

Observations on the Potato Shelf

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Why boring?

It's too much in line with my experience and common sense. It means that I could call on existing experience to understand it, so I was able to instantly build up a stereotype of what a supermarket should look like.

I want to see if I could find new ways of looking at and observing something that we are so familiar with that we are tired of it. This is one of the important meanings of the word "observation"



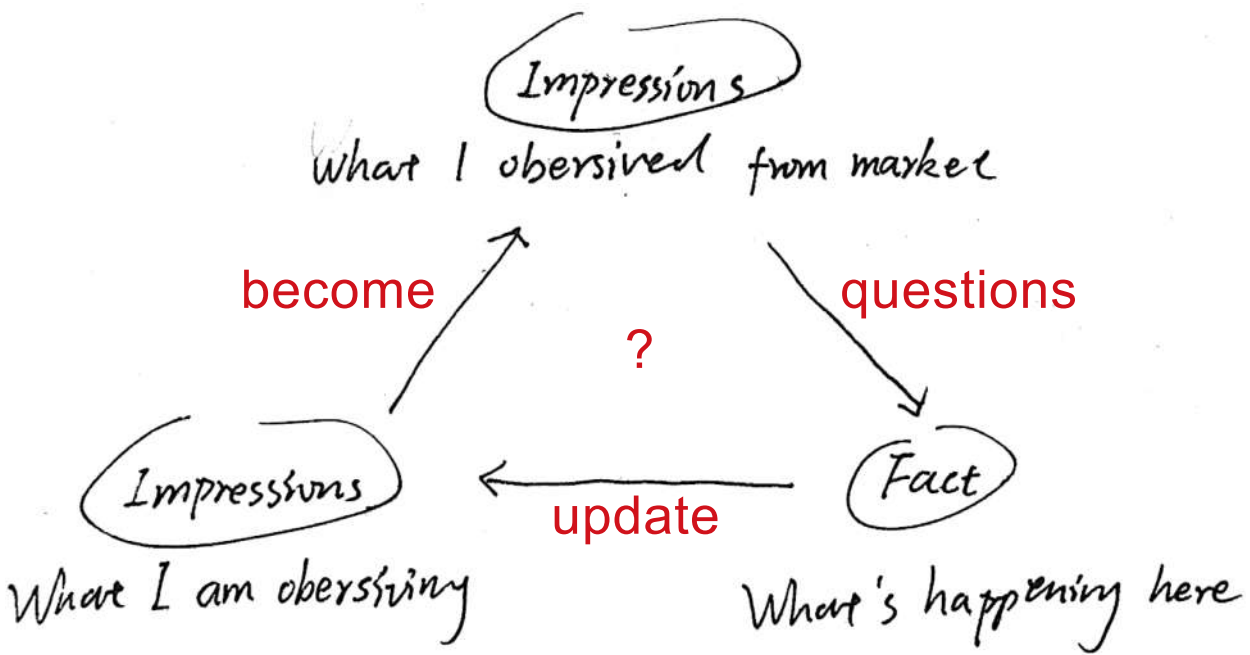
The underground is different



The bus is different



But the supermarket?

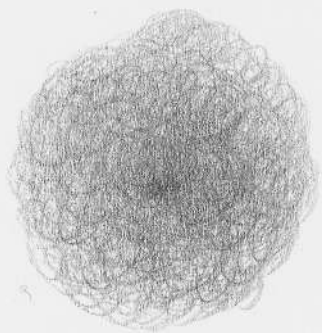


Impressions

So I chose the potato shelf of this supermarket.
Potatoes are usually the most common thing I buy
in supermarkets.

Firstly, I did my best to portray the potato as I
remembered it: this is the impression left in my
memory of the potatoes as I observed it in my
past experience.

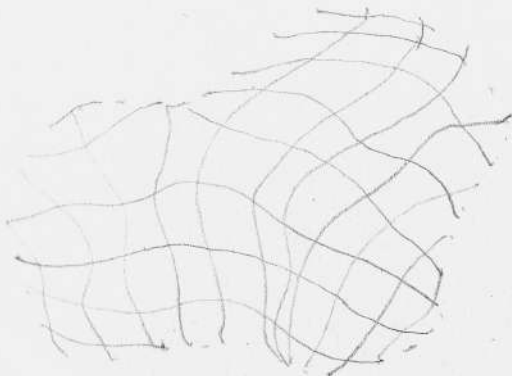
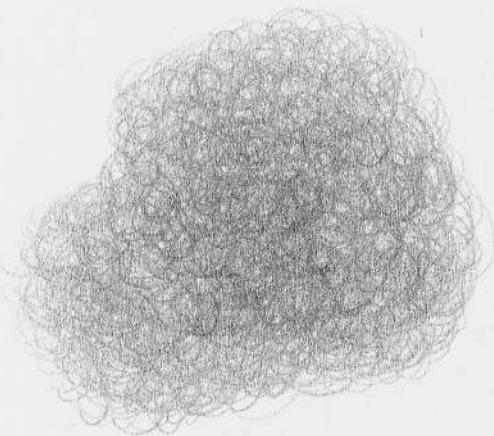
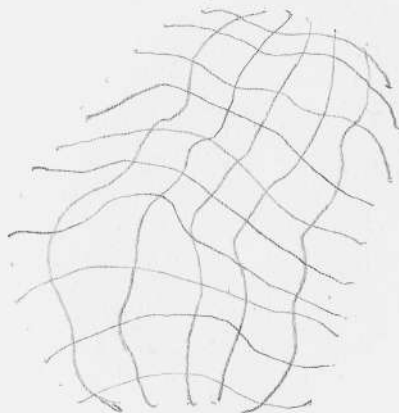
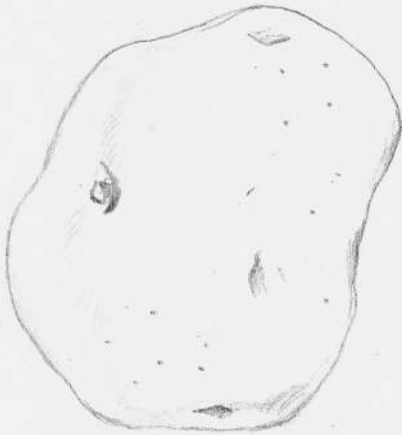
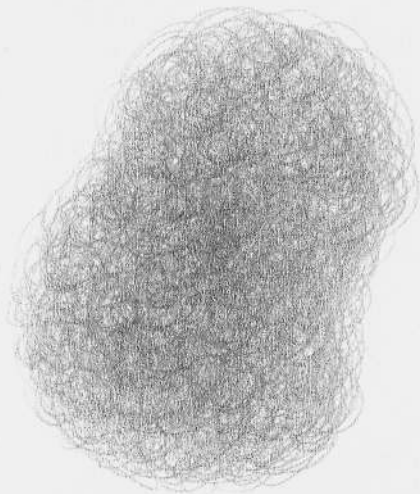
Volume



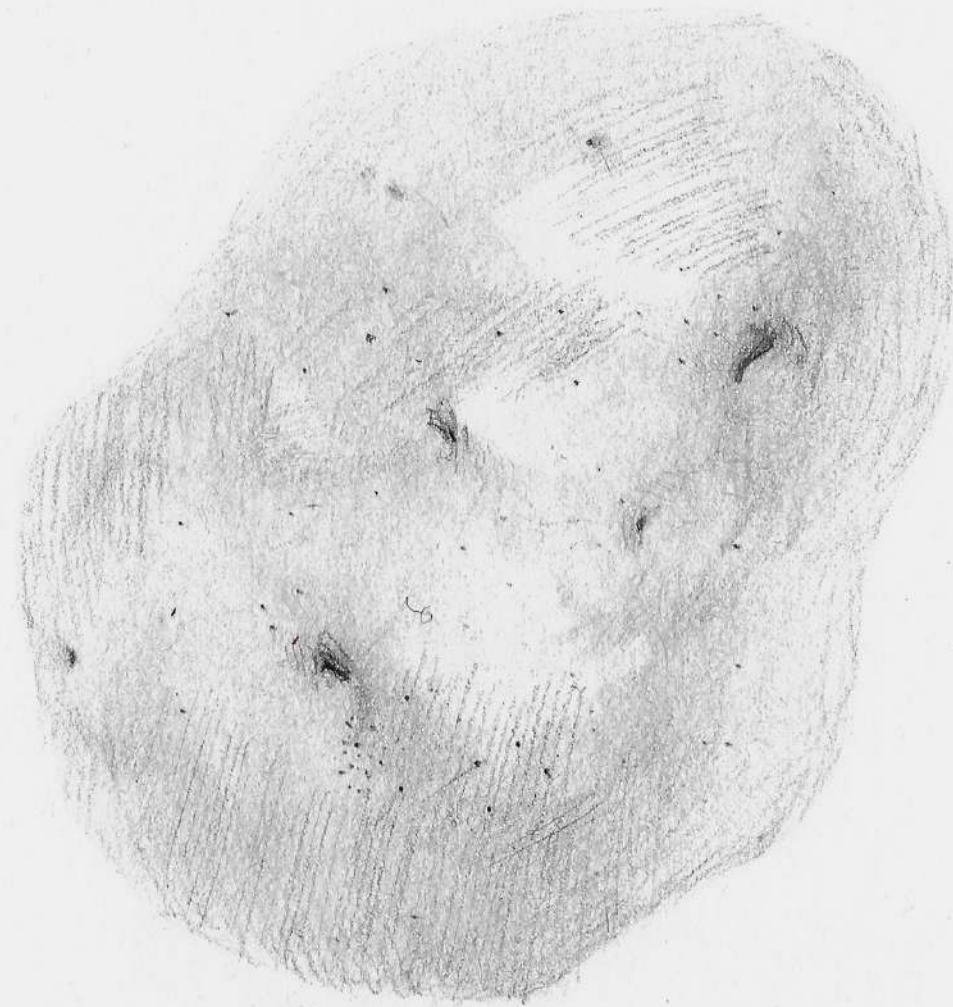
Surface



Structure



The most specific one



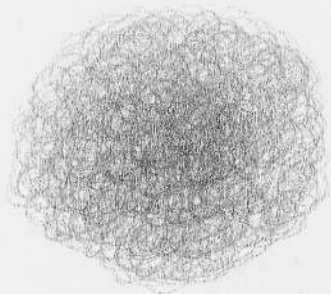
The fact

Then I went into the supermarket.
Beyond my imagination, I found heart-shaped potatoes in Waitrose! Varda picked it up in a field and now I pick it up in the supermarket.

I wonder if this means some change in our living environment, for example, the standards for picking up potatoes in supermarkets has become more forgiving.



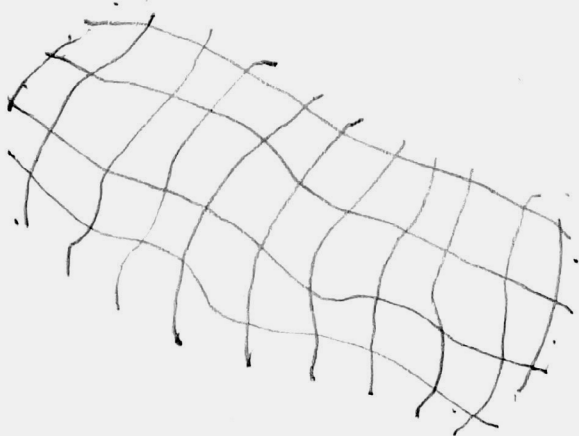
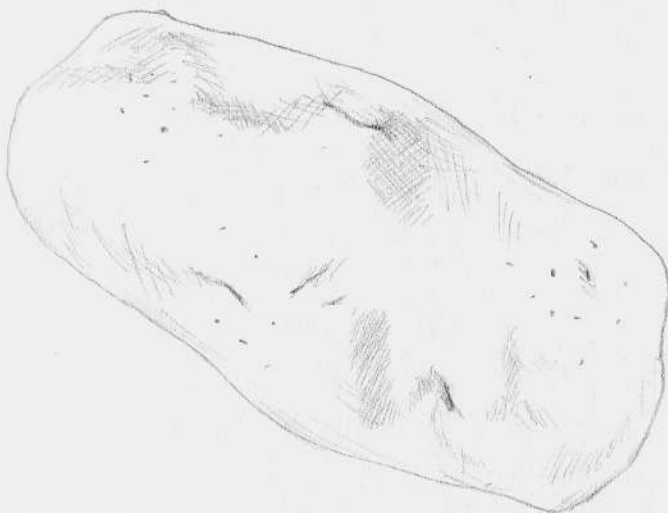
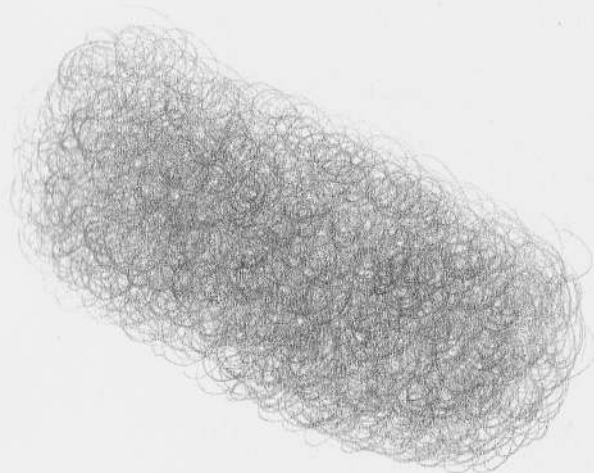
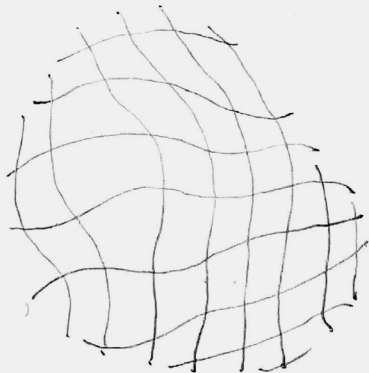
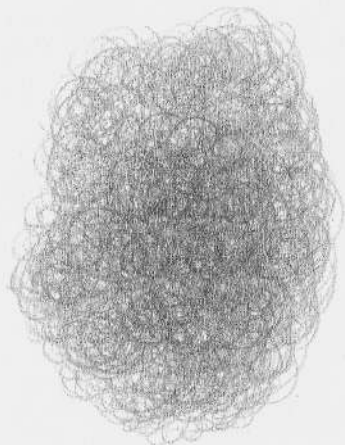
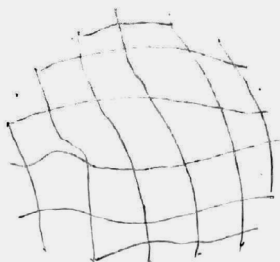
Volume



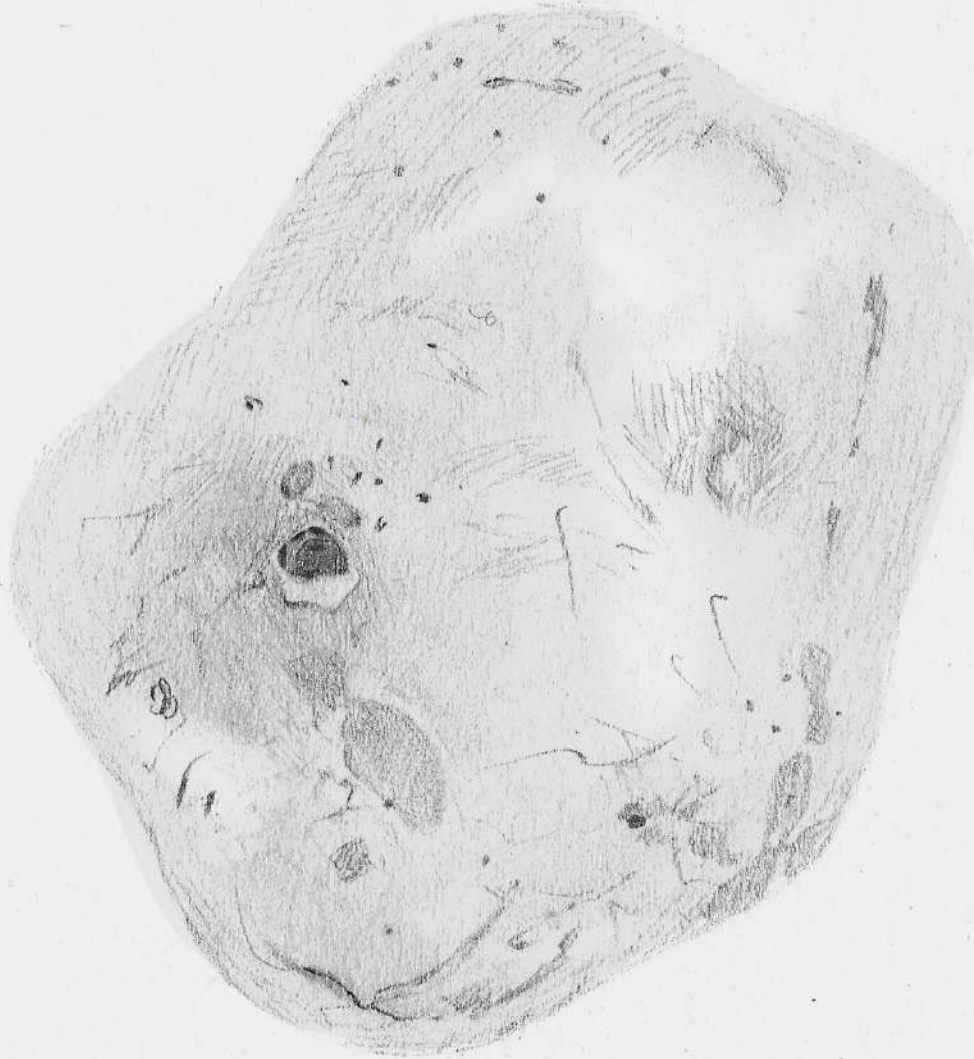
Surface



Structure

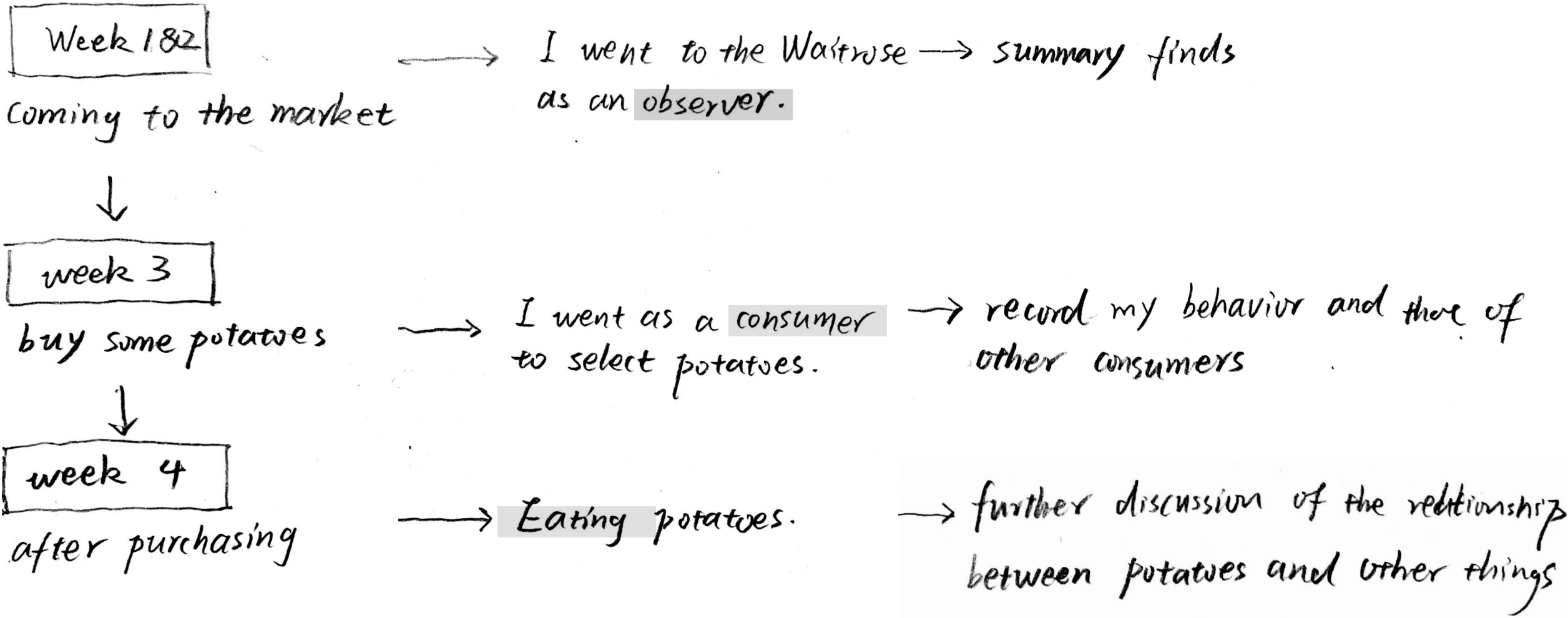


The most specific one



Progress this week

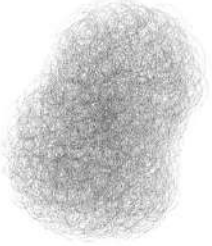
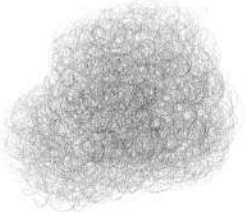
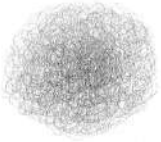
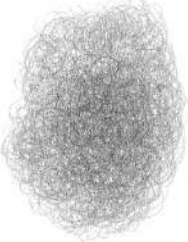






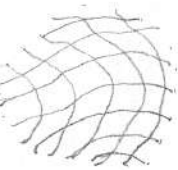
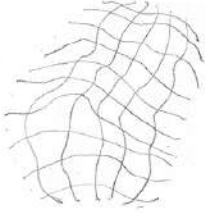
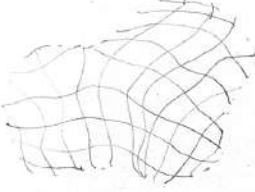
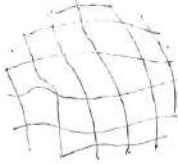
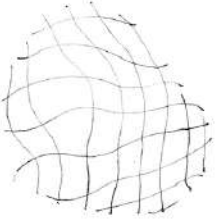
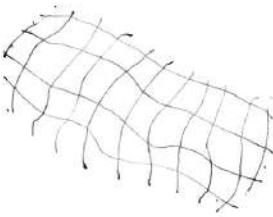
I summarized last week's findings and established the logic for the next observation. My identity: Observer → Consumer → Diner



As an observer

I created a comparison chart to compare the potatoes I remembered with the ones I could find in the UK to see the differences.

Through this process, I realized that the reason for the difference was that the criteria used to filter potatoes had changed.































AFTER					BEFORE
					
					
IMPRESSION	OBSERVATION				

As an observer

In addition, I introduced a new element, colour,

and a larger quantity to complete a chart of potatoes in my impression versus actual ones.



IMPRESSION					SHAPE
					
					
					
					
					
OBSERVATION					COLOUR

Why Post-It Notes?

The medium I used to draw these potatoes was Post-It notes with no glue on the back. They are small, square and not fixed.

This means that they are flexible and come with some sort of pre-existing framework that can be rearranged and discussed by others according to their understanding.

So all I'm offering is an imaginative approach with a coordinate axis.



As a consumer

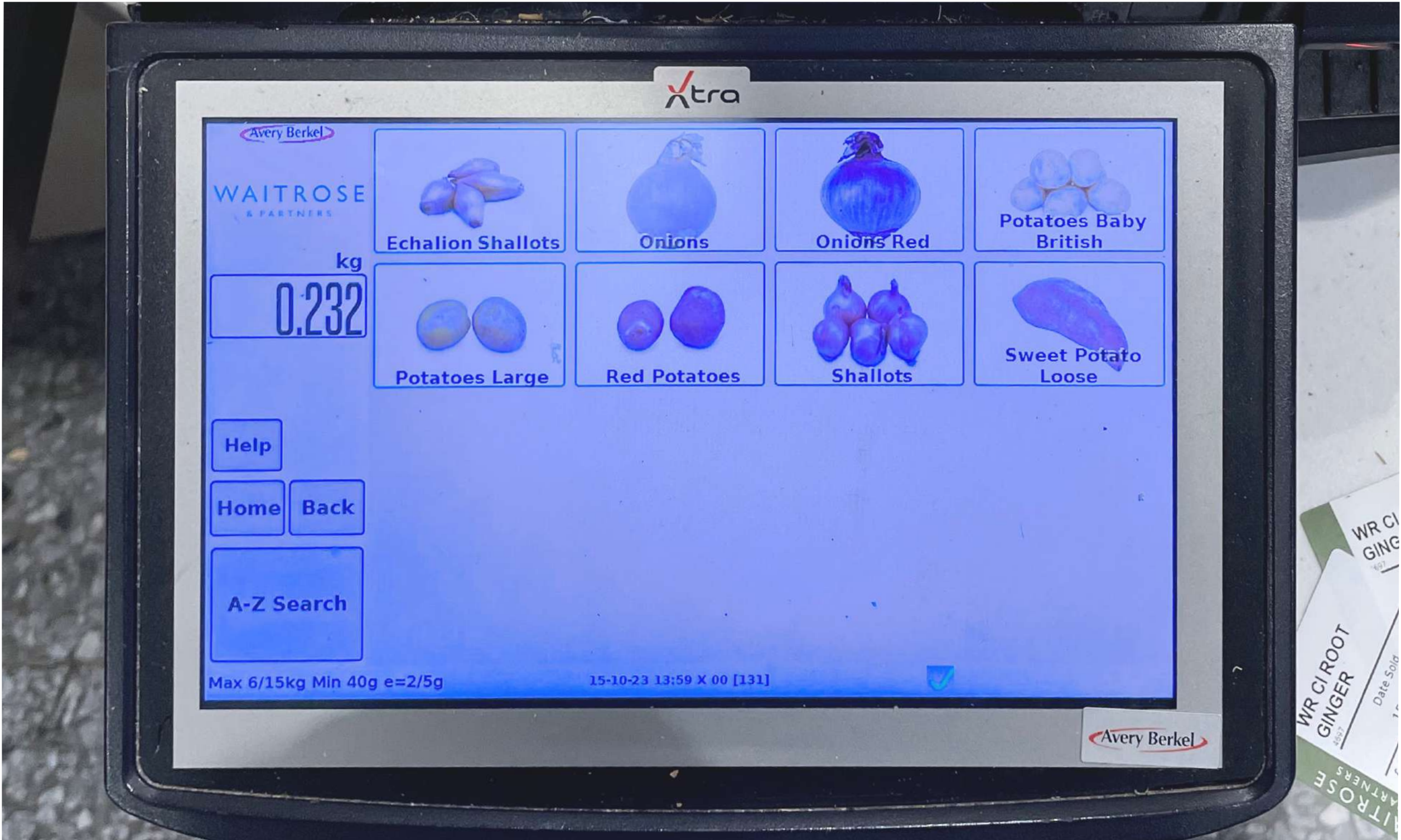
This time I came to the supermarket as a consumer. I observed the actions, language, and criteria used by other consumers in selecting potatoes and finally made my own choice.



As a consumer

An interesting little discovery was that although the potato shelf displayed 22 different types of potatoes, they were grouped into eight on the checkout machine.

It's also a kind of criteria that people use to select potatoes.



A map of the Southeast region of the United States, showing state boundaries and major cities. The map is labeled "SOUTHEAST" in the top left corner. The states shown are Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. Major cities like Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and Miami are marked. The map is oriented with North at the top.

A hand-drawn map of a coastline. The word "SOUTHWEST" is written in capital letters at the top. On the left side, the words "over there" are written vertically. The coastline is depicted with a series of small, irregular shapes representing waves or land features.

Red at the list on her
upper and lower levels)

A family of three
slowly!
give me your hand
(gesture) * this!

an
taking the bag of
rightmost suitcase in the suit
at looking his shoulder there, shou
walking away quickly
On

Kids running
(screaming)

Three Ladies

Just like the cheese


A coup

No, let

I ren

high by

ing



le
's go. All right
ember. that yet

Washroom
Students
me look at this after
schedule a
ant

A couple
(shaking head)
stared at the
a long

Two ladies
we need to make up
the one - No, this
potatoes - five or six potatoes

A man
(humming)

A couple
one of these, this one's
just got one of these. I

to and then: now's
or, not prepare decide
not rough enough.
et's go.

children

Parents with children
(watching,
thinking)

NORTHWEST

NORTHEAST

NORTHWEST

As a diner

I bought some potatoes from Waitrose and cooked them.

In this process, through the act of 'eating potatoes', potatoes are connected to other ingredients in my kitchen, to different cultures, and to the world we live in.

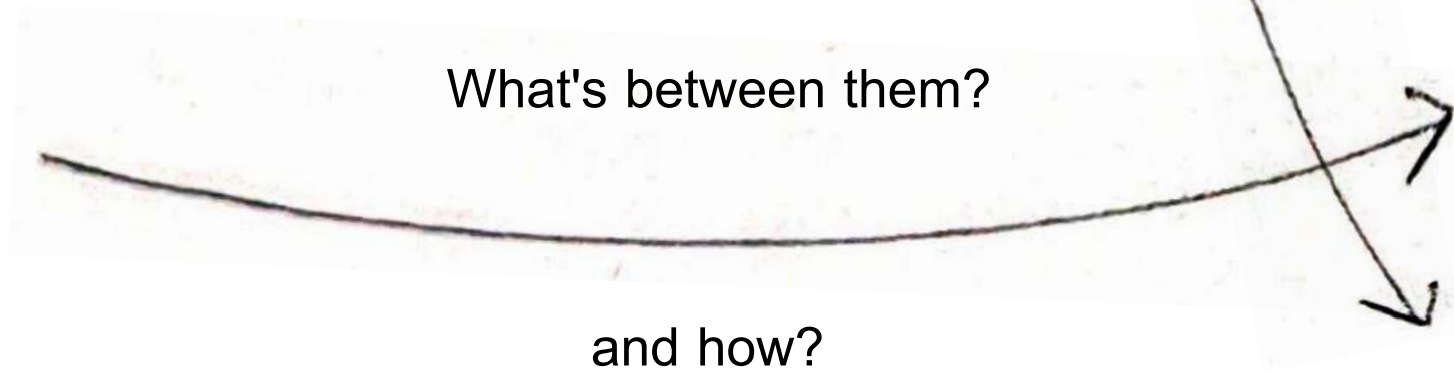
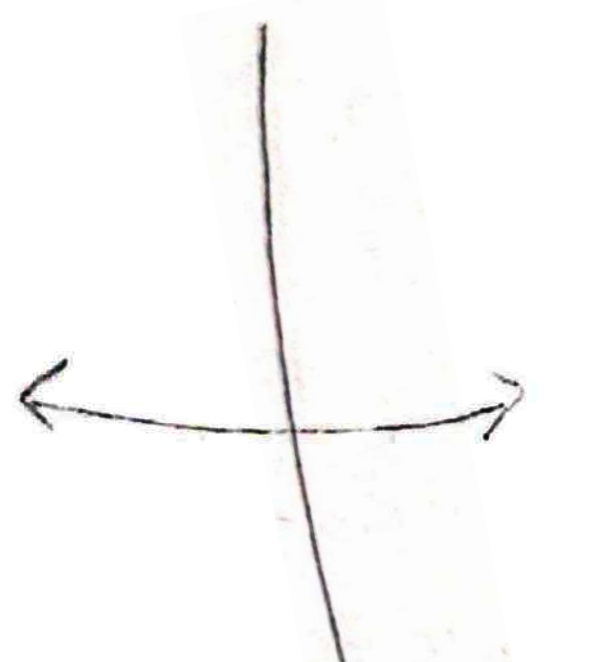
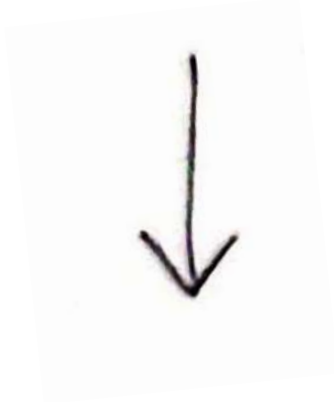
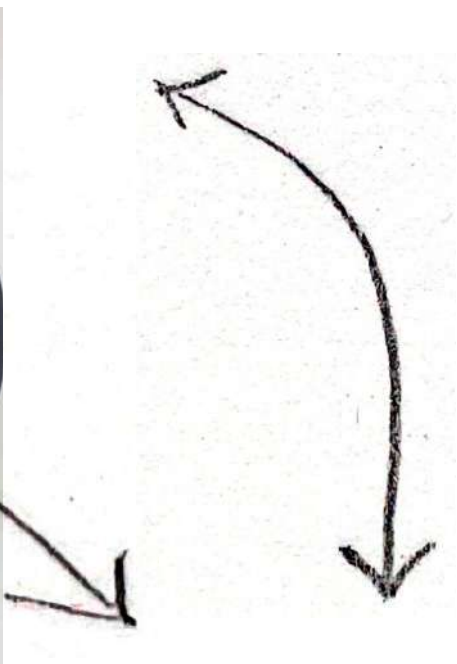
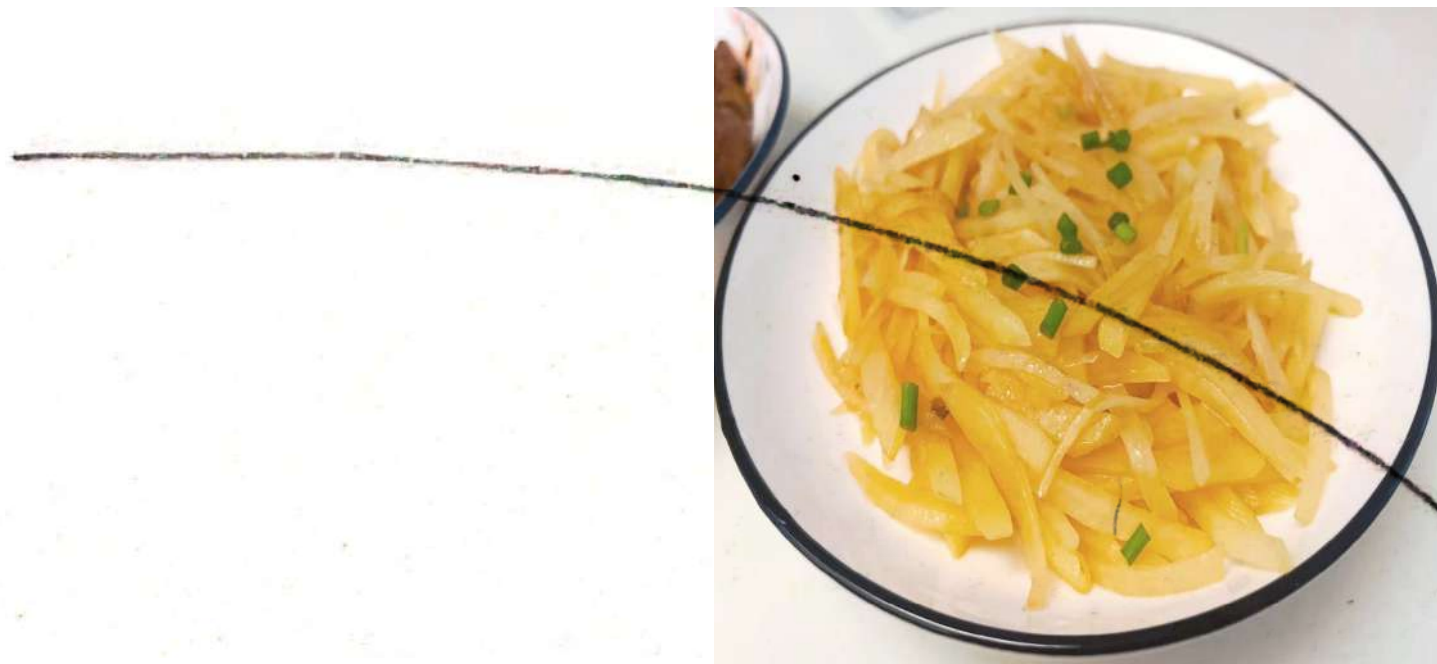








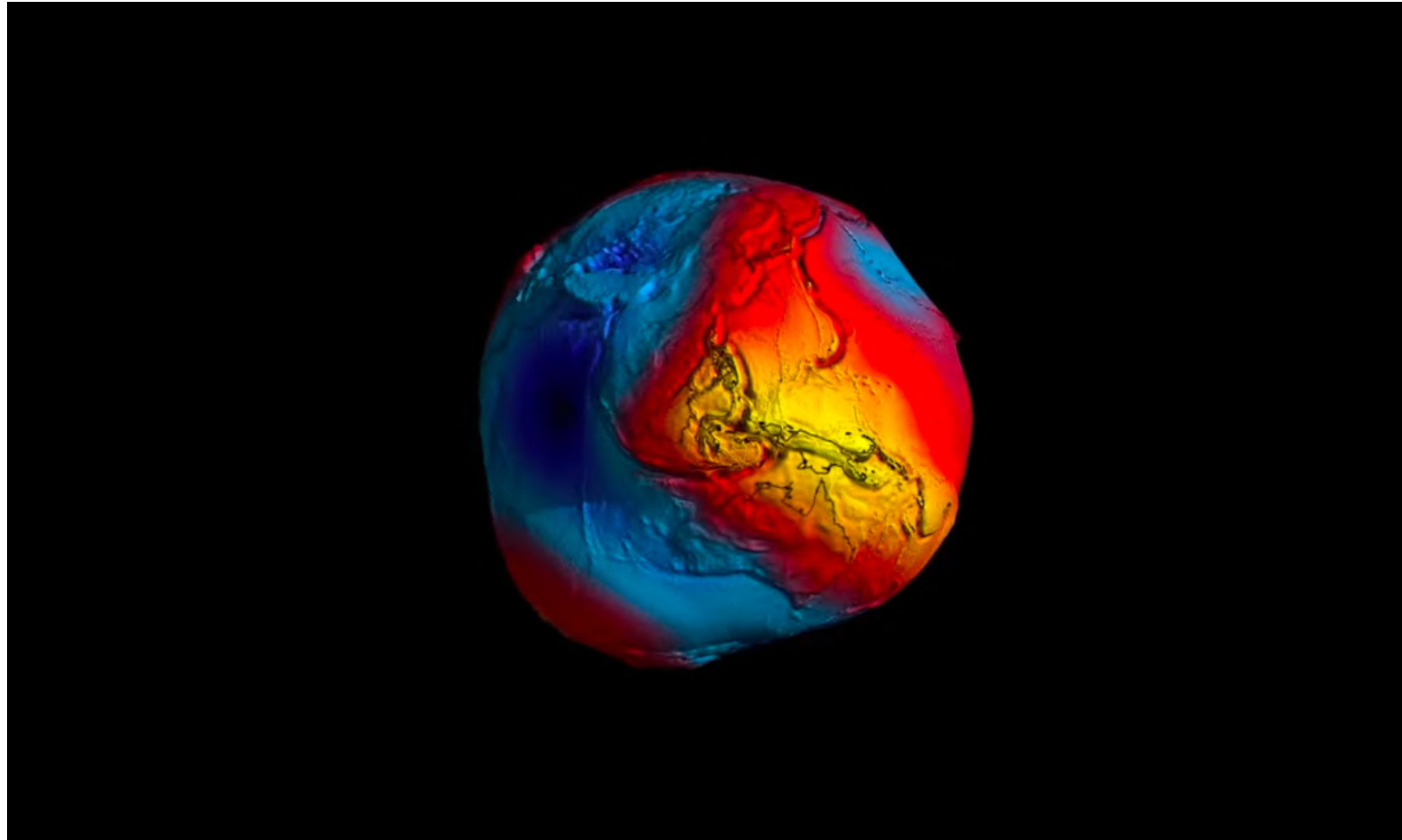




As a diner

This larger level of relationship reminds me of that famous geographical model: the "Potsdam potato".

This is a way of observing and understanding the shape of the Earth based on the distribution of gravity, in which the whole Earth is shaped like a potato.



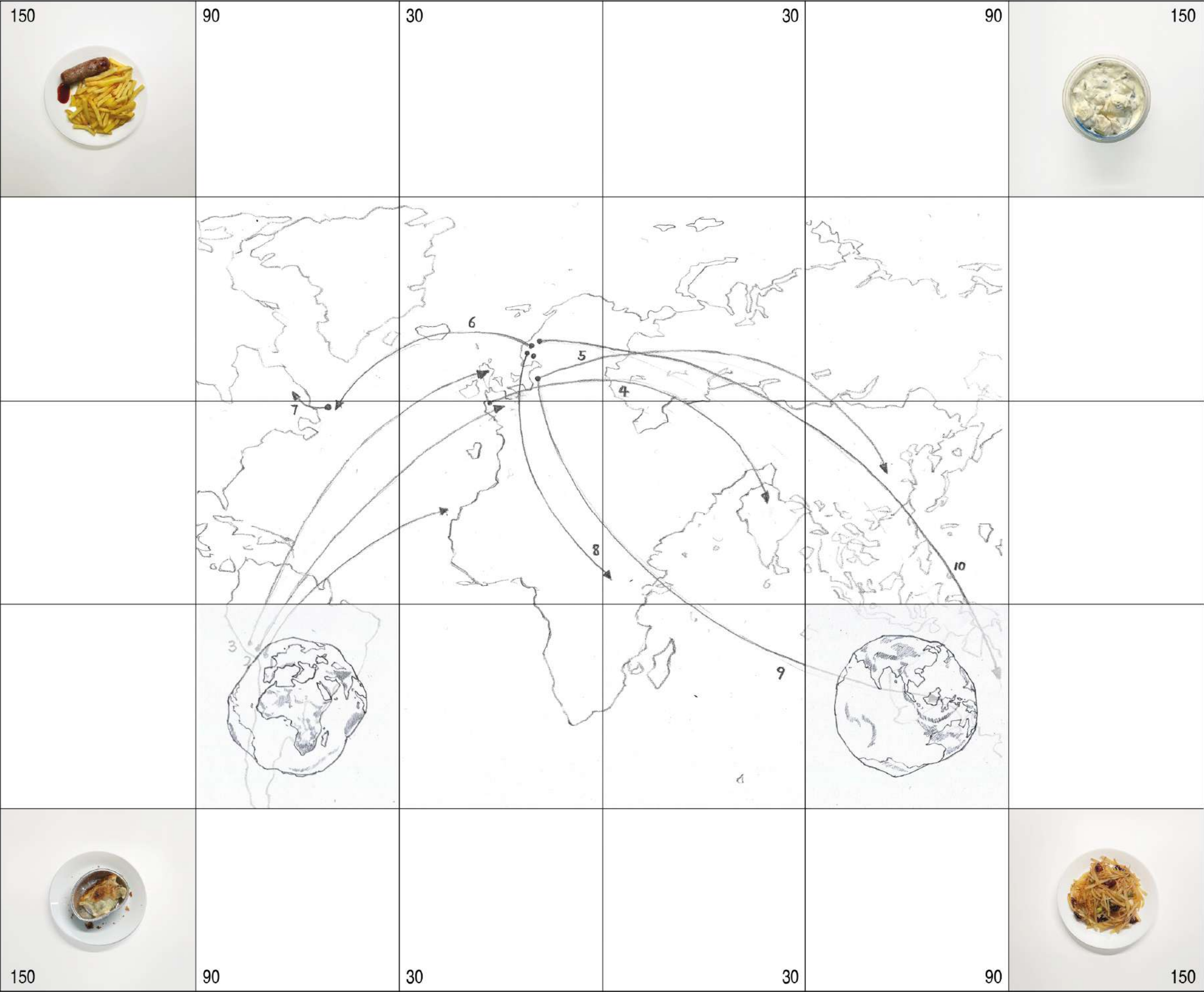
As a diner

I've organised all these thoughts around the potato into a larger grid that represents how the potato affects our culture, our lives and our understanding of things.

So I chose to make it look like a map in which the world revolves around the potato.

In the past, the logic of drawing a map was often to place the most critical elements at the centre of the map. According to this method, I put the potato at the center of the world.

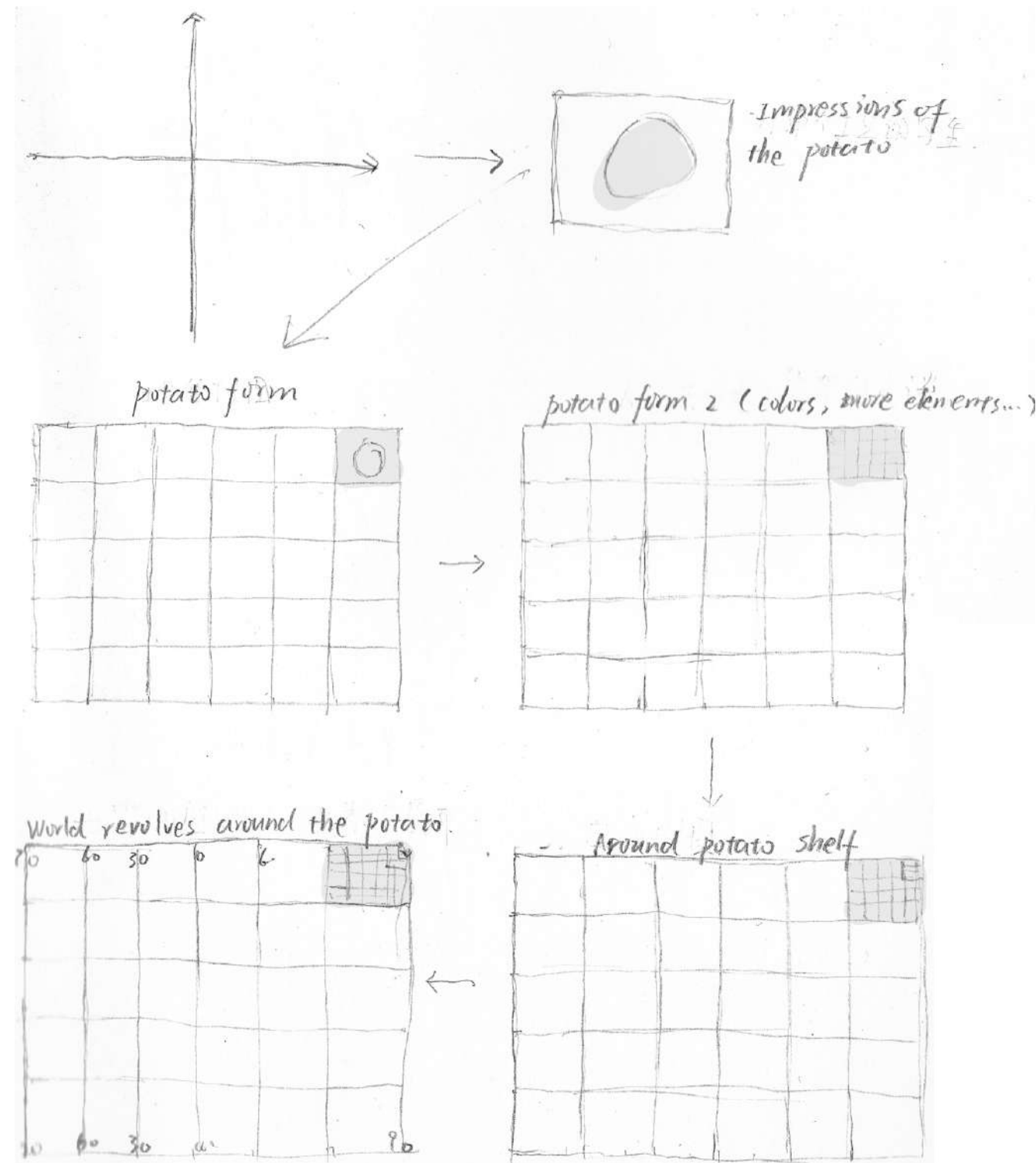




The grid I use

Finally, I'd like to say a few words about the grid I'm using. I tried to use a systematic approach to deal with what I found in the process of observation: starting from one potato, to a wide range of potatoes, to things and cultures associated with potatoes.

Horizontal and vertical lines interwoven into the grid represent different meanings at different stages:
In the first, the grid represents contrast;
In the second, the grid is the axis;
In the third, the grid is orientation;
In the fourth, the grid is latitude and longitude.



That's all

Maybe living on a planet shaped by
the potato is not bad