat". I therefore tried to recruit meat reducers by contacting them on the online platform 'Happy Cow' where people can make profiles and find restaurants with meatless options. I got help from Korean friends to write messages in Korean and let the meat reducers know that we could conduct the interview in Korean if they were uncomfortable with speaking English. This was also unsuccessful, which made it seem like recruitment would be a very difficult process. However, after some time of reaching out to more acquaintances and joining different social activities, I was able to get in contact with more people and recruiting meat reducers went smoothly after that. This made it apparent that having enough time in the field was very useful. I mainly communicated with the participants through email when that was possible, or through the most used messaging app in South Korea, Kakao Talk, when I could not contact them by email.

Below is a table with information pertaining to the participants, including some relevant information such as their pseudonym names, gender, age, living situation, occupation, nationality, and the city they resided in when I did my fieldwork. Ji-yoo has a '*' next to her name because I received the answers to the interview questions in written form.

Table 2: Overview of participants

Name	Gender	Age	Living situation	Occupation	Nationality	City
Ha-yoon	Female	65	Alone, occasionally with her grown-up son	Receptionist	Korean	Seoul
Yoo-joon	Male	40s	Alone	Advisor	Korean	Seoul
Ji-ho	Male	34	With partner	Self employed	Korean	Seoul
Do-woon	Male	32	With partner	Self employed	Korean	Seoul
Seo-yoon	Female	46	With her parents and her daughter	Advisor	Korean	Seoul
Ji-yoo*	Female	48	Lives with her husband and two children	Housewife	Korean	Seoul
Hannah	Female	26	Alone	Research assistant	Canadian	Seoul
Charlotte	Female	35	With husband	Freelancer/translator	American	Seoul
Eun-Jeong	Female	24	Alone	Working for NGO	Korean	Seoul
Lina	Female	23	Alone	Master student	Lithuanian	Daejeon
Da-Eun	Female	26	Alone	PhD student	Korean	Daejeon
Min-joon	Male	21	With parents	Bachelor's student	Korean	Seoul
Shi-woo	Male	31	Alone	Adjunct professor	Korean	Seoul
Emma	Female	25	Alone	Master student	American	Daejeon

Sample limitations

One of the limitations of my sample consisted mainly of well-educated females in their 20s and 30s which gives a skewed picture of the population in South Korea. Previous studies also find that females in this age group are more likely to be interested in reducing or avoiding meat consumption (see, e.g., Yoo and Yoon 2015; Sundet 2021). In that sense, this sample might be representative of

the people who are trying to eat less meat in South Korea. However, from my interviews with the 'older' participants in my sample, it seemed like meat-reduction was common among people in their 40s and 50s, a group that was more difficult for me to get in contact with. Therefore, my sample might be a little skewed. I tried to compensate for this by receiving two written interviews from people over the age of forty who did not feel comfortable with an in person interview. However, only one of the written interviews was detailed enough for me to use for as data, and the other interview is therefore not included.

Additionally, my sample mostly consists of participants that are well educated and have good English skills. This might say something about the group of people who identify as meat reducers and flexitarian, but it can also just be because my existent network consisted of well-educated people who referred me to their acquaintances. I also ended up getting in contact with quite a few foreigners living in Korea. These foreigners gave useful data in that they provided an insider insight in Korean eating practices since most of them had lived there for at least 1,5 years and were working or studying with Koreans or married to a Korean and socialized with Korean friends. Still, the foreigners might lack insight in the Korean food environments and eating practices, because they also have outsider qualities. I believe the combination of insider and outsider knowledge can help shed light on some practices that native Koreans might take for granted (Thaagard 2018).

4.4.1.2 Recruiting representatives from vegan and vegetarian restaurants

I sought to interview restaurants serving different types of meatless food, preferably located in different areas in Seoul or Daejeon. I focused on contacting restaurants in Seoul with the highest number of such restaurants and these were located closer to where I was staying. To recruit the restaurants I interviewed, I used strategic sampling and found restaurants through Seoul Metropolitan Government's list of meatless restaurants (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2021). I ended up collecting one in person interview and three written interviews.

To recruit representatives from vegetarian or vegan restaurants in Seoul, I reached out to restaurants through email, Instagram and phone calls. I got help from Korean friends to write messages to the restaurants in Korean, and I also let them know that we could conduct the interview in Korean, if that was desired. I only got replies from a few of the restaurants I contacted, and the recruitment

process was slow. I therefore decided to give the restaurants the option of answering the interview in written form. Some of the representatives from the restaurants expressed that they preferred to answer my questions in writing, with reasons like being busy, wanting to see the interview questions and feeling more comfortable with writing than speaking English. I was content with giving the restaurants the option of answering my questions in written form since this helped me recruit more restaurants. I ended up with one in person interview, and three written interviews, where one of the written interviews was in Korean while the rest were conducted in English.

Sample limitations

The sample of restaurants is very limited as I was only able to have interviews with representatives from four different restaurants. Even though the restaurants served different cuisines and were in different areas of Seoul, they are not representative of meatless restaurants. I was, however, able to get some insight into the provision side of the meatless market.

4.4.2 Interviews

4.4.2.1 Interviews with meat reducers

All interviews lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. In an attempt to get beyond attitudes and sayings, the interviews with the meat reducers were focused on getting the participants to reconstruct different eating situations (Hitchings 2012). In other words, I wanted to highlight what the meat reducers were actually doing, not just what they said that they were doing. The interview guide was also made with this in mind and by taking inspiration from previous studies using practice theory to study meat reduction (see, e.g., Sundet 2021). Focusing on the eating practices of the meat reducers was at times challenging as I experienced some of my participants being very passionate about meat reduction and wanting to talk about their reflections surrounding eating practices. I tried to solve this by steering the conversation to the mundane routines and habits surrounding eating, by getting the meat reducers to reconstruct different food related scenarios such as going out to eat with coworkers or doing grocery shopping (Hitchings 2012). The participants' perceptions and lack of insight into their own eating practices means that the practices they talked

about do not represent a ‘perfect picture’ of their meat reduction and consumption. Still, gaining insight into their own reflections surrounding the topics was useful.

Most of the interviews took place at (quiet) coffee shops near the participants’ home or offices, or at the participants’ offices or universities. I asked the participants where they preferred to conduct the interviews so that it could be a place where they felt comfortable and that was convenient for them. This created a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere that I think made the interviews feel informal and enabled us to talk easily. It also allowed me to experience some of the streets and environments my participants lived their daily lives in, which was a useful insight into the food environments surrounding the meat reducers.

In South Korea, it is common for the oldest person to pay for food and drinks when meeting up. I did experience that some of my participants wanted to pay for my coffee, but it did not feel right to accept, so I politely declined. Instead, I ended up paying for the drinks that my participants were drinking because I invited them to the coffee shops to do the interview, and in that sense, they were doing me a favor. Offering something to the participants can affect the interviews but I did not get the sense that this was the case during the interviews. It simply felt like the ‘right’ thing to do since they were willing to talk to me. Moreover, when I faced difficulties with recruitment meat reducers, I heard from my Korean friends that it is normal to give incentives to participants by offering them coffee coupons. I never ended up doing this because I was able to recruit without incentivizing.

Because of the COVID-situation in South Korea at the time, a couple of the interviews were done wearing facemask which I experienced as creating sort of a barrier between me and the people I interviews since a lot of facial mimics are lost behind the mask. However, since wearing a mask inside was the law at the time, and wearing a facemask is highly normalized in South Korea, I do not think this affected the interviews too much.

Due to distance, I ended up doing one interview over zoom. Although zoom interviews can be a little awkward and impersonal, I found the interview comfortable and fruitful. I think part of the explanation for this was that I had met the person in real life on a previous occasion. For the two written interviews I collected, I purposefully made the interview guide a bit more detailed based on the experiences from previous interviews, to get fuller data. One advantage of doing written

interviews is that the participants had more time to develop their answers which might be especially useful for non-native English speakers. I did however, experience some of the nuances and details that came from talking to the meat reducers were lost in the written interviews (Tjora 2017). Therefore, I ended up only including one of the written interviews in the data. Still, I got quite extensive and useful data from that one written interview. Moreover, since the written interviews were with people on the 'older'-side of the age spectrum for the participants, I found it valuable to include the interview to obtain a broader age-range of meat reducers.

4.4.2.2 Interviews with restaurants

The interview guide for the restaurants was designed to obtain information about the restaurants' daily operations and on the market for vegetarian food/meat alternatives. The one interview I did in person took place at the restaurant and lasted for 45 minutes. In addition, I ate dinner at that restaurant which gave me further insight into their daily operations. For the written interviews, I made the interview guide a bit more comprehensive. Even though the interviews with representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants were fruitful, I found that they worked best to provide contextual knowledge in the thesis.

4.4.3 Recording and transcribing

The two first interviews I did were audio-recorded with the UiO Dictaphone app 'Nettskjema-diktafon'. Since both interviews happened a little spontaneously, I did not have a backup recorder. Unfortunately, the UiO app malfunctioned, and I lost the recordings from the first two interviews. The lack of audio recordings may have led to loss of information. However, as they were some of the first interviews I did, and since I did not have a back-up recorder, my notetaking was extensive. I also had the contact information of the participants and could ask them if any clarifying questions came up. For the rest of my interviews, I used a dictaphone for recording. I also made an audio recording using a dictaphone during the one interview that I did on Zoom with one of the participants in Daejeon. For this one interview, I obtained oral consent, while I obtained written consent for the rest of the interviews.

The interviews were transcribed, and information that could be used to identify the person or the people they talked about, such as names and workplaces, was anonymized in the transcription process. Later when quotes from the interviews were used, some of them were modified for clarity, which is indicated by using brackets. The written interviews were collected through email and identifying information was anonymized. All participants were given random names for anonymity.

4.4.4 Observations and partaking in practices

Even though my main form of data collection consisted of interviews and did not involve me observing my participants' eating practices, my fieldwork was filled with observing, doing, and talking. Observations entail "[…] strategically placing oneself in situations in which systematic understandings of place are most likely to arise." (Kearns 2016, 318). I placed myself in situations where practices related to meat-eating and meat reduction were likely to arise and sought to participate in a broad range of eating practices. Some of these engagements included eating alone in restaurants, eating together with people at meat-intensive restaurants and vegan restaurants, taking a Korean cooking class, shopping at different types of food stores, cooking food, living and eating with a Korean family, and going to a vegan fair hosted by the Seoul Metropolitan Government. I wanted to engage in meat-eating practices to look at their embeddedness in the South Korean culture, while also exploring the scope of meatless alternatives in grocery stores, restaurants, and other food environments. Engaging in eating practices, similar to my participants, brought out forms of tactile knowledge and helped me 'enter' the field. I wrote down important observations from the food environments and experiences from partaking in eating practices, these field notes made up a field diary that was later treated as data (Tjora 2017). The field notes and pictures of food environments helped me step-back into the field after coming home from the fieldwork.

In addition to doing observations and engaging in eating practices, I spent time learning the Korean language, reading Korean newspapers, and engaging in Korean culture by reading books and watching Korean movies. I also had numerous of casual conversations pertaining to food over shared meals with Koreans and foreigners living in South Korea. Engaging in casual conversations and observing the surroundings gave me valuable insight into the Korean food culture and life.

These informal meetings contributed greatly to building contextual knowledge around Korean eating practices. Noting down observations, and thoughts from interviews and informal conversations in a field diary, helped me notice emerging themes. Overall, the field work outside of the interviews, was central to develop deeper contextual knowledge of the site and case and played an important role in shaping my understanding of South Korean food environments and everyday eating practices in South Korea.

4.4.5 Analyzing data

My analysis strategy was informed by the stepwise-deductive-inductive (SDI) approach (Tjora, 2017). One of the core elements of SDI is that the researcher should be open-minded and unbiased, and let issues and themes "emerge" from the material. By leaning on the SDI approach, I sought to move from unprocessed data to theory development. The approach is both inductive and deductive. Inductive in the sense that there is progression towards theory, through data analysis, and deductive in the sense that it tests theory against the data. This model was created to maximize the value of the data by using an analysis that is "close to the data". Meaning that my initial codes consisted of direct quotes from the participants, or even whole paragraphs, in an attempt to stay as close to the participant's own experiences and negotiations as possible. After the initial coding, similar codes were collected into more generic categories and as the process progressed, the categories were adjusted, and I removed codes that did not fit the criteria (Tjora 2017). As discussed above, the field notes were used for developing themes and stepping back into the field after returning home.

4.5 Assessing data quality

There are discussions surrounding how to best assess data quality in qualitative research. Some researchers apply the measurement of validity and reliability, while others use different measurements (Bryman 2012, 48). I will use trustworthiness (Lincom and Guba 1985) as presented by Bryman (2012) to assess this research project. These aspects are 'credibility', which looks at how believable the findings are, 'transferability' which explores if the findings are applicable in other contexts, 'dependability' referring to whether the findings are likely to hold true at another time, and 'confirmability' which reviews to what degree the researcher's values has intruded the research (Bryman 2012, 49). Below, I will discuss these four measurements in my own research.

I sought to increase the credibility of my study by taking detailed field notes, recording the interviews I did and transcribing them afterwards. Moreover, by using the SDI-approach to data analysis and keeping the initial coding process "close to the material", I hope to increase the credibility of my research. Some of the quotes in the thesis have been modified to make them clearer because of language issues. This is indicated with brackets between the modified words. In these cases, I have sought to make the meaning behind my participants' statements clearer, while trying to maintain the content of the statements. Exploring different accounts of social reality, i.e., triangulation, is also important to increase the trustworthiness of the research (Bryman 2012, 392). I have sought to do this by relying on insight from interviews, news articles, academic research, my own observations and by partaking in eating practices.

The notion of transferability is much discussed in qualitative research since "[…] qualitative findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied" (Bryman 2012, 392). Still case studies can have some transferable qualities (Baxter 2016). All though the research I have done has taken in the specific context of South Korea, theorizing meat reduction in South Korea, can be used to understand meat reducers in other contexts. I seek to contribute to the expanding research on flexitarians experiences with meat reduction using practice theory.

It is more difficult to say something about the dependability of this research. The interviews, observations and partaking in practice are done in specific places at a specific time. Moreover, the people I interviewed talked about their experiences, which might have been different if they had taken place with different people. However, I have found recurring themes through the many interviews I have carried out. This points to the findings being dependable in the sense that there is a likelihood of finding similar themes if a different sample was done among meat reducers in Seoul and Daejon.

Confirmability might also be difficult to fulfill. I have tried to be open about the research design and reflect on my positionality. Research quality is strengthened by being transparent about the process and by reflecting on the researcher's positionality (Bryman 2012). I have sought to be self-reflexive throughout the methods chapter and give detailed accounts of my fieldwork and methods.

Below, I will further reflect on how interviewing acquaintances, language barriers and how my positionality might have affected my research process.

4.5.1 Interviewing acquaintances

As some of the participants were recruited through my own network, I did know a few of the participants outside of the interview situation. Interviewing acquaintances is pretty frequent in qualitative research, but it needs to be addressed (Braun and Clarke 2013) as it has both strengths and weaknesses (Garton and Copland 2010). One disadvantage can be that of anonymity (Garton and Copland 2010). However, I consider the anonymization to have been complied with since the participants have been given randomly chosen names and there are few identifying quotes in the analysis. Another disadvantage of interviewing acquaintances is that they might feel obliged to take part in the interview. However, I did not experience this as a problem, as the participants seemed eager to participate in the research and were thoroughly informed that they could withdraw from the interview at any time without any negative consequences. Some advantages of interviewing an acquaintance include gaining access to data that you would not have obtained if you interviewed a stranger (Garton and Copland 2010). It can also lead to a more relaxed atmosphere, which makes the participant open up to a greater extent (Blichfeldt and Heldbjerg 2011). I experienced the interviews I did with my acquaintances as comfortable and relaxing. Moreover, interviewing acquaintances allowed me to broaden the characteristics of my sample.

4.5.2 Language barriers

I was prepared to use a translator during the interviews if necessary. With the exception of some help on phrases in the one written interview that I received in Korean, I ended up not using a translator since the participants I got in contact with, spoke English. Regardless, the language barrier has been challenging and affected the collection of data in several ways (O'Leary 2021). One way is the lack of access to information pertaining to meat reduction in South Korea. I have lower intermediate knowledge of the Korean language, but still academic articles and news articles in Korean are difficult for me to access and to understand. Had I been more fluent in Korean, I would have been able to consume more Korean media and research, talk to more Koreans,

and do richer observations which could have contributed to more nuanced understandings (O'Leary 2021, 65-66).

To minimize some of the language barriers, I have used translation programs and gotten help from friends with translating where needed, like asking for the meaning of phrases that I did not understand in the one interview I received in Korean. Moreover, the use of English is prevalent in South Korean media and academia, which has helped me gain insight into South Korean society and has limited the extent of the language barrier. My limited Korean sometimes came in handy when the participants could not think of an English word, particularly when they were using Korean terms for traditions, dishes or types of restaurants. During the interviews, my participants and I, always came up with a solution to explain any Korean words that my participants had problems translating to English, and I felt a sense of teamwork where both parties were invested in coming to mutual understandings.

4.5.3 Positionality

A researcher's positionality is determined by physical and culturally ascribed factors such as gender, nationality, beliefs, and political ideology. On the basis of these factors, researchers locate their views, in relation to the research process and findings. As the social constructivist approach postulates, knowledge is not objective, it is created in a social world (O'Leary 2021). The researcher's own reflections and reflexivity are crucial components of a qualitative research design such as mine.

Even though I have lived in South Korea previously, my position is best described as an outsider. The position of an outsider comes with challenges such as lacking insight into the context that is studied but can also have some advantages such as questioning things that locals take for granted (Thagaard 2018, 79). Throughout my fieldwork, I used field notes as a tool to reflect on my role and position as a researcher (Bryman 2012, 447). At times throughout the research process, I felt like a total outsider, especially when I faced troubles with recruiting participants, and when I returned to Norway to start writing the thesis. Some participants, both Koreans and foreigners who had lived in South Korea longer than me, seemed to view me more as an outsider which often led to more thorough and less taken-for-granted explanations of South Korean society. Other times, I

felt like I was treated as an outsider with some 'insider knowledge'. A lot of the participants asked me why I wanted to write about South Korea for my master's thesis. When they understood that I had experiences with living in South Korea, it seemed to create a bond between me and the participants. I found that having some previous knowledge and experience with Korean culture helped in the processes of building mutual understandings with the participants. While other foreigners had similar experiences with living in South Korea, and it felt like a mutual understanding.

Overall, I did not experience any uncomfortable situations during my interviews that were linked to my positionality. At times, interviewing people my age made me feel very aware of my position as a researcher, especially in the beginning of the interviews. However, it felt like as the interviews progressed, that gap I experienced between us diminished. I also think this was helped by the fact that eating practices are so embedded in everyday life, which makes the interview based around mundane topics, which made for comfortable interview situations.

As touched upon previously, age is important in the social hierarchy in South Korea. Apart from the occasional participant offering to buy me coffee, I did not feel that the age differences between me and my participants affected the interviews much. Because the social hierarchy influences how one speaks to each other in Korean, conducting the interviews in English, might have made the age differences less noticeable.

Lastly, since I identify as a meat reducer myself this can have affected my interviews and analysis because I could relate and sympathize with my participants' experiences. During the interviews, I did not mention my own eating preferences unless I was asked by the participants, and this did not seem to influence how the participants talked about their experiences. Moreover, I have tried not to let the fact that I am a meat reducer myself affect my research by reflecting on my own positionality and eating practices during the fieldwork and analysis process.

4.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are a part of the entire research process and need to be addressed to ensure the integrity of the research project, and more specifically to assure the safety of the participants

(Bryman 2012, 130). In line with Norwegian law, this research project was approved by Sikt, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research, before conducting the interviews. Moreover, I have followed their guidelines for ethical research and storage of data.

As discussed in the part about interviewing acquaintances, the principle of informed consent was complied with as participants were given an information letter about the project beforehand, which they signed before the interview. Moreover, the participants were told that they could withdraw from the project at any moment (Bryman 2012, 138). Furthermore, the participants were all given pseudonym names, and identifying quotes about my participants or the people they talked about, where anonymized.

Some of the reflections on ethical research are discussed above in the sections about language barriers, interviewing acquaintances, and positionality. Since I did my research in a different cultural context, I strived to gain knowledge about the culture and my participants in a respectful manner. I did so by studying different cultural codes and asking my Korean and foreign friends living in Korea for advice when needed. I also sought to make the interview setting feel safe and comfortable for my participants by asking them to suggest a place for us to meet up.

4.7 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have sketched out the research design, data collection methods, data quality assessment, and discussion of the conflicts and difficulties that have influenced my data collection. I have attempted to openly and reflexively account for the potential errors and biases in my research process by explaining constraints and difficulties I encountered, as well as commenting on my role as a researcher. This chapter's objective was to explain the study in a thorough manner while also leaving the research methodology open to review and discussion.

CHAPTER 5 First main course

Enabling meat reduction

5.1 Embarking on meat reduction

The analytical part of this thesis consists of two chapters that seek to answer the research questions: 1) What motivates meat reduction in South Korea and how do flexitarians perform meat reduction in everyday life?, and 2) How do dominant eating practices in South Korea enable and constrain meat reduction? This first part of the analysis looks at what motivates meat reduction in South Korea, and how flexitarians perform meat reduction in everyday life. Moreover, this chapter looks at how dominant eating practices enable meat reduction. In chapter six, I will look at how dominant eating practices in South Korea constrain meat reduction.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the participants' motivations for embarking on meat reduction, where I begin by looking at what led them to want to eat less meat. Then, I explore the factors that facilitated embarking on the meat reduction project, before touching on how motivation can translate into meat reduction. After, I will look at the different ways meat reduction was enabled for my participants.

5.1.1 Motivations for meat reduction

As discussed earlier, the definition of 'meat reducers' and 'flexitarians' that I use in this thesis is a broad one, consisting of people who say they are "[…] cutting back on meat but are not avoiding it completely […]" (Malek and Umberger 2021, 2). The broadness of the definition was also reflected in my sample. My participants had different aspirations for and approaches to meat reduction, from aiming at eating a vegan diet to abstaining from meat one day of the week. Another participant looked at the difference in emissions from foodstuff and sought to eat the food with the lowest environmental impact.

In terms of motivations, personal health was the most prevailing one, closely followed by environmental sustainability concerns. Environmental concerns were most prevalent among the younger participants, while personal health was more apparent among the participants over 40 years. In addition, animal welfare concerns were mentioned as a motivation. These motivations are also common among participants in similar studies (Malek and Umberger 2021; Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) and in previous research in South Korea (Yoon and Yoon 2015; Lim et al. 2022). Although the motivations can be divided into different categories, the participants often described their reason for embarking on meat reduction as a combination of different motivations.

Several of my participants talked about beginning meat reduction after an event occurred. Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul] describes the animals dying in the wildfires in Australia as a catalyst for quitting meat-eating:

> A really big catalyst for me […] was in 2020, like right before COVID started, and there were actually like wildfires in Australia […] How can I justify eating meat if I feel this kind of emotion, […] of overwhelming sadness because these animals are dying in fires, but I'm still consuming an animal as a meat eater […] I decided at that point, like, okay, I'm not gonna eat meat anymore.

For clarification, Hannah went pescetarian in 2020 when she lived with her family in Canada during COVID but resumed eating some meat in 2021 when she moved back to South Korea.

Another example is Seo-yoon [age 46, Korean, Seoul] who described how she reduced her meat consumption after receiving dietary advice from her doctor:

> I'm supposed to […] answer some questionnaire about your eating habit or exercise in this kind of questionnaire, so you will get the result together with some health check and some recommendations like you know you.... have to eat more vegetables, less meat […].

A few of the other ‘older’ meat reducers also described following dietary advice given to them at a health checkup, such as eating more balanced meals without excessive amounts of meat. Yearly

medical checkups are common in the Korean healthcare system (National Health Insurance Service 2021). Though eating is more of a matter of convention than authoritative regulation, food is often seen as "a primary tool of medical intervention to maintain and improve health" (Warde 2016, 93-96). The dietary guidelines are an example of rules connected to eating, although, without any formal punishment for not following them, they serve as clear guidelines for the participants (Schatzki 2002).

A third example is Lina [age 23, Lithuanian, Daejeon] who described how she got motivated to eat less meat after starting a master's program where her fellow students were concerned with the environment and gave her insight into the environmental consequences of eating meat.

These three examples show the different motivations that were prevailing among my participants. Hannah is an example of being motivated by animal welfare and environmental sustainability, Seo-yoon exemplifies health as a motivator, and Lina talked about being motivated by the environmental benefits of meat-reduced eating. The notion of one event triggering change in dietary patterns is also apparent in studies from other countries (Hirschler 2011; Mylan 2018; Fuentes and Fuentes 2022). Greenebaum (2018) calls this a 'catalytic experience', which is an occurrence that causes a change in perspective followed by a change in their consumption of meat (681). The notion of a catalytic event has parallels to what O'Neill et al. (2019) refers to as fractures, which can contribute to changes in meat consumption (see also Godin 2023). These fractures are "[…] small cracks that start to appear in practices at the micro-scale regime (individual, households, small communities of practice such as co-housing) that offer the opportunity for moving towards shifts at the meso-scale." (O'Neill et al. 2019, 232). Fractures can happen due to public events such as the Australian wildfires are an example of, or through other more personal events such as receiving dietary advice from a doctor or beginning a new master's program (O'Neill et al. 2019).

Not all of my participants talked about embarking on meat reduction after a specific event. Some participants described embarking on meat reduction as more of a process, consisting of, for example, becoming more concerned with health, sustainability, or animal welfare. Moreover, echoing findings in other contexts (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), it became apparent during the interviews that various factors underlined my participants' decisions

to eat less meat. This is not to say that these events, such as the wildfires, receiving medical advice or gaining new insight into the consequences of eating meat, cannot trigger change. Rather, it is to say that the participants' meat reduction projects were a result of an interlinkage of factors, including previous engagement in practice. It is therefore important to look beyond these catalytic experiences or fractures to understand why my participants became interested in eating less meat.

5.1.2 Exploring factors that facilitated the embankment on meat reduction

An explanatory factor beyond these events is the social sites that the participants were a part of. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, social sites refer to a group of practices that come together to form a specific context of performance (Schatzki 2002). To explain how these social sites influence motivation, I will first go back to Hannah who described the wildfires in Australia as a catalyst for eating less meat. During the interview, Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul] talked about how her living situation facilitated meat-reduced eating because Hannah's parents had, for the past few years, mainly served meatless food: "And it was easy for me because my parents are vegan too. […] The environment made it easier for me to kind of adapt to not eating meat".

Similarly, Seo-yoon [age 46, Korean, Seoul] described that a lot of her friends and family members, over a certain age, were concerned with meat-reduced eating:

> In Korea, I think after 40 or 50, that's the period when people are a little bit changed in their mindset... Especially about the eating habits. So, I notice many of them kind of start to do more exercise, also eating less meat.

In addition, Lina [age 23, Lithuanian, Daejeon] described the people that she interacted with daily in her department as concerned with meat-reduced eating. Accordingly, the social site of the household, in Hannah's case, the social site of the friend group or family in Seo-yoon's case, and the social site of the department in Lina's case, were described as meat reducer friendly. These different social sites were linked to general understandings of health or sustainability. As the theory chapter explores, general understandings can represent a purposeful quality of practices because the concept includes accepted worldviews and ideas that motivate, and steer behavior (Schatzki 2002). Moreover, by using 'scripted social sites' (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), we can

conceptualize how the different practices and their elements come together and create 'frameworks of actions' (Akrich 1992, 208) for individuals. From my participants' descriptions, it seemed like the social sites of the household, friend or family, and department, scripted meat-reduced eating as desirable. My participants' engagements with these sites can explain the knowledge, perceptions, and motivations that made Hannah, Seo-yoon, and Lina, and other participants, decide to start meat-reduced eating.

A related factor that explains why my participants decided to embark on meat reduction is the above-mentioned general understandings. In the earlier quote from Seo-yoon [age 46, Korean, Seoul], she stated that Koreans began to be more concerned with health in their 40s and 50s. Thus, Seo-yoon remarks that perceptions attached to general understandings of health are prevalent in certain groups of society. She also links these general understandings to an interest in eating less meat. Furthermore, several participants described healthy eating as a growing concern to the general Korean public, and as a topic that is frequently featured in the media:

> All of the media is always educating the people. Fish or egg, a kind of protein, is much more healthy than red-colored meat. So, this they mentioned in a lot of documentaries on TV [Ha-yoon, age 65, Korean, Seoul].

Similarly, perceptions that were attached general understandings of sustainability influenced my participants' meat reduction projects. This was especially apparent among the younger participants:

> I mean, I've always been concerned with environmental problems, but even though I kind of knew that the consumption of meat or production of meat directly influences that, it never really clicked. [Lina, age 23, Lithuanian, Daejeon]

Several participants talked about increasing media coverage on sustainability and meat. This underlying knowledge contributed to my participants embarking on meat reduction. As mentioned earlier, the 'older' participants talked about health as a motivation more often than the younger ones who tended to focus on sustainability. This might indicate that some perceptions were more apparent in certain segments of the population, which can potentially be explained by factors such

as the different social sites they interact with and their sources of information. However, I do not have enough data to make solid conclusions.

Generally, my participants talked about seeing an increased interest in, and awareness of, meat-reduced eating. From my interviews with representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants, it seemed like their clientele was diversifying. The restaurants that had been open for a while described an increase in clientele that were non-vegan and males. The owner of one of the restaurants, which had only been open for a little over a year said this about opening the restaurant: "[…S]urprisingly, we got support from everyone. I don't know. Like vegans, non-vegans, Koreans, non-Koreans, everyone is... everyone was very interested in what we do, I guess." Thus, my impression from the interviews with the representatives from the restaurants indicate that although there is some skewedness in the clientele interested in meatless eating, there is also a diversification. Although I only interviewed people from four restaurants, the findings indicate that there are prevalent perceptions of meat-reduced eating as good. Moreover, there is an increase in the amount of people making voluntary meat reduction in South Korea (O. Han 2019; Gibson 2020; G. Lee 2021).

Furthermore, my participants' perceptions of meat as potentially unhealthy, unsustainable, and bad for animal welfare were not only connected to discourses in South Korea. As mentioned, meat reduction has grown to become a recognized sustainability issue globally, and most of the foreigners among the participants had such knowledge and perceptions before coming to South Korea. Accordingly, my participants' meat reduction can be seen as part of a 'collective project' (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012) rather than merely personal projects. This is because the project of meat reduction represents widely accepted values, objectives, and meaning that directs my participants' time and priorities (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Enger 2023). Moreover, the interest in meat reduction, through among other influences, media discourse, is examples of meat-eating as a form of 'contested consumption' discussed in the background chapter (see also Halkier 2020; Hansen and Wethal 2023). This does not mean that the practitioner is stripped of the reflexive process or the choice to engage in some practices and not others. Instead, the practitioner is 'recruited' to a practice embedded in social, material, and locational influences (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012).

In addition to observing an increasing interest in meat reduction, my participants described that they saw an upsurge of veg(etari)an products available in stores and restaurants:

> I feel like just a few years ago, there [was not many] vegan options, even in Starbucks. But like today there are a lot of vegan sandwiches and vegan salad in Starbucks. Also, with other cafes. [Eun-jeong, age 24, Korean, Seoul].

The perceptions among my participants also seemed to fit with the increase in veg(atari)an eateries (O. Han 2019; G. Lee 2021). Thus, the food environments, understood as the environments where acquiring, preparing, and eating food happens, were described as increasingly facilitating meat-reduced eating. Put differently, the food environments scripts meatless eating as increasingly desirable, with frameworks of action for meat-reduced eating. The participants picked up cues from this socio-material environment which fed into their meat reduction (see also Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023).

A final explanatory factor is the participants' previous engagements (Schatzki 1996). In a sense, all the factors mentioned above relate to this, because my participants interaction with different social sites and food environments, and so on, are examples of previous engagements in practice.

Expanding the temporal scale to look at engagement in practice during childhood, it became evident that several participants had encountered meat-reduced eating when growing up. For instance, Charlotte [age 35, American, Seoul], talked about how she had never really liked the texture of meat, but been okay with some types of processed meats: "So, I've always been a little weird, like wishing there was a different option for meat stuff, or like wanting the same flavor but not wanting like the feeling"

Several participants, both among the foreigners and the Koreans, stated that the food they ate growing up was balanced, healthy and contained relatively little meat. Following Greene and Rau (2018), previous engagements in practice, or the participants' "[…] career-in-a-practice can be conceptualized as a biographic repository in which elements such as embodied skills, knowledge, meanings and changing technologies are accumulated, rearranged, replaced or removed over time." (68). Thus, perception of what proper food was to my participants when growing up, and their

accustomedness to the taste of that food, influenced my participants' motivations and perceptions today. This finding is echoed by Goodin (2023) in her study of people who transitioned to vegan and vegetarian diets in Canada. Moreover, this connects to Bourdieu's notion of habitus, which highlights the historical and biographical experiences as crucial components of current decision-making (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28). Some of my participants had embodied perceptions, tastes and experiences which resulted in the current embarkment on meat reduction, an example of how the past exists in present time (Bourdieu 1997 in Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 27).

5.1.3 How can motivation translate into meat reduction?

In sum, my participants' motivations were linked to health benefits, sustainability, and animal welfare. Motivations are important to discuss since a practice "[…] must entail a specific motivation to perform it.", but the motivational drivers for performance are not always sentient to the performer (Reckwitz 2017, 120). Practice theoretical approaches see motivations as embedded in practice rather than a property of the individual (see, e.g., Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Reckwitz 2017). Still, practitioners, as 'carriers of practice' (Reckwitz 2002, 250), can carry with them motivations. Above, I have discussed how insight, knowledge, and certain triggering events influenced my participants' decision to start reducing their meat consumption. However, echoing previous studies (See, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) these factors are only part of the explanation for embarking on meat reduction.

My participants' motivations were shaped by increasingly held perceptions of meat reduction as appropriate. These perceptions were attached to general understandings inside and outside of South Korea related to health, animal welfare and sustainability. Moreover, my participants described social sites that scripted meat-reduced eating as desirable. Similarly, the food environments, with an increase in veg(etari)an options in stores and restaurants, 'scripted' (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Hansen and Wethal 2023) meat-reduced eating as increasingly sought after. My participants' perceptions and motivations for eating less meat were shaped by being a part of these social sites and food environments. Engaging with other infrastructural elements, such as receiving dietary advice during a yearly health examination, also influenced some of my participants' meat reduction.

Lastly, previous engagements in practice, such as the participants' familiarization with eating a diet containing little meat when growing up, fed into their practice biographies and shaped their current performances of practices. Although some participants described their meat reduction projects as starting with catalytic experiences**,** general understandings, different social sites, and food environments all come together to recruit the practitioners. In sum, my participants meat reduction can be described as taking part in a 'collective project' (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012).

An important finding is that my participants appeared insightful about the different benefits of eating less meat, and were motivated to do so, but they still ate meat, often more than they wanted to:

> It's more of like an environmental reason than that I physically cannot eat meat. I know some people that because of ethical reasons they really feel like they don't want to touch it They don't want to eat meat at all whatsoever. I wish I could be like that but I'm, I'm not [Emma, age 25, American, Daejeon]

This quote from Emma exemplifies the cognitive dissonance that existed among my participants. She demonstrates a value-action gap (Middlemiss 2018) and in a display of the meat paradox (Loughnan and Davies 2019), she knows the harmful consequences of meat but still eats it. In contrast to approaches to sustainable consumption concerned with increasing the individuals' knowledge to change consumption patterns (see, eg., Tobler, Visschers, and Siegrist 2011; Vainio 2019), my findings suggest that knowledge is not sufficient. This is reflected in previous studies in other contexts as well (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), and displays the importance of looking at the interlinkage of different factors influencing meat consumption and reduction. However, I will also stress that knowledge and motivations are part of the reason why my participants put "[…] time and effort […]" (Wendler Halkier 2023, 8), into reducing their meat consumption. This time and effort, and sometimes sacrifices, i.e., coordination work, is part of what I will look at in the following section where I discuss how the participants perform meat reduction.

5.2 Doing meat reduction

This part of the analysis deals with how my participants performed meat reduction and how meat reduction was enabled by existing eating practices. The section includes a division into four different ways in which the participants performed meat reduction. Not all conducts were equally common, but all of the flexitarians relied on one or more of these categories. Based on the analysis of the data, these are the four different categories of meat reduction: adherence, alteration, negotiation, and arrangement. Put briefly, *adherence* entails adhering to the existing practices that facilitate meat reduction. *Alteration* involves the practitioners altering their eating performances to fit their existing eating patterns. Alteration was done by changing the frequency of the dishes they ate on a regular basis, or making changes in the way they performed eating with others. *Negotiation* encompasses negotiating and experimenting with different ways of ensuring meat reduction, while still, to a large degree, accommodating existing eating practices. This was done through substituting the meat in the dishes that my participants already knew how to make, and through actively negotiating with their acquaintances or at restaurants. Lastly, *arrangement* covers bigger changes, or initiatives in practice to allow for meat reduction. Examples of this are the participants learning how to make new dishes or suggesting restaurants to eat at when meeting up with others.

As expanded on in the theory chapter, I draw on the concept of consumption work (see, e.g., Glucksmann 2013) and concepts from Wendler and Halkier (2023) to conceptualize coordination work as *the additional time, effort, and sometimes sacrifices, put in by individuals to ensure change in the performance of practice.* As mentioned, I will specifically use the concept to talk about the work put into ensuring successful meat reduction. The way I have categorized different types of coordination work is highly inspired by Wendeler and Halkier's (2023) division between different types of social coordination work which is, adaptation, negotiation and proaction but I have altered the categories to be able to combine the focus of work done alone, and with others.

While alteration, negotiation, and arrangement are examples of coordination work, adherence does not require any conscious effort, and is therefore not classified as a type of coordination work. In the following, I will discuss the different factors that enable meat reduction, focusing on the most

relevant ones. I will begin with an exploration of how adherence can enable meat reduction. Then, I will expand on the three categories of coordination work.

5.2.1 Eating rice cakes lying down: Meat reduction through adherence

As mentioned above, *adherence* captures the existing practices my participants performed that facilitated meat-reduced eating. Since no extra time, effort, sacrifice, or reflections, were required by the participants, the title of this subsection refers to a Korean proverb that describes situations where something is really easy to do. Before exploring how adherence facilitated meat reduction, I will make some notes on my participants' eating practices.

When my participants talked about their daily eating practices, they often spoke of acquiring, preparing, and consuming food as highly routinized activities. For instance, most of my participants reported having a small repertoire of dishes that they could shop for and cook up without needing to look at a recipe. As put by Ha-yoon [age 65, Korean, Seoul] "Usually I make [what I am used to]. Yeah, I'm a little bit lazy to make a new […] to use a new recipe". The notion of a repertoire is also apparent in previous studies in other contexts (see Mylan 2018; Wendler and Halkier 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Volden 2023). Moreover, my participants displayed repertoires in other aspects of their eating practices, such having one or two grocery stores that they rotated shopping at and having a handful of restaurants that they alternated dining at – either alone or with others. In general, eating food outside of the home was a regularly occurring event for most of my participants, with a couple of them eating all their meals outside of the home. Since dining out was integrated in most of my participants' eating practices, it was also a part of their routinized eating behavior, which can explain why they talked about having a repertoire of restaurants that they went to. This type of repertoire is less apparent in similar studies in other contexts (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Wendler and Halkier 2023) which might be explained by the prevalence of eating out among my participants, and in South Korea in general (Lim et al., 2022).

The occurrence of repertoires of dishes that my participants acquired, prepared, and ate without needing much thought, aligns with Warde's statement: "[...] people have available a repertoire of procedures which are brought into a stream of activity without the need to stop to think about how they are done or whether they will work." (2016, 126). For clarification, the existence of repertoires

does not exclude trying to make new dishes or testing out new restaurants but underlines a clear tendency among my participants to lean on their habituated eating patterns.

5.2.1.1 Adhering to familiar patterns of eating

One of the ways my participants performed meat reduction was through adhering to these repertoires of dishes, i.e., adhering to existing practices. Adherence could allow for meat reduction when my participants ate the dishes they usually shopped for, cooked for or otherwise sought out on their own initiative, or when dining with others.

All of the meat reducers displayed meaty repertoires, but also talked about seafood dishes, veg(etari)an dishes, and dishes containing few pieces of meat being a part of the dishes they ate regularly, even before embarking on their meat reduction projects. This has also been found in other contexts (see, e.g., Sundet 2021). As put by Do-woon [age 32, Korean, Seoul] "I prefer seafood over meat, so [when going out to eat] I will suggest sushi place happily". Following Reckwitz' description of an individual as a 'carrier' of practice (2002, 250), my participants were carriers of meatless and meat-reduced eating practices that they performed routinely in their day-to-day life. My participants displayed embodied knowledge, such as knowing where the ingredients they needed where placed in the grocery stores that they frequented, how to prepare and cook the ingredients for specific meals, how to get to the restaurants they often went to, and what to order at those restaurants. Not all my participants had reflected on the fact that some of the dishes they ate on a regular basis allowed for meat reduction, which further emphasizes the tacit aspects of eating, and the agency assigned to the bodily pillar in practice theory (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). As put by Wilhite, "[t]he sources of agency in embodied actions are not always transparent to the subject. The body predisposes actions that are accomplished without conscious direction [...]" (2016, 28).

As noted earlier, the participants' performances of practice are shaped by their previous engagement in practice (Schatzki 1996). Needless to say, all of my participants, including the foreigners, had previous and current engagements in eating practices in South Korea. As mentioned earlier, South Korean cuisine has traditionally relied on limited amounts of meat, and some of Korea's staple dishes that are still popular today contain little or no meat. Additionally, Koreans

are among the top consumers of seafood in the world (H. Oh and M. Yoo 2021). This is not to understate the prevalence of meat-eating in South Korea today, but to place emphasis on some of the meatless or meat-reduced dishes that are an integrated part of the Korean food culture and many of my participants' eating habits. This finding aligns with how practice theories conceptualize the implicit culture as the "[...] tacit, dispositional and embodied [...] as the foundation of social action." (Welch, Halkier, and Keller 2020, 329).

As discussed in the section about motivation, my participants' previous engagements in practice, such as what they ate growing up, is a part of their practice biographies and thus shape their current practices (Greene and Rau 2018; Daly 2020; Godin 2023). Several of the meat reducers would look back on their upbringing and talk fondly about the food they ate growing up. The participants described this food as being healthy, balanced, and often containing little meat. Several of the foreigners gave such descriptions, but the descriptions were particularly apparent among the Korean participants:

> Growing up, if I look back, she [his mom] always cooked me very proper meals. So rice, soup, and then side dishes, and then she always tried to include one main dish. It could be fish or meat [Do-woon, age 32, Korean, Seoul].

These previous engagements in practice are what generates wants (Warde 2005, 137), and thus co-shape current practices. The participants who talked about being accustomed to eating limited amounts of meat when they were growing up, also had perceptions of what constituted a healthy and balanced meal. For the Korean participants, these perceptions seemed attached to general understandings of health, and traditional Korean cuisine as fitting the image of a healthy and balanced diet. Moreover, some of the participants would make food that was similar to what they were served when growing up.

In sum, my participants were carriers of practices that facilitated meat reduction, through previous engagements in practice, their perceptions, and skills. Adhering to their existing repertoires of dishes thus enabled meat reduction without requiring any conscious reflection, time, or effort, i.e., coordination work, from the practitioners.

5.2.1.2 Adhering to appropriate conduct

Adherence, as described above, relates to the participants adhering to their own repertoires when they were 'in charge' of acquiring and preparing food. As mentioned earlier, there also seemed to be repertoires related to the food the participants ate when they were dining with others, such as a repertoire of food they ate with their housemates, and a repertoire of restaurants that where common to go to when eating in specific social groups. Moreover, some participants talked about having a repertoire of meals that went with certain occasions when meeting up with others. An example of this is Seo-yoon [age 46, Korea, Seoul], who has a six-year-old daughter. When her daughter's friends celebrate their birthdays, it is common for the kids and parents to meet up and go out to eat together:

> [...] If it is a social gathering together with kid's parents, none of them have a very strong opinion, because we have to know how to compromise, you know, among ourselves. So, in that case, [...] we normally go for common places: pasta places or the barbeque places.

The quote shows a repertoire of appropriate restaurants that are 'common places' that everyone can agree on. Seo-yoon describes no one in the group having strong opinions about where to eat, thus, certain restaurants become tacitly accepted. These standards of appropriateness were reinforced by repeatedly going to the same types of restaurants (see also Warde 2016).

Often, the restaurants my participants went to with others were ones that served meat, but occasionally the restaurants served seafood, veg(etari)an dishes, or dishes including few pieces of meat, thus meat reduction was enabled. For instance, several participants mentioned that eating seafood was fairly common in their households or when meeting up with others. Adhering to this repertoire then led to meat-reduced eating performances.

This section explores the different social meal occasions that facilitated meat-reduced performances through my participants adhering to 'appropriate conduct' (Warde 2016, 149). For a couple of my participants who lived with others, eating a diet containing little meat was part of their daily eating practices when sharing meals. An example of this is Seo-yoon [age 46, Korean, Seoul]. She and her daughter moved in with Seo-yoon's parents three years ago. Since then, Seo-

yoon's mom has been the one that does most of the cooking in the household. She serves traditional Korean meals, which consist of vegetable side dishes, soups, rice, and small amounts of meat that the family eats together. Seo-yoon described how moving in with her parents created a positive change in her eating habits:

> I have been living with my parents for three years now, but you know, compared to [...] the lifestyle I had before I moved to her [her mom] house, my eating habits are getting a bit [...] much better.

During the interview, Seo-yoon talked about how she would eat more meat before moving in with her parents. The change in Seo-yoon's eating habits after moving in with her parents, is also an example of how a fracture, in the form of a life event, can enhance and encourage change (O'Neilll 2019). After moving in with her parents, the dishes Seo-yoon is served limits the availability of meat for her to eat. Moreover, Seo-yoon talked about herself and her parents having similar perceptions related to healthy and balanced eating. These perceptions relate to general understandings of a traditional Korean meal format as healthy. Seo-yoon and her family are examples of shared understandings within the household, where meat reduction can be seen as a shared project.

According to Welch and Warde (2017) general understandings "[...] may inform the normative ordering of the teleoaffective structure of practices [...]" (186). Thus, the general understandings that the social site of the household draw on may influence the teleoaffective structures, making healthy eating an important teleoaffective structure. Previous engagements with the social sites, and the teleoaffective structures these social sites are attached to, draw up behavioral templets making some practice performances more feasible, easier, and thus more likely than others. The social site of the household, scripts meat-reduced eating as appropriate and desirable, and adhering to these scripts, enables meat reduction. Although the project of meat reduction is shared within the household, Seo-yoon's mom is the one who cooks all the food, thus potentially limiting Seo-yoon's agency to influence what food she eats. Indeed, Warde points to how the communal aspect of eating within the household imposes a particularly constrained space for individual agency (1997, 180).

A few other social sites also seemed to script meat-reduced eating as appropriate. Some participants talked about eating meatless or meat-reduced food when meeting up with certain members of their families or in specific friend groups. One example of this was Min-joon [age 21, Korean, Seoul], who was part of a student group that was concerned with the environment. The group would semi-regularly dine together at a restaurant. In the group, several of the participants had perceptions attached to general understandings of sustainable consumption. This influenced the teleoaffective structures of the social site of the group, making sustainable consumption a prominent teleoaffective structure. Choosing a meatless option was seldom discussed explicitly in the group; rather, it was something that was tacitly accepted as appropriate conduct when eating together. As discussed in the background chapter, food-sharing is very prevalent in Korean culture which is highly influenced by collectivist ideas. When eating with others, you usually get served your own rice but share a main dish, a stew, and a colorful selection of side dishes. The prevalence of eating in groups and sharing food is also visible in the materiality of the restaurants. Many restaurants in South Korea specialize in one menu that is to be shared and offer few variations on that menu item. This means that, if you go out to eat with other people in South Korea, the chances of going to a restaurant that serves limited amounts of dishes is fairly high. Thus, if that restaurant serves dishes with little or no meat, then that is what you eat. In that sense, several Korean restaurants, as social sites, script meal-sharing as appropriate conduct.

The examples above show how different social sites can script meat-reduced eating as appropriate, and how my participants 'followed' these scripts without necessarily giving it too much thought, or without having discussed what to eat with others. As argued by Halkier, '[r]outinized performing of food activities is done together with others, in front of others, and in relation to others.", which means practitioners coordinate their food performances through different types of social interactions (2020, 402). My participants displayed adhering to appropriate conduct in these different eating situations. As put by Warde, this appropriate conduct

> [...] is founded not so much in values, attitudes, calculations, and conscious design of strategies as in learned procedures. [...] Rather, it is an essentially embodied (though not thereby unconscious, nor bereft of mental process) capacity to respond in a given ongoing situation by implementing procedures anticipated as being suitable on the basis of previous experience for the generation of an effective stream of action. (2016, 149).

For instance, my findings suggest that coordination of eating practices within the household did not necessarily entail conscious integration of the different household members' eating performances, but rather a process of synchronization ending up with my participants, and the rest of their households, eating the same food. When the social site of the household 'scripts' meat-reduced eating as desirable or appropriate, meat reduction can be done without necessarily making conscious efforts into changing eating habits, or without doing coordination work (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Similarly, other social meal occasions where the social site scripts meatless or meat-reduced eating as desirable, meat reduction does not necessitate discussion or conscious effort. This does not mean that such discussions never took place, but that they did not need to take place. Moreover, it shows the agency of the social pillar, through "[t]acitly accepted social rules and values [...]" (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 30).

Even though performances of eating practices sometimes resulted in unconscious meat reduction, this does not mean that the participants did not eat meat. Although several of the participants stated that they were served little meat at home when growing up, they were also accustomed to eating a lot of meat – as mentioned earlier, most participants ate meat regularly, and often more than they wanted to. Moreover, even though meat reduction is becoming increasingly prevalent in South Korea (O. Han 2019; Gibson 2020; G. Lee 2021), and several participants described different social sites that scripted meat-reduced eating as appropriate, this was not the norm – a lot of social sites scripted meat-eating as appropriate. Therefore, my participants engaged in different types of coordination work to succeed with meat reduction. These different types of coordination work are discussed below, starting with alteration.

5.2.2 Change the frequency: Alteration as coordination work

As discussed in the theory chapter, the work done by the practitioners to succeed with meat reduction, which I call coordination work, entailed time and effort, and sometimes sacrifices. The most common way my participants did coordination work was through altering their eating performances to fit with their existing eating patterns. *Alteration* required time and effort from the participants in the sense of making changes to their repertoire of standard dishes or making changes in the way they performed eating practices with others. What distinguishes alteration from the other coordination work categories is that alteration does not require learning new skills, such as learning

how to make a new dish, nor does it require explicit negotiations in social situations. Rather, alteration entailed that my participants adapted and altered their behavior to their existing eating patterns, relying on their embodied knowledge and prevailing conventions on social meal occasions. Alteration was done both when the participants were the ones 'controlling' the acquirement and cooking of food, which I will explore first. It was also done through my participants making alterations to their behavior on social meal occasions, which will be discussed after

5.2.2.1 Altering the frequency of the existing repertoire

My participants performed meat reduction by eating the meat-based dishes in their repertoires less frequently, avoiding some of these dishes completely, avoiding certain types or cuts of meat (i.e., preferring leaner cuts of meat or eating white instead of red meat), and by making the veg(etari)an or fish-based dishes that they already knew how to make, more often (see also Mylan 2018; Wendler and Halkier 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). All of these alterations entailed changing the frequency of the dishes in their repertoire of dishes that they shopped and cooked for.

As mentioned, my participants relied on their existing knowledge to ensure this type of meat reduction. Ha-yoon [age 65, Korean, Seoul] talked about making the seafood or veg(etari)an dishes that were a part of her repertoire, more often:

> [I make] various kinds of Korean-style food, yeah, mainly rice and some Korean-style vegetables. And instead of meat, I'm trying to reduce the meat, so instead of meat, egg, or some fish. The egg is the most common to get protein.

In the interview, Ha-yoon, and a few other participants, described preparing meals following a traditional Korean meal pattern as described in the background chapter, including side dishes, rice, stew, and a meatless dish. Most of the Korean participants would make some side dishes to eat for several days, prepare fresh rice every day, and then supplement this with some option of protein. When Ha-yoon talks about replacing meat with other protein sources, she does not mean putting eggs or fish in traditional meaty dishes, as will be discussed below; she talks about replacing meat as a protein source in the spread of dishes.

Another way in which my participants performed alterations was by changing the frequency in the repertoire of restaurants that they went to. Similarly, to shopping and cooking, the participants would eat the meat-based dishes in their repertoires less frequently, avoid some of these dishes completely, avoid certain types or cuts of meat, and go to restaurants that served veg(etari)an or seafood-based dishes more often. The most common way in which my participants changed the frequency of their repertoire of restaurants was to eat more often at restaurants that serve dishes with little to no meat:

> I think soybean-based cuisines is very strong in Korea, so I think there is always one in neighborhoods. So they serve tofu soups, tofu stew, tofu broth noodles […] That's definitely my go-to-options [Do-woon, age 32, Korean, Seoul]

Go-to-options, common among my participants were restaurants that served noodle dishes. Several Korean noodle dishes contain little to no meat but are often made with a meat broth. Thus, also exemplifying a case of frugal meat use (see Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). These kinds of restaurants seemed to be more available to the participants than, for example, vegetarian restaurants.

Doing these alterations did not necessitate learning new skills in the form of cooking new dishes or finding new places to eat at, because the participants' repertoires also included meatless dishes before beginning their meat reduction projects, as discussed in the section about adherence. For instance, noodle restaurants were restaurants that the participants frequented before embarking on meat reduction and were described as common in different neighborhoods. Rather, alteration as coordination work required the participants to change the frequency of which ingredients to buy, which dishes to make, and which restaurants to go to. This entailed coordination work in the sense of re-orienting the repertoire of meals that were frequently eaten. The material cooking environment in their homes, the stores, and restaurants that they frequented, their practical know-hows, and perceptions facilitated this approach to meat reduction. However, alteration also entailed a sort of sacrifice, by giving up on eating the meaty dishes that they usually ate, or eating them less frequently, thus forsaking on some bodily cravings.

5.2.2.2 Altering eating performances on social occasions

The above description of alteration relates to the participants altering their own repertoires when they acquired and made food. Several of my participants also altered their eating performances when eating with others. This type of alteration is what Wendler and Halkier (2023) call adaptation; however, as mentioned earlier, Wendler and Halkier also talk about failed meat reduction. I will focus on how my participants put time and effort into successful meat reduction. Alteration was prevalent in situations where the participants were served meat that was to be shared between the people eating together. This type of alteration was done in different social situations, whether it be at other people's homes or when eating with others at restaurants. When my participants talked about doing this type of alteration, they most commonly spoke of a restaurant setting where meat was the central part of the menu, most often a Korean barbeque restaurant. Therefore, this section will center on such a restaurant, although this type of alteration also was done in other places. Korean barbeque restaurants often serve pork that you are supposed to grill yourself at the table and will offer different pork cuts to choose from – but few menu items apart from pork. In addition to the main dish, you get complementary side dishes to be shared, and you can order your own bowl of rice.

Picture by author

Korean food and cooking vlogger and YouTube personality Maangchi, gives a guide on how to eat Korean barbeque. What she describes is one way of eating barbeque by making a wrap (ssam):

> Traditional Korean restaurants will usually provide a basket of lettuce for this, sometimes even a few types of lettuce. To eat ssam-style Korean BBQ, first place a lettuce leaf in the palm of your hand. Add a piece of meat (dipped in the sesame oil dip if available), then add a dollop of ssamjang, some pajeori (shredded green onion salad), maybe a slice of garlic, and a piece of chopped green chili pepper. (Maangchi 2015)

For clarification, ssamjang is a type of dipping sauce. When finding themselves in these eating situations, a few of my participants would adapt their performances by making such wraps but only put in the meat occasionally. Seo-yoon [age 46, Korea, Seoul] states that:

> Even if you're vegetarian in Korea, you don't have to say it because you still have options in many restaurants. […] In Korean style restaurants, […] because we serve, not only meat itself, we serve meat with side dishes, so you always have the option [of not eating as much meat]

Moreover, the people who did coordination work described meat-intensive restaurant as "not bad" in terms of meat reduction. Seo-yoon goes on to explain how she navigates these situations:

> I just eat less meat, you know, just one or two [pieces] because no one asks you to eat more. […] It is more like socializing place. So, what I do is kind of eat less [meat]. And then if I am still hungry, then I eat something more at home, after I am back.

To succeed with meat reduction, the participants did coordination work in the sense of eating differently by "eating around the meat" (Wendler and Halkier 2023, 9). My participants ate less of the meat on the table, and forwent hunger, cravings or other bodily cues that became present when faced with abundant amounts of meat. Moreover, as mentioned by Seo-yoon, the people who altered their way of eating were not always full after eating at such a restaurant, so they sometimes did additional work by acquiring, preparing and consuming food at home.

Barbeque restaurants as social site script meat-eating as desirable, but scripts are always interpreted by the individual (Akrich 1992). The 'receiver' can negotiate scripts, like my participants did with the restaurant's meaty scripts by doing coordination work. Moreover, since there are several dishes on the table, these kinds of meat intensive restaurants might offer somewhat open templets of behavior. Seo-yoon pointed to the fact that barbecue places are more of a "socializing place", which suggest that the teloaffective structures attached to barbeque restaurants, such as social bonding and mingling, might enable the participants to 'get away' with eating less of the meat while still adhering to appropriate conduct.

Still, not roaming outside of what was considered 'appropriate conduct' in these social situations was very important to most of my participants. Seo-yoon is describing not having to state her eating preferences as a good thing, which might point to how wanting to eat a meatless or meat-reduced diet is considered outside of the scope of appropriate conduct in many different social situations. Indeed, my participants would rarely state their preferences for avoiding meat when dining with others. Moreover, several participants talked about not wanting to be the center of attention or create any social friction in such a social setting by stating their preferences (see also Yoo and Yoon 2015). This was also found in a similar study done in Norway (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023).

While altering their eating performances when eating with others was a common type of coordination work, it was not something all of my participants did. Social practice theory sees individuals as social creatures, but also as unique carriers of practice through previous engagements (Schatzki 1996; 2002). The difference in performance among my participants can therefore be partly explained by differences in their practice biographies. For instance, most of the participants who only ate a few pieces of meat when finding themselves at a Korean barbeque restaurant also stated that they really did not like the taste, texture, or feeling of eating pork belly (samgyeopsal) – the most commonly served meat at barbeque restaurants. Moreover, pork belly seemed to be the most contested type of meat among my participants and was often brought up as a particularly unhealthy type of meat, which might also be part of the explanation for why some participants did this kind of coordination work, and others did not.

In sum, alterations did not necessitate learning new skills or knowledge in the form of cooking new dishes or finding new places to eat at, because the participants' repertoires also included meatless dishes before embarking on their meat reduction projects, as discussed in the section about adherence. Moreover, alteration did not require the participants to stick their necks out and state their preferences for meat-reduced eating when meeting up with others. Rather, alteration was done by changing the frequency of the dishes they ate on a regular basis, or by making changes in the way they performed eating with others. However, alteration required time and effort, as well as sacrifices from the participants, through giving up on eating the meaty dishes that they usually ate, or eating them less frequently, thus giving up on some bodily craving. For some of the people who did coordination work by, for example, not eating as much pork belly at a barbeque restaurants, this seemed like less of a sacrifice because of their previous engagements in practices and perceptions around health.

5.2.3 Meat me halfway: Negotiation as coordination work

Another type of coordination work that my participants did was *negotiation*. Negotiation entailed experimenting with different ways of ensuring meat reduction, while still trying to accommodate for existing eating practices. Negotiation was done by substituting the meat in meals they already knew how to prepare, which will be discussed first. Negotiation was also done with friends, family, or restaurant staff, which will be discussed after.

5.2.3.1 Negotiating meat substitution

My participants negotiated by adapting meaty dishes to work with non-meaty foodstuff. I here understand substitution as using non-meaty materials to replace meat in familiar dishes, i.e., dishes that are a part of my participants' repertoires. Meat substitution has been emphasized as a central approach for consumers to succeed with reducing their meat consumption (Schösler, De Boer, and Boersema 2012; Daly 2020). As put by Twine (2018), ''[…] [substitutes] allow for a high degree of continuity […]" and "[t]hey afford less disruption to pre-established eating routines and consequently can potentially attract new practitioners." (172). Still, substitution required time and effort by my participants.

The first way of doing negotiating was by replacing the meat in traditionally meat-based dishes with egg, tofu, meat mushrooms, vegetables with meat-like texture, or legumes:

> I just make a bunch of stuff and put it in a tortilla. Instead of beef, I use chickpeas, I mean, to fill the space, like the chewiness, or something like that. But the chickpeas, I had to add a lot of flavors to them to kind of have the same amount of; I don't know… So, I have a lot of like sumak and I have a lot of random spices, that I'll just throw on, on […] like chickpeas or tofu, and then put it on eggs even, and put it into the dish as if they were meat […] [Charlotte, age 35, American, Seoul]

Charlotte describes having to figure out which spices to put in the dish to make a dish tasty enough to replace the meat, thus experimenting and expanding her skillset. She mentions having to add many flavors to, for instance, chickpeas, to make the meal as satisfactory as it would be if it had meat in it, which points to the teleoaffective structures attached to eating, such as satisfaction and enjoyment. Others also talked about missing the texture of meat and therefore buying vegetables with meaty textures. This displays the bodily dispositions of the participants connected to eating meat. Moreover, it indicates general understandings connected to what constitutes a proper meal, which often involves some kind of meat.

Other participants displayed coordination work by replacing meat with meat substitutes. While ingredients such as chickpeas might qualify for a variety of different uses, prefabricated meat substitute products deliberately 'script' meat substitution (Volden 2023, 261; Fuentes and Fuentes 2022). Rather than more extensive changes in the repertoire of dishes my participants made, meat replacements only required minor adjustments in their existing repertoire of standard dishes:

> […] Really basic ingredients like [fake] minced meat […] I can just put it whenever I want to eat: taco or, like, mala [referred to here as a type of Chinese soup]. [Da-eun, age 26, Korean, Daejeon]

Thus, meat substitution did seem to allow "[…] a high degree of continuity […]" (Twine 2018, 172). For the few people who used meat replacement products, these products did not seem to

interfere with those participants' embodied tastes, or require learning many new cooking skills, though finding the most fitting products may take some trial and error.

The coordination work entailed in using meat substitutes was most prevalent when acquiring the products. Food stores as social sites are influenced by general understandings surrounding convenience, health, and meal formats. The food shops are also shaped by other social sites such as the neighborhood in which they are located, teleoaffective structures such as profit, and affected by the laws surrounding retail, supply chains, and the people shopping and working in the stores. Moreover, the internal logistics, the layout of the store, and product design encourage some behaviors and hinder others (see, e.g., Fuentes and Fuentes 2022). As mentioned earlier, most of my participants had a repertoire of food stores that they frequented. These stores were not always described as suitable for buying meat replacement products. My participants described meat replacement products as pricey, often only found at some bigger supermarket chains or online, and all the participants who used such products described them as difficult to find. Thus, at the same time as the increased availability of veg(etari)an products enabled my participants' meat reduction projects, the food stores they frequented seemed to script meat-based eating as convenient and appropriate. Because of this, some of the participants had to do coordination work and re-orient their shopping habits to facilitate meat reduction by traveling to food shops that they usually did not frequent, or by ordering the products online.

In sum, meat substitution products did allow for a high level of continuity in cooking but required changes in shopping habits. Other forms of meat reduction, such as replacing meat with legumes, required more time and effort in cooking to replace meaty qualities. A lot of coordination work seemed to be involved in shopping and finding the right ingredients.

5.2.3.2 Negotiations with others

My participants also described explicitly negotiating with others as a way of "[…] making agreements with their acquaintances of how to co-perform […]" (Wendler and Halkier 2023, 9), and with staff at restaurants to ensure meat reduction.

A few meat reducers mentioned the possibility of asking non-vegetarian restaurants to go off-menu to accommodate meatless eating, both when eating alone and with others. Doing negotiations with restaurants, or the possibility to negotiate with restaurants, was most often mentioned in relation to restaurants where food was made on the spot, such as kimbap places (rice, vegetables, egg, and meat/fish wrapped in seaweed), jeon places (savory pancake), or fast-food places. Charlotte [age 35, American, Seoul], described going off-menu when going to jeon places with a friend group. Her friends consisted of veg(etari)ans and meat-eaters. When ordering at the jeon place, they would negotiate with the restaurants by asking them to not put specific ingredients in the jeons:

> […] it's like various kinds of Jeon where, if you ask the chef, they will sometimes take out like the seafood, or we will be like: 'can you not add the pork' […] because they make it [on the spot]

As put by Warde (2016), a restaurant "[…] frames and constrains performance." by constituting some shared ways of understanding and framing some eating performances as more appropriate than others (159). In the case of restaurants that made food on the spot, the participants seemed more open to negotiating the order, and saw going off-menu as a possibility. However, most of the participants who talked about this, only talked about it hypothetically. It seemed like negotiation was outside of the scope of what is considered appropriate behavior, thus requiring too much coordination work in the sense of social friction, making this an unlikely approach. Nevertheless, this was something that Charlotte and her friends did. An explanation for why they did this might be the shared perception within her friend group. Since several of the members shared similar projects of meat reduction that draw on general understandings of meat-reduced, or meatless, eating as sustainable, the social site of the friend group is attached to teleoaffactive structures of sustainable consumption. Moreover, the friend group would negotiate co-performance by ordering some vegan dishes and some meat dishes to accommodate for everyone's food preferences. This might be explained by teleoaffactive structures of care and affections that is attached to the social site of the friend group.

Similarly, a few other participants described being more comfortable with stating their preferences and negotiating which restaurants to go to when eating with close friends and family, as put by Seo-yoon [age 46, Korea, Seoul]:

> […] If I this is kind of my close friend, she or he knows, what kind of person I am, and what I like, so we go for Korean style restaurant, or we go to some … like one both of us like.

For clarification, a Korean style restaurant is a restaurant which serves food that Seo-yoon, perceives as healthier and less meat-intense. Traditional Korean restaurants might be attached to teleoaffective structures such as eating a healthy and balanced meal that might be different from those attached to, for example, a barbeque restaurant. In that sense, a traditional Korean restaurant is compatible with Seo-yoon's perceptions of a healthy meal. Moreover, by offering meatless options and facilitating this kind of eating, these restaurants, as social sites, script meat-reduced eating as acceptable, and maybe even desirable. Meat reduction is also enabled by the close friendship between Seo-yoon and her friends, and possibly by the fact that eating meat is an example of 'contested consumption' (Keller and Halkier 2014; Halkier 2022; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) that brings with it normative understandings and conventions, thus making it a potential topic for discussion.

In sum, negotiation required time and effort from the participants (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). Negotiation as coordination work shows how my participants went back and forth and experimented in different ways to allows for meat reduction, while still to a large degree accommodating existing eating practices. The different negotiation processes took place between the participants existing skills, tastes and perceptions, as well as the food environments, social sites, and other people. In contrast to alteration, which did not require learning any new skills, nor that the participants stuck their heads out, negotiation could require learning how to cook a new product or find that product in the store. It could also involve sticking their necks out by asking restaurant staff not to include meat in a dish or discussing where to eat with friends. Still, most participants had a narrow frame for where and with whom they would negotiate, for instance only with close friends.

5.2.4 Edible arrangements: Arrangement as coordination work

Lastly, *arrangement* covers bigger changes or initiatives in practice to allow for meat reduction. In other words, arrangement entailed the participants facilitating meat reduction by taking more initiative than in alteration or negotiation. Arrangement entails the participants adding to their

repertoire by, for example, learning how to cook new dishes or seeking out new restaurants, which is what will be discussed first. This category differs from substitution in the sense that substitution revolves around the practitioners replacing the meat in dishes they already know how to make, while arrangement requires adding new dishes to their repertoires. Arrangement also involves the participants being proactive in situations where they eat with others to ensure meat reduction, which will be explored after. This entails the practitioners taking "[…] the initiative in coordinating food activities […] "(Wendler and Halkier 2023, 10) to enable meat reduction.

5.2.4.1 Expanding repertoire

One way in which my participants made arrangements was through adding new dishes to their repertoires. For one participant, Eun-jeong [age 24, Korean, Seoul], this entailed building a repertoire, nearly from scratch:

> **Mina:**
>
> So you make food in your own home and you did before you started [eating less meat]?
>
> **Eun-jeong:**
>
> Not really.
>
> **Mina:**
>
> So did that prompt you to make food at home?
>
> **Eun-jeong:**
>
> Yeah, because like... As I had to quit eating meat, like eating out became very difficult option, so I chose to cook

Finding it difficult to avoid eating meat when she was dining outside of the house, Eun-jeong resorted to cooking instead. A few other participants also learned how to shop and cook new meatless dishes, but this was not common among my participants. Regardless, a few of the participants did learn how to make new dishes. Expanding the repertoire of dishes required coordination work in the sense of finding recipes, buying ingredients that they potentially had not cooked with before, and securing the skills needed for making that recipe. This might also involve

learning new skills such as cooking a particular vegetable or finding that vegetable in the store. By setting out to train for new skills the participants sought to "[…] make embodied procedures available […]" (Warde 2016, 131).

Similarly, some of the participants expanded their repertoires by seeking out new meatless restaurants. Finding new recipes and new restaurants required the participants to do coordination work by finding these meatless or meat-reduced options. Thus, displaying how although eating is highly habituated, there is "[…] [n]o doubt people sometimes set out intentionally and purposefully to improve their performances and do so by seeking relevant knowledge […]" (Warde 2016, 132). The few meat reducers who did learn new recipes, sought inspiration online, via social media, cookbooks, or friends. This was enabled by the increased public interest in veg(atari)an cooking and by relying on some social sites like friend groups to gain practical knowledge. Similarly, most of the participants who sought out new veg(etari)an restaurants relied on information from their friends, chat groups for people interested in sustainability, or by using applications to find veg(atari)an options. This connects to Shove, Pantzar, and Watson's point about how innovation in practices can come about through different communities and networks (2012, 66). Moreover, it shows how material infrastructure of phones, apps, and social media can create "[…] opportunities for the global sharing of food creativity[…]" (Twine 2018, 174).

Arrangement, through making new dishes required that the participants invested time and effort into finding recipes or restaurants, testing them out, potentially finding new products and learning new cooking skills, thus adding to their repertoire of dishes. This was enabled through interaction with different social sites. Moreover, seeking out meatless dishes and acquiring new skills might entail a form of sacrifice in the sense of giving up time they would otherwise be spending doing something else.

5.2.4.2 Arranging to ensure meat reduction in social settings

Some of my participants also made arrangements when eating with others but this was not very common. One way in which some participants tried to ensure meatless eating when dining out with others, was by suggesting a meatless option (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). Arrangement in this form was mainly done when the participants did not know the eating preferences of the people

they were dining with, or when they were eating out with people who did not have the same food preferences as themselves. For instance, Ha-yoon [age 65, Korean, Seoul] would subtly guide her colleagues to restaurants that serve meatless alternatives. Da-eun [age 26, Korean, Daejeon] would suggest restaurants when discussing where to eat in a group chat with her friends or acquaintances:

> I suggest many places in advance, before they suggest... Like four or five and every time there are at least one or two they like. So, I just go there. So it's a secret that I don't really say aloud […]. It's usually me who provide the list of restaurants first. So that I don't get into the situation where they suggest: "oh, how about samgyeopsal? […]" or something like that

By providing a list of restaurants before anyone else in the group chat, Da-eun hopes to avoid meat-intensive restaurants such as samgyeopsal restaurants, i.e., barbeque restaurants. Furthermore, she suggests several restaurants and hopes that a few seem appropriate for the people dining with her. Da-eun keeps her coordination work a secret from her friends or acquaintances, which suggests that even though she is comfortable with proposing restaurants, she is not comfortable with stating her preferences for not eating meat explicitly. This points to the general understandings related to what constitutes a proper meal, and of social harmony, which was discussed in the background chapter (see also Yoo and Yoon 2015). Da-eun is describing doing coordination work in the sense of researching places to eat at where meat reduction is doable, thinking about the different perceptions and dispositions in the group that she is eating with, and suggesting different restaurants before anyone else does. Without going beyond the scope of appropriate conduct, she can succeed in her meat reduction project.

Another way in which my participants made arrangements was by cooking. Most of the participants who worked with others, ate lunch with their colleagues daily. My participants described these eating occasions as rarely facilitating meat-reduced eating. To succeed with meat reduction, several participants would make their own food and bring it to work. In this sense, cooking became a type of coordination work, which entailed putting in more time and effort to shop for and cook up dishes, and foregoing temptations that come with eating out. This could entail eating alone, instead of joining colleagues for lunch, thus requiring a sort of social sacrifice.

Relatedly, one of the participants who was living with her husband, talked about how the two of them had started to eat separately after she embarked on her meat reduction project. Charlotte [age 35, American, Seoul], who lives with her Korean husband, is the only one of my participants who engaged in coordination work within the household. Before she started to eat less meat, Charlotte and her husband would eat dinner together when her husband was not working, but this changed:

> I'm OK with eating together, but he's like, he just thinks I'm weird. […]. It doesn't feel like food to him if there's no meat in it, so […] Yeah, he's like not full.

Evidently, not sharing the same project of meat reduction, Charlotte and her husband rarely ate dinner together anymore. Instead of eating together, her husband would eat at a restaurant, order food, or make his own food. In this case, Charlotte and her husband have different dispositions in terms of taste and perceptions related to what constitutes a proper and fulfilling meal. Moreover, they pursue different ends when eating. While Charlotte wants to eat healthily and sustainably by not eating meat, her husband does not feel satisfied when meat is left out of the meal. Relatedly, the need to eat meat to feel full has been linked to ideals of masculinity (see Kildahl and Syse 2017). To succeed with meat reduction, Charlotte does coordination work by arranging all her own eating activities within the home through shopping for and cooking her own food. Additionally, the coordination work entails a social sacrifice by not sharing meals with her husband.

In sum, my participants engaged in coordination work through arrangements, which entailed that they learned new skills, made bigger changes, or took more imitative in social co-performance to succeed with meat reduction. In some sense, finding new restaurants may be an easier approach to expanding one’s repertoire than finding and learning new recipes. Still, finding appropriate restaurants did sometimes require a good amount of time and effort. In terms of co-performance, the participants who took the initiative in choosing restaurants with others, all apart from one did so in a way that avoided creating any social friction. Thus, they still adhered to the scope of appropriate conduct. Other types of arrangements, such as making food instead of eating out with others, entailed investing more time and effort into cooking, and potentially making social sacrifices by eating alone.

5.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the factors that facilitated meat reduction for my participants, through looking at their motivations, the coordination work they did, and how adhering to existing practices occasionally allowed for meat reduction without any work. I showed how motivations were not only explained by the participants' knowledge about the different consequences of meat-eating, or one incident, conceptualized trough a catalytic event or a fracture, they were also a result of the social sites and food environments they engaged with, general understandings, and previous engagements in practice. As put by Christensen et al. (2023, 12) "There is a complicated relationship between routinization and reflexivity in relation to the reproduction and change of consumption." As discussed in this chapter, and in the literature review, meat-eating seems to be a form of 'contested consumption' (Halkier 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023). Bringing awareness and questioning taken for granted habits might break up the stability of a practice (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 29) and be part of the explanation for why some of my participants engaged in coordination work.

Motivation as an explanatory factor represents the intention behind my participants' time, effort, and sacrifices, i.e., coordination work for succeeding with meat reduction. Coordination work was done through alteration, negotiation, and arrangements. The different participants relied on different ways of doing coordination work, which can be explained by their previous engagements in practice and by the different social sites and food environments that they were a part of. An important remark on coordination work is that it primarily denotes the additional work put into making a change in the performance of practice. When practice performances are established and part of routinized behavior, additional time, effort, and sacrifice are to a lesser degree needed. However, meat reduction projects might require different types of coordination work and adaptations when encountering different social sites, life events, and changes in the socio-material environment.

Meat reduction was also facilitated by adhering to existing practices. Both examples of adhering to repertoire and adhering to the scripts of certain social sites illustrate that meat reduction does not require motivation (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). In other words, some of my participants'

eating performances, even those taking place before starting their meat reduction projects, enabled meat-reduced eating. Furthermore, meat reduction through adhering to repertoire or appropriate conduct in different social situations does not require any extra time or effort, i.e., coordination work. Looking at how adherence facilitates meat reduction, can be seen in relation to Browne, Jack, and Hitchings's point of looking at "already existing" practices to understand how change can accrue (2019). Beyond looking at eating practices in countries where meat-reduced or meatless diets dominate, or looking at vegans or vegetarians in meaty countries, which Hansen et al. (2023) uses as examples, another potential fruitful avenue can be seeking to amplify existing practices that allow meat reduction.

Previous engagements in practice are part of the explanation for the participants' motivations, and practices they performed that facilitated meat reduction; this is part of their practice biographies (Godin 2023; Greene and Rau 2018). Alteration by changing the frequencies in their repertoire of dishes is in a sense an extension of adherence, because the starting point is looking at what they did from before putting in time and effort to ensure meat reduction. Alteration was the most common form of coordination work. Even though this points to how meat reducers do not drastically abandon their meaty eating habits (see also Dagevos 2021; Halkier and Lund 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), the findings might also indicate that starting with the most familiar is an accessible avenue for change in diets.

When doing coordination work in relation to others, whether it be negotiation, alteration, or arrangements, most of my participants operated within a scope of appropriate conduct, which allowed for meat reduction without creating social friction. These limited operational spaces, which were restricted by social, as well as bodily and material factors, were rarely optimal in terms of meat reduction. The notion of having an operational space is what I hope to capture with the concept of coordination work; my participants are doing work that is constrained and enabled by the different agentive elements that constitute practice. Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal (2023) use Nicolini's (2013) concept of 'bounded creativity' when describing how the Norwegian flexitarians they interviewed approached meat reduction. I find this fitting for how my participants did coordination work, as bounded creativity refers to the agency individuals have in re-interpreting practices due to the different elements that come together to constrain performance (Nicolini 2013). Still, my participants could innovate and change their performances, i.e., do coordination work,

often through processes of negotiating scripts (Akrich 1992), to succeed with meat reduction. However, this required time and effort, as well as certain sacrifices. As discussed, explanations for why some participants engaged in some types of coordination work and others did not can be their individual practice biographies and the social sites they partake in.

The constraining factors of meat reduction are what I will explore in the next chapter, because even though my participants occasionally succeeded with meat reduction, most of them described it as difficult.

CHAPTER 6 Second main course
Barriers to meat reduction

The previous analytical chapter explored the different ways in which my participants performed meat reduction. By exploring how meat reduction required coordination work, chapter five pointed to some influences that complicated meat reduction. Since my research questions seeks to explore how dominant eating practices complicate meat reduction, this chapter is dedicated to a deeper exploration of the different factors that constrain meat reduction. Following Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal (2023), this chapter is divided into the three agentive pillars of social practice theory from Sahakian and Wilhite's (2014): 1) bodily factors, 2) material factors, and 3) social factors. Even though I have defined food environments as socio-material, I will place it under the material pillar because of the associations to components such as infrastructures and foodstuff. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, the different elements in practice overlap and all three agencies are always at work, but for analytical reasons it can be useful to distinguish between them.

6.1 Bodily factors

The bodily pillar assigns agency to factors such as taste, fullness, knowledge, and skills related to cooking, shopping, and finding places to eat out, cravings, tactile aspects of food preparation, and different perceptions such as what constitutes a proper meal (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Warde 2016). While the practitioners' perceptions are shaped by a myriad of factors and previous engagements in practice, I will discuss some of my participants' perceptions under the social pillar. This is because several of the most relevant perceptions around meat were visibly attached to general understandings of, for example, health. During the interviews, it became clear that the participants' bodily dispositions could be a hindrance to their meat reduction projects. In this subsection, I will look at how the participants' taste, cravings, knowledge, skills, habitual behavior, and cognitive processes worked as barriers for their meat reduction projects.

6.1.1 “I am a very willing participant overall”

Most of my participants said that they liked the taste and texture of meat and talked about having cravings for meaty foods. Ji-ho [age 34, Korean, Seoul] believed he occasionally deserved to eat the meat-based dishes he was craving, because he usually ate meatless food with his vegan girlfriend. Shi-woo [age 31, Korean, Seoul] would try to avoid unhealthy meaty foods on weekdays and would therefore allow himself to eat whatever he was craving on the weekends. However, cravings were not always a result of restraint. Meaty cravings often became apparent in different situations, for example when eating with others. Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul], who quite frequently eats meaty dinners at restaurants with her boss and coworkers, puts it this way:

> My particular work situation too, where my boss just really likes food a lot and I'm willing to participate. […] Even though I try to like separate myself from it, but at the end of the day, I'm a very willing participant overall […]

Like Hannah, many of my participants described themselves as being ‘willing’ participants of meat intensive eating experiences. As discussed in the previous chapter, a few participants talked about having a distaste for meat, particularly for meat types such as samgyeopsal (pork belly), but this was not the case for the majority of the participants, or most meat types. Mostly, the participants described food environments and social sites that scripted meat-eating as appropriate and desirable and could ‘trigger’ meaty cravings. These material and social factors are further explored in the coming subchapters.

While most of my participants talked about enjoying the taste and texture of meat, they also mentioned being unaccustomed to certain meatless options. This was especially prevalent when it came to meat substitutes. Meat substitutes are frequently cited as key to lowering meat consumption (see, e.g., Twine 2018; Daly 2020; Kanerva 2022), but research also show that people are skeptical of such products (Varela et al. 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023). Most participants had tried some type of meat substitute, whether it be traditional soy meat found in Korea or newer versions like 'Beyond Meat’ burgers. As discussed in the previous chapter, a few of the participants used such products when cooking, or sought them out when eating out, but several participants did not like the taste:

> I've only tried the ones that have traditionally been here in Korea, like soy meat … I've tried soy meat. I don't […] I hate them. They're not tasty. [Do-woon, age 32, Korean, Seoul].

The notion of meatless options being unsatisfactory replacements for meaty dishes was also apparent outside of meat substitution products. For instance, Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul] frequently went to McDonalds and ordered a meaty Big Mac. In an attempt to eat less meat, she went through a short period of ordering the fish fillet instead, an endeavor that proved unsuccessful. The fish fillet did not fulfill the same sensorial experience, taste, texture, craving, fullness, and overall satisfaction as the Big Mac: "I just really wanted a Big Mac, that was kinda what happened, and then I just went back to eating [it]". In other words, my participants had experiences with prefabricated meat substitutes not living up to their roles of replacing meat. This did, in some cases, hinder my participants' meat reduction projects by making them hesitant to experiment cooking with them or eating them when dining out. The same was the case for other failed attempts at replacing meaty sensations, such as Hannah's attempt at replacing the Big Mac with the fish fillet.

Commonly, my participants were willing participants in meat-eating. An explanation for this is that the participants were 'carriers' of meaty eating practices. Although several of the participants talked about being accustomed to a diet consisting of relatively little meat when they were growing up, they were clearly carries of meat-intensive practices as well. Most of the participants had bodily dispositions related to meat-eating that often manifested in cravings for meaty foods. From my participants' accounts, satisfaction and tastiness seemed to be important teleoaffective structures connected to eating, whether it was eating food inside of the home, or eating out. Since the participants had strong dispositions related to eating meat, and displayed a lack of dispositions connected to eating, for instance meat substitute products, the coordination work involved in foregoing familiar tastes, textures and bodily cravings, to succeed with meat reduction, often seemed too much.

As discussed earlier, coordination work requires forms of time and effort, and sometimes sacrifices, from the practitioner. Coordination work is an example of how awareness and willingness to change can result in putting time and effort into meat reduction. As discussed earlier, performance of practice requires some sort of motivation (Reckwitz 2017, 120). However, the practitioners may

not always be aware of these affective incentives or ends that are connected to practices (Schatzki 2002). My findings suggest that, in line with practice theoretical approaches, a lot of eating behavior is habitual, taking place without any extensive amount of thought (Warde 2016). In the same way, many of my participants' bodily dispositions connected to meat-eating were not something my participants considered, and some meat-eating seemed to 'go under the radar' in the moment of consumption (see also Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023).

Nevertheless, the participants also talked about having internal deliberations about meat reduction. In the above quote from Hannah, she states that: "I try to like separate myself from it […]", the 'it' being meat consumption. As discussed earlier, several of my participants ate more meat than they wanted to, which points to a cognitive dissonance which can be conceptualized as a 'value-action gap' (Middlemiss 2018), or a display of 'the meat paradox' (Loughnan and Davies 2019). Generally, the participants seemed to negotiate with their own meaty cravings, feelings of non-meaty foods as unsatisfactory, and the thoughts and feelings surrounding their intentions to eat less meat. These reflections could take place when eating, but also to a large degree as a form of post-rationalization. Seemingly, cognitive processes could motivate change in practices but also help to justify eating meat (see also Sundet 2021).

6.1.2 "With meat, you can do whatever to it [and it] tastes good"

Another complication within the bodily pillar was the participant's lack of skills and know-hows related to making or finding meatless options. As mentioned, my participants tended to stick to their repertoires and only sporadically deviate from or innovate their practices, for example by making new dishes for dinner, going grocery shopping at new stores, or trying new restaurants. As discussed earlier, several of the participants did have knowledge related to cooking or finding meatless or meat-reduced foods, but their repertoires heavily featured meat. Echoing previous studies in other contexts, the participants' competencies were strongly related to meat consumption (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Daly 2020; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Volden 2023).

The lack of skills related to cooking meatless food was most evident with Do-woon [age 32, Korean, Seoul] and I will therefore use him as an example. During the interview, Do-woon talked

about how the taste of seafood and some vegetable dishes could be satisfactory replacements for meat, yet he rarely cooked those kinds of dishes:

> When I cook alone, I don't like to touch seafood that much. […] And there are a lot of handlings I have to do. If I have to prepare fish at home, it's so much work I don't want to do it.

For Do-woon, his lack of skills, as well as lack of familiarity with the tactile aspects of preparing seafood, worked as barriers for his meat reduction projects. Moreover, Do-woon finds cooking meat to be easy:

> Meat is so much easier. […] [I] think the problem with vegetables is that you need to know what you're doing with your cooking. You need to like blanch it well... you need to be very careful when you're cooking. With meat, you can do whatever to it, [and it] tastes good.

Although cooking meat might for some be perceived as easier than cooking meatless food, Do-woon's statement "With meat, you can do whatever to it, [and it] tastes good" can be interpreted as a result of his previous engagements in practice. The easiness of preparing meat might be attributed to the fact that Do-woon already possesses skills and knowledge of how to prepare meat, as well as a taste towards meat, rather than it being credited to the inherent properties of meat, which make it easier to cook than other foodstuff. In general, my participants' meat reduction projects were hindered by their lack of know-hows related to cooking meatless food, in comparison to their skills and knowledge of cooking meaty meals.

6.1.3 Bodily factors: concluding reflections

In sum, my participants displayed 'meat-accustomed bodies' (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023, 250), both in terms of liking and craving the qualities of meat, and by having a lot of embodied knowledge related to preparing meaty foods or finding restaurants that served them. Tastefulness and satisfaction seemed to be important teleoaffective structures connected to eating. Thus, not being able to replace the properties of meat with meatless options, hindered meat reduction. Moreover, the lack of skills related to cooking meatless food, in combination with the coordination

work required to learn how to make new dishes, worked as a barrier to meat reduction (see also Volden 2023). As put by Wallenborn and Wilhite, “Bodies are the sites of social reproduction because they both experience situations and incorporate past experiences.” (2014, 60). My participants’ skills, tastes, and knowledge relate to general understandings and culture, which are discussed in the last part of this chapter. These factors are part of my participants’ habituated behavior because “[h]abits are ‘locked into’ bodies through the learning of gestures in interaction with a cultural history and a material environment.” (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014, 60).

6.2 Material factors

The material pillar is composed of agentive elements like technologies, infrastructures, and objects (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014, 28). My interviews revealed that material factors may interfere with my participants' plans of eating less meat. In this subsection, I will examine how these elements, such as the participants’ kitchens or lack thereof, the price of different goods, the foodstuff available in stores, and dishes available at restaurants acted as barriers for their initiatives to reduce the meat in their diets.

6.2.1 “I do not see many options”

My participants frequented different food environments – they lived in different types of housing and frequented different neighborhoods. Though most had access to at least a kitchenette, one participant did not have access to a kitchen at all. The varying kitchen size and kitchen facilities might be explained by material factors such as the participants’ financial situations, whether they lived alone or with others, or what their employments status was. Having limited access to a kitchen space might hinder the participants cooking experiments, as put by Emma [age 25, American, Daejeon]

> My kitchen is slightly separated from my […] bedroom. But you can't cook that much, I have, like an electric stovetop or a induction burner, but I do like to cook at home for the most part. […] it's just somewhat limited in like what I can do […]

The participants' living situations also seemed influential for how often they cooked their own foods. Lina [age 23, Lithuanian, Daejeon], for instance, was a student living in a dormitory without kitchen facilities. Because of these material constraints, Lina ate all her meals outside of the home. As mentioned earlier, although some participants cooking a lot, most of the participants would eat food outside of the home on a regular or semi-regular basis. However, only a couple of participants went to vegan or vegetarian restaurants regularly.

Even though my participants talked about seeing an increase in meatless options, most participants described meatless alternatives as laborious to seek out. For example, there is an increasing amount of veg(etari)an eateries in South Korea, but they still only account for about one percent of the restaurants in Seoul (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2021). Furthermore, such restaurants were described as even harder to find in Daejeon. Since most participants ate close to their home, workplace, or university, they were limited to the restaurants in those neighborhoods, which were described as having a sparse selection of meat-reduced dishes.

My participants described that the limited meatless options were a hindrance for their meat reduction projects: "If I want to have something vegan, then maybe I have […] like four or five options [in the neighborhood]" [Eun-jeong, age 24, Korean, Seoul]. Da-eun [age 26, Korean, Daejeon] described how her university campus had one restaurant offering vegan options, and that for one week she ate there several times, eventually getting tired of the food. Since satisfaction and tastiness are important teleoaffective structures connected to eating, the lack of variation in meatless options could conflict with these teleoaffective structures and create barriers for meat reduction.

Even the participants who lived in areas with a higher concentration of veg(etari)an restaurants described them as inaccessible. Do-woon lives in one of the 'hipper' neighborhoods in Seoul, with a relatively large concentration of veg(etari)an restaurants (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2021):

> Even though I live in a very... somewhat hipster neighborhood in Seoul. I do not see many options available that are affordable for everyday people [age 32, Korean, Seoul].

In addition to describing a lack of veg(etari)an restaurants in their areas, most participants described such restaurants as pricey, or too pricey for the quality of food. As mentioned in the previous chapter, participants who wanted to seek out veg(etari)an restaurants often had to do coordination work in the sense of looking them up, travelling longer distances, and maybe paying more for them. While a couple of participants would negotiate with staff at meat-serving restaurants to have them remove the meat from their dishes, most participants would not.

The limited availability and price aspect were also prevalent when it came to shopping for meatless options. As discussed in the previous chapter, shopping to accommodate new recipes was not always easy for the participants. The meat reducers who frequently cooked with meat replacement products, or included spices not commonly used in Korean cuisine, had to do more coordination work to re-orient their shopping practices. Moreover, meat replacement products were often described as pricey.

In sum, the participants described food environments offering limited amounts of meatless options. Thus, Fuentes and Fuentes' (2022, 520) phrase 'antagonistic landscapes' seems fitting for the food environments my participants moved around in. Obtaining meatless options often required coordination work as described above, this entailed time and effort that my participants did not always put in. Thus, the lack of meatless options worked as a barrier for meat reduction; as put by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson '[…] it is in any case *access* that matters […]' (2012, 47). Moreover, "[e]mbodied knowledge and skills are shaped conjointly with material spaces" (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014, 63), an insight that gives the material element its agentic powers.

6.2.2 "We actually don't care about the [broth]"

While a lot of my participants saw several meatless options as difficult to obtain, meaty options were described as widely available, exemplified by the sign hanging outside a barbeque restaurant that gave name to this thesis: "No pork, no life". Several of the meat reducers described an increased availability of meat-intense foods, such as processed meat and meat-intensive ready-made dishes, in stores. As discussed in the background chapter, convenience food is often closely linked to meat consumption (Hansen and Wethal 2023). Do-woon speculated that the amount of meat they put in traditional Korean dishes served at restaurants had increased over the years:

> […] I think Kimchi jjigae [kimchi stew], doenjang jjigae [fermented soybean paste stew], those traditional dishes, usually you don't really see chunks of meat, traditionally. But I think nowadays when you go out and eat those, a lot of times you see big pieces of meat in them. People are craving more meat, even from traditional dishes these days. Yeah... It's hard to eat vegetables here. [age 32, Korean, Seoul].

Do-woon was the only participant who described an increased amount of meat in traditional Korean dishes, but this resonates with Hansen's (2018) findings in Vietnam. Regardless, the participants talked about dining out, eating take-away, or ordering in as especially meat-intensive eating experiences. The link between increased meat consumption and eating food outside of the home is also an international phenomenon (Hansen 2018). It is also worth mentioning that even though there were different perceptions among my participants related to the price of cooking their own foods compared to eating at a cheap restaurant, several participants saw eating out as a financially viable option.

In the previous chapter, I wrote about how my participants would do coordination work in the form of arrangement. This type of coordination work entailed, for example, that my participants cooked food instead of eating out with others. However, my participants also described eating out or ordering in as convenient and tempting, and them occasionally giving into the enticing restaurant scene. Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul], for instance, normally eats all of her meals outside of the house, but described an attempt at making more food at home in to ensure successful meat reduction. She does not describe herself as a good cook, but she knows how to make one dish: tofu scramble. During the interview, Hannah talked about how she would make tofu scramble several times over a one-week period, but then stopped and went back to her routines of eating out:

> I just had the like strongest craving for it […]. I went, and I bought, like, a frying pan. I bought all of the spices for [it]. And I made it a bunch of times during that one-week period, and then I never made it again […]. So that's the only time I cooked for myself. For the whole… you know, a year and a half that I've been here

Hannah described buying tools and ingredients for tofu scramble, thereby facilitating the material environment so she could make the one dish she already has the skillset to make.

Still, she only cooked for herself for one week. For her, the coordination work involved in cooking, and changing up her routine, combined with the food environments that scripts eating out as convenient, acts as a barrier to meat reduction. Several other participants also talked about eating out or ordering as occasionally being more tempting and convenient than making their own foods. Thus, convenience can be conceptualized as an important teleoaffective structure attached to the practice of acquiring food. Relatedly, Shove (2003) writes about how unsustainable consumption patterns have evolved, partly due to a pursuit of convenience that occurs when the different demands in daily life create time constraints.

The meat consumption described above was something my participants were readily aware of but other meaty foods seemed to go more under the radar. As discussed, a few participants would say something to the extent of "I have this kind of rule, that I don't cook meat in the house" but would, after further scrutiny, talk about how they made some foods that contained meat. This was usually meat-based broths found in premade soup packages or ramyeon (instant noodles). Though the participants seemed to be aware that these foods contained meat, these were foods that often went 'under the radar' when stating that they never cooked meat in their house.

This sort of 'hidden' meat consumption was also apparent when the participants ate food outside of the home. An example from the previous chapter is the noodle dishes that often contained meat broth or tiny pieces of meat that my participants ate to eat less meat, which points to the material embeddedness of meat in plenty of dishes, and the lack of obtainable meatless options for the participants. Another example is Min-joon [age 21, Korean, Seoul], who talked about how he would use an app to find veg(etari)an restaurants when going out to eat with his vegan girlfriend. The app would regularly categorize dishes as vegetarian, but when Min-joon and his girlfriend showed up at the restaurants, there was actually meat in the dish. This was especially apparent for noodle restaurants where he and his girlfriend had given up on asking whether the broth was made from meat or not. Min-joon stated that: "We actually don't care about the broth", a sentiment that seemed apparent among many of my participants. In some cases, this seemed to be a compromise that came about due to a lack of options. In other cases, meat broth seemed like an integrated part of my participants' repertoires, and thus went unchecked.

These examples point to the embeddedness of meat-based broths in the repertoire of dishes the meat reducers made, and the material representation of meat in dishes that were not directly associated with meat, such as different noodle dishes and soups. Moreover, when Min-joon talked about using a flawed app for finding meatless restaurants, it displays how – in addition to help as discussed in the previous chapter – the material can complicate participants' meat reduction projects. Notably, the material manifestation of meat in many dishes also has to do with culture, and my participants' negligence towards meaty broths is related to their perceptions, but these elements are discussed under the social pillar.

6.2.3 Material factors: concluding reflections

In sum, the expression "meat-inducive food environments" (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023, 247) seems to fit the South Korean food environments described by my participants. In addition to limited options of meatless foods in stores and meals in restaurants, the food environments offers an abundance of meaty goodness that can be bought easily in stores, brought to the participants' home through speedy delivery services, or consumed at a cheap price in nearby restaurants. The food environment, which involves different foodstuffs, food-related infrastructure, and other technologies enable certain behavior and discourage others (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022). According to my participants, the food environments seemed to script meat-eating as appropriate and desirable.

6.3 Social factors

The social pillar assigns agency to aspects such as settings, norms, values, institutions, and cultural conventions that all prescribe practices (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Warde 2016). As discussed previously, I will explore the participants' perceptions in this chapter because the perceptions that appeared important in creating barriers for meat reduction seemed attached to general understandings. General understandings (Schatzki, 2002) are not explicitly mentioned as part of the pillars created by Sahakian and Wilhite (2014). However, since "[g]eneral understandings might include such things as concepts, values and categories." (Welch and Warde 2017, 183), it seems fitting to discuss here. Indeed, Bourdieu's concept of 'doxa' which Sahakian and Wilhite use in constituting a social pillar, points to the "[…] tacitly accepted and unspoken." (2014, 29).

My participants' intentions to consume less meat were hampered by social factors such as general understandings, conventions for behavior in different social settings, and different conflicting practices. These barriers will be discussed in the following section.

6.3.1 "A certain amount [of meat] can be recommendable"

As the meaty broths and the overall meat-inducive Korean food environments discussed above displays, meat consumption has become an integrated part of Korean food culture. Among several of the Korean and foreign participants, meat-eating was seen as healthy and nutritious. These perceptions seemed connected to general understandings of meat as part of a healthy and balanced meal and were also apparent in the participants' need to replace meat with other protein types. The perceptions can be connected to Korean dietary guidelines, which includes meat as part of a balanced diet, in addition to grains, fish, eggs, beans, milk, dairy products, vegetables, and fruits (FAO n.d.). As previous research shows, people who try to reduce their meat intake frequently worry about the amount of protein in meatless dishes (see, e.g., de Koning et al. 2020; Volden 2023). This worry, along with other perceptions about the nutrients in meat being good for their health, would for a few participants, make going vegetarian out of the question. For instance, Charlotte [age 35, American, Seoul] stated that "[…] maybe once a week, I intentionally kind of, try to have some meat for health reasons".

For a few of the older participants, these perceptions seemed connected to medical advice they had received from their doctor during a yearly health checkup:

> But he [the doctor] recommends eating meat because meat has lots of, you know... nutrients in a way, like proteins. And also ... it's good for your blood circulation. But, the way how to eat is more important. You have to eat meat with other vegetables, with other foods. We should not eat too much there. […] A certain amount can be recommendable... And also not a fatty part; it's a flesh part without much fat... That's kind of the guidelines from the doctor [Seo-yoon, age 46, Korean, Seoul].

Perceptions related to meat as healthy was especially prevalent for certain types of meat.

It seemed like the advice the participants received related to meat was connected to the types of meat and how it was prepared, favoring lean cuts of meat over fatty cuts, and boiling meat over grilling or frying it. This was particularly apparent when it came to pork. As mentioned in the introduction, Koreans eat more pork than any other meat, but pork also seemed to be the most contested meat in terms of health. Moreover, participants perceived red meat as less healthy than white meat. Several participants talked about getting information about meat and health from different internet or television sources, and since these perceptions were apparent among a large group of participants, these perceptions seem connected to general understandings of meat and health.

Welch and Warde (2017) write about Schatzki's (2002) definition of general understandings, that they are "[…] common to many practices, condition the manner in which practices are carried out and are expressed in their performance" (184). The perceptions displayed above also made its way into the participants different eating practices. A few participants talked about replacing one type of meat with another. An example of this is Shi-woo [age 31, Korean, Seoul] who described ordering chicken pho (Vietnamese noodle soup) instead of beef pho in an attempt to eat meat with lower environmental impact. A couple of other participants described substituting some cuts of meat with other cuts of meat:

> Even though when you make when we make the bossam [boiled pork dish], of course […] that is using the samgyeopsal meat [pork belly meat often used in Korean barbeque]. But there is so much fat... So, we don't use, (instead we use) moksal [leaner pork meat from the neck/shoulder]. [Ha-yoon, age 65, Korean, Seoul]

Even though some perceptions connected to general understandings of health could aid the participants' meat reduction project because they saw eating too much meat, or certain types of meat, as unhealthy, they could also create barriers for their meat reduction. By reducing some types of meat, the participants' health might improve, and their carbon footprint may decrease. However, these general understandings also seemed to inform some participants' perceptions of the nutrients in meat as unreplaceable, thus creating barriers for meat reduction. Moreover, the participants who put time and effort into replacing one meat type with another, saw this as part of their meat

reduction efforts, which could in some sense distract them from their efforts of actually eating less meat.

6.3.2 “I don't want to [stand out] in this kind of social circumstance”

My participants described meat reduction as the most difficult when eating with others, especially people outside of their immediate circle of friends, family, and partners, and with people who had different food preferences than them. This was the case whether they were invited to eat dinner at someone’s house, invited someone over for a meal at their house, ate lunch with colleagues, or met up with people at a restaurant. As described in the subchapter about *adherence,* my participants mentioned having a repertoire of restaurants that they went to when eating out with certain groups of people. In that section, there is a quote from Seo-yoon where she describes how no one in the group has a strong opinion about where to eat. Thus, the lack of discussions outside of what Seo-yoon refers to as “common places”, indicate that certain restaurants had become tacitly accepted. Generally, my participants described having little agency in deciding what to eat, as put by Lina: […] if I'm going with someone else, I usually let other people decide [age 23, Lithuanian, Daejeon]. Most of my participants described not having much or any say in where to eat when meeting up for a meal with others, a finding that is echoed by previous research in other contexts (see e.g. Warde and Martens 2000). Which restaurants were appropriate for which events were often described as given, and not something my participants were comfortable challenging. Thus, this quote from Warde seems fitting:

> When, where and with whom an event takes place will reveal some of the considerations, usually tacitly, subtends its character. […] While there are no simple or rigid rules of correspondence between the type of event and food consumed, there are shared understandings which restrict the range of foods which might be eaten at different types of occasions (2016, 63-64).

As stated in the previous chapter, some of the restaurants in the repertoires served meatless or meat-reduced foods, thus adhering to repertoire allowed for meat reduction. However, these repertoires were often described as meat-intense, and the participants talked about meat restaurants being staples on various social occasions.

Generally, stating clear preferences for where and what to eat when eating with others was not something most of my participants would do. The majority of my participants said something to the extent of: “I don't want to [stand out] in this kind of social circumstance.” [Seo-yoon, age 46, Korean, Seoul]; “I don't want to be picky” [Ha-yoon, age 65, Korean, Seoul]; and “I don’t want to make anyone feel uncomfortable because of me.” [Charlotte, age 35, American, Seoul].

As mentioned, many restaurants in South Korea specialize in one menu that is to be shared and offers few variations on that menu item. My participants often frequented these types of restaurants when eating with others. In the previous chapter, I discussed how some participants did coordination work when going to meaty restaurants by altering their way of eating and only eating a few pieces of meat, or negotiating with meaty-restaurants to ensure a meatless meal. However, most participants ate meat in these settings. The participants’ meaty cravings were only part of the explanation for why they ate meat in these situations. Another reason is the different social factors, as put by Charlotte [age 35, American, Seoul]:

> In Korea, everyone eats the same thing. So, if one person wants, like meat, you cannot (not) oblige them. […] The main thing is just the social aspect that is really hard, to be, like, different, to not eat whatever everyone else is eating.

As discussed in the previous chapter, social bonding and care seemed to be important teleoaffective structures related to eating. The teleoaffective structures can be influenced by general understandings (Welch and Warde 2017, 186). Moreover, since general understandings could be used to describe widely accepted cultural notions (Hansen 2022, 31), teleoaffective structures can be linked to cultural and social values. Echoing previous research on meat avoiders and meat reducers in South Korea, the cultural and social values attached to ordering and eating the same meals, appeared to complicate meat reduction (Yoo and Yoon 2015). In their article about the challenges of becoming vegetarian in South Korea, Taebum Yoo and In-Jin Yoon (2015) emphasize the collective aspects of Korean culture as an important barrier because disturbing group harmony is frowned upon. Collectivism holds great influence on the South Korean society (Yao 2000; Park et al. 2017), but not wanting to stick out in such social situations are not exclusive to collectivist cultures such as the Korean. Other studies in different context have also found that people are hesitant to impose their eating preferences on others (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Wendler

and Halkier 2023; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). In sum, the restaurants my participants most often frequented, such as Korean barbeque restaurants, could be conceptualized as 'scripted social sites' (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) that scripted meat-eating as appropriate.

6.3.3 "We have a time limit"

As touched upon earlier, eating required moving between different social sites. In the examples above, the participants ate at the social site of a restaurant with the social site of, for instance, their colleagues. Shopping requires interacting with the social site of the food store, or some online platform for ordering groceries, and cooking happens within the social site of the household. Together, these interactions and different places co-shape eating performances. Moreover, eating is only a small part of the practices that the participants perform in the course of a day.

Competing practices such as cooking, shopping, working, parenting, commuting, and studying seemed to complicate my participants' meat reduction projects. For instance, eating lunch at a restaurant with their colleagues required eating within the time span of an hour to make it back in time for work: "We have time limit too, like in a time constraint, you have to finish everything in an hour." [Seo-yoon, age 46, Korea, Seoul]. Thus, the participants are bound by time and space, the intersection of practices of working, eating and socializing, and by moving between different social sites such as the restaurant and the office. This complicated the participants' meat reduction projects by limiting the number of restaurant options available to them, and by not wanting to be a bad colleague by imposing their eating preferences on others. Intersecting practices that created constraints for my participants were also apparent in other aspects of the participants' lives. The different demands of everyday life and subsequent time constraints, did for instance, make the participants reluctant to make new recipes or travel far to go to a specific store, or restaurant, which created barriers for my participants' meat reduction projects by hindering them from trying out new meatless options. As put by Greene et al. "[…] recognizing the temporal patterning of practices is important for understanding routine social life and the consumption that takes place within it." (2022, 226).

Hannah [age 26, Canadian, Seoul] works as a research assistant for a professor, and talked about having dinner with her coworkers as one of the most difficult situations to avoid eating meat in:

> I agree yeah with other people a lot of the time […]. [Especially] with like the professor or like with higher up people. And at that time, […] I have to finish my food. […] The hardest is definitely if I'm going out with my coworkers, or with my boss […] I have no say in what I eat pretty much.

When going out to eat with her boss – the professor – and other coworkers, the professor is usually the one who decides where to eat. Hannah uses 'higher up people', which can denote to the Korean term 'witsaram' (윗사람), which refers to one's superior or elder. The fact that, Hannah uses "higher up people" to describe people such as the professor she works for, indicates general understandings of social order or hierarchy, which connects to the influence of Confucianism on South Korean society (see also Park et al. 2017; Yoo and Yoon 2015). This can mean that contradicting a person in a higher social position than herself is outside of the scope of appropriate conduct. The general understandings related to social orders then complicates Hannah's meat reduction project. Moreover, the meanings, such as amiability and reliability, that are attached to the teleoaffective structures of working, conflicts with not eating meat.

In sum, the different practices that my participants performed every day, as well as the different social sites they move around in, complicate my participants' meat reduction projects. Socio-temporal rhythms organize and structure performances of practices (Southerton 2020), and other practices, including socializing, working, studying, commuting, parenting, and exercising bring with them their own ends that can conflict with or harmonize with the ends attached to eating. This displays how agency is distributed between different practices and their elements (Sahakian and Wilthite 2014), and shows the importance of looking at how different practices are intertwined to understand how various elements influence how sustainability is performed in daily life (Klitkou et al. 2022).

6.3.4 Social factors: concluding reflections

Social practice theory considers social interactions fundamental to carrying out practices (Keller and Halkier 2014, 40). General understandings such as those related to meat as being healthy, and food sharing as important for social bonding, influenced the different social sites my participants

where a part of, and their practice performances in a way that complicated meat reduction. Different practices and social sites bring with them strongly embedded expectations about how to perform certain practices, such as eating. Moreover, social sites script some ways of doing as more acceptable, desirable, and convenient (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). These scripts then condition the most likely outcome of practice. Most of my participants described eating with other people as particularly challenging for meat reduction and did not want to create any social friction by going against the expectations embedded in practices. In this sense, the meat reducers would, in most social eating situations, adhere to 'appropriate conduct' (Warde 2016, 149) by eating meat. Moreover, the participants' meat reduction projects were complicated by the different practices that were a part of their daily lives which put temporal and social constraints on meat reduction.

6.4 Chapter summary

In sum, agency is distributed between the different elements in practice which all come together to qualify different ways of doing. This often resulted in my participants eating meat, sometimes without giving it much though, other times with a sense of cognitive dissonance, or as willing participants. My participants' perceptions, knowledge, skills, craving, and taste were highly linked to eating meat. This is a result of their previous engagements in practices and their interactions with the food environments and different social sites. The South Korean food environments seemed to largely script meat-eating as desirable, acceptable, and convenient with meatless or meat-reduced options being largely unavailable or difficult to obtain compared to tempting meaty options. Moreover, many of the social sites my participants engaged with carried similar scripts of meat-eating as desirable and acceptable. Creating social friction by stating preferences for meat-reduced eating was largely unthinkable for my participants. Thus, some scripts seemed unnegotiable to my participants; or in other words, in some situations, doing coordination work, was a non-option.

Moreover, general understandings such as those related to healthy and balanced eating, and meat as part of this, as well as the importance of maintaining social harmony, created barriers to meat reduction. Additionally, the interactions of different practices in day-to-day life made meat-reduced eating difficult. The notion of a distribution in agency between the body, material and social factors,

has proved helpful in explaining why the participants' motivations were insufficient in succeeding with meat reduction.

These findings largely echo studies done in other contexts (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023), and they underline the importance of understanding unsustainable forms of consumption as a result of adhering to normalized behavior (Shove 2003, 198).

CHAPTER 7 Dessert
Conclusion

In this chapter, I will first summarize the most important findings and arguments. Then I will look at the theoretical implications of this research. Lastly, I will briefly discuss some broader implications and suggestions for further research.

7.1 No pork, no life? Summarizing the most important findings and arguments

"[…] I was convinced that there was more going on here than a simple case of vegetarianism." (K. Han 2015, 16). I will use this quote to highlight one important finding: meat-reduced eating is complex, and enabling and constraining influences cannot be reduced to single factors. Framings of consumers as mindful decision-makers that can choose the most sustainable options given that they have sufficient information and the right attitudes and motivations, leaves much to be unexplored (see, e.g., Shove 2010). I have used a social practice theoretical framework to look at the complexity of factors that influence self-declared flexitarians' meat reduction endeavors. My research questions have been:

1. *What motivates meat reduction in South Korea and how do flexitarians perform meat reduction in everyday life?*
2. *How do dominant eating practices in South Korea enable and constrain meat reduction?*

I have displayed how motivations for meat reduction are embedded in previous engagements in practice, sometimes stemming from childhood, an increasing prevalence of non-meat options in the socio-material environments, and an increase in understandings of meat-reduced eating as healthy, sustainable, and good for animal welfare.

Based on the data analysis, my participants performed meat reduction in four different ways: *adherence*, *alteration*, *negotiation*, and *arrangement*. Alteration, negotiation, and arrangement

were examples of how motivation occasionally led to successful meat reduction. I have conceptualized these successful endeavors as 'coordination work', meaning *the additional time, effort, and sometimes sacrifices, put in by individuals to ensure change in the performance of practice.* The concept of coordination work highlights the effort that dietary changes require from the consumer. This result aligns with Wendler and Halkier's (2023, 1) findings that "dietary transition requires work".

The type of coordination work done varied between the participants, which was partly explained by their 'practice biographies' (see, e.g., Greene and Rau 2018), and the food environments and social sites they engaged with. Most commonly, my participants leaned on their existing knowledge, perceptions, and tastes in the way they did coordination work, which meant that smaller adjustments were favored over bigger ones. This was partly explained by the habitual nature of eating, but also by the interaction of eating and other practices in day-to-day life. A related finding was that, while meat-eating is deeply embedded in South Korean society, my participants also displayed knowledge, tastes, and skills that were related to meat-reduced eating. These pre-existing characteristics were what the flexitarians largely built on when doing meat reduction. This finding displays the importance of looking at the potential for change by exploring 'already existing' practices (Browne, Jack, and Hitchings 2019).

On the other hand, existing practices highly complicated meat reduction. Although my participants made efforts to succeed with meat-reduced eating, constraining factors on practice performance often resulted in suboptimal meat reduction. This underlines how the social, material, and bodily agencies embedded in practices, and the interaction between different practices in daily life, create a limited operational space for practitioners. Thus, they have 'bounded creativity' in re-interpreting practice (Nicolini 2013, 225). Moreover, the routinized aspects of eating practices resulted in several meaty practices going 'unchecked' by the participants. In sum, the intention to change diets was not sufficient for meat reduction, as several previous studies also show (see, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Wendler and Halkier 2023).

Generally, my participants *adhered* to 'appropriate conduct' (Warde 2016, 149) in most social situations, whether it be through conscious reflections, or most often through unconscious adjustments. In situations where meat-reduced eating was appropriate, my participants would eat

less meat. In situations where meat-eating was appropriate, which most often was the case, my participants would eat meat (see also Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). Thus, the flexible identity inherent in the meat reducers seemed to make them susceptible to change in behavior according to what was deemed as appropriate conduct in different situations (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023, 252). This also implies that meat-reduced eating does not require motivation (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023).

To sum up, I will try to answer the question posed by the title of this thesis: does no pork, here understood as no meat, equate to no life? Meat-eating was a highly integrated part of most of my participants' lives, and their perceptions of what constituted a healthy and balanced diet. In some cases, successful meat reduction, through coordination work, entailed that they gave up on certain aspects of their lives, such as eating meals with others. Thus, no pork did in some cases entail no life. Still, some of my participants' attempts at meat reduction were successful, and parts of their lives involved no meat, even before embarking on meat reduction.

7.2 **Feeding into theory:** Theoretical implications

I have drawn on existing theory and sought to bring new insight into the different ways meat reduction is enabled and constrained. My findings align with previous research on flexitarians and underline the importance of looking beyond individual agency when exploring how meat reduction is facilitated and complicated (See, e.g., Mylan 2018; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023). My participants largely adapted their eating performances to appropriate conduct, often through intuitively conforming. This echoes previous research in other contexts (see, e.g., Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023).

Still, I have sought to bring the individual back into practice theory approaches (see Hansen 2022 for discussion.), to further scrutinize how transitions to meat-reduced diets can be enabled. In doing so, I have suggested using the concept of 'coordination work'. Building on the concept of 'consumption work' from Glucksmann (2013) and Wheeler and Glucksmann (2015), and 'work' and 'social coordination work' from Wendler and Halkier (2023), I have sought to highlight the labor that is required by individuals to ensure a change in the performance of practice, in this case to ensure successful meat reduction. I have defined coordination work as *the additional time, effort,*

and sacrifices put in by individuals to ensure change in the performance of practice. The concept is similar to consumption work because it can be used to highlight the workload allotted to consumers in processes of change, but different because coordination work requires that the individual carries a form of motivation and intention to change the performance of practice. Coordination work is similar to the forms of work conceptualized by Wendler and Halkier (2023) in the sense that it looks at the time and effort that is required by the individual to succeed with meat-reduced eating. However, coordination work seeks to look at how the different elements of practice – the social, material, and bodily, all come together to circumscribe practice performances.

Coordination work has proved useful for highlighting that, even though eating practices are highly routinized (Warde 2016), individuals can put time, effort, and occasional sacrifices into succeeding with meat reduction (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). However, these efforts were highly constrained by the different agencies embedded in practices and the intersections of different practices in day-to-day life. These restrictions on practice performances often resulted in suboptimal meat reduction. Thus, Nicolini's (2013) phrase 'bounded creativity' seems fitting for the coordination work done by my participants – putting time and effort into meat reduction, required them to coordinate with the different elements in practice, their own embodiments, different social sites, and different socio-material arrangements.

I highlighted some of these restrictions on practice performances by using the concept of 'scripting' (see e.g., Akrich 1992; Latour 1992; Verbeek 2006). Inspired by other practice theoretical approaches to meat reduction and consumption (Fuentes and Fuentes 2022; Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023; Hansen and Wethal 2023), I have used the concept 'scripted social sites' (Sundet, Hansen, and Wethal 2023) and 'scripted food environments' (see Funtes and Fuentes 2022; Hansen and Wethal 2023). These concepts have highlighted how food environments and social sites create 'frameworks of action' (Akrich 1992, 208), that make some behaviors more likely than others. In an extension of this, coordination work can then be understood as a way of negotiating scripts (Akrich 1992), made possible by the fact that "[p]ractices are literally reproduced on each novel occasion." (Nicolini 2013, 226).

Generally, I found using 'coordination work' to be productive in exploring complicating and enabling factors for change in the performance of practice. I think the concept can be useful in further studies of sustainable consumption.

Another interesting finding was that the kind of coordination work done varied between my participants. Although there were some apparent trends, there was also a large degree of variation. Looking at the participants' 'practice biographies' (see, e.g., Greene and Rau 2018) proved useful in explaining some of these differences. Moreover, practice biographies were valuable in understanding my participants' motivation and how they did meat reduction (see also Godin 2023). However, it is important to note that practice biographies only explain part of the variations in practice; the practitioner is always in interaction with different social sites and socio-material environments, which also explain variations in how coordination work was done.

Still, I believe looking at practice biographies in the light of coordination work can be a fruitful theoretical approach to understanding the facilitating and complicating factors of meat reduction, and other forms of sustainable consumption more generally. However, looking far back into the lives of my participants was not a central focus during my interviews. Thus, how changes in the participants' commitments to practice related to changes in the social sites they engaged with, and to socio-material developments, go underexplored in my thesis.

7.3 Food for thought: Broader implications and further research

My findings suggest that exploring existing or previous engagements in practice, that already allow for sustainable consumption, can be a good starting point for understanding how transformations can occur (see also Browne, Jack, and Hitchings 2019). The concept of coordination work highlights successful meat reduction, but it also displays how processes of change require individuals to invest time, effort, and sacrifices into acquiring new skills and knowledge, while adapting to different social eating situations (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). My findings suggest that the prevailing understanding of individuals as mindful decision-makers that can choose the most sustainable options, given that they have sufficient information and the right attitudes and motivations (see, e.g., Shove 2010), is insufficient for understanding transformation in dietary patterns. One important takeaway from my research is that the workload allotted to the consumer

needs to be lessened (see also Wendler and Halkier 2023). Providing the consumer with information or increasing the market for novel non-meat options are not sufficient for ensuring transformation towards more sustainable diets. Larger structural changes must occur to ensure that meat-reduced diets are increasingly normalized at the expense of meat-centric practices and food environments. Unless meatless or meat-reduced eating is the appropriate, accessible, and easiest way to eat, fundamental changes in dietary patterns seem unlikely to occur.

This thesis has provided insight into the motivations for and practices of meat reduction in South Korea, through in-depth interviews, observations of food environments and partaking in eating practices. The methods have proven useful for looking at the different facilitating and complicating factors for meat reduction. Numerous issues, including the small sample size and choice of methods constrain the research. Given this, further research could for instance include a larger sample size, further exploration of the provision side of meat and meatless eating, and a combination of in-depth interviews with quantitative methods to look at the amount of meat consumed by flexitarians. Moreover, since my sample largely consisted of well-educated young women in urban areas, it would be beneficial to broaden the sample to include more diversity in age, education level, and people living in rural areas. To further develop understandings of the connections between coordination work and practice biographies, future research using longitudinal approaches can prove fruitful. This thesis sought to contribute to understanding flexitarian diets outside of Western contexts; yet, more research examining other non-Western contexts is needed. Lastly, while my research has provided some useful insight into policymaking, policies for ensuring meat-reduced diets are largely underexamined in this thesis. Therefore, research focused on applying insight from practice theory into policymaking is useful.

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APPENDIX I Consent forms

Meat reducers:

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

"Meat reduction in South Korea"?

Purpose of the project

You are invited to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to investigate factors that make it easier or more difficult for households in South Korea reduce their meat intake. I wish to gain deeper knowledge of how meat is ingrained in South Korean eating practices by looking at how everyday behaviours are linked to meat consumption, and to identify strategies for sustainable meat consumption in South Korea. I also want to explore the challenges and opportunities for restaurants that serve vegetarian options by talking to restaurant owners.

The research is conducted as part of a master's thesis at the Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo is responsible for the project. The project is conducted by Mina Fosse Kristoffersen, master's student at the Centre for the Development and the Environment.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in the project because you are interested in reducing your meat consumption and are living in South Korea, or because you are an owner of a restaurant that serves vegetarian food.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in the project, this will involve participation in an interview. The interview will take between 45 and 60 minutes. Households will be asked questions about habits and thoughts related to their food consumption. You will also be asked about thoughts around general environmental challenges, but no discussion of sensitive topics beyond this. I will record with a voice recorder and take notes during the interview.

Audio recordings will be deleted after the end of the research project.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

Only the student, Mina Fosse Kristoffersen, and the supervisor, Dr. Arve Hansen, will have access to the personal data material

I will replace your name and contact details with a code. List of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is May 25th, 2023. At the end of the research period, recordings and personal data will be deleted and only the anonymized data will be stored.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the Centre for the Environment and Development at the University of Oslo. Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Master student, Centre for Development and the Environment, Mina Fosse Kristoffersen (minafk@student.hf.uio.no)
- Centre for Development and the Environment, supervisor Dr. Arve Hansen (arve.hansen@sum.uio.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer at the University of Oslo: Roger Markgraf-Bye (personvernombud@uio.no)

Yours sincerely,

Arve Hansen (Supervisor)

Mina Fosse Kristoffersen (Student)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project "Meat reduction in South Korea" and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in an interview
- ☐ that the interview will be audio recorded

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)

Representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants:

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

"Meat reduction in South Korea"?

Purpose of the project

You are invited to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to investigate factors that make it easier or more difficult for households in South Korea reduce their meat intake. I wish to gain deeper knowledge of how meat is ingrained in South Korean eating practices by looking at how everyday behaviours are linked to meat consumption, and to identify strategies for sustainable meat consumption in South Korea. I also want to explore the challenges and opportunities for restaurants that serve vegetarian options by talking to restaurant owners.

The research is conducted as part of a master's thesis at the Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo is responsible for the project. The project is conducted by Mina Fosse Kristoffersen, master's student at the Centre for the Development and the Environment.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in the project because you are interested in reducing your meat consumption and are living in South Korea, or because you are an owner of a restaurant that serves vegetarian food.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in the project, this will involve participation in an interview. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. Households will be asked questions about habits and thoughts related to their food consumption. You will also be asked about thoughts around general environmental challenges, but no discussion of sensitive topics beyond this. I will record with a voice recorder and take notes during the interview.

Audio recordings will be deleted after the end of the research project.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

- Only the student, Mina Fosse Kristoffersen, and the supervisor, Dr. Arve Hansen, will have access to the personal data material
- I will replace your name and contact details with a code. List of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is May 25th, 2023. At the end of the research period, recordings and personal data will be deleted and only the anonymized data will be stored.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the Centre for the Environment and Development at the University of Oslo. Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Master student, Centre for Development and the Environment, Mina Fosse Kristoffersen (minafk@student.hf.uio.no)
- Centre for Development and the Environment, supervisor Dr. Arve Hansen (arve.hansen@sum.uio.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer at the University of Oslo: Roger Markgraf-Bye (personvernombud@uio.no)

Yours sincerely,

Arve Hansen (Supervisor)

Mina Fosse Kristoffersen (Student)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project "Meat reduction in South Korea" and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in an interview
- ☐ that the interview will be audio recorded

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)

APPENDIX II Interview guides

Meat reducers – in person interviews:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEAT REDUCION IN SOUTH KOREA

INTRODUCTION

- Introduce myself and the project
- How the material from the interviews will be handled
- Guarantee anonymity
- Right to stop the interview at any given time
- Length of the interview (between 45 and 60 minutes)

BACKGROUND

- Can you introduce yourself – background, family, living situation, job/studies, interests, who lives in the household and how long have they lived together?

ROUTINES

- What does a typical day look like to you and what do you eat during the day?
- Where do the meals take place? Eating outside of the home, eating on the go, eating at work/school and eating at home

FOOD AT HOME

- How do meals usually take place at home? (homemade, premade food, take-away, delivery food)? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- To what extent do you (or person in your household) plan your meals and shopping? Do you have any go-to dishes?
- How is the responsibility divided between the different people in the household? How do the different people in the household think about meat consumption?

FOOD OUTSIDE OF THE HOME AND FOOD SHARING

- How often do you eat food outside of the home? Where and what do you usually eat? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?

- Can you describe a social gathering where food is involved? Do you remember the first time you tried to avoid meat in a social situation? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- Can you tell me about any social norms or cultural practices that you follow when eating?
- What did you eat growing up? How has it changed over the years?
- What does a meal with your family/parents look like today? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?

MEAT REDUCTION AND REFLECTION

- What are the most important components in a meal? What food makes you feel satisfied/ what food is delicious?
- What is your motivation for reducing your meat intake, and what specifically are you trying to eat less of?
- How long have you tried to eat less meat?
- In which situations do you usually eat meat, and in what situations do you try to avoid eating meat? What would make eating less meat easier?
- Is meat consumption a topic for the people you surround yourself with or in debates you follow?
- What does ethical consumption behavior look like? What is sustainable food consumption?
- Who has the influence to change consumption patterns?

CLOSING

- Any challenges or experiences with reducing your meat consumption that you have not mentioned?
- Anything else you want to add?
- Anything you want to ask me?
- Do you have any feedback on the interview?

Meat reducers – written interviews:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEAT REDUCION IN SOUTH KOREA

BACKGROUND

- Can you introduce yourself
  - Age
  - Background,
  - Where you live and with who? Partner/children etc.
  - How long have you lived together?
  - What is your profession?
  - If you studied, what did you major in?

ROUTINES

- What does a typical day look like to you and what do you eat during the day?
- Where do the meals take place? Eating outside of the home, eating on the go, eating at work/school and eating at home

FOOD AT HOME

- How do meals usually take place at home? (homemade, premade food, take-away, delivery food)? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- What and where do you usually eat lunch? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- To what extent do you (or another person in your household) plan your meals and shopping?
- Where do you usually shop and how often?
- What do you usually eat at home? Do you have any go-to dishes?
- How is the responsibility divided between the different people in the household? How do the different people in the household think about meat consumption?

- What and where do you usually eat during the weekend? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?

FOOD OUTSIDE OF THE HOME AND FOOD SHARING

- How often do you eat food outside of the home? Where and what do you usually eat? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- Can you describe a social gatherings where food is involved? (Colleges, family, friends etc.) Do you remember the first time you tried to avoid meat in a social situation? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?
- Can you tell me about any social norms or cultural practices that you follow when eating?
- What did you eat growing up? How has it changed over the years?
- What does a meal with your family/parents look like today? How do you find eating less meat in these situations?

MEAT REDUCTION AND REFLECTION

- What are the most important components in a meal? What food makes you feel satisfied/ what food is delicious?
- What is your motivation for reducing your meat intake, and what specifically are you trying to eat less of?
- How long have you tried to eat less meat?
- In which situations do you usually eat meat, and in what situations do you try to avoid eating meat? What would make eating less meat easier?
- Is meat consumption a topic for the people you surround yourself with or in debates you follow for example on TV?
- What does ethical consumption behavior look like? What is sustainable food consumption?
- Who has the influence to change consumption patterns?

CLOSING

- Any challenges or experiences with reducing your meat consumption that you have not mentioned?
- Anything else you want to add?

- Anything you want to ask me?
- Do you have any feedback on the interview?

Representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants – in person interviews:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEAT REDUCION IN SOUTH KOREA

INTRODUCTION

- Introduce myself and the project
- How the material from the interviews will be handled
- Guarantee anonymity
- Right to stop the interview at any given time
- Length of the interview (between 45 and 60 minutes)

MENU AND CUSTOMERS

- What does the menu consist of? Do you serve vegetarian food/meat alternatives?
- How would you say the restaurant has changed over time?
- How would you describe the competition in the meatless market? Who are your competitors?
- What are the challenges/possibilities for the restaurant? How would you say these challenges/possibilities have changed over time?
- What plans does the restaurant have for the future? What are the challenges/opportunities?

CLOSING

- Any challenges or experiences with serving vegetarian options that you have not mentioned
- Anything else you want to add?
- Anything you want to ask me?
- Do you have any feedback on the interview?

Representatives from veg(etari)an restaurants – written interviews:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEAT REDUCION IN SOUTH KOREA

INTRODUCTION

- Describe your role in the restaurant
- How long have you worked at the restaurant?

MENU AND CUSTOMERS

- What does the menu consist of? Do you serve vegetarian food/meat alternatives?
- How would you say the restaurant has changed over time?
- Which costumers usually come in? Who are your target customers? Has this changed over time?
- How would you describe the competition in the meatless market? Who are your competitors?
- What are the challenges/possibilities for the restaurant? How would you say these challenges/possibilities have changed over time?
- Do you offer take-away/ delivery in addition to serving food at the restaurant? Why/ why not?
- What plans does the restaurant have for the future? What are the challenges/opportunities?

CLOSING

- Any challenges or experiences with serving vegetarian options that you have not mentioned
- Anything else you want to add?
- Anything you want to ask me?
- Do you have any feedback on the interview?