

Recipes in Paulista Cuisine, Brazil (19th and 20th Centuries)

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ABSTRACT: This study presents how transnational mobility contributed to the formation of many Brazilian cuisines, examining the contributions from Native Brazilian, enslaved Africans, European colonizers, and immigrants. The analysis comprised the culinary manuscripts of women resident of Campinas during the years 1835–1960, seeking to comprehend the choices and assimilations between different food cultures.

Transnational mobility molded global gastronomy by adding flavors and methods from different cultures to traditional cuisine. We consider the maritime expeditions in the 15th and 16th centuries to be the first movement towards food and cuisine globalization. The great navigations and the colonization of Africa and the Americas significantly altered the dietary habits of practically every culture in the world. Among such exchange of resources, from Europe to the Americas, Asia, Africa, and vice versa, food and its practices were utilized to get in touch with diverse cultures.

In the present day, population movements suffer an acceleration, caused by capitalist systems, wars, droughts or hunger. People are continuously on the move whether in search of food, work, or a better quality of life for their families.

Multidisciplinary studies have been discussing the connection between food and mobility from many perspectives; Mary Douglas (1972, 61–81) suggests we think about food as a code that provides possibilities for particular messages, which are expressed by societal patterns and can tell us about hierarchy, inclusion, exclusion, transgression, and boundaries; Jack Goody's (1995) and Sidney Mintz's (1985) *Sweetness and Power*, reintroduced food anthropologists to history and used it to show how both material conditions and symbolic representations changed over time.

Food is a particularly fruitful topic for exploring the meaning of globalization, once it exposes the complexities of an interaction process, food lies in the interface between the country of insertion and the country of origin, between the individual migrant and their country, region, or family, all of which reveal the meanings infused in the choice of a certain ingredient over another, the chosen methods, the uses, the perpetuation or abandonment of one or another dish (Gabaccia 2012, 305–323).

How can these interactions between ethnicities, traditional knowledge and customs be apprehended? Do cookbooks reveal processes of cultural interaction? Do recipes unveil how transnational mobility accelerated the appropriation of several culinary cultures?

We seek to answer these questions with the analysis of manuscript cookbooks written in the 19th and 20th centuries by women in São Paulo. Historians use cookbooks as primary sources to identify patterns in the choices of meal, ingredients, equipment, cooking methods, as well as for recognizing interactions between different food practices. To Ken Albala these documents contain rich and detailed information and historians must attempt to answer five questions: “Who wrote the cookbook? What was the intended audience? Where was it produced and when? Why was it written?” (Albala 2012, 228). These are not simple questions to answer, especially regarding manuscripts, which were often copied without the insertion of dates and names. Notwithstanding, Janet Mitchell (2001, 1–11) reinforces how important these documents are to help us comprehend the food habits of societies, historical events, and technological advances.

Brazil - São Paulo

Since its colonization in the 16th century, Brazil has carried distinctive traits from different peoples and ethnicities, which configure the national gastronomic physiognomy. Demarcating the period studied in this research, from 1860 to 1940, did not derive from a random choice. We considered the economic shifts the country was undergoing, with the spawn of coffee culture in Brazil's Southeast, supplanting the hegemony of the sugar cycle, in which Brazil's Northeast had played the lead role. In 1830, Brazil became the first country to export coffee to the world. Coffee culture reshaped the national economic landscape, raising to the spotlight the provinces with best results in coffee crops. The cities of São Paulo and Campinas benefited from this expansion and went through a process of modernization.

The economic rise directly impacted internal and external migration flows. In the year 1872, there were 10 million inhabitants in Brazil, 3,8% of which were foreigners, mostly Portuguese, German, free Africans, and French. The enslaved population represented 15,24% (IBGE 1872). Brazil welcomed five million Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, German, and Japanese immigrants from 1819 to the end of the 1940s (Rocha, Rial and Hellebrandt 2013, 189).

Beyond economic affairs, transnational mobility in the 19th century was also propelled by the advance in steam navigation. The development of steam navigation technologies remodeled society's manners in social, political, cultural, and economic aspects (Sampaio 2006, 25). Cruise ships transported not only wealthy excursionists, but also

immigrants in search of work and better life conditions for their families. While immigrants travelled in third-class cabins, the rich travelling for leisure, study, or work, occupied the first class, with the privilege of balls and banquets.

Culinary compendia

The manuscript cookbooks selected for this research provide an important source for Food History in the period selected for this study. Finding and collecting these documents is not an easy task, given the frailty of paper, its long-term handling, and the lack of proper preservation throughout the years.

Fortunately, some families kept those manuscripts along with their personal documents, which were donated to historical archives, in this case Centro de Memória - Unicamp. There are eight cookbooks belonging to Custódia Leopoldina de Oliveira, who wrote four volumes between 1863 and 1873. Anna Henriqueta de Albuquerque Pinheiro produced three cookbooks between 1900 and 1940. Barbara do Amaral Camargo Penteado recorded her recipes in one single cookbook in the years 1885 to 1940. In addition to the manuscripts, I found and analyzed two manuscripts which were published as cookbooks, written by Lucia Queiroz (1916) and Sylvia Ferreira de Barros (1931). All these women belonged to the economic, political, and intellectual elite of São Paulo, and their social network was nurtured and strengthened during the many social gatherings held, as afternoon tea parties, banquets, and balls.

The methodology chosen considered the discursive elements of the recipes. As well observed by Luce Giard, within recipes we can find the linguistic elements applied to talk about the craft of cooking. The lexicon of culinary instructions, according to Giard, is composed of four distinctive areas of objects and actions: ingredients; utensils and containers; the operations, action verbs; the final products and the naming of dishes (Giard 2000, 287). Beyond that analysis, we also investigated the authors' history, who they were and how they conceived their cookbooks. These cookbooks reveal the systematization of a specific body of knowledge, also a result of the sociability between groups and individuals, constituted by the written transmission of culinary recipes. According to Solange Demeterco these documents provide technical guidance to those who prepare the recipes, but above all, they evoke family memories (Demeterco 1998, 115).

Each author adopted their method of registration for the manuscripts. Oliveira wrote 234 recipes, and it is evident she drew her inspiration from Portuguese manuscript cookbooks to compose her 4 volumes. Pinheiro, in her turn, imported many delicacies from French cuisine, such as *brioche*s, *bavaroise*, and *gallantine*, amongst the 255 instructions. Penteado was systematic in the organization of her cookbook with 579 recipes. She informs the reader on the variations of the recipes – in cases of recipes with more than one version available.

Another characteristic of Penteado's writing is that she identified the name of the person who had taught her each recipe. We counted approximately seventeen people between family members and acquaintances. Among these recipes one can find *Bolo de Noiva (da Giloca)* and *Bolo da Comadre Rita*.

The case of Queiroz reveals the interest people had for cookbooks, facing they were manuals providing guidance to readers on how to prepare dishes and sweets to their families and guests. Queiroz's manuscripts were published to be distributed to her family and friends, and for sale to the public. Within the 217 pages, the author took care of guiding her audience on the handling and preparation of food; including recipes for dressings, salads, savory dishes, sweets, and liqueurs (Queiroz 1916). These features are not found in the manuscripts of Oliveira, Pinheiro and Penteado, which feature mainly (80%) by recipes for sweets and no instructions for savory dishes for daily meals.

Barros (1931) followed the steps of Queiroz (1916) and published her cookbook to be sold to raise funds for the Hospital Candido Ferreira, of which she was the founder. Her book was divided into *Pratos de Sal* (savory dishes) and Sweets, Liqueurs and Refreshments.

The writing of these women is the medium that brings to light the social interactions that are based in oral tradition and take place in the exchange of knowledge from mother to daughter, aunts, enslaved cooks, cooks, and from written cookbooks in circulation. The paradigm of taste, preserved by the manuscripts, unfolds with the passing from one generation of women to the next, with explicit intentions – noted on the compendia – and subtle intentions, not least important, perpetuated by the know-how and the daily quotidian experience (Abrahão 2018; Notaker 2017, 63).

According to Bruno Laurioux (1998, 447–465), to analyze a recipe one must analyze its context entirely – textual content, ingredients, utensils, and preparation methods. After all, food is a vessel for self-representation and communication. Let's take a closer look at some recipes and the influence of different population groups impact on the flavors of the period studied.

From Manauê to feijoada

Food culture interactions

Food is the first method to penetrate diverse cultures. This was not different in Brazil. Pedro Álvares Cabral, commander of the squad that arrived in Brazil in April of 1500, presented to Native Brazilians ingredients that they partially knew and also introduced entirely new ones. As much as the Native Brazilian introduced their food to the colonizers, with ingredients particular to the American continent.

The colonizers had to adapt to local ingredients, due to the scarcity of original products from Portugal once the supply depended on the lengthy ship journeys. The first

cooks the Portuguese encountered were the Native Brazilian (*cunhã*). They would prepare the food with the produce available. The main substitution was the use of cassava instead of wheat; cassava was the primary base in Indigenous food practices. Basic ingredient, cassava was first domesticated by the Tupi people, in the vast area of Madeira River, Amazonian region, before spreading through Brazil (Hue 2008, 59).

It is notable, from these initial interactions of knowledge and flavors, that the exchange between colonized and colonizers did not take place only through the exchange of products, which indeed transformed food practices, but also through the exchange of knowledge on culinary techniques, for instance, cooking methods – baking, simmering, stewing, braising, pounding –, methods for seasoning and conservation – with the addition of salt or smoked sugar –, artefacts for preparation and consumption – cauldrons, copper pans, cake pans in varied shapes –, and the recipes (Algranti and Asfora 2014, 262–265).

Manauê: a sweet snack

The recipes in the cookbooks studied reveal a stronger influence of Portuguese techniques and food practices over Brazilian cuisine. This information may sound obvious, given that Brazil was colonized by Portugal. However, the decolonization of food has been contributing to the rediscovery of African and Indigenous recipes in the constitution of Brazilian food culture. By food culture we mean: “the collection of representations, beliefs, knowledge, and practices inherited and/or taught that are associated with nutrition and shared by the individuals of a certain culture or social group” (Contreras and Mabel 2011, 129).

We start with an ingredient of multiple uses, *cará*. The name has its origin in the language Tupi, and the Native people from the Brazilian coast used this word to designate the tubers *Discorea trifida*. In the early 17th century, species of yam, its name derived from *nyame*, from Wolof, spoken on the coast of Senegal (Hue 2008, p.74), were brought to Brazil from Africa. Nonetheless, Native Brazilians would rather consume the native tuber *cará*, which was also highly appreciated by the Portuguese. *Cará* is a recurrent and certain presence in the manuscripts analyzed. It was utilized in the preparation of cakes, savory and sweet puddings, bread, and biscuits.

This is an example of common consumption among Native Brazilians and Portuguese, along with the addition of salt and sugar, ingredients familiar to the Lusitanian taste. The main Lusitanian contributions to the colony's cuisine is the incorporation of salt, which was hardly ever used by Native Brazilian and African people (Algranti and Asfora 2014, 262–265), and the use of sugar, central ingredient in Portuguese cuisine, long before its large-scale production in the colonies.

Some versions of a sweet dumpling consumed in Brazil in the 19th century. The ingredients indicate the assimilation of Indigenous, Portuguese, and African

cuisine, with the use of *cará*, cornmeal, peanut, and coconut milk. *Manauês* were consumed all around Brazil and there are many recipes and different names, it was a popular sweet snack. It used to be sold in the streets by free slave women, who made a living out of it.

An example of such variations can be seen in Penteado's recipe, under the name *Manaquê*, taking rice, cornmeal, *cará*, butter, cheese, eggs, rose flower and sugar. Whereas in Barros' recipe, under the name *Manauê*, with a different list of ingredients and variations in the preparation method, taking sugar, eggs, butter, coconut milk, flour, introducing the addition of peanuts on top of the dumplings after roasting.

It is safe to affirm that the Lusitanian influence travels to all corners of Brazilian territory mostly due to Portuguese confectionery. Introduced by the Arabs into the Iberian Peninsula, the craft of pastry played a central role in Portuguese cuisine long before the contact with the sugar from the colonies. One of the presents offered by the Native Brazilian to the Europeans was honey, an ingredient of daily use in Indigenous food habits. Native Brazilians would apply honey for medicinal purposes and produce honey wine (Hue 2008, p.194). Ever since, sweets and cakes have integrated Brazilian food practice, reaching the most diverse segments of society, consuming them as desserts after meals, during work breaks, to receive guests, or in festivities (Abrahão 2007, 18–21).

This constantly reproduced cultural heritage incorporated new ingredients in the confection of sweets. In the New World, with the abundance of native and acclimatized fruits, sweets of all textures were prepared (Algranti 2004). Jellies, Sweets with dried fruit, fruit in syrup, and jams. The cookbook authors registered numerous recipes for dried sweets and jams. Among the fruits found in recipes are: pineapple, pumpkin, plum, *bacuri*, banana – *banana prata* and *banana da terra* – cashew, cider, coconut, fig, guava, *jabuticaba*, orange, lime, lemon, apple, papaya, passion fruit, quince, watermelon, strawberry, pear, peache, and grape (Abrahão 2018, 160–164). The dried sweets and the jams, frequently found in ancient cookbooks, have been consumed to the present day by Brazilian families.

For more formal dinners it is common to find sweets of more delicate texture, typical of French cuisine, such as the *Crêmes*, *Mousselines* and *Bavaroises*. We can also observe an abundance in the offer of sweets in such formal occasions, as can be seen in Figure 1 (Abrahão 2021).

Flavours

Transnational mobility shows that recipes and ingredients travelled, and this was not different with the case of spices and herbs. They are responsible for seasoning and adding flavor to dishes. Named as *cheiros* in Portugal, they were introduced to Brazil with the same name, among them there are: garlic, onion, cinnamon, cloves, fennel, and ginger (Abrahão 2018, 205).

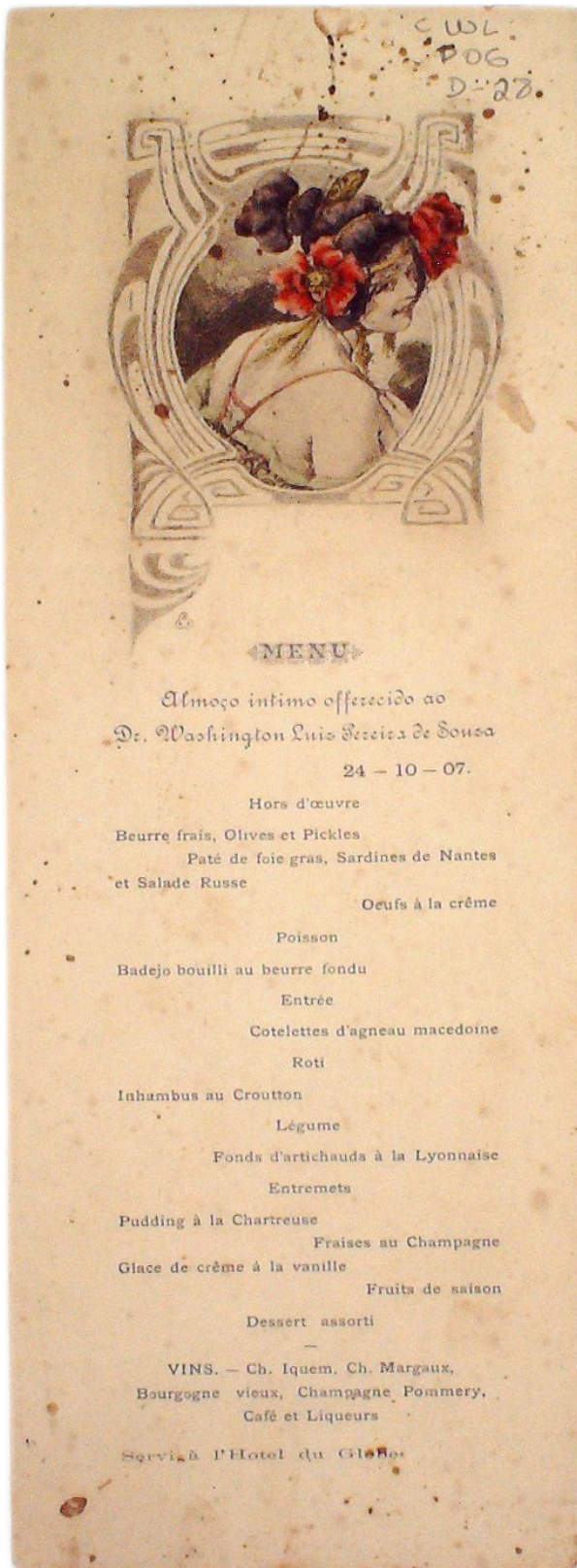


Figure 1. In the luncheon offered to the former president Washington Luís Pereira de Sousa the sweets appeared in the *Entremet* and the *Dessert*. The guests tasted *Fraises au Champagne*, cream frosting *à la Vanille*, *Fruits de saison* and *Dessert assorti*. Source: Sousa. Menu (24 October 1907).

Incorporations like those are recorded in manuscripts and cookbooks from the second half of the 19th century to the first decades of the 20th century, showcasing spices and herbs as indispensable to savory delicacies. The formula presented by the authors under the name of *quatro temperos* contains nutmeg, black pepper, cinnamon, and clove as ingredients. Until today, in all regions of Brazil, garlic and onion form the foundation for rice and beans, the nutritional axis of Brazilian food. In parallel, for sweet dishes and liqueurs, the mixture of clove, cinnamon, and fennel appeared to be mandatory (Abrahão 2018, 204).

Nonetheless, the contrary also took place, in the case of South American red peppers, which supplanted the use of the black peppers consumed by the Portuguese, because the Lusitanians incorporated the use of local peppers in their dishes and, rapidly, they started exporting red peppers to Africa, India, and China. For many Africans, until the present day, it is still hard to assimilate the fact that South American red peppers have substituted their native black pepper, becoming a fundamental element in African cuisine (Hue 2008, 100).

Multicultural recipes

Everyday meals were characterized by the rusticity of earthly produce, mixed with acclimated plants and livestock. The consumption of hens is worthy of review. Native Brazilians would farm hens for selling, but they would not consume them. Since the colonial period the hen has been considered as a delicacy for festivities in the Northeast countryside and in Southeastern farms, in Minas Gerais and São Paulo. Families would only sacrifice a hen for familiar festivities or the reception of distinguished guests, such as priests, politicians, or some important friend (Suassuna 2010).

The hen is, up to today, the main ingredient of a dish consumed mainly by the people of Minas Gerais and Pernambuco, despite having identical preparation methods in both states, the dish receives different names in each region. Both states claim this dish to be their typical original delicacy. This is the case of *galinha de molho pardo*, a Portuguese specialty – *Galinha de Cabidela* – considered by Eduardo Frieiro (1982, 137), the typical Minas Gerais dish. While, at the same time, *galinha de cabidela* has been fossilized in the local culture of Pernambuco as a typical local dish. Regionalisms aside, this is still one of the most important delicacies in Brazil, which Queiroz made sure to include in her cookbook as *Galinha ao molho pardo*. The ingredients mentioned by her included: chicken, lard, onion, garlic, tomatoes, salt, “cheiros”, comari pepper, flour, cup of water, hen blood, lemon, and vinegar. She recommends this delicacy for lunchtime, accompanied by mush (*angü*) – a thick mush prepared by stewing corn flour, cassava flour, or rice flour in water and salt (Queiroz 1919, 46).

The circulation of culinary knowledge was not strange to the authors of the cookbooks analyzed in this study. It could not have been different, because during the period studied

the participation of immigrants in Campinas counted 11,9% of the local population (1872). Such a proportion is a lot higher than the average of immigrants in other cities of the State. São Paulo was the only city to surpass this number, with 13,3% of immigrants (Abrahão 2019, 33).

The portion of Italians who arrived in Brazil from 1886 to 1887 by far surpassed the presence of other nationalities, and the contact of these immigrants with the local population can be perceived in São Paulo until the present days. Italian cuisine composes the daily feeding practices in São Paulo. Delicacies such as pasta, *polenta*, *gnocchi*, and *ravioli* were registered by the authors. Queiroz (1916) included the recipe for *Rabiolis*, similarly to Pinheiro, who wrote the following recipe:

Rabiolis

Prepare pasta with ½ kilogram of wheat flour, 6 eggs and salt, work the dough and stretch it; prepare a dumpling with hen, chopped into small pieces with the addition of all spices, and place them into the hen broth to boil for a little time. Arrange the dumplings on the plate and cover with tomato sauce and grated parmesan cheese (Pinheiro, n.d.).

In her turn, Penteadó delved into the delicacies from Bahia and registered some of them, as *Vatapá* and *Moqueca*, regional recipes that nowadays are strongly associated with the culinary tradition of Bahia. We believe these recipes arrived in São Paulo due to the exchange of knowledge caused by the internal migration that took place with the railways expansion in the west of São Paulo, as well as the installation of industries in the Southeast, which attracted the workforce coming from other Brazilian states.

What is the origin of *Vatapá*? It is a multicultural dish of afro-Brazilian creation, which carries references from the Iberian and African cuisines (Lody 2018, 4). *Vatapá* can be prepared with wet bread or cassava flour, cornmeal, ginger, *malagueta* pepper, peanuts, cashews, coconut milk, palm oil, onions, and tomatoes. It can take fresh whole shrimps or even dried ground shrimps with fish, cod, or chicken meat (Moura 2020, 11). The dish is also popular in Amazonas, Amapá, and Pará, where its recipe suffers variations such as the exclusion of peanuts and other ingredients that are common to the traditional recipe from Bahia (Paiva 2017).

Interestingly, Penteadó registered another version of *Vatapá* with hen and shrimp, and a recipe for *Moqueca Baiana* (originally from Bahia), the latter prepared with freshwater fish, those easy to find in the region of Campinas, given that the city is located one-hundred and seventy kilometers away from Santos, shore city and the main supplier of saltwater fish to the state in that period.

Vatapá from Bahia was prepared and sold on demand by women who maintained the commerce of ready meals in the city of Campinas, in the year of 1871. Simpliciana Maria da Conceição is an example, because her restaurant prepared ready meals every day and on demand requests.

She announced her restaurant in the city newspapers, informing the readers she served coffee all day and claiming to be a specialist in preparing *angú carioca* and *vatapá baiano*.

Feijoada: a Brazilian dish

Luís da Câmara Cascudo (2014) stresses that this delicacy follows the same preparation method used in the cooking of beans and meats, a factor that traces back to the many Portuguese stews. To Cascudo, it is the case of a European solution elaborated in Brazil, with ingredients as beans and flour, historically significant in Brazilian population's feeding habits (Cascudo 2014, 433–453). Beans, alongside cassava or corn flour, were part of the binomial that daily fed the greater parcel of Brazilian population during the Colony and the Empire periods. That was not the case of *feijoada*, which required the addition of meats, greens, cassava flour and pepper. The newspapers in circulation at the time mention *feijoada* in Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Campinas, and other sites since the year of 1838.

Queiroz (1916) registered a recipe for *feijoada* with pork feet, ears, cheeks, biltong (salted dehydrated meat), pork tongue, sausages, ham, and black beans. Accompanied by corn flour, commonly utilized by the Native Brazilian people from the Southeast of Brazil. Barros (1931), in her turn, registered a quite different version from the original, *Feijoada à Tivahy*. The divergences are not limited to the name of the dish. This recipe includes ingredients as chops of bacon, white and red beans, peas, pods, and sausages. After simmering and cooking it should be put on a plate and covered with butter, grated cheese, and placed in the oven to gratin.

Final considerations

Overall, the matter of food interchange is vast in history of food. The case of Brazil can be more deeply understood from multiple perspectives in the book *História & Alimentação. Brasil séculos XVI-XXI*, edited by Leila Algranti e Sidiana da Consolação de Macedo (2020). Since the first encounters, in the case of the ultramarine Portuguese conquerors, the interest in getting to know the local fauna and flora was paramount, as from such knowledge they would derive the resources to guarantee the survival of the colonizers, as well as the success of the expeditions.

The visibility of African cuisine emerges when we attentively look at the manuscripts and identify in the recipes the ingredients, such as sweet potatoes, yam, coconut milk, palm oil, and black pepper. These elements were used in the preparation of fish or shrimp *moquecas*, savory puddings, and mushes – delicacies that were sold in the streets by black women who made a living out of food. The invisibility of the hands of the black women is brought to light by the recipes registered in manuscripts and cookbooks of the period studied.

The cuisine of Brazilian countryside assimilated numerous elements from the Lusitanian, Indigenous, African,

European, and Asian cuisines. While menus in the Northeastern and Southeastern coasts were marked by the use of fish, fresh shrimps, shellfish, prepared with coconut and fish mush, in stews, *moquecas*, among other dishes, originated by the transnational flows. Countryside cuisine (*cozinha sertaneja*), in its turn, showcases other recipes, such as *galinha de cabidela*, freshwater fish mush, gherkins, okras, and *pequi*. Amazonian cuisine introduces the duck with *tucupi*, açai, *mucuã*, sweets made of *cupuaçu* and *bacuri*. Finally, the South of Brazil implemented the barbecue, very much appreciated in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, a practice that originates from the relationships with the Uruguayan and Argentinian cuisine (*pampa gaúcho*) (Simon 2019).

Such cultural exchange reveals the abundance of flavors and knowledge which comprise the Brazilian territory. The richness of gastronomy lies in the comprehension of how these cultural constructions took place, rather than trying to delimitate one single national delicacy. The concept of “national cuisine” imposes limitations, given that it is necessary to answer the following question: what is Brazil’s national dish? After all, many dishes have names that refer to countries or regions, but do not represent a particular tradition. Where did this or that dish appear? It is a very hard question to answer when we look at Italian pasta or some Brazilian cases such as flour mush, *galinha de cabidela*, *tacaca*, *quindim*, and many others. All these particularities expose how much culinary is an intersection of cultural experiences.

The fact is that food communicates, aggregates, and forms new bonds of cultural belonging. The long path of culinary exchange unveils practices, perpetuations, and cultural transformations of a society composed of varied elements, different methods, and ingredients assimilated in this new continent, called Brazil.

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