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GENOA'S FOODSCAPE: TYPICAL AND ETHNIC

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE INTERPLAY OF TYPICAL
AND ETHNIC FOODWAYS WITHIN PLACE IDENTITY

CAMBI FRANCESCO

961101154130

Thesis Supervisor: dr. Harro Maat

BSc Tourism Thesis - GEO 80818

Wageningen University & Research – Breda University of Applied Sciences

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

Thesis title: Genoa's Foodscape: Typical and Ethnic

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Author name: Francesco Cambi

Bachelor's degree program: Bachelor of Science Tourism

Educational Institute: Breda University of Applied Science and Wageningen University & Research

Authorship statement

I hereby declare that this thesis is wholly the work of Francesco Cambi. Any other contributors have either been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and the scope of their contribution.

Where I have consulted the published work of others this is always clearly attributed. Where I have quoted from the work of others the source is always given. A list of the references used, is included. An appropriate referencing style is used throughout. With the exception of such quotations this thesis is entirely my own work. I have read and understand the penalties associated with plagiarism as stated in the Student Charter.

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ABSTRACT

Food has crucial importance within a city's identity and tourism image. Moreover, food is one of the most important perspectives that can be used to analyse immigrant inclusivity in host societies. This research explores how the interplay of typical and ethnic foodways is related to discourses of place identity and immigrant inclusivity, using as a case study the city of Genoa, Italy. To do this, 19 in-depth semi-structured interviews have been conducted with typically Genoese restaurants, ethnic restaurants and international tourists. An interpretative social constructivist approach has been used to analyse the data, and the notion of foodscape has been used as an overarching framework containing locally situated practices related to foods and eating habits. The findings of this study show that foods are often used to consider broader socio-cultural dynamics, and that different views on ethnic foodways reflect broader issues of immigrant integration. Moreover, this research confirms that notions such as tradition, typicity and ethnicity are socially constructed and used in value-laden ways. The conclusions of this study underscore the need for further attention on the interrelation between food, immigration and tourism.

Keywords: place identity, foodways, foodscape, tradition, typicality, ethnic cuisine, heritage cuisines, immigration.



Cover Picture: Genoa's historic centre from above. © Susanne Cambi (2019), with permission.

PREFACE

After my final year of high school, four years ago, I left my hometown, Genoa, up to explore the world and live in different countries. During these years, I occasionally visited my family and friends in Genoa, but I never thought I would come back there for more than a couple of weeks in the near future. I escaped. I needed to see the world, new cultures, ways of living. First travelling in Canada and the USA, then studying in the Netherlands, then back to Canada on exchange.

Fast forward to last April. I have chosen my bachelor's thesis topic, but I still have a lot of doubts. What am I going to focus on? Where do I want to do fieldwork? Do I really want to do it? I start thinking about different options, in Italy and abroad. I am struggling, I am indecisive by nature. Time is running out and I need to decide. I am in Wageningen in my room, almost desperate. I call my sister Susanne asking for advice. After some talking, she tells me: "Why don't you do it in Genoa?"

I am immediately puzzled. Genoa? My hometown? Why on earth would I want to do fieldwork there?

After some pondering, I reconsider the idea. Why not? Maybe I could see my hometown under a different light. And, oh boy, if I was right. During the data collection process, I rediscover my own city. Slowly walking in the narrow streets of the historic centre, I notice details I had never paid attention to before. I see new architectural elements, new colours, new spaces. For the first time in my life, I make sense of the maze of alleys which compose it, I put in perspective where everything is located. But mostly, I come to appreciate the historic centre diversity, liveliness, voices, smells, cultures, people.

I thoroughly enjoyed working on this thesis in all its phases, including the notoriously tedious interviews' transcriptions. I particularly treasure all the moments with the participants, without whom this research could not have come to be. I want to thank them for their availability and eagerness to help. I also want to thank my family and friends for supporting me during the research process. I am particularly grateful to Susanne, my sister, and Silvia, my neighbour, who gave insightful comments on my report. Finally, I want to thank Harro, my supervisor, who trusted me granting me freedom and creativity.

I hope you will enjoy reading this thesis as much as I enjoyed writing it,

Francesco Cambi

Thursday, 27 of June 2019

Genoa, Italy

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When talking about tourism, few would argue that a destination is not something connected to a physical space. Indeed, according to the World Tourism Organization, a local tourism destination “[...] has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, and images and perceptions defining its market competitiveness” (WTO, 2002, n.p.). Nonetheless, the concept of tourism destination goes well beyond mere spatial-physical attributes. Bosman & Dredge (2014, p. 265) define tourism destinations as “locations that are characterized by a complex layering of social, economic, political, environmental and cultural forces operating over time and across different spatial scales.”

In this thesis, I focus on the last type of these forces, the cultural ones and, more in particular on the role that food plays within those forces. Moreover, the way cultural forces are interrelated to social, economic and political ones will be exemplified, with special attention to dynamics of immigrant inclusion and exclusion in urban tourism destinations. Indeed, although an extensive body of research investigates how food contributes to destination identity and attractiveness (Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011; Ramshaw, 2015; Timothy, 2015), and several studies have been done on the role of food when analyzing immigrant inclusivity in host societies (Counihan, 2016; Gasparetti, 2012), approaches that combine the two are remarkably scarce. This thesis attempts to do so by exploring how these two strands interact with each other, using as a case study the historic centre of Genoa, Italy, an area where tourism and immigration notably come together.

This paper is structured as follows: chapter two reviews relevant literature on the theoretical concepts that are central to this study. Then, the theoretical framework and research questions are presented in chapter three. Chapter four elaborates on the methodological details of the research, covering research design, description of the case study area, data collection and analysis methods, limitations and an overview of the research participants. Following that, chapter five comprises a thorough analysis and interpretation of the research findings, punctually highlighting the key points and occasionally making reference to other scholarly positions. Finally, in chapter six the broader insights that emerged from this study are reflected upon and discussed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 PLACE IDENTITY, IMAGE AND CULTURE

In the academic literature, place identity and image are conceptualized in the most diverse ways, also due to the different fields of inquiry in which they are handled.

In the branding sphere, place identity, together with its numerous variations (local, territorial, spatial, etc.), is frequently seen as an objective property of a place which uniquely derives from its intrinsic features (Mayes, 2008). As Kalandides (2011) indicates, some see identity as a synonym of image, others strictly associate it to a place's culture and traditions, or even consider it as an objective entity opposed to image. However, Kalandides (2011), suggesting that conventional understandings of identity are both based on unity and distinctiveness, claims that the transposition of the concept from humans to places is full of contradictions and can only be understood figuratively. Specifically, Kalandides (2011) associates place identity to the notion of sense of place and thus characterizes it as a dynamic process constituted by "materiality, practices, institutions and representation" (p. 37) which has to be considered in the context of power relations. On this last point, Govers and Go (2009, p. 17) underscore that place identity is something "constructed through historical, political, religious and cultural discourses; through local knowledge, and influenced by power struggles".

The complexity of this expression is also emphasized by Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013), who argue that place identities and brands are created via an intricate system of "interactions between the individual and the collective, between the physical and the non-physical, between the functional and the emotional, between the internal and the external, and between the organized and the random" (p. 76). Furthermore, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013), drawing from Hatch and Schultz (2002), outline place identity in terms of image and culture. In their conceptualization, place culture refers to the component of identity internal to a place, while place image refers to the ensemble of external factors which constitute it (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). Many of those factors are social in nature, and as Aitken and Campelo (2011) indicate, identity, culture and image are not constituted by a mere addition of individual objects and perceptions, but by dynamic and shared interactions among social actors. Bearing this in mind, it is interesting to look at the factors which contribute to place identity, both through culture and image. A valuable way to investigate this is by using the notion of heritage, which will be the topic of exploration of the next section.

2.2 HERITAGE AND HERITAGE CUISINES

Culture, history and art are key determinants for the image of tourism sites (Beerli & Martin, 2004), as they form the heritage of a particular place. Whereas tangible heritage mainly refers to buildings, artefacts or natural sites, intangible heritage is about stories, knowledge and ideas that persist through time and are still used in the present (Timothy, 2005). Food and cuisines are among the most essential components of intangible cultural heritage and place identity, two strictly interconnected concepts (Timothy, 2015). As a matter of fact, Timothy (2015) goes as far as claiming that all the aspects of culture are in some way connected to food; while Timothy & Ron (2013, p. 99) argue that “food has long been one of the most important markers of regional and ethnic identity, along with religion, language, folklore, and other distinguishing elements of culture”.

The notion of heritage cuisine refers to the way food constitutes the cultural heritage, and therefore the identity, of a particular people, which is often linked a specific place (Timothy, 2015). Di Giovine (2016, p. 77) defines heritage cuisine as “particular form of cuisine which, through its ritualized production and consumption, and ties to the unique milieu in which it is found, binds individuals across time and space through discourses of patrimony and inheritance [...] [and] invokes a sense of inherited “tradition” that must be preserved [...]”. Ramshaw (2015) stresses how unique, heritage-based, place identities are heavily influenced by the intermingling of culinary heritage and tourism and how this is important for the differentiation and competitiveness of destinations. This is substantiated by Timothy (2015), who contends that in destinations food is no longer only a supporting service but a central attraction in itself. Lin, Pearson & Cai (2011), from a marketing perspective, argue that food contributes to destination identity and that it can, therefore, be used to create successful destination brands.

Moreover, it is important to highlight that heritage in all its forms is not a static, univocal and neutral concept (Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016). Indeed, heritage can be used instrumentally by actors to convey different messages and to propose particular narratives of history. In the tourism field, the most ideal aspects of the past are often underscored, while undesirable elements not seldom concealed (Timothy, 2015). Sporadic research hints at the fact that heritage cuisine is sometimes used as a device to revitalize and redefine local identity, also in relationship with tourism (Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016; Everett & Aitchison, 2008). Reflecting on the meaning of heritage, it is useful to phrase the debate in term of traditions, authenticity and typicality, notions which all hint at uniqueness. On this subject, the academic debate is vast and animated (Bilotta, 2005; Bessière, 1998; Benedix, 1989; Boisseaux, 2004; Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016; Chanpredonde, 2011; DeSoucey, 2010; Gasparetti, 2012; Longo, 2006; Malevolti, 2003; Pratt, 2007; Sidali, Spiller & Schulze, 2011; Sims, 2009; Timothy, 2015). Because of this, definitions of what is traditional and typical, both regarding food and other cultural heritage characteristics, are contested and plural. In the next section, a concise overview of scholarly definitions and interpretations of tradition and typicality is given.

2.3 TRADITION AND TYPICALITY

2.3.1 TRADITION

Starting with tradition, Bendix (1989) noted that the term is commonly but mistakenly associated with something static, which has origin in ancient times, is not changeable and lacks any agency. This naturalist view of tradition, which sees it as a bounded group of cultural characteristics passed on from the past, originated in the 18th century and was predominant among social scientists until the first half of the 20th century (Handler & Linnekin, 1984). More recent understandings of tradition reject this take, claiming that tradition is a social construction, a notion that is discursively formed and interpreted. In 1984, Handler and Linnekin argued that tradition is something that can “be understood as a wholly symbolic construction” and that denotes an “interpretive process that embodies both continuity and discontinuity” (Handler & Linnekin, 1984, p. 273). Particularly valuable for this research are Gasparetti's (2012, p. 261) indications of tradition as “often the result of a projection of the present onto the past, rather than of a deep historical continuity” and of traditional foods as “the result of a process of construction and invention of the identity of the dish” (Gasparetti 2012, p.260). The just mentioned idea that traditions are susceptible to be invented is also supported by Bendix (1989), who supplements Gasparetti's characterization with the importance of socio-economic and cultural factors.

2.3.2 TYPICALITY

The term typical has two common sense connotations. The first one denotes the normal behaviour of a group of agents or the usual characteristics of an object. For example, one could say that the regular consumption of pasta is typical of the Italian people, or that hot temperatures are typical of July. On the other hand, typical also refers to the specific properties which make an object unique, in a way that distinguishes itself from similar ones (Chanpredonde, 2012). For the purpose of this research, the second connotation is considered. In particular, in the context of food products, typicality is to be understood as a socially constructed notion which embraces ideas of locality, uniqueness and tradition. Longo (2006) indicates that the social construction of typical foods is opposed to ideas of homologation, standardization and massification, instead incorporating the physical and emblematic search of uniqueness, distinctiveness and local diversity. Grasseni (2016, p. 55) links typical foods to locality and traditions, by delineating typical as something “inextricably tied to [...] being local, namely rooted in a specific territory with its biological and botanical peculiarity” and claiming that “typical foods are not just “traditional” but are bearers of the historical know-how that would flourish in that particular locality”.

As for tradition, the concept of typicality is prone to be invented and reinvented by different actors, for example in the context of protection and institutionalization of food as cultural heritage. Scholars have extensively studied how labels such as PDO have contributed to the institutionalization of

traditions and typical culinary products (Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016; Champredonde, 2011; Timothy, 2015). Overall, it is possible to identify a consensus on the fact that both tradition and typicality are socially constructed and dynamic, and that different actors attribute them different meanings (Bilotta, 2005; Benedix, 1989; Bérard & Marchenay, 1995). Moreover, issues of power, politics and development are central in the construction of these notions (Bessière, 1998; Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016; DeSoucey, 2010; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Timothy, 2015). In the next section, a particular kind of label given to certain traditional and typical cuisines is briefly presented.

2.4 ETHNIC CUISINES

Similarly to other concepts introduced in this review, ethnic cuisine is as deceptively simple to grasp as problematic to define. In their most simple incarnation, ethnic food and cuisines are something associated with a particular ethnic group (Verbeke & Poquiviqui López, 2005). Indeed, as Mohammad and Chan (2011) contend, each ethnic group has distinctive features that make the foods they prepare unique. Mora (1998) gives a more nuanced definition of ethnic foods, defining them as “the expression of food in terms of attitudes, values, behaviours and beliefs of a culture that is an expression of its cultural traditions or heritage, religion or national origin” (as cited in Verbeke & Poquiviqui López, 2005, p. 825).

Despite Mora's fitting definition, as Mohammad and Chan (2011) argue, different individuals attribute distinct meanings to this dynamic and evolving expression. The situation is made even more intricate by the fact that ethnic communities, which are often taken to be something homogeneous and with clear boundaries, are in fact a blurry category, whose members are determined by who considers them as an object of inquiry (Möhring, 2008). In doing so, internal differences are often disregarded, and liminal cases not considered. This does not come as a surprise, as ethnic, as most of the concept discussed in this thesis, is socially constructed.

2.5 FOODSCAPES AND FOODWAYS

A recently emerged expression that blends together place identity, culinary heritage, and socio-personal dynamics is the notion of *foodscapes*. Johnston & Baumann (2015, p.3) define foodscape as “a dynamic social construction that relates food to places, people, meanings, and material processes”. Likewise, Adema's (2009) characterization of foodscape stresses how historical and contemporary forces of different kinds (socio-economic, political, cultural, personal) influence how people perceive and use food in particular localities. According to Adema (2006), both the tangible and the intangible are included in the construct of foodscape: physical or imagined landscapes, foods, tools, preparation techniques, place-food associations and other sensorial real or perceived features are only some of the elements that characterize this malleable concept.

Another concept worth mentioning is *foodways*. Contrarily to foodscapes, foodways have been embedded in the literature for more than half a century. Camp, writing in 1982, defines foodways as “a set of dietary and cultural alternatives most fully expressed in unconscious choices and preferences (p. 289)”. In spite of his definition, Camp acknowledges that foodways are a multidimensional concept which escapes a precise characterization, embracing production, distribution, cooking and consumption of foods. More recently, scholars refer to foodways as practices related to food production and consumption, often linked to particular peoples and places (Timothy, 2015; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2015). One of the most comprehensive and recent definitions of foodways describes them as “all of the traditional activities, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors associated with food [...]. Foodways include customs of food production, preservation, preparation, presentation, gathering, marketing [...], uses of food products other than for eating and food folklore” (Darton, 2012, n.p.).

So, what are the main differences between foodscapes and foodways? From my understanding of the literature, both concepts encompass places, peoples, traditions, foods and associated practices. Despite the partial overlap, I understand that foodscapes are more centred on the *mélange* between food and landscape (Adema, 2006), and that they are in a way more dependent on personal or collective interpretations. Foodscapes are, in the first place, linked to a physical site, be it a restaurant, a neighbourhood, a city or a country, but they can also refer to imagined food-place associations (Adema, 2006). On the other hand, I understand foodways as something intrinsically connected to a set of foods related practices.

2.6 IMMIGRATION, FOODS AND IDENTITIES

A more niche area of the literature focuses on how local (and place) identities are sometimes averse to external influence, for example through immigration. Counihan (2016), using as a case study the city of Cagliari, Italy, contrasts cultural openness and inclusivity with protectionism and exclusivity. In her study, Counihan claims that Italian culinary practices are generally unaffected from the influences of immigrant ethnic cuisines. Measures are taken to ensure that this stays the same, for example by designating products as traditional specialities and banning non-traditional restaurants in particular areas. Nonetheless, immigrants are often constituting the majority of the workforce responsible for the production of many of the products that are considered “traditional” and “local” (Counihan, 2016).

Along similar lines, in Italy immigrants are contributing to the repopulation of rural and fragile areas, which often suffer from abandonment and lack of opportunities (Osti & Ventura, 2012). The extent to which immigrants are included in part of the local societies and economies varies considerably from case to case and, even if a general pattern of exclusion and uneasiness is identifiable, cases of integration and success have been studied. Membretti & Galera (2017) examine how, through

successful organizations and social enterprises, asylum seekers (immigrants) have been successfully integrated into local mountainous communities and are contributing not only to repopulation but also to sustainable tourism development.

Changing perspective, Gasparetti (2012) looks at the way in which Senegalese migrants living in Turin, Italy, use their traditional food to overcome internal differences and create a sense of shared identity. While Gasparetti's research focuses on how food is used to increase community bonding and reinforce migrant identities as opposed to the host society's one, her recommendations stress the importance of investigating the "encounter between Senegalese food and Italian society" (Gasparetti, 2012, p. 274).

Counihan (2016) concludes her paper with some thought-provoking questions, which are used as an inspirational basis for this thesis. First, she questions whether the Italian cultural and culinary heritage discourse can be open to immigrant influences. Second, she asks if foods maintain part of the immigrant cultural heritage when they are grown by immigrants. Lastly, she reports that the exclusion of immigrant contribution from local culinary heritage is a symptom of a broader problem, namely the difficulty of immigrants to be included in Italian society.

But how do people feel about this? What are the views of local inhabitants, tourists and immigrants? In what way could the interaction and complementation of ethnic, typical and traditional foodways impact a city's identity and image? All these questions remain unanswered and, despite occasional calls for more research on these topics (Counihan, 2016), the interplay between identity, culinary heritage, immigration and tourism remains largely unexplored. In this thesis, I investigate the views of locals, tourists and immigrants about place identity, culinary heritage and inclusivity, analyzing how places are responsive to non-local influences. In doing so, foods, foodways and foodscapes are used as the primary lens of investigation within a case study in Genoa, Italy. In the next chapter, the theoretical framework and research questions are elaborated in more detail.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Considering the exploratory nature of this study and the lack of previous research on the topic, an interpretative and inductive framework is utilized. In inductive studies, the researcher's experience in collecting data shapes the research itself, to the point that questions and methods might be adapted during the research process (Cresswell, 2013). Specifically, a social constructivist approach is employed. According to social constructivism, people create subjective or inter-subjective meanings in interaction with others, and thus a single social reality out-there does not exist (Cresswell, 2013). In all of this, the researcher co-participates in the construction of multiple realities in interaction with the participants, hence personal values and biases are taken into account. As a consequence, no precisely predefined categories are used to investigate the object in question. Instead, categories and ideas are formed during and after the research process, via the interpretation of data from observations, interviews and other encounters with participants (Cresswell, 2013). Starting from these considerations, it is clear that many of the theoretical notions presented in the literature review were not given *a priori* conceptualizations. Instead, their meaning developed throughout the research process. In practice, constructs of identity, ethnic, traditionalism and typicality emerged as discursive configurations in the encounters with participants (Turchi, Michele, Bonazza, Girardi, 2014).

In all of this, foodscape was used as an overarching framework: elements such as place identity, traditions, heritage cuisines and socio-cultural, economic and political processes all came together as practices situated in a particular setting, Genoa's foodscape. For the purpose of this thesis, drawing from Johnston & Baumann (2015) and Adema (2006), I conceptualize foodscape as a malleable social construction which incorporates practices, meanings and socio-cultural dynamics associated with foods and eating habits. I take that a foodscape is something usually, but not necessarily, linked to a physical space and influenced by several foodways. I delineate foodways as something intrinsically connected to a set of foods and eating practices which share determined characteristics, for example the production and consumption by an ethnically similar group of people. I hold that foodscapes can be influenced by one or more foodways, and that different foodways can co-exist within a particular foodscape. When referring to Genoa's foodscape, I intend what emerged as it to be as a collective construction constituted from the encounter of my personal understanding and the research participants' opinions and thoughts.

Despite being aware that foodways go well beyond food establishments, I used restaurants as a vehicle of exploration of Genoa's foodscape because of two reasons. First, I deemed that restaurants owners could give me nuanced views on food practices and, second, entering in people's domestic sphere was considered to be of higher difficulty and necessitating more time and personal connections.

3.2 RESEARCH RELEVANCE AND QUESTIONS

This research aims at expanding the literature on the nexus between two important mobilities, tourism and migration, as seen through lenses of identity and food. This approach is novel, and it contributes to the academic debates of immigrant influence to local culinary heritage (Counihan, 2016), immigrant inclusivity in host societies (Gasparetti, 2012) and to the role of food in tourism destination identity and image. Moreover, issues on immigration and inclusion are crucial in contemporary Italy, both socially, economically and politically, and thus deserve special attention.

Starting from this, the following research has the objective of exploring from various perspectives how typical and ethnic foodways interact within Genoa's foodscape. In doing so, investigating how this interaction affects the city's identity and reflects immigrant integration is the central angle. In particular, the following research questions are formulated:

- How do typical Genoese restaurants¹ view the coexistence of typical and ethnic foodways within Genoa's foodscape?
 - o How are typical Genoese restaurants influenced by the potential presence of foreign workers within their establishment?
 - o How do typical Genoese restaurants view ethnic foodways of Genoa's foodscape in relation to the city's identity?
- How do tourists view the coexistence of typical and ethnic foodways within Genoa's foodscape?
 - o How do tourists view ethnic elements in Genoa's foodscape in relation to the city's identity?
- How are ethnic restaurants integrated within Genoa's foodscape?
 - o To what extent does the level of integration of ethnic restaurants mirror the social integration of immigrants in the host society?

Moreover, this research explores how concepts such as traditional, typical and ethnic are socially constructed and understood by different groups.

¹ Throughout the thesis report, I often give agency to restaurants, personifying them: with this, I generally indicate their owners, managers or representatives.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND CONTEXT

As previously mentioned, this exploratory research revolves around a case study in the historic city centre of Genoa, Italy. I deemed that a qualitative case study design was the most appropriate way to approach the research questions. In fact, case studies allow for an in-depth and holistic understanding of complex social phenomena, rather than analyzing relationships between specific variables and aiming at general rules (Adler & Clark, 2007). Indeed, for complex and context-dependent social situations, it is futile to attempt to find predictive theories and universals (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Finally, case studies privilege depth over breath of understanding, and despite conventional claims, are not more biased towards verification than other methods (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

I chose Genoa, my hometown, because I had first-hand insights and personal connections that enabled me to collect data in a more insightful and effective manner. Moreover, the city of Genoa was particularly suitable for this research on the following grounds: (1) Genoa's culinary heritage is notorious for its deep entrenchment within local and destination identity, foods such as *Pesto alla Genovese* and *Focaccia* are some of the staples for which the city is famous (Navone, 2006); (2) approximately 10% of the local population is foreign, with significant growth in the last decades (Comune di Genova, 2018); (3) Genoa is rapidly developing as a tourism destination (Comune di Genova, 2018).

Concerning the choice of the historic city centre, there are several reasons. First, by choosing the historic centre I circumscribed my research in a more specific area, therefore being able to better represent the situation as a whole. Second, Genoa's historic city centre is home to numerous foreign and immigrant communities, especially from Morocco, Senegal, Ecuador and Bangladesh (Comune di Genova, 2018). Third, cities' historic centres are often considered to embody the core identity, the origin, the traditions and the past of the city and its inhabitants (Leone, 2010). Prior to conducting fieldwork, I had considered focusing my study on even more circumscribed areas of the city centre or on a single immigrant ethnic group. Despite this, for practical and convenience reasons, I decided to take into account the historic city centre as a whole and to focus on all kinds of ethnic Genoese cuisines and foodways. Before moving on to the methodological chapter, it is useful to take a closer look at the case study site, the historic centre of the city of Genoa.

4.2 CASE STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

Genoa, counting 578.704 inhabitants (Comune di Genova, 2018), is the capital city of the north-western Italian region of Liguria. Its most ancient core, today referred to as historic centre, includes the three oldest city districts (*Prè-Molo-Maddalena*, cf. Figure 2). With an area of 1.13 square kilometres and housing 24.883 people in 2018 (Comune di Genova, 2018), it is Europe's most densely populated historic city centre (Visit Genoa, n.d.). This population density is made possible by relatively tall buildings very close to each other, giving shape to a maze of characteristically narrow alleys, locally named *caruggi* (cf. Figure 1).



FIGURE 1: PART OF GENOA'S HISTORIC CENTRE, AS OVERLOOK BY A NEARBY HILL. THE BUILDINGS' DENSITY CAN BE APPRECIATED IN THE CENTRAL PART OF THE IMAGE. PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSANNE CAMBI, WITH PERMISSION.

Contrarily to most of the Italian cities, Genoa's historic centre is characterized by the strong presence of immigrant population: with 6060 foreign residents in 2018, over 24% of the historic centre's population is foreign, a significant figure considering the city average of 9.4%. Moreover, some ethnic communities are mostly represented in the historic centre of the city: 47% of the Senegalese and Bengali, 25% of the Moroccans and 15% of the Chinese and Nigerian living in Genoa reside in its historic centre (Comune di Genova, 2018). To understand how this came to be, it is useful to have a brief overview of the history of Genoa, which will be the topic of the next section.

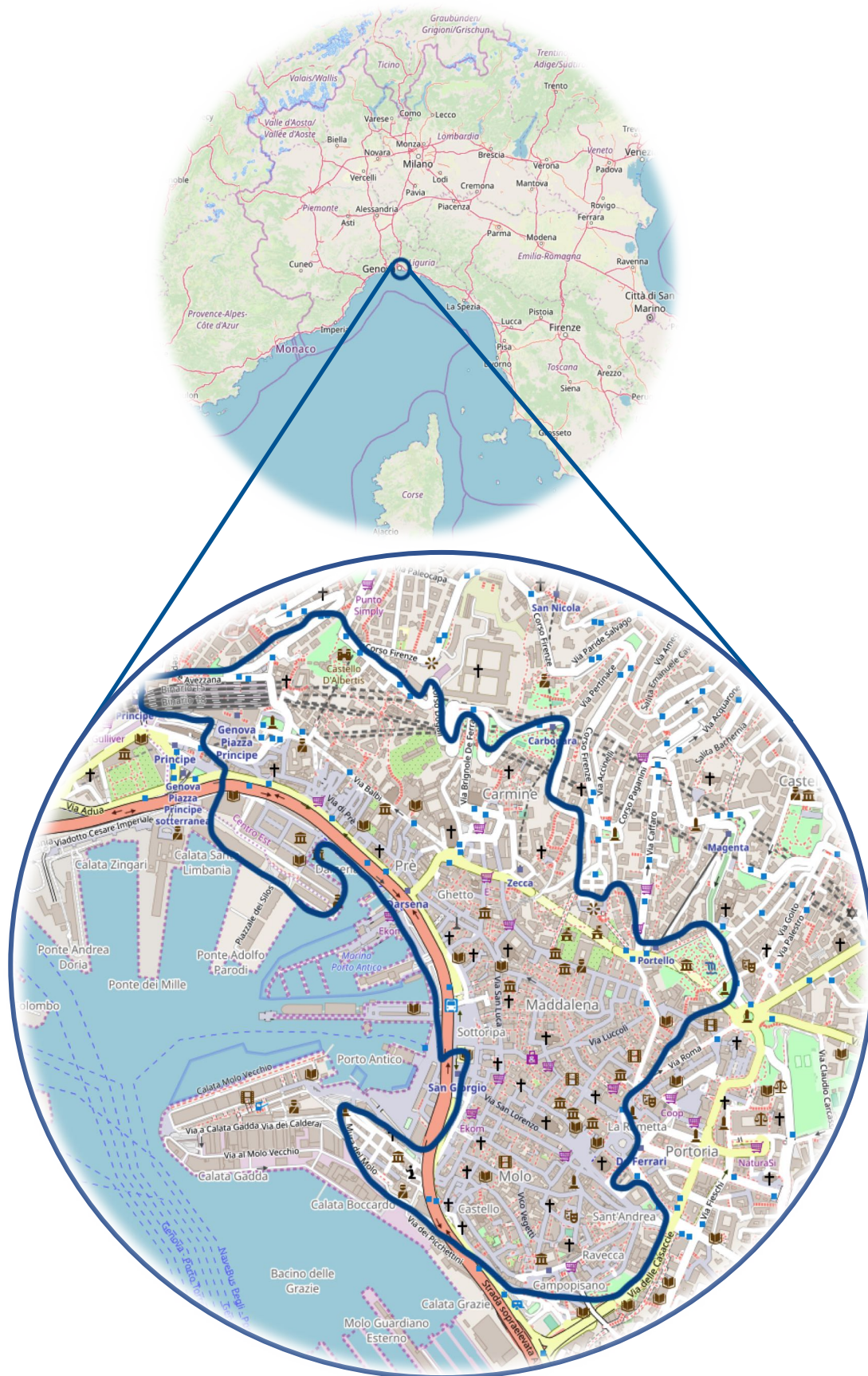


FIGURE 2: GENOA AND ITS HISTORIC CENTRE. MAP FROM OPENSTREETMAP.ORG, PERSONAL ELABORATION IN BLUE

4.2.1 AN HISTORICAL NOTE ON GENOA AND ITS OLD CENTRE

Established as a municipality (*comune*) in the 11th century, Genoa has its roots in the early Roman times, with the first settlement (*Oppidum Genuate*) being erected in the 5th century BCE. During the following centuries the city expanded and, being the seat of the homonymous maritime republic from the 11th to the 18th century, numerous layers of defensive walls were erected by its inhabitants (Bedocchi & Profumo, 2007). With the passing of time, the city walls lost their practical value, to the point that much of their original extension is now missing. Nonetheless, due to socio-cultural and urbanistic processes, the area once enclosed in Genoa's 14th-century walls is now unanimously considered its historic centre (Leone, 2010).

Genoa's historic centre, being built around the city's seaport, was until the end of the 19th century the social and economic heart of the city. However, since the beginning of the last century and especially after the Second World War, a process of depopulation and urban degradation has struck the area, with the historic centre's inhabitants moving to more modern and comfortable neighbourhoods (Leone, 2010). This reflected the relocation of most of the commercial and institutional activities to the "new" centre, constituted by adjacent area of *Piazza De Ferrari* and *Via XX Settembre*, constructed in the 19th century. As Leone (2010) describes, these urbanistic transformations left the "old centre" as it was, thus creating a sharp architectural contrast between the new and the old: the former being characterized by wide streets and ample spaces full of light, the latter by narrow and dark alleys (cf. Figures 3 and 4).



FIGURE 3: PANORAMA VIEW OF PIAZZA DE FERRARI, THE SYMBOL OF THE "NEW CENTRE". SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA², UNDER CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSE.

Moreover, between the 1960s' and the 1970s', the nature of Genoa's harbour changed, with large container cargo ships disrupting previous loading and unloading procedures. This occurrence had dire consequences on all the formal and informal harbour activities once predominant in the "old centre", which were suddenly not suitable for the new commercial practices (Leone, 2010). This

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piazza_De_Ferrari#/media/File:Piazza_Raffaele_di_Ferrari_-_Genova.jpg

phenomenon of marginalization led to local urban degradation and, consequently, to the development of minor criminal activities organized in an underworld. Because of above-discussed and other reasons (see Leone, 2010), in the second half of the 19th century, the most ancient part of the city was its main area of domestic and international immigration: people from Southern Italy and other countries replaced most of the city's old inhabitants, many of whom also emigrated to the Americas and Northern Europe.

Only at the end of the 1980s, a process of urban requalification of the historic centre began. In 1992, in occasion of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, the old port area was completely repurposed, passing from being an industrial and then degraded zone to the new waterfront of the city, an area principally aimed at recreation and tourism (Leone, 2010; Bedocchi & Profumo, 2007). Furthermore, in 2006, some of the historic centre's most significant palaces were enlisted as UNESCO World Heritage site (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2006). Following these events, tourism numbers started soaring rapidly and the historic centre's economic and societal status began to improve again (Leone, 2010).



FIGURE 4: ONE OF THE HISTORIC CENTRE'S NARROW ALLEYS. PHOTOGRAPH BY THE AUTHOR

4.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.3.1 DATA COLLECTION

In order to answer the research questions, qualitative methods were used, namely in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The sampling techniques were convenience and snowball. Originally, data was intended to be collected from the following categories: (1) typically Genoese restaurants, (2) ethnic restaurants and (3) international tourists. The first category included restaurants which marketed themselves as traditionally or typically Genoese, as it could be seen from their names, their signs and the dishes on their menu, which needed to be reflecting Genoa and its traditional foods. I hypothesized that these restaurants would generally be run by native Genoese or Ligurian inhabitants. Ethnic restaurants refer to eating places which proposed a non-traditionally Genoese cuisine and, in particular, are associated with a certain country or geographical region. I assumed that most of those would be run by immigrants. In doing so, I approached a number of business that I believed met those criteria. Eventually, the population of the study included (1) six traditionally Genoese restaurants, (2) four ethnic restaurants and (3) seven international tourists. Moreover, I interviewed two restaurants that, although initially being considered one typically Genoese and one ethnic, after the interviews were deemed to be evading those two categories.

Concerning the semi-structured interviews, a total of 19 interviews were conducted between the 16th of May and the 3rd of June 2019. All interviews took place face-to-face, other than one that was answered via email. Most of the restaurant interviews were scheduled on appointment, whereas tourists were approached on the main touristic street and in a hostel. 13 interviews were conducted in Italian, five in English and one in both languages. The interviews' quality and duration varied considerably, with the shortest lasting a mere four minutes and the longest 55 minutes, with the average duration being above 22 mins. This can be explained by several factors, such as the different time availability of participants and their varying command of Italian or English. Despite the short duration of some interviews, all respondents provided at least a relevant insight which significantly contributes to the depth of this research. Because of this reason, I decided not to exclude any interview. About research ethics and confidentiality, informed consent forms have been handed out digitally to all participants, with 16 of them signing the form and three only giving verbal consent. A copy of the form can be found in Appendix I.

Regarding the way the interviews were structured, three kinds of questions guides were formulated, one being for tourists, one for typically Genoese restaurants and one for ethnic restaurant (copies of the interview guides can be found in Appendix II). All the interviews began with some introductory questions about participants' background information. In the cases of restaurants, questions were mainly directed at their history, proposal, employees, suppliers, etc. For tourists, nationality, length of stay, traveling motives, and previous travel experience were asked. In the following phase, more

conceptual topics were explored: participants were asked to reflect on the meaning of traditional, typical and ethnic. Depending on the participant background, questions were phrased in more abstract or pragmatic ways. Finally, respondents were spurred to elaborate on the ways they viewed ethnic and traditional cuisines and foods in Genoa's historic centre, with particular attention to their influence on the city's identity and image. In doing so, the topic was approached from different angles depending on the type of participant: for instance, ethnic restaurants were asked about the way their business contributed to the identity of the area, Genoese restaurants about the way they viewed the presence of ethnic business in the historic centre and tourists about their preferences and opinions. Despite having questions guides, interviewed often took unexpected directions with several unplanned follow-up questions.

Regarding participant observation, restaurant ethnography was carried out in three businesses, paying attention to the culinary proposal, the kinds of customers, the preparation methods and the languages spoken by the employees, among others. Also, participant observation was conducted in the streets of the historic centre. Nonetheless, during the thesis writing process, data gathered from participant observation resulted to be of marginal importance compared to the one from the interviews. Because of this, participant observation insights are only occasionally used to corroborate or confute findings.

4.3.2 DATA ANALYSIS

A mainly inductive coding approach was used to analyse the data, with only the broadest categories deductively taken from the literature. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, only omitting inaudible parts, stuttering and excessive use of filler words. Then, the transcripts were open coded and labeled with broader categories, both taken from the literature and emerging from the encounters. An analogous process was employed to analyse participant observation notes. Concerning the quotations in the findings chapter, excerpts from the Italian interviews have been personally translated by the author, paying attention at being as closely loyal to the original as possible while maintaining ease of understanding³. To ensure confidentiality, all the names used in the report, both of people and restaurants have been pseudonymized.

4.4 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

4.4.1 ONTOLOGICAL AND CONCEPTUAL LIMITATIONS

Because of the nature of the knowledge construction approach, social constructivism, the results of this study are based on subjective and inter-subjective discursive configurations which emerged from

³ In this regard, all the restaurant interviews were conducted in Italian, thus the totality of the excerpts in the findings section is translated by the author. Concerning tourists, interviews took place generally in English, with a few exceptions. Where tourists' quotes were originally in Italian, it is reported after the quotation.

the encounter between the author and the research participants. Due to this, the author's biases and assumptions have certainly influenced the outcomes of this thesis. In practice, during interviews and conversations, the direction of the discussions was steered by the researcher in different ways, in some cases towards the implicit view of the researcher. Those considerations, although highlighting the non-generalizability of the study, are in line with what stated in section 3.1 and therefore do not lower the quality of the study.

4.4.2 SAMPLING LIMITATIONS

Concerning the sampling, interviewing a greater number of ethnic restaurants would have provided more insightful and nuanced perspectives on many of the topics discussed in this thesis. This is partially due to the difficulty encountered in approaching immigrants and gaining their trust, both due to cultural distance and communication barriers. In fact, a significant number of ethnic restaurants were approached, but only a few showed to be willing for an interview. Nonetheless, a greater than expected number of typically Genoese restaurants and tourists partly balances the scarcity of ethnic restaurants in the sample.

4.4.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS LIMITATIONS

With regards to data collection and analysis, some limitations have to be pointed out. First of all, limited time allocated for fieldwork did not allow the author to carry out the research as originally intended, with more emphasis on participant observation and other methods, such as visual research. In this regard, it needs to be underlined that data gathered via participant observation did not contribute significantly to the research conclusion, as it focused on aspects that were eventually not of primary importance for this thesis' arguments.

Second, an overly ambitious conceptual focus made it difficult for the author to report certain topics. Because of this, a part of the interviews' content, although deemed of interest, was not included in the findings of this thesis. For example, tourists were asked several questions about their background, traveling experience, motives for traveling, etc. Nonetheless, data coming from those questions were not included in the final version of the thesis report, as it was not considered adding depth to the study.

Third, as this research was carried out by a bachelor's student with limited experience in individual qualitative research projects, the collection and the analysis of data was sometimes inconsistent in its content and structure. In practice, certain questions were only asked to some participants after reflecting on the process of previous interviews and thus several themes and categories only emerged in the later phases of the fieldwork. All things considered, despite the above-mentioned limitations affected the conclusions of this study, the research process associated with it constituted a significant learning experience for the author.

4.5 PARTICIPANT'S PROFILES

This section provides a general overview of each interviewed restaurant to help the reader better contextualize some of the respondent's propositions. Concerning tourists, who hailed from Argentina, California (USA), Canada, Colombia, Belgium, Slovakia and the United Kingdom, providing detailed information was not deemed beneficial for the purpose of this study.

Ristorante del Pozzo

Introduction: *Ristorante del Pozzo* is a historical high-end restaurant which originally made Tuscan and then Genoese typical food. In 2012 the restaurant was taken over by the last and current management which, without changing the style of the establishment, made the prices more accessible so that almost everyone could afford eating there.

Ownership: The owner is a native Genoese person.

Customers: At lunchtime, the restaurant is especially popular among middle-class workers when there is a special "business lunch" menu. For dinner, couples and tourists prevail.

Promotion: Their business is promoted via social media and local TV channels.

Employees: Four Italians, two Moroccans and one Bengali.

Da Aurelia

Introduction: *Da Aurelia* is a historical *trattoria*⁴ founded in 1917. The restaurant was made famous by Aurelia, the woman who run it cooking exclusively traditional Genoese recipes from 1947 to 2008.

Ownership: The restaurant is currently run by Aurelia's daughter-in-law, a native Genoese person who has worked there since 1985.

Customers: Despite being initially frequented by mainly blue-collar workers; the restaurant is now popular among all social classes. The number of tourists has grown since 1992, with a dramatic spike in the last few years.

Promotion: Mostly done by word of mouth, guidebooks and domestic and international newspapers articles.

Employees: Five Italians, two Filipino, one Moroccan and one Nigerian.

Trattoria della Rupe

Introduction: *Trattoria della Rupe*, opened in 2017, is a socially oriented restaurant with the mission of contributing to the welfare of the local community. To do this, people from disadvantaged social groups are offered a job there. Moreover, low prices also for dinner are meant to attract a clientele of mainly local families which cannot afford eating out often. Finally, for each customer one euro is invested in local community projects. Their cuisine is mainly inspired from the Genoese and Italian traditions.

Ownership: The restaurant is owned by a native Genoese in partnership with a Turin-born chef who has lived in Genoa for the last decade.

Customers: Most of the customers are local families and workers. Tourists go there occasionally, mostly for dinner.

Promotion: Word of mouth, occasionally press and media.

Employees: Five Italians, five foreigners from Africa, Albania and Haiti.

⁴ *Trattoria* refers to a small, simple and inexpensive restaurant, usually family-run.

La Fainà de Zena

Introduction: *La Fainà de Zena* is a historical establishment dating back to 1880 which, as today, has always proposed traditionally Genoese dishes and products. In addition to sit-in service in the numerous halls, take away service is possible for certain foods.

Ownership: The establishment is owned by the same Genoese family since 1950.

Customers: The clientele, which back in the days consisted mainly of port workers, is now dominated by middle-class workers and tourists, which amount up to 50% of the total customers.

Promotion: Word of mouth, famous for their typicity and traditionality.

Employees: All Italians, four family members and four employees from Genoa.

Gastronomia da Giorgetta

Introduction: *Gastronomia da Giorgetta*, opened in 1975, is a small business which combines typical Genoese food sales with sit-in restaurant service.

Ownership: Owned by a couple, the wife being Genoese and the husband originally from Apulia.

Customers: Most of the customers are local people, tourists are a sizeable minority.

Promotion: Word of mouth.

Employees: One Genoese employee plus the owners.

Ristorante la Vedetta

Introduction: Opened in 2004, *Ristorantela Vedetta* is specialized in traditional and typical cuisine from Genoa and Liguria.

Ownership: Since 2009, the restaurant is owned by man originally from Peru and a Genoese woman.

Customers: For lunch mainly local workers, for dinner mainly domestic and international tourists.

Promotion: N.A.

Employees: Two Genoese employees, plus the owners.

Trattoria del Pesciolino

Introduction: Opened in 2015 by a young woman with previous experience in the marketing field, *Trattoria del Pesciolino* is a small laboratory-restaurant which proposes innovative recipes blending tradition and contamination from Southern Italy, the Italian islands and other countries.

Ownership: The owners are a native Genoese woman with a background in marketing and communication and a Genoese man with a background in hospitality.

Customers: Customers are varied, being 70% local Genoese people and 30% tourists from various countries.

Promotion: Because of the owner's background, social media and internet are the main promotion tools.

Employees: Uncertain number of employees (nine according to their website, personal estimate of 10-11), all under 35, mostly from Italy but also with mixed backgrounds (ex. Japanese-Italian).

Da Kader

Introduction: Opened in 2003, *Da Kader* is a sit-in mid-sized restaurant specialized in traditional Senegalese cuisine. The décor is typically African with paintings and sculptures made by the owner's brother.

Ownership: The owner is a Senegalese man who emigrated to Genoa in 1980 and has worked in restaurants' kitchens since an early age.

Customers: The clientele is mainly composed by local Genoese people and tourists. Senegalese people are a minority.

Promotion: Word of mouth, social media.

Employees: Currently three Senegalese, in the past they also employed Italians and Germans.

Perù Mi Amor

Introduction: *Perù Mi Amor* is a sit-in mid-sized restaurant specialized in traditional Peruvian cuisine.

Ownership: The owner is a Peruvian person who emigrated to Genoa in 2004 whose family previously owned restaurants in Peru.

Customers: The clientele is mainly composed of locals (both Genoese people and South American immigrants) and tourists.

Promotion: Social media, belonging to the Ligurian Peruvian community.

Employees: Six Peruvians and one Ecuadorean.

Kebab del Porto

Introduction: Opened around 2008, *Kebab del Porto* is a Kebab house which proposes dishes typical of the Turkish and mid-eastern tradition together with Italian and international staples, such as pizza and burgers. The owner would like to add Afghani dishes but that is not possible for space and facilities reasons.

Ownership: The current owners are Afghani political refugees who emigrated in Genoa in 2015 and took over the establishment the following year.

Customers: Both local Genoese and tourists.

Promotion: Limited at the moment, but there are plans to open Facebook and Instagram pages.

Employees: N.A. (At least four according to personal observations)

Lanz Op

Introduction: Opened in 2018, *Lanz op* is a small Senegalese eatery with a few tables and mainly take away service. The business was opened to provide food to the numerous Senegalese community in the area.

Ownership: The owner is a Senegalese woman who emigrated to Genoa in 2001.

Customers: Mostly immigrants from Senegal and other African countries, but also local Genoese and tourists.

Promotion: N.A.

Employees: N.A. (At least three according to personal observations)

Comida del Mundo

Introduction: Opened in 2013, *Comida del Mundo* is composed by a restaurant with no table service and a pub. Their cuisine is firstly inspired by the Spanish tapas but also influenced by ethnic cuisines and experimentation.

Ownership: Ownership: The owners are a native Genoese man and a Spanish woman.

Customers: The clientele is varied, encompassing people from 20 to 70 years old. At lunchtime, workers between 30 and 50 predominate, while at dinner workers are complemented by younger and older people as well. Most of the customers are locals, both Genoese and foreigners. Tourists are scarce.

Promotion: Social media.

Employees: Three Genoese, one Nigerian and one Romanian.

CHAPTER 5: GENOESE FOODSCAPE – FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 HOW ARE CONCEPTS SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED? AN OVERVIEW OF TRADITIONAL, TYPICAL AND ETHNIC.

In the next sections of this thesis, concepts such as traditional, typical and ethnic will be key terms in discourses of immigrant inclusion in Genoa's foodscape and social fabric. Because of this, it is particularly important to have an overview of how these concepts are intended by participants, who socially construct them in disparate ways.

5.1.1 TRADITIONAL, TYPICAL AND LOCAL

This section presents the ways in which Genoese restaurants understood traditional and typical, in the context of food and cuisine. During the interview processes, a third concept often arose: the one of local food. To begin with, it is striking to notice that the difference between traditional and typical is not clear to everybody:

“Meh, I would say that... traditional and typical... there's no difference” – *Gastronomia da Giorgetta*

Ristorante la Rupe also considered traditional and typical as synonyms, opposing them with local:

“So, between typical and traditional I don't find big differences, between typical-traditional and local, yes, because locally there can be a tradition linked to a place. *Sciacchetrà* is a typical wine of a particular area of Liguria, which are *Cinque Terre*, but the wines that we have in Liguria are different from those. So, that's the local. [...] The traditional is instead that which is common to the whole region, or to the whole city” – *Ristorante la Rupe*

In *Ristorante la Rupe's* answer, local takes the place of what is meant by many others as typical, who associate it with a specific locality. This is illustrated by the following two quotes:

“Tradition can be something that you also inherit from your family history, right? The typicality of a place is that one. [...] If you go to Recco, what comes to your mind? *Focaccia di Recco*, because it is typical of that territory, right? I really see tradition as something that you carry with you, your [cultural] baggage [...]” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

“[...] Typical cuisine is maybe more circumscribed, I don't know. [...] at the moment I would say that a typical cuisine is typical of the center of Genoa. In Sestri⁵, for example there is a different typicality for certain things. For example, I know they make a pumpkin pie that you can't find anywhere in the centre here, you only find it there because it is typical of Sestri. [...] It gives me the idea that it is something related to a more specific

⁵ Sestri is a neighbourhood located in the west part of Genoa.

area, instead tradition is something which has much older roots perhaps ... but not even that, it is something which embraces more people, a broader context [...].” – *Da Aurelia*

In the above two answers, traditional is seen as something different than typical, in the first case associated with someone's family history and in the second one as something broader and more ancient. Another interesting remark on the dissimilarity between typical and traditional is made by *Ristorante la Vedetta*, which despite initially thinking the two terms had the same meaning argued that:

“To me, they are used to define the same thing. Traditional derives from the tradition and is a very ancient thing, but we don't know if that ancient thing didn't arrive from somewhere else. So, [...] stockfish is traditional of Genoa, however, stockfish is caught in Norway. So, stockfish is not typical, it is traditional. Maybe *Pesto alla Genovese* is typical, because [...] it is made with the basil of Prà⁶, for a long time, since always. So typical for me is autochthonous, a local thing. Instead, traditional is perhaps something that has got into the culture with time, I think” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

In this last case, traditional is again characterized as something very ancient but that can still have roots outside its current area. On the other hand, typical emerged as something both traditional and exclusively prepared with ingredients sourced locally. Along the same lines, the association of traditional with something ancient is reiterated by *Comida del Mundo*, though its owner focuses more on the difference between typical and local food:

“Well, yes, for sure. [...] If we speak of traditional then you need to look for the ancient traditional Genoese cuisine, those five or six dishes that are still passed on. What is typical is... anything can become typical. Genoa's pizza can become typical of Genoa, I mean pizza is from Naples but it becomes typical of Genoa. *Focaccia di Recco*, doesn't mean that focaccia was born in Recco, [it means] that is focaccia typical of Recco. And local means it's situated in that place, let's say a local brewery. For example, we collaborate a lot with a San Remo brewery, let's say it's local because it's nearby, which makes excellent beers. They make them here, with Italian products and everything, but it also makes other types of beers, foreign, European, salty, I mean non-traditional, but still local.” – *Comida del Mundo*

Of very different views is *La Fainà de Zena*, whose owner does not associate typical with a territory or a locality but sees it as something less rigorous than traditional, which has origins in ancient times and possesses precise characteristics:

“They are synonyms but different, in the sense that traditional must really reflect the traditional recipe. That is, for example, our vegetable pies have *prescinseua* as their main ingredient, which is a rennet produced by Virtus Liga here in *Corso Italia* in Genoa and therefore the traditional must respect that recipe. Typical might be the same vegetable pie, typical Genoese, but instead that *prescinseua* maybe containing ricotta, another creamy

⁶ Prà is a neighbourhood located in the most occidental part of Genoa, famous for its basil production.

cheese [...], but it is not really traditional, that is, it does not reflect the ancient recipe that should instead reflect. They could be mistaken for the same word, but I don't think it's the case" – *La Fainà de Zena*

This view is partly in opposition with *Da Aurelia's* idea of tradition as something broader and more general than typicality. Finally, *Trattoria del Pesciolino* provides a completely different and more abstract characterization of these three concepts:

"Of course, they are three different concepts. "Traditional" has the acceptance of a formal repetition of a set of rules, almost like a ceremony, in this case around a dish. "Local" focuses more on the geographical delimitation of a recipe, ingredient, custom. Whereas "typical" is perhaps a folkloristic acceptance, almost as if it were an adjective that can also be used to indicate a phenomenology." – *Trattoria del Pesciolino*

5.1.1.1 TRADITIONAL, TYPICAL AND LOCAL | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Some general trends can be seen from the above-presented answers. Firstly, many respondents had a varying degree of confusion regarding the difference between typicality and tradition. Secondly, typicality was in many cases – but not always (cf. *La Fainà de Zena*) – described as something with a strong connection with a particular locality. Also, in some cases typical was seen as a subset of traditional (cf. *Ristorante la Vedetta*), while in others it was not (cf. *Comida del Mundo*). In particular, *Ristorante la Vedetta's* characterization of typicality resonates with Grasseni's (2015) idea of typical as something which combines traditions with locality. Finally, there was an almost unanimous agreement on the fact that traditional food is something ancient, passed from generation to generation.

Still, in the discussions with participants, much more about traditionality emerged. Particularly animated was the debate on the nature of traditions: are they something static and hardly modifiable, or is there a continuous evolution that allows changes and external influences? The next section will explore the views of both restaurants and tourists about the matter.

5.1.2 TRADITION: STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

5.1.2.1 RESTAURANTS

On the nature of traditions, a continuum between static and dynamism can be identified. Starting with the most unalterable positions, *La Fainà de Zena* clarifies that tradition is something that belongs to the past, and that the only change that can be seen in their context is the rediscovery of the importance of using local ingredients instead of the ever more present imported ones:

"[Our tradition] changed: more and more we pay attention to products from our territory, and in any case we are careful not to take a crate of lemons from China, so to speak, that in case we send it back [...]. So, more than anything else we are very careful not to get products that are not good to cook our dishes, that are not perfectly suitable, that's it." – *La Fainà de Zena*

Similarly, *Da Aurelia* sees tradition as something rather fixed. That said, the owner notices that some aspects, as certain sauces and condiments, are subject to the socio-economic context of a time:

“To me, tradition has some fixed points, some fundamental points from which you cannot move away. What perhaps changed a little over time in traditional cuisine, [...], it's the condiments. There is a tendency to use less and less heavy condiments. But to me this can be explained by the fact that my mother-in-law came out of the period of the war, from the period of hunger, when once you could eat normally people tried to get nourished a lot, to make richer things, more nutritious, more everything. So, I think it's that that brought her, as many elders I had the chance to talk with, that brought here to think in that way, that food needed to be very rich” – *Da Aurelia*

Moving to more nuanced opinions, *Ristorante la Vedetta* articulated that:

“Tradition is static, tradition is always static, not only here but everywhere. And... not static still, but it moves so slowly that appears to be static, but then very slowly also there things change, right? And it moves so slowly that you are not able to see it, but then with the passing of time you realize how things change.” – *Ristorante La Vedetta*

By the same token, *Trattoria della Rupe* elaborated that:

“[...] Tradition is changed with very long-term cultural processes. Because if today I begin to introduce an ingredient into a typical, traditional preparation, and this thing is liked and spreads, maybe not in a virally but spreads first locally, then widens and spreads like wildfire, but then it is a journey that can last decades. For sure it can change, but it is the result of a series of experiences and situations. [...] Tradition is not made by one, or by a repetition of preparations” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

Particularly interesting are the reflections of *Comida del Mundo* which, after reasoning that the dynamicity of traditions is determined by who interprets and constructs them, contended that although Genoese culinary traditions are open, the situation is different for Genoese people:

“Actually, the Genoese tradition would be open for those who ... Genoa has always been a port city, the tradition, culinary too, has always dishes of easy contamination and adaptation in various ways. You can eat *focaccia* with whatever you want, we eat pesto with *trofie* but I mean you can eat it with a lot of other things. The Genoese [person] sometimes is not so open in respect of tradition, but the tradition, yes, is certainly open.” – *Comida del Mundo*

Finally, *Trattoria del Pesciolino* underscored that although tradition is flexible by nature its protection is essential:

“Tradition is a code, a heritage, modifiable in a thousand ways because we don't have any obligation to execute recipes exactly to the gram. Still, it needs to be safeguarded because there cannot exist any innovation without a profound knowledge of tradition. To me, it's like the primordial soup from which everything is born and in which, if one needs to find oneself, one returns. – *Trattoria del Pesciolino*

5.1.2.2 TOURISTS

From the tourists' point of view, only one respondent clearly characterized tradition as something immutable:

“So, to me traditional is what it's been made for a great many years, a great many. Still, I saw that also in cuisines they make a lot of fusion stuff, they keep the traditional and they mix it with some new things. But for me traditional is what has always been done, so [it is] static” – *Adela, Colombian*

All the other respondents generally see tradition as something dynamic and in evolution, although in different ways. One tourist from Canada underlined that a timespan of a few decades is sufficient for traditional food to change:

“It's a good question.... I think for it to be traditional it needs to have been around for at least a certain period of time. So, food that was developed this year will be traditional in 20 years or so. [...] I think our kids will... I think the people who live here would have to adopt that new style or new food or new dish for it to become traditional, it has to become that a lot of people know about.” – *Matt, Canadian*

Of comparable opinions are Tim, who concisely stated that “tradition is always evolving”, and Ana, who conveyed that:

“[Tradition] can evolve because in my opinion tradition should kind of [...] get better or be adapted at the time in which we are living. So, something traditional should be also like... could be improved by time, and it can change.” – *Ana, Slovakian*

Going into more depth, Julia argued that:

“Oh, I worked a lot on this, I'm against the view that sees that everything has to stay exactly like that, because it doesn't exist, it's a myth, there was always change, and always influence between all the cultures. It's just a myth. I'm sure that the local cuisine of Genoa was influenced during all the history by other cultures, and invaders, and etcetera”. – *Julia, Belgian-Israeli*

Lastly, Isabella provides a two-sided interpretation of tradition, in some ways echoing the words of *Trattoria dal Pesciolino*:

“I think [tradition] is dynamic, not something static. Because it [...] bring[s] to our own cultures stuff from another cultures, so it's kind of an evolution and an exchange, but there are some things, some habits, some folklore, that's not changing, that's meant to be kept for history, having this... [...] I think they [traditions] should be preserved as something that's part of that culture, because that's something that has reasons to be like that, and it has a time and it has a place, so I think it's important to have an [...] identity! – *Isabela, Argentinian*

5.1.2.3 TRADITION: STATIC OR DYNAMIC | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

In light of the above-reported opinions, it can be argued that both restaurants and tourists generally see traditions as something rather dynamic. However, exceptions exist (cf. *La Fainà de Zena*, *Da Aurelia* and *Adela*), and the way dynamicity is characterized varies considerably among respondents. Particularly relevant to note is the fact that, although many respondents identify tradition as something dynamic and in evolution, they still see it as a somewhat objective entity that exists in its own right. In this regard, the only exception is *Comida del Mundo* characterization of tradition as something purely socially constructed, whose meaning depends on personal attributions. This last view is particularly akin to Handler and Linnekin (1984) and Bendix (1989) ideas of tradition as something socially constructed and imbued with socio-economic and cultural aspects. Indeed, by claiming that “the Genoese [...] is not so open in respect of tradition, but the tradition [...] is certainly open”, *Comida del Mundo* underscores that Genoese tradition is made static not because of its intrinsic features, but because the people who attribute it meaning are not willing to see it as something changeable and adaptable.

5.1.3 ETHNIC AND INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

This final conceptual section analyses the processes of social construction of ethnic cuisine and foods both from the restaurants and from the tourists' standpoints. In the discussion about ethnic cuisine, reflecting on the distinction between ethnic and international restaurants played a role.

5.1.3.1 RESTAURANTS

First of all, three restaurants associate ethnic with the cuisine of one particular country, whereas international as a something drawing from different parts of the world:

"Ethnic let's say is typical of that... For example, a Chinese restaurant will make Chinese cuisine, so its ethnicity is that one. Bangladesh will make Bengali cuisine, isn't? International, in my opinion it is that kind of cuisine that encompasses all these groupings of ethnicities. [...]. If I go to a place that makes ethnic cuisine, maybe I go to the Nigerian restaurant, I expect to eat Nigerian cuisine and not pasta with tomato sauce." – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

"I am not very knowledgeable on the subject, let's say so... with international cuisine I see a menu that can include different nations, with ethnic I see it exclusively concerning that specific cuisine [...]" – *La Fainà de Zena*

"Well, from my point of view, as a layman of cuisines, ethnic cuisine is typical of a country, so if I go to eat Mexican or Peruvian, I go eat ethnic cuisine. International cuisine for me is that cuisine that offers you a wide variety of dishes that can come from the north and south of the world" – *Trattoria della Rupe*

Along similar lines, *Da Aurelia* identifies ethnic as something peculiar to an ethnic group:

“So ethnic depends on... [...] Ethnic can be the Moroccan cuisine, which is made of kebab and couscous, that is something that is really part of a people, an ethnic group. International... maybe ethnic is something less widespread than international cuisine, because I think that international cuisine can be proposed by people who belong to different countries, a bit everywhere [...]. International cuisine is less peculiar, more general.” – *Da Aurelia*

Interestingly, in all the above-cited answers respondents exemplify ethnic cuisine with extra European countries, namely from Asia, Africa and South America. Of radically different views are *Ristorante la Vedetta* and *Comida del Mundo*, which criticize the commonplace association of ethnic with something exotic and culturally distant. Specifically, both state that anything that is traditional is ethnic, even traditional Genoese cuisine. This can be seen in the following two quotes:

“Anything that is traditional is ethnic. Even Genoese cuisine is ethnic. Of course, anything that is clearly part of a group of people, a city, a region but also a nation is ethnic.” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

“According to the etymology of the word I would define even *pasta al pesto* ethnic. Because it is typical of the Genoese ethnicity. I don't know, I don't really know how to use it, that's why I don't write ethnic food, but food from the world. In the sense of all over the world, for me any food is ethnic.” – *Comida del Mundo*

Elaborating more on the topic, *Comida del Mundo* puts forward some more reflections on the socio-political consequences of how ethnic is constructed, claiming that this word is associated with cultural distance and is guilty of creating divisions:

“Even now they were talking about them... in the city council they discussed to ban ethnic foods [from the historic centre] and almost everyone made them notice: then what does it mean? You don't want hamburgers anymore because that's ethnic food? Then, no, the non-European ones? What are they talking about? Like goulash is ethnic, but is from Hungary, is it ok or not? And Greek dishes? Moroccan food? If someone makes couscous tabulé? Where is the problem there? We need to clarify. To me, what the masses intend [to be ethnic] is food from other continents, mainly Asia, Africa and South America mainly. They don't define a burger as ethnic, even if it is originally from Hamburg and then from the USA, but also that one is ethnic actually. Also because this word creates some divisions, that's it.” – *Comida del Mundo*

5.1.3.2 TOURISTS

Relatedly to what pronounced by *Comida del Mundo*, most tourists characterized ethnic cuisine as something coming from far away countries and culturally distant. Particularly exemplificative in this regard are Ana's and Adela's interpretations:

“I would say ethnic is more if we go out of Europe. [...] Let's say that for me it's... it means that ethnic is things that are based somewhere else than Europe. That is something that does not have origin in Genoa, so that's something ethnic, [...] it's something [...] with ethnical groups who came to Genoa and created or started to sell, whatever. So, it's something that was not probably here before but was created when people started to move

and travel. They were trying to find a better place to live, so they have created something like their own and that they could share with their ethnic group. – *Ana, Slovakian*

“So, if you tell me ethnic, I think about ethnicities. I don't know if I am wrong but the group of people who come from a culture... like I don't know how to explain you, the Indians... No, it's not the Indians, the *indigenas*? Yes, indigenous so those people that have another food culture, that make dishes in a completely different way than us and maybe focus on... I don't know, it's another kind of cuisine, it would be another very interesting thing to see, but how can I explain you... how...? In the jungle, I imagine things of the jungle, I don't know if I am right, I don't know. [...] I would think about Africa, the Amazon, South America.” – *Adela, Colombian*

Isabela, inquired about how she would characterize something as ethnic, remarked:

“I've seen it on the names, on the colors of the clothes, I mean the typical way of dressing of other cultures, I've heard them talking in other languages, what else... they kind of sometimes explain that this is from another region, so it's not like that hard to notice.” – *Isabela, Argentinean*

5.1.3.3 ETHNIC AND INTERNATIONAL CUISINE | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Summing up, it is evident that the term ethnic is associated with a cultural, more than geographical, distance and that it indeed refers to something seen as remote and different. This is confirmed by my personal observations in the historical centre. One example of this is a city street panel which opposes typical shops and restaurants with ethnic ones. In the panel, shown in Figure 5, ethnic shops are depicted with the icon of supposedly African people carrying jars on their heads.



FIGURE 5: STREET PANEL INDICATING DIFFERENT KINDS OF BUSINESSES IN THE HISTORICAL CENTRE.

PHOTOGRAPH BY THE AUTHOR.

5.2 GENOESE RESTAURANTS' VIEWS ON ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN THE GENOESE FOODSCAPE

This section examines the dynamics between typically Genoese restaurants (henceforth: Genoese restaurants) and ethnic diversity within Genoa's historic centre foodscape. First, the way foreign workers are embedded and play a role in Genoese restaurants is presented and discussed. Second, a brief section looks at the way Genoese restaurants see Genoese elements within ethnic restaurants. Lastly, the views of Genoese restaurants in relation to ethnic diversity in the historic centre and in its foodscape are proposed and analysed.

5.2.1 FOREIGN PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE WITHIN GENOESE RESTAURANTS

Concerning the presence of foreign workers in typically Genoese restaurants, only two of the six analysed businesses had exclusively Genoese employees. Those two businesses have been operating for 40 and 140 years, and one of them prides itself to be a historical and traditional shop in which their employees have been working for decades. All the other Genoese restaurants employ at least one foreign person, but the way this is presented by the establishments varies considerably.

Ristorante del Pozzo affirmed that they have both staff from Italy and other countries, thus defining their business multi-ethnic:

“So, there are three employees in the kitchen and four in the dining hall including me. The countries... Let's say we are a multi-ethnic business, so there are Italian employees and employees who come from other countries. We have one employee [...] from Bangladesh and two employees from Morocco.” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

When asked if their foreign employees had any influence on their cuisine, the owner said that they do not and that, on the other hand, foreign cooks are better suited to cook dishes in the way the main chef wants. In her words:

"So, no [...] I found myself better at working with foreign cooks than with Italian cooks. Because obviously the Italian chef already has his own culinary experience and wants to impose his, let's say, culinary creed, while the foreign chef maybe not having a great knowledge of Italian cuisine [...] absorbs a lot of what you can transmit him [...]. So, he proposes that dish exactly as I did it, that's it [...]. It's a bit like if I had to go [...] to China to be a cook in a Chinese restaurant. You understand [...] that I wouldn't know where to start because Chinese cuisine is not my cuisine. So, since a Chinese chef teaches me it's like if I was a child in first grade, and so I learn as they give me their methodology [...].” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

Da Aurelia stated that they have, in addition to family members, three Italian and four foreign employees. During the interview, it was stressed that people are chosen to work there because of their work attitude, not their nationality.

“Look, our employees remain here if they are capable. There is no nationality distinction, nothing, so we have three Italian employees, other than me, my husband and my son. Then there is a Moroccan waitress, very skillful, and two Filipino collaborators in the kitchen and another helper in the kitchen, from Nigeria. All working here legally, I am glad that all the people that are here work legally and have a residency permit [...]” – *Da Aurelia*

However, the owner acknowledged that many customers are surprised to see foreigners working in the kitchen, thinking that they could negatively affect the restaurant's typically Genoese image:

“Many customers seeing this non-Genoese staff ask me: ‘Excuse me, a restaurant with all these characteristics, typically Genoese cuisine, typically Genoese décor, 100, 102 years that you are in Genoa, why don't you have Genoese employees?’ That's because I found better people who are not Genoese, I mean it's not that they necessarily need to be... Of course, if there had been very talented Genoese people coming here asking for work super brilliant and skilled it [the restaurant] perhaps would have that added touch of *Genovesità*, but we prefer interculturality” – *Da Aurelia*

Despite this, the owner remarked that their employees' background does not have any influence on their culinary proposal and on the style of the restaurant, which would otherwise lose its character:

“No, on the style of the place absolutely not, they all had to adapt to the Genoese typicality, also the ones who help me in the kitchen, we never introduced dishes which are not typical of the Genoese cuisine. Because it [the restaurant] would have otherwise lost its nature” – *Da Aurelia*

Ristorante la Vedetta disclosed that they are a small reality and that all their employees are Italian, but not for an ethnic matter, just because they work well with them. Nonetheless, the owner and main chef himself is of Peruvian origin and admitted that he has an influence on traditional recipes. When asked if his background had an influence on their cuisine, he replied:

“Yes, yes, of course, I do it on purpose, I have fun with it. [...] I put some non-Genoese spices, spices I've grown up with. It works, people like it, they also have fun. [The dishes] are typically Genoese, and then once in a while I put some small non-Genoese stuff. So, sometimes we have something contaminated. Even though that word is a bit ugly.” – (*Ristorante la Vedetta*)

Finally, *Trattoria della Rupe* stated that even though 50% of their employees are foreigners this does not have an influence on their culinary proposal, which is about the Genoese and Italian tradition. Despite this, when asked about a possible inclusion of dishes from other cuisines, the owner specified that “they don't exclude it a priori”.

5.2.1.1 FOREIGN PRESENCE WITHIN GENOESE RESTAURANTS | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

From the section above, it can be contended that most of the restaurants, despite welcoming foreign and immigrant employees, are generally unaffected by their presence in their culinary proposal. This resonates with Counihan (2016) argument of protectionism of culinary practices in Italy.

Nonetheless, exceptions do exist and, as in the case of *Ristorante la Vedetta*, it ought to be recognized that immigrants are not necessarily labourers, but that they can be owning and directing even “traditional” and “typical” Italian businesses. In those cases, more culinary leeway can be expected, with foreign influences and contaminations of traditional recipes.

5.2.2 MIXING GENOESE AND ETHNIC: A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Considering restaurants which mix Genoese and ethnic cuisines in their proposal, *Da Aurelia*'s owner is not convinced that it could be a good combination, as the identity and character of the restaurant would be weakened.

“But it seems to me that this coexistence would pervert the nature ... a place needs its own peculiarity, its own... to reflect the expectations of arriving customers and in my opinion this mixture would remove... for example here having two types of cuisines, suppose one Arabic and one Genoese, it would seem to me a bit like water and wine, a mixture that would not be the best, I would see it a bit as dispersing... what you want to know and appreciate.” – *Da Aurelia*

Moreover, reflecting on restaurants which propose a mix of ethnic and Genoese-Italian cuisine, *Ristorante la Vedetta*'s owner, on a similar line as *Da Aurelia*, remarks that one needs to be careful not to lose its identity and character and not sway too far from the chosen label. According to him, it is particularly important to have a valid reason to mix cuisines, especially considering the customers' demand:

“It depends a bit on the idea of the restaurateur, on what you want to offer. Because if you make a traditional and typical cuisine and then other things you need to explain the reason. If you make typical Senegalese cuisine you need to explain me why you are including typically Genoese dishes. Maybe because you want to gain some more Genoese customers who don't want to eat typically Senegalese dishes, and in this way maybe knowing that there are those dishes, they come eat at yours. If there is no reason, it seems to me a bit of a commercial move, that's it, eh. [...] When you give yourself, how can I say... you limit yourself, you have a parameter, I only make traditional, you create a parameter that you should respect, right?” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

Nonetheless, *Ristorante la Vedetta* recognizes that now many restaurants fall beyond labels such as typical and ethnic, defining themselves laboratory-restaurant and experimenting with new recipes. In these cases, the customer needs to be particularly careful in what he or she looks for:

“If instead you... as now is trending in all the places that don't consider themselves traditional but just restaurants, now it's a trend to name yourself restaurant-laboratory because in that way at least you play more, people there will find a bunch of stuff that is not related at all with typicity, they are experimental dishes. So, you need to be careful of this, but it depends on what you look for.” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

5.2.2.1 MIXING GENOESE AND ETHNIC | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

From the answers above, it can be seen how both traditionally Genoese and ethnic cuisines are characterized as something strictly related to identity and unicity: combining the two is seen as not desirable, as it would undermine the existence of something which is representative of a broader cultural heritage. To put it another way, traditional and ethnic cuisines can be seen in this context as heritage cuisines, as proposed by Timothy (2015) and Di Giovine (2016). Indeed, being important markers of identity, both Genoese and other ethnic cuisines are seen as something to be preserved and not contaminated (Di Giovine, 2016).

5.2.3 ETHNIC AND TYPICAL IN THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF GENOA: A GENOESE PERSPECTIVE

When asked their opinion about the presence of different kinds of cuisines – typical and ethnic – in the historic city centre, most Genoese restaurants were generally positive about the diversity of cuisines from all over the world. The following sections elaborate on Genoese restaurants' reflections about the existence of traditional and ethnic foodways within Genoa's foodscape. To facilitate readability and logical flow, findings are grouped under thematic sections containing the opinions of one or two establishments.

5.2.3.1 LA FAINÀ DE ZENA AND GASTRONOMIA DA GIORGETTA: WELCOMING DIVERSITY, WITH SOME RESERVATIONS

The owner of *La Fainà de Zena* went as far as claiming that she was beyond this argument and that diversity could only be good, also for tourists. In her words:

“Absolutely [the presence ethnic restaurants] is good, also because in that way the offer is wider, and the customer can choose. It is not that if a tourist comes seven days he must eat seven days with us, it is good that he can also taste another... also because in any case restaurants with ethnic or international cuisine always propose reinterpretations linked to the Genoese tradition, so I think it is also interesting to go to them. Let's say, around here we have the place by [ethnic restaurant], who is a very dear friend of ours, now he's on Ramadan and in the evenings he comes to fetch a *farinata*⁷! [...] Yes, of course [I think there is space], let's say that I find this topic outdated. I mean that I wouldn't even think about it, by now I mean, we're all completely... I don't look at this difference! I don't find any difference between me and [ethnic restaurant owner], like we are absolutely colleagues!” – *La Fainà de Zena*

In her answer, the owner highlights that discrimination on the basis of cultural belonging and cuisine is senseless for her. Also, in the context of Genoa's identity and image she thinks there is space for everyone, with no regulatory intervention required to manage the types of businesses and their diversity:

⁷ *Farinata* is a chickpea flour-based flatbread typical of Genoa

“No, [...] for me there is space for everyone, it's not that... I am traditional because I am the daughter of... and I found myself here and then I pursue my roots and my family tradition, but there must be space for everyone, for anything [...]. God forbid, absolutely! [...]. No, according to me it's not possible that there are only traditional restaurants, it needs to be as we are, all varied and different [...]. So, if it's proposed a cuisine, as we said before, international, be it. And also traditional and ethnic cuisine as well.” – *La Fainà de Zena*

Along similar lines, *Gastronomia da Giorgetta* claimed that:

“I think [diversity of cuisines] is a good thing. There should be room for everyone, right? It's right that there are other people, other recipes, it's great. [...] For me, the more we are, the better. There are many recipes, there are people that are different from us, of different language, so it's good, very good!” – *Gastronomia da Giorgetta*

Despite initially embracing diversity with no reservations, when asked whether an excessive presence of foreign restaurants could threaten the city's identity and image, she contended that:

“No, no [they cannot threaten the identity], also because at a certain point they will stop giving them licenses. One [foreign] shop next to the other, even if it's almost happening. But at a certain point they will no longer give them licenses, respect the rules.” – *Gastronomia da Giorgetta*

Following this, being asked whether the distribution of ethnic and traditional businesses should be balanced and regulated she said:

“Yes, absolutely yes. Now there is plenty of foreign places [...]. They all have a bit the things that we make. Well then, they are starting to make Italian things.” – *Gastronomia da Giorgetta*

From what illustrated above, it is clear that, despite welcoming diversity, *Gastronomia da Giorgetta* thinks that a regulated balance between traditionally Genoese and ethnic restaurants is desirable. Moreover, from the two above presented opinions, it can be evinced that ethnic restaurants are affected by Genoese and Italian foodways, as “they propose reinterpretations linked to the Genoese tradition” (*La Fainà de Zena*) and “they are starting to make Italian things” (*Gastronomia da Giorgetta*).

5.2.3.2 DA AURELIA: TRADITION IS ALSO ABOUT EMBRACING DIVERSITY

Another restaurant which had similar but more elaborated views is *Da Aurelia*, whose owner argued that:

“[...] The coexistence with other ways of cooking of other ethnic groups is very good, as it allows... for example us Genoese to get to know things that otherwise we couldn't know.” – *Da Aurelia*

Nonetheless, she contended that tourists are generally looking for something typical of the city they are visiting and not ethnic restaurants.

“What I can see is that tourists especially, when they come to Genoa, at least those who come to us, it is also logical, want to eat Genoese. That is, they are not interested in coming to Genoa and eating couscous, I am talking about couscous but it could be any other dish that is not typical.” – *Da Aurelia*

When asked about the influence that non-typical and ethnic restaurants and shops have on Genoa's identity, *Da Aurelia* excluded any negative impact, stating that the city of Genoa has always welcomed diversity and foreigners through its history. In her words:

“No, definitely not threaten [the identity], because in any case Genoa is a port, a city that has always welcomed non-Genoese people since ancient times, sailors have always been among us. There have always been foreigners, a great many of them have opened businesses, they always dedicated themselves to what they were able to do better, that if they were foreigners was surely not something typically Genoese. So this is not negative, it's not an aspect that can distort the nature of Genoa.” – *Da Aurelia*

Moreover, she underlined the importance of maintaining and persevering the city's typicality and identity, that also consists of embracing different cultures. This is illustrated in the following quote:

“Indeed, the nature of Genoa is precisely this being Genoese and defending our typicality ... No, defending is also the wrong term, to preserve, that's it, our typicality and make it known. Which is the thing that for example I am able to do. But an interesting aspect of Genoa is precisely this being able to welcome and promote other cultures, other ways of presenting itself to the public.” – *Da Aurelia*

On the matter of having a balance between typically Genoese and ethnic restaurants in the historic centre, especially considering destination image and tourism, *Da Aurelia* stated that the argument is two-sided, being both about persevering traditions and welcoming diversity:

“And also here the matter is ambivalent, I think that for any city it's nice to present oneself as what one is, one has always been, as one wants to be, offering its own intimate, its own essence, [...] that to me has something positive, we always try to offer the best of ourselves, also for what concerns the welcoming, not only in the dishes, trying to be as open as we can going a bit against that rumor that the Genoese is closed and hostile, not really expansive... In this sense, according to me, we need to open ourselves up towards everyone, and this is what we are trying to do. Preserving our own characteristics, those shouldn't be lost. I think that for everyone it's right to be true to oneself in everything. Still, it's also good that Genoa can also offer something else, it's not that everyone looks for our *genovesità*. They also look for other aspects, so it's right to welcome them, it's right that they are here.” – *Da Aurelia*

Despite clearly expressing her opinion, *Da Aurelia* points out that in the prevailing mentality locals are averse to excessive foreign presence and influence in the city. This is restated when she talks about how Genoese people long for the past, when most the areas of the historic centre were inhabited by Genoese people, contrarily to nowadays that are populated by immigrants. In her words:

“Sure, then in the common mentality they tell you... Here, in *Maddalena* they are all Moroccans, in the area of *Canneto* they are all Peruvians... But what does it mean, it's only because the Genoese had abandoned those places that were a bit less... a tad to be renovated, and then people who didn't have the means to go anywhere else went there.” – *Da Aurelia*

In stating this, *Da Aurelia* points out that it is not the immigrant's fault if some areas are predominantly inhabited by them, but it is the locals that abandoned those areas in the first place. When inquired on whether the diversity of restaurants and shops should be managed, *Da Aurelia* expressed that it is good when ethnic restaurants of different kinds mingle with Genoese ones. Indeed, noticing a tendency for business belonging to the same ethnic group to stick together, she indicated that the intermingling of immigrants and Genoese is the direction which should be pursued.

“[...] Otherwise it would be like forming ghettos, here all the Senegalese, here only Moroccans... This tendency is almost already here. [...] That's it, I don't think that [ghettoing] is just, because the evolution is being all mixed, right? Here there is one, here that other one, and maybe in conflict with each other under many points of view. [...]” – *Da Aurelia*

5.2.3.3 *RISTORANTE DEL POZZO: THERE IS SPACE FOR EVERYONE, BUT NOT IN THE HISTORIC CENTRE*

Of different views is *Ristorante del Pozzo*, whose owner despite claiming that in a city there should be space for everyone enunciated that she would have kept the historic centre more in line with the Genoese tradition, for the Genoese people.

“So, first of all, I would have preserved the historic centre for us the Genoese [...]. There were shops which sold typical stuff from here and now you go in the historic centre and it's coloured [...], meaning that there are various kinds of shops. Especially if you now go from *Prè* street to the *Commenda* it doesn't even look like you're in Genoa, right? I think there is space for everyone. The world belongs to everyone, right? Still, as a Genoese citizen I would have kept the historic centre, or maybe the [whole] centre, for the Genoese people, also for the tourists who come here.” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

In arguing this, the owner of *Ristorante del Pozzo* recognized that she might be a bit close-minded in that regard, but restated that Genoa is a city of traditions and sailors, not of ethnic businesses:

“From this point of view, I might be a bit close-minded but this is what I would have done. By all means, I repeat here is space for everyone but if you want to open the shop which makes braids like in Nigeria you go open it outside the historic centre. I think that the tourist who comes to Genoa, who wants to visit Genoa, would like to see how the Genoese life looks like, right? [...] And Genoa is a city of sailors and not a city that proposes you... I mean wherever you go now if you go for a tour in the historic centre there are Indians selling phone covers [...]” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

Also, *Ristorante del Pozzo* pointed to a mismatch between the way the historic city centre is promoted, as a place of historical and traditional shops, and the way it is. Specifically, the owner thought that

many of the ethnic shops and restaurants located in the historic centre are not compatible with Genoa's identity and traditions because of their cultural characteristics and products proposal. This is illustrated by the following quote:

“Welcome to where you find historical shops and then you go to Prè street and the Nigerian tells you if you want the wig rather than the braids. Is this typically Ligurian? Really typical? Or I don't know if you want to buy... Now okay come on Ligurian cuisine it's not really a meat-based cuisine but that nobody... You want *luganina* [kind of salami], right? No, and then you go in a butchery where there is written halal. I repeat, without taking anything away because I wouldn't dream of it. But for me these things... integration, yes, but where it's right to do it.” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

Asked about the presence of different ethnic restaurants, *Ristorante del Pozzo's* owner reinforced her argument stating that the historic centre of Genoa should have been preserved in its traditional integrity, especially considering the growing tourism flow. Elaborating more in depth, she explained that the presence of an excessive number of ethnic business in the historic centre has a negative impact on the city's identity and image, and that the municipality of Genoa should not have allowed this to happen. In her words:

“Yes, if you go to the historic centre there is really everything, there is the Nigerian place, the Romanian place, the Chinese place, there's everything. Maybe there are more businesses of foreigners... rather than Ecuadorians, kebabs, I mean all these things that I really don't... I repeat, do it, but the municipality of Genoa should not allow [them] to do it in a UNESCO heritage site and we have the most beautiful historic centre, if they preserved it, the largest of Europe. By all means, I wouldn't like this to come out as a racist, it's not like that, because as you see in my establishment foreigners work well, that's it.” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

“Of course. It has plenty of it [influence]. [...] I mean that's it. Now I say it again, you can open a kebab [house], but it doesn't make sense... don't open it where tourism is, open it I don't know in a centre where there are only students, I'm giving you an example, right? To me, here in the historic centre it hasn't been a fair thing, I repeat, for the Genoese citizen, for the one who wants to propose [something] and make [his/her] own city known. Genoa is not a city of braid-making shops, as kebabs are not traditions either. That's all, well then.” – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

About the way ethnic businesses should be managed and regulated, *Ristorante del Pozzo* proposed that the local government should not allow foreign-owned businesses in the historic city centre, which could operate in other neighborhoods and in the outskirts, where they would not have such a high impact on the city's image. Yet, she felt like economic interests prevailed and that city officials have allowed Chinese investors to acquire a considerable number of businesses, providing licences for any kind of activity to increase the city's revenue.

“I would not allow certain business to open at all, myself. [...] But since we are now invaded by these Chinese for example who are buying everything and everyone. Maybe they need

to get cash rather than... Then they rent and give permits to open certain shops and they give licenses everywhere, they could say no [...]. Do you want to open a store which sells furniture and clothing? I don't know, stuff, everything and more, megastores of this kind, you rather go and get a warehouse in Campi⁸. And you sell your stuff. You understand it's not that you come here and you open the Chinese cuisine shop [...]. No, not here in the historic centre, to me this is not fair [...]" – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

Ultimately, *Ristorante del Pozzo's* owner expressed a nostalgic feeling for her childhood, when she went for groceries with her aunt in the historic centre and she would find a plethora of typical shops run by Genoese people.

"I remember when I was a child that I was going with my aunt, I was going in Prè street and there was really everyone... buying groceries. And there were really all those typical shops, like you would walk in and smell incredible aromas of focaccia, and the fishmonger where all the fishing ships from the port would bring fresh fish, and you would hear the lady screaming at you "ANCHOVIES!" [...]. Just to say, right? Like now, it's really a dream to think about this [...]" – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

Instead, today she does not even feel at home in the same places, which have been taken over by immigrants and lost their traditional character, giving way to foreign flavours and smells. What is more, she now feels threatened and afraid by the way everyone looks at her, to the point that last time she walked there she needed to escape.

"[...] I don't even know if there is any [Genoese] shop left there [in Prè street]. Because I swear the last time I walked there I escaped. At the end I got out, I passed through Gramsci street because, believe me, I was afraid, they were all looking at me, me myself I felt like the foreigner in my country and I had this feeling of uneasiness, because everyone stares at you [...]. Today that one [Prè street] is another world, it's not that one, not that one in which.... You walk there and it doesn't smell like *focaccia* anymore [...]. Now, I don't know, you walk there and you smell kebab spices and curry, those things, here, that's it, well then." – *Ristorante del Pozzo*

5.2.3.4 RISTORANTE LA VEDETTA AND TRATTORIA DELLA RUPE: SHEDDING LIGHT ON SOME LESS POSITIVE ASPECTS

The two remaining restaurants, *Ristorante La Vedetta* and *Trattoria della Rupe*, despite generally welcoming the cultural diversity and the presence of different ethnic restaurants in the historic centre, also shed light on less positive aspects. Starting with the first one, the owner of *Ristorante La Vedetta* stated that a diversity in terms of restaurants is good for the city, especially considering that younger people are more curious to experiment with non-typical cuisines than older generations. Nonetheless, he questioned the quality of many of the ethnic restaurants which populate the historic centre, stating that more work should be done on that regard. In his words:

⁸ Campi is a neighbourhood located in the outskirts of the city

“I don't know if there are quality ethnic restaurants, there are a few but to me more work should be done on that point of view, because to me ethnic restaurants are too homely [...]. The type of establishment, the dish presentation, a slightly more accurate presentation, details, small details. In Genoa there aren't ethnic restaurants of a certain level, that's it. They are all a bit so so. [...] So rather than on the quantity of ethnic shops, be them restaurants or whatever it is, more work should be done on the quality of things, right? Also the ethnic shops themselves, trying to make them a bit nicer...” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

Considering the influence which ethnic businesses have on the city's identity and image, *Ristorante la Vedetta* declared that Genoa's identity has formed through the millennia and he does not see how foreign and ethnic businesses could alter it now and in the future. In the owner's words:

“But, you know, it's part of the human being itself, right? It's something you can't stop, many tried but you can't stop it. Your identity belongs to you, isn't it? You cannot lose it. You must not lose it. I don't see why a Chinese clothing store could put your identity in danger, right? This thing doesn't make sense [...]. I don't believe that this thing can threaten the identity indeed of a city which has a very strong identity, an identity which has gone on for 2000 years. [...] It changed very little in 100 years, so it will not radically change in the next 50 years, I think.” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

Despite this, *Ristorante la Vedetta's* owner stated that in order to improve the image and tourism attractiveness of the historic city centre, work needs to be done both on improving the quality of ethnic restaurants and to ensure a better distribution of businesses of different kinds, again echoing what said by *Da Aurelia*. In particular, he believed that tourists are principally interested in typically Genoese shops and restaurants, and therefore areas with almost exclusively foreign businesses are not desirable. Besides, he insisted on the fact that the municipal government should regulate the distribution of ethnic business to minimize ghettoing and ensure a medley of people from different ethnic groups. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

“If a French tourist comes here to eat in the Chinese restaurant rather than Peruvian restaurant rather than Senegalese restaurant, according to me [he/she] didn't understand anything, isn't it?” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

“[...] But this is certain, no, no, we need to create, always do things in an orderly way. This is important: not to have what then is defined a ghetto, right? [...] When a distinct and fixed ethnic group stays in one single spot, it does no good because it only creates... only malaise, it bothers [you] because then some ideas come to your mind, ideas like in Gramsci street where there are many Chinese restaurants. People complain by saying eh here back in my days there were other shops, other restaurants... and now there are only Chinese. Everything should be distributed in a coordinated way. This would be a very nice thing. You see it if you go to Macelli street, you see the ethnic diversity among clothing shops, or the butcheries, you see the greengrocer popping out that is surely North African, that the grocer[s] who are Indians, you see a bit of ethnic mixture and it's nice if you walk there, it's nice. Because anyway you see that the people are happy, aren't they?” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

Furthermore, *Ristorante la Vedetta* really insisted on the need of having a better organized and cleaner historic centre, so as to improve the experience for locals and tourists alike:

“In any case, it would be good if all the shops organized themselves to keep the city a bit tidier [...]. It would be good if all the shops were nice you know, because the niceness is liked, then it also attracts people, the order, the cleanliness of the streets and all these things, it's a pleasure to see the tourists being happy when coming to Genoa. On the other hand, I am sorry when they slip in some alleys which are dirty [...].” – *Ristorante la Vedetta*

Moving on to the thoughts of *Trattoria della Rupe*, the owner stated that diversity is generally a very good thing because it can facilitate two-way integration between Genoese and immigrants. In spite of this, he underlined that certain kinds of restaurants are in some way “closed” to native Genoese people. More in particular, he enunciated:

“[...] It's nice that these things are here, because everyone presents their own cuisine and so maybe we can integrate with each other by eating out, as long as it's not done in closed environments. For example, here there is a place that makes typically Senegalese cuisine, but I wouldn't step in it as an Italian, maybe it's my personal hesitation, but I don't see many Italians going there. On the contrary, there are Ecuadorian, Colombian, Mexican, Thai and Chinese restaurants that are frequented a bit by everyone. So as long as there is openness let's say in the offer it's a good thing.” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

Prompted to clarify what he meant, he elaborated and explained that this closure, which is also due to the close-mindedness of Genoa as a city, is mostly associated with Africans and stems from a “reverse” prejudice. This mechanism of reverse prejudice foments cultural distance and unwillingness to integrate for certain immigrant groups. In his words:

“We are a closed city and who gets here as a first glance gets the closure in the Genoese, which is not an unmotivated closure, because I need to get to know you and then when I know you, if reciprocally it's worth it, we completely trust each other [...].” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

“For what regards the closure part, that then it's the Africans the big part of closure, to me it also derives from a prejudice the other way around. I mean, thinking to be prejudiced, in the sense that we don't trust them because we don't know their culture, they close themselves like a clam and then say: since you don't want me, you don't deserve me, I am on my side and I don't have any... If you want that I don't want to integrate, then I don't integrate. There is still a bit of racist distance, because then this is it.” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

Additionally, he expressed that Africans are still often associated with illegal activities such as drug dealing, and that this leads to a vicious circle of prejudice. On the other hand, other ethnic groups which are linked with more positive images by the local population are usually more open, also in the context of food and restaurants.

“Also, because mostly the African ethnicity is linked with illegal activity. I don't know why, other than that Italian culture sees north Africans always as *vu cumprà*⁹, as they were once called, and so they are people to be looked with suspicion. By creating this vicious circle of prejudice and thus of deriving racism there is a closure that is almost inevitable. [...] Then there are other cultures that instead are much more open. Using as an example the Brazilian, it's a cuisine from the outside seen as an exotic restaurant, and inside instead there are welcoming people that, whoever you are, welcome you with a smile, etcetera, and are not afraid, they have the right fears but without closing everything.” – (*Trattoria della Rupe*)

Moreover, *Trattoria della Rupe* did not think that the presence of different ethnic groups and cuisines in the historic centre could be a threat to the city's identity and traditions, but only an enrichment. Indeed, he underlined that ethnic diversity, other than being good for immigrants, can stir up interest in locals towards previously unknown products and foods. Eventually, these new products can be assimilated in the local lifestyle and culture to the point that they become normalized. That being said, when asked on whether Genoa's tourism image should be open to ethnic and cultural influences, *Trattoria della Rupe* believed that tourists should know Genoa for its traditions. In his words:

“Actually, they can make comfortable all the people who come from that culture, they can also entice a certain curiosity in local people that look at these products and slowly learn to love them. For example, at the greengrocer the avocado, which is part of the south American culture, is something very popular now. Still, until a few years ago we didn't know it, the same for other things.” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

“I reckon that if someone comes to Genoa as a tourist, it is good that [he/she] knows it for its culinary traditions, as for its historical and architectural tradition. Then if someone comes from Germany and finds the German restaurants which makes the food that they eat at their home, anyone is free to do whatever they want.” – *Trattoria della Rupe*

5.2.3.5 ETHNIC AND TRADITIONAL: A GENOESE PERSPECTIVE | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Because of the variety and the specificity of the responses, drawing conclusions on the way ethnic foodways in Genoa's historic centre are viewed by Genoese restaurants is not practicable. Nonetheless, some insights can be given. Regarding tourism, all the restaurants pointed out that tourists are generally interested in typically Genoese establishments, with only *La Fainà de Zena* stating that ethnic restaurants could be appealing for tourists as well, especially during longer-term stays. Those considerations corroborate the idea that food is a central attraction in a tourism destination (Timothy, 2015; Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) and that eating typical foods is one way of experiencing the city's identity and culture. In the case of Genoa, at least from the restaurants'

⁹ *Vu cumprà* is an Italian neologism used to refer to street peddlers, usually of African origin. The term usually has a derogatory or mocking connotation, and it derives from the Neapolitan terms for “Do you want to buy?”. <http://www.dizionario.rai.it/poplemma.aspx?lid=3752&r=194177>

perspective, unique traditions and typicality make Genoese cuisine a fully-fledged heritage cuisine, which constitutes a significant part of the city's identity.

Concerning the presence of ethnic restaurants in the historic centre, all but one restaurant (*Ristorante del Pozzo*) generally welcomed diverse ethnic foodways. However, other than *La Fainà de Zena*, every restaurant had something to say about the problems around ethnic diversity and the way it should be managed. In all of this, restaurants expressed that ethnic foodways impact the city identity both through its culture and image (see Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). Regarding culture, the most striking view is the one by *Ristorante del Pozzo*, whose owner manifested that an excessive presence of immigrants and ethnic establishments is affecting Genoa's identity from the inside, through changing its culture. Another relevant observation in this regard is made by *Ristorante la Vedetta*, whose owner articulates that a lack of regulation and organization creates social divisions and unease among the historic centre's inhabitants, thus negatively affecting Genoa's identity through its culture¹⁰.

Considering the way ethnic culinary diversity affects the identity of the city through its image, opinions have been incredibly varied. Nonetheless, almost all the respondents acknowledged that Genoa's image is somewhat affected by foreign incursions. In some cases, ethnic foodways are seen as enriching Genoa's foodscape (cf. *Da Aurelia*, *La Fainà de Zena*, *Trattoria della Rupe*) and in others as deteriorating the city's image (cf. *Ristorante del Pozzo*). On the other hand, other restaurants pointed out that ethnic diversity itself is not what improves or worsens the image of the city. Instead, they underscored that more attention should be paid to ensure that ethnic restaurants do not operate in closed environments (cf. *Trattoria della Rupe*) and that efforts are made to increase the quality and organization of all food establishments (cf. *Ristorante la Vedetta*).

¹⁰ Here, an attentive reader could point out an apparent contradiction: how can it be stated that *Ristorante la Vedetta* argues that Genoa's identity is affected by a lack of regulation when the restaurant owner himself enunciated that any foreign or ethnic element cannot change Genoa's strong identity? To solve this apparent paradox, social constructivism allows us to make sense of multiple realities seemingly in contradiction. In fact, in this paragraph my construction of identity as image and culture is based on Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) framework, whereas *Ristorante la Vedetta's* owner constructed identity in a radically different way, as something that persists through centuries and is highly resilient to changes.

5.3 ETHNIC RESTAURANTS' VIEWS ABOUT THEIR INFLUENCE AND INTEGRATION IN THE GENOESE IDENTITY AND FOODSCAPE

This section looks at the way in which ethnic restaurants are inserted in the socio-cultural and culinary fabric of Genoa's historic city centre. Also, the extent to which their cuisine is influenced by the context in which they are located is considered. Before continuing, it needs to be disclosed that some of the interviews conducted with ethnic restaurants do not go as much in-depth as the ones conducted with typically Genoese restaurants. This has to be attributed to the limited language skills of three of the interviewees and in one case by their skepticism towards interviews and personal questions.

5.3.1 LOCAL GENOESE PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE WITHIN ETHNIC RESTAURANTS

One small Senegalese eatery, talking about the food they propose, after stating that they make Senegalese cuisine, admitted to also prepare typically Italian dishes:

“No [we don't make food from other countries], here we only make Senegalese food and something Italian, like lasagne. We make dishes with rice, vegetables, meat and fish.” – *Lanz Op*

Concerning their ingredients, they revealed to buy most of the supplies locally, only importing a few ingredients from Senegal, those which cannot be found in Genoa:

“Like some shrimps that for us are much tastier in Senegal, [...] also palm oil which we use for some things, and then nothing some dried fish that here in Italy are not sold. But we only put that dried fish in a few things because it's expensive.” – *Lanz Op*

Another Senegalese restaurant, *Da Kader*, said that after an initial period in which it offered both Italian and Senegalese dishes, they decided to focus exclusively on Senegalese cuisine. In his words:

“Yes, because I've seen that there are a bunch of restaurants which make the same things, it's no use to play it, not at all. It's not that they are better than me in that stuff, it's material that I know well, isn't it? But in Campo Reale they don't see you like that, they still see a difference.” – *Da Kader*

Regarding their preparation methods, the owner stated that all the recipes and ingredients are traditionally Senegalese, with only one exception:

“It's the same, the same, there isn't [difference], other than the oil I used, now I use olive oil. That's the difference. This oil. [...] I respected the oil and then I put Senegalese ingredients” – *Da Kader*

Talking about their supplies, the owner stated he purchases fresh ingredients from local suppliers, but that importing grains from Senegal is essential because of the different way crops are grown:

“The most part comes directly from Senegal. For example, the couscous is not [made of] wheat, you cannot find it at the national market, it's a product that arrives directly [from

Senegal]. And basmati rice, the one you see that Scotti advertises on TV is not fine for our cuisine, it's too meaty. Senegalese rice is finer and tastier, also because it's cultivated wild, they are two completely different things. It's the difference, the ingredient that makes the rice grow is completely different. There [in Senegal], the poor beings throw it and pray the God that makes it grow fast to have something, here they use ingredients [chemical fertilizers] to make it grow quickly, they are two very different things.” – *Da Kader*

Similar insights were given by *Perù Mi Amor*, whose representative claimed that the cuisine they propose and the preparation methods are one hundred percent Peruvian, and that importing certain ingredients is a necessity:

“Yes, [there is] a Chinese supplier which brings us the goods from Peru, yes. We found them [there]. And then we find meat and fish in those big markets, like XXXX and YYYY [two wholesale stores]. But the really Peruvian products which are at the basis of Peruvian cuisines here in the Chinese store.” – *Perù Mi Amor*

Asked about any possible Italian or Genoese influence on their cuisine, *Perù Mi Amor* articulated that even if there is no particular influence on their proposal, Peruvian cuisine itself is a result of many foreigner contributions, including the one of Genoa:

“Eh, the recipes are really Peruvian, but Peruvian gastronomy is a gastronomy with a lot of foreign influence. First, Spain came to Peru, then the Chinese, the Italians, the Genoese to Peru. All of this created Peruvian gastronomy, so Peruvian gastronomy is a fusion of everything.” – *Perù Mi Amor*

Lastly, *Kebab del Porto* illustrates that supposedly ethnic restaurants can propose cuisines that are not linked to the owner's background and culture. In this case, a kebab house that combines Turkish and Italian culinary elements (kebab and pizza) is run by Afghani refugees that took over an establishment previously managed by Turkish immigrants. Still, in this case the owner expressed the desire to propose Afghani cuisine in Genoa but conveyed that it is not possible due to the limited size and facilities of the current establishment. For now, *Kebab del Porto* limits itself to offer a few Afghani pastries and dishes to complement their otherwise ethnically mixed proposal.

5.3.2.1 GENOESE PRESENCE WITHIN ETHNIC RESTAURANTS | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

From this short section, it can be learned that ethnic restaurants, despite usually presenting themselves as offering something authentic and traditional in an almost dogmatic way, are not free from influences given by the context they are situated in, in this case Genoa. On the one hand, some elements are considered to be compulsory: the need to import a particular variety of rice, chili peppers or seafood that cannot be found in the region. On the other hand, sometimes there is space to integrate Genoese foodways in their preparations, as in the case of olive oil (cf. *Da Kader*).

5.3.2 COEXISTENCE OF TRADITIONAL AND ETHNIC IN THE GENOA'S FOODSCAPE: A FOREIGN PERSPECTIVE

Concerning the presence of different ethnicities and foodways in the historic city centre, *Da Kader* painted a situation of close-mindedness that hinders immigrants' integration and is detrimental to Genoa's image. In particular, he enunciated:

“It's not easy [to contribute to the identity of Genoa], because the city of Genoa was massacred by the Genoese themselves, with their own hands, really [...]. You can't keep something for 1000 years, you continue to keep it in the same way without giving it the possibility to make a change, so that different people can come, this is it... Genoa is dying because of this.” – *Da Kader*

In the context of ethnic restaurants, he stated that the Genoese closure and aversion to change is reflected in the way locals are not willing to welcome new cultures by always eating in the same places. This is illustrated by the following quote:

“Unfortunately [the Genoese] always go eat the same stuff and indeed here we see that shops don't succeed. When the culture changes and you always want to eat in the same way, this game doesn't lead to a society that can grow, the cultural change belongs to that. If you didn't accept that there is something missing that you need to accept, and that's not easy.” – *Da Kader*

Moreover, *Da Kader* reasoned that the city creates a difficult situation for small businesses by giving them licenses but no financial incentives and protections:

“Why you give something to a person and then you immediately choke [that person] because it doesn't go well? You really need to give it a chance, as other nations do. That's what kills Genoa, not the immigrant, not someone coming from another planet, it's the Genoese himself who killed Genoa [...].” – *Da Kader*

Also, *Da Kader* highlighted how immigrants are exploited by speculators who only care about money, not human beings, and how this causes marginalization and poverty in certain areas of the historic centre. Infuriated by this, he condemns exploitative situations worldwide, which bring exploited people to devalue human life. In his words:

“It's all a game they are playing at, as long as I get the rent all the rest is their fucking business. This is the wrong way in which a human being can act, because everything that you're now fishing... you already forgot that sooner or later you will leave this money here and end up underground [...]. Nobody can live without money, but we pretend more, we kill a person to have money, the worst thing that can exist, this is what is happening all over the world, the power you see is not the poor who kills, eh, behind it there is the powerful that accumulates wealth. You are talking with a person that was in Ruanda during the war, I was picking... you take the feet I take the arms, the arm breaks apart from the human being. Everything smells, we need to try to collect it with spades to bring it to the ditch. When you lived this, you don't care about human life anymore.” – *Da Kader*

Finally, *Da Kader* pointed out that racism in the city is still a considerable problem, especially in comparison to other countries, and that younger generations can only improve immigrants' integration only if their upbringing and family allow for it.

“That [close-mindedness] I can say will be changed by my daughter, who now when she's going to school in her way, right, begins to have this mindset here and you marry it, it then becomes connected.” – *Da Kader*

“The youngsters who have dad or mum with elastic minds, yes, if they give them the good teaching it works, but if already the grandad or grandma gives them the wrong education [...] it doesn't work [...]. It happens, it's simple, by now you can see the taint, I see it walking, I see when I get close to a person who's not of the same colour, the movements in their face, it's sad to see. When you go to Belgium, France or Germany they don't have that fear, they don't have that... I sweat you, I'm not kidding [...]. Do you understand what I'm talking about?” – *Da Kader*

Concerning the other interviewed restaurants, little about their ideas has been possible to evince, with interviewees not fully understanding the question or just providing limited answers. One example is *Perù Mi Amor*, that only said their restaurant can enrich the identity and image of the historic centre.

“Yes, I think so [it's good for the city]. This because Peruvian cuisine reached a very high level with regards to gastronomy at a worldwide level, right? Now Peru is the main gastronomical destination in America. Yes, it's the first so this is important for Genoa, this restaurant, yes. – *Perù Mi Amor*

“Yes, now there are plans to make this expansion of Peruvian gastronomy, here in Genoa, to have other restaurants with the same name of this restaurant. Yes, in one other part of Genoa where there are many Peruvians [unintelligible Spanish words], and Imperia, where there's many sites where there are many Peruvians, Ecuadorians so there's the thought of doing something there. Yes, also street food, do this thing together with my sister, I have this thing in mind, yes. With the same name of the restaurant and do this thing.” – *Perù Mi Amor*

5.3.2.1 TRADITIONAL AND ETHNIC: A FOREIGN PERSPECTIVE | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

All in all, despite the limited data, it can be seen that immigrants perceive a problem of social exclusion also through Genoese people's food practices. In this regard, *Da Kader* enunciations about racism and prejudice reflect and complement *Trattoria della Rupe* and *Ristorante del Pozzo* ideas. About the first, *Trattoria della Rupe*'s idea of reverse prejudice is seen from the immigrant perspective (cf. “I see when I get close to a person who's not of the same colour, the movements in their face, it's sad to see”), who blames the Genoese closed mentality. Concerning the second, *Ristorante del Pozzo*'s ideas of longing for the past, when most of the centre was populated by Genoese businesses, corroborate *Da Kader*'s insight of aversion to change (cf. “When the culture changes and you always want to eat in the same way, this game doesn't lead to a society that can grow”). All in all, these reflections once again substantiate Counihan's (2016) suggestion that unwillingness to accept the immigrant contribution to a local foodscape is a symptom of societal integration problems.

5.4 MORE THAN BLACK AND WHITE: COMIDA DEL MUNDO AND TRATTORIA DEL PESCIOLINO

Two of the interviewed restaurants, *Comida del Mundo* and *Trattoria del Pesciolino*, fall outside between the typically Genoese-ethnic dualistic distinction, the former defining itself “no-borders” and the latter mixing “local tradition and contamination from southern Italy, the islands and abroad”. Despite not belonging to the two predefined categories, interviews with the owners of these restaurants, both native Genoese people, provided stimulating insights on the co-existence of typically Genoese and ethnic restaurants.

The owner of the restaurant *Comida del Mundo*, asked about his take on the ethnically diverse presence of restaurants in the historic city centre, expressed that cultural diversity is essential and positive for the city. In his words:

“So, I think... Not only I think it [the co-existence of traditional and ethnic] to be positive for the city, I think it is fundamental and inevitable, especially in a city like Genoa. But also all over the world, objectively all of us... I adore *pasta al pesto*, *polpettone* and *minestrone* but if I ate them my whole life, if we only ate that we would be sick of it, right? So, it is good that there are also other cultures and other culinary cultures. In particular, Genoa with the port it's always been like that. Indeed, according to me it's really an added value, to me the beauty of the historic centre it's really passing from the Sottoripa *friggitoria* and you go three meters away to the Portuguese restaurant, then it's us with Tapas, you go on the other side and the Chinese one, the one from eastern Europe, the Senegalese. Beautiful, really beautiful. By now we act a lot like the globalized ones and then we don't accept different food cultures? Come on, if you don't like it, you don't eat it, so be it.” – *Comida del Mundo*

Similar thoughts were shared by the owner of *Trattoria del Pesciolino*, who fully supported the historic centre's culinary diversity. Indeed, she recognized both a positive impact on the city's identity and that traditions and diversity have equal importance in the tourism image of the city. Moreover, she conveyed that dualistic distinctions such as traditional and ethnic are outdated for young generations. This is illustrated by the following two quotes:

“To me, the broader the gastronomical landscape is, rich of proposals, wide-ranging and cosmopolitan, the more a great city gains attractiveness and splendor. I would not impose any limit, be it internal or external.” – *Trattoria del Pesciolino*

“Appreciating and raising the key dishes of Ligurian cuisine is as important as extending cultural horizons. The youth need to express itself, not only be able to stay in the box. The love to do both with a ductility unknown to the elderly.” – *Trattoria del Pesciolino*

From *Comida del Mundo's* words, it is clear that, although personally embracing diversity, he notices a general hypocrisy in some Genoese people who are not fond of an excessive foreign presence in the

city and in its foodscape. Spurred to elaborate on his last reflections, he explained that certain ethnic restaurants are seen as a menace by some members of the local government:

“Well for sure by someone it [the presence of ethnic restaurants] is seen [as a threat], actually I am convinced that there is... When they talked about this proposal of not allowing ethnic restaurants in the historic centre it was referred to the usual *kebabbaro* [kebab house] which attracted customers who pushed [drugs], but I mean it's not that you need to demonize kebabs. If anything, you need to demonize who pushes. Then also there, the subject is always subtle: pizza restaurant that pushes is alright? The problem is not what is sold, the problem is that [the restaurant] is used as a site of [drug] pushing or criminals or ill-famed people. So that's the problem, not kebabs. Ah, is there a kebab right there? Then all the junkies and the pushers of Genoa go there because there's a kebab? No, quite the opposite, there are some kebab [places] in Prè street that are almost exclusively frequented by Maghrebi and north Africans, I go there often and nothing bad goes on [*original in Italian: dove non vola una mosca*] and it's all super tasty.” – *Comida del Mundo*

In his answer, it becomes clear that the food itself is not the matter, but the way it is associated with illicit activities by government officials. In particular, he points out that only specific ethnicities and foods are demonized and how this reflects common prejudices and stereotypes. In his words:

“What is the problem with that one? There is no problem, the problem now is really of this [city] council in this historical-political moment in which, exactly, [they] always and only cling stubbornly on propagandizing, on making grand proclamations without reasoning on what the problems of the city really are. I mean, always blaming the foreigner, the different, it's a new kind of fascism. Is there any problem? It's because of the gipsy, the foreigner, the immigrant... But let's also talk about Italian history. In Italy, haven't there ever been criminals and *Mafiosi*? Do you really think there isn't any Italian wheeling and dealing with migrants and things? Here, [...] the real problem is the Italians, the *Calabresi*, not the pushers. The pusher who's here is maybe African but that guy is there because he was put there by an Italian probably. That one is really an obtuseness, the search of big words for private goals. They themselves don't care at all of the kebab house, so it's not seen as a threat to the food... then sushi could be a threat to the local restaurants, but that is accepted because cool? Just because the Japanese are not here pushing? Then one day if the Japanese push also sushi will be bad? But what does it have to do with it, it's what the problems and their causes are that needs to be clarified.” – *Comida del Mundo*

Finally, addressing the topic of whether Genoa's tourism image should be open to influences from other cultures, *Comida del Mundo* voiced that Genoa's traditional identity should be promoted together with its cultural diversity, also in terms of cuisines:

“Well, you know you ask me that among other things I have an "ethnic" place, for sure they are added values since it is a port city. [...]. Everyone goes to Spain because they welcome you fantastically [...], anyway the food is good and cheap, and you always come back enthusiast. But that is if you go for two or three days. I lived there for two months and if you go there they only aim at their own, they are very parochial, in the long run it is

reductive, you get bored with it. [...] I mean, I think they aim at short-term tourism [...]. Here [Genoa] is a more real, more concrete and sincere city where you can find a bit of everything, also other different cultures and places. [...] The will and the demand are here, it should be advertised in parallel, or indeed together, to say: Genoa city of a thousand cultures and traditions. Then also in the Genoese tradition, also in the culinary one, there is the inclusion of many other cultures. Being a port city, it has always been this way, we have always been very contaminated by other cultures, other spices, other things that are not present in the traditional Italian cuisine.” – *Comida del Mundo*

5.4.1 MORE THAN BLACK AND WHITE | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Summing up, the last section's arguments are of crucial importance for several reasons. First, they corroborate the idea that a sizeable part of the Genoese population is rather conservative and is not ready to embrace ethnic diversity. Second, they confirm that discourses around ethnic food are often manipulated and subject to power dynamics, and that foods are merely used as a means to achieve political ends. Finally, the idea that a destination image necessarily needs to be based on traditional foods and products is challenged, giving instead space to diversity.

5.5 TOURISTS' VIEWS ON ETHNIC FOODWAYS IN THE GENOESE FOODSCAPE

This section aims at illustrating how tourists view ethnic elements in Genoa's foodscape. First, the eating habits of tourists are explored. Then, a closer look is taken to the way tourists consider ethnic foodways in Genoa's historic centre. Lastly, the potential influence of ethnic foodways on Genoa's identity and image is elaborated from the tourists' standpoint.

5.5.1 TOURISTS' VIEWS ON NON-TYPICAL AND ETHNIC RESTAURANT DURING THEIR VISIT

First of all, most of the respondents conveyed to be mainly interested in typical and traditional cuisine from Genoa and Italy, not in ethnic or alternative restaurants, with only one respondent indicating to be interested in both traditional and high-end ethnic and international restaurants.

“Not really, I would say, on a whole, we tend to stick to local stuff.” – *Matt, Canadian*

“Don't try to order not local thing, it is just usually not as good, unless you are in a really big city, I think. But why not enjoy what is typical, because it's probably the best.” – *Dave, Californian*

“Yes, I am interested in food which is local. If I am in Genoa I eat... If I go to some place, I try Genoa's typical dishes, I don't eat Chinese cuisine in Genoa because it doesn't make sense, so I always try the things that are, let's say, local. Because I can eat the other stuff in my country and in other countries and places.” – *Ana, Slovak (original in Italian)*

“Ehh two splits. Local, traditional and then the high-end [inaudible] style, one of each.” – *Tim, British*

This is usually due to the fact that with limited time at their disposal tourists prefer to try what the city is famous and special for. Indeed, many respondents indicated to personally be fond of ethnic

cuisines, but that they can make experience of that in their home countries, and especially not in Italy which is famous for its food. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

“You know, if we lived here, we'd be probably more inclined to try something like that, but our time is so limited that we think we still wanna stick with the cuisine of Italy and in this particular case Genova. So, we'll try different kinds of restaurants and we are gonna try a couple of fish restaurants, so we can have an idea... So, we just had lunch today down in this little nice cafe. She had gnocchi, I had pesto lasagne, it was delicious!” – *Dave, Californian (USA)*

“We don't wanna waste different cuisines on that one, we have four times, but at home we try a lot of different cuisines, because there's a lot of choices, a lot of nationalities, and mostly they are run by people from those countries so Thai or Chinese or Mexican with a story, that they brought their recipes from their mums... And then it's very fun to try, it's like traveling without traveling.” – *Emma, Californian (USA)*

Adela, a Colombian woman who had lived in Milan for one year and at the time of the interview staying in Genoa for two months, still considered her time in the city to be too short to try non-typical restaurants and foods. In her words:

“Then that depends on how much time I spend in the city. For example, when I was in Milan I tried so many things but at the same time I missed a bit of stuff from my country. So, I also cooked what I used to eat every day [...]. This time since I arrived I told myself: you have to taste the focaccia, you have to go there to eat the pesto, the best pesto in all of Italy, because I know that the pesto is Genoese, so when I was in Colombia I used to make pasta with pesto many days per week however never as good as here. So, now that I am more conscious that I will be here for a shorter period of time, I take advantage of that to eat Italian food more often. Then once I discovered that things are very good here, very special, I prefer to eat more Italian than the other stuff. But when I was in Milan, for example, I went two or three times to eat Japanese, I don't really feel like it here, but I could do it if I had to. But it's not a thing...” – *Adela, Colombian (original in Italian)*

On the same topic, two respondents from Canada specified that they would try ethnic and fusion restaurants if they had more time, even just a week, especially if they are not part of a large chain:

“I think so. I think, if I would stay in a place for long enough, then I'd go try those things as well. My first priority would be trying traditional, then when I tried the traditional, try what's coming, you know.” – *Matt, Canadian*

“It comes down to who's running the restaurant. If it's a large chain just trying fusion, attracts a lot of people, that would be less favourable than a local chef, that decides he wants to integrate different ideas. That would be beneficial for locals and tourists alike, for some variety. – *Alex, Canadian*

“Yeah, even within a week I think you can work your way towards trying new things, but for us we only have a few meals and we're gonna try the few things we can and then go.” – *Matt, Canadian*

On the other hand, Ana was still reluctant to the idea of experimenting with non-typical cuisines in Genoa, even if she habitually eats in ethnic restaurants in her home county:

“Maybe if it’s good food I would try also but as I am staying here [in Genoa] just for one and a half months I mean... It’s pointless to try something else when I can eat anywhere, even at my place, so yeah.” – *Ana, Slovak*

“Mhhh... well I try out new things because you know, I am so used to Slovak food that I wanna try out new things. So, I don’t just stick to Slovak cuisine but also something else.” – *Ana, Slovak*

5.5.1.1 TOURISTS’ VIEWS ON ETHNIC RESTAURANT DURING THEIR VISIT | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The findings of this section clearly substantiate what previously expressed: when coming to Genoa, tourists are keen to make experience of typical and traditional food, considering it a key component of the destination cultural heritage. In this regard, the previously made considerations of Genoese culinary traditions as a heritage cuisine and the centrality of food in tourism destinations are corroborated.

5.5.2 TOURISTS’ VIEWS ON TYPICAL AND ETHNIC IN GENOA’S FOODSCAPE

5.5.2.1 TOURISTS’ VIEWS ON THE PRESENCE OF ETHNIC RESTAURANTS IN GENOA’S HISTORIC CENTRE

Despite being not interested in ethnic restaurants at a personal level, most of the respondents positively welcomed the ethnic and culinary diversity in the historic centre, mainly because of their importance for the Genoese people and immigrants.

“I think it’s more for the locals, they don’t wanna eat the same thing over and over again, so something new for them would definitely be positive, but for us we are coming to a new place and we wanna try what they are known for.” – *Matt, Canadian*

“So, I mean, there are many ethnic places here and I think it’s kinda good for us that we have this choice to buy something that we don’t know and still many ethnical groups are living here, so... It’s probably important for them to have this ability to buy things from their countries [...]” – *Ana, Slovak*

“Yeah, I think there is room [for non-typical restaurants] because I think they are in high demand because Genova is a very multicultural place, so I think there’s space for them.” – *Julia, Belgian-Isreali*

On a similar line, Adela stated that cuisine diversity is important for tourists and locals alike and that there should thus be space for everyone. Nonetheless, she had the impression that Genoese people might be somehow traditionalist with regard to their tastes:

“No, in my opinion it could be a very very good idea, I mean that all the tourists always come in the historical centre, [...] so it would be a good option if they come to look for something of their own country, it’s fine! And it could be interesting, not only for them

but for the Italians themselves. I don't know if you are very faithful to your cuisine and so ... but it would be very interesting to find other things” – *Adela, Colombian (original in Italian)*

Finally, two respondents said that ethnic diversity is simply about the market forces, and that the city should not interfere with that by regulating the number and types of restaurants.

“I think not, I think it's free market. I think that if someone wants to sell pesto, you can sell pesto, if someone wants to sell hummus, they can sell hummus whatever. I think it shouldn't be regulated by anyone.” – *Ana, Slovak*

“I think the city should allow the market forces to take place. If people go to them, then they can make business and it's fine. That's the demand, right?” – *Tim, British*

5.5.2.2 TOURISTS' VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC RESTAURANTS ON GENOA'S IDENTITY AND IMAGE

Moving on to the way the ethnic and culinary diversity in the historical affects the city's identity and image, opinions were more mixed. A couple from California manifested that this diversity can only have a positive influence of the city, making it more interesting. In their words:

“I think it makes it an interesting city, I think you know as at home if you go to San Francisco you can find anything. And that's what makes it interesting. You won't have the same thing every night.” – *Dave, Californian*

“I think it makes a city more interesting, when we were in... I don't know we didn't spend a lot of time in Alba, it was delicious, but every menu was pretty much the same, with their way of doing it, but if you were really looking for tacos you might not find it there. In this city [Genoa] I think you can probably find a little bit of everything. I guess.” – *Emma, Californian*

Similarly, most of the other respondents supported the idea of promoting ethnic cuisines and diversity in the context of the city's tourism image. This is illustrated by the following quotes:

“Maybe to be promoted, because there is space for many other things here. To be promoted, because it's not that there is a lot of physical space let's say but it can be done, yes, yes.” – *Adela, Colombian (original in Italian)*

“I think they should include the diversity because in my opinion the diversity is enriching the typical Genoese things, so that's a plus. You have something that is traditional here and then you have plus this.” – *Ana, Slovak*

“It should definitely be promoted; people would definitely go to visit somewhere if they have great food and places that are known for food [...]. Even in Canada, where we are from, Mississauga and Brandon, those are Canadian places but are known for having great Indian food, and we go out there all the time to get that food, because that's what they are known for being good at, even though is not necessarily traditional, that's what special there.” – *Matt, Canadian*

Tim had a more nuanced opinion, arguing that ethnic restaurants, although generally impacting the image of an area, can contribute positively to the identity of a city only under certain conditions. Especially, he expressed that having a relationship with the history of the area or is needed for businesses to be truly engrained within the city. In particular, he stated:

“It is interesting if it has some relation to the history of the area. For example, in England we have a lot of Indian restaurants, for instance, that’s due to the historical link to India. So, if it has a link to the history of the country is quite interesting. If it is just like another kebab house you see on the corner, that’s not so interesting. [...] Often the ethnic cuisine comes from trading parts, right? Where the country has traded, historically. So, if that’s the reason the restaurant is there, and have a good history, then that’s interesting. – *Tim, British*

Lastly, Isabela had a more critical and in-depth view, stating that the excessive presence of foreign and ethnic shops in the historic centre, although being positive in a way, does not fit with the identity of the city. In her words:

“Ahhh... I think there are too many of them [ethnic businesses]. It’s not fitting in the surroundings, in the place, in the spirit. But this is what I also like about Genoa, that is such a diverse city, I mean you can find people from everywhere. Shops and food from everywhere. I like that, that is respectful and diverse but also kind of loses part of its own identity when all of this is mixed too closed and all the time. Maybe it’s okay if there are ethnic shops or food locals [establishments] but it could be regulated or something like, trying to equilibrate with Genoese things, right.” – *Isabela, Argentinian*

Elaborating more on the topic, she conveyed that diversity *per se* is not negative, but the way it is badly managed has a negative influence on the city’s identity and image. Because of this, she proposed that different ethnic restaurants and shops should be balanced with Genoese ones via regulatory means.

“I think it’s overpopulated, the city centre, for me that’s kind of messy, it should be more organized maybe, and the city in its own has, as I told you, an identity and diversity, and it’s super interesting, but it’s kind of unorganized, I think, that’s my feeling. My personal feeling with the city. And you see that in the city centre a lot, but there are some other parts that are really well organized, and it’s like a completely different place from the city centre.” – *Isabela, Argentinian*

Asked about the way the regulations should be designed, she expressed that the historic centre’s inhabitants themselves should be in charge and, working together with the government, give the historic centre a better image, also from the tourism standpoint.

“It’s something more of a community to make, not just like from laws like police or government. It’s like a group job. The community... What does Genoese want also? Because I’ve read and I’ve heard that sometimes I understand they don’t want tourists. Ahh, it’d be something like... A shared task to do, the community plus the system let’s say”.
– *Isabela, Argentinian*

Expanding on the way the ethnic diversity of shops and restaurants affects the historic centre's image, Isabela restated that the influence can be both positive and negative. In spite of this, she articulated that when balancing traditional and ethnic, typicality and tradition should be prioritized in the way the city is branded and promoted for tourists.

“Well, again, it [the city image] can be affected in a positive or negative way. And what I think that gives Genova its identity is that diverse stuff. But you can also see that it has something in its own, I mean beyond the... all this stuff that are not from here. Ahh in image, also, I think it's missing a little bit of organization and yeah like, things are not that well defined, mostly in the city centre [...] But yeah the city must have and keep its own identity and so, there must be locals more than the others [...]. Yeah, because this is Genova, so it must be something that's from here, and made here, something that was born in this place, so yeah, I think it should be like that. Then in between you can add plenty of different things for different types of tourism, for different types of business, or whatever, but the city needs to say: Ok, this is me! It must have a defined image and personality.” – *Isabela, Argentinian*

Finally, Isabela insisted that to maximize the tourism potential of the city a clear image and identity is essential, which could also be created through local community participation. Despite this, she acknowledged that pursuing this road in large cities such as Genoa is not as easy as in smaller realities and that both tourists and local community should be educated about good tourism practices.

“Yeah I think that's the way. I mean in smaller communities that's sometimes well-done, because tourism can be in some ways good and in some way bad for the place, right? [...] So, it's something you need to plan really well and to see the interest in both sides: what are the tourists looking for and what the community needs. I think that's a conjoint job. [...] It is, it is more difficult in bigger cities, yes, but I think if people understood that tourists can be a good thing and to know how to manage and take advantage of it, they wouldn't be mad. On the other way, it's also responsibility on the tourist's side. When coming to a place they should respect this way of living of this place. This part is kind of difficult to manage from one place, but if the people are well educated on how to receive a tourist, it will get easier to manage I guess.” – *Isabela, Argentinian*

5.5.2.3 TOURISTS' VIEWS ON ETHNIC INFLUENCE ON GENOA'S IDENTITY | KEY CONSIDERATIONS

From the above two sections it transpires that tourists, despite personally prioritizing typically Genoese foods over ethnic ones, are generally welcoming the presence of different foodways in the city's foodscape. Moreover, the vast majority of them expresses that ethnic diversity contributes positively to Genoa's destination image. Nonetheless, the most detailed elaboration is given by Isabela, who swimming against the current is somewhat critical about the way ethnic foodways are embedded in Genoa's historic centre. In particular, her considerations resonate with *Ristorante la Vedetta's* reflection about the need of having an orderly distribution of different kinds of businesses. However, Isabela goes beyond *Ristorante la Vedetta*, by providing precise details on how this balance should be pursued, namely through community involvement. Despite this, Isabela is aware of the limits of her approach, which is better suited for smaller realities.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In chapter five, all the findings of this study have been presented and analyzed, occasionally making reference to the literature. In doing so, the research questions have been answered. Instead, this chapter critically reflects on the broader insights that emerged from this research, comparing them with existing studies.

6.1 HERITAGE CUISINES, IDENTITY, CULTURE AND IMAGE

First of all, the findings of this research show that Genoese traditional cuisine can be considered as a prime example of heritage cuisine. Indeed, traditional Genoese food was often characterised as something of crucial importance in the processes of identity construction of the city, both from the local and the tourist perspectives. In this regard, Di Giovine's (2016) argumentation of heritage cuisine as something connecting people across time and space, based on inheritance discourses, is confirmed by numerous findings. Moreover, Ramshaw's (2015) and Timothy's (2015) ideas of food and heritage cuisines as central elements within a city and destination identity are corroborated.

From the local perspective, Genoese restaurants generally manifested a strong attachment to traditional Genoese foodways, considering them an important marker of collective and place identity. Using Kavaratzis and Hatch's (2013) framework, it could be argued that this is visible both through culture and image. Indeed, it transpired that certain Genoese restaurateurs, and more generally a good part of the local population, want to maintain a genuinely Genoese internal culture within the city's identity. This was shown by the reported longing for the past, when more traditionally Genoese shops were present, and by the often-highlighted need for a regulated distribution of ethnic and traditional businesses throughout the historic centre.

At the same time, from several interviews it emerged that, despite often welcoming ethnic foodways, restaurateurs deeply care about the external image of the city as perceived by the tourist. Some examples of this are the need of having a clean and orderly historic centre, with more attention paid to the quality of its businesses (cf. *Ristorante la Vedetta*); and the idea that the historic centre should have been preserved in its traditionality for the tourists to experience the way Genoese people live (cf. *Ristorante del Pozzo*). In this regard, even the respondents who most welcomed ethnic diversity (cf. *Da Aurelia*) phrased the discourse around preserving traditions, and that also includes being open toward external and foreign influences. The only exceptions to this trend are the opinions of *Comida del Mundo* and *Trattoria del Pesciolino*, whose owners manifested that traditional culinary heritage should be promoted in parallel with novel foodways, be them ethnic or experimental.

Moving on to the tourist's perspective, most of the respondents characterized Genoese – and more in general typical – food as a fundamental component of Genoa's image and identity.

This is demonstrated by the fact that ethnic diversity was considered by tourists as something positive for locals, be them Genoese or immigrants, and only marginally for themselves. Moreover, the importance of having a strong tourism image based on Genoa's traditional foodways is manifested by one respondent (Isabela), who insists that more work should be done on that regard. In saying so, Isabela implicitly expresses that locals do not value their cultural and culinary heritage as they could.

Conclusively, these considerations confirm the common idea that Genoese people, although being very proud of their heritage, are rather reluctant in using it to maximize the city's tourism potential. This could be explained by the fact that mass tourism is still a relatively new phenomenon in the city and that, as many respondents manifested, local people are slow in adapting to novelty and changing their habits.

6.2 TRADITION AND TYPICALITY

Reflecting on the characterization of tradition and typicality, the findings of sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 show that there is significant variance in the way these notions are socially constructed, with respondents often giving definitions dissimilar to any of those provided in the literature review. These findings confirm that tradition and typicality are given different acceptations by different actors (Bilotta, 2005; Bendix, 1989; Bérard & Marchenay, 1995), and that in general people associate traditions with something having roots in ancient times (Bendix, 1989). Moreover, tradition is generally identified as something existing in itself and being passed on from generation to generation (see Bendix, 1989). This view partly coincides with naturalist takes on the notion (see Handler & Linnekin, 1984) but differs from them in being usually characterized as dynamic and in evolution by most of the respondents, both locals and tourists.

On the other hand, *Comida del Mundo's* idea of traditional as something *per se* open but made fixed by the actors who construct it, not only fully embraces a social constructivist perspective, as described by Handler & Linnekin (1984), but emphasizes the role of socio-economic context, echoing Bendix (1989). Concerning typicality, Longo's (2006) and Grasseni's (2016) portrayals of it as something unique and linked to a locality have been substantiated by many respondents, with one interviewee fully embracing Grasseni's (2016) idea of typical as traditional and local. With regards to Bendix's (1989) and Grasseni's (2016) ideas of traditional as something that can be invented or projected from the present to the past, little is possible to evince from the findings of this study, with respondents focusing on other aspects. Despite this, *Comida del Mundo* elaboration of traditional could hint at the fact that traditions can indeed be created using selected elements in retrospection. On this, future research with a more specific focus and better-suited methods, such as long-term ethnography and participant observation could reinforce Bendix and Grasseni's ideas, by identifying specific socio-cultural and economic elements that lead to inventing traditions.

6.3 ETHNIC CUISINES AND IMMIGRANT INCLUSIVITY

Considering the characterization of ethnic foods and cuisines, the findings of section 5.1.3 substantiate Mohammad and Chan (2011) and Möhring (2008) ideas of ethnic as socially constructed and often stereotyped by individuals, who envision it as something rather homogeneous and with clear boundaries. Moreover, the findings of this research add another dimension to the social construction of ethnic in the context of foods: cultural distance. Indeed, most respondents identified ethnic as something exotic, coming from faraway regions populated by groups of people with drastically different cultural traits. Specifically, Africa, South America and Asia are naively seen as areas inhabited by ethnic groups with foodways relatively uninfluenced by western culture and practices. Finally, using ethnic to typify culturally distant realities was also seen as guilty of creating divisions and hindering integration.

In particular, discourses of immigrant inclusion and exclusion became evident: on this subject, this thesis confirms that the reluctance to accept ethnic contributions to a local foodscape reflects the difficulty of integrating immigrant populations in Italian society, as already intuited by Counihan (2016). With this last point, it is not meant that most of the respondents rejected ethnic foodways: on the contrary, the presence of ethnic cuisines was generally welcomed positively. Still, from several responses, it emerged that a sizeable portion of Genoa's population, including some members of the local government, exclude some immigrant ethnic groups on the basis of the food products they propose. Likewise, from the immigrant point of view, the resentment towards the local population's lack of cultural openness with regards to trying new foods mirrors the more general situation of racism and ethnic prejudice.

Concerning more specific situations, Gasparetti's (2012) conclusion that Senegalese migrants use food to form a sense of shared identity by eliminating internal differences is partially confirmed by this study. Indeed, *Lanz Op*, an eatery mainly frequented by Senegalese immigrants, is a case in which Senegalese people group together in an establishment serving their traditional food¹¹. However, this study shows that opposite cases exist as well, with *Da Kader* mainly catering to Genoese people and tourists, not Senegalese immigrants. In this case, Senegalese food is not used to create a sense of collective identity in opposition to the Italian (and Genoese) one, but as a vehicle to integrate within the host society. This last consideration only superficially contributes to Gasparetti's (2012)

¹¹ In this regard, it is needed to open a side note. During my experience on the field, I approached a multitude of small Senegalese businesses similar to *Lanz Op*. Despite this, almost all of them were not willing to be asked questions or did not have the language skills needed to conduct an interview. This confirms that many Senegalese immigrants are not particularly integrated in the host society, and that they use food to create a sense of shared identity opposed to that of the host society.

suggestion of exploring the interaction between Italian society and Senegalese food, which surely deserves further attention by future research.

6.4 FOODSCAPES

Reflecting on the notion of foodscape, this study showed that socio-economic, cultural and political discourses have a crucial role in determining individual and collective food choices. Indeed, respondents often associated foods and cuisines with broader socio-cultural dynamics, meanings and power relations. Examples of this include the association of certain kinds of foods with illegal activities (cf. *Comida del Mundo*) and the refusal of ethnic foodways as mirroring immigrant exclusion. In this regard, Adema's (2009) and Johnston & Baumann's (2015) characterizations of foodscape are corroborated and expanded: while Adema (2009) focuses more on how forces of different kinds make people use foods in certain ways in determined localities, this study shows that people often use food to consider broader societal issues. Moreover, the findings of this study show that participants, when asked to elaborate on social issues, often do not make clear distinctions between foods and other products. Indeed, in more than one case respondents failed to keep the focus on food-related establishments, considering all kinds of businesses and shops. Starting from this, future research could explore the interplay between foodscapes and non-food elements, such as artifacts, services and commodities.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

This exploratory study, despite touching numerous theoretical points, was principally aimed at empirically exploring the encounter of typical and ethnic foodways in the context of Genoa, Italy. In doing so, some investigative cues for further research emerged.

First, future studies on the general topics covered in this thesis could be narrower in scope and analyse only selected ideas. In particular, the association of ethnic with something exotic and culturally distant could be further investigated, so to make policymakers more aware of possible ethical implications of the use of this term. Also, it would be interesting to explore if the above-mentioned acceptance of ethnic is only found in food and cuisine or it extends to other fields. Second, despite this study used restaurants as a lens of analysis, the interplay between traditional and ethnic foodways could be explored in other ways, for example by looking at domestic eating habits, public food markets and specific food preparations. In doing so, interviews could be complemented with ethnography and visual research. Concerning Genoa's image and destination attractiveness, this research illustrates that non-typical foodways, and more in general cultural and ethnic elements of immigrant groups, if well managed can be used to enhance the city's tourism attractiveness. A solid and inclusive strategy should aim at valorizing the ethnic diversity of the destination combining it with traditional and

typical elements in non-dichotomous ways. Also in this case, more specific research aimed at exploring the topic with larger samples and mixed methods could be beneficial.

6.6 A CONCLUDING REMARK

This research started with a very broad and ambitious goal: exploring how traditional and ethnic foodways interact within Genoa's foodscape. In order to do so, three main perspectives were taken: the tourist one, the Genoese restaurant one, and the ethnic restaurant one. The considerable amount of information gathered in this study does not allow for easy generalizations and conclusions, especially considering each respondent's peculiarity. Nonetheless, it emerged that Genoa is a city with a large potential for follow-up studies on many of the topics emerged in this thesis. In this regard, I believe that each of the research questions of this thesis deserves a study in its own. First of all, it would be interesting to confirm that Genoese restaurants, despite employing numerous immigrants, are generally not affected by foreign influences in their culinary proposal. Second, the complex dynamics that characterized Genoese restaurants' opinions on the city's ethnic diversity should be analysed more in depth. Third, the fact that tourists appear to be almost exclusively interested in traditional and typical foods should be examined from other perspectives, be them quantitative methods or observations. Fourth, the tourists' reported openness towards non-typical food elements within the identity of the city should be studied on a larger sample, using methods less incline to verification. Finally, and most importantly, studies should be conducted to scrutinise immigrant integration through ethnic foodways inclusivity. In this regard, more depth could be achieved through focusing on single immigrant ethnic groups.

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APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

IT - Informazioni sull'intervista e consenso informato

La ringrazio per aver dedicato il suo tempo a incontrarmi oggi. Mi chiamo Francesco Cambi e sto conducendo ricerca per la mia tesi di laurea del programma di studio in Scienze del Turismo, co-organizzato dall'Università di Wageningen (WUR) e la Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAS).

In questa intervista, vorrei parlarle di **panorami culinari e cucine nel centro storico di Genova**. In particolare, parleremo di cucine locali, etniche e internazionali e della loro influenza sull'identità della città.

L'intervista dovrebbe durare tra i **15 e 45 minuti**. La sessione sarà **registrata**. Dato ciò, la prego di parlare chiaramente e a voce alta, così non mi perderò informazioni importanti.

Tutte le risposte saranno trattate confidenzialmente. Questo vuol dire che le risposte saranno solamente condivise con il mio supervisore di tesi ed eventuali esaminatori di WUR. Mi assicurerò che nel testo finale non ci sia alcun dettaglio che permetta identificazione di alcun intervistato. Tenga a mente che può decidere di non rispondere ad alcune domande e che **è possibile terminare l'intervista ad ogni momento**.

È tutto chiaro quello che ho spiegato? Avete altre domande?

Volete partecipare a questa intervista?

_____ Intervistato

_____ Francesco Cambi (Intervistatore)



EN - Interview information and Informed Consent

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Francesco Cambi and I am carrying out research for my thesis to graduate from BSc Tourism, jointly organized by Wageningen University and Research (WUR) and Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAS).

In this interview, I would like to talk to you about foodscapes and cuisine in Genoa. In particular, we will talk **about how you experience local, international and ethnic cuisines** and about how those influence the city's identity and image.

The interview should take **between 15 and 45 mins**. I will be **taping the session** because I don't want to miss any of your comments. Because we're on tape, please be sure to speak up so that I don't miss your comments.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared with a few individuals from WUR and I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and **you may end the interview at any time**.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

_____ Interviewee

_____ Francesco Cambi (Interviewer)



APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Ethnic Restaurants

- How long have you been living here? In Italy? ***Da quanto tempo vivi qui? In Italia?***
- Why did you choose to settle in Genoa? ***Perché hai deciso di stabilirti a Genova?***
- When did you open your business? ***Quando hai aperto la tua attività?***
- Why did you decide to open a restaurant/shop? Tell me your story. ***Perché hai deciso di aprire un ristorante/negozio? Raccontami la tua storia.***
 - ***Lavoravi in un altro settore precedentemente?***
- What kind of food do you sell/cook? ***Che tipo/i di cibo/prodotti vendi?***
- Is the food linked to your heritage/home country? ***Il cibo/prodotti che proponi è legato al tuo paese? In che modo?***
 - Do you do the same at home? ***È simile a quello che cucineresti a casa? Hai adattato la tua cucina? Come?***
- Who are your usual customers? ***Chi sono i tuoi clienti abituali? Da dove vengono?***
 - Would you like to attract different kinds of customers? Why? Why not?
 - ***Vorresti avere anche altri tipi di clienti? Perché?***
- Who works in your business? Where are they from? ***Chi lavora nel tuo ristorante/negozio? Da dove vengono i tuoi dipendenti?***
- How do you promote your business? ***Pubblicizzi la tua attività? Se sì, in che modo?***
- What about the preparation methods and the supplies? Do you get them here? Are they imported? ***Dimmi qualcosa sui metodi di preparazione e sulle tue forniture. Cosa trovi qui? O devi importare qualcosa? Dove le compri?***
- Do you also offer Italian food? ***Offri anche del cibo tradizionalmente italiano? Perché?***
- Do you think that ethnic and Italian food can blend well together? ***Pensi che la cucina italiana si combini bene con la tua? Che la influenzi? In che modo?***
 - ***Hai notato cambiamenti nel corso degli anni? Quali?***
 - ***Pensi di cambiare qualcosa in futuro?***
- Do you think that your restaurant/shop contributes to the city identity? ***Come pensi che la tua attività contribuisca all'identità di Genova e del suo centro storico?***
 - ***Pensi che si integri bene e che lo arricchisca?***
 - ***In che modo pensi che questo possa cambiare in futuro? Cosa desideri?***
- What are your plans for the future? ***Quali sono i tuoi piani per il futuro?***

Genoese Restaurants

- Who is the owner/manager of the restaurant? **Chi gestisce il ristorante/negozio? È tuo? Lo hai rilevato?**
- When did you open? **Quando è stato aperto?**
- Were you born in Genoa? How long have you lived here? **Sei nato Genova? Quanto hai vissuto qui?**
- Who are your usual customers? **Chi sono i tuoi clienti abituali? Da dove vengono?**
- How do you promote your business? **Pubblicizzi la tua attività? Se sì, in che modo?**
- Why did you decide to open a restaurant/shop? Tell me your story. **Perché hai deciso di aprire un ristorante/negozio? Raccontami la tua storia.**
- Who works in your business? Where are your employees from? **Chi lavora nel tuo ristorante/negozio? Da dove vengono i tuoi dipendenti?**
 - If (any of) your employees are foreign, do they have any influence on the cuisine and dishes you propose? Or on the preparation methods? **Se alcuni (cuoco) sono stranieri, hanno alcuna influenza sui piatti che proponi? Sui metodi di preparazione?**
- What kind(s) of dishes/products do you offer? In which way are they linked to the Ligurian and Genoese tradition? **Che tipo di piatti/prodotti proponi? In che modo sono legati alla tradizione Ligure e Genovese?**
 - Do you also offer international/ethnic dishes? **Proponi anche piatti etnici o internazionali?**
 - Do you think there is a difference between ethnic and international? Which one(s)? **Pensi che ci sia una differenza tra piatti "etnici" e internazionali? Quale?**
- What do you think of the co-existence of Italian and ethnic/international cuisine in the historical city centre? **Cosa ne pensi della co-esistenza di cucina italiana ed etnica/internazionale nel centro storico?**
 - And within restaurants themselves? **E nei ristoranti stessi?**
- What do you think about ethnic and non-traditional restaurants and shops and their presence in the historical center? **Cosa ne pensi di ristoranti e negozi etnici e non-tradizionali e della loro presenza nel centro storico?**
 - And in relation to tourism? Do you think it is important to maintain a traditional image of Genoa and its cuisine or that there is room for an opening towards foreign influences? **E in relazione al turismo? Pensi che sia importante mantenere un'immagine tradizionale di Genova e della sua cucina o che vi sia spazio ad un'apertura verso influenze straniere?**
 - Do you think that tourists are mainly interested in typical cuisine or also others? **Pensi che i turisti siano principalmente interessati alla cucina tipica o anche ad altre?**
- Do you think there is a difference between traditional, local and typical? Which one(s)? **Secondo te, esiste una differenza tra tradizionale, locale e tipico? Quale?**
- Do you think of tradition as something static? Or open to changes and adaptation? **Pensi che la tradizione sia statica? O aperta a mutazioni?**

- What are your plans for the future? **Quali sono i tuoi piani per il futuro?**

Tourists

- Where are you from?
- How often do you travel?
- What is “travelling” to you?
- Where do you usually go on holiday/travelling?
- How long are you staying in Genoa? And in Italy?
- What are the most important things you look for when visiting a city?
- What about food and cuisine? How important are they for you when visiting a city?
 - Are you mainly interest in local/traditional/typical food? Do you think there is a difference between those? Elaborate
 - How would you define local food? Does it have to come from the city? Region? Country?
- And what about traditional? Do you think of traditional as a static concept? Or as something dynamic and evolving?
- Let's talk about ethnic and international restaurants and shops, both in Genoa and in other tourism destinations. What do you think of them? Have you eaten there? Do you plan on doing it? Which ones?
 - What is, according to you, the difference between international and ethnic?
 - Are there particular kinds of restaurants/eateries/food places of which you have a strong opinion?
 - Eateries, fast food, high-end restaurants...
 - Would that be different when you are a home?
- Do you think that there is space for non-typical and ethnic cuisines? Which ones? Are there differences between kinds?
- What do you think about restaurants and shops which propose different kinds of cuisines? Ethnic/international and local? What is your opinion about this mix?
- What do you think contributes to the identity of a city?
- In which ways do you think that the city's identity and image is affected by foreign/ethnic restaurants and shops?
 - Do you think this should be limited/controlled or promoted? Why? How?
- (In light of what you just talked about, do you have the same opinion on the concept of traditional?)
- Would you like to add anything else? Do you have any questions for me?