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**POLITICAL COOKS OR COOKING
POLITICIANS**

Spain's golden chance for gastrodiplomacy

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I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to determine the scope of gastronomy, which enroots to the own origin of the human being, and the sway of its practice as a powerful instrument to promote the image of nations abroad. Food is a political routine in decision-making processes such as institutional diplomacy, as our history has defined itself because of the gathering of those powerful ones among a table. We may encounter major milestones that signified a change of paradigm, being varied in their myriad, from the Last Supper, perhaps the most decisive event attached to a meal, to the Berlin Conference and the political implications that derived for the configuration of Africa and Asia and further determined the succession of events that would lead the outbreak of the two world wars.

The French Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, considered the first gastronomist author with his famous *Physiologie du gout* (The Physiology of Taste), published in 1825, affirmed that “Gastronomy rules all life, for the tears of the infant cry for the bosom of the nurse; the dying man receives with some degree of pleasure the last cooling drink, which, alas! he is unable to digest” (Brillat-Savarin, 2014). Extending Brillat-Savarin’s definition, we will recognise that gastronomy rules all international life, hence international politics.

Every single being needs to get fed, be it with water, nutrients or flesh. Food is entwined within the existence of our mother Earth, as it comprises a part of life. Therefore, all of us, as creatures, share an experience through alimentation. As we study in schools, living things (plants and animals) born, grow, reproduce and die. Food is, in its grounds, the basic form of sustenance, the element needed to survive. As defined by social geographers Gill Valentine and David Bell, food “occupies an unrivalled centrality in all of our lives” (Bell & Valentine, 1994). A glimpse to any meal derives profound implications in a vast number of fields, but we will try to focus on human sciences and specifically applied to the field of diplomacy and international relations. From politics to sociology or anthropology, a single group meeting sharing food could be, thus, analysed (López García, Juárez, & Medina, 2016).

Food is always a preeminent basic element in our celebrations, a core pillar. We humans party with food, ergo our feasts cannot be understood without any kind of eating or drinking (Lupton, 1996). The role of the culinary in our lives stands depth, but the studies of its political and cultural implications have not been pretty addressed until very recently. The powerful reasoning behind food lies behind the words of French philosopher and

semiotician Ronald Barthes, as he stated that “food permits a person to partake each day of the national past” (Barthes, 2008, 27), enhancing it towards the accumulated wisdom of our ancestors and observing it as a system of communication.

We could also see another primary connotation on politics, intertwined with national security as was the case of the former US Secretary of State and influential statesman Henry Kissinger. Kissinger affirmed that “who controls the food supply controls the people; who controls the energy can control whole continents; who controls money can control the world” (Morgan, 2012), rather observing aliments as a weapon (Brewda, 1995). And yet food, more specifically, a banquet, served to one of the acclaimed ancient Greek philosophers, the Athenian Plato back in the 385-370 BC to dissert about love and *Eros* in his celebrated *Symposium*.

Thus, gastronomy has much to say when it comes to international politics not only as a common practice, but also as a tool to enshrine a country’s position in the public consciousness. The practice of politics derives from kitchens. National identities can be cooked in its own literal terms, for what a symbolic national cuisine could be of much use. A certain meal could end up identifying a whole nation (Panzter, 2015) and such happens with rice in Japan, wine for the French, curry and India, ceviche for Peru, Italians and their pasta... (Ranta, 2015). The cookery is extent and it could serve to the promotion of the national interest in foreign countries.

Because of the profound roots of food as essential on the people’s lives, a state can use their culinary as a communication tool (Stajcic, 2013) that may entail a greater impact than other diplomatic aims and a greater reach. I will analyse the different cases of three nations to observe the role of food as server for their development: Israel, Peru and finally Spain. Israel is quite a fascinating example for the literature due to its uniqueness, because of the profound bounds between their cookery and nationalism. After observing the starting point of a national cookery, I will address the paradigmatic example of Peru and their rich diversity. And, considering its global repercussion¹ as a country at the forefront of international gastronomy, we would finally observe the role of Spain towards

¹ According to the World’s 50 Best Restaurants 2018 (announced in Bilbao), the most prestigious awards on the field, Spain was the country with more restaurants, 7, positioned among the list, of which 3 of them (*El Celler de Can Roca*, *Mugaritz* and *Asador Etxebarri*) are on the Top Ten.
<https://www.theworlds50best.com/list/1-50-winners#t1-10>

gastrodiplomacy, in order to propose a strategy to strengthen their culinary power in the international arena.

With the aim of delimiting theoretically and conceptually the field of study, in the work I will define “gastrodiplomacy” as the actions carried out by individuals and authorities that seek to promote their nation through the use of their culinary. This category englobes other concepts, such as gastronomy and diplomacy, and is virtually linked with many other areas. As we will observe in this research, gastrodiplomacy can be practised in many different shapes and forms.

II. PURPOSES AND AIMS

The core of this present research is to carry out an analysis on the different elements that have contributed to uplift gastrodiplomacy into the broad sphere of public diplomacy and try to analyse how it has helped different countries to either promote their nation towards the rest of the world or even the importance of their culinary to construct their own national identity. All the rich concepts that enclose gastronomy would be portrayed to show why gastrodiplomacy is an effective tool that all states should consider using, because of its length and effectiveness in promoting national interests in the global scenario.

Firstly, I will frame different fields of analysis regarding the category, starting by its appearance in the academic field by leading scholars and the development of government initiatives cohesive to its implementation and development. Then I will deem the impact of gastronomy in various fields throughout the years, such as culture, politics or philosophy, to try to understand the importance it holds, enlightened from their prisms. In order to do so, I shall differentiate the terms that this new area involves, such as culinary diplomacy, public diplomacy and soft power.

Thirdly, I will conclude this analysis reviewing three different case studies relating the role of gastrodiplomacy:

- 1) A gastro-nationalism for the foundation of Israel,
- 2) A case of nation-branding for Peru and
- 3) The chance of a strengthen gastrodiplomacy in the case of Spain.

Alongside these three specific cases I will focus on the role of their cuisines to entail the national identity of a nation, towards themselves and also the rest, involving both cultural and political reasonings. Gastrodiplomacy involves economic outcomes because of the increasing interests of tourists towards food, as well as the dichotomy of being a necessity for the country or the perfect opportunity to approach a reality that already intervenes in shaping their narrative.

As such, one of the main aims of this research paper is to observe the causes that have been involved in the Spanish authorities' apparent ambivalence on the issue, as few governmental efforts towards gastrodiplomacy appear to be launched until the moment. I would try to analyse the reasoning behind this lack of initiative, by which the help of Spanish diplomats will portray the reality of gastronomy in the practice of international politics. Hence, this research paper is interesting for its academic purposes, as no previous research has yet addressed Spain as a case study in gastrodiplomacy and hopes to serve to the utility of Spanish foreign policy.

Therefore, although I will work on three specific cases that are different in their ethology and in their fundamental characteristics, but that comprise in each the diverse variants that gastrodiplomacy could enter in. The present work is finally oriented to the definition and promotion of the field of gastrodiplomacy applied to the international relations of the Kingdom of Spain.

In addition to a theoretical interest, this research has a markedly practical character: to contribute to the implementation of a public policy of gastrodiplomacy within the government and the official institutions of Spain. It is a theoretical investigation with the ultimate purpose of its practical application (i.e., a theoretical-applied research) to the Spanish extent.

III. RESEARCH QUESTION

States have a wide range of tools to use towards the strengthening of their position in the international arena in which gastrodiplomacy outlines because of its capacity as a soft power (Spence, 2016). Intermediate countries have developed these strategies to gain reputation and influence in foreign societies, but it traces back to Greek and Roman ages,

where food was used to “negotiate, settle disputes and divulge state secrets over long meals with ample wine to loosen tongues” (Mendelson Forman & Sonenshine, 2014).

The objective of this research paper is to understand the gastrodiploamcy of two different states, Peru and Israel, to then analyse the causes behind the lack of initiatives in Spain. The former two countries have followed their distinctive characteristics to approach food diplomacy, as Peru enjoys a gastronomy that is contemplated among the first ones in the world, whereas Israel had to adopt a national cuisine in order to arise its nation identity. The main question derived from this present research is: what similarities and differences are observed in gastrodiploamcy between Peru, Israel and Spain and how could it impact in the creation of a Spanish gastronomic diplomacy?

To answer the secondary objectives aimed in this study, we shall address the following questions:

- 1) How did different actors in Peru, Israel and Spain contributed to gastrodiploamcy and their international promotion?
- 2) What gastrodiploamcy initiatives have been carried out within Peru and Spain to support their global reach?
- 3) What gastrodiploamcy initiatives should Spain develop, regarding the Peruvian precedent?

IV. METHODOLOGY

In order to justify the hypothesis previously detailed, as well as answer the research question that has already been raised, we shall state the different sources that have been used for this work. We have used the following research technique – content analysis technique – that consists on the compilation and analysis of information coming from a wide range of sources. The data collection has been conducted through the following sources:

- a) Primary sources:
 - a. Academic publications. The subject matter has been dealt by plenty of research works among teaching and academic circles that have tried to prove the different hypotheses we have used to base the analysis on the case study that presently concerns us, because of the essence of gastrodiploamcy as a study. All academic papers consider Paul Rockower as the main figure on the

academic structuring of gastrodiplomacy and are very recently, because of dating from 2011 until the present. Some papers included summaries on all previous academic works, such as the large cross-comparisons completed by Noor Nirwand and Ahmad Azran Awang or Juyan Zhang.

- b. Interviews: in order to reach a better understanding over the Spanish case, some diplomats were contacted for their knowledge on culinary diplomacy.
- b) Secondary sources:
- a. Literary works: to structure the theoretical framework here analysed, reading and synthesising of published work by international renowned authors was necessary. On the part of culture, one of the main sources was the compilation of articles on *Food and Culture Reader*, by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, enunciating the main theories on gastronomy as a cultural belonging. It included authors such as Ronald Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss or Mary Douglas, who also helped to portray the different theories on gastronomy and society.
 - b. Journal articles: containing information on the reality of gastrodiplomacy initiatives carried out by different countries.
 - c. Reports: regarding the positioning of different countries relating their soft diplomacy, such as The Soft Power 30 Index or the special Gastrodiplomacy Issue of Public Diplomacy Magazine. Public agencies reports were also studied, such as Unesco, the WHO, WTO or Spanish ICEX.
 - d. Webs and blogs: different initiatives are present throughout the internet, such as España Global campaigns.

The principal investigation method within social sciences is the comparative research between different case studies in order to compare three specific cultures: Israel, Peru and Spain. An analysis on different gastrodiplomacy mappings has been deployed, so that the comparison across the three chosen realities could be later discussed.

V. CURRENT STATUS

In what follows, we will try to outline the historical developments regarding our field of study. Gastro-diplomacy, food diplomacy or culinary diplomacy is a concept of recent use and diffusion, displayed in newspaper columns at the onset of this 21st Century, even though there has usually been literature over culinary practice relating politics or food

culture at least in the broader terms. Specifically, it was named because of a brief 2002 article referring to the ‘Global Thai’ initiative on The Economist’s article named ‘*Thailand’s gastro-diplomacy*’².

This recent emergence of the concept was influenced by governmental initiatives of nation branding to place their states in the international imaginary, such as the Taiwanese, Thai, Peruvian, South Korean or Malaysian campaigns to promote their cuisine (Rockower, 2010a). As a result of this, gastrodiploamacy was coined by framing different case studies on cultural diplomacy into academic theories of public diplomacy (Rockower, 2014) and has since become a burgeoning concept on international relations.

Gastrodiploamacy englobes different fields such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics or international relations (Zhang, 2015), as being under the sphere of public diplomacy. Regarding this area of study and discipline, there are various main relevant scholars such as Paul Rockower and Sam Chapple-Sokol, of whose theories I will offer an outline because of their relevance on setting the scene for the term.

1. **Paul Rockower**

Rockower, a gastronomist and public diplomacy scholar, first embraced the concept on different 2010’s journalistic articles about the different initiatives carried out by Asian countries, such as South Korea or Indonesia, to then further explain it on his 2011 paper *Projecting Taiwan: Taiwan’s Public Diplomacy Outreach*, in where he stated that Taiwan was evading its international isolation in public diplomacy and through practising a sort of soft power projection with a \$ 34.2 million campaign to promote Taiwanese cuisine internationally (Rockower, 2011). Food diplomacy serves a country to reach spaces that seem to be apparently restricted due to geopolitical aims. His definition of the concept was the eloquent “gastrodiploamacy, simply put, is the act of winning hearts and minds through stomachs” (Wilson, 2011).

Rockower acknowledges gastrodiploamacy as an effective tool for medium-size nations, such as the Asian middle powers that were the first ones in carrying out gastrodiploamacy initiatives in order to project their soft power (Zhang, 2015). In his 2012 *Recipes for Gastrodiploamacy* the concept evolved to the more elaborated “culinary delights to appeal

² Rockower states “An obscure word in an obscure article about Thailand’s outreach to use its restaurants as forward cultural outposts as a means to enhance its nation brand has become a field of study within the expanding public diplomacy canon.” (Rockower, *The State of Gastrodiploamacy*, 2014)

to global appetites, and thus helps raise a nation's brand awareness and reputation” (Rockower, 2012a) (Alhinnawi, 2017). The idea of nation branding is entwined within the further development of gastrodiplomacy by most scholars (Wilson, 2011), who have assimilated this definition and broaden it to also include its clear economic and cultural outcomes. Within these authors is included Mary Jo A. Pham, who also encompasses the efforts to export their national culinary patrimony (Pham, 2013).

According to Rockower, there are various concepts that need a differentiation. Hence, ‘gastrodiplomacy’ would comprise the tool of public diplomacy that nations use to promote their culinary culture and enhance their international influence, whereas ‘culinary diplomacy’ refers to the diplomatic practice of gastronomy performed by the state diplomats, and ‘food diplomacy’ is defined as food aid provided like humanitarian assistance (Rockower, 2012a). As a result of this distinction, gastrodiplomacy will concern the governmental actions to spread their national cuisine, while culinary diplomacy comprises the hospitality of the diplomatic corps in their engagement with other country’s representatives (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2016).

2. **Sam Chapple-Sokol**

A gastronomist and former White House Pastry Chef currently working at the Think Food Group of renowned chef José Andrés, Chapple-Sokol, contrary to Rockower, defines ‘culinary diplomacy’ as “the use of food and cuisine as an instrument to create cross-cultural understanding in the hopes of improving interactions and cooperation” (Chapple-Sokol, 2013), thus identifying it with gastrodiplomacy. Scholars cite his 2013 paper *Culinary Diplomacy: Breaking Bread to Win Hearts and Minds* as opposed to the differentiation among the three terms that Rockower stated because of using them indistinctly (Zhang, 2015) (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2016) (Farina, 2018).

However, Chapple-Sokol later embraced the difference set by Rockower and referred to ‘gastrodiplomacy’ as *public* culinary diplomacy, whereas ‘culinary diplomacy’ was *private* because of including solemn interaction between heads of state (Chapple-Sokol, 2016). Because of it, the author conceives culinary diplomacy as “an overarching term, an umbrella that is raised over three somewhat distinct pillars”, which are private culinary diplomacy, endorsed by the culinary practice between state authorities; gastrodiplomacy, based on public initiatives towards the foreign public; while the third is “Citizen Culinary Diplomacy”, engaged by non-state actors in which nation branding is embedded.

Rockower and Chapple-Sokol collaborated in a podcast initiative set by the later, 'The Culinary Citizen' (Paul S. Rockower, 2016), in which these three pillars are further developed.

This author has focused on large-scale culinary diplomacy projects, because of his personal involvement on diplomatic cooks³. As such, Chapple-Sokol remarks the *Club des Chefs des Chefs*⁴, an international gathering of the cooks of heads of state (from the Élysée to Buckingham) having mottos such as "if politics divides people, a good table always gathers them". This phrase is culinary diplomacy besides also being gastrodplomacy as its best. The inconvenience on this length of the field is that the conversation among chief of states is determined by a dichotomy between public and private affairs that cannot be really applied in international relations, because everything is within the scope of 'public'.

The approach of US former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton towards gastrodplomacy unfolded in 2012 through the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership alongside the James Beard Foundation⁵ (Reid, 2012). As stated by Ms. Clinton, "showcasing favorite cuisines, ceremonies and values is an often overlooked and powerful tool of diplomacy. The meals that I share with my counterparts at home and abroad cultivate a stronger cultural understanding between countries and offer a unique setting to enhance the formal diplomacy we conduct every day." (U.S. Department of State - Office of the Chief of Protocol, 2012). It is curious that in this excerpt from Secretary Clinton's statements, the "cuisines" appears at the same conceptual and symbolic level as the "ceremonies" and

³ In his media (webpage, LinkedIn orTwitter), Chapple-Sokol describes himself as 'culinary diplomacy expert'. <https://samchapplesokol.com/>

⁴ As stated in their homepage "The Club des Chefs des Chefs, which is seen as the world's most exclusive gastronomic society, has extremely strict membership criteria: to be accepted into this highly elite club, you need to be the current personal chef of a head of state. If he or she does not have a personal chef, members can be the executive chef of the venue that hosts official State receptions. One member is admitted per country except for China, which has two seats. One of the society's primary purposes is to promote major culinary traditions and to protect the origins of each national cuisine. The Club des Chefs des Chefs also aims to develop friendship and cooperation between its members, who have similar responsibilities in their respective countries." <http://www.chefs-des-chefs.com/presentation/>

⁵ "When Capricia Marshall and her State Department team called me two years ago to tell me about Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's passion and belief that better and more effective diplomacy happens over the dining table rather than a conference table, I immediately agreed," said JBF president Susan Ungaro in a speech at the launch. "I also immediately thought about what James Beard so wisely said over thirty years ago: "Food is our common ground." <https://www.jamesbeard.org/dcp>

"values" of different cultures. This implies that for Ms. Clinton the cuisine is not only an instrument of political communication, but also one of the basic pillars of any society.

This initiative developed the American Chef Corps, distinguished cooks such as José Andrés or April Bloomfield serving as American cuisine ambassadors worldwide, in a true 'culinary diplomacy' regarding Rockower's definition. Chapple-Sokol remarks that the advantage of this US program resided on not being funded by the State Department, but rather embraced personally by the chefs or embassies (Sheir, 2014), with which elements of expansion of the sphere of gastrodiploamacy beyond the merely administrative sphere of the states can be perceived.

Chapple-Sokol, as the rest of academics, convenes in the increasing popularity of gastrodiploamacy (Zhang, 2015) and also in considering that the concept could be traced on the appearance of international relations, because the exchange between different communities involved food in some stage. The emphasis of the concept is placed on communication, exporting a palatable idea aimed to the masses and middle-class consumers (Pham, 2013).

3. **A field developed alongside Case Studies**

The core of gastrodiploamacy literature has been structure due to case studies (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2016), thus we shall stop to examine them. There are different examples of gastrodiploamacy through the records, all following the path of Thailand (Zhang, 2015). It firstly emerged from former European colonies in Asia, such as Taiwan, Korea or Malaysia (Kressman, 2010) and extended throughout American ones, like Peru. But its presence has been so popular that even great powers such as Japan or the US joined this new ambit of public diplomacy. Later, we shall focus on three concrete cases: Israel, Peru and Spain.

The firsts glimpses of this new diplomatic reality appeared on the "*Global Thai*" 2002 campaign sponsored by Bangkok that doubled Thai restaurants abroad⁶, half of which were on the US, in order to attain tourists because of tasting Thai food (Rockower, 2010b). Its success led to the launching of similar initiatives by other countries in the region such as 2009 the South Korean "kimchi diplomacy" with their "*Korean Cuisine to*

⁶ The campaign was a success, as the 5,500 Thai restaurants worldwide in 2002 resulted in more than 10,000 by 2012. (Chapple-Sokol, Culinary Diplomacy Isn't Just American (Part 2): Global Thai, 2012)

the World” campaign, focused on reaching 40,000 Korean restaurants abroad (Rockower, 2010a) to overcome Japanese and Chinese international prevalence (Pham, 2013).

Taiwan entered in the arena with their “Dim Sum Diplomacy” started mainly in London and the UK (Booth, 2010) to differ from the heavy perceived Chinese food (Rockower, 2010b) and sponsor Taiwanese cuisine to the world (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014). “Bring Malaysia to everyone” was the programme launched by the Malaysian government to enhance gastrodiplomacy (Zhang, 2015), whereas the Peruvian authorities efforts were placed on their “Cocina Peruana Para el Mundo” (Wilson, 2011), a landmark on South American gastrodiplomacy as I will further analyse.

Other examples include great regional powers such as Japan, Australia or India. Tokyo has supported the promotion of *washoku*, their traditional cuisine, as a pillar of their soft power and cultural diplomacy (Otmazgin, 2018), which comprises the essence of Japanese non-warrant diplomacy (Agawa, 2015). As a matter of fact, Japanese cookery is, because of sushi, perhaps one of the most expanded worldwide⁷ (Farina, 2018) and *washoku* is considered by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2013), a coveted seal that all desire. Delhi is using their strong connection with their former metropole translated into curry houses (Rockower, 2011), and Canberra promoted the “Restaurant Australia” campaign towards different markets (Gill, 2019).

As a consequence, there is no single doubt that gastrodiplomacy is an up-and-coming topic that is being studied and analysed from various scholars, even though it is still understudied (Lipscomb, 2019). Since its sudden inception it has fully entered the public diplomacy sphere as a new brand of this academic field, whose importance is being favoured by all actors involved: state, IOs, institutions and even the third sector.

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Gastronomy

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, gastronomy is “the art and knowledge involved in preparing and eating good food”. Its Oxford counterpart goes beyond by adding the

⁷ According to data collected by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, there were 117,568 Japanese restaurants worldwide by October 2017. The government sponsor their expansion and also certifies their procedures <https://www.nippon.com/en/features/h00218/number-of-overseas-japanese-restaurants-tops-100-000.html>

electing feature, defining it as “the practice or art of choosing, cooking and eating good food”. Its origin lies on the Ancient Greek *gastēr* (stomach) and *nómos* (laws that govern). When looking for the term ‘cuisine’, Oxford provides us with the extended ‘a style or method of cooking, especially as characteristic of a particular country, region, or establishment’, whereas Cambridge chooses the more parc ‘a style of cooking’.

A wide range of fields, if not all, have focused on studying gastronomy (Zhang, 2015), regarding that eating is not only a pure biological activity, but entails further significance because of comprising a basic habit with profound social and symbolic aims (Bardenstein, 2002). Singularly, alongside this research paper we shall observe the scope of gastronomy approached mainly by anthropology, but also the implication of sociology, cultural and culinary tourism or philosophy, as well as international relations.

Individual and collective memory are embedded by means of food (Holtzman, 2006) and perhaps in here lays the key for the emergence of this topic. Even in 1961 “Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption”, Barthes affirmed the increasing importance of food, which was “incorporated into an ever-lengthening list of situations” (Barthes, 2008, 28-29). The works of French anthropologist Lévi-Strauss, “*Le Cru et le Cuit*” (The Raw and the Cooked) in 1964 or his 1966 “*Triangle Culinarie*” are examples of the interest of anthropology in the matter, a science which introduces the ‘anthropology of food’ as a sub-discipline.

The relevant gastronomist M.F.K. Fisher, pioneer on culinary literature, stated in her 1951 “How to Cook a Wolf” that “with our gastronomical growth will come, inevitably, knowledge and perception of a hundred other things, but mainly ourselves” (Markos, 2006). Fisher, considered in 1960s as one of the greatest American writers, interpreted food as a cultural metaphor, studying it as one of the three basic needs of life, alongside love and security, yet the less developed on the literature (O’Neill, 1992).

To complete this approximation to the concept, we shall include this extract of Brillat-Savarin’s 1825’s “Physiology of Taste” (translated by M.F.K. Fisher). Grasping the concept of gastronomy as related to much different fields of study, Savarin asserted the following: “Gastronomy is a chapter of natural history, for the fact that it makes a classification of alimentary substances. Of physics, for it examines their properties and qualities. Of chemistry, from the various analysis and decomposition to which it subjects

them. Of cookery, from the fact that it prepares food and makes it agreeable. Of commerce, from the fact that it purchases at as low a rate as possible what it consumes and displays to the greatest advantage what it offers for sale. Lastly it is a chapter of political economy, from the resources it furnishes the taxing power, and the means of exchange it substitutes between nations” (Brillat-Savarin, 2014).

2. **Cultural dimension**

Gastronomy comprises the relationship between food and culture (Kivela & Crotts, 2006). If gastronomy relates food and the rest of culture, this implies that gastronomy is a notion that encompasses both food and social practice, as well as culture, which means that all food is cultural, but also that all culture is also edible.

Culinary is often wrongly associated with nature because of an ambiguous connection, as it is more related with culture because humans perform due to the processing, preparing, transforming and consuming of aliments (Montanari, 2006). Even though we do not tend to undertake an anthropological research on this paper, it is required to convene on this science to study the role of gastronomy on culture, as anthropology is imbedded in all human disciplines because of observing the essence of our very own nature. As food studies scholar Donna Gabaccia asserted, the history of a society cannot be understood without reflecting the history of the eating habits of its people (Gabaccia, 1998).

a) **Fire beings and the cooking hypothesis**

The qualitative jump from animal to person came through a pot. Our specie, the human being, needs to cook the meal in order to digest it (Garner, 2009). We shall part from the influential “Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human”, a book of Richard Wrangham, a renowned primatologist and Ruth B. Moore Professor of Biological Anthropology at Harvard University⁸. As Dr. Wrangham observes, the emergence of *Homo erectus* derived from the ape because of the ‘cooking hypothesis’, as they learned to prepare food through the use of fire around 1.8 million years ago (Wrangham, 2009).

⁸ Richard Wrangham is best known for his work on the evolution of human warfare and the role of cooking in human evolution, currently at the Department of Human Evolutionary Biology at Harvard University, which encompasses physiology or behavioural biology and cultural evolution. Dr. Wrangham founded the Kibale Chimpanzee Project, a long-term study of Kanyawara chimpanzees in Uganda, patrons the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) a UN initiative to ensure ape survival in Africa and Asia and began his career under Jane Goodall.

Ruth Moore, a bacteriologist, became in 1933 the first African-American woman to gain a PhD in a natural science.

The primitive way of cooking had multiple outcomes for our evolution, assures Dr. Wrangham. “It makes our food safer, creates rich and delicious tastes and reduces spoilage. Heating can allow us to open, cut or mash tough foods. But none of these advantages is as important as a little-appreciated aspect: cooking increases the amount of energy our bodies obtain from food”. This one essential output implies a giant leap that the majority of anthropologists agreed upon (Rosati, 2018), as from now on less time would be dedicated on foraging, as fewer was needed to consume, and also processing aliments (Driver, 2010). Cooking spared time for our predecessors and changed the circle of life for all time.

This extra energy expanded the capabilities of the *Homo erectus*, enabling it to excel all other species because of their ability to survive and reproduce better than the others (Ings, 2009). The implications of this landmark are simply massive, in all fields, from anatomy to psychology or society, as from it derived the path of the different hominids until our current version, the *Homo sapiens* (Garner, 2009) (Ings, 2009).

One other main consequence of this significant event was the new capability of controlling fire, an element that implied the change of life habits and the start of a new social structure (Wrangham, 2009). Because of the heating, the structure of protein and starches in aliments changes, easing the enzymatic breakdown (Moeller Gorman, 2008) and improving digestion. It is precisely this landmark around fire the one that implies controversy over scholars around Wrangham’s theory, as archaeological evidence of fire dates as much as a million years old (Gowlett, 2016)(Lawton, 2016)(Rosati, 2018) and *Homo erectus* remotes another million years before that.

However, scientists agree in believing that the *Homo. erectus* had a 50 percent larger brain than its predecessor, the *Homo habilis* (Moeller Gorman, 2008) (Van Arsdale, 2013). This provoked a major development and a bigger brain required high-quality diets (Gowlett, 2016). Within the hominin lineage, the *erectus* is regarded as the first human-like specie because of its body proportions (Hendry, 2018). In addition to it, it is also deemed to be the promptest cosmopolitan, due to its expansion beyond a single continental region (Van Arsdale, 2013), becoming the most geographically widespread hominid besides *Homo. sapiens*, our own (Hendry, 2018). Hence, the scientific arena mostly agrees in respecting *Homo erectus* as direct ancestor of the current human and the practice of cooking was crucial alongside this process (Gowlett, 2016).

What interests to carry out this research paper is that cooking fostered the development of the human race, from all the biological benefits to other effects such as the division of labour or the take-off of sociology (Driver, 2010). According to Steven Mithen, archaeologist at the University of Reading, culture origins from the following bounce of brain evolution, the cognitive fluidity that made us evolve from Neanderthals (Mithen, 2000). Therefore, we are allowed to say that cooking has define our nature and, consequently, that the human ages were initiated in a pot. As we transform the aliments, a whole variety of dishes could be offered from a bunch of raw aliments, in what differentiate us from apes (Lawton, 2016). We humans are, hence, a product of fire.

b) Food as a language impacting in the conformation of civilisations

All human cultures have cooking as a common feature that comprises one of their nonverbal forms of communication (Pham, 2013). Or perhaps not, as according to French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss in his 1964 study *Le Cru et Le Cuit*, the cultures that are unaware of the very process of cooking do not retain in their language the both words of raw or cooked, as their lack of knowledge is reflected in the absence of the concept. According to Kaplan, the culinary of each culture is no accidental, as each deems what is acceptable to eat, holded by the merge of their religious beliefs, social costumes or even gender roles (Kaplan, 2012). Cuisine, since the *Homo erectus*, appears to be the base of society, thus it reflects the reality of their people.

Barthes believes that food was a semiotic and linguistic system whose communicative value resides in the appearance of meals or their preparation (Barthes, 2013, 24-25). Because of it, food could transform itself into situation, because of being a protocol that satisfies the basic needs of the society, in this case, the French (Barthes, 2013, 29). Lévi-Strauss also stated his classic structuralist system of oppositions in linguistics, with regards to a vowel triangle and a consonant triangle that reflects itself on the 'Culinary Triangle', appraising three different cooking methods: boiling, roasting and smoking (Lévi-Strauss, 2013). By this, meat could be either raw, cooked or rotten, as a shared typology by all human cuisines (Clark, 2008) that holds the different levels of difficulty on cooking. As evidence of it, Lévi-Strauss argue that Aristotle stated that "in ancient times, men roasted everything" (Lévi-Strauss, 2013, 41) and that even natives from the British Guiana, Mexico or New Caledonia roasted meat.

Alongside the semantic of food, researchers have also studied the primary template parameters that assented in considering a cultural meaning of food terms in the context of their preparation, the sharing of food and being credited as positive by the public (Faber & Vidal, 2017, 163-4). Linguistics Pamela Faber and M. Carmen Africa Vidal believe that both *bread* and *rice* are shared among every culture and considered them as hypernyms (Faber & Vidal, 2017, 156)⁹.

Eating habits diverge in any culture even in those similar ones. As such, European visitors described their astonishment on the huge amounts of food consumed by Americans in the 19th Century (Markos, 2006). The way of consuming the same food is unique by each practice because of the cultural assimilation of it, as happens in Japan towards Western food (Stajcic, 2013) or the unique case of Israeli cuisine relating to Arab food, that will be object of further analysis.

Food can comprise a whole ritual, as the authenticity of a nation could be compressed in the presentation and flavour of a single meal (Bailey, 2013). The sharing that involves a meal underpins the understanding of a common belief in a community, their identity (Marshall, 2015). Food has a strong component of unity while also a great power of symbolism. Aliments were often used as offerings to intermediate with supernatural entities (López García, Juárez, & Medina, 2016), being a defining feature of indigenous Latin American costumes. Food was offered to the different divinities to praise for a good harvest, to the fall of rain, as assurance of fertility or to connect with the dead (Håland, 2012). The symbolism of food as a prayer, through sacrifices or other religious practices, will be analysed in the following sections.

There is also a huge difference between centre and periphery countries in regard to their way of cooking, as underdeveloped nations still cook in wood-fire ovens that suppose a huge risk to health and are a cause of pollution (Rosenthal, Quinn, P.Grieshop, Pillarisetti, & I.Glass, 2018), as I will discuss further on. Not only cooking items differ from each culture, but also obviously diverge their cooking methods. As an instance, from India to Scandinavia, milk and butter are key ingredients on their cuisines, whereas olive oil bases the cookery of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries (McGee, 2004). Or,

⁹ As an example of the impact of food on language, we could observe that cooking is also impregnated within the proverbs of various cultures, such as the German '*viele Köche verderben den Brei*', equivalent to the English '*too many cooks spoil the broth*'.

continuing with Lévi-Strauss' triangle, Northern European countries consume boiled meat rather than roasting it as usually do Southerners.

3. **Political dimension**

In order to provide an adequate context of the issue hereby discussed, we need to question ourselves what we judge to be diplomacy, or more accurately, public diplomacy, to then observe whether gastrodiploamacy has to be estimated soft or hard power and lastly further deem the political reality regarding culinary diplomacy. Food has always been present in politics because of being a basic need of the human being, but rather aimed with respect to human security or the survival of the people (Segal, 1974). Politicians rather focused on the supply chain of food and the logistics, on food security, because of deeming food as “trivial or frivolous” according to Chapple-Sokol, who reflects there was a hindrance to accept food as a cuisine in academics (Poon, 2014).

a) **Diplomacy, public diplomacy, soft power**

It is not the aim of this paper to define public diplomacy in an academic exercise, as such ambitious goal could not even be reached by a single study. We may start by stating that, as often happens with concepts as vast as this one, there is no single agreed-upon definition of the term. Few would consider that to be a terrible hindrance, presumably because for most scholars this absence of consensus ends up bringing a beneficial to its study (CPD, 2019), as the wide range of interpretations provided enrich its field of study. Due to the varied nuances that can be grasped, PD is one of the most contested topics on International Relations (Farina, 2018). I will try to obtain the most accurate approximation to the term given that, fortunately, there is no categorical imperative in the case.

i. **Diplomacy and public diplomacy**

In order to enter in this conceptualisation, it is necessary to set the terms for what we contemplate as diplomacy. Studying the definition of Nicholas J. Cull, one of the most current acclaimed references on this very field, diplomacy is studied as “the mechanisms short of war deployed by an international actor to manage the international environment” (Cull, 2009). By defining it in such a way, the author is providing perhaps a negative side of it to the public, one that perhaps has emerge influenced by *realpolitik*, as it seems to be stated in terms of deterrence more than the broad function that the concept now holds, as description of a whole method aimed to deal with international issues (Roberston,

2004). It does not longer constraint to the personnel dedicated to enhancing the interest of their countries abroad.

Having stated the term for diplomacy, we shall address straightaway the scope on its merge with the ‘public’ aspect, resulting on the most current concept of public diplomacy, or PD. Tuch defined it as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies” (Tuch & Kalb, 1990). As one of the most shared definitions on PD (Farina, 2018), it emphasises on the most informative aspect of the term, a path that would be consequentially followed until uplifting the role of the public opinion on the further development of the term. Other academics comprehend it as the placing of the external image of a nation on their political agenda, so that it becomes a political issue (Gonesh & Melissen, 2005).

According to Cull, the first use of the phrase in its current meaning was by Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University (Massachusetts). Gullion stated that “Public diplomacy... deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications” (Cull, 2006).

We encounter that public diplomacy is comprised of government initiatives to communicate with the foreign public. In such a way, many efforts have been made by states to promote their images abroad, through new coined concepts of nation branding, which many states have applied in some extent. or the external initiatives and strategies. Public diplomacy has been an up-and-coming concept for both scholars and national strategies in the recent years. Per se, it its often common to perceive it as blurred within other topics such as political pressure or even propaganda (Gonesh & Melissen, 2005). Public diplomacy is aimed at public opinion, with the object of protect our values and positions beyond our borders, as a defining feature of actual foreign policy in the 21st Century.

ii. **Soft power**

Public and cultural diplomacy engage in the broader umbrella of soft power. Coined by Harvard political scientist Joseph Nye in the early 1990s, this concept has gained immense popularity after the publication of his 2004 “Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics”. It is the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants, shaping their preferences (Nye Jr., 2010). Soft power is opposed to hard power in that it “co-opts people rather than coerces them” (Nye Jr., 2008). According to Nye, there are three intangible assets for a country to achieve soft power: their culture, political values and foreign policies.

Soft power enhanced persuasion and attraction (McClory, 2018) as opposed to hard power, which emphasises on military intervention, coercive diplomacy and economic sanctions (Wilson E. J., 2008). Soft power is often referred as smart power, because of exposing less the interests of the actor while reaching beyond (Nye Jr., 2009) traditional diplomacy (Merino Araya, 2016). It englobes all cultural diplomacy, a practice that has defined Western powers this present 21st Century. As reported by the Soft Power 30 Index, in 2018 the first nation in soft power projection was the UK, followed by France, Germany, the US and Japan (McClory, 2018). Only five of the thirty ranked nations were non-Western powers: Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China and Russia.

Even though some have questioned the effectivity of soft power (Walt, 2009), food is clearly entwined in soft power and public diplomacy (Farina, 2018), as national cuisines are part of the cultural aspect of societies. Gastrodiplomacy transcends nation branding, where is often granted as a powerful tool (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2016), because of being more than a portrayed image of the country. Some, as Ronald Ranta, refer it as culinary nationalism or “gastronationalism” (Ranta, 2015), but we may dissent from this view, because gastronomy is enrooted within the very essence of the human being.

b) **Food as a political reality and practice**

One of the further implications of cooking is the creation of kitchenware (Twilley, Graber, & Gastropod, 2018), which perhaps helps to portray the stage of development of a state as well as the state of global inequalities. Wood-fire ovens are the cause of over four million yearly deaths as a result of smoke inhalation (Palou, 2016) and these kitchens are

used by nearly half of the world, according to the WHO¹⁰. Women and children are the most affected because of being exposed to indoor cooking fumes, which causes severe pulmonary dysfunction (Svedahl, Svendsen, Qvenild, Sjaastad, & Hilt, 2009). Because of it, UN efforts have been doubled towards ‘clean cooking’ as directly involved with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹¹ and the 2030 Agenda¹². This has much relation with energy access in low- and middle-income countries and composes one of the major global concerns that implies the vulnerability of the poor (Legros, Havet, Bruce, & Bonjour, 2009). Nonetheless, as being currently addressed by the main international organisations, it is hoped to take greater strides towards health conditions and its environmental impact (Rosenthal, Quinn, P.Grieshop, Pillarisetti, & I.Glass, 2018).

The importance of food in diplomacy is considerable, in accordance with Rockower’s “culinary diplomacy”, because of being present in any diplomatic dialogue (Farina, 2018). As a diplomatic tool, food is one of the powerful aims to encounter issues of conflict and violence (Vélez de Berliner, 2017). As such could be the sharing of a meal. “Table-top diplomacy”, the idea of addressing politics around the table, is attributed to Winston Churchill (Peck, 2018). It is regarded that the historic British Premier settled Yalta during dinners with US President Roosevelt and Soviet leader Stalin (Stevenson, 2017). Food can be both a convener and divider. We could muse that even though Cuba’s isolation in the international arena, Cuban restaurants are popular in U.S. countries; or the strive for water resources in rivers such as the Nile or Yangtze (Mendelson Forman & Sonenshine, 2014).

Dining together is a common practice in negotiation processes. Harvard Business Review echoed an experiment carried out with MBA students portraying that eating while negotiating increased the benefits of the deal in more than a ten percent (Balachandra, 2013). The act of eating together liberates endorphins in our brain, helping to strengthen social ties (Gusinskaya, 2017) and thus, becoming a persuasive mean that politicians

¹⁰ As stated by a joined WHO/UNDP declaration. “The indoor concentration of health-damaging pollutants from a typical wood-fired cooking stove creates carbon monoxide and other noxious fumes at anywhere between seven and 500 times over the allowable limits.

<https://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2004/statement5/en/>

¹¹ The SDGs count on the cooperation of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, who aims at clean cooking as a key driver of SDG success <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/11416Global%20Alliance%20for%20Clean%20Cookstoves%20-%20Delivering%20on%20the%20SDGs%20through%20Clean%20Cooking.pdf>

¹² UN Cooking for Life Programme (CFL). <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=11544>

should be aware of. Geographer Leonore Newman has observed that commensality can create more sustainable environments, as seen in the suburban fringe of Vancouver (Newman, 2014).

However, the relationship between food and politics resides also within food choices, as they could be determined because of the influence of the food industry over the market (Nestle, 2019) (Nestle, 2016a), as famous sociologists Marion Nestle pointed out in the recent 4th Edition of “Food and Politics”, the leading compilation of Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. Nestle is passionately advocated towards well nutrition and against the overconsumption of sugar or processed aliments, blaming the lobbying of the industry on alimentary issues (Nestle, 2016b).

It is also important to note the influence of gastronomy in sociology. As such, food practices have deepened the divergencies between the different cultures and social groups since the annals of history, as the food table of farmers was not even closely related to the one of the elites (Schlüter, 2017). The latter were able to introduce variants in their eatery due to their economic welfare, thus helped to the improvement of gastronomy as such (Barnés, 2014). But this has also resulted in the bad food habits of the poor, because the difference in income and educational levels features the great gap between rich and pauper. According to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the dietary quality of the poor in the U.S. could result in an increase of chronic diseases such as heart diseases, diabetes or cancer among them (Willett, 2014).

Nestlé thoughts are not a blunder. Trans fats and the excess of sugar have become one of the major enemies to beat by almost all health system in the world, whereas undernourishment remains alongside with it as a major concern. This presence of contrary afflictions together in the same societies is acknowledged as the “double burden” health epidemic (Hawkesworth & Keir, 2018). The worldwide exposure to heavily processed food and the lack of physical activity, due to TV or technological dependencies, results in obesity as a global pandemic across all socio-economic classes in developing countries as well, due to their improved consumption and development (Hoffman, 2001). But the problematic is worsened as the trend towards a healthy diet or the consumption of bio products is only embraced by those with greater financial means. Hence, food can also be deemed as a driver of that inequality that results in the rich against the rest (Pazzanese, 2016).

c) **Politic deliberation and foods within the public imaginary**

According to historian Michael A. La Combe, food is “the circulation of blood in a body politic” (Meacham, 2015). In his “Political Gastronomy”, La Combe argues that food was a pillar in the emergence of America as a nation. One example of it could be the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth in 1621, which gathered European and Native Americans in praying while sharing a banquet¹³. Food trading developed commercial routes that impacted on the growing economic power of nations, being these routes causes of the creation of modern nation states (Merino Araya, 2016). Food customs are crucial to different social negotiations, in what is recognised as “the politics of food”, which encodes food choices, cooking, dining or “table manners”, as hospitality and receiving (UCL, 2010). Brillat-Savarin marvellously typify the influence of food in politics by stating that “meals have become a means of governing, and the fate of whole people is decided at a banquet” (Brillat-Savarin, 2014).

i. **The French (Gastro)Revolution**

The French Revolution crystallised the importance of food and dining regarding politics on the 18th Century (Linton & Harder, 2015), as indeed the feasts within *Versailles* and their squandering¹⁴ induce to its first riots (Bramen, 2010). One of the agreed causes on the uprising was bread. Not the aliment itself, but its rising prices (Brace, 1946), as the starving crowd was incapable of even accessing to the meal that was regarded as a basic necessity for the people (Pelz, 2016). Hence, we could assert that the emergence of modern democracies, structured within the division of powers, emerged through one of the plainest foods, bread¹⁵.

But the contribution of the Revolution to gastronomy was also extent, as it concluded in setting dining politics, as private dinners and cafés started to the new scenarios in where decisions were taken (Linton & Harder, 2015). One of its main leaders, Georges-Jacques Danton is remembered to point his discrepancy with the head of The Terror, Maximilien

¹³ Even though the public opinion give credit the origin of Thanksgiving in this event, some historians debate that the Spanish were the first celebrating it with Natives in St. Augustine, in 1565 (Brockell, 2017).

¹⁴ It is believed that Louis XVI was served around 65 courses when dining publicly (*au grand couvert*) on Sundays and feast days, reducing it by third because of public claims (Becquet, 2014). These twenty dishes were usual in a normal meal of the King (Wallick, 2010).

¹⁵ According to Historian Michael R. Lynn, bread is perhaps the aliment that has been most shared by almost all cultures and comprised (Lynn), as we previously saw with Faber & Vidal.

Robespierre, alongside a dinner between both as depicted the 1983 *Danton* film, starred by Gérard Depardieu.

The impact of this historic event on food was of such magnitude that some credit the Revolution as the initiation of restaurants¹⁶ just as of the actual concept of cuisine (Spang, 2001). Fine dining was a costume of nobility and royalty, which were the only ones that could afford holding grand kitchens and personal chefs (Bramen, 2010). Because of overthrowing the *Ancien Régime*, the kitchen cadre of dismantled aristocratic households turned into restaurateurs (Mealey, 2018), even though the first restaurant is believed to be opened around 1765 in Paris¹⁷ by a bouillon seller, Boulanger (Blau, 2015). A new cuisine also emerged because of abolishing the guild system, which curtailed the practice of offices such as butchers or bakers (Bramen, 2010), so different elements of cooking merged together.

The contribution of the French to the culinary is remarkable. It enroots with the role of food as a symbol of power during the splendour of Louis XIV, who used to dine at Versailles *au grand couvert*, where the royal family dinner in front of the public (Selin, 2018). This cook splendour owns much of its lavish display to the relevant François Vatel¹⁸, who delighted the French Court as the first maître controlling not only the menus, but also the decorating or entertainment around the table, creating a new gastronomic protocol. This period set the rules of modern cuisine, depicted with the publication of the first modern cuisine book at 1651, *Le Cuisinier François* written by François Pierre La Varenne, which introduced sauces such as bechamel or *roux* (McGee, 2004). Other French creations were the modular system of cooking, which allowed to create new recipe combinations because of displaying fresh ingredients (Civitello, 2011), or the *Service à la française*, the actual buffet where all dishes are served at the same time (Day, 2008).

¹⁶ One of the most famous restaurants linked with politics is precisely “*Le Procope*”, often depicted as the oldest café in Paris, founded in 1686. Still existing today, in its tables Voltaire wrote some of his most famous works and where the Cordeliers Club of Danton and Marat directed the fall of the French monarchy (as the attack on the Tuileries Palace) in the ending months of 1792. <https://www.procope.com/en/>

¹⁷ According to Guinness World Records, “Restaurante Botín” founded by French Jean Botin in 1725 in Madrid, is considered as the oldest restaurant in the world. The Guinness organisation bases it in restaurants that have been in operation since their opening (Guinness World Records, 2016).

¹⁸ Vatel (1631-1671) was a cook and maître that served under Nicolas Fouquet or the Grand Condé. He is known for creating the *crème Chantilly* and because of committing suicide because of the delay of food delivery in the banquet orchestrated at the Palace of Chantilly to entertain Louis XIV and the Court. As anecdote, Gerard Depardieu also characterised him in the 2000 film *Vatel*.

The current table setting and procedure in Western societies derives from Napoleon but is actually named as *Service à la russe* because of its Russian provenance, and comprises the actual full-course dinner (Satrústegui, 2018).

4. **Philosophical dimension**

The essence of food has been object of analysis of philosophy because of the entailed ramifications with the human being and as it is a chance for communion and exchange among the people (Pham, 2013). Its implications to the individual, because of the virtues put into practice while eating (Telfer, 1996), as well as the different religious costumes that involve the habit of nurturing conclude in raising food as a topic of debate within the world of ideas.

a) **Food as a pleasure**

Since antiquity we hold concerns towards food, because of being related to self-control and discipline, thus maintaining a difficult and even problematic relationship with it (Coveney, 2006). Moral philosophy has engaged food because of the obligations it involves in the development of virtues (Telfer, 1996). Food was respected a pleasure by ancient civilisations, as philosopher Michael Foucault studied regarding the distress of Greeks in their dietary regimes, who were more interested in caring for the self with regard to food rather than sex (Taylor, 2010). Food was part of the “art of living” of the predecessors of Western cultures (Huijer, 2015), and was a characteristic of their *ethos* (Baumlin & Meyer, 2018).

Aristotle or Plato defended the Spartan *syssitia*¹⁹ (“eating together”) as a practice towards social integration (Michael Jackson, 2014). Indeed, the connection between diplomacy and food is attributed to the Greeks (Chapple-Sokol, 2013). Romans used to celebrate around excessive orgies, in which they could express their passion as in their “*Apicius*”²⁰ cookery recipes (Abrahams, 2017), which is often related to epicureanism and their focus on pleasure. Even in medieval ages food was sensed as a sign of wealthy and meat was a luxury item. Gout emerged as the “rich man’s disease” or even the “disease of kings”²¹

¹⁹ The assistance to these daily banquets was mandatory for all men belonging to the Spartan peers and was also common in Crete or other Greek locations. It sought to create a strong bond between the different groups of the city. (Michael Jackson, 2014)

²⁰ Marcus Gavius Apicius (around 1st Century AD) is believed as the first Roman gourmet during the reign of Tiberius, to whom *Apicius* is attributed.

²¹ Accurately described since Hippocrates, gout has been perceived as an elite disease. Most notably instances of its afflicted wide from Carlos V, the most renowned King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor to its enemy Henry VIII of England or even Charlemagne.

(Dubow, 2003), and being fat was attractive for nobility and monarchs (Puerto Sarmiento, 2013). The 1558 “The Art of Living Long” of Venetian merchant Luigi Cornaro is estimated as one of the first compilations for a healthy diet, advocating for calorie restrictions (Foxcrot, 2016).

The role of sensory perceptions within our appreciation of food determine our experience while eating (Kivela & Crotts, 2006). It is scientifically proven that infants determine their food preferences in their early childhood, as they can learn their food pleasures (Nicklaus, 2016). As happens within our societies, the perceptions on food differ from one another. Because of it, we can appreciate different alimentary identities, as can reflect Brillat-Savarin’s phrase of “tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are” (Taylor, 2010). One of its main examples is vegetarianism, that implies further identification as feminism or socialism even though its thoughts are related to the “wrong” production of meat, hence consuming it is immoral (Doggett, 2018). Animal rights are also concerned with this debate, but were not advocated by philosophers such as Descartes or Kant, but by utilitarianism father Jeremy Bentham in his 1780 “The Principles of Morals and Legislation” (Bentham, 2002) that set the basis of this topic (Caudevilla, 2013).

b) **Belief food – religious dietary laws and fasting**

For monotheist beliefs, the first laws on dietary derived from the Torah’s Books of Leviticus²² and Deuteronomy, in which was prohibited the consumption of beasts such as pork or shellfish, as well as merging milk and meat. This led to a sort of rulings that practicing Jews still observe known as the *kashrut*, of which all fulfilling it is considered as kosher. They have convened in a distinction of the Jewish community (Douglas, 2013), as I will analyse later at the Israeli case study. Its implications also echo in Muslim habits, because of their renowned prohibition of eating any swine aliment and their *halal* practices, which also ban alcohol. According to Marvin Harris, one of the anthropologists behind cultural materialism, this prohibition derived from, among others, environmental causes, as the Middle Eastern weather is not favourable to pigs (Harris, 2013); while structuralist Mary Douglas argued it was due to not being used to this specie (Douglas, 2013).

²² Leviticus 11: 1: Whatever parts the hoof and is cloven footed and chews the cud among animals, you may eat.

The importance of food in the Christian religiosity costumes is not comparable to the Jewish and Muslim ones, because there is no specific banning towards aliments. However, food represents a short of practice between Catholics and Orthodox Christians because of the symbolism of fasting and abstinence observed around Lent to commemorate the death of Christ, or also as a sacrifice to strengthen their prayer as, according to Pope Francis, fasting is a “wake-up call for the soul” (Brockhaus, 2019). As a matter of fact, Coptic Christians fast a total of 210 days throughout the year, almost following a vegan diet (El-Dabh, 2013). But also enjoying food is felt as a Christian practice, as depicted in the relevant the Babette’s Feast (Curry, 2012).

Fasting, as a way for purification, is a common practice within beliefs, as Ramadhan in the Muslim world or Sabbath on the Jews. As an instance, Buddhists fast for a better mediation and their monks do not consume food after the noon meal, according to the Vinaya rules (Khantipalo, 2006). Other religions fast as well, as Taoism, Jainism or Hinduism, and this acting is commonly also carried out as a form of protest by civil rights activists, as the 17 fasts undertook by Mahatma Gandhi to conclude the independence of India (Jack, 2005).

Sustainability is also a concern that involves religious authorities because of observing the planet as a gift of the divinity. One of the most prolific leaders in this extent has been Pope Francis, whose *Laudato Si* encyclical advocates the protection of the environment from the Catholic scope and the role of society and the importance of training individuals in order to confront the huge environmental issues that threaten the existence of the Creation (González Fabre (coord.), et al., 2018), God’s reflection in the world. Therefore, because of its importance in human nature, food also serves as a communication channel with the absolute being.

VII. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSION

CASE STUDY 1: ISRAEL

1. Israel – the force of icons and sentiment to assemble a nation’s identity from scratch

The case of the Zionist state retains a singular interest in the use of food as a tool to construct a national identity that literally emerged from the ashes. Since its trembling establishment, Israeli authorities were urged to create a strong national identity that could

be composed of more than the unity derived from the struggle against neighbouring countries that were threatening the very own existence of the State of Israel or the hope in building a safe place for all Jews, fleeing for generations. Somehow, the Zionist authorities observed that Judaism was not the only path to construct Israeli nationalism. Food was therefore used as a crucial tool to build the national feelings from an early stage (Raviv, 2002), as asserted by Yael Raviv, one of the leading scholars on Israeli food culture and nationalism and lecturer on Nutrition and Food at New York University.

As a new-born nation, the Israelis have managed to diversify their cuisine and their efforts have focused on highlighting the huge emphasis of multi-ethnic echoes in their food in order to build a strong collective memory within the population (Sertbulut, 2012). Therefore, gastronomy portrayed a crucial part in order to correlate with the recognition of Israelis as a nationhood, as the task remained in create an artificial bond between the people and their common land and history (Raviv, 2003), because of the many divergencies among their population. In the words of Raviv, “food offers a tangible and concrete window into the illusive concept of national identity” (Raviv, 2001). As such, Israelis have proven to be very pragmatic with this idea, as could be hereby analysed.

The different Jewish groups that settled in the Palestinian territory at the end of the 19th Century merged after a fashion with the Arab culinary traditions that were common in those lands, assimilating their costumes and traditions as their own (Ranta & Mendel, 2014). It was not until the Third *Aliyah*, coinciding with the Great War, in which food became an ideological tool (Van Pinxteren, 2013), as agriculture was the leading feature of Jewish communities in the region. Hence their socialist-inspired communes, the famous *Kibutzs*, took a central part in this emerging nationalism as one of the particular aims used against the British presence within the Mandate for Palestine and to boost the colonisation of the territory (Siminovich, 2018).

The leave of the British forces from Palestine was followed by the declaration of the State of Israel by its very first President, David Ben-Gurion, on May the 14th 1948 and the beginning of the Arab-Israeli War (Office of the Historian, s.f.). Consequently, the Arab nations of Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia invaded the self-declared state with an apparent superiority of forces. However, the recent nationals managed to become surprisingly victorious in battle, as American novelist Leon Uris narrated in his 1958 pro-Jewish best-seller *Exodus*, that was followed by the successful Paul Newman

starred film of 1960. This new storytelling, because of its close human approach, shifted the public opinion towards the conflict (McDowell, 1987). Thus, it heavily impacted on the view that Americans (Silver, 2010) and the rest of the world hold on the Israeli cause since (Burston, 2012). *Kibutzs* were crucial alongside the story. Their self-consumption organisations reflect their own ability to construct their patriotism was primarily influenced by the role of food. Yet it was only for survival, but it also served to display the image of Israel to the globe.

a) Falafel, a typical Arab meal switched to Israel's food landmark

Notwithstanding, the absence of any clear food symbol forced Israelis to encounter a single recipe that could be depicted as an indicator of their national pride. As a result, nationalism hoisted perhaps the most popular recipe around Israel after independence: falafel (Raviv, 2003), the legume *croquette*. The upcoming importance of a traditional Arab dish within the context of the war was helped through the assimilation of it as authentically Jewish and helped to portrayed Arabs as the enemy, the *Other* (Rabinovitch L. , 2015). It shall be noted that this concept of the evil as a threat, barbarian, derives from geopolitics Mackinder and his *Heartland* or Haushofer and his *Lebensraum*.

And, even though the narrative was set on religion indeed, food, because of this notable connexion, was also another arena for the fight. Nonetheless, there was also a reasonable inspiration behind the enthronement of falafel, as the economic situation was critic and this flavourful meal is very inexpensive. Hence, falafel became a short of emblem to the multi ethnical Jewish nation, which is currently used to portray the image of the country abroad (Raviv, 2015), despite the criticism of Palestinians because of this cultural appropriation.



Image of a typical falafel, the main street food of Eastern Mediterranean countries, culturally assimilated by Israel

Falafel, the national pride of Palestinian or even Egyptian cuisines, became Israeli because all Israelis thought of it in such a way (Mischel, 2005). In the ongoing encrusted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, falafel is one of the cultural stages that annoys Palestinians the most, been analysed as another way of discrimination towards them and that Israelis have launched a global campaign to discredit their meal. Food relates to one of the most inner aspects of the being, its essence, and as such was used by Israelis following a constructivist approach towards their own identity, as shaping their reality.

Thus, this issue appears time and again in their own media headlines, such as “Israel’s appropriation of Palestinian food”, in *The Arab Weekly*, believing it as a mislabelled Palestinian meal by Israelis (Alhelou, 2018); or also believing it vital “to preserve the Palestinian heritage from the occupation” as stated recently by *The Jerusalem Post* (Jerusalem Post Staff, 2019). Even one of the main Israeli newspapers, *Haaretz*, also addressed the issue, with the aid of one of the main experts in the field, Ronald Ranta, former chef and senior lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Kingston University, also son of Jews, who affirmed the following “it is interesting to think of why Jewish Israelis have been so reluctant to admit that they share a lot in common with Arab and Palestinian food” (Vered, 2018).

Parallel to the emergence of falafel as a national icon, even though its origin remains Arab, there was another battle between Israel and its perhaps most warrant neighbour, Lebanon, over the main Lebanese landmark on the culinary state: hummus, a legume *pâte* that is typical on the East Mediterranean (Percival, 2008). The battle included symbolic events such as holding the Guinness record for the largest bowl of hummus served, currently being in the Land of the Cedars (Arad, 2015), but also higher concerns. The Lebanese struggled against Israel to trademark “hummus” in the European Union but failed because of the arduousness of proving it solely Lebanese (Panzter, 2015). This event entails a besmirch so long it demonstrates the attempts of nations to retain the authenticity of their food preparation and stand out within the process of globalisation, that homogenises every culture by making them equal in their void (Ari, 2012).

As a consequence, the aim to find a culinary tradition is shared to all countries, even those with a marked cookery, due to the threat that globalisation composes to the very concept of nation (Ichijo, Johannes, & Ranta, 2019). Israelis, alongside with the falafel discourse, encountered that Mizrahi-Jewish communities, present in the Middle East, prepared these

same meals and so they belong to Jewish tradition and, consequently, to Israeli culture (Ranta, 2015). Constructivist theories, as could be reasoned, played a major part in this process. In this present case, history, culture and religion have merged into creating the one-of-a-kind common identity that Israelis possess (Siniver, 2001) and that they try to reflect in their cuisine.

The majority of the Israeli cookbook authors emphasised the influence of immigration on Israeli cookery, which experienced an evolution until it flourished in the middle of the 1960s, where the narrative of the new Israeli food was adapted to export it abroad, with the apparition of cookbooks such as “Israeli Cookery” by Lilian Cornfeld, written in 1962 towards an American audience (Cornfeld, 1962). In the 1936 “The Flavours of Israel”, the authors affirmed that their cuisine is the merge of Jewish immigration (Ranta, 2015), as the *Galut* (Diaspora) marked the advancement of the Israeli food culture. Ranta, who is versed in this subject, claims that all cookbooks failed to include the Arab or the Arab-Palestinian tradition in the conformation of the Israeli cuisine, mainly because of the Zionist narrative of them as a the rival other (Ranta & Mendel, 2014).

These literature efforts sought to serve as spearheads of Israeli nation-branding, presenting the image of assimilation and the success story of adapting Biblical food to modern times. It shall be deemed that, alongside this very singular process of nation-building, nostalgia was a core driver that helped to its effective accomplishment (Ore, 2015). Israel portrayed a very effective gastrodiploamacy overseas and outside the Arab world, retaining the acknowledgement of a cuisine that never existed before as a traditional one and enriched by the blend of different civilisations, regions and cultures (Rabinovitch L. , 2015).

It was not until the 1980s that Israelis agreed upon the Arab and Arab-Palestinian scope of their cuisine, increasing the notion of it around their media (Sertbulut, 2012). Since then, Israeli cookers focused on offering recipes that gathered both tradition and modern tendencies, and referred to their own gastronomy as one that has been developing through history because of the willingness of Jewish communities in Europe or the Middle East to adapt their local cuisines to their religious standards (Spector, 2016). One of the main connoisseurs of Israeli and Jewish cuisine, Janna Gur, has endeavoured to demonstrate the rich nuances of their cookery with a modern perspective, stating that the Israeli food culture enroots to ancient history but also dates to the pretty turbulent past, and links with

politics, history, religion or society (Gur, 2008). Gur even included in her “The Book of New Israeli Food” Ramadan recipes as almost a fifth of Israelis are Arabs (Roth, 2008).

The Arab origins of Israeli meals was highlighted, even if for the fact that Arabs prepare better falafel or hummus, but because there was also an effort to join it with the land traditional cookery. The general opinion agrees that the best hummus or falafel preparations in Israel are in Arab-owned restaurants (Roth, 2008), because their food-knowledge has passed through generations. This fact is also agreed by multiple Israeli cookbooks, as well as specialised webs and media (Time Out, 2019). As a matter of fact, even in the Israeli efforts to beat the world record for the largest dish of hummus to the Lebanese, the ones involved were Arab-Israeli citizens (Ari, 2012). Consequently, all meet in remarking that Arabs prepare their dishes better. But one interesting insight of all this information is that it generally names demonyms such as Egyptians, Lebanese, Syrians, Jordanians or even Arabs, with the avoidance to mention Palestinians as part of this culinary process (Sertbulut, 2012).

b) The Jewish Dietary Law

One of the many implications of Judaism relating to food is that the meal preparation unfolds through the sieve of *kashrut*, all that is esteemed proper to be consume, or kosher, under the *halakha*, the Jewish ancient traditional law that derives from the first five books of the Bible. This food processes have concluded into distinguishing Jews and creating among them a sense of belonging as well as self-control, as Mary Douglas, anthropologist expert on Biblical symbolism, argued (Douglas, 2013). This could be comparable to the Muslim requirement of *halal*, especially regarding meat or the prohibition of consuming alcohol (Eardley, 2014).

However, the status quo in Israel have changed because of the eroding links between religion and state, not affronting the Jewish identity itself, but the private sphere of Israelis, as their ideology and reality clashes (Stern, 2017). Nonetheless, even though a large part of Israelis are secular, the economic outcomes of kosher are certain as the needed certificate to label any food related place, as about a 70 percent of Israeli Jews consume kosher food (Rabinovitch A. , 2016). The winds of change also affect the Holy Land.

As considered by Ranta and Mendel, Israeli culinary culture and their own identity by extend, cannot be appreciated without the cultural exchange with Arab-Palestinians (Ranta & Mendel, 2014). Raviv also refers to the practice of “breaking bread” between Palestinians and Israelis to sit in the table and enjoy peacefully together (Raviv, 2016). Such an initiative deepens the role of food as a unction between even enemies. Despite of it, the nationalism of both clashes, as the former enroots with the essence that the one of the later threatens because of assimilating it as its own (Bardenstein, 2002). If Zionists succeed in reshaping the Jewish national identity with food, a new and sensible argumentation could be offered, as a reach out for harmony, through the plate.

The evolution of the population of Israel into secularism and the change on its demographics also forces their politicians to “abandon the accepted view of a majority and minorities, and move to a new concept of partnership between the various population sectors in our society” as Israeli President Reuven Rivlin affirmed in June 2015 at the annual *Herzliya* conference (Stern, 2017). The consequences of this shift, or better contemplated, the ability of Israelis to adapt to this new reality, will undoubtedly affect the role of food and the implications of multiculturalism in their cuisine. Perhaps the Arab heritage of their cookery will serve now to unite a fragmented society and end up with the view of us against the others. After all, there is no manna from heaven anymore.

CASE STUDY 2: PERU

2. Peru – a modern culinary tracing centuries on their ancestor’s heritage

The former Incan nation has developed a profound cultural diplomacy in order to highlight as one of the landmarks of Latin America. Peru shares its *middlepowermanship* in the region with other nations, such as Chile (Merino Araya, 2016). Gastrodiplomacy fits there perfectly, as Rockower studies it as a public diplomacy carried out by middle powers in order to obtain their objectives without economic resources or the military. Furthermore, the cultural potential of Latin America is large regarding the presence of literature with figures such as Neruda, Cortázar, García Márquez, Paz, or Vargas Llosa (Peruvian) as well as historic sites such as Teotihuacan in Mexico, Tikal in Guatemala or the most iconic Machu Picchu, in Peru (Montiel, 2010).

Because of it, nation-branding became a priority for Lima in 2003 with the “Plan de Política Cultural del Perú en el Exterior”, which has engaged an ambitious cultural diplomacy plan in different areas such as art, dance, literature or music (MRE, 2003). Food was outlined among them not only because of their rich tradition, but also because of conveying more power than other cultural expressions (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014). The plan also created the Inca Garcilaso Cultural Centre, named after the first mestizo,



son of a Spanish *encomendero*²³ and an Incan princess, which is focused on the promotion of the cultural heritage of the country (Montiel, 2010). There is even a nation brand, “Perú”²⁴, aimed at tourism and investors through the expedition of licenses to operate under it on different sectors, from business to tourism or gastronomy. This initiative is also helped with the creation of a Commission for Exports and Tourism, PromPerú²⁵.

Logotype of the Peru nation brand designed by FutureBrand

In the promotion of food diplomacy, Peru offers the example of joined forces among the different actors involved in this task that should be observed by any other nation attempting to enter gastrodiploamacy in order to retain its effectiveness. The public sector was mainly represented by the government itself and the Chancellery in their effort to outbalance their negative image on the global scenario, mainly due to their internal

²³ The name given for the Spanish medieval system of *encomienda* set by the first conquerors, that ended as a covert slavery prohibited by Charles I of Spain with the New Laws of 1542, even though his grandmother, Isabela I of Castile forbidden enslaving Indians in 1501.

²⁴ Designed by FutureBrand, a world referent on branding, it wanted to contain the new country’s positioning “there is a Peru for each and every one”, being a written red Peru whose ‘p’ in spiral “evokes past civilisations and at the same time projects the country to the future”. (FutureBrand, 2017).

²⁵ According to their webpage, their mission is “to position Peru in the world through the promotion of its image, its tourist destinations and its export products with added value, contributing to the sustainable and decentralised development of the country”. <https://www.promperu.gob.pe/>

conflict²⁶. The non-state actors promoting it are Peruvian chefs, mostly represented by its most renowned colleague, Gastón Acurio, who initiated this gastrodiploacy because of rediscovering Peruvian cuisine (Gusinskaya, 2017) and APEGA²⁷, the Peruvian Society of Gastronomy created in 2007, because of bonding both public and private initiatives and sponsor its development (Merino Araya, 2018).

a) Governmental gastrodiploacy

Gastronomy entails one of the most valuable elements of the Peruvian identity, alongside their indigenous heritage or their dances, because “it is on our cuisine where we rediscover and encounter our nationalism” (Wilson R. , 2011). The gastronomic world is experiencing a Peruvian gastronomic boom, enabling Peruvian cuisine as one of the most prestigious internationally (Matta, 2016). The government of Peru, aware of such scope, approached it towards various initiatives, following the Asian path.

Because of their rich history, Peru was able to portray its cuisine as one of their hallmarks, as public diplomacy needs credibility in order to become effective (Cull, 2009). Peruvian gastrodiploacy was launched with the official project of “Perú Mucho Gusto” (a word game that means both Peru, with pleasure and Peru, much taste) presented in 2006 in Madrid Fusión, one of the main international summits on gastronomy.

The Peruvian Ministries of Culture and Foreign Relations joined by Apega aimed in 2011 to obtain the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) recognition of their gastronomy (Merino Araya, 2018), after the success of the Mediterranean countries like Spain, Greece or France as well as Mexico, whose cuisines achieved this acknowledgement in 2010 (Matta, 2012). Another major effort for this candidacy was the web-based campaign “*Cocina Peruana Para el Mundo*” (Peruvian Cuisine for the World) that comprised a wide range of Peruvian celebrities and personalities, such as Mario Vargas Llosa, Nobel Award Winner of Literature, the actress Eva Mendes or the US Ex

²⁶ Between the 1980s and 2000s, Peru was immersed in severe concerns within the international scope, such as corruption, economic crisis and guerrilla. The main belligerents were the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement and Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), or Grupo Colina, one of the main state-affiliated paramilitaries. It is estimated that more than 70,000 have been killed throughout its ongoing. Even though the conflict is now dormant, it remains as the second longest internal conflict in America, after Colombia.

²⁷ According to their website, APEGA seeks “to achieve that by the year 2021, Peruvian gastronomy will be recognized worldwide for its high quality, diversity and richness, and that the country will become consolidated as the main gastronomic destination in the world.” <http://www.apega.pe/nosotros/que-es-apega>

Vice President, Al Gore or famous chefs such as Anthony Bourdain or the Peruvian Gastón Acurio (Wilson R. , 2011). According to Wilson, the project sought the identification of Peruvian cuisine as its main national identity, a common feature of gastrodiploacy and of social and anthropological value of gastronomy in states (Torres Oñate, Romero Fierro, & Fernanda Viteri, 2017). This vey project supposed the inclusion of Peruvian gastronomy as one of the main cultural features of the country abroad, and the further proposal to UNESCO served even more to contribute to the image of Peru (Matta, 2016).

The Unesco proposal was supported with the 2009 documentary film “*De Ollas y Sueños*” (Cooking up Dreams) in order to present Peruvian culture and underlying their cuisine as pillar of their identity and traditions (Wilson R. , 2011). The ICH attempt failed in 2010 because of not meeting the standards²⁸, so ceviche has been recently proposed to the Unesco as the Peruvian champion for ICH (EFE-EPA, 2019). It is not surprising that this typical dish has emerged as the candidate, as it represents the pantry of Peru, joining coast, mountains and jungle, but also its mestizo essence.

Another initiative that is being replicated in the main world gastronomic plazas, as London, New York or Madrid is the “Peru Restaurant Week” (PromPerú, 2018a), in which Peruvian restaurants are featured and offer a taste of their gastronomy. All these programmes have contributed to increase the nation image of Peru abroad (Miño, 2016). The elements for an effective cultural diplomacy were just there because of their tremendous historical richness and natural biodiversity (Fernández Guadaño, 2014), but the importance of Lima lies in the fact that they were capable of amalgamate all these components, with the help of the involved stakeholders, to structure a successful policy (Carman, 2012).

b) The role of non-state actors

The emergence of Peruvian cookery is due more to the own efforts of its cooks rather than the subsequent impulse of the authorities in its promotion (Merino Araya, 2018), as a relevant initiative of citizen culinary diplomacy on Sapple-Chokol terms. According to Rockower, the success of gastrodiploacy campaign resides on a holistic campaign such

²⁸ According to Mariano Valderrama, former President of APEGA, “the error was that the history of Peruvian cuisine and all regions were included”.

as the Peruvian one (Rockower, 2012a). The combination of advertising and positioning the campaign with celebrities adds gastrodiploamcy an important mark. (Calderón, 2018).

i. Peruvian chefs

Gastón Acurio, regarded as one of the main figures of Peru²⁹ and the world reference on Peruvian cuisine (Miroff, 2014), who believes in it as a social tool and is also credited as the founder of its gastrodiploamcy (Merino Araya, 2018). Son of a politician, he encountered cooking while studying in France and he trained under the best Spanish cooks, such as Ferrán Adrià. Even though some observe him as a future politician, his major contribution has been to tie politics and gastronomy, because of placing Peruvian cookery in the national awareness as the main brand of Peru and use it towards a grand social impact (Wilson R. , 2011).

Acurio's restaurant Astrid y Gastón³⁰ was the first Peruvian restaurant classified among the World's 50 Best Restaurants in 2012, as No. 35 and later *highest climber* because of listing 14th in 2013. He was even awarded the Whole Career Award of this ranking in June 2018, as well as the highest Peruvian recognition, the *Gran Cruz*, in July (Jolonch, 2018), alongside the 2013's Global Gastronomy Award of the Swedish *White Guide*³¹ (Colón-Singh, 2013). With more than 34 restaurants in 11 different countries distributed in his emporium Acurio Restaurants-AR- (Clay, 2018), The chef has even been a topic of a Harvard Business School Case Study because of the adaptability of AR as a gastronomic business concept³² within its international expansion (Herrero, 2014).

Virgilio Martínez, a former chef at Acurio Restaurantes, followed the path taken by his mentor and experienced the climb when in 2017 his restaurant *Central* topped as 5th within the World's 50 Best Restaurants and as the best restaurant in South America (The World's 50 Best Restaurants , 2018) and his *Lima Fitzrovia* in London is the first and only Peruvian restaurant with a Michelin star (Norman, 2013). Martínez was also awarded with the 2017 Chef's Choice, a recognition between leading chefs as the most remarkable among them (Maglione, 2018).

²⁹ According to Acurio, because of political discontent in Peru "today a chef here is someone more trusted than a politician". His company employs around 1,000 Peruvians.

³⁰ The restaurant was named after Gastón and his wife, Astrid Gutsche, a German that is considered as the best confectionery of Latin America and has contributed to the promotion of Peruvian cocoa, being known as "La Dama del Chocolate" (El Comercio , 2018)

³¹ A restaurant guide focused on the Nordics, Baltics, Denmark and Sweden that recognises the best world restaurateurs and avant-garde sustainability initiatives.

³² Acurio is considered to manage "an empire of restaurant franchises" (Barclay, 2009).

Among these two stars emerged the Peruvian cook from Japanese descent Mitsuharu Tsumura, ‘Micha’, main exponent of Nikkei whose restaurant *Maido* ranked as no.7 as the second Peruvian restaurant among the top 10 of 2018. As well as Martínez and Acurio, Misha was awarded *Highest Climber* by the World’s 50 Best Restaurants, in 2015 (Tassano, 2016), and will open the first Nikkei restaurant in China, *Ají* (Alperstein, 2018). Other recognised chefs are Rafael Osterling, owner of four restaurants among the best of Latin America who believes that Peruvian cuisine is privileged because of their influence of other cultures³³ (Palacios, 2018); or Johnny Schuler, celebrity chef and an authority on pisco with his *Por las Rutas del Pisco* TV show (Carman, 2012).

Acurio believes that Peruvian gastronomy is a collective effort to promote their country abroad (Herrero, 2014). His mentee, Virgilio Martínez, also reflects that Peruvian gastronomy must be promoted worldwide because of exporting Peru’s products and values³⁴ (Contreras, 2017). The awareness of Peruvian chefs on the inequalities of their country is reflected in their initiatives to address it, such as Acurio’s *Nuevo Pachacútec Cooking School* in one of the marginalised areas near Lima (Culinary Interaction, 2016), or Schuler catering for oil workers in the Amazonian jungle (Carman, 2012). Misha, on the contrary, considers that there is no obligation for cooks rather than sustainability or the protection of the environment (Reich, 2018), following also Acurio’s theories in that as long as Peruvian cuisine expands abroad, its national supply chains will benefit and rural zones of Peru will foster (Wilson R. , 2011). The gastronomic scene was surprised to observe the upcoming cooking synergy of Peruvians, due to their chefs. In the words of Spanish renowned chef Ferran Adrià, “the future of gastronomy is being cooked up in Peru” (Symmes, 2011).

ii. APEGA

Apega is deemed as crucial on Peruvian gastrodiploacy because of connecting the governmental authorities with the gastronomic scene of the country in order to promote the Andean country through their cuisine (Wilson R. , 2011). According to their webpage, the institution appeared in 2007 because of the “need to articulate efforts to give Peruvian gastronomy the place it deserves in the world, and make it a source of identity, innovation

³³ According to Osterling, “In Peru we are in front of the kitchen of the mestizaje” (Ceviche de Sandía , 2019)

³⁴ In 2017, Martínez stated that “It is not only Central, which represents the biodiversity of Peru, our culture. This gives value to what we do, and I hope it brings happiness not only to the team but also to cross borders, for all the people we work with, which is a lot.”

and sustainable development for Peruvians” (Apega, n.d.). It is composed of cooks, gastronomists, researchers, restaurants, cooking schools or universities, as well as producer associations and public entities³⁵.

Their scope is in year 2021, to what they joined the National Centre of Strategic Planning and the whole government Cabinet. Coinciding with the bicentenary of Peruvian independence, their aim is that Peruvian gastronomy becomes a worldwide referent (Humala Tasso, Valdés Dancuart , & Soldán Franco , 2012). In the words of Acurio, one of Apega’s founders, “the Peruvian cuisine is ready to be the world’s gastronomic hub” (Publimetro , 2014).

Apega’s research has focused on analysing the contribution of the Peruvian gastronomic boom, as being one of the main engines of the economy as well as driver of social change (Apega , 2013). In the words of the then Peruvian President Ollanta Humala at the UN General Assembly in June 2012: “today we see that the cuisine allows us the integration of genres. It is a weapon for social inclusion and transformation of our abilities and talents. It is possible to develop and incorporate young people who otherwise would not have, or they'd have very difficult opportunities.”

As such, Apega was one of the principal sponsors of the ICH candidature for Peruvian cuisine that now has shifted into the recognition of ceviche (Matta, 2016). In the first proposal, Mariano Valderrama, director of the gastronomic society at the time, focused on the role of resources: protection to producers, history of food, cultural practices that shape food in a determined way... (Matta, 2012). It is striking how this civil association was capable of deepen the importance of gastronomy no longer in its aspect of gastrodiplomacy, but as core of Peruvian culture.

Apega has organised since 2008 the International Gastronomic Fair of Lima, also known as Mistura, presided by Acurio. It was holded as a festival of Peruvian biodiversity and aims to bring their haute cuisine closer to the street, as well as the engagement of the main foreign gastronomes (Apega, 2010). The fair experienced an spectacular growth thanks to the media coverage it holds, as the most relevant culinary festival in Latin America reaching near 400,000 attendants in 2015 and appeals to the emotional aspects and

³⁵ As an example of the synergies observed in Apega, the Nobel Laurate Vargas Llosa requested Peruvian chefs to name one of their dishes after him. Acurio picked up the glove and suggested an amusing proposal in the menu of one of AR restaurants, Tanta, called “Los huevos de don Mario al jugo” (literally, “Don Mario’s eggs in juice”). (Apega, 2011)

cultural identity of Peruvians, being a trademark for Peru's society (Geks Madico, 2017). Apega decided to cancel the late 2018 edition of Mistura in order to adapt it to the international scope (EC, 2018).

c) The gastronomic legacy of Peru: the epitome of fusion cuisine

The importance of Peruvian food shall be noted, because of its uniqueness. The enroots of cuisine within the very own identity of civilisations is more than palatable. Peruvian cuisine is appraised as one of the most varied and rich ones worldwide because of its exchanges with different cultures, starting with the Spanish Empire but then extended to influences of mestizaje from Moorish or African slaves and the further immigration of Asian countries, such as China or Japan.

Its richness also derives because of Peru's privileged geographical enclave, that results in unique harvesting and crops due to merging the Amazonian³⁶, the Andean mountains and the ocean (Carman, 2012). Peruvians benefit from the Humboldt Current of the South Pacific Ocean, that allows an ecosystem in which almost 20% of the global marine fish catch, being a abundant/ food source for Peruvians³⁷ (Symmes, 2011). Peru accounts over 90 different microclimates that result in their sharing of more than 25,000 different species that include the country amidst the five nations with more biodiversity on the planet (Medina, 2018).

Because of it, Peru has different gastronomies based on its regions, varying from the marinated fish meals of their Northern coast, divided in marine and criolla cuisines, to the millenary Andean dishes such as *papas a la huancaína* and the jungle cookery, based on exotic meat species like armadillo or the white-lipped peccary and fruits such as the citric camu-camu or cape gooseberry.

i. Pre-Columbian sacred cuisine

Peruvian ancient civilisations are regarded as developed as the Greek or Romans, as where the Norte Chico civilisation, the Nazca or the Moche, rulers of the northern coast of Peru that in addition to their mastery as potters also highlighted as goldsmiths (Davidson, 2005). Pre-Columbian Andean societies were advanced farmers that were able to supersede their harsh climate and orography with technological infrastructures for

³⁶ According to Johnny Schuler, "we haven't discovered yet everything that comes from the valley of the jungle"

³⁷ As stated by Sandra Gamio, a Peruvian food connoisseur, "Every civilization has to have a food source. In Egypt it was the Nile. For us, it was the sea".

water retention and drainage such as their terraces, which still stand the inclement weather in the Andes (Graber, 2011). Its main example is Peru's national icon and perhaps one of the most recognisable historical monuments in the world, the Inca citadel of Machu Picchu.

All this ancient tradition still reflects in the variety of Peruvian agriculture. Peru is known for being the homeland of potatoes³⁸, the Andean tuber which is vastly represented with around 4,500 varieties labelled in the country according to the International Potato Center (CIP, 2012), from any shape and colour (Jaffrey, 2018). Other crops harvested in Ancient Peru included corn, which has emerged as a symbol of American natives and is reflected in their famous *mazamorra* dessert³⁹ (PromPerú, 2019a), or quinoa, a whole idol of the masses currently in Western societies (Little, 2016).

The Incan cookery was a mixture of pre-Incan cultures such as Moche, Chanka or Huancas (Merino Araya, 2018), where their food was a crucial aspect of their religiosity. As such, one can encounter multiple examples of ancient heritage of the indigenous cultures through food costumes that hold a deep spiritual aim and also on the ways of cooking.

One of the other main elements that adjust to the primary use of food is quite a forgotten one, stone. The imperishable of the four elements is engraved (by and because of fire) in the ancient origin of the human being and has evolved with food uses since then. One of the most dated methods of cooking with stones consist in digging a pit in which a fire is lighted and covered with the rocks. The heat of the stones cooks the raw aliments, which could also be covered with large leaves such as fig or cabbage ones. This cooking technique is still being present in some Latin American cultures, such as the Peruvian *pachamanca* or the Chilean one, in which there are two preparations, the "*calapurca*" and the "*curanto*" where stones play a major role (Aguirre, 2003). This later way of cooking remotes itself to 11,525 BP, being counted as one of the most ancient recipes in the world after some archaeological discoveries. It literally means 'stone heated by the

³⁸ Archaeologists at the University of California, Merced, reported evidence of potatoes harvesting in southern Peru dating from 3400 B.C. (Yin, 2016)

³⁹ It is believed to have emerged in pre-Columbian times, when ancient Peruvians cooked "*motalsa*" or "*ishkupcha*," a kind of mazamorra with yellow corn. With the arrival of the Spaniards, cinnamon, quince, cloves and sugar were added. Years later, it was replaced by purple corn and mixed with sweet potato flour and nuts.

sun' in the *mapuche* language, used by the natives of Chiloé island (Stuart, 2011), in the Pacific.

Its practice by the mapuches is related with fertility, as the stones that were primitively used were thought to have a connexion with the divinities and the ancestors, and could be both good and evil, hence the importance of protecting the food with the use of leaves. This was a common practice within Polynesian tribes. The presence of stones is also shared by the Hawaiian cuisine with their *kalua* or *umi*, were they cook with the aid of an underground oven, or the similar New Zealand's Māori method of *hāngi* (Webb, Cardella, & Jeanne, 2018). This example just enlightens the importance of cooking in the evolution of history and how similar procedures raised among diverge cultures with no relationship between them.

ii. Cultural influences in their gastronomy

Migration communities have impacted much on the Peruvian gastronomy, merging their cuisines in three different types: Chifa, Nikkei and Criolla, which entail a culinary tradition by themselves and Peruvian cuisine altogether. According to some authors, there has also been some Italian influence, such as pasta or the opening of *pulperías*⁴⁰ (Merino Araya, 2018).

Criollos or Creoles were the American-born Spaniards social group in the Spanish Indies that ended up leading the independence processes of Hispanic America. Because of the cultural assimilation on Peruvian natives, the Spanish cookery melted with the millenary food traditions of the region. The most relevant dishes alongside this type of food are the icon of Peruvian cuisine, *cebiche*, the *chanfainita*, introduced by African slaves⁴¹, or the renowned *ají de gallina*, the chicken chilli that is believed to have medieval origin⁴² (PromPerú, 2019a). From desserts, *arroz zambito*, a rice pudding of Arabian provenance or the *picarones* derived from the Spanish *buñuelos* but with an Andean taste⁴³. They

⁴⁰ Company stores and dining facilities opened in the mid-1800s in South America equivalent to general stores.

⁴¹ It uses the lung of the cow (bofe), considered as "ignoble parts" for Spaniards because of being viscera of animals.

⁴² The "Manjar Blanco" is considered its precedent, which consisted of a stew based on chicken breast, rice starch, sugar and almonds.

⁴³ The pumpkin and sweet potato were incorporated, as well as a sweet honey based on *chancaca* (panela), giving origin to this incomparable Peruvian dessert.

also introduced Old World species, such as cilantro, mint or oregano (Silva , Almeida, Vaz de Melo, Musolesi, & Loureiro , 2014).

The second largest ethnic Japanese population in South America⁴⁴ has influenced Peru vastly and both of the most recognised cuisines worldwide merged on Nikkei, a new cuisine that appeared in the 1950s (PromPerú, 2019b) that is conquering the European gastronomic capitals (Storey, 2016). According to Misha Tsumura, the main Nikkei chef, it appeared in Lima as Japanese migrants prepared Peruvian (criolla) dishes in a Nippon representation and “they didn't know they were pioneers of a new way of cooking. It was about surviving by doing the best they could. The Japanese flavour was strained in the criolla seasoning” (PromPerú, 2019b).

Nikkei means “away from Japan” and was the name given to Japanese-Peruvians. This new cuisine completely rethought the way of cooking seafood in Peru⁴⁵. According to Mario Céspedes, a Peruvian chef who is taking over the Spanish gastronomic scene, Nikkei portrays fresh meals that is easy to eat (Palomo, 2018). Misha observes Nikkei as “Peruvian cuisine –hard rock– with Japanese influences –classical music–” (Reich, 2018). The main dish is *tiradito*, a combination between Japanese *tataki* and the marinade of ceviche, or *makis*. Because of this new concept, Japanese crops were introduced in Peru alongside pastes, sauces, soy cheeses and pickled products.

Lastly, the *Chifa*⁴⁶ cuisine, whose appearance is due to the presence of Chinese migrants since the 1850s, with around 100,000 Chinese Culis⁴⁷ arriving at Peru (Merino Araya, 2018). As happened later with Nikkei, Chinese opened small restaurants serving Chinese-Peruvian dishes, of whom outlined the *lomo saltado*, the previous ‘*lomo con todo*’ embedded of Cantonese cuisine and cooked in a wok⁴⁸ (PromPerú, 2019a). Other Chifa meals are *arroz chaufa*⁴⁹, fried rice, *Sopa Wantan* or *Tallarín saltado*. This Cantonese

⁴⁴ The first Japanese migrants arrived at the end of the 19th Century. The first is located in Brazil, where a Japanese-Brazilian food has also emerged but without the development of a concept such as Nikkei (Unger, 2016).

⁴⁵ Nikkei revalued fishes such as octopus or eel, which began to be used in Peruvian homes.

⁴⁶ Chifa derives from the Cantonese 鑊飯 “*chi*”, eating, and “*fan*”, rice; meaning “to cook rice or a meal”.

⁴⁷ Coolie was the given name to designate low-skilled shippers and workers from India, China and other Asian countries that forcedly migrate towards America, where they suffer mistreatment. The Lima Chinatown is considered one of the oldest Chinese neighbourhoods in America, after Mexico City and San Francisco’s.

⁴⁸ The Chinese skillet used to sauté food.

⁴⁹ Cantonese-Peruvian style fried rice: white rice, soy sauce, scallions, fried egg, and meat such as chicken or pork

culinary tradition popularised soy sauce, sweet and sour, noodles or rice within the Peruvian gastronomy.

And among this whole mixture of culinary traditions of three different continents and civilisations, the Peruvian national dish joins them all. *Cebiche* was prepared by Pre-Columbine cultures and even has a national celebration in Peru, each June 28th (EFE, 2008). Indigenous Peruvians prepared ceviche with raw seafood, salt and ají, their renowned pepper. The Spaniards contributed with onion, bitter orange or lime to this dish that represents a country in itself. More recently, Japanese cookery has influenced the preparation on macerating it lightly in lemon and also relating the understanding of seafood (PromPerú, 2018b).

As well as the enthronisation of falafel in Israel, despite being also prepared by other neighbouring countries, ceviche has emerged as the national pride of Peruvians, but its historical roots are much deeper. The proposal to Unesco comprises the preparation and consumption of cebiche, with is not only a “*platillo*”, but “an exemplary expression of biological and cultural diversity, generating identity and pride among Peruvians” (PromPerú, 2019c). If cebiche becomes recognised as ICH, Lima will see their convincing bet towards gastrodiploamacy (Matta, 2014) assured as their identity will be, hence, respected as one of humanity’s main achievements. The possibilities for their further promotion, if such succeeds, could be of a great magnitude when being properly managed.

d) Outcomes of Peruvian gastrodiploamacy

Peru has been awarded by tourist-ranking specialist World Travel Awards as “World’s Leading Culinary Destination” continuously since 2012, as well as “World’s Leading Cultural Destination 2018” or “World’s Leading Tourist Attraction” 2018 and 2017 (World Travel Awards , 2018). Peru leads the Latin American gastronomic scope, even overcoming Mexicans. As an instance, it holds the only Cordon Bleu, which is perhaps the world’s most recognised cookery school, in South America (Tegel, 2016). It is for sure that Peru’s cultural diploamacy is proving quite successful as tourism is growing in the Hispanic country, having cuisine as one of the biggest claims for visitors alongside the Andean Tourist Route. The Peruvian Andes are those so-called sanctuaries of traditions and roots that remain distant and mysterious but also disturbing to the gaze of cosmopolitan tourist (Ormeño Aspauzo & Paz Ríos, 2017). Because of it, Peruvian authorities have been judicious enough to benefit from what they already had in order to portray an image towards the exterior.

Culture was deemed as key of sustainable development on the Hangzhou Declaration of Unesco in 2013 (Treserras Juan, 2017) and Peru has embraced this though almost literally. According to Jordi Treserras, director of LAB-PATC⁵⁰, gastronomic tourism or gastro-tourism is an opportunity for diversification and sustainability as it provides the chance to broaden the tourist activity of a country and around the key element for the community, its identity. Gastrodiplomacy reinforces the identity of the nation that develops it to promote itself (Buscemi, 2014) and when tourism is increased because of it one could hardly deny that gastrodiplomacy come to a halt profitable result.

However, these Peruvian initiatives are not analysed as beneficial for all. According to the University of Washington anthropologist María Elena García, the hygiene conditions of Peruvian markets is racialized⁵¹ because of being directed only for the sake of tourism rather than the people depending on it (García, 2014). Prof. García harshly criticises Apega initiatives and Peruvian gastronomic boom in that modern cuisine has changed the vision over traditional meals⁵² and forgets the real social impact it seeks, even though stating it repeatedly. It should not come as a surprise that every promotive initiative of a state would rather seek to hide its fragilities while bolstering their major assets. And cookery has become an effective tool thereof.

According to the author, indigenous are set aside in the reformulation of the *novoandino* cuisine in Peru (García, 2013), as the share is absorbed by acclaimed figures such as Gastón Acurio. Through a colonialism and cosmopolitical approach, Prof. García denounces that, even though gastronomy has unified Peru, Acurio is the standard-bearer of a form of “cultural capitalism”, alongside the rest of Peruvian celebrity chefs. In such way, gastrodiplomacy will result thereof in a sort of culinary capitalism as no indigenous is truly represented in this gastronomic revolution, hence a dark side of the boom is not depicted.

However, the power of food as a social driver shall not be underestimated. Over 80,000 Peruvian youngsters study cuisine because of the influence of Acurio and at least 90% of

⁵⁰ Laboratory of Cultural Heritage and Tourism of the University of Barcelona and IBERTUR, the Iberoamerican Portal of Cultural Management.

⁵¹ According to García, in her meeting with Mariano Valderrama, then President of APEGA marked hygiene as the biggest handicap towards gastrodiplomacy. “Our most representative market, La Parada, is Calcutta”.

⁵² “The development of “alternative” traditional dishes has been an important strategy in this move from “savage” to “sophisticated” cuisine.”

Peruvian exporting brands are related with the gastronomic sector (Rivas, 2012). The balance of a successful gastrodiploamacy shall be placed between cultural preservation and its exportability towards international markets (Nass, Overgaag, & Gomez, 2018), as Peru seems to be achieving. The Peruvian gastronomic boom came together with their chefs and fine-dining restaurants, that were mostly frequented by tourists or Peruvian elites rather than the broader population and some argue that the cookery development has stagnated (Medina, 2018).

Furthermore, there have also been initiatives towards the middle classes, as some launches of the Acurio Restaurants (Risatti, 2018), as well as other social impact initiatives such as the Pachacutec culinary school. In spite of it, the burden of inequality in the country is far from being totally covered, mainly in the Andes and Amazon indigenous communities (Forsyth, 2018) and that needs to be properly offered with a solution.

Either Peruvian gastrodiploamacy becomes sustainable, or it will not be, as the World Gastronomy Institute defends. Food experiences through tourism can foster local development and the diversification of rural economies (Richards, 2012), as Peru will definitely benefit from their gastrodiploamacy. According to Apega, in 2011 around 5,5 million Peruvians benefit from gastronomy, being the sector with the most growth within its GDP, with an estimate worth of 5 billion USD yearly (Tegel, 2016). Peruvian kids now want to become chefs rather than football players.

CASE STUDY 3: SPAIN

3. Spain – a country seeking multilateralism through the use of food-based diplomacy

Spain is one of the nations with perhaps the most recognised gastronomy worldwide. Tortilla, paella, tapas, Rioja or jamón are universally notorious, as well as other Spanish traditions such as bullfight, flamenco or even the siesta. Even though these might be overspread *clichés*, such images help to portray the country overseas and reflect the current facts of the Iberian country. A huge asset to promote Spain abroad gathers among Spanish private actors. One could not forget Spanish artists, universally renowned such as Picasso, Dalí or Miró; and sport figures, such as Rafael Nadal, and the Spanish role as global leader in football, with teams such as Real Madrid or Barcelona.

After a convulse late history, democracy was finally embraced 40 years ago, whereas the historic Spanish Monarchy was also restored. As a result of democratisation, Spain has reached hitherto unknown stages of development and has established as a middle power in Europe and as a relevant actor in the international arena. The country was able to portray a successful history of a social, economic and political project as its major image towards the rest of the world (Molina, 2014).

The role of the private sector into this consolidation of Spain as a developed and modern country has been crucial. Spanish multinationals are present around the globe in almost every sector and promote their interests in multiple ways, thus contributing to the visibility of the country. From the fast retail champions of Inditex, owner of Zara, and Mango, which recently engaged in the main event of the fashion world that is the Met Gala (Colón, 2019); to banks such as BBVA, who emerged as sponsor of the NBA, or Santander, also present in Formula 1. Spaniards also led other areas such as infrastructures or organ donation, and, undeniably, are gastronomic challengers.

a) Governmental gastrodiplomacy

i. Overview of Spanish diplomacy

Spain has followed a soft power approach to public diplomacy since the democratic transition. Modernisation within the country was achieved partly because of the diplomatic efforts that contribute to the change of perception towards the country (Priego Moreno, 2014). International recognition was culminated with the Spanish integration to

NATO in 1981 and the European Union in 1986. 1992 marked a huge spot for the international image of Spain, with the celebration of the Barcelona Olympics (España Global, 2017). The Council of Europe, OSCE, and a further UN implication were continuously engaged by every Spanish government. Spain has been searching since, with greater or lesser success, for the perfect spot among the concert of nations, due to its privileged geopolitical position as a bridge between Europe and Northern Africa, as well as the main partner of Latin America in Europe.

Spanish foreign policy strategies should enhance its advantages and come to the fore as a reliable middle power and mediator. The current situation in Europe, with the trembles of Brexit demolishing further expansion of the European country and also the turbulence faced by the Italian nation, favours an escalating role of Spain as a major actor in Brussels, due to the Europeanism of Spaniards and the initiatives of Moncloa towards international cooperation (Ortega, 2017). Spain advocacy for multilateralism, supporting different regional partnerships such as the EU, the Ibero-American Summits or international cooperation, was cleared by Spanish premier, Pedro Sánchez during the political campaign of last April (Sánchez, 2019).

Spain's credibility and international prestige, preserved since the 1970s was highly undermined because of the severe economic crisis the country was immersed in 2008, being one of the most affected countries in the Eurozone, which was at the brink of collapse (Molina, 2014). Cooperation and foreign aid, that once marked Spanish foreign policy, were seriously rewound and so was the role of Spain in the world, as a result of the lack of external action of both the government and public authorities (Sotillo, 2014). Spain's political system shifted from a majority party to polarization, as a reflection of the social and identity crisis that rumbled within the Spanish society. The crisis marked Spain's retreat into itself because of the magnitude of its problematics. As a result of this, isolation has marked the Spanish foreign policy since, but the international and, most importantly, European uncertainty urges to a comeback of Madrid to the global scope (Torreblanca, 2015).

Cultural diplomacy, that *prima ratio regum*⁵³, has been also intertwined with Spain's emerging role within the international scenario as a tool for peace (Martínez, 2015). As

⁵³ It is said that French artillery during the reign of Louis XIV were engraved with the words "*ultima ratio regum*", referring to canyons as the last resource of Kings.

historically within European countries, this form of diplomacy has been engaged by Spanish cultural institutions (Lamo de Espinosa & Badillo Matos, 2017). In this particular form of seducing other countries, Madrid counted on the Spanish language as a core driver, a task that is mainly interpreted by the Cervantes Institute (Prieto-Gutiérrez & Rubio Núñez, 2018), equivalent to the British Council, the Institut Français or the Goethe-Institut. Other cultural institutios with linguistic implications are the Royal Academy of the Language (RAE), Fundéu BBVA or even the Carolina Foundation. The Cervantes unify all Spanish-speaking countries, while promoting the language abroad. These linguistic efforts are viewed by some as neocolonialistic approaches towards public diplomacy (Parera, 2014).

According to the first Spanish grammar, written by humanist Antonio de Nebrija in 1492 to Queen Isabella of Castille (coinciding with Columbus arrival to America), “language was always a companion of the empire and to such a degree it accompanied it, that together they were born, grew up and flourished, and their demise came together later on as well” (Badillo, 2016). Such is also the intention behind the RAE, guarantor of Spanish, which is normally criticised for accepting English words due to the habitual use of anglicism among society (Bastenier, 2016).

The image of the country is historically portrayed from literature, such as the romanticist of the 18th and 19th Century that depicted a negative optic of Spain as a backward country (Prieto Gutiérrez, 2013). Spanish hegemony among European powers from the middle 1400s to the 1600s has resulted in a heavy slab on the international perspective over its history, reflected in the so-called Black Legend (Francescutti, 2014). This unfavourable representation was mainly produced by the anti-Spanish sentiments of the English and the Dutch (Maltby, 1971), and was also retaken by U.S. magnates such as Hearst. , which still echoes in the current time (Baz S., 2005), with icons such as the Spanish Inquisition or the slavery of native Americans (even though Queen Isabella and later his grandson, Charles V, prohibited it). The Black Legend has deformed history, and hence shaped the way in which many, including a large proportion of Spaniards, deem the legacy of the Spanish Empire (Slater & López-Terrada, 2017).

ii. **Spain´s actual position as a soft power**

In order to better addressed this part, I shall estimate the use of different country rankings. According to the Soft Power 30 2018, Spain was placed as 14th nation as soft power. The

Index accounts six criteria: enterprise, culture, government, engagement, digital and education; and it highlighted one of the best Spanish promoters: football. Playing in one of the best leagues of the world, the main Spanish teams Real Madrid and Barcelona are present in the collective imaginary of the planet. Both clubs are in the end huge companies that amass a billionaire fortune, with an estimate of almost 1,500 million euros of benefit in 2018⁵⁴ (Fernández, 2019). Spain also acclaimed the attraction of “tapas, rioja and bullfighting” that made it the third most visited nation, and its impressive diplomatic network. Because of it, the country rates as 7th in their Engagement sub-index (The Soft Power 30 , 2018). This sub-index regards the global footprint and contribution to the international community of the country, and it shall be pointed out because in here gastronomy is definitively placed.

The main Spanish think tank, the Elcano Royal Institute, publishes annually its Index of Global Presence, stating the countries with greater external projection. In the 2018 edition, launched on May 2019, Spain ranked 12th. This index differs between three different aspects: the economic, in which Spain topped as 10th, the soft presence, in which Spaniards were also 10th and the military, where a 15th position was achieved (Real Instituto Elcano, 2019).

We shall also account the Country Rep Trak 2018 of Spain, which studies the perception of Spain in 28 different countries including G8 nations, carried out by the Reputation Institute. Spain was topped as the 14th most estimated country among G8 nationals, 7th among Latin Americans and 12th within the own Spanish society. The highest relative position for Spaniards, again as 7th, was achieved in the Leisure & Entertainment sphere, which includes culture, gastronomy or sport (Reputation Institute, 2018). Again, gastronomy is depicted as one of the main features of Spain. As reported by the 2017 Nation Brand Index of Brand Finance, Spain holds the 12th position among the 20 most valuable nation brands, the 3rd between the 10 best performing ones as the greatest growing PIGS nation because of Brexit (Haigh, 2017).

The huge hindrance for a Spain’s stronger soft power is political instability. Political struggles in Spain cope the public debate, generally jeopardising cultural initiatives because of the lack of benefit coming from long-term strategies (Rubio, 2015). One of

⁵⁴ FC Barcelona achieved 690 million while Real Madrid earned 750, which set the record of a football team income. Just to compare it, insular countries such as Dominica, Tonga or São Tomé and Príncipe amount a lower GDP.

the main necessary steps, currently repeated by scholars, is the revision of the public diplomacy model and to converge international and domestic cultural strategies into it (Ortega, 2017), by which language is often seen as a core pillar (Badillo, 2016). Catalonia is often deemed as the biggest political concern in Spain⁵⁵, hence affecting its international image.

As an instance, this last January the Spanish Ministers of Culture and Foreign Relations decided to reactivate the Foreign Cultural Action Plan (PACE), which was frozen during the previous cabinet, led by Mariano Rajoy (González, 2019). Because of its implications, as I have analysed at the beginning of this work, food could be an extraordinary tool to introduce in the Spanish cultural strategy because of its inherent appeal to the essence of identities and because of being a Spanish trademark (Manzano, 2013). Gastrodiplomacy could ideally be placed with a clear plan to be followed that would necessarily require no political disagreement over its structuration, even though that might not be Spanish for identity.

iii. Culinary diplomacy initiatives: the importance of public-private strategies

As opposed to its European counterparts, Spain has historically been a country with a lack in developing a coordinated cultural action abroad to improve its foreign image, with scarce and fragmented examples of Spanish cultural action that were normally outmoded (Lamo de Espinosa & Badillo Matos, 2017). It has been a repeated mantra that Spain has a grave concern regarding its promotion and image (Noya, 2002), even considering that more efforts should be placed with the inner soft power of Spanish as a language by not only Spain, but all Hispanic nations (Bastelier, 2016).

Marca España (ME), launched in 2013, was the first global plan of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that aimed the promotion of Spanish companies in the exterior. It embraced a clear path of nation branding that include almost all sectors of Spanish economy, highlighting the assets in which Spaniards are deemed global references (Aguirrezabal, 2015). This project continued the initiative led by the Forum of Renowned Spanish Trademarks (FMRE) a public-private partnership of more than 100 Spanish

⁵⁵ Teresa de Lemus, Managing Director of Brand Finance Spain, stated: "The events in Catalonia have a direct impact on Spain's risk premium, which will increase if the region's independence materialises. Future brand values of Spain and Catalonia combined could be significantly lower than the current brand value of Spain."0

internationalised companies with leading brands in specific sectors⁵⁶, and authorities such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Tourism, the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade (ICEX), and the Chamber of Commerce. FMRE believes in internationalisation, country image and business competitiveness for Spanish brands.

FMRE promoted the biannual recognition of “Honorary Ambassadors of Marca España” since 2005. Its categories include company administration, culture and communication, sports, tourism and gastronomy, institutional relations, solidarity and science and innovation and has been awarded to almost every Spanish leading public figure, from the famous actor Antonio Banderas, Rafael Nadal or Spanish top businessman, Amancio Ortega. Within the gastronomic sector, it includes chefs such as Ferrán Adrià or the Roca brothers that promoted Spanish products abroad (EFE, 2013). The other chef holding this title is the globally acclaimed José Andrés (EFE Economía , 2013).

However, in some countries the image of the Spanish brands abroad was negative, mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries⁵⁷. To shift such change could only be achieved through gaining credibility (Pellicer, 2013). Part of the media argue that Marca España is a failed initiative because of being too pretentious and against both impact and credibility, basis of the very essence of branding (Parralejo Agudo, 2013). The rush in its implementation was analysed as a further obstacle to promote Spain, as well as the used denomination and the lack of communicational skills. According to the critics, some of the main impediments to its success were a devastating (and exaggerated) New York Times editorial on the Spanish crisis (Daley, 2012), which depicted Spaniards as stuck in poverty or the sanctions on football teams over illicit public aids (Iríbar, 2013).

Despite embracing a wider scope and the threat of failure since its inception, ME included gastronomy as one of Spain’s branding cores⁵⁸. Another stumbling block of internal politics emerged when regional branding was opposed to the national project and the

⁵⁶ The average of internationalisation is marked on being a recognisable and prestigious brand abroad that is identified as Spanish, with a presence in almost 71 countries and more than half of their commerce abroad. Within the food and beverages, and the services sector, the FMRE accounts more than 21%.

⁵⁷ Southern European nations struggling the most from the Eurozone crisis (Spain, Portugal, Greece, Italy) were defined by the English financial media as the “PIGS” or “GIPSI”.

⁵⁸ In its official launch at the European Parliament, chefs such as Mario Sandoval or Darío Barrio were present as representatives of Spanish gastronomy (González M. , 2013).

Spanish Commissioner of ME directly attacked Catalan public branding⁵⁹ and observed regional nationalism as its main obstacle (Cordero, 2014).

Spain Recoils as Its Hungry Forage Trash Bins for a Next Meal

By SUZANNE DALEY SEPT. 24, 2012



In Spain, the unemployment rate is over 50 percent among young people. Samuel Aranda for The New York Times

The NYT article was illustrated with a young man looking inside a garbage can. The article was released during the UN General Assembly, in which Mariano Rajoy made no allusion to the economic crisis.

Some of the actual promotion of gastronomy included the campaign “*Spain Everywhere, España en todo el mundo*” produced by the Spanish national television, interviews in foreign media (Marca España , 2017), or the promotion of Spanish gastronomy guides, such as the Culinary Tour of Spain of the British Monocle magazine (Marca España, 2015). According to a 2012 research of the Elcano Royal Institute on nation branding, these initiatives are usual on developing countries and some countries such as Germany have failed in this initiatives due to institutional resources already shifting the country’s image (Noya & Prado, 2012).

For both Noya and Prado, a strategy of public diplomacy or a combination of both concepts, in where gastrodiplomacy would be placed, could have more benefits for a middle power such as Spain, whether there is coherence in the achievement of objectives and the strategies take benefit from the given opportunities. Marca España has evolved to “España Global” since the motion of censure won by Pedro Sánchez and now promotes “democratic values” (Marcos, 2018).

One of the strongest initiatives on public culinary diplomacy has been “Food and Wines from Spain”, a comprehensive plan for the promotion of these foods that is backed with

⁵⁹ Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros, High Commissioner of Marca España, declared that the Catalan and Spanish flags were often confused and that these regional initiatives “don’t attack the one with the umbrella”. The declarations came in 2014, during the escalation on the Catalan claims over Madrid.

European funds. Promoted by ICEX, it is aimed at professionals of the food and beverage sector and as a clear driver of trade. It is currently organised within a webpage portal that includes from a news section, to also a “Doing business” tab, where export companies or trade regulations are depicted, as well as Spanish products, recipes, training videos for cooking techniques or even chef profiles. ICEX launched a platform in Amazon (Spain, Germany and U.K.) with more than 170 Spanish gastronomic brands, enabling the purchase of over 1,500 products, from olive oil to Iberian cold meats, condiments or food preserves (EFE, 2017). Such project observes the incorporation of a traditional sector to one of the digital Big Four.

The Spanish Trade Commission embraced gastrodiplomacy long ago holding events, despite the term was not yet coined for a reality that already existed. One of its main events is the yearly celebration of the “Spain’s Great Match” a proposal to popularise Spanish wines in Northern America (Marca España , 2014). Accounting its 26th edition, it includes workshops, seminars and regional campaigns, all centred among the Spanish grape elixir (Advisor , 2018). As for the 2019 edition, the chosen cities were Austin, New York and Miami. It is a strategy that could be adapted as well for other countries.

b) The role of non-state actors

i. Spanish chefs

José Andrés might be the Spanish equivalent for Gastón Acurio, because of building a true cooking empire with more than 30 restaurants with his Think Food Group and his global recognition, which makes him the leading figure of the Spanish cookery globally, or at least of its promotion. Formed on the stoves of the Spanish chef’s mastermind, Ferrán Adriá, his arrival on the American food scene lead to the international prominence of the Spanish tapa and the introduction of the Spanish gastronomy on the U.S. (Lagasse, 2018). Andrés holds notorious acknowledgements: being the only Spaniard among the Time’s “100 Most Influential People” both in 2012 and 2018, “Outstanding Chef” and “Humanitarian of the Year” by the James Beard Foundation, the only chef holding a two-star Michelin restaurant and four Bib Gourmands, GQ’s “Chef of the Year” in 2009, or the recent Global Citizen award of The Clinton Foundation (Arenós, 2019), amidst other multiple recognition.

Despite being a well-known figure, within the Spanish society Andrés does not share the same levels of popularity of other Spanish chefs, because of being based in the U.S.

Nonetheless, José Andrés is not apparently damaged by the “no one is a Prophet in their own land”, for he has become a global culinary icon and standard-bearer of the Spanish cookery. In Spain he has been as well awarded with numerous honours, from being one of Marca España’s first ambassador to receive the Order of Arts and Letters of Spain in 2010 (LNE, 2010) or the recent “Chef of the Year 2018” award, given in February by Tapas Magazine, a Spanish foodie periodical (E.E., 2019). Andrés proudly represents the duality as Spaniard and American, enrooting his country of origin in the land of freedom.

However, the actual thrives of Spanish gastronomy came from the inner parts of the country. Or, more precisely, from two of its Northern regions: Catalonia and the Basque Country, lands of the avant-garde cuisine. And at the vanguard of culinary innovations, Spain’s main chef is placed: Ferrán Adrià. With his brother Albert, their creative and cooking high-tech, using non-traditional methods inspired on the Mediterranean style (elBullifoundation, 2014) supposed the revolution of cooks. Their advances are currently regarded as molecular cooking, replaced the *Nouvelle Cuisine* of the French, home of haute cuisine, as the leading cook trend in the kitchen scenario (Puyuelo Arilla, Montañés Biñana, Garmendia Otegui, & Sanagustín Fons, 2017).

El Bulli, the world-famous restaurant of the Adrià brothers in Girona, has become a global icon in cookery, marking a turning point in the history of gastronomy (Capdevila, Cohendet, & Simon, 2018). Roses suddenly became the gastro-capital of Spain, in one of the best examples of how food can place a nation in the global scope (Abend, 2017). As a result of being a global reference, a huge majority of the current top chefs (including Acurio or Andrés) were trained in these Catalan stoves. It reshaped the whole philosophy behind food⁶⁰ (Mantilla, 2016) and has, thus, influenced the further generation of chefs. Closed in July 2011, elBulli is a recurrent case study among business schools where Adrià exposed in it his particular theory of cooking, maintaining the interconnection between food and intellect (Urrea, 2003). It currently is a space of research and creativity composed by biochemists, anthropologist, engineers or chefs with the support of the Telefónica Foundation, continuing the experimental path of the restaurant. Adrià was the first chef focused on i+D, destinating 20% of elBulli incomes towards creativity, and the restaurant also served as consultor to the food and hostelry industry (elBullifoundation, 2014).

⁶⁰ The New York Times critic Arthur Lubow referred to elBulli as “a gastronme’s once-before-you-die mecca” and enunciated the culmination of the nouvelle cuisine hegemony by the avant-garde Catalan cuisine.

The Roca brothers, Josep, Joan and Jordi, gained position as their familiar restaurant, *Celler de Can Roca* (also in Girona) succeeded elBulli as the best one in the world (Jolonch, 2012). Catalan as the Adrià, Josep is among the best world sommeliers as Jordi between pastry chefs, and Joan (trained with Adrià) has gained twice the Best Chef Award in 2017 and 2018 (Romero, 2018). As with its neighbouring precedent, the waiting table lists are immense, such is the desire of worldwide gastronomes to taste Roca's.

The *New Basque Cuisine* was also an important milestone on Spain's leadership on gastronomy, led by chefs Juan Mari Arzak and Pedro Subijana around 1976, coinciding with the end of the Spanish dictatorship. This tendency embraced the return to traditions, reintegrating forgotten dishes and highlighting the respect for the product as characteristic of their tendency, which was helped by the French chef Paul Bocuse, initiator of the *Nouvelle Cuisine*. Formed on familiar Basque taverns, Arzak became the first Spanish chef with the three Michelin stars and is revered as the spiritual father of the Spanish haute cuisine (Hermoso, 2010). Half of the Spanish restaurants with such distinction, *Arzak*, *Martín Berasategui*, *Akelarre* and *Azurmendi*, are within the region⁶¹ (Rodríguez, 2014). Subijana's *Akelarre*, a symbol of Donostia, honours Basque tradition and seeks for the best local product. As the chef states, "throughout the meal, we take care of every last detail to ensure that the occasion is a memorable one" (FWS, 2015).

Seasonal cooking sets the Basque cuisine and concerns many other top chefs. Unity has marked the movement's success⁶². Among the Basque stand Spain's most popular chefs, such as TV celebrity Karlos Arguiñano or Martín Berasategui. A cook since childhood, Berasategui accounts seven Michelin stars and a story of effort and discipline (Rodríguez, 2019). Other main chefs of the region include the updated tradition of Eneko Atxa in *Azurmendi*, or Andoni Luis Aduriz, cook of the trompe l'oeil in *Mugaritz*. All of them, as deputies of this trend, advocate for sustainable cooking and closeness to producers, mostly local farmers such as Navarre King of Vegetables Floren Domezain⁶³ (Capel, 2015).

⁶¹ There are 5 Basque restaurants among the 50 Best Restaurants, matching the French. Furthermore, San Sebastián and its surroundings are the area with a higher rate of Michelin stars, accounting a total of 16.

⁶² As stated by Arzak: "us, Basque cooks, have joined the same team and happily from Japan to the U.S., leaving all brawls at home". Even though they have argued, Josemari continues by saying that "if a client goes to Martín and has no table, he sends it to me. And if I neither have, I send it to Subijana, and so on".

⁶³ Floren has been provider of Arzak, Subijana or Bersategui. He has a commemorative plaque in the kitchen of Arzak, explaining that without his recovery of forgotten crops, such as the pink tomato or the

From both Catalan and Basque kitchens have emerged almost every recognised Spanish chef. The count of young, talented cooks is almost infinite: Dabid Muñoz and his rouge touch, Valencian Quique Dacosta, Mario Sandoval, Diego Guerrero, the sea-chef Ángel León, Paco Roncero, Pepe Rodríguez... Among the 2018 50 Best Chef Awards, 17 were from Spain (Romero, 2018). Therefore, all of them could be effectively employed to represent Spanish cookery abroad, as today leaders of its inner development. In such a way, Mario Sandoval and his 2-Michelin-starred Coque will be awarded the Global Ambassador of Gastronomy Award 2019 at New York, alongside other winners such as Leonardo DiCaprio or Carlos Baute (FWS, 2019). This exposure towards the international sphere helps to reaffirm the capabilities derived from these culinary figures.

Female chefs are also emerging within Spain, despite kitchens have traditionally been a men's world. But prestigious women cooks shared also to elevate the country into the gastronomic altar, such as Carme Ruscalleda, the sensible chef⁶⁴ and the woman with most Michelin stars, 5, because of her restaurants in Barcelona and Tokyo (Sueiro, 2011). Elena Arzak, following her father's witness at the familiar restaurant has been recognised as Best Female Chef in the World (Rivas R. , 2012) and leads the future generation of cooks. Other women chef are Begoña Rodrigo, known from her participation on TV's TopChef (Saiz, 2018), Eva Arguiñano, Susi Díaz or María Marte, a Dominican whose story is an inspiration for many of us⁶⁵ (Ruiz Mantilla, 2015).

A traditional sector in which women have lead the gastronomic scene has been catering, with pioneers such as Isabel Maestre or Rocío Gandarias, to the famous Samantha Vallejo-Nájera or the upcoming Cristina Oria (Portinari, 2018). Also, Clara María González de Amezúa, the creator of *Alambique*, the main Spanish cooking school and cookware establishment that contributed to the evolution of the country's culinary. Furthermore, I shall point out that without the culinary tradition of mothers, none of the current Spanish chefs would now enjoy their international recognition as their knowhow would have been totally different.

tear pea, the Basque Cuisine would not have evolved in such a way. I am personally close to him and I wanted to pay tribute in this work to a figure that has contributed by large to the reconfiguration of Spanish gastronomy and represents the example of sustainability.

⁶⁴ As Carme states, her successful career has been followed "*poc a poc*", little by little, step by step.

⁶⁵ Marte became chef of Club Allard, a 2 Michelin star restaurant in Madrid, after migrating from Dominican Republic and being the dishwasher of the restaurant

Due to the successful TV emissions of culinary programmes such as *Masterchef* or *Top Chef*, gastronomy holds a prominent position among the social practices in Spain, represented in the famous phrase of Disney's *Ratatouille*, "everyone can cook". Chefs are estimated as celebrities and cooking is most fashionable and gastronomes have come to the fore, in what has helped the fostering of a culinary boom as the one faced before the economic crisis (Singer, 2018). Madrid experiences constant restaurant openings and investors have turned the eye into the sector, because of the success of many gastronomic group such as the luxurious *El Paraguas*, the fashionable *Larrumba*, or the Cantabrian Cañadío (de Luna, 2018). These three cases could be studied and applied as models of success for any further gastrodiplomacy initiative.

However, it shall be noted that the Spanish perception towards the trend followed by renowned chefs has not always been that favourable. Huge criticism has always surrounded some long shot on culinary innovation, especially regarding the redefinition of Spanish food icons. Such was the controversial "*tortilla deconstruida*" of Adrià (Álvarez, 2009), whose fame precedes it but not many have tried it. Molecular cuisine has also been described as unnecessary cooking techniques that in the end result in complicated forms being marvellously executed but without a fresh taste (Warwicker, 2014). Another controversy emerged from the interns of haute cuisine restaurants, the *stagiers*, a non-regulated figure that exposed the hardship of the stoves with marathon workdays and no economic remuneration (Casteleiro García, 2017). Michelin chefs defend this system as a beneficial synergy of unpaid training for cooking apprentices (Brunat, 2017a) and it is held as one of the grounds of the sustainability of elite restaurants⁶⁶, due to their high costs of maintenance (Brunat, 2017b).

As a conclusion, it is no coincidence that Spanish restaurants top the international rankings, with 3 out of the top 10 best restaurants and being the most represented country at the World's 50 Best Restaurants, the annual awards that are credited the Oscars of gastronomy. During its existence, *elBulli* ranked as 1st in 2002 and from 2006 until 2010, whereas its Spanish successor *El Celler de Can Roca*, topped the list in both 2013 and 2015 (León, 2018).

⁶⁶ *Stagiers* work over 16 hours a day in Michelin starred kitchens, in what is considered as a "privilege", and account from 50 to even 80% of their restaurant's staff. It is said that some are crammed into flats finance by their boss, elite chefs. Its regulation could help to end with this issue that foreshadows the Spanish gastronomic boom (Fernández Guadaño, *Sobre los Becarios de la Alta Cocina*, 2017).

ii. Other non-state actors

One of the main implicated on the gastronomic field in Spain is the Spanish Royal Academy of Gastronomy (RAG), a non-profit cultural association whose aim is to research and divulge Spanish gastronomy both in Spain and abroad. RAG aligned with Marca España creating the Gastro Marca España, an initiative embossed by Joan Roca and under the patronage of Spain's main companies such as Banco Santander, Repsol or Telefónica that collaborates with academic institutions, Iberdrola or El Corte Inglés, Spain's largest department store (Marca España, 2015). Rafael Ansón, President of RAG, is one of the most respected gastronomists in the globe and his efforts towards the promotion of Spanish gastronomy have been marked also with the celebration of the National Gastronomy Awards, received in 2018 by Albert Adrià or Rafael Sandoval, brothers and colleagues of starred chefs Ferrán and Mario, respectively (Canal Cocina, 2018). Other initiative has been the Google Arts & Culture digital exhibition "España: cocina abierta", also participated by ICEX. With 55 thematic exhibits on flavours, people and encounters among art and culture, it pioneers as being as the first Google project in this area (Poncini, 2019).

FIAB, the Spanish food and beverages industry federation, is the organ of the first industrial sector of the country as the food industry accounts more than 100,000 million euros on production and 3% of Spain's GDP⁶⁷ (FIAB, 2018). Alongside the Ministry of Agriculture, it that faces the international competitiveness and sustainability of Spanish companies on the area (Tomasi, 2018). Other main character in the promotion Spanish gastronomy are the Spanish media, highlighting different cooking channels and programmes such as the successful Masterchef, Canal Cocina or traditional recipe broadcasts, alongside traditional newspapers such as EFE, El País, ABC la Vanguardia or El Mundo with digital media and blogs, such as El País' Comidista (Tía Alía, 2015).

The apparent absence of the Spanish academic world on gastronomy was partially catered with the creation in 2009 of the Basque Culinary Center, dependent of the Mondragón University, one of the most innovative colleges in Spain. The Basque is placed in its main gastronomic spot, the starred Donostia and is appraised as the most avant-garde school of gastronomy. Divided in the Faculty of Gastronomic Studies, where gastronomy is studied as a degree alongside the most prestigious cooking masters, its research centre serves as a gastro-hub and is developing the first gastronomic technological centre, aimed at health,

⁶⁷ Spain is the 5th EU exporter on the sector and 9th globally.

quality and gastronomic sustainability (Ormazabal, 2018). The Basque Culinary is the perfect legacy for the main chefs behind its inception: Arzak, Berasategui, Subijana, Argiñano, Aduriz and Atxa (Olaizola, 2010). The main international cooks are also part of the project from Acurio, to Massimo Bottura, including Redzepi or Acurio, who will envy the further training of Spain's future top chefs.

iii. **Initiatives**

Because of the wide presence of chefs, the efforts towards the promotion of gastronomy have been incomparable. One of its best ramifications is Madrid Fusión, the main summit of gastronomy in the globe. Yearly celebrated since 2003 it was founded by the main Spanish gastronomy figures, including leading chefs and critics such as renowned critic José Carlos Capel (León, 2018). The event has become the gastronomic tendencies oracle, in where the gurus of culinary innovation gather among their main place of training, Spain (Tiu, 2014). It fosters a feedback synergy among the world's top chefs, such as the French Paul Bocuse and Joël Robuchon or Danish Rene Redzepi (owner of the best restaurant in the world, Noma, in Copenhagen), who share their innovation based on recipes and techniques, as well as the application of high-tech to the stoves (Von Bremzen, 2015).

The precedent of Madrid Fusión was the "*Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía*" Congress alongside Spain, where Adrià became a major actor due to its innovative techniques and leading role within the Spanish panorama (Abend, 2012) The impact of gastronomy in Spain is generally only placed in tourism, but not in exports and trade (Fernández Guadaño, 2019), despite both concepts should be linked as ICEX foresees. Each Madrid Fusión addresses different conferences and showcooking of the chef elite and has an invited country. There is even a replica of the congress abroad, such as in the Philippines, where the Madrid Fusión Manila is annually convened, highlighting Spanish and Filipino food and sustainable aims for gastronomy (Dublin, 2017)

Conventions and fairs have also brought the attention of the gastronomic extent, as could be deemed through different events, such as the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism (IGCAT), which addressed gastrodiploamacy in their 2015 international meeting in Barcelona. Or Expofooding, a summit of food and international relations held in Madrid and organised by the World Gastronomy Institute and the UNESCO Chair on Food, Culture and Development (UOC), with the support of the

UNWTO (La Razón , 2016). It has two main areas: the Symposium, with a marled academic tendency, and the Gourmet Forum, of an informative nature.

Euro-toques, an international organization of chefs and cooks, is an initiative led by Pedro Subijana, recognised by the EU as an advocacy for Quality Food that deems that cooking, as an art, shall adapt to the evolution of times while preserving regional traditions (Subijana, 2012). Tasting Spain was another plan to represent the rich and varied Spanish culture within their food products and wines, as a product club towards food tourism (Cantalapiedra Álvarez, 2012).

One of the most ambitious initiatives to promote Spanish gastronomy is carried out by both José Andrés and the Adrià brothers: “Mercado Little Spain”, a food hall playing homage to Spanish cookery in the middle of Manhattan’s new neighbourhood, Hudson Yards⁶⁸ (Arenós, 2019). Opened last March, it follows following Spanish traditional recipes in each of their spaces, such as *tortilla*, *callos*, *churros*, *empanada*, *cocas* or *paella* (Lyon, 2019). Andrés passionately defends this popular dishes to redefine Spanish culinary, such as the main course of Madrid, *cocido*, for what the chef has finally disembarked in his country of origin⁶⁹ (Álvarez, 2019). It seeks to operate as the point of reference of Spanish cookery worldwide, in where the A Team of Spanish chefs revendicates the essence of Spanish cookery, with 3 restaurants and 15 food kiosks and the estimate cost of 40 million dollars (Fernández Guadaño, 2019). The aim of “Mercado” is to be also exported to other different nations. Some compare it with the successful “Eataly”, now worth 400 million euros (Ellwood, 2016).

José Andrés has also deployed an exemplary work towards social initiatives such as culinary schools in developing countries or to deliver relief to natural disasters like the devastating earthquake of Haiti or the recent hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico (Kanani, 2013). To channel this philanthropic effort, Andrés created an NGO, World Central Kitchen, with more 2,300 workers (among whom Chapple-Sokol is also included), to improve the conditions of kitchens and accomplish “smart solutions to hunger and

⁶⁸ The area is considered the largest urban planning project in the history of New York, attracting the attention of the Big Apple. However, some have criticized Hudson Yards as yet another megaproject in the name of gentrification (Caramica, 2019).

⁶⁹ 2019 is being the age of expansion for José Andrés. Alongside Little Spain, the chef has also started to operate another huge *Jaleo* restaurant in Disney World Orlando, and 9 different restaurants in Madrid. In addition to it, Andrés runs

poverty”, aiming to eradicate coal stoves⁷⁰. Their data is astonishing. In the disaster of Puerto Rico, they deliver 3.6 million of meals (Lagasse, 2018), and 250,000 in Mozambique. They even served 2,000 dishes to federal workers in Washington D.C. during the American shutdown this past January (Clifford, 2019). As Andrés recently stated, the planet could forget from starvation as there is enough wealth to feed all humans, “food is powerful, as it touches everything. It creates jobs, it builds the image of a people, it is health” (Arenós, 2019). He is even the first chef candidate to the Nobel Peace Prize because of not only satiating hunger, but also feeding future with hope.

Other cook social initiatives are not of the extend of Andrés’ NGO but respond to philanthropy as well. Jordi Roca, sponsored by BBVA, presented “The sense of cocoa”, a project to raise awareness over taste disorders (BBVA, 2019). Or the more humanitarian case of María Marte, who left her 2-Michelin star kitchens to instruct a hotel training program for impoverished women in Dominican Republic (Ayuso, 2018).

c) The gastronomic legacy of Spain

The Spanish culinary culture raises today as the result of all interactions within the country. As stated by Joan Roca, its consideration as one of the best gastronomies is due to the combination of exceptional products, creative talent and also the support of Marca España or the RAG (Roca, 2015). Spanish cookery was intertwined with the own identity of its chefs, who were able to express themselves in their dishes, while advancing on the use of new flavours and privileging restaurants as vanguards of culture (Abend, 2017). According to Capel, the key for Spain’s food culture has been to manage both tradition and evolution to end in such revolution.

i. Spanish aliments: history of food in Iberia

Spain contributed to the gastronomic sphere with the use of new ingredients that are now spread across Europe. Tomato, potatoes, corn, beans, coffee or chocolate were introduced in the old continent by the Spaniards at the beginning of the 16th Century, when the Spanish Empire was the global hegemon (Puyuelo Arilla, Montañés Biñana, Garmendia Otegui, & Sanagustín Fons, 2017). The region’s history is the result of a variety of civilisations: the Iberians and Carthaginians, then the Greek and the Roman dominion of the Peninsula. Alans, Vandals and Visigoths marked the entrance of the Middle Ages,

⁷⁰ According to their website, they seek to improve health, increase education rates, provide career skills and create food businesses through kitchens. <https://www.worldcentralkitchen.org/>

and a gastronomy based on cereals and grapes. As such, these cultures set the bases in which the Mediterranean diet is based, such as bread, olive oil or wine.

But the greatest impact on the food culture, excluding America, came alongside the Muslim control from 711 until 1492. Al-Ándalus (the Arabic name given to the Spanish Muslim realm) remained as one of the most advanced European lands thanks to the Islamic knowledge, that bequeathed medical, mathematical, architectural and academical innovations, among many others⁷¹. The Spanish language observes a mixture between Latin and Arabic etymologies, which defines its richness. Agriculture was also impacted by the Islamic progress, pioneering in dams and hydropower, with the harvest of new crops such as asparagus, rice, cotton or artichokes (Abad Alegría, 2001).

Influencing its cuisine as well, the Islamic cookery did not only meant the introduction of common species such as aubergine or even rice, as well as the popularity of citrus fruits (Rego, 2001), but also the normalised consume of fish or the use of new cooking techniques, such as marinate. Muslim cuisine echoes in the current Spanish cookery with the use of nuts or spices such as cinnamon, basis of the popular and Arabic-echoed *arroz con leche* dessert (Sanz, 2014) or saffron, which is vital for any paella that prides itself as Spanish. Even the current sugar was crystallised due to Islamic technological innovations.

Tettner counts the prevalence of pork in Spanish cuisine as a sign of gastro-nationalism after the *Reconquista*, due to the victory of the Catholic Monarchs over the Moors and also the subsequent expulsion of the Sephardic Jews (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2016). The acknowledgement of the Mediterranean diet as an intangible cultural asset contributes to the popular awareness on these gastronomic realities as important references around the globe (Matta, 2012).

Nonetheless, it is interesting to see how Spain create its own identity through cookery, separated from the rest of European nations, the Arabic cultures and Latin American ones, but combining all in a fusion that has created a food icon. Regarding the previous case studies, I would argue that Spanish gastronomy has combined the identification of a country through a dish. In that, Spaniards have followed the example of what the Israeli heavily aimed to, outlining their cuisine among their peers. However, the Spanish

⁷¹ The *madrasa* as precedent of European universities, the use of Arabic numbers and the “0”, astronomic observatories, chess or backgammon, Spanish beautiful milestones such as the Alhambra de Granada... even distillery! The legacy is almost infinite.

culinary has yet a diversity more similar to the Peruvian cookery, because of the rich legacy that contributes to its vast wide of recipes due to all the different subsystems of the regions' cuisines. Each of them is proudly represented by their food champions: Galician fisheries and empanadas, Asturian cheese, Cantabrian anchovies, Rioja wines, Navarrese asparagus, Balearic *sobrasada*, Catalan *pan amb tomaquet*, Castile and *lechazo*, the Basque *pintxos*, Andalusian gazpacho, Valencia and paella, Canary mojo and the crown's treasure: Extremadura and Iberian cured ham. *Jamón* is the one delicacy that all Spaniards agree in estimating as the main gastronomic landmark of their country.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND PROPOSALS

ii. Gastrodiplomacy for the future

Because of the huge development of Spanish cookery, there are plenty different example of initiatives or actions that could entail gastrodiplomacy purposes as the ones I have previously examined. Despite of it, these would perhaps be better framed onto the culinary diplomacy of Chapple-Sokol (José Andrés' mentee), because of the absence of a clear state initiative to achieve nation-branding through gastronomy. Therefore, I believe that the path initiated with Marca España has been paralysed while properly attained by ICEX, which is an institution dependant on the Ministry of Economy rather than on the cabinet of Foreign Affairs. And yet, these initiatives have not accomplished the path they were aimed for. Hence, a determined gastronomy plan shall be placed in Spain's foreign policy that promotes a traceable Spanish kitchen, as José Andrés defends (Bareño, 2019). Gastrodiplomacy must become a reality of Spain's foreign policy.

a. Food as an asset to enhance tourism

Gastrodiplomacy can be an effective tool for tourism, as well as for the promotion of the country abroad, as I have developed in this work. And for Spain, tourism is vital. The tourist sector represents a huge portion of Spain's economy, englobing the 11% of Spanish GDP and over 12% of their jobs (Cantalapiedra Álvarez, 2012). Spain is the 2nd preferred destination in the world after France, both in the income and the number of tourists received, with 81.8 million visitors in 2017 (Molina C. , 2018). The importance of the country within the sector is marked as Madrid is the base of the UN World Tourism Organization, WTO and the celebration of FITUR, one of the main tourism summits. Even though these tendencies could be reverted, at April 2019 the increase was still

present, with over 21.4 million tourists, 4.4% more than in the same 2018 period, in addition to 22.5 billion euros of income, in what is a 5.1% increase (Europa Press , 2019)

Even though all Spaniards share a vision over gastronomy and tourism, yet the efforts towards a stronger food tourism are not in place. Authenticity of its cookery shall identify the gastronomic tourism in Spain in order to be really credited as a form of “creative tourism” (Richards, 2012). Tourism shall further in quality and efficiency so that the best service is provided, and the benefit could grow steadily, following these years trends.

Some studies have identified that tourists choose destinations reputed because of their quality local products, as Spanish brand image can relate to gastronomic values (Subijana, 2012). One of the main attractivities for it is the ICH List inclusion of the Mediterranean diet in 2010, shared by Italy, Greece or Morocco, but offering a different gastronomy while a country rich in history and uniqueness. Because of it, the upcoming gastronomic tourism can be an important asset to the Spanish tourist sector, which shall lead global trends on the area to prevail as a worldwide reference (Gheorghe, Tudorache, & Nistoreanu, 2014).

As we rake the digital public, we shall examine the reputation of Spain’s gastronomy in different tabloid rankings. Starting with U.S. News, where Spain was the 2nd country after Italy listed by perception (Dicker, 2016). Italy leads gastrodiplomacy without being necessary into the field, because of the huge prevalence of pasta and pizza in almost any corner of the world (Ellwood, 2016). According to Thrillist, Spain’s cookery is placed as 3rd after France and Italy, and the Spanish one is a simple cuisine with respect of the product (Alexander & Childers, 2015). According to an online test on the digital space Ranker, with over 40,000 voters online, Spain was considered 4rd after India, the French and Italians (Ranker Travel, 2019).

b. The need for a Spanish proposal

The history of Spain’s success on gastronomy is based on anonymous leaders promoting their products, mostly continuing their family heritage, as the olive oil *Casas de Hualdo*, supported by José Andrés, that has recently been granted as best liquid gold in the world (Fernández Guadaño, 2019). Spain shall squeeze these fresh lemons that gastronomy is providing into the best juice to defend its interests and people. Food can be used to change the perception that some nations hold on biased topics such as the precious dilemma between siesta or siesta still present in some inaccurate approaches towards our country

(Li, 2019). The actual exposition allowed by the digital world and especially on social networks can be the perfect landscape to structure the Spanish gastronomic still-life that unifies both tradition and modernity.

I was astonished to discover that the only efforts of a clear gastrodiplomacy were based on *Cuina catalana*, Catalan traditional recipes that served as an initiative towards the ICH signature (Treserras Juan, 2017). It is no surprise that a part of the Catalan society desires to become independent of Spain and such recognition could be an impulse towards their acknowledgement of Catalonia as a separate culture from Spain, which indeed it is, but so are as well other regional patrimonies. Spain shall embrace its unity among the diversity that is also present in its territorial food. But cooking, rather than bridging the gap among Spaniard chefs regarding their provenance, has unify them towards the promotion of Spanish gastronomy abroad. Perhaps the most freestanding accent is emphasised by Basque cooks and their culinary, but all proudly state their belonging to a wider umbrella. This reflection is an distinction that, wisely used, could suppose a benefit for both national and international realities.

c. **Reflection of Spanish Diplomats**

In order to accomplish its advantages, I surveyed some Spanish Diplomats to better understand how a gastrodiplomatic initiative should be embraced, as experts on the practice of culinary diplomacy. I asked them about their knowledge of the term and any country initiative, their considerations over gastronomy as an advantage and the initiatives carried out by Spain in the field, to finally discuss whether gastronomy could be more effective than other traditional diplomatic aims.

The first figure I contacted was Fidel Sendagorta Gómez del Campillo (1956), former director of the Foreign Office for North America, Asia and the Pacific, who was Ambassador at Egypt and present in varied posts. Mr. Sendagorta was unaware of the existence of gastrodiplomacy, but he could identify some state initiatives, such as Spain Food and Wines (ICEX) and España Global. He contemplates gastronomy as a driver of Spain, which needs to be more effectively promoted. During his experiences in embassies, he carried out formal and informal receptions, promoted Spain's products and collaborated with reputed Spanish chefs. For Mr. Sendagorta, the active promotion of quality Spanish restaurants is crucial, to which he depicts Mercado Little Spain as an

example, which reflect that gastronomy can function as a diplomatic tool but not as effective as others.

Next answered Ms. María Victoria Morera (1956), current Spanish ambassador to Germany. As opposed to Mr. Sendagorta, Ms. Morera knew gastrodiploamacy and considered it as a nation branding initiative present in France, Italy or Spain (the three top nations for their gastronomy, according to the rankings mentioned above), where gastronomy is an asset. On diplomatic initiatives, she included the ones mentioned by her previous colleague, while highlighting their variety in the promotion, from gastronomy to agriculture production; and recognises that more efforts shall be taken into place. Ms. Morera included the same initiatives of Mr. Sendagorta, adding Spanish gastronomy forum or discussions and thinks that food fairs are the most effective gastrodiploamatic tools. As Ms. Morera depicts gastrodiploamacy as an objective itself, she considers crucial to support Spanish products and renowned chefs as well.

Lastly, I contacted with the Spanish ambassador to India, Mr. José Ramón Barañano Fernández (1950). Present in one known culinary nation, Mr. Barañano was more familiar with napkin politics and culinary diplomacy rather than with gastrodiploamacy, and deems that three European food champs, Japan and Vietnam have carried out gastrodiploamatic initiatives. Contrary to his previous colleagues, Mr. Barañano does not think that gastronomy is not one of the main promoters of Spain but that it shall be more effectively promoted as the current initiatives are not enough. In addition to all the initiatives of Ms. Morera and Mr. Sendagorta, Mr. Barañano has also collaborated with chefs of the countries he has been deployed in, promoted shops or Spanish street food and introduces social networks as a crucial driver for gastrodiploamacy. He delivers an approach towards tourism because of counting hotels, restaurants, the media and importers as stakeholders for nation promotion; and that gastronomy is part of image and cultural campaigns. Mr. Barañano ends regarding the biggest obstacle to face for a successful gastrodiploamacy: continuity.

We must consider the expertise of these ambassadors on the three main continents: America, Europe and Asia, as the enriching to their considerations. Gastrodiploamacy is yet an unknown concept even within our public servants, mainly because of its recent appearance, even though it is a concept that coins initiatives that all of them clearly identified. Surprisingly, Thailand was no mentioned despite being the pioneer

middlepower on the field, but other known gastronomic countries with top nation brandings, such as France, Japan or Italy. Gastronomy is valued as core of Spain's identification; thus, more should be enhanced towards its development. All have engaged in the traditional culinary diplomacy depicted by Rockower and widely known by Sapple-Chokol, while other strategies approached by non-state actors are not that common, despite they observe these as pillar agents to promote the country. Because of its soft power note, gastronomy is not seen as effective over diplomatic means, but they aim at long-term initiatives to its sustainability.

From the testimonies of these three active diplomats, I extracted various ideas. The first is the need of a clear gastrodiplomacy for Spain enhanced by the public agents. Due to all the initiatives already developed by chefs, foundations and companies, the work that is already carried out by ICEX must be expanded to further areas, not only focusing on trade but also on cultural influence and shall engage with all the possible stakeholders. Therefore, an alliance between the involved Ministries, the RAG and even the academic sector represented by the Basque Culinary Center should be structured thereof, through the use of all diplomatic institutions, as embassies, consulates and cultural ambassadors. External assessment of platforms as FutureBrand or similar marketing experts shall be present to guarantee their success. Whether all the involve stages are included in this planning, the success of it would reach greater expectations.

Secondly, that gastrodiplomacy might not be a known term but it embraces practices that already account nation efforts on the area. On the practice, there is no difference among the implementation of gastrodiplomatic strategies, such as the promotion of Spanish food and wines added to collaborating with Spanish chefs; and the acts of culinary diplomacy, such as embassy receptions. However, the theoretical framework for their answers would be better fit within Sapple-Chokol's view, in what I consider logic regarding the professional background of the surveyed. Moreover, in the end all these actions are drivers of Spanish promotion, allowing it to rest in the subconscious of those tasting the flavours of Spain, because of the profound interconnection of food and identity.

The further aim of gastrodiplomacy is the engagement with the foreign public so that the nation is intertwined with its dishes. In here we could include cultural events, around the Spanish food and wine heritage, such as showcooking, product tasting and the placement of Spain's cookery in the country where the gastrodiplomatic representatives are based.

Thirdly, all three ambassadors provided an interesting review regarding the possible paths to be followed. From the business perspective, with the support of Spanish restaurants abroad, which could be initiated with funding as occurred with the Global Thai initiative, to the promotion in different tourist-related companies, such as hotels, restaurants and even specific food halls as Little Spain in New York. The Peru Restaurant Week could base as an example of strategies that can be replicated by our nation representatives.

The commitment of famous figures to achieve this is vital. Spain could mirror on the American Chef Corps, an initiative that has no public funding but reflects the pride of cooks to represent the U.S. Despite similar activities are carried on our embassies, I think that these should group among an identified label, such as Spain's PDO products are. Naming realities helps to spot them among the practice, just as gastrodiplomacy currently reveals. Economic growth is also a vital aspect in here, as FIAB participation in food fairs to promote Spanish brands. The agricultural sector is still important within Spain's economy and the use of gastrodiplomacy would serve to its further development. Even though public funding to actually promote restaurants abroad is hardly expected, some economic capabilities are undeniably needed to achieve it.

The cultural sphere and its long-term implication are also nucleus on the need of continuing the efforts towards gastrodiplomacy and the actual presence on the media, especially on social networks. Already in digital scenarios like Google or Amazon, ICEX initiative could be also exported to Instagram, Facebook or the system that is more used by the public. This presence will result in a greater brand awareness and the consolidation of stronger networks for the Spanish gastronomy that will result in a development of Spain as a nation. There is still a long path to cope Italian pizza or Japanese sushi, but Spanish products shall go under the *vísteme despacio, que tengo prisa* premise.

To conclude all that I have developed alongside this paper, I shall urge to the application of gastrodiplomacy in Spain. Our gastronomy provides a unique storefront in where to exhibit the values that define the historic nation we are and to retain better means to deal with the uncertain future that is upon us. In the decay of our continent due to the Asian pivot, food can be deployed as subtle evocation of Spain's identity and perhaps help to reach a celebrated visibility towards the globe. It is time to *poner las manos en la masa*. Gastrodiplomacy shall be awoken so that Spain remains acquainted.

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