

Changes, Conflicts and Ideologies
in Contemporary Hispanic Culture

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CHAPTER FIVE

SPANISH PASTA: FOOD, ADVERTISING AND NATIONALISM

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“Tell me what you eat, and I’ll tell you who you are”
Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (philosopher), 1825

1. Introduction: The Role of Advertising in Structuring the Society

According to the latest report published by the Spanish Audio-Visual Producer’s Rights Management Association (EGEDA, 2012), Spaniards watch an average of 4 hours of TV per day. If we consider that advertising constitute at least the 25% of the time of programming, Spaniards watch an average of one hour of TV advertising per day. This means that advertising is a type of discourse that is very present in our lives.

The influence of advertising in everybody’s lives is obviously strictly linked to this quantitative aspect, its omnipresent nature. However, it is also linked to other basic features of the discourse of advertising: a) repetitiveness: adverts are repeated countless times; b) banality: the advert is an anonymous text, whose authors and production context are implicit, meaning it is *apparently* intelligible and simple; c) persuasiveness: adverts are rhetorical texts (they use rhetorical artifice) and argumentative texts (they express reasoning and opinions that are intended to convince) which are aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviour of the receivers; d) brevity: adverts are short texts that condense a large amount of meaning into a short space or time period: a photo, a poster or a 20-second video; e)

¹ I wish to thank Erin Hogan (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) for her linguistic assistance and her useful comments. Shortcomings instead are of my unique responsibility.

multi-modality: adverts combine signs of different semiotic types: images, sounds, words, videos, logotypes, etc. Legislators are also aware of the importance of advertising, with the Spanish General Publicity Law defining it as an activity that is “socially transcendental.”

In other publications I have analysed the role of advertising and its ability to structure a society, as well as its *politicalness*, in other words the fact that it is a politically significant text (Screti, 2011a; 2011b; 2012a). This study follows the same line of research and aims to highlight the importance of publicity not only as an element that is socially structured or determined (i.e. resulting from specific social structures), but rather as an element that structures society. Advertising is capable of constructing society, and, at the same time, representing it and categorizing it. Due to its ability to influence social relationships or political perspectives, sometimes even unintentionally, advertising has a clearly political aspect. In this sense, advertising and adverts play a fundamental role in the construction and expression of certain types of ideologies (Screti, 2011b) and in the structuring of the social life and interactions of individuals, a phenomenon which is widely recognised. There are specific references to the ability of advertising to *banally* (Billig, 1995) produce and reproduce nationalist ideologies (see also Screti, 2011a; 2012b).

This will be demonstrated through the analysis of an advertisement from the Spanish company Gallo, a producer of fresh and dry pastas, precooked dishes and sauces. The advert is called *Our Own Flavours*, and was broadcast on Spanish TV stations from February 2011 onwards, in which a well-known figure from the Spanish media praises the “Spanishness” of Gallo pasta.

2. Food:

At the Crossroads between Culture, Nation and Industry

The advertisement *Our Own Flavours* is a clear example of the relationship between nationalism and trade, and the commercialisation of nationalist feelings (cf. Screti, 2012b), and the (re)production and exploitation of nationalist sentiment by certain agents in order to achieve their own particular commercial goals (Screti, 2011a).

This article is based on two main ideas, firstly: food is an essential aspect of human life, and therefore of the culture of a human group. This is clearly expressed in the writings of the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1964), from which it can be deduced that food defines and distinguishes human groups. Secondly, food is one of the key sectors for the economy of a country. In this sense, food, like many other aspects of the culture of a

human group, by integrating processes of commodification, is the object of economic and financial disputes. However, by operating as a distinctive element of identity, it is the object of symbolic disputes, such as those of a nationalistic kind. In effect, food can be very closely linked to nationalist feelings 1) due to its ability to identify a group (cf. the sentence by Brillat-Savarin quoted above) and 2) due to its connection to the national economy, it is at the centre of the interests of the nationalist agents who focus on protecting their “national economy”, and of those groups who (re)produce and exploit nationalist feelings to protect their own specific interests, making them appear to be common interests and goals. Actually, the so-called “national economy” is nothing more than the set of specific economic activities of these limited groups, although they are passed off as pertaining to the nation as a whole.

Alimentation refers to a series of elements (foods) and norms (forms of consumption) that are culturally defined²: it can be compared to a language, as it has a lexicon—the types of foods that are normally accepted for human consumption; syntax—the rules for combining and using the foods; and semantics—a meaning associated with the foods. Over time, the food becomes more elaborate, and goes from being more natural to more refined, increasingly involving human intervention. In a society organised into a class structure, the production of food has a fundamental value in the economic and productive cycle. In this sense, food is above all a product and as such is essential in the chain of production-buying-selling. As a product, food is subject to disputes between different economic agents with different interests.

As previously mentioned, food can and indeed does receive specific and even symbolic meanings: consider bread in the Christian cultural tradition, in which it represents the body of Christ. As a cultural element, food can be *ideologizable*, meaning it can receive different and even opposing evaluative connotations from groups competing for resources³. For instance, consider the differential relationship established by the fact of eating or not eating pork, which places Christians (who do eat pork) at odds with Muslims/ the Jewish (who do not). In this sense, food, like any other element, and especially like languages, can be used as a diacritic of identity for the group, meaning it can be “nationalised,” in the sense that it is used as a distinctive or typical element of one nation in relation to or in opposition to others. This is the sense with which I have defined food as

² Obviously, these are also determined by objective situations, such as availability, production conditions, purposes and practical functions, etc.

³ Put simply, this is the concept of ‘ideology’ I am dealing with here (Eagleton, 1994; Larraín, 1979; van Dijk, 1998).

an *ideologizable* element, as it has an evaluative content (Voloshinov, 1973 [1929]).

This said, every nation adopts diacritical elements in terms of its relationship with other nations, and food is an element that defines and distinguishes their national cultural identity, in the same way as their flag, national anthem or national football team do.

3. Pasta and the Italians

Ask anyone what are the distinctive aspects of Italian cultural identity (if something like this may exist) in terms of food, and the answer will undoubtedly be pasta and pizza. Despite being found all over the world and forming an integral part of the diet of millions of non-Italians, there are no other elements more intimately associated with the idea of Italianness than these two products.

I do not mean to say that pasta and pizza *are* two Italian products, as I find it quite difficult to describe with any certainty the genealogy of foodstuffs such as pasta or pizza. This is something that will fall into the hands of researchers in search of their fifteen minutes of fame, stating that pasta was invented by Hispano Muslims or the Chinese, when in fact they invented noodles⁴, which are quite different from spaghetti, as they use rice flour instead of durum wheat flour⁵. The question of whether pasta is an Italian product or not is not an issue in this chapter; instead, my intention is merely to highlight that in the collective mind-set of the Italians and non-Italians around the world, pasta is indivisibly associated with Italians, Italy and Italianness. There is some true in this, as wheat pasta continues to form the cornerstone of the diet of the majority of Italians.

Focusing on Spain, it is interesting to note that the Spaniards, somewhere between jokingly and disparagingly, refer to the Italians as “macarroni” or “espaguetini”, although written differently than in Italian (*maccheroni*; *spaghettini*), an obvious sign that pasta is the element that most typically defines the Italians.

⁴ Reliable works on these issues are, among others, Watson (2008: 20-23) and Serventi & Sabban (2002, especially 10-30).

⁵ These arguments regarding its invention form a part of a dispute about (invented) tradition. The nationalist discourse always attempts to backdate its own traditions, acclaiming its originality, antiquity and uniqueness, refuting the equally invented traditions of others (Wodak *et al.*, 2007; Hobsbawm, 2003 [1983]), in order to enhance the group’s prestige and belittle the others. In the nationalist discourse, tradition is a value in itself.

But apart from identifying the Italians, pasta is a large-scale, high-profit industry with a global market, which goes far beyond the confines of the Italian peninsula⁶. It is a massive business with a high turnover, mainly in the hands of Italian companies, and which could even be considered a type of cultural colonisation, such as McDonalds or Coca-Cola.

4. Spain and Cooking

In recent years, Spain has achieved considerable notoriety in the gastronomic sphere. Spanish foods, especially Iberian ham⁷, are beginning to cross its frontiers and appear in homes and restaurants all over the world.

This phenomenon implies two things: added economic value, in other words money and employment for Spain (Chinese imitations permitting), and added symbolic value, implying the valuing of the “Spain brand”, as frequently found in political and business discourses.

There is a media campaign underway to promote Spanish cooking as the best in the world, Spanish food products as the best in the world, ranging from ham to wine, olive oil to fish... and pasta.

There is a struggle underway for European or worldwide leadership in terms of Mediterranean cooking between Italy and Spain, involving a number of Spanish governmental and business institutions who are constantly committed to topple Italy from its previously successful, well consolidated market positions, with a constant process of weakening the image international consumers have of Italy and the quality of its wine and foods. This is an endeavour by a challenger to undermine the consolidated market position of an already-established competitor.

Extensive contact with Spaniards has indicated that just like the Italians, they believe and claim that “here the food is better than anywhere else⁸”. But above all, my experience living in Spain has revealed that there is a campaign underway in the main national media (TV, newspapers,

⁶ As Serventi & Sabban state: “pasta represents the ubiquitous foodstuff par excellence” (2002: xvi).

⁷ Note that Iberian ham is the symbol of Spain at alimentary level, demonstrated by the fact that the hamburger chosen to celebrate McDonald’s 30th anniversary in Spain, called the *McIbérica* and launched in 2010, contained Iberian ham and Manchego cheese together with the hamburger (Actualidad Económica, 2012: 29).

⁸ Obviously, the deictic reference of this “here” varies: for Italians means ‘Italy’, for Spaniards means ‘Spain’. This demonstrates the existence of a public awareness of the value of food as an indicator of the value of a nation—hence the constant celebration of “national” (or “local”) foods.

radio and Internet) targeted at two different types of Audiences—one internal, and another external (also involved in other publicity events such as trade fairs)—with the aim of persuading people about the wonders of Spanish gastronomy, and thereby, the greatness of Spain and Spaniards. In other words, it is a matter of national marketing or branding. To name just a few examples, in the programme *Españoles por el mundo* (Spaniards around the world), Spaniards living in foreign countries gush with praise about Spanish cooking and how they miss it; in the programme *Destino España* (Destination Spain), foreigners living in Spain sing the praises of Spanish food; the two presenters of the programme *Un país para comérselo* (A country for eating) travel around the whole of Spain glorifying its food; one can see a seemingly endless number of programmes on Spanish food and cooking. Not a day goes by without the national news on different channels including in their infotainment some type of item about Spanish food, the excellence of Spanish products, or the number of Michelin stars won by Spanish chefs. The planetary success of the restaurant *El Bulli* and its chef Ferrán Adriá has been exploited to the maximum and flaunted in the media ad nauseam as an example of the success of Spanish food and wine. The links between the national media and businessmen dedicated to the food industry with the country's monarchy and its political and cultural institutions such as the Cervantes Institute have not come about by chance. Furthermore, it would seem to indicate that this forms part of some greater plan to further gloss the “Spain brand” in a global context of competing country-brands, firmly backing its food, together with its sport (Secreti, 2010) and language (Del Valle & Gabriel-Stheeman 2004a; 2004b).

The discourses heaping praise on Spanish food come from nationalising agents of the central government: several ministries (such as the Ministry of Economy or Agriculture or of Foreign Affairs), the Cervantes Institute, the Monarchy, the two main political parties (PP and PSOE), etc. They participate in the policy to create a single Spanish nationalist discourse⁹, something that is constantly challenged by the peripheral nationalist movements of Catalonia (Catalanism), the Basque Country (Basqueism) and Galicia (Galicianism).

⁹ Note that an article in the right-wing newspaper *Actualidad Económica* (2012: 29), entitled “The Spanish Secret of Mc Donald’s,” highlighted the strategy of creating a successful image of “Spanishness” through campaigns that emphasised the contribution made by Spanish suppliers to the chain. This led to McDonald’s being positioned as more Spanish and less American, thereby overcoming the resistance from consumers derived from a sensation of cultural (or alimentary) colonisation.

5. The “Our Own Flavours” Advert

The advertisement to which this study refers in greater detail will be examined now. The video *Sabores Nuestrros* (Our Own Flavours) by the agency FMRG Compact for the company Gallo S.A., was first broadcast in February 2011 as a part of an expansion strategy by the company in the fresh pasta market.

A well-known personality from the Spanish media, the journalist Carlos Herrera, acts as the endorser of the product, presenting a new line of products from the brand: fresh pastas (ravioli or a similar variety, called “soles” or suns) filled with typical Spanish products with designations of origin¹⁰, such as Iberian ham, Manchego cheese, and Galician veal. The theme of the advert is that Gallo fresh pasta is Spanish pasta: on the outside, because it is made in Spain, and inside, because it is filled with *guaranteed Spanish (= made in Spain) products*¹¹. In this sense, the theme acts as an explicit premise of the argumentation, whose implicit premise is that ‘Spanish is good’ (chauvinism), with the following conclusion: Gallo pasta is good. It therefore goes without saying that if it is good, it deserves to be bought. But as it will be seen, it says that it is the best (better than anywhere else), and above all, plays on nationalist sentiment: Spaniards should buy Gallo pasta, because it is Spanish.

The following section includes a descriptive transcript of the video. Subsequently, its main aspects will be examined in greater detail: 1) the presenter of the advert, who acts as the endorser; 2) the role of the music; 3) the imagined community build through the place deixis (*here*) and person deixis (*us*); 4) the role of language, as they are essential in the creation of the Spanish symbolic national(ist) space.

6. The Video

The video lasts for 20 seconds, standard length for television, and has been broadcast on the main Spanish networks. The following description, given in the table below, is not intended to be exhaustive, but instead to clearly explain the video. In methodological terms, I believe it is the best way to represent a video by written means, as it makes it possible to highlight all of the important and pertinent aspects for its analysis. The left hand column contains a description of the soundtrack, as this is extremely important to create the image of the brand as being Spanish. The second

¹⁰ http://www.wipo.int/about-ip/es/about_geographical_ind.html.

¹¹ I use the same term used in the advert, as well as on the product packages.

column contains a number of frames from each of the scenes in the video, while the third contains the voiceover by the same main character (in Spanish with its English translation), divided into scenes, which correspond with the respective frames. Finally, on the right there is a short description of the settings, shots, and whether the main character is talking on screen or by voiceover.

Table 5.1. Soundtrack, images, voiceover and description

SOUNDTRACK	IMAGES	VOICEOVER	Description ¹²
<p>Spanish music with a Spanish guitar and flamenco “cajón” (wooden box) accompaniment, in a flamenco style throughout the whole video.</p>	 <p>Carlos Herrera / Periodista</p> <p>Carlos Herrera / Periodista</p>	<p>Como aquí no se come en ningún otro sitio (here the food is like nowhere else in the world)</p>	<p>Daytime interior in a bar with a typically Spanish appearance. The main character stands next to a bar, using a medium shot. Screen caption: “Carlos Herrera / Journalist”. Close-up of the main character, who says, “here the food is like nowhere else in the world.”</p>

¹² This heading is lower case because it is my description, while other headings are upper case because they indicate that what appears in the column is what spectators see/hear of the ad.

	<p>nuestro jamón ibérico (our Iberian ham)</p>	<p>Hands of a waiter preparing a plate of ham. Close-up of a plate with slices of ham. Voiceover by main character, who says: "our Iberian ham."</p>
	<p>nuestro queso manchego (our Manchego cheese)</p>	<p>Outdoor shot on a pavement café with a typically Spanish appearance. Medium shot of the main character sat at a table with a glass of beer. A waiter serves him a plate of cheese. Close-up of a plate with slices of cheese. Voiceover by main character, who says: "our Manchego cheese."</p>

	 	<p>nuestra ternera gallega (our Galician veal)</p>	<p>Daytime interior shot of the kitchen in a house. In a ¾ shot, the presenter, wearing an apron, opens a fridge as he utters the phrase “our Galician veal”. Close-up of the inside of the fridge, from the inside, focusing on a shelf with three packets of Gallo fresh pasta. A packet of ravioli made using Galician veal is shown in the foreground.</p>
		<p>con nuestra pasta fresca Gallo (with our Gallo fresh pasta)</p>	<p>The main character, in a ¾ shot, takes out the packet of ravioli with Galician veal, looks to the camera and says: “with our Gallo fresh pasta.”</p>
		<p>sabores nuestros (our own flavours)</p>	<p>Close-up of the main character pointing to the packet of pasta, saying emphatically: “our own flavours.”</p>

		<p>Gallo rellena su pasta con ingredientes de aquí, garantizando su origen (Gallo fills its pasta with ingredients from here, guaranteeing their origin)</p>	<p>Big close-up of a plate of ravioli: a fork cuts through a piece of ravioli, revealing its interior, full of Iberian ham. Cutting between shots of the plate of ravioli and the packet of pasta, the main character says in the voiceover: "Gallo fills its pasta with ingredients from here, guaranteeing their origin."</p>
		<p>pasta fresca Sabores Nuestros ("Our Own Flavours" fresh pasta)</p>	<p>Close-up of three packets of Gallo fresh pasta, one of each flavour. Voiceover by main character: "Fresh pasta, Our Own Flavours".</p>

		<p>como en Gallo, en ninguna otra pasta (Gallo, like no other pasta)</p>	<p>Close-up of the main character looking at the camera and holding a packet of pasta, saying: "Gallo, like no other pasta."</p>
<p>Flamenco music ends.</p>			<p>End with logo on black background.</p>

6.1. The Endorser

Carlos Herrera, the main character who speaks for the company (with a script written by the agency FMRG Compact) is a radio, TV and press journalist, who is also a recognised gourmet and avid Spanish nationalist.

The fact that Herrera is a gourmet and a Spanish nationalist is essential in order to articulate the message contained in the advert: in order to sustain and make credible an argument whose main features are the relationship between types of food and a nation, it is essential that the speaker is both an expert on foods and on issues related to the nation. In terms of foodstuffs, Carlos Herrera owns a well-known on-line food store that sells oil, hams, cheese and other typical Spanish products, as may be seen on his personal website¹³. As regards the second point, Carlos Herrera is a figurehead of Spanish nationalism. He writes a column in *ABC*, a right-wing, Catholic and nationalist Spanish newspaper, he is one of the main broadcasters of *COPE*, the radio station that belongs to the Spanish Episcopal Conference, an extreme right-wing Catholic and nationalist station; he is a hero of the right-wing digital newspaper *Hispanidad*¹⁴, as may be deduced from some of the articles the newspaper dedicates to him; but above all, on Monday the 27th of March 2000, Carlos

¹³ http://www.carlosherrera.com/web/index_new.asp?Tipo=BI.

¹⁴ On its own website, the digital newspaper defines itself as follows: "*Hispanidad* is a forerunner of the Spanish digital press that analyses the latest events occurring in the Spanish-speaking world from a Christian perspective and with a certain economic bias".

Herrera was a victim of an attack by the Basque armed separatist group ETA. This made him a martyr to the Spanish nationalist cause in contrast to separatist regional movements.

And so, in order to promote Spanish food products such as Gallo fresh pasta and underline their Spanishness, there could be nobody better than a journalist, an authoritative and “objective” voice (the commas are inevitable), the voice of the national linguistic standard, recognised expert on Spanish gastronomy and above all, a recognised representative of Spanish nationalism.

Before moving on and specifically analysing a number of discursive devices, a brief reference will be made of certain elements of the music used in the video.

6.2. The Role of the Music

Although it may seem to be a minor point, the music provides a contextualization cue (Gumperz, 1982) allowing the viewer to quickly locate the action in a Spanish setting. Together with the furnishings and other contextual elements, such as the setting, location, climate, and light, the music gives the sensation of being in Spain, although to a greater extent than the other elements. The music does not only make it possible to characterise the setting in a highly emotive way as being Spanish, but also leads (Spanish) receivers to imagine it as their own space, creating a community of feelings¹⁵.

The flamenco music used is an extraordinarily strong symbolic means of characterising the fictitious space represented in the video as being Spanish. At the same time, it becomes an auditory element that runs through the whole video, clearly indicating Spanishness.

6.3. The Imagined Community of “Us Here”

It is important to examine the statements made by the main character in the video, as they are essential in the discursive construction of the imaginary community of Spain. These are listed below:

como aquí no se come en ningún otro sitio here the food is like nowhere else in the world
(our Iberian ham)
(our Manchego cheese)
(our Galician veal)

¹⁵ Cf. the concept of *social unison*, elaborated by van Leeuwen (1999: 79-80).

(with our Gallo fresh pasta)
 (our own flavours¹⁶)
 (Gallo fills its pasta with ingredients from here, guaranteeing their origin)
 (fresh pasta Our Own Flavours)
 (Gallo, like no other pasta)

The first *here* (1) refers to Spain, in the same way as the second *here* in (7), where *ingredients from here* should be taken as meaning *Spanish ingredients*.

In each of the other statements one can find the possessive adjective *our* (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8). In other words, except for the last, each statement contains a personal deixis, even in the first person, or a place deixis

(Levinson, 1989: 60-75). The strategic exploitation of these two discursive devices for the creation of the nation has already been put forward in the analysis of another advertisement that took advantage of nationalist feelings to increase sales (Screti, 2011a). The nation is a concept constructed through discourse, which does not exist in itself, but instead is imagined (Anderson, 1983; Gellner, 1997; Wodak *et al.*, 1999). In the video analysed in this paper, the Spanish nation is constructed by discursively constructing a space and a group that occupies it. The speaker refers to the space using the adverb *here*, and to the group using adjectives (*nuestro*, *nuestra*, *nuestros* = *our*) referring to a first person plural (*we/us*).

The adverb *here* makes it possible to create, through discourse, the symbolic space occupied by the imagined community, the space of Spain—in other words, spatially defining the place of the group (Spaniards). This is a determination of proximity: the speaker is located—physically and symbolically—inside the place, within the place from where he is speaking. But the *here* indicates a place that is also close to those who are listening, those who are effectively in the same space, which is why it has been referred to a deixis of proximity: the proximity between speakers and listeners.

The value of the person deixis is even greater. Despite the fact that the adjective *our* has a clearly ambiguous status—or precisely for this reason—the deixis of the first person plural is typical of the nationalist discourse (Anderson, 1983; Billig, 1995; Wodak *et al.*, 1999; Íñigo Mora, 2004; Petersoo, 2007; Wilson, 1990; amongst others). The deixis of the

¹⁶ Words of this phrase are not capitalized, because they do not refer to the name of the product, as in (8), but rather to the fact that the three fillings cited before (Iberian ham, Manchego cheese, and Galician veal), as well as the Gallo fresh pasta, are *ours* (=Spanish) they are Spanish flavours.

first person plural thereby configures the imagined community, the group. By using the adjective *our*, the speaker positions himself within the group he is speaking from, forming part of it, and establishing himself as a member of it: he is speaking from the group to the group (and in the name of the group). As a result, speaker and listener share the same space and belong to the same group: the speaker speaks from Spain and from amongst the Spaniards, to Spain and the Spaniards.

6.4. The Role of Language

A deeper analysis of the function of language (and varieties within it) as index of origin nationality—due to the supposedly straightforward relation between language and nation(ality)—as marker of authenticity, should be very interesting, also due to the huge and well founded bibliography (Gal 2012, especially p. 30; Heller 2005; Duchêne & Heller 2012, among others), but it would take an entire chapter; hence it will go beyond my editorial limits.

Nonetheless, I would like to point out some questions. For instance, it is worthy to note that Carlos Herrera is only a virtual speaker: in fact there are two addressers: 1) the real one is Gallo; 2) the virtual one is Carlos Herrera, through which Gallo speaks within the ad. Carlos Herrera works as a synecdoche for the company, he represents the company. Receivers can reasonably suppose that the virtual addresser (Carlos Herrera) is *authentically* Spaniard because he speaks in standard peninsular Spanish (Castilian). By speaking through a character immediately recognizable as a ‘standard’ Spaniard, Gallo builds an image of itself as an authentic Spanish company.

7. Final Considerations

In this video, the advertiser, Gallo, attempts to convince viewers of the qualities of its fresh pasta. Gallo is competing in a market that is mainly controlled by Italian brands such as Rana or Buitoni¹⁷. The discursive strategy of Gallo, essential in order to compete in a market such as the foodstuff sector, in which tradition (either real or invented) is a valid argument in itself, is to focus on the traditional nature of the products, which contain typical fillings, and to stimulate the nationalist spirit and

¹⁷ Originally Italian, then owned by Nestlé, Buitoni is now owned by a Swiss-Italian businessman.

pride of Spanish nationalists¹⁸ by emphasising the Spanishness of the product. In this way it attempts to convince them to buy Gallo fresh pasta, and not foreign pastas. This explains the commercial strategy of using typically Spanish fillings in a product such as fresh pasta that is intimately associated with Italy. The commercial strategy and positioning of Gallo is to emphasise the fact that by being a Spanish company, its fresh pasta is 100% Spanish, inside and out: the pasta itself, made in Spain, and the typically Spanish fillings, even guaranteeing them with protected geographical designations of origin.

To convince consumers of its own Spanishness, Gallo uses as its endorser a well-known journalist from the Spanish media, Carlos Herrera, bringing all of his prestige as a broadcaster and therefore his ability to persuade. He is a celebrity not because he is an expert in Spanish gastronomy, but instead, and above all, because he is recognised as a symbol of Spanishness and of Spanishism¹⁹.

To transmit the message that its product is good, and naturally better than its competitors, Gallo states that its product is Spanish, and to do this, not only fills its products with typically Spanish foodstuffs, but even *speaks* in ‘Spaniard Spanish’ through a recognised Spanish nationalist. Obviously, its persuasive discourse exploits a chauvinist theme (here the food is like nowhere else in the world), or formulas from the nationalist discourse, such as the deixis of the first person plural: *our*.

Note that this deixis of the first person plural (*us, our*), preferred by the nationalist discourse, is ambiguous in nature, contradictory and above all, contradictable: it can be contradicted, criticised or refuted. For example, including Galician veal within the imaginary Spanish community configured by the adjective “our” constitutes an appropriation by Spanish

¹⁸ Note that there may be passport-carrying Spaniards who are not Spanishist at all, or that are even Basqueist or Catalanist.

¹⁹ It is interesting to note that the corporate website that presents the campaign (in a text probably written by the publicity company itself or another company associated with the interests of Gallo), makes no mention of Herrera’s support of Spanish nationalism, only focusing on his interest in food and cooking. The fact that the company twists or silences the intention to make use of this nationalist feeling is indicative of a subtle type of ideological manipulation. This lack of references to nationalism is due, on the one hand, to the banality with which nationalism is (re)produced (Billig, 1995), and on the other, to the strategic value of nationalist sentiment in the argumentation and, finally, the fact that an open declaration of nationalism in Spain continues to generate a certain degree of distrust, due to its connections with the former Francoist regime. This may have contributed to the fact that Spanish nationalist sentiment is increasingly sublimated in the promotion of certain elements such as food, sport or music.

nationalists of an element that belongs to the space defended by Galician nationalists. Galicia is an element that is subject to contradiction, between Spanish and Galician nationalists, and therefore considering something Galician as typically Spanish is a form of symbolic occupation or colonisation. The custom of nationalists to occupy physical and symbolic spaces, or linguistic and cultural spaces, is widely known²⁰. The *our* spoken by Carlos Herrera refers to Spain, and in this sense positions Galicia *within* Spain, although for a Galician nationalist this *our* would position Galicia outside of Spain.

In this sense, it is impossible to overlook a typical tendency of nationalism in dealing with internal differences, for example in relation to the different idiosyncrasies of the different regions or parts of the country, as a single unit, different only from what exists outside its legal frontiers. In this case, all of the parts of Spain are equal to each other, and are different from that which is not Spain.

Besides, it is also important to note the importance of publicity as a discourse that serves to structure our current capitalist and mercantilist society. Publicity is a discourse that permeates all the levels of our society, and which reaches a much larger number of people than, for example, an article in a newspaper or a book, or other texts that are produced and disseminated by the mass media. Due to its characteristics, in other words its omnipresence, repetitiveness, banality, persuasiveness, brevity and multimodality, publicity has the power to disseminate in a banal but effective manner a large number of meanings that are highly relevant in terms of the structuring of society and thought, i.e. ideological meanings. In reference to this article, but also in many other cases (Screti, 2011a²¹;

²⁰ And in a way that is by no means paradoxical, it affects all of the different nationalisms, even those on a very small scale: remaining within Spain, Galician nationalists have laid claim to certain parts of Asturias or Castile and León; Basque nationalists have claimed Navarra and certain parts of La Rioja and the French Basque Country as their own; Catalan nationalists claim parts of the Community of Valencia and the Balearic Islands, etc., exactly in the same way as Spanish nationalists claim or emphasise the Spanishness of the three disputed communities (Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country), Ceuta and Melilla (in Moroccan territory), or Gibraltar (British territory on Spanish soil). In this sense, all nationalisms are the same, except in terms of size.

²¹ This is an interesting case, as it studies nationalism presented through an advertisement for a Galician supermarket chain (owned by a Galician company). On a smaller scale, the same phenomena dealt with in this paper can be seen: the exploitation of (Galician) nationalist feelings in order to sell local products, the (re)production of nationalist sentiment, the superiority of the local in comparison

2011b), publicity plays a leading role in the construction and dissemination of nationalist ideology.

Finally, it is important to emphasise the value of gastronomy, and especially the traditional gastronomy of a group, in constructing nationalist sentiment, something that makes it possible to refer to a genuine gastronomic nationalism. This relationship between food and the nation is well known. However, recognising the importance of gastronomy for nationalism must lead to recognising the importance of the foodstuff industry for the national economy, and in this sense, to recognising the national industry (of which the foodstuff industry is only a part) as one of the main agents for the (re)production of nationalism. The relationship between business and nationalism is widely known, or the relationship that connects the bourgeoisie with the birth of nationalism (Anderson, 1983; Gellner, 1997). This relationship does not only concern the birth of nationalism, as has been demonstrated by the previously cited academics, but instead, as has been demonstrated here and in other studies (Screti, 2011a), this relationship becomes apparent in all of the events involving the banal reproduction of nationalism, and in its instrumentalization in order for the bourgeoisie to achieve its specific objectives.

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to the non-local, the use of *us* and *here*, or the use of the idea of “there’s nowhere better than here”.

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