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**FROM *PARILLA* TO *PA' AMB TOMAQUET*: ARGENTINE MIGRANT  
IDENTITY IN BARCELONA, SPAIN**

by

**VERA ARMUS**

**SUBMITTED TO POMONA COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS**

**PROFESSOR SEO YOUNG PARK, SCRIPPS COLLEGE  
PROFESSOR DRU GLADNEY, POMONA COLLEGE**

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## Glossary of Terms

### Argentine Foods

- Dulce de leche* - Caramel spread  
*Empanada* - Hand-pie; usually baked or fried and filled with variety of savory fillings  
*Guiso* - Stew  
*Alfajor* - Sandwich cookie  
*Milanesa* - Breaded chicken or veal  
*Provoleta* - Slice of grilled provolone cheese typically served during Argentine barbecues  
*Panqueque de dulce de leche* - *Dulce de leche* pancake  
*Sorrentinos* - Argentine stuffed-pasta dish  
*Sandwich de miga* - White-bread sandwich  
*Bife de chorizo* - Sirloin strip steak  
*Choripán* - Chorizo-baguette sandwich  
*Asado* - Barbecue  
*Vacio* - Flap steak  
*Morcilla* - Blood sausage  
*Medialuna* - Crescent roll  
*Locro* - Hearty stew made with corn, beans, potato and meat  
*Tostado de jamón y queso* - Toasted ham and cheese sandwich; equivalent of Spanish *bikini*  
*Facturas* - Argentine pastries  
*Chocolinas* - Classic brand of chocolate cookies  
*Chocotorta* - *Chocolinas* cookie cake  
*Vitel tone* - Veal served in a creamy anchovy-tuna sauce  
*Verduras a la parilla* - Grilled vegetables often served during Argentine barbecues

### Spanish/Catalan Foods

- Pa amb tomaquet/pan con tomate* - Catalan tomato bread  
*Montadito* - Tapa on a slice of baguette  
*Bikini* - Toasted ham and cheese sandwich  
*Entrepa* - Meal between breakfast and lunch  
*Tortilla de patata* - Spanish tortilla made with eggs and potatoes  
*Pulpo* - Octopus  
*Jamón Ibérico* - Raw Iberian ham  
*Gazpacho* - Spanish tomato soup, served cold  
*Arroz meloso* - Brothy rice dish  
*Cava* - Spanish sparkling wine  
*Bocadillo* - Spanish term for sandwich  
*Solomillo* - Equivalent of Argentine *lomo*  
*Entrecot* - Equivalent of Argentine *bife de chorizo*  
*Panellets* - Traditional Catalan All-Saints Day cookies  
*Paella* - Traditional rice dish  
*Yemitas* - Egg-yolk dessert  
*Croquetas* - Small, fried bread-crumbs roll  
*Pisto* - Vegetable dish  
*Salmorejo* - Tomato, bread, and vinegar soup, served cold  
*Romescada* - Catalan fish stew  
*Gulas* - Fish made to look like baby eels  
*Bacalao pil pil* - Basque cod dish

## Introduction

For me, food has always been a source of personal cultural connection. Raised in an Argentine household in New York City, I grew up experiencing many of the nuances that come with a multifaceted cultural heritage. At school, with my friends, or even just on the street, I was exposed to ‘typical’ culinary customs – from peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, to donuts, I quickly developed a strong attachment to American culture and traditions. At home however, my reality was different. Growing up, *milanesas* were a staple. As an afternoon snack, I usually had a banana with *dulce de leche*. Instead of buying meat at a normal supermarket, my dad would drag my brother and I to *El Gauchito*, an Argentine butcher shop that was an hour away. Food, it appears, both fed and reflected my multicultural heritage.

At the same time, food seemed to indicate my identity struggles. Constantly having tiptoe between two cultures often proved difficult; throughout my childhood, it was hard to bridge, incorporate and adjust the distinct facets of my identity into one cohesive whole. On the first day of Kindergarten, I felt shame eating an *empanada* in front of my classmates, so I never took it out of my lunchbox. When eating pizza in Argentina, I was lost when my cousins ordered *faina* and expected me to place it on top of my slice, as is typical. While I tasted bites of my two heritages, I never truly felt like I was gaining the full experience; neither fully American nor Argentine, I often struggled to see where I fit in.

As I grew older, I saw that identity was not clear-cut and set-in-stone, but rather, something fluid, contextual, and socially constructed. Like my food habits, my identity was shaped by various factors and was often subject to change. In turn, this realization

began to spur my attentiveness towards the intersection of immigration, cultural identity, and food – for instance, I now grew interested as to why my father, to this day, makes an effort to conserve the Argentine traditions he grew up with, while my mother does not. Informing much of my undergraduate path, these preoccupations led me to the examination of food, identity and migration. This thesis is therefore, inspired by my intellectual curiosities, as well as my personal experiences navigating situational selfhood; simultaneously, it constitutes a way to further cultivate my own multifaceted Argentine identity.

### **Food as a Window of Analysis into Identity**

“Tell me what you eat and I shall tell you what you are.”  
-Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, 1854 (Brillat-Savarin 1854)

Food -and our relationship with food- holds immense interpretative potential (Barthes 2008; Mintz et al 2002; Cramer, Greene, and Walters 2008); symbolic of where we come from and who we are, it gives us insight into the nature of communal and individual identity. Although consumption is a universal act, the practices whereby it is materialized in each specific historical and spatial context are widely diverse, with taste contributing to the nature of these specific culinary customs (Aranda Jimenez et al. 2011: 1). Particularly valuable in situations of cultural variability (Mintz and Du Bois 2002: 198), food thus serves us well in examining identity shifts that come with migration, as movement is almost always associated with the incorporation of new food-ways and the loss of traditional ones (Vallianatos and Raine 2008: 356-357).

Identity is a social conception. A “dynamic construct that develops over time through the acquisition of new behaviors, attitudes and experiences” (Weller and Turkon 2014: 58), Much like cuisine, it becomes nuanced when transposed to a different context.

While food is one of many cultural features that represent identity, it is a particularly useful one, as it is characterized as an “essential need,” which defines the human experience (Weller and Turkon 2014: 58). Utilizing an interpretive anthropological approach, this thesis draws inspiration from food’s culturally symbolic-meaning and employs it as an exploratory lens to understand the identity shifts that have risen-post migration.

The stories in this thesis ultimately reveal that the nature of identity development is situational and constantly in-process. An idea that has been present throughout many current anthropologic debates, it supports the shift towards “a vision of a more fragmented, paradoxical, and ambiguous world” where flux, movement, and change have become the norm (Eriksen 2001:43). Like anthropologist Judith Nagata advances, individuals may oscillate rather freely from one ethnic reference to another, supporting the idea that one is never bound to a single cultural identity (Nagata 1974: 333). As people move about daily life, culture ties can change according to variations in the situations and audiences they encounter (Nagel 1994: 154). Though one may associate with a particular culture at a given moment, other situations may bring out different parts of their cultural identity; unstable over time and lifespan, different settings may ‘activate’ different aspects of one’s possible affiliations (Vathi 2015: 39). Throughout this thesis, I take these variations as instances of ‘situational identity’ (Barth 1969; Nagel 1994), turning to food habits as a way of explaining these dynamics.

### **Uroboros Project**

The initial idea for this investigation was conceived during the summer of 2016 as part of Claremont McKenna College’s Uroboros Fellowship. Though I was interested in

Argentina and immigrant identity, I had never formally delved into these topics; having also developed a curiosity for the anthropology of food, the fellowship provided me the opportunity to incorporate this dimension into my investigation. While I knew that Spain held the largest Argentine migrant community in the world, Barcelona proved to be particularly attractive as a field-site because of its strong regional Catalan identity and prominent culinary traditions. Furthermore, since my mother had studied in Barcelona during the Argentine Dirty War, while my godmother continues to live there, I was always curious to explore the realities of immigrant life in the Catalan capital. With a number of pre-established contacts, it made logistical sense to draw on these networks to ease my research process. Seeking to explore the connection between food, identity, and integration, I spent three months with the Argentine community in Barcelona, investigating their day-to-day food habits and experiences of adjustment and incorporation into Catalan society. Through this ethnographic fieldwork, I was able to gain a preliminary insight into the lived migrant experiences of Argentines in Barcelona.

To further my understanding of these dynamics, I decided to continue pursuing the topic of Argentine migrant identity in Barcelona for my senior thesis. While this project draws on the work I did in 2016, using it as a starting point for my analyses and research, it digs deeper into the ways in which food, identity and immigration intersect in Barcelona's Argentine community. Narrowing my scope of inquiry, I focus on the cultural adjustments made post-migration, but consider this theme throughout three distinct migratory context - the first-generation, the second, and the social scene. Accordingly, I also expand my research, both in breadth as well as methodology, in order to more closely examine these pinpointed themes.

## Research Questions

“Identity negotiation is a central part of the immigrant’s experience. When face to face with a culture or context that is different from that of one’s homeland, the immigrant must often address what parts of his/her identity are fluid and which parts will remain fixed.”

-Rachel Brown (Brown 2014: 41)

In this thesis, I explore Argentine migratory experiences in Barcelona, Spain, using food as my lens of inquiry. I consider food choices, habits, and social tastes in order to gain insight into how identity is impacted upon migration. In order to guide my research, I draw on the following questions:

1. How have the food cultures, practices, and norms of Argentine immigrants in Barcelona shifted after migration?
2. How do migrant adjustments and identities differ across generation? How have the practices and ideas surrounding food shaped Argentine’s immigrant experiences?
3. What has been the role of Argentine food in the broad Barcelona’s food scene? What has been its reception? How has Argentine food adjusted to fit in with Catalan preferences?

Throughout this thesis, I argue that Argentine migrant identity in Barcelona is both fluid and situational; constantly in oscillation, it is never set-in-stone. As Argentine food habits, like all customs, are also socially constructed, these two concepts go hand-in-hand. Through my research, I advance that food not only mirrors Argentine migrant adjustments, but also take a concrete role in shaping these transformations upon migration. I additionally argue that it is worth examining the complexities of migrant identity through various dimensions, as multiple angles provide distinct yet, valuable insights into the dynamic of Argentine migrant adjustments.

## Methodology

Throughout my investigation, I relied on semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and media analyses in order to examine the relationship between food and

identity, and as more specifically, gain insight into both personal experiences, cultural meanings, and adjustments throughout Barcelona's Argentine migrant community.

### *Interviews*

Throughout the 2017-2018 school year, I carried out twenty-three interviews with seventeen interlocutors, all of which I conducted in Spanish over the phone, and then translated into English. Ten of my interlocutors were 'first-generation' Argentine immigrants, five of which migrated before 1985, during the first Argentine wave of migration to Spain. The other five migrated after 1995, during the second migratory wave. Eight of these interviews involved interlocutors whom I met during the summer of 2016, but re-interviewed over the phone during the 2017-2018 school year in order to respect IRB protocol. Two of these individuals shared a number of their contacts with me, which was how I recruited my remaining two interlocutors. I conducted two follow-up interviews. For the sake of confidentiality, I have replaced the names of my interlocutors with pseudonyms.

My interview questions consist of three organizational themes – migratory background, food habits, and identity. More specifically, I focused past and present culinary customs, self-conceptions of identity, integration into Catalan society, social networks, and nostalgia. For food habits and identity, I compared interlocutors' experiences upon arrival to Barcelona with their current experiences to see if/how they had changed upon settlement, aiming to see how they reflected notions of identity and the subsequent adjustments that have been made post-migration.

I additionally interviewed five 'second-generation' interlocutors over the phone, three of which were born in Barcelona to Argentine parents, and two who were Argentine

but migrated to Barcelona during their childhoods. Though the latter group could be more accurately categorized as part of the 1.75th generation,' it made sense to organize their accounts with those of the Catalan-born, as both groups had spent the bulk of their developmental years in Barcelona. These set of interview questions focused on identity formation and food habits during childhood, current senses of selfhood, and culinary practices. Through these particular accounts, I wanted to explore the particular ways in which different migrant generations deal with food and how culinary habits shape identity. I conducted two follow-up interviews, also over the phone.

I also interviewed four Catalan locals. Two of these interlocutors worked in the food industry and provided insight on Barcelona's culinary scene, as well as the place of Argentine gastronomy in it. Along with the other two interlocutors, they also offered information on the extent of knowledge on Argentine cuisine. Three interviews were conducted in person, and one was over the phone. Finally, though not official interviews, I engaged in various conversations with restaurant owners, chefs, supermarket employees, and individuals in the restaurant industry who also provided relevant commentary on Argentine food in Barcelona.

#### *Participant Observation in Barcelona and Media Research*

All of my on-site fieldwork was conducted during the summer of 2016. In order to gain a sense of Argentine food's presence and place within Barcelona's restaurant scene, I visited various Argentine restaurants, Catalan super-markets, ice cream shops, specialty stores, mini-marts and food stalls, paying particular attention to the prevalence of Argentine foods, as well as client backgrounds. I supplemented my short-term fieldwork with online research on Barcelona-based food blogs to understand the city's

current food trends and ‘in-style’ restaurants and analyze the extent to which Argentine food has presence in the city. I examined fifteen famous blogs, twelve of which were featured on the Barcelona Eat Local tour company’s ‘Best Barcelona Blogs’ page, and the other three by an interlocutor. To gain a sense of non-Argentine reactions towards one particular Argentine restaurant, *Braseria Iguazu*, I examined TripAdvisor’s restaurant review page, which included 241 reviews.

### **A Word on Positionality**

I had a number of advantages and unavoidable biases going into this investigation because of my Argentine background. Firstly, my interlocutor-search process was eased by virtue of the fact that my godmother forms part of Barcelona’s Argentine migrant community. Without her help, I would have had a much harder time finding interlocutor to interview, particularly those who are less integrated into Catalan culture, as they were harder to access. Additionally, since my parents have a number of Argentine friends in Barcelona, I was able to draw on these contacts.

Because of my Argentine accent, knowledge, and interaction with Argentine culture, I had a relatively easy time connecting with the majority of my first-generation migrant interlocutor, especially the ones who have retained deeper ties to their home country. Consequently, I think these aspects contributed to their comfort in opening up about their experiences entering Catalan society, in particular the ones that were not as positive. Additionally, though my godmother is Argentine, but is also very in touch with Catalan culture, I have been exposed to many Catalan customs, which also made it easier to speak with heavily adapted Argentines and Catalans alike.

I believe my biases came out particularly when interviewing the second-generation, since I have the most in common with these interlocutors. Looking back, I realize now that I often subconsciously searched for connections between my experiences and those of my interlocutors', especially ones relating to rejection of heritage. Furthermore, my interview questions seemed to reflect this as well, as I assumed that interlocutors would have experienced at least some sort of aversion to Argentine culture, as had been my experience. Interestingly enough, this did not hold true in most cases, which also speaks to the significance of context.

### **Organization of the Thesis**

Throughout this thesis, I argue that Argentine migrant identity in Barcelona is both situational and fluid; complex and subject to change, it can take on a different nature depending the circumstance/context. In order to grasp its intricacies and support this overall claim, I have organized my discussion into four distinct chapters: In Chapter 1, I begin by providing an overview of Argentine migration to Spain. By briefly detailing the historical antecedents, which led the two countries to assume their pronounced bilateral relationship, I aim to explain why so many Argentines ultimately migrated to Barcelona. I focus on the two most prominent Argentine migratory waves, and examine the push and pull factors of each context. In Chapter 2, I draw on this background to address the varied patterns of migrant integration and adjustment. I discuss the experiences of first and second-wave interlocutors once migrated to Barcelona, looking at food habits in order to see how they reflect shifted identity. In Chapter 3, I look beyond the immediate experiences of the migrants themselves, and consider the developmental trajectory of second-generation Argentine immigrants. I examine how food itself plays a role in

identity formation and the ways in which their identity adjustments differ from that of their parents' generation. Finally, in Chapter 4, I extend identity beyond the self, and explore the role of Argentine food within Barcelona's societal space. I examine how Argentine tastes have been received within city's local food culture, and then analyze the ways they have adjusted (and been adjusted) upon arrival to fit into the Catalan context.

### **Chapter 1: From Colonialism to Bilateral Solidarity: An Overview of Argentine Migratory Patterns to Barcelona**

*“Che, boludo,” I hear a man emphatically say on the phone, while crossing the street. I recognized the distinctive accent even before the phrase had been finished. Coming from New York, where the majority of Spanish-speakers are from Central America, I wasn't used to hearing the unique Argentine porteño dialect very often. Less than five minutes later, I overhear another woman passing by, screaming to another, “Me estas cagando? ¡Tengo que ir a laburar!” using notoriously Argentine mannerisms to make her point clear. I continue to walk down the street, chuckling a little bit – what are the odds? “¡Pero pelotuda, ponete las pilas!” a man yells on the phone, three minutes later.*

*-Vera Armus, Barcelona, Summer 2016*

#### **Introduction**

Housing the largest overseas Argentine community, Spain is the home of approximately 73,362 Argentine immigrants (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística* 2015). Across the country, various cities hold prominent Argentine populations, with Madrid, Valencia, Malaga, and of course, Barcelona, housing particularly large enclaves. As I continued to run into Argentines on the streets of Barcelona, I started to wonder, why had so many Argentines indeed ended up in the Catalan capital?

In Chapter 1, I open my discussion with a historical overview of the Argentine-Spanish relationship, tracing how mass migratory influxes from Spain spurred ethnic and socio-cultural similarities within Argentine society. I argue that it was these similitudes, and the countries' bilateral relations, which paved the way for two large waves of Argentine migration to Barcelona, and established the city's large Argentine community.

Examining the social, political, and economic contexts of each wave, I also explore the differences between each period of migration, paying attention to the distinct motivations, socio-economic profiles, and political statuses experienced throughout Barcelona's Argentine community. This background will then allow me to move on to a discussion of the relevant identity-based adjustments experienced.

### **From Colony to Nation**

A Spanish colony from 1516 to 1816, Argentina was remarkably shaped by its Spanish colonial ties. Buenos Aires, the current capital city, experienced its first flood of Spanish migration when it was established as port-city and named as a viceroy of Spain. Many of these migrating Spaniards would end up forming the bulk of the soon-to-be Argentine population, contributing to the formation of a distinct national character through a vibrant process of mixture and exchange (Lobato and Suriano 2013: 15-89). Declaring independence on July 9, 1816, Argentina's next couple of centuries would be pivotal in the development of its unique cultural identity, drawing in many cultural influences and different ethnic backgrounds, hailing from indigenous to European.

At the time of independence, Argentina's existent population consisted primarily of three groups: *criollos*, the "creole" descendants of the original Spanish colonizers, which were the most numerous in population; the indigenous peoples, who were mainly nomadic and spread out, and finally, a small number of *mestizos*, or individuals of mixed Spanish-indigenous background. Starting in the latter half of the 19th century however, these demographics would begin to shift (Lobato and Suriano 2013: 15-89). By the 1860s-70s, Argentina began to reconnect with the capitalist Atlantic economy as an exporter of primary goods, now demanding a larger and more prominent labor force.

Since the new country's population was small, and its elites were uninterested in incorporating the indigenous peoples into the workforce, the Argentine government faced a labor shortage. Thus, beginning in 1880, Argentina promoted an open immigration policy in hopes of further populating the sparse nation, as well as spurring economic growth and development (Lobato and Suriano 2013: 15-89).<sup>1</sup>

Spurring a large influx of European migrants, the South American state experienced diverse migrations, bringing in various ethnic groups. Giving way to the formation of different cultural, ethnic, religious and societal dimensions, these different groups left profound impacts on Argentine society (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 15). As written by famous Argentine writer, Jorge Luis Borges, Argentina was now a "land of exiles" (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 16). Described as a "modern country built from scratch through liberal economic and social policies and massive immigration" (Nouzeilles and Montaldo 2002: 16), Argentine culture would result from the mixing of Europeans, *criollos*, and *mestizo* populations, with the marginal but direct contributions of Amerindians.

Amongst the European migrant communities, Spanish and Italians constituted the country's two largest immigrant populations and established the foundation of Argentina's national identity. While Italian migrants dominated the mid-to-late 1800s, the early 1900s saw the arrival of roughly two million Spanish citizens (Ginieniewicz 2012: 25). Arriving mainly from Galicia (55%), Cataluña (11.8%); Asturias (7.1%), and

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that up until then, both the Spanish-colonial and Argentine governments had assumed a non-interventionist stance towards indigenous populations. The majority of indigenous groups were distinct and independent from each other; following itinerant living patterns, they did not pose significant threats to the European rulers. Yet, following this new immigration policy, the Argentine government expanded to the indigenous-inhabited Pampa lands, now assuming an official practice of violent expulsion or annihilation.

Andalucía (6.8%), the Spaniards, migrated for number of reasons, including overpopulation, famine, poverty, and the overall pursuit of a higher quality of life (Novick and Actis 2008: 206). Though the most important waves came in 1901-1910, Spanish migration would continue throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with two other historically prominent spikes: 1. During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) 2. Throughout the repressive Franco Dictatorship (1939-1975), with particularly high rates from 1941-1960, when the Argentine government granted asylum to all Spaniards (Novick and Actis 2008: 206). With further incorporation of diverse regional Spanish populations, the Spanish cultural and demographic influence that had originated during colonialism was thus augmented, stretched, and simultaneously, nuanced. Including traditions from different Spanish regional communities, these Spanish practices were mixed-in with customs of other ethnic group.

With this introductory understanding of Argentina's cultural and historical trajectory, it is then easier to comprehend why so many Argentines chose Spain as their new destination. Though "cultural affinity (or cultural assets) have played a significant role in pondering possible destinations to emigrate," it was not cultural similarities in general that fueled the decision to go to Spain (Ginieniwick 2012: 26). For instance, while Argentine culture was also quite similar to its Italian counterpart, few Argentines made move there, since the majority did not know Italian, nor did they have many established contacts in Italy. These mass migrations depended on common language, similar culture, established family ties, and strong political affinities. As a result of the massive waves of Spanish migration throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Argentina and Spain developed perdurable bilateral relations, thus promoting solidarity between the

two countries, which would pave the way for Argentine emigration (Novick and Actis 2008: 212).

### **Waves of Migration**

Movement is always motivated by particular events or phenomena. For the most part, migrants don't simply pack up their bags and leave; rather, they generally depart because of a push or pull factor. In the case of Argentina, emigration to Spain came because of two fundamental happenings: an oppressive dictatorship, and a deep economic crisis. Taking place during very different historical contexts, these cases have more differences than similarities; they have provided diversity in the emigrated populations, which has impacted the current realities of Argentine migration.

### **Impact of *La dictadura* - The First Wave**

Officially titled the 'National Reorganization Process,' the Argentine military dictatorship began in 1976, and lasted until around 1983 (Sikkink 2008: 3-4). Rising to power on after deposing President Isabel Peron, Argentina's military regime began to propagate a period of state-sponsored terrorism, which would come to be known as the 'Dirty War.' For the next six years, the military junta targeted left-wing guerrillas, political dissidents, and essentially anyone believed to be associated with progressive ideas. Hunting down, torturing, and ultimately, forcing guerilla activists as well as non-militant citizens to 'disappear,' they used clandestine centers to promote their terror campaigns, and in turn, carried out a massive number of human rights violations (Sikkink 2008: 4).

Led by General Jorge Rafael Videla, the Argentine dictatorial state primarily drew its ideas from an ideology dubbed the 'National Security Doctrine,' or NSD for short.

Considered to be the major body of ideas behind the Argentine state of terror, it placed national security above personal security, the needs of the state before individual rights, and the judgment of a governing elite over the rule of law (Armony 2005: 310). This set of ideas guided the authoritarian regime's two-branch structure; the first launched a campaign of state-terrorism, capitalizing on pre-existing right-wing extremist organizations to carry out mass numbers of 'disappearances.' The second constituted a 'legal' arm, using the Advisory Legislative Commission to justify the agenda of the 'needed' intervention by way of judicial power. Thus, the climate in Argentina was one in which dissenting political activity was prohibited, and overt censorship was actively promoted; a period characterized by civil unrest, feelings of confusion, fear, and anger prevailed (Armony 2005: 305-331).

Generating a 58.3% uptick in migration from 1976-1983, it is estimated that upwards of 20,000 Argentines migrated to Spain because of the Dirty War (Actis and Esteban 2008: 85). For some, the choice was deliberate; fed up with the difficult realities of day-to-day life, they left in pursuit of better living conditions. Amongst other variables, they sought political legitimacy, freedom of speech, economic opportunity and general peace of mind (Novick and Actis 2007: 211). For others, the decision to leave was compulsory; essentially a matter of life or death, these migrants were forced to leave because of political affiliations, social relationships, and other factors that the government determined as subversive. From journalists and professors, artists and university students, huge sectors of the Argentine population were targeted, many of them facing immediate death threats (Jensen and Yankelevich 2007: 405-406). Regardless of the degree of political repression experienced, the reality was a common

one; leaving their lives in Argentine behind, these individuals all arrived under the same title: migrant.

The prevalent demographic of this population could be described as young, well-educated, urban and primarily middle class. According to a 1981 census, 40.2% of migrants fell between the ages of twenty to forty-four, 30.6% below twenty-five, and 29.8% above forty-five years of old (Actis and Esteban 2008: 86). As sociologists Silvina Jensen and Pablo Yankelevich point out, migration was not a feasible option for lower-class sectors of the population, and so, the first-wave was relatively homogeneous, consisting of many students and professionals (Jensen and Yankelevich 2007: 435). Furthermore, many migrants (though not all) had distant family members or relatives in the regions they settled. While individuals came from all over Argentina, the majority hailed from Buenos Aires, or other urban areas like Cordoba, Rosario, and Mendoza. This was thus the overall character of the pioneering Argentine migrants; forming the first Argentine communities, the first-wave would establish Spain as a fertile environment for migration in the years to come.

### **Post-Franco Barcelona: Context of Catalan Restoration**

Arriving to Barcelona right after the end of Francisco Franco's dictatorship, the first-wave of Argentine immigrants would encounter the beginnings of the Catalan national restoration process. This movement, which emphasized the return to a Catalan regional identity, would heavily affect the nature of their lived experiences, and ultimately influence the dynamic of their adjustments: November 20, 1975 marked a pivotal change in Spain's modern history. The date of Spanish General Francisco Franco's death, it paved the way for the restoration of Spanish democracy, ending an

oppressive dictatorship, which had been ongoing since 1939. While the democratic shift was evidently important for the entire nation, it was particularly meaningful for the Catalan and Basque nationalities, as it ended Franco's homogenization policy, which had barred the expression of language and regional cultural customs (Strubell 1999: 15-20). In the case of Cataluña, not only were individuals prohibited from speaking Catalan in public, but a ban on periodical publications, technical and scientific books, and translations had also been enforced (Shabad and Gunther 1982: 443). For both the Catalans and the Basques therefore, Franco's death enabled the return of nationalist expression.

Following the ratification of a new Spanish constitution in 1978, Cataluña was granted a status of autonomy, thereby establishing its own parliament in Barcelona, dubbed the *Generalitat*. From institutionalizing bilingualism to re-establishing Catalan national holidays, the Catalan government embarked on an agenda to restore and revitalize the Catalan national identity, a pursuit that would significantly shape Barcelona's political, cultural, and economic landscape for the years to come (Dowling 2013: 94-97).

Though the new *Generalitat* advanced a regionalist discourse, the formal ideology of Catalan nationalism favored the assimilation of immigrants. Throughout the Franco Era, Barcelona experienced an influx of Spaniards fleeing other impoverished Spanish regions, as the city was still relatively prosperous in comparison to the rest of the nation, and already held a significant non-Catalan population. Furthermore, since foreign labor had contributed to an economic boom and did not pose challenges to the employment of native Catalans, Barcelona accepted and welcomed Spaniards and non-Spaniards alike

into its urban landscape (Shabad and Gunther 1982: 447). Thus, the Barcelona to which the first-wave Argentines arrived was one that welcomed them with open arms; because of the pro-immigration Catalan discourse at the time, in addition to the pre-established historic migratory pattern, Argentines from the first-wave faced relatively favorable conditions upon migration.

Anthropologist Javier Avila argues that today, not much has changed. He claims that the institutional and social barriers Argentines face in Spain are minor or non-existent; as a result of their European citizenship from family ties, or relative ease in acquiring this citizenship, they have a greater chance of integration in relation to migrant groups from other nations (Avila 2008: 75). Drawing on Avila's work, scholar Jorge Ginieniewicz cites feelings of entitlement in Spanish society, cultural affinity, consumption patterns, and looks as possible factors, which explain this ease of integration (Ginieniewicz 2012: 32). He also advances however, "Like migrants from other countries, Argentines in Spain find it difficult to consolidate and develop strong ties of solidarity and friendship with the native population" (Ginieniewicz 2012: 34). As interaction and social ties with locals seem to be important factors in integration, Avila's claim seems to be contradictory. Is it truly possible for Argentines to integrate if they struggle to foster meaningful relationships with local Catalans? To unpack this, we need to consider another dimension of Argentina's migratory history to Barcelona - that of the second-wave of migration.

### **Hyperinflation, Neoliberalism, and *El corralito* – The Second-Wave**

The Argentine migratory surge prompted by the Dirty War seemed to settle down in 1984, following the restoration of democratic rule in Argentina. However, this ebb was

short-lived. Experiencing a period of massive inflation in the early 1990s, Argentina underwent the beginning of an economic crisis that intensified with President Carlos Menem's neo-liberalization policies, and would ultimately peak with his predecessor's *corralito* policy. Spurring a second-wave of Argentine migration, this era would bring Barcelona's Argentine community to its full fruition.

Elected to office in December of 1983 by way of popular vote, President Raul Alfonsín was Argentina's first democratically elected leader since the rise of the military dictatorship in 1976. His election is considered the end of the Dirty War, following the collapse of the Argentine military regime after defeat in the Falklands War (Carranza 2005: 67). While Alfonsín is credited with returning the nation to the rule of law, his administration faced a difficult couple of years; leading Argentina through a period of restoration, the aftermath of the dictatorship left intense economic difficulties and hyperinflation, which ultimately led him to resign six months before the end of his term. Sparking intense instability, civil unrest and political tumult, Argentina additionally saw an intensification of class struggle, featuring riots, and overall political and economic tumult (Carranza 2005: 67-68).

Consequently, this context of recession and economic despair provoked the second-wave of Argentine migration (Ginieniewicz 2012: 25-26). Seeking economic stability and opportunity, political order, security, and an overall higher quality of life, many Argentines fled to Spain, capitalizing on the significant Argentine communities that had been established by the first migratory wave. Further incentivizing the already disenchanted Argentine population, the Spanish government promoted a regularization policy in 1991, dubbed *la ley de extranjería*. Granting citizenship to all Latin American

immigrants entering the nation, it spurred even higher rates of Argentine migration to Spain (Actis and Esteban 2008: 89).

Yet, the largest boom of migration was still to come. Democratically taking over office in July of 1989, President Carlos Menem instituted a series of neoliberal economic reforms, which amongst others, included the mass privatizations and manipulation of the U.S. dollar-peso exchange rate. His goal with this was to combat the economic recession, move towards a *laissez faire* economy, and discipline the ‘rowdy’ working class (Carranza 2005: 67-68). Though his policies seemed to work in the short-term, they had devastating social effects later on; mired in corruption, they accelerated de-industrialization and dramatically increased unemployment rates, especially in the Greater Buenos Aires area (Carranza 2005: 68). Propelling Argentina into a full-blown recession in 1995, Menem’s reforms paved the way for the deepest economic slump in Argentine history (1999-2001), which was catalyzed during the De La Rúa administration with the period of *el corralito*. On December of 2001, during the midst of Argentina’s economic depression, all of its foreign investors withdrew from the market. Fearing a stock crash, many companies and individuals withdrew their entire bank accounts, and converted these sums into dollars, later transferring them to bank accounts overseas (Carranza 2005: 70). In response, the Argentine government froze their citizen bank accounts, limiting the amount of money they could withdraw. Literally stealing the money from the public to service the country’s US\$142 billion external debt, the government’s practice, known as *el corralito*, proved to be the final straw for many (Carranza 2005: 70).

Precipitating a series of riots on December 19 and 20th of 2001, *el corralito* set the nation into a period of overall tumult. As political scientist Mario Carranza observes, “The Argentine crisis revealed the existence of a profound crisis of legitimacy during the December 19-20th, 2001 popular uprising” (Carranza 2005: 76). The effects of the crisis had been profound and hard-hitting, producing massive amounts of debts, unemployment, unrest and political turmoil. From 1998 to 2002, the Argentine economy had shrunk by 20%; by December of 2001, unemployment stood at 30%, while 14 million, more than one third of the Argentine population, stood below the poverty line (Carranza 2005: 70). Many could no longer afford basic day-to-day needs. It was ubiquitous to see children, who were supposed to be in school, selling trinkets and toys on the street. Worsening the situation, Argentina’s political system was in shambles; from December of 2001 to January of 2002, Argentina saw the rise and fall of five different presidents (Carranza 2005: 70).

This chaotic context resulted in a mass exodus of migrants seeking to flee this setting of disorder and instability. While specific motivations for emigration differed, all of these specific factors were more broadly motivated by the economic crisis. From unemployment and poverty, to absence of socio-economic mobility, insecurity, and lack of faith in political system, Argentina experienced a drastic population drain, which would peak in 2001, and remain steady up until 2005 (Novick and Actis 2008: 228-232). Like their antecedents from the first-wave, these migrants saw opportunity and potential in Spain, specifically Barcelona. Ginieniewicz points out that there is significant evidence to suggest, “Individuals who have friends and/or relatives are more likely to emigrate than those who do not. Those who face the endeavor of moving to a new country, tend to

rely on people who can be trusted” (Ginieniewicz 2012: 26). In most cases, members of the second-wave already had some contacts in Barcelona, and thus migration had the potential to be a lot smoother. Tallying an overall national population of 257, 288 Argentines in 2005, Barcelona’s Argentine community has been established as one of Spain’s most prominent migratory groups (Novick and Actis 2008: 229).

The second-wave migrants seemed to take on a general profile that was distinct and unrelated to the Argentines from the first-wave. While the majority of political exiles tended to be decently well-off professionals, geographer Luna Vives Gonzales points out, the second-wave population was “more diverse and, generally speaking, less skilled.” As a group, these immigrants were “younger, had a lower educational and professional standing, and came more often from regions other than Buenos Aires” (Vives Gonzales 2011: 231). Accordingly, the socio-economic status of this migrant group tended to be lower than that of their predecessors (Vives Gonzales 2011: 231). According to report found in a study conducted by scholars Susana Novick and Walter Actis, there had also been a registered decrease in level of education within this new population, with 39.7% of migrants holding post-secondary degrees in 2000 (Novick and Actis 2008: 228).

In gauging the socio-economic status of second-wave migrants escaping the economic crisis, it is important to consider that they were by no means the poorest of the poor. As Ginieniewicz points out, the majority of second-wave Argentines actually had a decent economic situation; they seemed to leave because of recent unemployment, or a desire to increase their salary and economic stability (Ginieniewicz 2011: 156). An example of a migration spurred by a crisis of expectations, individuals who emigrated concluded that staying in Argentina would worsen their standards of living.

Another important change was the shift in Spain's immigration policy. After entering into the European Union, Spain gradually began to alter its *ley de extranjería*, ultimately ending Argentine naturalization privileges in 2005. This caused many of the newly arrived first-wave Argentines to assume an undocumented status, as they exceeded the legal standard 90-day tourist visa. While some have been able to gain citizenship, others have not been so lucky, and are still residing under illegal-status (Vives Gonzales 2011: 231-233). With this background, Avila's claim that Argentines in Spain are more equipped for integration than other groups seems to be too general. While some Argentines may experience favorable socioeconomic situations and hold access to Spanish citizenship, the profiles of second-wave migrants reveal that this is not always the case. Nonetheless, it is important to note that despite that limited economic and political resources, many of these immigrants did have the advantage of a pre-established network of contacts. Through ties with settled family members, friends and acquaintances, second-wave migrants enjoyed the benefits of an already-installed Argentine community, which in itself, proved to be a valuable asset for integration. In distinction to Avila's analysis however, these advantages seem to be more closely tied to the element of time.

### **A Cosmopolitan City: The Context of Barcelona's post-Olympic Prosperity**

Like the context and demographic of the Argentine situation, Barcelona's social, political and economic landscape too, had taken on a new form. The 1990s marked the start of an era of drastic change. In 1992, almost twenty years after the end of *franquismo*, Barcelona became the first Spanish city to host the Summer Olympic Games. Projecting an image of a modern and dynamic city, the Olympics facilitated the

restoration of various run-down neighborhoods, stimulated many sectors of the Spanish economy, and established Barcelona as a premier travel destination, invigorating the tourism industry with great strength (Smith 2006: 410-413), and paving the way for a re-invigoration of Barcelona's vibrant food culture. Ex-Mayor Pasqual Maragall observed that the games returned "a collective excitement and pride to a city which had been defeated and had suffered many years of speculation, lack of investment and negligence" (Balibrea 2017: 46). Turning Barcelona into Spain's economic capital, the Olympic Games shaped Barcelona into a cosmopolitan city with an abundance of economic opportunities. This prosperity thereby constituted another pull factor for Argentine migrants. Coming in stark contrast with the chaos of *el corralito*, many of my interlocutors indicated that their migration represented a move towards a better and more stable economic future. Now also the destination of many migrant groups, from North Africans, to other Latin Americans, the city took on an international dimension, spearheading the incorporation of different ethnic and cultural influences into its landscape.

Today, the reality of economic opportunity has changed. Because of the gradual restoration of the Argentinean economy, as well as Spain's 2008-2013 economic depression, the once high numbers of Argentines moving to Barcelona and Spain have since been significantly reduced. As Gininiewicz points out, the "current relative economic bonanza of Argentina, which was not significantly affected by the global financial crisis, combined with high rates of unemployment and debt in Spain, has actually generated a 'reverse migration' towards the Southern country" (Ginieniewicz

2012: 26). While Argentines no longer form the largest migrant community in Barcelona, their presence is nonetheless important and noteworthy within Catalan society.

### **Conclusions**

As this chapter aims to demonstrate, the Argentine community in Barcelona is comprised of diverse profiles. Though Argentine migration to the region originated because of the same historic precedents, commencing with colonialism and continuing with the countries' migratory traffic pattern, the nature of migrants between the first and second waves are significantly different. Members of the first-wave, for the most part, were pushed out of their home country because of the political situation, drawing parallels to the Spaniards who fled to Argentina during the years of the Spanish Civil War. Individuals from the second wave however, primarily left to ameliorate their economic situation, and held less similarities with their Spanish counterparts. Experiencing varying push and pull factors, and holding different demographics, economic resources, social assets, and legal statuses, these emigrants entered Barcelona with distinct backstories, which have therefore contributed to differing degrees of cultural adjustment and integration.

Also relevant is the fact that these migrants moved to Barcelona during different economic and political contexts. First-wave Argentines arrived in the years following the Franco regime, and therefore benefitted from the Catalan nationalist rhetoric, which favored immigration. For individuals pertaining to the second wave, this was not necessarily the case. Along with Argentines, the mass surge of other immigrant groups actually spurred a rise in both racism and anti-immigration discourses (Miampika and Garcia de Vinuesa 2009: 95), which was something that many of my interlocutors also

noted. Thus, to grasp complexities of Argentine immigrant identity in Barcelona, it is important to consider individual stories, from a variety of different backgrounds. While there are, of course, prominent similarities between the two waves, the varying divide between these migrants has generated a mix of experiences that cannot be condensed into one singular story. Constantly in-flux, migration patterns and motivations, just like migratory adjustments, are open-ended and contextual.

## **Chapter 2 – From Bife de Chorizo to Butifarra: Food Habits as a Reflection of Migrant Identity**

*The first time I met my god-mom, I found it impossible to believe she was from Argentina. My mom had told me all about her; sharing countless stories of their childhood years in Buenos Aires, I envisioned her having a thick Porteño accent like the rest of my family members. Yet, when I met her at JFK airport, I was confused; greeting me with two kisses, pronouncing her “s’s” like “th’s,” and using different Spanish words I had never heard before, she resembled none of the characteristics I was taught to associate with Argentines.*

*-Vera Armus, 2017*

### **Introduction**

The reality of the Argentine migratory experience in Barcelona is not black and white. As made clear in Chapter 1, the profiles and backgrounds of the Argentine migrant community is diverse and eclectic, partially because of its two-wave pattern of migration. This heterogeneity has thus produced a diversity of experiences once migrated, notably concerning notions of personal identity. Though my god-mom can, and usually does, pass as a Catalan native, her case comes into contrast with many other immigrants, whose Argentine heritage becomes evident after just a few seconds of interaction. On any given day, it is possible (as I experienced) to hear a cacophony of *porteño* accents on the streets of Barcelona. While some may wear their Argentine identity proud on their sleeve, retaining their accents, customs and other representative characteristics, others seem to have moved away from their roots, exemplifying traits and features that have hidden the

presence of their Argentine background. Deliberate in some cases and unintentional in others, the topic of immigrant identity is complex; contextual, personal, and at times, contradictory; each individual's experience in Catalan society has been different, and has thereby shaped their identity in unique ways. In trying to make sense of these experiences (and possibly address Avila's claim), it is thus valuable to consider individual accounts and perspectives. Drawing on semi-structured personal interviews with Argentine migrants in Barcelona, this chapter will illustrate the diverse ways in which migration has impacted identity, utilizing food as a tool of analysis in order to interpret the nature of these different experiences.

### **Identity and Migration**

Cultural identity, just like any type of identity, is never a set-in-stone concept; dynamic and contextual, it is constantly in-flux and situational, rather than clear-cut and rigid. When dealing with topics of migrant adjustment, we see this fluidity play an even heightened role. Though one may feel attached to a particular culture in one given moment, this may not be the case in another situation. Nonetheless, one way of grasping this complexity is by relying on trajectories of integration/adjustment. In this chapter, I organize my interlocutors into three distinct adjustment patterns, one, which constitutes a middle ground, and the others, which are characteristic of two extremes, in order to effectively organize these accounts and more easily grasp the diversity of experiences observed. While I operate my analysis with overarching labels, some of which I acknowledge are heavily loaded, I want to make clear that my goal is not to categorize my interlocutors; instead, I use these patterns as descriptive terms, rather than methodological units of analysis, in order to highlight the varieties of adjustment and

integration experienced. In my discussion, I then deconstruct these categories, showing how many of my interlocutors may fluctuate and/or overlap with other categories in a given situation. The terms are as follows: 1. Assimilated: Have little to no retention of Argentine habits; associate themselves as more Catalan/Spanish than Argentine. 2. Adapted: Retain some Argentine customs, but have also adopted other Catalan practices; still consider their identity to be at least partially Argentine. 3. Preserved: Retain the majority of their Argentine customs and have adopted little to no Catalan customs; feel as though their identity is fully Argentine, and have no connection to Catalan/Spanish identity.

In *'Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are': The Literal Consumption of Identity for North African Muslims in Paris (France)*, anthropologist Rachel Brown also organizes her discussion along the trajectories of integration. An ethnographic article on how food has become a “symbol of negotiated identity” for North African immigrants in Paris, France, she argues that through analysis of “daily food practice of Muslims in France (the buying, preparing and eating of food), one can gain insight into the diverse and nuanced approaches to identity development taken by North African Muslim immigrants in a European context” (Brown 2015: 42). Like Brown, I advance that food habits demonstrate the ranges of migrant negotiations with host and home cultures and the espousment of different identities; I draw on my framework to more easily grasp the diversity of experiences observed.

### ***Mas catalanes que argentinos - More Catalan than Argentine***

The three immigrant interlocutors that I introduce in this section have experienced extreme adjustments of their cultural identity, for the most part replacing the cultural

facets of their motherland with those of the destination of migration. Their narratives show characteristics that theorists often identify as “assimilated” (Alba and Nee 1997; Gordon 1961), fully identifying with Catalan identity, and holding little to no retention of Argentine cultural customs and practices. With the exception of one, all were from the first-wave of migration; having settled more than two decades ago, they have carved out their place in Barcelona, maintaining stable jobs, prominent Catalan social networks, and overall high-qualities of life.

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Martina Leona migrated to Barcelona in 1981 when she was just twenty-three years old. Though she did not face an immediate political threat, Martina had always considered the possibility of moving to Spain, as her parents were Spanish immigrants themselves. Early on, Martina did actually feel more tied to the Argentines. “We had more in common, so it was easier to establish relationships.” Keeping in touch with her friends and family, she maintained strong connections to Argentina, which influenced her involvement with the Argentine community in Barcelona. While Martina first mentioned that her transition was overall, “smooth,” she did admit later on that it was easier to turn to fellow Argentines in the moments she was struggling. “I had some difficult moments in the beginning; there were some months in which I was really scared about what would come; my financial situation, my social networks etc., and in those times, I usually found solidarity with the Argentines.” Initially glossing over her difficulties, Martina’s transition was therefore not as smooth as she made it out to be.

When I asked her to describe her current Argentine identity, she bluntly told me that she would not even consider herself to be under the category of ‘Argentine’:

I think to a certain extent, my integration into Catalan society represented a rupture with Argentina; a sort of new beginning. To be honest, I do have a certain point of rejection of Argentine culture. I think deep down, I did want to distance myself from the culture; I’m not a person who really needs traditions or customs. I’ve separated myself from Barcelona’s ‘Argentine ghetto;’ I don’t really want to be part of that community.

Martina’s entry into Catalan therefore, society spurred a deliberate desire to detach herself from Argentine culture; not only did the introduction of new customs prove to be more attractive, but they also seemed to generate a sort of disdain for her cultural heritage. Speaking with a strong Catalan accent, sporting the ubiquitous *espadrillas*, and always greeting someone the Spanish way, planting a kiss on each cheek, there seems to be little trace of her *porteño* roots.

When I asked Martina to describe her nationality, she interestingly admitted, “When you leave your nation, you don’t really have one anymore.” Rather than matching her exhibited Catalan conventions, Martina’s sense of self was more complex than she initially made it out to be. Exemplifying that her exhibited Catalan identity was not exactly ‘intact,’ we see example of how migrant identity is fluid; not set in stone, it cannot be categorized into one clear-cut model.

Alfonsina Jimena’s motivation to leave was more extreme. Left widowed after the oppressive dictatorial government murdered her husband, she fled to Barcelona in 1976. Arriving with her 3-month old daughter, her migration represented a new chapter in her life. Alfonsina primarily chose the Catalan capital because of the opportunities that it presented. Seeking to finish her orthodontics degree, the University of Barcelona was one of the few places that would accept her transfer credits. Like Martina, Alfonsina’s first

friends were exclusively Argentines. “I had a couple of friends who had also fled, so obviously I turned to them initially.” As soon as Alfonsina started meeting locals, her social networks quickly changed. Still grieving the death of her husband upon arrival, she felt Catalans to be very supportive of her situation. “People in Barcelona really showed solidarity towards Argentines during this time.” Little by little, she befriended Catalans through her first job and her Argentine ties were weakened. “Almost simultaneously, I began distancing myself from the Argentine community.” Replacing her Argentine relationships, the introduction of Catalan ties established her place in Catalan society. Today, Alfonsina feels a lot more tied to Catalans than Argentines. Maintaining few ties with Argentina, as both of her parents have passed away, the majority of her Argentine friends have actually migrated as well, and are scattered around the ‘diaspora.’ She concluded:

I have my life here. My daughter grew up here; my grandchildren are Catalan. I have my own dentistry clinic here. Yes, I grew up in Buenos Aires; yes, my roots are Argentine, and this is something I can’t forget. Unlike some other immigrants in my situation who left because of exile, I think I’m actually more open to Argentine culture; it’s not like I outright reject it. But since I’ve been in Barcelona for over thirty years, I feel like I’m from here.

Alfonsina’s adjustments therefore, seemed to be rooted primarily in time, rather than rejection. Nonetheless, like Martina, if you didn’t know Alfonsina’s story, she could easily pass as a native Catalan. Admitting that she would cheer for Spain in a soccer match against Argentina, her *porteño* traces seem to have been left behind.

Similar to Alfonsina, Diego Pedro also migrated because of immediate political threat. In October of 1978, 19-year-old Diego was held and tortured at Buenos Aires’ largest detainment center. Released after three days, he considers himself one of “the lucky ones,” as political prisoners were typically murdered. After his liberation, he

immediately made plans to flee Buenos Aires, and left for Spain three weeks later. Though he had many family members in Galicia, he chose Barcelona as other exiled friends lived in the city, and one of his great aunts resided nearby. As was the case with Martina and Alfonsina, Diego's transition to Catalan society was not initially easy. Missing his life back in Buenos Aires, he found comfort living in the 'Argentine ghetto' during his first six-months in Barcelona. "It was easier being surrounded by Argentines. People understood each other's situation." After finishing his engineering degree at the University of Barcelona, and joining the company at which he still works at today, Diego grew closer to Catalan culture. "My life became more stable; I felt more secure. I was able to make more local friends through my job." With the help of these new friends and his Spanish family members, Diego began to feel at-home in Barcelona, and gradually ventured beyond the Argentine ghetto. Though he has remained in contact with some of his friends in Buenos Aires, or other migrants living in the Argentine ghetto, he, like Martina and Alfonsina, also considers himself predominantly Spanish:

I still appreciate Argentine culture, don't get me wrong. I grew up there, some of my closest friends are from high school, but my life is here in Spain. Partially, I think it's because my parents are from here, because my children and wife are as well. Another part of it is that I've spent more than half of my life here. Maybe it has to do with the dictatorship. I can't exactly pinpoint it.

Diego's adjustments, while vague in some respects, appeared to be driven primarily because of time and social networks. Hearing him pick up the phone in Catalan, he blended right into his surroundings. Conducting our interview at his home in *Gracia*, I observed various soccer memorabilia displayed across his living room walls. Amongst countless Barcelona FC posters however, I was surprised to find an Argentine *Boca Juniors* banner as well.

With exposure to Catalan customs, my interlocutors would gradually adopt Catalan norms, whether it be picking up a Catalan accent and actually learning the Catalan language, to wearing *alpargatas*, celebrating *Sant Jordi* or even simply gaining an appreciation of Julio Iglesias. Thus, as the process of integration began, we can see that Catalan influence would begin to encroach on these migrants' Argentine identity, and eventually, overpower it.

### ***Bikinis in Place of Tostados - A Catalan Diet***

A parallel relationship can be observed when comparing my interlocutors' food choices to their personal conceptions of identity. Looking into the daily food habits of the 'assimilated' interlocutors, I found that in general, they rarely tend to consume Argentine food. All of these interlocutors tend to maintain primarily 'Catalan' or 'Spanish' diets at home, additionally following the standard late mealtimes. Cooking regularly, Catalan staples such as *tortilla de patatas*, *pan con tomate* and *calamares a la plancha* form a part of their daily diets at home. Despite these shifted food habits, my interlocutors expressed that they had felt a desire to preserve their customs upon arrival.

When he first arrived, Diego used to seek out bakeries that sold *medialunas*, and buy *dulce de leche* at specialty shops. Martina said, "During the months after my arrival, I ate in an Argentine manner to the extent I could. I felt comfortable replicating the meals I was accustomed to eating in Argentina. Gnocchi, other pastas, meats, *milanesas* were all foods I could easily make." Alfonsina also made an active effort to conserve her practices during her first couple of years. "In the beginning, I really tried; I would buy *dulce de leche*, *milanesas*, *empanada* dough." Yet, as time went on and my interlocutors began to adapt to life in Barcelona, these Argentine culinary traditions were replaced by

Catalan and Spanish customs. “I don’t think it’s because I actively made an effort to substitute my Argentine customs with Spanish ones, but as time went on, they just began to integrate themselves into my daily habits,” Alfonsina said.

Today, consumption of Argentine food is not frequent. Primarily eating traditional Catalan/Spanish cuisine in addition to other popular ethnic cuisines, the rare times they do go for Argentine food, it seems like this decision is guided by a particular motive. Though Diego still enjoys preparing a good *asado* every so often, he’ll really only do it for particular situations, like holidays, or visits from family members. Furthermore, more often than not, this consumption is linked to someone who espouses elements of an Argentine identity, or at least a curiosity for it. Martina mentioned, “Whenever I eat Argentine, it’s because someone else suggests it - I’m never the one to propose it.” Similarly, Alfonsina said, “I still have a couple of migrant friends who regularly eat Argentine food at home. Sometimes, they’ll invite me over for dinner and that’s where I’ll eat things like *morcilla* or *bife*,” adding that other times, it’ll be when a Catalan friend requests it. “A couple of my friends are ironically big meat fans, so they’ll propose to go out to *parillas*.” Driven by external influence, we see that eating Argentine hasn’t resulted because of a retained routine.

Furthermore, consumption of Argentine is also frequently rooted in convenience. Both Alfonsina and Martina’s homes are close to Argentine *empanada* shops, and they’ll sometimes stop by. “I’ll go to the corner *empanada* shop with my grandkids, from time to time. *Empanadas* are convenient because they’re very cheap, and easy to eat,” Alfonsina said. The same seemed to happen with *dulce de leche* ice cream, since it’s available at pretty much any Catalan ice cream store in Barcelona. Martina, who has a huge sweet

tooth, does enjoy it when relatives or friends bring her candy and desserts from Argentina, since these gifts come without any hassle to obtain. She was quick to add however, that this indulgence does not stem from any sentimental attachment or nostalgic longing. “Unless someone from Argentina brings me *alfajores* or *dulce de leche* or something, I really don’t eat any Argentine food... even the occasional Argentine sweets I’ll eat, I don’t eat them as a result of sentimentalism; I eat them purely because I love sweets.” Feeling as though she had to justify her consumption, this case further highlights Martina’s point of rejection with Argentine culture, giving us insight into Martina’s complex relationship with her identity.

According to Rachel Brown, the adoption of local foods can consequently aid migrants in their integration process; by consuming the food of the host society, immigrants shows that they are a part of that culture (Brown 2015: 47). Particularly the case in Barcelona, where the preservation of Catalan regional identity is remarkably important, this theory seems to hold true. For Diego, it was his initial interest in Catalan food, which allowed him to consolidated friendships with his co-workers. “As I started to make Catalan friends at work, they began to show me their favorite *tapas* bars, and we started to go out a lot more.” Alfonsina distinctly recalls bonding with a fellow parent over the *bocadillos* they packed for their children’s lunch. “We talked for hours about which meals were the most convenient to make for our kids. I remember we even exchanged recipes.” For these interlocutors, eating Spanish food not only constituted a way of blending in, but it also became a point of connection with local Catalans.

Another factor that explains these shifts in cuisine is the element of accessibility. As scholar Donna Gabaccia suggests, for immigrants, lack of access to cultural foods is

often linked to the loss of cultural heritage (Gabaccia 1998: 54). Martina and Alfonsina arrived during the late 70s and early 80s, a time in which specific Argentine foods, products and key ingredients were not readily available. As Martina detailed, “It’s not like you could go to any supermarket and find *provoleta* to make on occasion.” Before the era of mass-consumerism and globalization, it was hard to find the staples to preserve their traditional ways of eating. While many Argentine dishes were possible to replicate, it was more convenient to make use of the easily obtainable products, which made up Catalan cuisine. At this point in time, Barcelona’s Argentine community, though growing by the day, was still developing, making these staples harder to access. Even Diego, who settled later on, pointed out that it was inconvenient to shop for Argentine food, and expensive.

These cuisine changes, once accepted, were more or less permanent. Though today, accessibility is no longer as large of an issue as there are many supermarkets, restaurants, and specialty shops that sell these Argentine staples, my interlocutors have stuck with their adapted ways. As these new customs came in, it seems as though they subdued the desire to seek Argentine food. Now eating *entrepans* between breakfast and lunch, buying *panellets* for All Saints Day, and regularly drinking *cava*, my interlocutors have assimilated into Catalan food culture.

By utilizing food as a tool of investigation, we see that food practices not only reflect identity adjustments, but also serve as a stepping-stone for insight into more deeply rooted identity topics. For example, after discussing her lack of sentimentality when eating Argentine food, Martina admitted that to some extent, she had in fact, made a deliberate decision to distance herself from Argentine culture. Moreover, though in

some moments, Martina was confident saying she was a Catalan, in others, she admitted feeling a bit more lost, like when asked about her nationality. Similarly, while Diego mentioned he rarely partakes in Argentine culinary customs, I saw a collection of Argentine *bombillas* openly displayed on his kitchen cabinet. After asking him about them, he admitted that he does occasionally use them to drink Argentine *mate*. Although some of these individuals were first-generation Argentines themselves, all of my interlocutors arrived with firm notions of Argentine identity; as time went on however, their ‘Argentine-ness’ was gradually replaced with ‘Catalan-ness’ or ‘Spanish-ness.’ In parallel, the Argentine food practices and customs they migrated with were also overpowered by Catalan and Spanish culinary conventions. Highlighting the unique trajectory that these individuals have experienced post-migration, food thus gives us valuable insight into this assimilated groups’ migrant identity. Therefore, even in the extreme ‘assimilated’ group, we see that notions of ‘identity’ can be situational and fluid.

### ***Un poquito catalanes - A Little Bit Catalan***

Many of my interlocutors showed a transitional and mixed adaptation processes. Though they have retained overall notions of Argentine identity, they have still, in some capacity, integrated themselves into Catalan society and adopted features of Catalan culture. As a group, their senses of identity were the broadest and least clearly defined; subject to more variability within particular contexts and situations, they exemplified ‘bi-cultural’ characteristics (Brown 2015: 52), choosing to emphasize Argentine/Catalan affiliations at different points of time. Though the majority moved to Barcelona during the later stages, there was representation from both the first and second-waves of migration. The two interlocutors I present in this section demonstrated that adjustments

take on distinct natures; both experiencing adversity and rejection upon arrival, they dealt with these negative occurrences in diverse ways, while still adapting to life in Barcelona.

Migrating with her husband and daughter in 2007, Lucia Alejandra moved to Barcelona with the hopes of gaining economic stability and one day buying a house in Buenos Aires. Despite these dreams, her first couple of years were far from easy. Missing her friends and family in Argentina, Lucia didn't feel very welcomed. "Maybe it was more because of my poor economic situation, but I also felt distanced from the Catalans. It was hard to build relationships with them... with outsiders, they're very closed off." Similarly, Sebastian Manuel decided to make the move from Cordoba in 2002, seeing more economic opportunities abroad. Though he has now spent more than a third of his life in Cataluña, Sebastian believes he will always be an outsider. Pinpointing Catalan nationalist attitudes as the source of the issue, he argued that Catalans are somewhat hypocritical. "They pride themselves on this whole thing of acceptance; after the Spanish civil war, after the Argentine dictatorship, after the Syrian refugee crisis... Sure they've let in outsiders in but have they truly accepted us? Is forcing us to learn Catalan really integrating us?" It seems more like a barrier to me..." Voicing his discontent, he was not shy about his feelings towards Catalan nationalist policies and stances.

Though neither interlocutors found Catalan society to be particularly welcoming, they each responded in different ways. Sebastian deliberately avoided learning Catalan in resistance to "closed-off nationalist attitudes." Nevertheless, he mentioned that the majority of his friends are Catalans, which shows how he has integrated himself into the local social sphere, still adjusting to certain features of Catalan society, despite his

negative attitudes. With his strong *porteño* accent intact, he admitted "... life is so much more livable in Barcelona," adding that he will never return to Argentina.

Lucia on the other hand, reacted in an opposite manner. After making a conscious effort to connect with Catalan locals by appealing to their national identity, she now feels accepted. "I feel integrated into Catalan society...I looked and tried to integrate myself; I took a Catalan course, I can cook Catalan food for my employers- making an effort to adapt is something that pleases the Catalans..." Making several Catalan friends through her church, Lucia says she has gained exposure to many other Catalan customs. A big TV fan, she regularly watches Spanish drama *Cuentame como paso*, or other shows like *MasterChef España*. Though she firmly identifies as an Argentine, something that will never change, she also thinks she would not be able to readapt to life in Buenos Aires if she were to return. "I think I've been away for too long. My aspirations have changed, I've changed." Often using the Spanish *vosotros* tense, exhibiting a slight Catalan twang, and wearing the ubiquitous Spanish *alpargatas*, Lucia at first look, exhibited partial evidences of prevalent Catalan cultural norms.

### ***Empanadas de jamón serrano - An Argentine-Catalan Diet***

Upon examination of my 'adapted' interlocutors' food habits and choices, I found both a presence of Catalan and Argentine culinary customs. Though all of these immigrants had shifted their food practices to some extent, they managed to retain certain aspects of Argentine traditions.

For Lucia, *tortilla de patatas* is now a household staple. She'll usually eat dinner at 10 or 10:30 pm, as is the norm in Barcelona, as opposed to 8:30 or 9 pm, as she did in Argentina. Also citing *gazpacho* and *arroz meloso* as family favorites, she has

incorporated a number of Spanish dishes into her daily routine. Sebastian, who's not much of a cook, loves to make *pan con tomate* topped with a slice of *jamón* for breakfast, as it's quick and easy to prepare. Like Lucia, he also grew accustomed to eating later, and has now incorporated the *entrepá* meal into his schedule. Frequently going out to eat, he'll usually opt for some sort of Spanish cuisine. "Basque *montaditos*, Galician *pulpo*, fish, Iberian ham, I love pretty much every Spanish food," adding that sometimes he will eat Chinese or Indian.

Despite these new additions, this group of interlocutors still maintain Argentine culinary practices to some extent. Lucia and her family still have Argentine food on a regular basis. "We still eat a lot of *milanesas*, pastas, *empanadas*, and *asados* at home. I'll make the stews I made in Argentina; there are a lot of things that haven't changed in my eating and cooking habits." While Sebastian mentioned his limited culinary skills often impair him from cooking Argentine dishes at home, he'll definitely eat them if he has the chance. A point of divergence however, comes when considering the motivations and subsequent underlying meanings associated with this consumption. Though Sebastian does occasionally eat Argentine, he doesn't specifically seek these foods out. Notably, like Martina, he made it clear that there is no emotional link driving his actions:

If the occasion presents itself, I'll eat Argentine and enjoy it. If I'm close to an *empanada* shop or an Argentine ice cream place, I'll stop by. If I get invited to an *asado* at a friend's house, I'll come prepared with an empty stomach, so I can feast. But it's not like I'm going to go out of my way to find them. I'm not really trying to conserve my 'Argentine-ness' by eating Argentine food. There's not much sentimentalism attached.

In contrast, for Lucia and her family, sentimentalism is chiefly one of the most important factors that drives the consumption of certain Argentine foods. "Whenever I drink *mate*, I remember being in Buenos Aires with my friends. Preparing *guisos* like my

mom used to make also brings be back.” A method of remembering the past, eating Argentine fosters a sense of nostalgia. These symbolic consumptions support Rachel Brown’s claim, which holds that food presents a common connection to memory; tied to the places and situations where a particular dish was first consumed, food holds the capacity to move people “between the time it was first eaten, the present moment and future opportunities to eat the same food” (Brown 2015: 44). As Lucia’s daughters grew up eating Argentine staples, they frequently ask for their favorite dishes like *milanesa con papas fritas* or *choripán*. “Moving to Barcelona hasn’t been easy for them- they had to leave behind all of their friends, our family etc. For them, eating the foods they grew up with make it easier,” Lucia said. Therefore, in this case, many specific Argentine dishes seem to represent what Brown suggests are ‘anchors of memory’ (Brown 2015: 44). A way to momentarily return to their life in Buenos Aires, these dishes and practices seem to serve as coping mechanisms, counteracting both physical separation (Weller and Turkon 2014: 58), and bridging their pasts with their presents.

Yet, this sentimentalism seems to work two-fold; as Lucia recounts, not every Argentine food elicits a positive reaction. “Sometimes eating Argentine food make me miss Argentina, and sometimes eating Argentine food helps me cope with missing Argentina. It kind of depends... whenever I make *empanadas*, even though it’s technically the same dough, there’s something that ends up tasting different... so I don’t really make them anymore.” Highlighting the intricacies of immigrant adjustment, we see how intensely personal and complex these shifts and adaptations can be. Similar to Brown’s claims, Anthropologist Eugene Anderson argues, “Nothing brings back a place, time, or occasion more powerfully than a scent or taste. To eat the familiar home food is

to be at home, at least in the heart – as well as the stomach” (Anderson 2005: 130). For Lucia however, it really depends on which food is being consumed.

Like Weller and Turkon advance, access to certain foods may be limited by the physical, political, economic and socio-cultural realities of the immigrant’s new environment; this may very well impact the execution of a particular practice or dish, implicating negative associations in the immigrant’s new home (Weller and Turkon 2014: 58). In other cases however, ‘fusion’ foods may very well be accepted and encouraged. Despite her ambivalence with Barcelona’s *empanada* dough, Lucia recently prepared *locro* with Spanish *chorizo* and plans to make it again. She also added that one of her Argentine friends often puts a spin on traditional ham and cheese *empanadas*, using *jamón serrano* in place of the typical cooked ham, which Lucia herself enjoys. Sometimes, interlocutors have even found so-called ‘replacements’ or equivalents to traditional Argentine foods, such as swapping the Argentine *tostado de jamón y queso* for a Catalan *bikini* sandwich.

Thus, we can take these alterations as both evidence of adapted identity, and the contextual meanings that these adjustments may elicit. My ‘adapted’ interlocutors have demonstrated that Argentine food customs have undoubtedly been tweaked and nuance upon migration. Exemplifying a mix of both changed habits, retained customs, and even hybridized practices, it is clear that they have in one way or another, had to navigate processes of adjustment. Quite personal and specific, these adjustments seem to vary case by case. As seen with my ‘assimilated’ interlocutors, ‘adapted’ interlocutors also reflect food practices which highlight their now mixed Argentine-Catalan identity; they have adopted specific Catalan habits, while retaining other particular Argentine customs, and

experienced the generation of ‘hybridized’ cultural facets, which are neither fully Catalan nor completely Argentine.

Furthermore, in synthesizing food practices with overall matters of identity, we see the presence of other, subtler themes advanced. Culinary habits demonstrate that these immigrant adjustments have by no means been clear-cut; full of complexities and contradictions, there are various competing underlying meanings, which could explain the consumption or rejection of certain foods. At a basic level, as seen with Lucia’s case, eating Argentine food can demonstrate a reaction to feelings of homesickness, which ‘adapted’ individuals may still be experiencing, even years after their migration. Yet, since these same dishes or practices also have the potential to actually trigger that sadness, rejecting certain Argentine elements might actually indicate this dynamic as well, although this lack of presence could also be interpreted as natural loss related to adjustment. These particularities seem to echo some of the difficulties in integration, which these interlocutors experienced; presented with more resistance and in some cases, racism on the part of Catalans, the ‘adapted’ seem to have harder transitions to Barcelona than their ‘assimilated’ counterparts did.

Through acceptance and enthusiasm of other hybridized foods, we see just how specific, contextual, and personal these migrant adjustments have the potential to be. While Sebastian reacted with resistance when faced with pressure to learn Catalan and other barriers towards integration, he openly adopted Catalan food. Lucia on the other hand, made an effort to adhere to these ‘requisites’ for integration. Nonetheless, while willing to learn traditional Catalan recipes in order to gain an in with her Catalan bosses,

she was not ready to accept ‘altered’ *empanadas* and thus completely stopped making them.

### ***Argentinos todavía - Still Argentines***

The last organizational group can be described as the ‘preserved.’ The population holding the most intact Argentine traditions and customs, these interlocutors have retained the vast majority of their original cultural identity, and sometimes even emphasize these contributing aspects more vigorously than they did in Argentina. In general, their extreme preservation of Argentine habits can be understood partly because of avoidance towards/resistance of Catalan culture. Usually sticking to themselves and living in isolated, predominantly Argentine communities, these interlocutors have struggled to integrate themselves into Catalan society; more hidden and less numerous than their assimilated and adapted counterparts, it was initially harder to access this population.

Seeing ample business opportunities in Barcelona, Hernan Ricardo migrated with his wife, and two other business partners right before the 2001 economic crisis and founded his current restaurant *Pampero*, shortly after arrival. Located in the popular Argentine-settled neighborhood of *Eixample*, Hernan’s *parilla* is staffed with an exclusively Argentine team. Finding it possible and favorable to live surrounded by his Argentine migrant community, he had no desire or motivation to integrate himself, as he is happy moving within the periphery of his small Argentine bubble.

Hernan’s ‘isolationist’ mentality does not seem to come as a reaction, noting that he has experienced a relatively easy migratory transition. “In the first couple of months, everything went very well; it didn’t seem like a job, but more like vacation. I had my

wife's family here; my two friends; I quickly found my rhythm in the Argentine community." Though the novelty of everything seemed to disappear after a few months, he hasn't had significant trouble in adapting to life in Barcelona:

I have noticed differences; the codes of communication and social cues are distinct; not speaking Catalan is a barrier. The manner of selling products and labor standards took a bit of getting used to. But in general, I adapted well; looking back, nothing was particularly hard. I haven't felt any racism or notions of rejection, something that I know is not the case with most experiences.

Though Hernan has lived in Barcelona for over fifteen-years, his interaction with Catalans has remained very limited. "I have Catalan acquaintances and contacts, but the true majority of my friends and the people I choose to interact with are Argentines. It's just easier to form relationships with them." Making it a point to exclusively hire Argentine employees at *Pampero*, he added that it's "simply more comfortable" for him and his business partners, as they are easier to relate to. Conducting our interview inside *Pampero*, the restaurant looked exactly like a typical Argentine *parilla*. In many moments during our interview, Hernan spoke about *Pampero* as though it were his child, and therefore made it seem like he had taken a piece of Rosario and transplanted it to the streets of Barcelona.

In contrast to Hernan's easy transition, Fernanda Cecilia had a very hard time adjusting post-migration. Arriving to Barcelona in 1976 because of the dictatorship, Fernanda said her life in Barcelona has not been easy. "Upon arrival, I didn't feel comfortable; I hadn't exactly chosen to leave my country; I didn't choose to live in Barcelona. The first months were very hard. I would cry in secret every day; I was desperate to go back..." Although her migration came during the first-wave, a time in which Alfonsina said Catalans showed solidarity towards Argentine exiles, Fernanda

struggled to foster relationships with Catalans. Similar to Lucia and Sebastian's experiences, she said, "Catalans are truly very closed off. Even after three years of working at the same office, I remember asking a coworker to come over for dinner and she looked at me like what?" While the birth of her son helped Fernanda adapt a bit more, she remained unhappy and even attempted moving back to Buenos Aires after the end of the dictatorship.

I actually tried moving back a couple of times. I would stay in Buenos Aires a couple of months here and there, but then always moved back to Spain. Realizing that things had changed in Argentina, the nation that was supposed to be my homeland, was really hard. It's obvious now, but in the moment you don't really expect that things will change when you leave.

Today, Fernanda speaks with a particular and blended accent. Using Spanish phrases and mannerisms while retaining Argentine pronunciations, it's initially hard to uncover her origins without knowing her full story. While Hernan and Fernanda constitute two very different examples of 'preservers,' they seem to hold common perceptions about their current place in Argentine society. Though Hernan self-identifies as an 'Argentine living abroad,' he interestingly feels more Argentine inside *Pampero* than when back in Rosario. "Here, I reaffirm my Argentine identity every day. When I visit Rosario, I feel a lot more distanced; not participating in daily life makes it hard. Whenever I go back, I always feel like I've missed out on a lot, actually making me more of an outsider." Similarly, Fernanda highlighted: "...I kind of naturally, but somewhat involuntarily became affected by Catalan and Spanish culture. I don't think I'd be able to live in Argentina if I tried; it's too different now, nothing is the same. After migrating, you're not a citizen of your own country anymore; you become displaced." Both

implying that their relationship to Argentine has shifted (though for different reasons), we see how physical distance also limits the retention of an up-to-date Argentine identity.

Though Hernan and Fernanda each have taken steps to maintain the customs they arrived with, these cultural facets are also from a specific point in time. Just like personal identity, cultural traditions are also in-flux and subject to change; contextual and temporal, cultural identity is fluid and ever changing. Therefore, as hard as Hernan and Fernanda may try to preserve their Argentine customs, we see that these are specific to the moment in which they left Argentina - with migration, not everything is subject to control.

### ***Parilla para siempre - An Argentine Diet in Barcelona***

Like Brown observes, “When one finds oneself in an unfamiliar context it is not unusual to hold to the familiar more strongly” (Brown 2015: 48). As expected, ‘the preservers’ have held onto their Argentine culinary traditions to the best of their ability, clinging on to these familiar habits. As Fernanda detailed, “I’ll still get together with friends to have *mate* and *empanadas*; I still buy *alfajores*, *dulce de leche* and *medialunas* for *merienda*, even after all of these years. I may not eat the way I did in Argentina every single day, but I’ve still kept many traditions.” As the owner of a *parilla*, Hernan interacts with Argentine cuisine on a daily basis, admitting he eats more Argentine than when he was back in Rosario. “I eat Argentine all the time. I think in part because it’s convenient, but also because I really enjoy it and its part of my day-to-day routine.” While it remained unclear whether or not these patterns were deliberate, his behavior seems to mirror Brown’s claim, which holds that consumption of the cuisine of origin can

hold the potential to be more prominent in the host nation than back home (Brown 2015: 49).

Though both interlocutors regularly eat the foods they consumed back home in Argentina, these dishes still seem to elicit a sense of nostalgia. For Fernanda, there is a lot of sentimentalism attached. “I definitely remember my childhood when I eat Argentine food... *Alfajores*, *chocolinas*, *dulce de leche*; *asado* and *empanadas*, there’s memories associated with all of those foods.” While Hernan basically eats Argentine every day, there are instances in which these staples still connect him back to Argentina. “At times, eating Argentine food still takes me back to being in Rosario. *Asados* with my friends, drinking *mate*- it’s not like I get nostalgic every time I do this, but there are definitely moments that take me back.” Frequently, but not always, my respondents noted that they engaged in Argentine culinary traditions with other Argentine immigrants in Barcelona. For Hernan, it is usually with his team from *Pampero* while for Fernanda, it’s with her Argentine friends. Seemingly tied to Barcelona’s Argentine community, or as many of my interlocutors call it, “the Argentine ghetto,” we therefore see a reflection of an idea proposed by Brown; what may start as a simple search for familiar food, can, if multiplied, lead to separate communities formed by people who speak only with each other (Brown 2015: 48).

In going further, we can interpret these actions as possibly feeding into notions of imagined communities. As anthropologist David Sutton says, “there is an imagined community implied in the act of eating food ‘from home’ while in exile, in the embodied knowledge that others are eating the same food” (Sutton 2001: 84). For Hernan and Fernanda therefore, consumption of Argentine may very well represent and contribute to

a trans-local Argentine society; a way to transcend both temporal and physical space, Argentine food is used as a way of recreating their Argentine experiences in Barcelona.

Despite this dynamic, the diets of ‘the preservers’ have not remained completely intact. Hernan said, “Before coming, I really didn’t really drink that much coffee. But now, I’m very ‘*cafetero*.’ I also eat a lot more fish, seafood, and ham.” Even Fernanda admitted to changing some of her culinary traditions. Upon arrival, she was so disgusted by Catalan food, claiming she couldn’t stomach any of it: “Everything was swimming in oil, and fried in the same grease. It physically made me sick.” Yet, she revealed that she now appreciates a good *fidéua*, and frequently goes out for tapas. Thus, even in the ‘extreme’ case of ‘the preservers,’ immigrants never seem to live in a vacuum; while individuals may try to sustain their traditional identities, this process is never without some imparted influence.

Predominantly Argentine consumption patterns do seem to indicate the idea of a retained and, in some cases, resisted immigrant identity. With Hernan and Fernanda, we see how interaction with Argentine staple foods can aid the preservation of one’s traditional culture, and to some extent, foster detachment from the habits of the host nation. At the same time, matching my interlocutors’ unique experiences in Catalan society with their food practices also illustrates the notion that integration is not always the goal. Though Fernanda was looking to foster a connection with local Catalans upon arrival, Hernan on the other hand, did not indicate a desire to immerse himself into communities outside of the Barcelona’s Argentine collective. With diverse motives and subsequent reactions to experienced integratory adjustments, we see that the reality is not uniform.

Furthermore, it can also be noted that in many cases, the adjustments that immigrants experience are outside of their control. Hernan and Fernanda both expressed that they felt as though they no longer fit in upon returning to Argentina; while a variety of factors could explain these sentiments, it was the changes in Argentine society that expounded these reactions. Though both interlocutors engage in practices, which supposed to help them preserve their Argentine culture, they are conserving facets of a particular Argentine identity observed at a specific moment in time. Since society, like identity, is constantly in flux, there is feasibly no way for immigrants to maintain themselves completely up to date. While Fernanda was not shy to voice her initial negative opinions towards Catalan food, she did end up liking *fidéua*, contrary to her opposing mentality towards Catalan culture. Therefore, it can be said that these situations are complex and nuanced; despite that the phrase ‘preserved’ could imply a clear-cut and narrow category, ‘preserved’ experiences are far from identical.

### **Conclusions**

Throughout each of the three identity groups discussed, food served as a useful tool for exploring migrant identity. Through analysis of my interlocutors’ culinary practices, I was able to see a basic reflection of the adjustments they have made after arriving to Barcelona. In all situations, there seemed to have been a definitive change in forms of nourishment. While obviously varying in scope and vigor, all of my interlocutors ended up modifying features of their routines. Indicative of the strength of context, this dynamic highlights how upon migration, it is nearly impossible to resist some sort of local influence.

At the same time, food also revealed the diversity of these individuals' lived experiences; each of their stories and positions were unique and varied. Even within a particular identity group, migrants illustrated different spectrums of the discussed themes and levels of acculturation. For example, while Afonsina and Martina were very similar in some ways, their perceptions towards Argentine culture seemed to differ. Even though Lucia had faced more hardships than Sebastian had during her first few months in Barcelona, she was still open to learning Catalan, while he was not. In many instances, my interlocutors also presented circumstantial identities; though Fernanda was not shy about voicing her resistance towards Catalan culture, in some cases, she did actually accept it, as with her love of *fidéua*. While they could sometimes exemplify traits or habits that would firmly characterized them as 'assimilated,' in other situations, they exemplified a more fluid, 'adapted' identity, showing how these traits often overlap. Reinforcing anthropologist Clifford Geertz's claim, which holds that social situations can be "at once fluid, plural, un-centered and ineradicably untidy" (Geertz 1980: 166), we see now we see now that labeling, in this context, is both ineffective and problematic. Rather than trying to employ a "law-and instances ideal of explanation," it is worth taking a more interpretive and explanatory case-by-case approach, as now seems to be the norm in anthropological inquiry (Geertz 1980: 165-167).

In general, two variables seemed to be crucial in accounting for differences in integration: time and social networks. Overall, the interlocutors who had migrated earlier to Barcelona appeared to be the ones who were more integrated. In the beginning, all of these individuals had faced some sort of difficulty. Like Diego admitted, there had been some moments during his first months in which he really missed Argentina and longed to

go back. As time went on however, he began to find his rhythm in Catalan society, and this yearning to return began to disappear. As adaptation is never immediate, it thus makes sense that the longer one stays, the more integrated one gets. Furthermore, personal interactions with Catalans allowed migrants to learn about local culture and gain an in; looking at the ‘assimilated’ individuals, each of them had significant interactions with local, whether it be spouses, or connections made through their children. With more opportunities to form bonds with local Catalans, we see that these two explanations may very well go hand in hand.

Since immigrant from the first-wave have both had more time to establish themselves in Catalan society, and thus, foster bonds with local Catalans, it could be argued that the two different migratory waves have played a decisive role in explaining the diversity of experiences encountered. However, as emphasized throughout this chapter, it is crucial to remember that these experiences vary from immigrant to immigrant, which is why it makes sense to draw on patterns rather than stages. Though Fernanda was one of the earliest migrants, she herself does not feel integrated into Barcelona’s society; on the other hand, Lucia, who arrived in 2007, does. Also constantly in flux, personal conceptions of integration may also be situational.

### **Chapter 3 - Segunda Generación or Segona Generació? Identity amongst the Second-Generation**

*It's the first day of kindergarten. At lunch, everyone seems to have the same thing: a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. As I confidently reach into my lunchbox and take out my foil-wrapped meal, preparing to devour that creamy sandwich, I'm faced with a harsh reality. Rather than a PB&J, glaring up at me is an ugly, brown empanada. Mortified, I shove it back into my lunchbox, shielding my classmates from this monstrosity.*

*-Vera Armus, Common Application Essay, 2013*

## Introduction

As psychologists John Berry and Colette Sabatier write, “Second-generation youth have been seen as having the challenge of working out how to live with and between their parents’ cultural heritage and communities in highly variable ways” (Berry and Sabatier 2011: 1). For second-generation immigrants, or individuals who migrated at a young age, living with a multicultural identity results in extensive situational adjustment; often times, this cultural negotiation is even more prominent for them than for the migrants themselves. Growing up as an Argentine American in New York City, I, like my interlocutors in Barcelona, had to juggle various backgrounds and identities throughout different cultural contexts. At home, I felt Argentine - speaking Spanish, playing traditional Argentine card-games, and eating *morcilla* for dinner, I wasn’t raised with prevailing ‘customary’ American habits. At school however, I was a local - by speaking English, taking American history, and consuming the same graham crackers and apple juice as my classmates, I everyday reaffirmed the fact that I was from the United States; like my interlocutors, I was constantly absorbing customary habits from my teachers and friends, incorporating them into my day-to-day ways of life. Navigating both backgrounds as we grew, our relationship to each culture was therefore, developed differently than our parents’ generation.

Focusing on this diversification and distinction, this chapter explores the identities of individuals who have Argentine heritage, but grew up in Barcelona. Here, I examine my interlocutors’ developmental trajectories, drawing on food to examine how they have carved out their identities while living within the context of their duality. Throughout this chapter, I argue that food itself plays an important role in identity formation; impacting

the development of my interlocutors' selfhoods in childhood, when negotiating their Argentine background within the context of school and Catalan society, it has also fueled their current connections with Catalan and Argentine culture.

### **Why Examine the Second-Generation**

As explored in Chapter 2, culinary habits have the ability to reflect conceptions of identity, also encapsulating its fluidity and situational nature. Since all interlocutors from Chapter 2 arrived to Barcelona as adults, and therefore already held deeply ingrained Argentine traditions, analysis of their particular food habits reflected the subsequent personal adjustments they experienced post-migration. The situation for their children however, to whom I will refer to as the 'second-generation,'<sup>2</sup> was different. Though some migrated at a young age, while others were born in the Catalan capital, each spent a significant portion of their formative childhood years in Barcelona. Experiencing Catalan culture for the majority - if not entirety - of their developmental stage, they were more malleable and susceptible to its influence than their parents' generation; this therefore gave them the possibility to connect with Catalan society on a more impactful level. With a closer connection however, came the potential for further identity-related complications and contradictions; facing more variables to navigate and contexts to negotiate, these interlocutors faced even more situational identities to manage.

Moreover, food also concretely impacted the formation of their identities. On the one hand, it allowed for interlocutors to build up their Catalan identity, and experience

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<sup>2</sup> As mentioned in my introduction, I use the term 'second-generation' to refer to: 1. Individuals with Argentine descent who were born and grew up in Barcelona, but had parents of Argentine descent 2. Those who were born in Argentina, yet still spent the majority of their childhood years in Barcelona. Though the latter group could more accurately be described as pertaining to the '1.75th generation,' their experiences still provide worthy insight into identity formation, and thus, I found it apt to include them under the title of 'second-generation.'

the culture of the environment they grew up in; on the other hand, consumption of Argentine food gave them the possibility to establish and maintain a relationship with their heritage, especially if not many other ties remained. As a result, these set of interlocutors experienced - and continue to experience - these two cultures in a different way than their parents.

As anthropologists Dawn Chatty, Gina Crivello and Gillian Lewando Hundt posit, “young people are active in the construction of their own lives and societies” furthering that, “social relationships and perspectives are worthy of study in their own right” (Chatty et al. 2005: 399). Drawing from this theory, anthropologist Alessandro Monsutti’s *Deterritorialized Youth: Sahrawi and Afghan Refugees* discusses how food takes on a specific meaning for young Afghan refugees living in Iran (Monsutti 2010). Daniel Weller and David Turkon too, find it useful to look at immigrant identity across generational divide, drawing on culinary habits to discuss identity formation and heritage maintenance (Weller and Turkon 2014). Inspired by these discussions, I also examine the second-generation, looking at their particular adjustments in order to more fully grasp the complexities of identity negotiation that come with migration, and the variation that these dual background often produces.

### **Growing Up Catalan?**

My second-generation interlocutors demonstrated that food takes on a variety of different meanings and roles in relation to identity-development and consolidation. While these individuals experienced similarities with interlocutors from Chapter 2, food habits represent increasingly complicated, but ultimately relevant, dynamics, because of their multi-ethnic cultural affiliations. In order to analyze the second-generations’ trajectories,

I firstly consider their childhood cultural associations, early notions of selfhood, and the food habits they practiced growing up. Then, I examine their current adult self-conceptualizations and food practices, analyzing how these childhood variables had shaped their ethnic identities today. Throughout my discussion, I pay close attention to food habits, seeking to see not only how they reflect these developmental factors, but also to gain insight on how they have informed this formation.

A recurring theme throughout my interlocutors' experiences was the increased presence of Catalan culture as they grew up. While some started with an already-strong Catalan identity, each noted that Argentine culture had played some sort of role throughout their childhood, and was primarily passed on by their family members. Yet, this 'inherited' presence would weaken over time with the introduction and reinforcement of Catalan practices. This dynamic proved to be consistent with Young Yun Kim's theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim 2001), and the greater paradigm of linear assimilation (Andujo 1988; Makabe 1979; Ullah, 1985). Kim's framework advances that the incorporation of cultural practices from the new country amongst first and second-generation migrants tend to cause the weakening of the old 'heritage'-based traditions. For members of the second-generation, education, friendships, and shifted family relations all seemed to strengthen the absorption of Catalan and promote the abandonment of Argentine customs. As a result, when interlocutors grew older, they became more independent, and ties with other Argentines (either first or second-generation immigrants) and exposure to Argentine culture became less and less frequent. Catalan culture therefore, seemed to overpower these interlocutors' Argentine basis, thereby illustrating Kim's theory.

### *School for the Second-Generation*

The first factor that led to the conception of an increasingly Catalan identity was school. As a crucial point of introduction to Catalan culture, school exposed interlocutors to lifestyles that were different from what they experienced at home. Though each cited that their parents had contributed to their education, it was the act of being in school, which led them to adopt Catalan customs. There, they took Catalan social studies classes, which introduced them to both local language and culture; by interacting with Catalan classmates, they discovered prevalent conventions; at the cafeterias, they were even presented with specific Catalan dishes. Surrounded by “Catalan-ness” at every corner, they were consciously or unconsciously, immersed into the fabric of the Catalan context. As was the case in Weller and Turkon’s study, school was the place in which many interlocutors became aware of their cultural differences (Weller and Turkon 2015: 68).

Andrea Isabel arrived to Barcelona in January of 1991, when she was nine-years-old. Traveling with her two sisters, she met her father, who had migrated two months prior to secure his current job. Touching down in Barcelona on a Saturday and starting school on the following Monday, Andrea was immediately “thrust into Catalan society.” On the first day of class, she recognized that there were specific overall differences between her the culture of her home country and that of Spain’s:

I could definitely tell I was different. I remember during the first week of school, with my sisters, we would laugh about the fact that my teacher’s name was *Conchita*, which in Argentine Spanish, means something completely different. I knew different games, I had different dolls, I watched different TV shows...

Despite her Argentine customs, Andrea noted she didn’t have a particularly rough time adjusting to life in Barcelona. Interestingly enough, her classmates were actually allured by her these foreign habits. “I was seen as the sort of exotic one. I had a funny

accent, a different Spanish vocabulary... I remember I was also the only one in my class who had been on an airplane, something that fascinated my classmates.” In this case, Andrea was met with a high level of what Kim calls “host receptivity,” an idea in which “a given environment is open to, welcomes, and accepts strangers into its social communication networks and offers them various forms of social support” (Kim 2001: 79). Though her difference was marked, Andrea felt overwhelmingly welcomed into her classroom dynamic; rather than dismissing her atypical habits, her classmates grew interested in her unique experiences.

Although many of her classmates would go home for lunch, Andrea and her sisters ate at the school cafeteria, since their father worked during the day. “I remember that same first week at school, I discovered *tortilla de patatas* at the cafeteria - I loved it. After that moment, I basically ate *tortillas* every time they were available to me.” Gaining exposure to other staples like *jamón*, *paella* and *pan con tomate*, her diet quickly became Catalan-dominated.

Renata Josefina, 42, also highlighted the influential element of school in terms of identity formation. Born in Buenos Aires, Renata left Argentina with her mother in 1978, following the disappearance of her father. Arriving to Barcelona as a two-year-old, Renata remembered her childhood being more influenced by Catalan culture. While her mother always told her stories of Buenos Aires and made sure to keep her connected with her grandparents, Renata’s life of “duality,” in her words, started early on. Entering a bilingual *guarderia*, the Spanish equivalent of nursery school, just a month after she arrived to Barcelona, she learned to speak Catalan essentially at the same time she learned Spanish. Since Renata’s mom was finishing her university degree while working

at a private practice, Renata spent a lot of time in childcare care-programs. While she didn't remember the exact moments in which she became aware of her culinary differences at school, she did recall that she was frequently exposed to Spanish dishes, which didn't factor into her diet at-home, noting that *yemitas*, *pisto* and *croquetas* played a role in her diet outside of her household.

In distinction with Andrea and Renata, Santiago Lugo was both born and raised in Barcelona. While both of his parents are Argentine, he has since his childhood, felt like he was from Barcelona; never identifying as an outsider, he also suggested that his identity was more rooted in the city, rather than Spain or Cataluña itself. Despite this firm association with Barcelona, he added that Argentine culture did play a role while he was growing up. "With my dad, I did more 'Argentine' things. He taught me how to make *asado*, we watched the Argentine national soccer team on TV, and sometimes he played music by Cacho Castana." Like Renata, it was harder for him to recall specific moments in which he felt different at school. However, he did note, "I remember at the cafeteria, we would often have dishes that I never ate at home. Things like *fidéua*, *croquetas*, *bravas*, *crema catalana*... Catalan dishes that were more elaborate and required more work to make." He also remembered that in primary school, around Three Kings Day, he would often make a traditional sweet bread called *tortel de reyes* with his class, which was something he never made or ate at home.

Though all interlocutors experienced Catalan food customs at school, Argentine food was not lacking in the home. Despite varying levels of Argentine cultural education, reinforcing scholar Kyunghwa Kwak's claim that, "the degree to which family members carry on cultural continuity in the new society can vary substantially" (Kwak 2003: 119),

each indicated that Argentine culinary customs had, in fact, played a significant role throughout their childhood. At home, Andrea and her family continued to eat Argentine food on a relatively frequent basis. Despite not having access to many Argentine products, she noted that *matambre*, *milanesas*, and *dulce de leche* continued to factor into her childhood diet once migrated. While Renata and Santiago's connections to Argentine culture were not as strong as Andrea's, they did mention that their diets at home were definitely Argentine-inspired, listing staples like *empanadas* and noting that they ate more meat and pasta dishes than their classmates. Renata, too, engaged in various set traditions, such as "having gnocchi on the 28th<sup>3</sup>" or eating pizza on Sundays.

Considering how much time these interlocutors actually spent at home, we see that their exposure was not as frequent as one may think. Despite the fact that Andrea's family continued their culinary customs, she only ate dinner at home - as a result, she quickly began to adopt Catalan norms culinary customs at school. With the introduction of these new foods and limited exposure to Argentine staples, she became more aware of Catalan culinary conventions, and openly embraced them. Even if her 'exoticism' was initially seen as an attractive trait to her classmates, it didn't take much time for Andrea's palate to adjust to traditional Catalan taste. Similarly, she admitted she had a full-on Catalan accent by age 11.

Like Andrea, both Renata and Santiago attended school all day, spending only one meal at home during the week. While they experienced less cultural contrast, they both indicated that their school context had resulted in the formation of a primarily Catalan taste. Ironically, Renata remembered visiting Argentina when she was eight and

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<sup>3</sup> Eating gnocchi on the 29th of every month is a tradition - eating it on the 28th is not, which could be taken as an indicator of Renata's lack of connection with Argentine culture.

noticing that the food was different from what she was accustomed to in Barcelona. Similarly, Santiago recalled struggling to use a *bombilla* for his *mate* as a teenager while visiting family in Rosario, despite having a picture of himself as a toddler drinking the traditional Argentine tea.

While each case was distinct, each interlocutor indicate a more or less natural progression towards customary Catalan practices, mainly because they spent the majority of their time at school. As this wasn't a choice they explicitly made, we see that the shift towards Catalan culture was not specifically intentional. As Santiago reflected, "I think it was being at school, surrounded by Catalans, sometimes speaking in Catalan, and learning about Catalan society, that I naturally gravitated towards the culture." Learning and doing what was customary, members of the second-generation grew to both form and reinforce their Catalan identities because of immersion into the school context. Reflecting Kim's model of cross-cultural acculturation, we see how this introduction to Catalan norms seemed to overpower Argentine influences, sometimes directly, and other times, more abstractly. Considering that no interlocutor noted scenarios in which they felt excluded because of their cultural identity, nor instances in which they explicitly felt coerced to adjust, we see that conformity pressure is not applicable to these interlocutors' cases; rather, they seemed to accept their surroundings with open arms.

### *Catalan Friendships*

A second influential theme for members of the second-generation was the impact of social networks, both in the private and public realms. Although school was the primary point of introduction to Catalan culture, their exposure was also driven by specific friendships and social interactions with classmates. All of my interlocutors noted

that the overwhelming majority of their close childhood friends in Barcelona came from Catalan families, each citing ways in which these friends shaped their understanding of local culture, and subsequently shared cultural customs such as food habits.

For Santiago, the relationships he established through his soccer team played a relevant role in this discovery. “I started eating *paella* on Sundays (as is typical) after I joined my soccer team. Since we always had matches on Sunday morning, one of the teammates would always host a lunch after.” Adding that at home, he never partook in the *paella* on Sundays tradition, we see how Santiago’s teammates added a new Catalan dimension to his weekly routine.

For Andrea and Renata, introduction and exposure to certain Catalan foods by way of their friends led to an even more prominent effect; it caused their desire to incorporate these foods into their daily habits, as they subsequently demanded them to their parents. Andrea noted, “...during my first couple of months, when I was still seen as ‘exotic,’ I remember one of my friends gave me a couple of her *pipas* to try - I liked them a lot, and everyone at school seemed to have them. Then, I remember seeing them at the supermarket a couple of days later, and asking my dad to buy them for me.” Renata, despite not having many examples about feeling different at school, remembered many instances in which she wanted something that her best friend had at her house. “... I spent a lot of time with my neighbor, who was also my best friend. Her mom would always make *crema catalana* when I was over, because she knew I loved it. My mom didn’t know how to make it, and I was always bugging her because I wanted it at home, so one day, Julia’s mom came over and taught us both.” Embracing these new foods, Andrea

and Renata then brought their own homes, and shared them with their parents, thereby affecting their adjustments as well.

While Renata and Andrea's comments both indicate that they wanted these items because of how they tasted, they also suggested it had to do with a desire fit in with the norms; this seems to highlight Kim's theory, which holds that one of the prime "pull" factors in adopting local identity is the necessity to change behavior in seeking harmony with the new milieu (Kim 2001). Furthermore, Andrea and Renata's explicit desire for Catalan food demonstrates how food also holds the potential to shape identity. Considering the argument that "you eat what you wish to be" (Brown: 2015, 43), these instances could be interpreted as ways in which they literally consumed culture to build Catalan identity. While not as powerful as an outright rejection of Argentine food, they still indicated a voluntary desire to shift towards predominantly Catalan customs.

In anthropologist Alessandro Monsutti's discussion of young Afghans living in Iran, he points out that frequently, members of younger generations develop new food tastes which are different from their parents; in turn, this shift also acts as a way to distinguish themselves from these adults, engaging in a sort of rebellion against Afghan culture (Monsutti 2010: 229). Interestingly enough, none of my interlocutors indicated that their motive was to differentiate themselves from their parents, or Argentine culture. This perhaps could have something to do with the high levels of host reciprocity they experienced, since none of them recalled a moment in which their Argentine upbringing was explicitly problematic for them within Catalan society.

### *Shifting Family Dynamics*

Another important theme was the added presence of Catalans in my interlocutors' family dynamic. Just as school was crucial for the introduction of Catalan customs, family was the chief source of Argentine food for each interlocutor while growing up. As archeologists Ramon Buxo and Jordi Principal point out, "Right from the very beginning of a person's life, feeding is not only a biological necessity, but also a social process that creates bonds of identity, affection and belonging" (Buxo and Principal 2011: 204). More or less dependent on their parents for food at home, Argentine migrants had the power to dictate what was consumed at-home, and consequently, imparted aspects of their own cultural identities onto their children. Like Monsutti furthers, "The particular situation of young migrants stems from the fact that their sense of belonging and identity is shaped by elder generations" (Monsutti 2010: 216; Chatty et al. 2005: 388). For my interlocutors, this cultural transmission was frequently dependent on one or two crucial sources; therefore, when exposure to these individuals' cooking was blocked, consumption of Argentine was reduced. In many cases, the inclusion of a new Catalan presence in the family structure seemed to compromise their access to Argentine food.

When Santiago was twelve, his father married his current wife, a Catalan native. While this event obviously impacted Santiago's experience at his father's house in a variety of different ways, one of the biggest changes he noticed was with cuisine. "After they moved in together, Paula (his father's wife) became the one who cooked. My dad always got off work later, so she pretty much always made dinner." Making both typical regional and national dishes, Paula played an important role in informing Santiago about gastronomy. "Paula would always make things I saw on restaurant menus; stuff I had

heard about but usually never really ate. *Salmorejo*, *arroz meloso*, *butifarra*, *romescada*. She even made things like *gulas* or *bacalao pil pil* from the Basque Country; it was awesome.” It was her culinary influence, which Santiago thought influenced his overall love for gastronomy.

Andrea too, experienced a change with her family dynamic. Two years after moving to Barcelona, her father began dating another Argentine immigrant named Teresa. Since Teresa’s parents were from Spain, she had grown up already eating many Spanish dishes and “knew about Catalan and Spanish cuisine.” Also fleeing the Dirty War when she was 23-years-old, she was more integrated to life in Barcelona. Moving in with Andrea’s family six months into their relationship, and bringing with her Luciana, her half-Catalan daughter, Andrea said these new presences pushed her to adopt more Catalan norms. “When Teresa and Luciana moved in, we definitely cooked more Catalan food and did things for Catalan holidays, which we didn’t do before.” While Luciana exposed Andrea to Catalan items such as *xuxes*, Teresa too, introduced her to many new conventions. Ironic that Andrea’s adjustment arose because of an Argentine, we see just how important social relations have the potential to be.

While the introduction of these new figures broadened my interlocutors’ Catalan culinary repertoire, they also seemed to come at the cost of Argentine traditions. As Santiago noted, “When Paula moved in, we ate Argentine less frequently at my dad’s.” Since Santiago’s father acted as his main source of exposure to Argentine food, detailing that *chimichurri*, *matambre*, *gnocchi* and *panqueques* were all previously household staples, the replacement of his meals meant a definitive loss of presence. Also factoring into this loss was the fact that Santiago now spent weekdays at his dad’s and weekends at

his mom's. "Once I got to secondary school, I would do weekdays with my dad, since it was closer to school, and weekends with my mom. Even though Paula did most of the cooking in general, my dad never cooked on the weekdays because he got off work later." Since it more convenient for Paula to cook, and the gendered convention, she took over as the main meal-preparer and influenced what Santiago ate.

Overall, the presence of these new relationships therefore seemed to shape the dynamic of the family sphere in important ways. Affecting the primary source of access to Argentine culture, my interlocutors' Argentine customs began to weaken, while Catalan practices grew stronger. In this case, reconsideration of Gabaccia's claim, which advances that lack of access to heritage food is connected to the loss of cultural heritage, provides us with worthy insight (Gabaccia 1998: 54). Because of Santiago and Andrea's now limited access to Argentine food, their developmental trajectory seemed to take on a primarily Catalan flavor.

As seen through my interlocutors, food habits amongst the second-generation reflect a shift towards an increasingly Catalan cultural identity. While each noted that Argentine customs and habits played a part in their childhood, the introduction and sustained prevalence of Catalan culture contributed to the intensification of their 'Catalan-ness'. More prominently than with their parents, my interlocutors noted that this introduction in many cases, fueled their connection with cultural identity. Serving as a vehicle of acculturation and reinforcement of Catalan cultural norms, consumption of Catalan food drove consumption of Catalan identity. As Santiago said, "I think food habits do, in fact, signify culture. Even though I'm not sure my choices were necessarily a response to my duality, or a conscious favoring of Catalan culture over Argentine, they

did play a role in establishing the conception of who I am today.” Intentional or unintentional, these shifts towards Catalan customs represent the adhesion of a more Catalan identity.

### **Adulthood Identity and Food Habits for the Second-Generation**

Today, both my interlocutors’ current ethnic associations as well as their culinary practices reflect their predominantly Catalan lifestyles. Reinforced as they grew older, affiliations with Barcelona seemed to strengthen while connection to Argentina was weakened, in terms of both food and identity. Overall, Renata said her family practices a “generally Catalan diet,” noting, “At home, we eat many vegetable-dishes, *cremas de vegetales*, sometimes beef, a lot of grilled fish...” Planning a regular dinner schedule, she makes *tortillas de patatas* at least once a week. Andrea echoed, “Day-to-day, I’d say my food habits are predominantly Spanish, adding that *pan con tomate*, *guisos*, rice-dishes, *tortillas*, *bocadillos* and *cremas* prevail. When asked to list dishes, which factored into their daily eating habits, no interlocutor answered with examples of Argentine food, despite the fact that they had all grown up eating Argentine food in some shape or form. In this case, although each interlocutor reflected primarily Catalan modes of consumption, they all also suggested evidence of other external influences which explained why they eat the particular way they do.

My interviews with the second-generation revealed that external variables outside of their control influenced their shifts. For Renata and Andrea, their current family dynamic seemed to play a big part. Renata pointed out, “A big part of my culinary habits at home are shaped by the fact that I have kids, so they definitely influences what we end up eating, since they’re not willing to eat everything...” Andrea too, said that her children

influenced what was ate at home, suggesting that choices at home were dependent on elements out of their control. Though during childhood, Paula had guided Andrea's shifting habits, her children were now the influential figures, thus highlighting the importance of social relations.

For Andrea, another important change came about because of her husband's half-Portuguese background. Stating that this background has influenced her family's eating habits, she added that her mother-in-law taught her how to make many Portuguese dishes, which she has now incorporated into her weekly routine. "Nacho's mom taught me how to make many vegetable-based soups - *caldo verde*, *sopa de pedra*." Andrea's decision to become a vegetarian in 2010 also seemed to exacerbate the inclusion of this influence. While her husband and children have remained omnivores, she noted that many Portuguese dishes are vegetable heavy, and can be made with or without meat. Usually cooking the same recipe twice, making a larger batch with meat and an adapted vegetarian version for herself, she said these Portuguese dishes were convenient to incorporate into her routine. Though Andrea's renouncement of meat could be interpreted as a move from Argentine culture, since it is so beef-heavy, she advanced that everything in Spain "has pork in it" and held that vegetarianism was harder to practice in Barcelona.

Santiago, who is now attending journalism school in New York, noted that his day-to-day habits have also shifted as a result. "I try to eat the way I ate in Barcelona, but it's not like I can always maintain that sort of diet being in the US. Especially when I'm busy with school, I'll end up eating quick meals like pizza, rather than cooking myself, like I did back home." Though the influential Catalan variables from their childhood certainly informed interlocutors' current habits, they had continued to shift with presence

of external variables even as adults, reminding us that these elements are fluid. This dynamic therefore, seems to represent a more of a plural and segmented developmental paradigm, such as described in social psychologist Jean Phinney's *Ethnic Identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research*. Holding that identity is a two-dimensional process, it requires consideration of "both the relationship with the traditional or ethnic culture and the relationship with the new or dominant culture" as these two relationships may be independent (Phinney 1990: 501). Depending on many factors, Santiago's example reflects the complexity and multifarious nature of identity building.

When discussing their personal conceptions of identity, each interlocutor noted that they felt at least half-Catalan or Spanish. Renata said, "In terms of cultural connection, I'm definitely closer to Catalan society." Like Renata, Andrea also identifies more with Catalan culture, though she makes it clear that she does not associate with Catalan nationalist political views. Santiago feels as though he's fully "from Barcelona," like Andrea, distinguishing himself from both Catalan and Spanish nationalists.

Analysis of current friendships also revealed divergence from their Argentine-influenced childhoods. In many cases, parents were the point of connection with other Argentines. As the second-generation grew older, their associations with their Argentine social networks began to subside, just as it had with Argentine food. Though Renata does have friends who themselves are immigrants, none of them have Argentine heritage. "I don't have any close Argentine friends, nor Argentine-Catalan. People who immigrated from other places yes, but not Argentina." Similarly, Santiago highlighted, "I had a couple of Argentine friends during my childhood through my parents' friends. As we

grew up though, we drifted apart and lost contact. I was probably around 13 when we stopped seeing each other.” Today, none of his friends are Argentine.

While Andrea noted that her interactions with Argentines outside of her family are still relatively limited, she added that her Argentine-related social networks actually increased as she grew older. “Growing up, I didn’t have much relationship with other Argentines. When I got to college however, I actually met more Argentines than during my childhood. I befriended some, and with them, I have remained in contact.”

Nevertheless, Andrea actually feels more Catalan when she interacts with these friends. “Since many still have their accents in-tact, and are well-connected with the culture, I think being with them reinforces the fact that I’ve strayed away from Argentina, and that I no longer have a strong Argentine cultural identity.” Reflecting the notion that loss of cultural is not a deliberate decision, we see that it is “the result of complex interplays and changes associated with the immigration process” (Campbell 2005; Weller and Turkon 2015: 61). In Andrea’s case, identity formation is not quite as clear-cut as linear assimilation theory makes it out to be, as it takes on a more fluid and free-flowing nature (Kim 2001; Andujo 1988; Makabe 1979; Ullah, 1985).

### **Retained Habits**

Consideration of my interlocutors’ current food habits also highlights the presence of their developmental trajectory. Although the majority said they were more aligned with Catalan identity and customs, they all, in some capacity, demonstrated that some sort of Argentine cultural variable or identity element still played a part in their lives; sometimes, this presence was even extended into their Catalan social networks, carving its place in Catalan society. Furthermore, consumption of/engagement with Argentine

food seemed to serve as a way of both preserving these parts of their selfhood, as well as making them their own. Monsutti writes, “Food and eating is not a mere remembering of their past. It may be both a way to reactivate and to appropriate the discourse of the older generation...” (Monsutti 2010: 216). Allowing the second-generation to form their own relationship to Argentine society, food habits often constructed personal links towards Argentine culture.

### *Special Occasions*

My interlocutors all noted that at the most general level, their connection to Argentine food and culture comes out within the setting of special occasions, such as reunions, holidays, or birthdays. Reflecting these commentaries, Weller and Turkon highlight that for many members of the second-generation, “heritage food is consumed infrequently, usually on holidays, yet continues to act as the primary conduit connecting them to their heritage culture” (Weller and Turkon 2014: 62). As these special events all involve the presence of family, and often times also include culinary traditions, they allow members of the second-generation to reconnect with individuals and customs that may not factor into their day to day. For Santiago, Christmas is his most stable form of connection to Argentine culture:

Ever since I was little, we did *asado* for Christmas. When I was young, I’d often go to Argentina during the holidays, so we’d always have it there, with all of my cousins and uncles. The years in which we didn’t go, we still made *asado* with my dad. Even after Paula moved in. Even now that I’m living abroad, I’ve had the chance to go back to Barcelona, and we still do *asado* for Christmas.

When I asked him whether he’d make it on his own if he wasn’t with his family on Christmas, he responded, “Probably. I’m not usually sentimental, but I think it’s been something I’ve been doing for so long, that it’d be strange to have Christmas dinner

without it. It wouldn't be the same." While Renata usually experiences a traditional Catalan Christmas, since she passes the holiday with her husband's family, she mentioned that New Year's Eve dinners at her mom's house always involve *vitel tone*, an Argentine holiday dish that consists of smothered veal in a lemon-tuna sauce. "We always use my grandma's recipe," she said. Though Andrea also cited Christmas as an important date, she more generally noted the importance of family gatherings. "Whenever we get together with my sisters at my dad's house, my dad will make *asado* if it's nice out... Despite being limited to *provoleta* or *verduras a la parilla*, she said it was still a ritual that had stuck. Therefore, it wasn't specifically the convention of holidays, which led to Andrea's consumption of Argentine, but rather, the time spent with her family.

It thus seems as though extended family is one of the prime connection points between second-generation immigrants and Argentine habits. Though in this context, members of the second-generation are usually not the ones preparing or even choosing the Argentine food, these special occasions still serve as methods in which they are reinforcing and embracing their Argentine side. Through actively attending and engaging in these reunions, members of the second-generation demonstrate that they still have a connection to Argentina.

#### *Go-To's*

Though family gatherings were the strongest point of reinforcement, all interlocutors noted that there was at least one Argentine 'go-to' item or dish that still factors into their current lifestyles, and they continue to go out of their way to obtain. For Andrea, it was *dulce de leche*. "We always have *dulce de leche* at home. I've always

loved it, and ever since you could find it easily in supermarkets, I always buy it.” Renata on the other hand, goes for *empanadas*. “There’s an empanada shop that’s great. It’s all the way in *Poble Nou*, which is very far from my house, but whenever I’m around there, I’ll go. The kids also love them.” While Santiago’s case is a bit different, as he no longer lives in Barcelona, he also mentioned that he and his friends would frequently go to the same *Poble Nou* shop Renata cited. Still though, he added, “We’ll sometimes go with my dad when I’m back in Barcelona for the holidays.” While these items may or may not have been intentionally employed as a way of “cultural maintenance” or preservation, they nonetheless, indicated the presence of childhood habits that stuck.

In the beginning of my interview with Santiago, he initially noted that he didn’t go out of his way to eat Argentine, yet, this example shows otherwise. Like Weller and Turkon point out, food is often times integrally tied to perceptions of identity even among those who may not explicitly recognize its importance (Weller and Turkon 2014: 63). Therefore, while Santiago may not explicitly take these Argentine habits as presentation of his Argentine identity, they still, in a way, constitute a way in which he is retaining his Argentine cultural background. In all cases, interlocutors additionally went out of their way to seek out these items thereby demonstrating a willingness on their part that went beyond family, this provided evidence of their personal continued connection.

#### *Passing down Traditions*

Perhaps the most explicit way in which food represented identity maintenance for the second-generation was through the extension of traditions. While my interlocutors’ parents had faced similar desires, the traditions that they sought to extend seemed to represent more powerful and personal connections. Since the second-generation held a

greater number of Catalan traditions, which were likely more accessible to pass on, the Argentine they chose to transmit seemed to be particularly meaningful. Exemplifying a concrete effort to preserve fragments of their childhood cultural influences, interlocutors here quite clearly highlighted an acceptance of their duality.

Growing up, Renata and her mother would always eat pizza on Sundays. While common amongst a number of Argentines, this 'ritual' isn't seen as a particularly traditional convention. When I asked Renata about why this particular custom had stuck, she answered, "My dad always had pizza on Sundays in Buenos Aires. When my mom came to Barcelona after his disappearance, it was one of the few things we did to remember him." Renata went on to explain that throughout her childhood, her mom didn't talk about her father very frequently. "Obviously I knew about him - I had pictures of him, I heard stories of his life, I talked to his parents back in Argentina. When I asked questions, my mom would answer them. But in general, my mom was never the one to bring him up." For Renata then, eating pizza on Sundays is one of the concrete ways in which she could connect with her father, as well as her history. Today, Renata has continued the tradition with her own family. "Even though it's customary here to have *paella* on Sundays, we do pizza," demonstrating in this case, an example of how she has favored Argentine norms over Catalan.

Andrea, like Renata, also has a number of practices she has continued with her family. At the simplest level, Andrea tries to expose her kids to Argentine food at home, noting that from time to time she cooks Argentine dishes for her family. Deliberate and intentional, we see evidence of her desire to preserve parts of her Argentine heritage. While Andrea vividly recalled memories of her birthday parties in Buenos Aires, which

involved the presence of customary *sandwiches de miga*, *alfajores de maizena* and other *facturas*, these customs changed upon arrival to Barcelona, as there were no Argentine bakeries nearby. With her kids however, Andrea now replicates the Argentine birthdays she failed to experience once emigrated. “A couple of years ago, a really high-quality (Argentine) bakery opened up, not too far from my house. Ever since then, ironically, I now buy *facturas*, *sandwiches*, and *alfajores* for my kids’ birthdays. All my Catalan friends always ask me where they’re from - some of them have even started going on their own.” By planning these birthdays, Andrea is in a way, providing her children with an opportunity she did not fully experience, and simultaneously sharing these practices to her Catalan circles. Indicating her continued desire to engage in a convention that she herself had forfeited, she is demonstrating a certain reflection of longing for what she lost by growing up in Barcelona. This instance shows us how the experiences of second-generation migrants have the potential to be more complicated and nuanced than that of their parents.

Extending this dynamic further, Andrea also noted that whenever she can get her hands on *chocolinas*, a type of Argentine biscuit, she’d make *chocotorta* with her kids. “I have fond memories of making *chocotorta* with my mom when I was little.” While her mother cut off all contact with Andrea and her sisters about a year after they left for Spain, Andrea implied that this memory is something she still cherishes today. Though she has attempted to regain contact with her mom multiple times, once even traveling to Buenos Aires, she has been unsuccessful. In this case, making *chocotorta* may represent a desire to keep connected with that memory of her mother, and to symbolically share it with her kids.

Referring to first-generation migrants, Turkon and Weller write, “by acting as the bridge between immigrants and their homeland, food also functions as a reservoir that immigrants draw on to resist incorporation and to pass their cultural identity on to their children” (Weller and Turkon: 2014, 58). In distinction to the first-generation migrants discussed, Renata and Andrea are not resisting their children’s incorporation. They are instead embracing their own multifaceted identity and transmitting these traditions onto the next generation of their families, often times advancing both their personal and communal Argentine identities.

### **More than Just Conventions - Food and Identity for the Second-Generation**

By the end of their interviews, all members of the second-generation demonstrated that to some capacity, whether it was explicitly stated or simply implied, consumption of/engagement with Argentine food is a way of linking themselves back to their Argentine heritage. Going beyond just indicating the presence of dual heritage, they each advanced notions of situational senses of self:

As Andrea already suggested, she sometimes feels like she’s from “nowhere,” especially when she’s surrounded by other Argentine migrants who still have a strong connection to their home country. However, by attending *asados* with her family, always having *dulce de leche*, buying *sandwiches de miga* for her kids, and remembering her mom by making *chocotorta*, it seems clear that food serves as a way of re-affirming her Argentine identity.

For Renata, her Argentine heritage seems to be a way of experiencing a disjointed past. Since she feels like she lacks her own Argentine traditions, her relationship with food could be interpreted as a way of maintaining the personal traditions she does have.

By eating her grandma's recipe for *vitel tone* on New Year's, and continuing her pizza-on-Sundays tradition, she is able to engage with individuals with whom she has been temporally and spatially disconnected. Recently, Renata went back to Buenos Aires for the 40th anniversary of her father's disappearance and memorial. Taking her children for the first time, she notes that while there, she introduced them to foods they had never tried before. While some they liked and others they didn't, she says *alfajores* were one of their favorites, and they have since asked for them every time someone travels to Argentina. Food for Renata therefore, may also constitute a way of making new traditions.

Though Santiago seems to be comfortable with the title of "I'm from Barcelona," he too, demonstrates that the second-generation case brings the possibility of competing, situational identities. Prior to moving to New York, Santiago worked as a journalist in Beirut for three years, and noted that his time away from Barcelona detached him from experiencing his parents' Argentine ways of life. Currently living with an Argentine family however, he now eats Argentine meals much more frequently. Confessing that he has since rediscovered his love for *dulce de leche*, he admitted that overall, living in the context of his Argentine-influenced New York home has brought him closer to his Argentine heritage and identity.

Argentine food in this context thus allows for concrete reinforcement of 'Argentine-ness,' if the individual wants/allows it to. Though it may not necessarily tie-in with 'identity,' for all cases, and it doesn't have to specifically be sentimental or emotional tie (though in many cases it is), food is still a cultural facet which connects the second-generation to their Argentine heritage. Through analysis of its consumption, we

gain a window into the situational nature of the second-generation experience; yet again, we see that food habits and identity are fluid, which reinforces the notion that nothing is set in stone.

### **Conclusions**

Exploring migrant identity through different generations provides further insight into the complexities of immigrant experiences. In the second-generation context, food illustrated the ways in which their multifaceted identity was formed. Highlighting how interlocutors navigated their duality, it demonstrated how intensely fluid their adjustments were, switching from one situation to the next. In distinction to interlocutors from Chapter 2 however, food seemed to take a stronger role in shaping identity; both in the Catalan and Argentine contexts, food practice allowed individuals to form their own self of sense and belonging.

Throughout their childhoods, Catalan food habits seems to push my interlocutors towards Catalan identity; by consuming food typical to Barcelona, they metaphorically seemed to feed their Catalan sense of self, allowing them to create a personal connection with Catalan culture. Similarly, in the Argentine realm, food acted as a way to maintain, and in some cases, further cultivate their Argentine identity. In the second-generation context therefore, food habits can be understood as a taking the role of a ‘fun-house mirror’; not only reflecting my interlocutors’ dual heritage, they also seemed to add shape and form to their identities. Furthermore, even more prominently than with the first-generation, food provided the possibility to concretely connect with Argentina; since these interlocutors had less ties to the country, and often times, didn’t seem to have as much of their own story, the traditions they maintained represented something intensely

personal and powerful. Examination of the second-generation therefore demonstrates the utility of examining various facets and dimensions of migrant experiences.

#### **Chapter 4 - Present but Hidden: Argentine Tastes in the Catalan Context**

*Almost every mini-mart in Barcelona features a circular cookie next to its cashier. Wrapped in light-blue packaging, it usually blends in with the assortment of random convenience store goods, which frequently seem to be overlooked. While I always saw this item when checking out, it took me a solid two months to realize this object was actually an alfajor, a traditional Argentine cookie sandwich. Upon discovery, I began asking the storeowners for more relevant information, and found that the majority didn't even know what they were, or where they came from.*

*-Vera Armus, Reflections Barcelona, Summer 2016*

#### **Introduction**

Tastes, one's inclination to certain flavors and styles, are not natural. Like any of the characteristics of our identity, tastes don't depend on science but rather, they are taught, learned, and performed (Stajcic 2013: 10). Contingent on time and place, in some cases, they can be explained by geographic environment, socio-political conditions, and/or historical antecedents of a given region. In other instances, their formation is more vague; rather than holding a concrete explanation, they arise because members of a particular group seem to enjoy them (Aguirre 2017: 19). Accordingly, each culture, community, and individual has different preferences that dictate how food consumption patterns are established. Dictating what stays and what goes, tastes constitute one of the factors, which influence the consumption habits of a particular context.

When examining the adhesion of a specific food or cuisine into a new environment, taste seems to play an important factor in determining what sticks. When I arrived to Barcelona in 2016, I was initially shocked by the ubiquity of Argentine restaurants and culinary influences present throughout the city. From Argentine *carnicerias* to *panaderias*, everywhere I went, I seemed to find evidence of Argentine influence. Yet, it soon became clear that not all of these staples held the same role.

Unlike *dulce de leche* ice cream or *empanadas*, which are widely consumed amongst Catalans and Argentines alike, the convenience-store *alfajor* hadn't been etched into the fabric of the mainstream Catalan food sphere; left behind at the check-out section, it didn't seem appeal to the tastes of the average Catalan mini-mart goer. Many other Argentine influences also seemed to be neglected by Catalans, exclusively serving sectors of the Argentine community. Why then, had some influences been incorporated, while others hadn't?

Inspired by this question, in Chapter 4, I explore the role of Argentine food within Barcelona's public culinary scene, taking restaurants and food shops as my areas of focus. I argue that examination of Barcelona's Argentine food offerings provides further insight into the fluid nature of migratory adjustments. Looking at the ways in which Argentines have both adjusted - and failed to adjust - different traditional Argentine staples, I advance that to be accepted in Catalan society, these foods must be adapted to fit within the parameters of Catalan taste when not already compatible. These shifts further reinforce the fluidity of migrant identity, and often times, mirror the dynamic of adjustments that are observed with the migrants themselves. In order to do this, I firstly contextualize Barcelona's food scene, looking at its historical formation and characteristics, to see where Argentine food might fit in. Next, I analyze food blogs in order to gauge food trends, and examine Argentine influences role in these mediums. Finally, I draw on participant observation and first-hand accounts to evaluate the nature of these shifts, and the implications they have had on integration of Argentine food.

## The Formation of Catalan Taste

“*Com catalans mengen pus graciosament e ab millor manera que altres nacions.*”  
Translation: *As Catalans, we eat with more charm and more style than other nations.*  
-Francesc Eiximenis, Circa 1379 (Vinyoles 1988: 140)

Food culture, strong culinary traditions, and pronounced gastronomic appreciation have played a central role in Catalunya for over six hundred years. Emblematic and tributary, the cuisine of Catalunya is hereditary of the civilizations that have dominated Europe since the age of the Roman Empire. From its earliest days, Catalan food had already taken on its most symbolic trait: its capacity to incorporate the best of the other cultures (Massanes and Culler 2010: 11). Maintaining this dynamic of amalgamation, Catalan cuisine has continued to grow and flourish, accepting nuance and modification into the 21st century.

Starting in the 1990s, Barcelona’s food culture and culinary atmosphere would start to take on an increasingly international character. Becoming the first Spanish city to host the Summer Olympics in 1992, Barcelona’s bid stimulated many sectors of the Spanish economy, including the tourism industry, which helped establish Barcelona as a premiere travel destination (Smith 2006: 410-414). Allowing the city to showcase its already impressive and established culinary traditions to an international audience, this tourism-driven dynamic introduced the world to distinct realm of Catalan flavors. Coincidentally however, Catalan gastronomy was experiencing its own drastic shift, driven principally by Chef Ferran Adria. Jumpstarting what was known as *cocina de autor* and the *vanguardista* culinary movements, Adria’s techniques and expertise pushed Catalan cuisine in a new direction, laying the foundation for what was to be known as ‘new Catalan.’

While Barcelona's post-Olympic context revealed the wonders of Catalan gastronomy to foreigners, it was truly Adria's impact, which put Cataluña on the map as one of the world's premier culinary destinations. With groundbreaking approaches such as molecular gastronomy and emulsification, his work was both inspired by foreign flavors and techniques, but also itself influenced a whole realm of chefs in the international arena. Michelin-Star Chef Joan Roca advanced in an interview with *La Vanguardia*, that Ferran has not only been the motor of Catalan gastronomy, but also of the world (Jolonch 2011). Establishing Catalan cuisine as one of innovation and creativity, Ferran Adria and the subsequent great chefs of Spain, known as "The Great 14," have facilitated this culture of fusion, particularly instituting tapas as canvases for creation (Jolonch 2011).

### ***Crema Catalana and California Rolls - Barcelona's Current Food Scene***

*Esta de moda ser chef... Lo chulo es que esté de moda la cocina.  
Translation: It's trendy to be a chef... The cool thing is that food as a whole is in.  
-Michelin Star Chef, Jordi Cruz (Lopez 2013)*

With the era of post-Olympic prosperity came the influx of new foreign influences into Barcelona's culinary landscape. While before, Barcelona's gastronomic offerings remained more or less local, with only a few foreign restaurant options available across the city, this all started to change during the 1990s. Martina remembered:

After this tourism boom and positive economic situation, deciding where to go out for dinner became a lot harder. Now, there emerged many new restaurants, and while many of these were Catalan, we also started seeing the introduction of *japos* (sushi-places), Mexican restaurants, French places, pizzeria's, trattorias, you name it.

Driving culinary tourism, as well as an overall heightened gastronomic enthusiasm, Ferran Adria's role also contributed to this form of culinary development. Another key factor however, was the newfound presence of thousands of foreign

immigrants, hailing everywhere from Southeast Asia to North Africa. Motivated by Barcelona's new economic opportunities, they began to shape the city's restaurant landscape and contributed to the innovation of Catalan cuisine itself.

Thanks to the post-Olympic tourism boom, as well as Ferran Adria's role, the Barcelona of today holds a wealth of flavors. From Thai food to Basque *tapas*, *fidéua* to doner kebabs, it offers both an exquisite diversity of foreign cuisines in addition to its high-quality Spanish and regional Catalan creations. As celebrity chef contestant and food-blogger Valeria Valencia expressed, "Barcelona is a very international city. Every day, there are thousands of tourists that visit, and our gastronomic offerings reflect this global atmosphere." Highlighting Japanese food as particularly popular, she advanced that its appeal comes from its trendiness in the international culinary arena, as well as its nutritional benefits, and simple but bold flavors. "What we are beginning to see in Barcelona is a mix of techniques and products from different cultures into our own cuisine. Incorporating foreign ingredients with local styles or flavors, there is a growing practice of fusion in its food scene, in part traced to the city's international status." Items such as tataki or salmon tartare have become ubiquitous on many Spanish and Catalan menus across the city. Not only limited to high-end restaurants or the professional culinary realm, these influences are both accessible and widespread.

While Catalan cuisine has undergone a reinvigoration in the past two decades, so has food culture overall. Hernan said:

There has been a boom in the world of gastronomy; from the latest technologies and gadgets, to millions of cookbooks, and establishment of cooking schools. Of course, Barcelona is one of the most advanced cities in this respect, and I think it has even contributed to this worldwide enthusiasm, but in a general sense, the culinary world as whole has amplified itself.

The appearance of TV outlets like Food Network, online publications such as *Eater*, pop-ups like Smorgasburg and even food Instagram accounts have heightened this infatuation; as a result, food culture has exploded into a worldwide phenomenon and can be found in an extensive array of industries. This widespread captivation with food has come with the establishment and proliferation of international trends, many of which have reached Barcelona's shores. From açai bowls and Hawaiian poké, to frozen yogurt and pressed juices, there are no shortcomings in Barcelona's 'trendy' food scene, which indicate that this is something Catalan's seem to crave (Guadano 2017; Galafate 2017; Ferrero 2013; Palou 2016). Considering these additions, as well as the long history of Catalan culinary appreciation, innovative spirit, and willingness to incorporate external influences, one would expect Argentine food to play a noteworthy role within Barcelona's culinary realm. Yet, as explored in the next section, the reality is more complex than historical context would suggest.

Today, Argentine restaurants, specialty-shops, and products are ubiquitous on the streets of Barcelona. Particularly with the arrival of the second-wave migrants, Argentine foods have expanded during the past couple of years, both in availability of products, as well as restaurants and locales. For example, *El Corte Ingles*, a Spanish supermarket chain, features *dulce de leche* in its sweets aisles; *Havanna*, a popular Argentine coffee store, has two locations in the city, one of which is located in the highly-touristic *Plaza de Catalunya*. Even a generic Google Maps search reveals evidence of Barcelona's high density of Argentine restaurants. Like Laura said, "I can find everything *porteño*; I use the same dough I used in Buenos Aires to make my own empanadas at home." Not only

making it possible for Argentines to carry on the food habits they had back home, the accessibility of these products clearly indicate the presence Argentine immigrants.

Yet, as was illustrated with the mini-mart *alfajor*, abundance of options does not mean that all Argentine foods are fully integrated into Barcelona's mainstream food scene. While dishes, products, and ingredients are certainly present, the majority haven't actually made as substantial of a culinary impact as one would expect. As Valeria detailed, "Argentine food hasn't quite caught on as a big trend. People know about the meat, yes, but it's not Japanese or Indian, for example." Though Santiago said the majority of his friend knew about Argentine meat and occasionally went out to eat at *parillas*, he also pointed out that not many people seem to be acquainted with particular the Argentine cuts.

Examination of Barcelona-based food-blogs also revealed that overall, coverage of Argentine food seems to be lacking. Out of the fifteen online blogs I analyzed, '*Mantel a Cuadros*' had the highest number of posts concerning Argentine cuisine, with ten mentions, and four restaurants reviewed. Yet, this was few in comparison to other, more popular foreign cuisines. For example, Japanese food included featured more than twenty relevant articles, and over forty restaurants reviewed. Along with Italian, Mexican, Thai and French cuisine, it featured a distinct organizational page on *Mantel a Cuadros*' website to better showcase relevant content. The Argentine places that had in fact been included however, seemed to reflect 'adjusted' restaurants, marketed towards Catalan tastes. Though we obviously cannot exclusively turn to food blogs as measures of presence and impact, they do seem to be valuable indicators of day-to-day trends and influences. As scholar Lori Kido Lopez writes, "blogs provide a unique space for

exposing the changing shape of these relationships as they are lived out in daily activities and interactions. Unlike pricey cookbooks, *Food Network* television shows, glossy food magazines, and other more traditional food media, blogs give their readers a peek into the everyday culinary adventures” (Kido Lopez 2016: 151). This therefore, led me to examine them for myself.

By visiting and engaging with a number of Argentine restaurants in Barcelona, I found that restaurants had adapted to Catalan norms and tastes in varying degrees; though some sought to insert themselves into the Catalan mainstream and accordingly conformed, others seemed to have other objectives, avoiding adjustment completely. Like in Chapter 2, I group my accounts into organizational themes in order to highlight the varying levels of adjustment.

### **Levels of Adjustment**

#### *Purely Argentine*

Consistent with the gap of knowledge and impact that Santiago and Valeria suggested, I found that many Argentine restaurants end up primarily catering to Argentine populations. One of these was ‘*La Braseria Iguazu*,’ a small, no-frills joint located in one of the more popular-sector of the *Barceloneta* neighborhood. As part of my fieldwork, I visited ‘*La Braseria Iguazu*’ with Fernanda, who has been going for over 10 years. “What I love about *Iguazu* is that you feel like you’re in Buenos Aires. Everything on the menu is something you would find at a *bodegon*,” she said. Simple and unpretentious, it was crowded with Argentine families enjoying classic dishes like *milanesas*, *bifes* and *sorrentinos de jamón y queso*. Attending for lunch on a Sunday, I experienced a similar situation.

*Excerpt from 'La Braseria Iguazú' field-notes:  
Overwhelming sound of 'porteño' accent heard across the room; don't hear any Catalan spoken;  
Family atmosphere; out of the eight tables in my field of vision, all clients have Argentine accent  
(heard a different accent at table by the entrance- unclear whether Catalan or other Spanish  
speaker); many of families at different tables interacting with each other; all of waiters are  
Argentines; Boca Juniors (soccer club) rerun from 2007 Copa Libertadores playing on TV-  
atmosphere feels exactly like an Argentine 'bodegon'- could very well be in Buenos Aires right  
now- definitely feels like an Argentine enclave.  
-Vera Armus, Barcelona, 2016*

With an exclusively Argentine staff, the space almost felt as though it had been intentionally made for Argentines, by Argentines. Reinforcing Fernanda's comments, to me, *Iguazu* emitted feelings of a translocated community; I easily could have been at a neighborhood restaurant in Buenos Aires. Like scholar Gina Almerico writes, ethnic restaurants "appeal to natives of the homeland represented by offering familiarity and authenticity in foods served" (Almerico 2014: 4). Satisfying a multitude of Argentines, *Iguazu* was effective in catering towards that specific population.

At the same time, it ironically felt as though there was a 'locals only' vibe; though I myself have an Argentine accent, and heavily associate myself with Argentine culture, I almost felt like an outsider in this context. Furthermore, online, there are various Trip Advisor reviews written by both foreign tourists and Catalans alike, which speak about the restaurant's overall service and atmosphere. While the vast majority praise the food, many of them point out that *Iguazu* doesn't constitute a 'warm' or inviting space, noting that the space was not aesthetically pleasing, nor were the waiters welcoming (TripAdvisor 2018). Without Catalan translations and an un-particularly inviting atmosphere, *Iguazu* isn't exactly being marketed towards a Catalan clientele, nor does it seem like it wants to be. Reflecting parallels to my 'preserved' interlocutors, *Iguazu* shows seems to constitute an example of an unadjusted form of Argentine culinary presentation.

### *Mostly Argentine*

Like *Iguazu*, Hernan's restaurant, *Pampero*, also serves Argentine food and focuses primarily on meat. In distinction however, it seems to be presented as a more 'accessible' option to non-Argentines, both in terms of appearance and atmosphere. Though his overall clientele includes many Argentines, Hernan mentioned that he does also get a frequent number of Catalan diners, in addition to a substantial number of foreign tourists. "*L'Eixemple* (where *Pampero* is located) is close to *Plaza Catalunya*, *La Rambla*, *Passeig Gracia* and a number of other tourist-heavy destinations, so we actually tend to get a number of foreigners as well." Though initially only offering his menu in Spanish, Hernan decided to translate the menu into English, Catalan, and French after realizing the large number of foreigners *Pampero* attracted.

In terms of meat cuts, Hernan serves both traditional Argentine options like *asado de tira* and *vacío*, as well as Catalan/Spanish styles such as *solomillo* and *entrecot*. His menu also includes a fusion of sources as he offers both imported (Argentine) and local beef. Interestingly though, the items that feature imported meat are cut in a Spanish style, while the locally sourced options are only offered in Argentine cuts. In Almerico's discussion of ethnic restaurants she writes, "For those who do not share the ethnicity of a dining establishment, the experience allows them to explore the novelty of a different and maybe even unfamiliar culinary adventure" (Almerico 2014: 4). In my interview with Valeria, she seemed to reflect these ideas when she said, "From a Catalan perspective, Argentine cuts are something different; they're a little exotic. In general, people tend to know that Argentina is famous for their meat and barbecue, so when they want to mix it up, they go to (Argentine) *parillas*." While Hernan agreed, noting that many Catalans

order the Argentine versions, he also added, “We included the Spanish cuts to make the menu more accessible. From a marketing perspective, it was important. Even though the Argentine cuts are very popular, people still frequently order the Spanish ones. By mixing the two, customers are still getting Argentine in some sort of way.” Through these comments, we gain insight into Hernan’s agenda; on the one hand, as a business owner, he finds it important to present options that appeal to all sectors of the Catalan population, not just the ones that are searching for an ‘exotic’ experience. On the other hand, his specific-menu decisions highlight his commitment to sharing at least some sort of Argentine aspect with his customers. Putting on various hats to deal with navigate the question of profitability vs. identity, we see how Hernan adjusts both his dishes and positionality in this setting. Though in his personal life, Hernan may be comfortable living in his transplanted Argentine bubble, his decisions with *Pampero* further reflect the fact that migrant identity is fluid and oscillated from context to context.

### *Argentine-Fusion*

As Fernanda told me, “There’s a lot of new restaurants that are ‘Argentine-inspired.’ They’re marketed more towards young people and tourists,” also adding that they were usually expensive and trendy looking. Going along with these characteristics, I found various restaurants that seemed to fit this ‘Argentine-inspired’ theme. In addition to its Argentine fusion-burgers, *Bro Burger*, also features typical *choripán* sandwiches served on Catalan *coca* bread. *Negro Carbon* advertised itself with the slogan, ‘Tango and tapas,’ and was filled with tourists and Catalans when I visited. Seemingly well integrated into the Catalan mainstream, it became clear in adjusting to fit the rubric of

Catalan preferences, Argentine restaurants did in fact, make a mark on Barcelona's food scene.

Yet, the most significant example worth discussing is Lionel Messi's restaurant, *Bellavista del Jardin del Norte*. Co-owned by the Iglesias brothers, which according to Martina are "two of Barcelona's most important restaurateurs," *Bellavista* is designed like a typical town in Messi's native province of Rosario. Called "cross of gastronomic paths" by Juan Carlos Iglesias, the restaurant, which is more of a food-hall, features a number of different stands and establishments, some with Argentine classics like *milanesa napolitana*, in addition to selections of inventive Catalan tapas, like marinated oysters (Jolonch 2016). While *Bellavista* opened in July of 2016, Santiago said it was still a hot-topic in the food world and the quotidian sphere. "There's still a decent amount of press surrounding it; it's still pretty hyped up. A lot of people still talk about it, mostly because of Messi's involvement." Capitalizing on the pride and obsession that Barcelona's residents have with the legendary Argentine soccer player, *Bellavista* seems to be employing Messi's celebrity-status as a way to lure customers in, adjusting its marketing techniques to appeal to Catalan consumer taste.

Closer examination however, reveals that Messi's identity also conceptually factored into *Bellavista*'s establishment. In a 2016 interview with *La Vanguardia*, the Iglesias brothers noted that the restaurant is meant to elicit a memory of a hometown (Jolonch, 2016). Many news pieces have touched on Messi's complex identity struggles - moving to Barcelona when he was just thirteen, many Argentines have accused Messi of being unfaithful to his homeland, since he never seems to perform with the Argentine national team. Though he rarely speaks up, Messi has mentioned that nothing bothers him

more than when people say he is not Argentine (*La Nacion* 2009). Like journalist Jeff Himmelman writes, “This boy who rejected the advances of Spain’s national team to choose Argentina, the land of his birth, only to find that he could never really come home” (Himmelman 2013). Inserting the narrative of Messi’s story into the focus of the restaurant, *Bellavista* therefore, represents a way in which Messi’s identity is communicated and drawn upon.

Through analysis of these different restaurants, we can see that Argentine food has been presented in different ways within the Catalan context. Within the restaurant sphere, *Iguazu* represented an institution, which prioritized character and identity. *Pampero* was more of an in-between, retaining a strong notion of Argentine-ness, but still adjusting its menu and marketing to cater to Catalan tastes and an international audience. Finally, *Bellavista* was the most changed and integrated; on the one hand, while it overtly prioritize marketing appeal and profitability rather than Argentine distinctiveness, it still embraced Lionel Messi’s duality, and reflected his complex identity.

#### ***Helado de dulce de leche and Empanadas - Already Catalan-Worthy***

While scrutiny of different Argentine restaurants indicated the degree to which restaurants have adjusted, two specific items, *empanadas* and *dulce de leche* ice cream, also provide worthy insight into how Barcelona’s food scene has reacted to Argentine culinary staples. During my interview with Andrea, she noted that though *dulce de leche*, a traditional milk-caramel spread, was readily available, it didn’t seem to fit with Catalan taste. “In general, I think it’s too sweet for Catalan taste. Food isn’t as sugary here - at my children’s birthday parties, *dulce de leche* is never really a hit.” Despite this comment, which based on my observations, seemed to hold true, *dulce de leche* is found as a flavor

in most ice-cream shops across the city. Amongst Time Out Barcelona's best ice cream shop rankings, eight out of nine locales serve *dulce de leche* as a flavor option, the only exception being *Llagurt*, a store that exclusively serves frozen-yogurt. Furthermore, *Dino Gelati*, a popular Cataluña-based chain, directly markets their version as made with "authentic Argentine *dulce de leche*." Interestingly enough, this flavor is offered in addition to their 'caramello,' which is basically the Spanish-equivalent of the Argentine caramel spread. *Gelaaati di Marco* and *Amorino* serve caramel variations in addition to their *dulce de leche* flavors as well.

Argentine chef Claudio Armando said, "...ice cream, even though it's still sweet, is far less intense in flavor than *dulce de leche*. By putting it into the ice-cream format, you can dilute some of the sweetness." Though it is hard to pinpoint exactly where and when the proliferation of *dulce de leche* ice cream took place, the ubiquity of its presence highlights how Argentine tastes were adapted to fit in with Catalan culinary preferences, and then adopted as a standard business practice in the ice cream market. Marina Rita, an Argentine who briefly studied at the University of Barcelona in 1986, didn't recall recalls ice cream shops serving *dulce de leche* as a flavor when she was a student, illustrating how this is a relatively new phenomenon. Though this flavor is in fact, available in Argentina, the fact that it is so popular in Barcelona while the original spread is not, implies a cultural-based adjustment. Though Santiago said that the majority of his friends know what *dulce de leche* actually is, few people actually eat it in its milk-caramel form.

Similarly, *empanadas* have become quite integrated into Catalan diets. Another simple Google Maps search reveals the presence of more than 20 *empanada* stores around Barcelona's metropolitan area. From traditional shops run by Argentine owners-

which sell classic options like beef, chicken and caprese, to more ‘fusion’ places that are not necessarily Argentine, which include goat cheese, pears and almonds, or sweet options like apple-cinnamon, *empanadas* have carved out a concrete space in Barcelona’s food culture. A portable, convenient and versatile dish, they could be the closest Argentine food that could fit the category of ‘trendy.’

Manuela, a twenty-one year old Catalan student, said that empanadas are well recognized amongst Catalans. “There are so many shops that it’s hard not to know what they are. While I don’t frequently go to them, I have various (Catalan) friends who do. They’re easy to eat if you’re on-the-go.” Though now closed, the Gracia neighborhood-based ‘*Las Empas*’ shop used to sell a flavor called, “*Catalana*.” Featuring red pepper, olives, garlic, almonds, courgettes, and onion, *Las Empas*’ creation serves as a testament to the Catalans’ enthusiasm with empanadas, as well as their adoption and subsequent adjustment of the Argentine staple. As anthropologist Fabio Parasecoli advances, migrants often develop tactics to “occupy economic positions” in the host country to turn members of the host community into consumers (Parasecoli 2014: 430). By making an *empanada* specifically geared towards Catalans, the owner of *Las Empas* seems to be doing exactly what Parasecoli suggests.

These two examples therefore, represent ways in which specific Argentine staples were tweaked, marketed, and then integrated into Barcelona’s food scene. Bearing in mind that both *empanadas* and *dulce de leche* ice cream are popular worldwide, we also see how international influences may also influence what does well. As Valeria noted, “Pretty much all of the food trends are originating in the US. We still seem to follow look at America for the latest inspiration.” Also considering the extensive number of tourists

that visit Barcelona each year, another way to explain Argentine food's limited presence is the fact that it doesn't have as much of an international appeal.

### **Conclusions**

Examination of Argentine restaurants and staples in Barcelona's culinary context allows for further insight into the realities of Argentine migratory experiences. This reinforces Parasecoli's idea food adjustments are worth exploring in multiple layers or dimensions (Parasecoli 2014: 417). At a basic level, the accessibility of Argentine products and widespread-ness of Argentine influences serve as evidence of immigrant presence, reflecting how immigrants have shaped the landscape. Yet, scrutiny also reveals how Argentine food is not particularly at forefront of ethnic food options. As seen through historical context, Barcelona has a long and rich food culture; based on the principles of integration and innovation, this is reflected both in its multifaceted cuisine, flourishing restaurant scene, and overall abundant culinary landscape. While Catalan food culture's 'emblematic trait' is its ability to incorporate new flavors/influences, it hasn't done this indiscriminately. As we see with *Iguazu*, *Pampero*, and *Bellavista*, Barcelona's Argentine restaurants seem to be integrated only when they present an element of appeal to Catalans. Furthermore, drawing on Andrea's comments concerning *dulce de leche*, we see that marketability for Catalans seems to be in part, based on flavor-based taste. Considering the ubiquity of trendy food items and ethnic restaurants available in Barcelona's food scene, it could be inferred that Catalan tastes, in a social dimension, depend on what is popular worldwide.

Finally, restaurants in particular also reflect the idea that adjustments and immigrant influence are in-flux and contextual; in a way representative of identity, we

see that not all restaurants may want to adhere to Catalan tastes; similarly, not all restaurant owners may not want to prioritize the preservation of Argentine authenticity. While the metaphor of the *alfajor* in this case, goes to show that Argentine tastes, in their pristine form, are present but hidden, it is also important to acknowledge this is not the entire scope of Argentine identity.

## **Conclusion**

### **Findings**

One of my goals with this thesis was to highlight the relevance and utility of food as a window of inquiry into the topic of immigration. Throughout, I sought to demonstrate that analysis of food habits, norms, and traditions act as valuable insights into explaining the nuances of migrant identity. Finding that they did in fact, provide commentary on the intricacy of their experiences, this thesis adds to the existing literature present in the sub-field of food anthropology, as well as the discipline of food studies.

Overall, I found that Argentine migratory experiences in Barcelona are quite complex. Revealing the vastly situational nature of migrant identity, my research cemented the idea that identity is never a rigid and fixed concept; constantly in-flux and subject to change, it has the potential to take on various different shapes and forms, depending on the given context. This lends itself to the notion that cultural identity, and possibly culture itself, is a pluralistic and unbounded concept, rather than set and established.

In Chapter 1, I traced how Argentina and Spain's historical relationship contributed to high rates of migratory traffic, and thereby produced various socio-cultural similarities between the two countries. Prompting two large waves of Argentine

migration within the past forty years, it was these mass influxes, which built up the bulk of Barcelona's large Argentine immigrant community. Though some claim that Argentina's similitudes made for relatively easy migrant experiences, I argue that this is not necessarily the case, as the nature of the two-wave pattern made for varying migrant profiles, also causing them to arrive to Barcelona at different points in time.

Drawing on this idea in Chapter 2, I argue that the realities of Argentine migrants were not black and white. Through interviews, I gained insight into the idea that migrant identities, just like overall experience, were diverse and multifaceted; fluid and contextual, they underwent adjustments based on the situation they were in. One way to understand their intricacy was through patterns of integration and adjustment. Revealing that time and social networks were two important factors, which impacted the degree of identity shifts and nature of integration, this frame also demonstrated how none of these patterns were set-in-stone, as there was still fluctuation observed. This therefore, demonstrated the inefficiency of categorization. The ways in which interlocutors interacted with food highlighted these ideas, and therefore, reinforced the notion that food is a marker of identity.

In Chapter 3, I saw how Argentine identities in Barcelona also varied across generations, which further demonstrated the intricacies of the topic. By examining the trajectory of identity development within the context of the second-generation, I found that identity was even more situational than with the first-generation. For these interlocutors, food habits reflected their duality as well as the formation of their current sense of self; in distinction with Chapter 2 interlocutors however, food also played a concrete role in shaping that development, and constituted a way to navigate their various

cultural backgrounds. Through this, I argue that it is worth considering the second-generation on their own terms, as they provide further insight into other dimensions of Argentine migratory experiences in Barcelona.

Seeing how it is valuable to examine identity on different levels, in Chapter 4, I explored the idea that identity adjustments extend beyond the self. Inspired by the notion that food plays a role in identity formation, I analyzed the place of Argentine food within Barcelona's culinary scene and paid attention to the specific adjustments that were made. As restaurant adjustments reflected the nature of personal migrant situational identity, I argue that it is worth examining the impacts of migration through a variety of different scales and settings. Finding that Argentine food does not have a particularly prominent role within the Catalan food realm, I conclude that in order to carve out a space in Barcelona's gastronomic environment, Argentine restaurants need to adapt to Catalan tastes. By considering the different ways in which restaurants have adjusted, we see that not every restaurant seemed to *want* to cater to Catalan preferences; some appeared to be content with their unintegrated character, and serving a primarily the Argentine community. Since 'taste' is an abstract concept and is therefore, hard to conclusively break down, it seems like Barcelona's particular tastes are rooted in both flavor and social appeal. Since much of Argentina's food does not naturally fit in with these criteria, it hasn't been as well integrated.

Throughout, my research revealed that it is important to examine individual experiences; I also found however, scrutiny of migration in its various dimensions allows for a more comprehensive understanding of its intricacies. Allowing me to compare, contrast, and link experiences across different contexts, examination of different

migration spheres helped me conclude and validate the idea that Argentine migrant identity in Barcelona is overall, fluid and open-ended.

### **Personal Reflections**

Overall, I believe this research shows the irrelevance of categorization and narrow constructions as tools of analysis for immigration studies. Since migrant identity is not fixed, I think there is a need to embrace that mentality when going about migration research. By employing interpretive and descriptive understandings that are not confined to strict labels, we can gain more accurate and in-depth understandings of immigrant experiences. For me, this thesis also supports the relevance of anthropology and anthropologic inquiry towards matters of identity and migration.

On a personal level, this thesis allowed me to understand my own personal sense of self; though I've come a long way since hiding my *empanadas* in Kindergarten, learning about other Argentine migrant experiences, especially those of the second-generation, pushed me to further understand and embrace multifaceted identity. Spurring me to think critically how food has influenced my conceptions of identity, this thesis also showed me just how relevant my own food traditions and customs have been in shaping my sense of self; it also continued to feed my passion for Argentine and Spanish cuisine.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

It is important to note that this study had a number of limitations. Firstly, the pool of my interlocutors was small, especially with my second-generation interlocutors. Though I did my best to find interlocutors with varying demographics, all of my second-generation interlocutors came from middle/upper-middle class backgrounds. With the exception of two individuals, all of my interlocutors had lighter-looking skin and more

European traits. It also would have been beneficial to interview more Catalan locals themselves, as their insights were important in constructing my understanding of Argentine food's place in Barcelona. Furthermore, the way I define 'trendy' was also limited, in that I relied mainly on media analyses, rather than first-count accounts.

Looking forward, further research on this topic would be benefitted by diversifying and amplifying the interlocutor sample for all types of interlocutors. The utilization of a wider range of methods, like polls and surveys, could also be advantageous in gauging the level of Catalan knowledge on Argentine foods, as well as fostering a better understanding of the characterization of Catalan tastes.

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