

NATIONALISM, GLOBALIZATION, AND CONFLICT CUISINE: A LOOK AT THE
EXPRESSION OF NATIONALISM THROUGH AFGHAN CUISINE IN THE
WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

by

Kristen Powell
A Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts
Anthropology

Committee:

_____ Director

_____ Department Chairperson

_____ Dean, College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

Date: _____ Spring Semester 2018
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Nationalism, Globalization, and Conflict Cuisine: A Look at the Expression of
Nationalism through Afghan cuisine in the Washington, D.C. Area

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Name of
Degree, such as Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

by

Kristen Powell
Bachelor of Arts
University of Mary Washington, 2015

Director: Linda J. Seligmann, Professor
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Spring Semester 2018
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Copyright 2018 Kristen Powell
All Rights Reserved

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all those persons who were ever forced to leave their home country and felt unwelcomed in their new one.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Cortney Hughes Rinker, Dr. Christopher Keller Morris, and especially my committee Chair, Dr. Linda J. Seligmann, for all of the guidance they have given me throughout this entire process. I would also like to thank both of my parents, Robert and Donna Powell, for supporting me through the process of receiving this Master's, along with Dr. Rashmi Sadana, for encouraging me to continue this Master's at a time at which I felt like giving up. Lastly, and most importantly, I would like to thank Zarlisht Shannan Kayoumy, who opened up to me about her experiences of being an Afghan refugee, along with introducing me to the beautiful world of Afghan culture and cuisine. Zarlisht, you were the inspiration for this thesis, and for that, I am forever grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	vi
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Chapter Two: Afghan-U.S. Relations.....	18
Chapter Three: Historical Context.....	23
Chapter Four: Afghan Cuisine as “Conflict Cuisine” in the Washington D.C. Area	34
Chapter Five: The Other Nationalism.....	50
Chapter Six: Conclusion	59
References.....	62

ABSTRACT

**NATIONALISM, GLOBALIZATION, AND CONFLICT CUISINE: A LOOK AT THE
EXPRESSION OF NATIONALISM THROUGH AFGHAN CUISINE IN THE
WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA**

Kristen Powell, MA

George Mason University, 2018

Thesis Director: Dr. Linda J. Seligmann

This thesis explores the ways in which nationalism is expressed through cuisine and ethnic restaurants in today's increasingly globalized world. It examines in depth the relationship between nationalism and globalization, given the presence of global migration flows and the opening and closing of nation borders around the world in response to these flows. This thesis discusses how these flows result in immigrant communities, particularly the Afghan community in the Washington, D.C. area of the United States, developing a transnational and deterritorialized nationalism, that is a nationalism for their home country while in a different country, and how this dual nationalism is expressed through the space of Afghan restaurants and cuisine.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Walk down any street in Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States of America, and one will quickly notice not only the abundance of food but also the variety and diversity of cuisines offered. Whether it is walking by numerous food trucks consisting of anything from Thai cuisine to fried chicken and donuts, or walking in the U Street and Shaw areas where there is an abundance of Ethiopian and Salvadoran food, there is a variety of kinds of cuisine everywhere one ventures in this city. Now going even further outside, into the suburbs of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, there is a range of even more ethnic cuisines. With Korean enclaves in Annandale and Arlington offering pop up pho and banh mi, to El Salvadorian shops from Woodbridge to Alexandria, to Indian cuisine restaurants all over, there is no doubt that the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, much like other major cities in the United States and around the Western world, is home to many different immigrant populations, which has resulted in the opening of a vast number of ethnic cuisine restaurants, shops, and food trucks in the area. But while buying a taro bubble tea from a Taiwanese food truck, or slurping up a nice hot pho at a restaurant in Arlington, does one ever stop to think, “How did this cuisine end up here?” “It is a Washington cliché: you can always tell where in the world there is a conflict by the new ethnic restaurants that open” (Forman 2014). The existence of the abundance of ethnic restaurants in the D.C. metropolitan area is largely due to the

immigration of people who have fled their home countries because of war and conflict. Many of these people came to the United States seeking refuge and new opportunities, and many started their own business by opening up a restaurant that serves cuisine from their home country.

This thesis will explore the ways in which cuisine expresses national and cultural identity, specifically for the Afghan community in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Through research and close analysis of fieldwork from different Afghan restaurants, I will discuss how globalization affects the ways in which national and cultural identities are expressed through cuisine, allowing for a sense of dual nationalism in the context of transnationalism. This sense of nationalism is developed and expressed through the space of these Afghan restaurants, along with the cuisine that is offered, bridging a gap between immigrant communities and the new societies that they live in.

Literature Review

Throughout this thesis I will be using various theories to further analyze the effects of globalization on the expression of national identity through cuisine. Below I have listed a brief description of the theories I will be using.

Nationalism and Globalization: Two Main Theories

In today's world it is much more common than before for immigrants to retain transnational connections to their homeland because of technology that allows for multiple forms of communication (Bernal 2005, 661). It is to be noted that a 'nation' can

be defined as a community of people under the same political government with similar cultural ideologies that recognizes a shared sense of unity and interests (Gellner 1983, 7). When speaking of national identity in today's age of globalization and an interconnected world, with increased migration, and borders that are considered by some to be more open and "fluid," there are two main theories that seek to explain the relationship between nationalism and globalization. These are (1) globalization undermines national identity (Ariely 2011, 542) and (2) globalization actually reinforces the strength of national identity (Ariely 2011, Ruodometof 2014, Glick Schiller et al 1995, Tomlinson 2003). Those who draw on the theory that globalization undermines or diminishes national identity argue this because everyone is becoming much more interconnected in today's world, cultural identities are becoming more "homogenized," and more influenced by the spread of Western capitalism, therefore destroying differences in cultural identity (Tomlinson 1999, 169). An example of this that is often used, and critiqued, in the literature of globalization is George Ritzer's term "McDonaldization." Ritzer argues that the characteristics of a fast-food restaurant (efficiency, predictability, calculability, substitution of nonhuman for human technology, control) begin to "dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world," (Ritzer 1993, 1). For Ritzer, the spread of fast food restaurants, such as McDonald's, acts as a paradigm, and these characteristics of fast food restaurants are also spread, thus creating more homogenization throughout the world. The argument that globalization undermines national identity also indicates that, since globalization is making cultural and national identities more homogenized, then this should also

simultaneously “reduce negative attitudes toward immigrants as the blurriness of boundaries makes it harder for any single national identity to retain its unique significance and distinguish itself from other national identities” (Ariely 2011, 542).

Therefore, since there is less and less distinction between cultural and national identities, the xenophobia towards immigrants should have decreased as well.

In this thesis I will argue that this is not the case. Rather, my evidence resonates far more with the second theory concerning the relationship between national identity and globalization. That is, globalization actually reinforces or strengthens national identity. Scholars have used this theory in two different ways. They have argued that globalization trends actually reinforce national identity because of an increase in xenophobia (Ariely 2011, Roudometof 2014). Gal Ariely (2011) argues that national identities are strengthened due to an increase in xenophobia stating that, “Exposure to globalization can increase the awareness of national boundaries and national uniqueness and reinforce feelings of national identification and xenophobic attitudes” (543). With the increase of global migration in today’s world, and the idea that borders are becoming more fluid or porous, nations may develop what some scholars note as “anti-global nationalism” due to the fear of the many different cultural and national identities that are settling in their nation (Roudometof 2014, 18). An example of this is discussed in Benjamin Barber’s *Jihad vs. McWorld* (1995). In this book, Barber focuses on the struggles between forces of free market globalization (that supposedly break down nation-state boundaries and increase homogenization) and the reinforcing of national traditions and identities within tribal forces in the Middle East. While Barber’s work has often been criticized for the

simplistic division of “East vs. West”, what is important to take away from his work is that Middle Eastern contexts have often been used as examples for showing the affects of globalization on national identity. This thesis will discuss how Afghan national identity can be expressed transnationally by Afghan immigrants in Washington, D.C.

The second way in which globalization actually reinforces senses of cultural and national identity is through the development of transnational and deterritorialized nationalism, a process that will be discussed in greater length in the next section. While I do not intend to underestimate the increase in xenophobia that accompanies the increase of global migration flows, the majority of this thesis will focus on the creation of transnational and deterritorialized nationalisms in the context of globalization, particularly focusing on the creation of a deterritorialized nationalism within the Afghan transmigrant community in the Washington, D.C. area, and portraying how this deterritorialized nationalism is expressed through cuisine and the space of Afghan restaurants.

Deterritorialized/Transnational Nationalism

The concept of deterritorialized nationalism or transnational nationalism is largely discussed in the works of Victor Roudometof (2014), John Tomlinson (2003) and Nina Glick Schiller (1995). Deterritorialization is a concept that was first introduced by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1972). Within the context of globalization, specifically in anthropology, deterritorialization indicates that cultural

identities are no longer tied to space (Appadurai 1990, Tomlinson 2003). John Tomlinson states in an article discussing the relationship between cultural identity and globalization:

We may live in places that retain a high degree of distinctiveness, but this particularly is no longer—as it may have been in the past—the most important determinant of our cultural experience. The idea of deterritorialization, then, grasps the way in which events outside of our immediate localities...are increasingly consequential for our experience. Modern culture is less determined by location because location is increasingly penetrated by ‘distance’ (Tomlinson 2003, 274).

In today’s globalized world, many migrants are able to retain the cultural identity of their home country due to technology, such as social media and cellular communication, which allows for transnational communication, thus resulting in a de-territorialized nationalism (Roudometof 2014, 26-27).

There is a major shift between immigrants before the Second World War and after the Second World War due to increasing globalization, technology, and communication processes. The immigrant communities that migrated to the United States before the Second World War were put under pressure by American society to become accustomed to American culture and were not able to stay in contact with their family and community from their home country easily. Due to an increase in technology and methods of communication across the globe, immigrant communities that settled in the United States after the Second World War and the generations that followed were able to stay in contact more frequently with family and community members back in their home country, thus allowing them to “inhabit both the world of the home country and that of

the host country” (Roudometof 2014, 26). This produced the phenomenon of “transmigration.” “Transmigrants,” can be defined as “immigrants whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation state” (Glick Schiller et al 1995, 48). These transnational migrants have also developed a sense of transnational nationalism or deterritorialized nationalism. Roudometof explains, “Nation-state building leads to the designation of people as transnational and/or diasporic...these groups emerge as key agents for the articulation of deterritorialized nationalism and transnational nation-state building” (2014, 19). Roudometof then goes on to state, “contemporary diasporas are constructing real or imaginary homelands and are producing deterritorialized nationalism; e.g. nationalism that lack a hitherto taken-for-granted territoriality” (2014, 26). Here Roudometof explains that these transnational communities construct and maintain nationalism for their homeland in part because of the transnational connection that they keep with the communities back home, which helps them develop a sort of “imagined” sense of home in their new home country. I argue that the ability of immigrants to express a sense of nationalism with respect to their home country as well as to their new country (a dual nationalism) is a result of this relationship between globalization and nationalism, the ability of immigrant groups to express their own cultural and national identity more freely after the Second World War, and the consequences of the Immigration Act of 1965.

Imagined Communities and Invented Traditions

The concepts of imagined communities and invented traditions will be used when discussing the creation of a sense of nationalism, particularly coupled with the concept of deterritorialization.

In order to understand the sense of dual or deterritorialized nationalism that occurs among immigrant groups in the United States today, particularly Afghan immigrant groups in the Washington D.C. area, it is useful to draw upon Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities. In *Imagined Communities* (1983) Anderson proposes that the "nation" is "an imagined political community" (1983, 4). Anderson goes on to describe how a nation can be defined as "imagined": "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (1983, 6). Anderson states, "it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship (1983, 7). He explains that the main way in which an imagined community is created is through the development of print media or "print-capitalism." Because of the development of print media, information could be spread throughout a nation, thus generating common ideologies and reinforcing this sense of imagined community. The concept of imagined communities becomes particularly relevant in today's world of migration flows. The process of immigrants becoming part of a nation has to deal with imagined communities. Tulasi Srinivas mentions in her article, "As the local becomes less significant physically, the memory and the imagination of that place become stronger. As people are living abroad away from what they consider their

‘home culture’, the idea of ‘homeland’ becomes an important nucleus for nostalgic sentiment” (2006, 205). Here Srinivas explains how imagined communities are created through the nostalgia of a homeland, thus further enhancing a deterritorialized sense of community in migrant groups. Kathleen D. Hall, states:

Immigrants become citizens through processes of social incorporation—processes that include the formation of social ties with the host society—traditionally referred to as “assimilation.” But whether and how people come to be viewed as “assimilatable” is informed, in part, by broader processes of cultural change associated with the symbolic creation of “the nation” as an imagined community. Imagining the nation and defining the basis of national belonging involve a dual process of delineating boundaries of inclusion and of exclusion... Notions of national belonging and, in turn, national identities and citizenship statuses are continually redefined, negotiated, and debated as they come to be articulated within different forms of nationalist discourse (2004, 112).

Here Hall explains how the creation of the imagined community of a nation deals largely with processes of inclusion and exclusion. I argue that a sense of nationalism is also created through processes of inclusion and exclusion. A nation defines itself through certain cultural aspects, one of which, I will argue, is cuisine. But what I will also argue is that, for the case of Afghan immigrant communities in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, these immigrant-owned restaurants become sites in which these imagined senses of nationalism with respect to both Afghanistan and the United States are reaffirmed.

The concept of imagined communities goes hand in hand with the concept of “invented traditions,” a term coined by political historian Eric Hobsbawm (1983).

Hobsbawm defined invented traditions as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past,” (1983, 1). In this thesis I portray how the concept of a national cuisine is a form of invented tradition for the imagined community of the nation, and how members of nations use a national cuisine as a way to define themselves in contrast to others.

As mentioned above, the concept of deterritorialized nationalism does not have to be tied to a particular place or nation. Senses of nationalism for one nation can be expressed transnationally, through the creation of imagined communities and invented tradition.

Ethnoscapes

Arjun Appadurai's (1990) notion of ethnoscape also contributes to an understanding of the creation of a dual sense of nationalism. Ethnoscapes are one of five dimensions of global cultural flows that Appadurai thinks must be studied in order to understand the flows of people, information, commodities, values and technology in today's globalized world (1990, 513). Appadurai defines ethnoscapes as “persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals” (1990, 513-514). According to Appadurai, these moving individuals are what make up the ethnoscape. The immigrant and refugee groups that came to the Washington, D.C. area are a principle vector of the

ethnoscape that led to the establishment of an Afghan cuisine and Afghani restaurants in the area.

Identity Through Cuisine

There have been many anthropological studies on the relationship between food/cuisine and cultural identity (Heldke 2003, Wilk 1999, Counihan 2008). Cuisines play a major part in helping shape and define the social and cultural worlds of individuals and communities (Crowther 2013: xxix). For this thesis, I will use this literature to further explore the relationship between cuisine and national identity. I will explore the concepts of gastro-diplomacy and gastro-nationalism, looking at how gastronomy is a gateway for different nations to become more knowledgeable of other cultures (Chapple-Sokol 2012). Below I discuss the concepts of gastro-nationalism, gastro-diplomacy, and conflict cuisines.

With increasing technology and globalization, along with a “blurring of borders,” nations are searching for more ways in which they can further identify themselves against others, and cuisine is one of those ways (Ferguson 2010, 105). Gastro-nationalism (frequently an invented tradition) serves as a way for nations to use a particular food or cuisine to define themselves against other countries and nations, and used to “demarcate and sustain the emotive power of national attachment” (DeSoucey 2010, 432).

Gastro-, or culinary, diplomacy on the other hand “is defined as the use of food and cuisine as an instrument to create cross-cultural understanding in the hopes of improving interactions and cooperation” (Chapple-Sokol 2012, 161). In “Culinary

Diplomacy: Breaking Bread to Win Hearts and Minds” Sam Chapple-Sokol explains the different ways in which food is connected to nationalism, and shows why, throughout history, food has been closely linked to international relations. Chapple-Sokol notes that, “the connection between food and diplomacy goes back to ancient Greece” (2012, 163). He argues that culinary-diplomacy is an effective form of diplomacy when it comes to international relations because food is “a universally vital, comforting and powerful element of our lives” (2012, 162-163). Chapple-Sokol makes the argument that when one nation eats the food of another nation, this increases contact with the identity of that nation, further enhancing the knowledge of their culture, and lessening the opportunity to “create tension and potential rivalry” (2012, 171).

In a recent article Johanna Mendelson Forman discusses a course she created for students at American University entitled “Conflict Cuisine,” in which the goal is for students to recognize the link between conflict and cuisine, in particular looking at the many different ethnic cuisines located in the Washington D.C. area. Like Chapple-Sokol, Forman conveys that “food is a means of communication” and is used universally as a “conveyor of culture” (2014). Forman states, “It is a Washington cliché: you can always tell where in the world there is a conflict by the new ethnic restaurants that open” (2014). By this, Forman is implying that most of the popular ethnic cuisines in Washington D.C. are a result of diasporas migrating to the city due to conflict in their home country. I intend to further explore this observation with respect to Afghan restaurants in the D.C. region. Forman argues:

The purveyors of cuisines from countries in conflict can use their food as a means of communicating to U.S. domestic audiences about their culture, particularly how war has affected the civilian populations who are now in exile (2014).

Forman makes the argument that these conflict cuisines can promote a greater understanding among Americans about reasons these people left their home countries and how they assimilate as immigrants in their new countries. Forman states:

This new take on the town and gown divide may actually help bridge a gap that often exists in the United States: distrust of newcomers, or more significantly, misunderstanding about different cultural norms, and may help overcome xenophobia (2014).

I will thus explore the ways in which the Afghan community tries to convey different aspects of their culture to the American public through their restaurants and cuisine.

Immigration and Cuisine in Washington, D.C.

This thesis focuses on Afghan immigrant culture and cuisine in the Washington D.C. area and the creation of deterritorialized and transnational nationalism through cuisine and the space of ethnic restaurants. The D.C. metropolitan area includes parts of Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia, and in some cases, even parts of West Virginia. This area is locally known as the “DMV” (an acronym for D.C., Maryland, and Virginia). Throughout this thesis I will refer to the Afghan immigration group in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (DMV). The specific restaurants that are the basis for this thesis are located in parts of northern Virginia.

Washington, D.C., as the nation’s capital is a popular destination for many immigrant communities. As of October 2017, just over 14 percent of the population in

Washington, D.C., was born in another country. One in seven residents of D.C. is an immigrant and one in ten residents has at least one immigrant parent (American Immigration Council 2017). Nevertheless, Washington, D.C. has not always been a popular city for many immigrants in comparison to other east coast cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. At the beginning of the 1900s, only 7 percent of Washington, D.C.'s population consisted of foreign born residents, whereas 37 percent of New York City's population was foreign-born (Singer 2013, 2). Unlike Washington, D.C., cities like New York with a more industrialized economy offered more job opportunities for immigrants. However, the immigrant population in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area "bloomed as immigrant gateways in the latter half of the twentieth century, during a period of high immigration into the United States," (Singer 2013, 3). This was largely due to the opening up of borders to various immigrant ethnic groups following the Immigration Act of 1965. The Metropolitan area of Washington D.C. "now ranks as the seventh largest metropolitan area with a concentration of immigrants in the United States" (Singer 2013, 3). Not only has the immigration population in the Washington D.C. area bloomed in the latter half of the century, but also the number of different kinds of immigrant ethnic groups is high. According to a study done by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), by the 1990s, the immigrant groups living in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area came from 193 different countries (Singer 2013, 14). Another reason for the major increase of immigrants to the Washington, D.C. area is because of social networks and transnational ties among immigrant communities. Many immigrants join family members and friends who have already established

themselves in the Washington, D.C. area in the well-known pattern of chain migration (Singer 2013, 5).

Accompanying the increase in the population of immigrant communities to the Washington, D.C. area has been an increase in the establishment of ethnic restaurants, food trucks, and grocery stores. As mentioned above, the Washington metropolitan area is home to many different ethnic cuisines, the result of immigrant and refugee groups fleeing from conflict. This is the case for the Afghan community in the D.C. area. In the next chapter I will discuss the history of Afghan and United States relations, along with the conflicts that occurred in Afghanistan over the past forty years, which resulted in many immigrants and refugees fleeing the country and settling in the United States.

Methods

The research for this thesis is based on text-based research and ethnographic participant observation. Between the months of October 2017 and February 2018, I frequently visited Jahan Banquet Hall and Restaurant and White Tulip Banquet Hall and Restaurant, two Afghan restaurants that were chosen because they are frequented by not only members of the Afghan immigrant and Afghan American community, but also members of the United States government and military. I conducted interviews with the owners of these restaurants, as well as with workers and customers of the restaurant, the majority of whom were either first or second generation Afghans, and all of whom gave me permission to conduct my research, interviews, and informal conversations. For privacy and protection reasons, pseudonyms are used for the names of both restaurants,

as well as for the owners, workers, and customers of the restaurants that were interviewed for this thesis. I analyzed the different information that was given to me during interviews along with acquired during participant observations using coding methods. I coded for different themes such as expressions of nationalism, expressions of identity, and expressions of transnational connection.

Structure of Chapters

The next chapter will focus on the history of the relationship between the United States and Afghanistan and reasons why many Afghan people migrated to the United States during the 1980s and the decade following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. on 9/11. The third chapter will discuss the history of immigration to the United States and how cuisine played a key factor in the expression of cultural identity for the many different immigrant groups that come to the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. In this chapter we will also discuss a shift that occurred in the 1960s, from an assimilationist policy to more acceptance of ethnic culture and cuisines in the United States, both on the part of people themselves, as well as the government. The fourth chapter discusses Afghan cuisine specifically in the DMV, introducing Jahan and White Tulip. It focuses on the ways in which these restaurants are used as ethnosites to further enhance a transnational connection to Afghanistan, and how certain aspects of these restaurants create an imagined community and express nationalism towards Afghanistan. The fifth chapter discusses how a sense of nationalism for the United States is expressed within the Afghan immigrant community, particularly in the restaurants of Jahan and

White Tulip. This chapter also discusses effects of xenophobia on different immigrant communities in the United States, in particular the increase in Islamophobia after the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

CHAPTER TWO: AFGHAN-U.S. RELATIONS

Introduction

Afghan immigration to the U.S. can only be understood by taking account of the political and cultural history of Afghanistan and, in particular, the United States' involvement in Afghanistan between the late 1980s and present day. The U.S. involvement in Afghanistan led to an increase in immigration of Afghans to the United States, and specifically to Washington, D.C. One of the main reasons that Afghans have immigrated to the U.S. is because of the political conflicts that occurred in Afghanistan in the 1970s and 1980s.

Brief Political History of Afghanistan Leading up to Russian Invasion

Before the Russian invasion, Afghanistan was a monarchy. It was declared a republic due to a coup initiated by former Prime Minister Mohammed Daud in 1973 (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 130). Before the shift from a monarchy to a republic, Afghanistan had many interactions with different countries, in part because it is a landlocked and buffer state country, making it “a gateway for the Middle East and South and Central Asia” (Dossa 2014: 12). For over a century before this shift occurred, Afghanistan was caught between Russian and British political ideologies of imperialism (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 114). It was not until 1934, when Afghanistan joined the

League of Nations that official democratic relations with the United States were established (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 114). Although democratic relations were established, “the United States did not view the country as having great economic or strategic value” and did not establish any sort of permanent U.S. representation in Afghanistan until 1942 (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 114).

The Russian Invasion of Afghanistan

In late 1979, Soviet Union troops invaded Afghanistan and established a communist government. Due to Afghanistan being a buffer state or “gateway” into the Middle East, the Soviet Union felt that by establishing a communist government, they would be able to spread further into the Middle East and hold a strong presence. By 1985, half of the people in Afghanistan were both internally and externally displaced, many of them seeking refuge in the neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan and hoping eventually to gain entry into European and North American countries (BBC News 2018). Shortly after, the United States began to intervene, wanting to stop the spreading of communism by supplying weapons and “over a half-billion dollars in aid” to Islamic guerrilla fighters known as the *mujahideen* (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 180). This eventually led to the fall of Soviet control over Afghanistan. The Soviet Union began to pull its troops out of Afghanistan in 1988, following the signing of peace accords by Afghanistan, the USSR, U.S. and Pakistan (BBC News 2018).

Taliban Rule, al-Qaeda and 9/11

Following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, the *mujahideen* “had a near monopoly of political legitimacy, diplomatic recognition, military strength, and financial support from abroad” which made them the new leaders of the country (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 195). Around this same time, Osama bin Laden, who was connected with a few *mujahideen* groups, founded al-Qaeda, the terrorist group that would eventually be the cause of the attacks in 2001 in New York and Washington, D.C (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 265). Up until 1996, different *mujahideen* groups had control over different parts of the country, and were unable to unite, which eventually resulted in the Taliban being able to seize control of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan (BBC News Afghanistan Profile 2018). The word *Taliban* is of “Arabic origin referring to lower level students of Islam, usually from poor, rural backgrounds and always males” (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 205). These students made up what is known as the Taliban movement, which controlled over most of Afghanistan from 1996 until 2000. While the Taliban gained control and power over the entire country, they put in place new laws that implemented what the Taliban considered to be a more strict and “religious” way of life. These laws included things such as:

- “a ban on playing or listening to music, dancing, television, flying kites, soccer”
- “a limited list of Muslim names that could legally be given to newborn children”
- “the institution of stoning, amputation, and public execution as punishment”
- “a ban on most education for girls (even in private homes)” (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 218).

In order to ensure a ‘grip on power’ in the Middle East, the United States government, which had already imposed imperialist ideologies towards certain Middle Eastern

countries, ignored the oppressive regime of the Taliban and did not act on the “violation of the right of woman and minorities,” (Dossa 2014: 13). During this time of Taliban rule, Osama bin Laden strengthened his group known as al-Qaeda, whose ideology was based on *jihād*, which is known as the advancement of Islam through warfare (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 219). On September 11, 2001, bin Laden initiated an attack using the al-Qaeda on New York City, Washington, D.C., and a California-bound plane, which crashed in western Pennsylvania. These terrorist attacks officially brought the United States forces into conflict with Taliban forces in Afghanistan (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 175).

United States involvement in Afghanistan

While the United States had been involved in Afghanistan during the 1940s, and then again in the 1980s during the Russian invasion, it did not have either a strong military or political presence there until after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. “[T]he death of nearly 3,000 civilians on American soil...and the attack on the citadels of government in the nation’s capital drew swift and fierce response, not just to al-Qaeda. The United States demanded to ‘make no distinction between the terrorist who committed these acts and those who harbor them,’ as Bush told the nation the night of September 11” (Wahab and Youngerman 2007, 224). The United States military began to occupy Afghanistan, fighting against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. During this time, the United States employed many Afghans to become translators and interpreters. The United States also gave many of the Afghans they employed special immigrant visas (SIVs) so they

could leave Afghanistan if they felt threatened by the Taliban for helping the United States military (Soh 2017).

Conclusion

While Afghan immigrants had settled in the United States and around the Washington D.C. metropolitan area before the conflict that began in 1979, the majority of Afghan immigrants today are refugees who fled Afghanistan between the early 1980s to present day, along with immigrants who migrated to the United States during the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. These conditions specifically led Afghani people to migrate to the Washington D.C. area.

CHAPTER THREE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

The historical context of the experience of immigrants bringing their different cuisines to the United States over the past century provides the backdrop for understanding why and how cuisine is closely linked to the structuring of nationalism and cultural identity among immigrants. This chapter looks at these experiences and traces shifts between the American acceptance and rejection of not only these cuisines, but also of the immigrant groups that brought the cuisines themselves. The first part of this section will discuss immigration and its impact on American cuisine before the Immigration Act of 1965 and the second section will look at immigration and its impact on American cuisine after the 1965 Immigration Act.

Does America Have a ‘National Cuisine’?

The relationship between food and ethnicity and the idea of a national American cuisine is “complex” (Gabaccia 1998, 34). Does America (that is, the United States) have a cuisine? Or is it the result of the many different types of cuisines brought by immigrants over the past centuries? Current “American cuisine” is seen by many as the result of the different cultural influences that have arrived in America over the past two centuries due to immigration. Many wonder if America does in fact have its own distinct culture and,

therefore, a cuisine they can call their own. Some note that there are *regional* cuisines within America (Mintz 1996) such as clam chowder and lobster dishes along the north eastern seaboard and Creole centered dishes in the south of the U.S. Along with these regional influences there are also influences from the cuisines brought from those of different ethnic backgrounds due to immigration. Sidney Mintz attempts to unpack the question “What is American cuisine?” in the final chapter of his book, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom* (1996). He states:

Since our beginnings as a nation, Americans have sought ways to integrate and assimilate newcomer populations within some generalized American culture...most newcomers have been encouraged to forgo their traditional cultures in order to “become American.”...But the public educational system, above all, and the tremendous power of peer pressure, working on both children and adults, has helped to reshape the behavior and outlook of successive generations of new arrivals (112).

Mintz explains that throughout the history of immigration in the United States, Americans have taken a number of initiatives in order to reduce the impact of the cultural practices of different immigrant ethnic groups on American culture among them, focusing on ways to assimilate them. It was not until after World War II that this bias was “modified legislatively” (1996, 110). Mintz argues that American culture does, in fact, lack a cuisine because the majority of the time Americans eat out at restaurants. At the time at which he wrote he observed that this was the case was because Americans tended to feel that they lacked the time to cook their own food (1996, 121). Americans continue to frequent an extraordinary number of ethnic restaurants. He states, “It is easy to romanticize the food of other cultures and to underemphasize worldwide trends toward

Westernized food patterns” (1996, 115). While majority of American eating habits consists of not only eating out, but particularly eating out at restaurants that are considered to be ‘ethnic’ or that serve food from different countries, this has not always been the case. The remaining parts of this chapter will discuss the shifts and transformations between American acceptance and rejection of ethnic and immigrant cuisines in the U.S.

History of Cuisine and Identity in the U.S. Pre-Immigration Act of 1965

In the early twenty-first century, ethnic cuisine has been widely accepted, popular, and in many ways celebrated in the U.S. Prior to this acceptance and celebration, the general American population had a much more negative or mixed response to accepting different cultural practices and foodways of immigrant groups. Below, I look at and discuss the cuisine and foodways of America during the pre-1965 period, and the different reactions of the general American public to these ethnic and immigrant cultures and foodways.

In Donna R. Gabaccia’s book, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (1998) she describes the history and transformation of American eating habits. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly during the colonization and then the formation of America as a nation following the Revolutionary War, the American cuisine was a creole mix, with a great deal of influence from Native American, African, and Caribbean cultures. Gabaccia notes that the eating habits of Americans varied among different regions and that eating habits of Americans during the

eighteenth century were very different from what they are today. Many explain changes in American foodways from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first century. Three of the main factors that helped transform the eating habits of American cuisine were (1) the formation of a national food marketplace, (2) the development of corporate revolutions, and (3) the introduction of new foods due to the substantial increase in immigration from Europe and Asia to the U.S. that occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Gabaccia 199, 35).

Important social conditions catalyzed a shift between the private consumption of immigrant foods by immigrants to the public consumption of immigrant foods by immigrants and the general population. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many Americans rejected the foods of immigrants, and immigrants were the only people to consume their own food. However, with the increase of immigration to the United States, which went hand in hand with an increase of xenophobia, there were limited job opportunities for immigrants. Many immigrants began to open food shops and peddle foods as street vendors in order to earn money. As a result, many Americans and immigrants became exposed to ethnic foods and had more opportunities to consume them as well (Gabaccia 1998, 78-85).

Gabaccia discusses the eating habits of immigrant groups such as Italians or Jews from various places, but also mentions the cuisines of other immigrant groups, such as Germans and Asian groups. She argues that the foodways of immigrants helped immigrants to express their identity while adapting to their new living situations in the United States. Anthropological and sociological studies have shown that one of the many

ways in which people express their cultural identities and define themselves against any “other” culture is through their cuisine (Ellis 2009, Long 1998, Heldke 2003). As mentioned above, cuisine is a way in which cultures and communities identify themselves nationally as well as culturally. By cooking, eating, and selling their own ‘ethnic’ food, immigrants were not only able to express their own identity, but also able to define their identity against the differences between their eating habits and those of other Americans. This was also a way in which immigrants were able to keep a connection to the national identity of their home countries. Immigrants stuck to their own foodways for many of reasons: “...[F]ood initiated and maintained traditional relationships, expressed the extent of social distance between people, demonstrated status and prestige, rewarded and punished children, and treated illnesses” (Gabaccia 1998, 51).

Religion was another reason why many immigrants stuck to their own eating traditions rather than abandoning them for American traditions. For example, when Jewish ethnic groups migrated to America, they realized that eating kosher meat was not something that was practiced. Therefore, they established their own butcher shops and grocery stores to provide for their communities’ religious needs. Keeping traditional foodways for immigrant communities was not just a choice for many immigrant populations; neither was it simply a way to express their individual cultural heritage. They viewed it as a necessity in order to continue to maintain their religious values and practices. Gabaccia mentions, “To abandon immigrant food traditions for the food of Americans was to abandon community, family, and religion...in the minds of many immigrants,” (1998, 54). Food was seen as a major symbol of one’s own cultural identity

and was a way in which immigrant communities could define themselves against the American culture that they had migrated into as well as against other immigrant groups.

The migration of many different ethnic groups to the United States and the introduction of different cuisines around the country were accompanied by xenophobic and discriminatory reactions from many Americans. From the early- to mid-twentieth century and before the Immigration Act of 1965, there were many attempts to limit the spread of ethnic foods and practices around the country (Gabaccia 1998). “Culinary reformers fought...to limit the spread of ethnic foods, businesses, and eating practices” (Gabaccia 1998, 131). Gabaccia mentions that these “culinary reformers” would turn to government food production and retail regulations in order to shut down many immigrant owned stores. In “Whispers in an Ice Cream Parlor: Culinary Tourism, Contemporary Legends, and the Urban Interzone,” Bill Ellis (2009) describes how the xenophobic reactions of many Americans created certain myths about immigrant owned stores. For example, in the early twentieth century, myths circulated that there was a connection between Italian and Anatolian owned ice cream shops and the kidnapping of young, white, American girls from these local shops. There were allegations against the immigrants that worked at these ice cream shops that were published in newspapers and put on posters that were displayed around cities. These advertisements warned young, white girls not to venture to ice cream parlors alone or they would risk being kidnapped and forced into the “white slave trade” (Ellis 2009, 54). Similar to the ‘culinary reformers’ mentioned by Gabaccia, Ellis states that this “crusade was led by a coalition of nativistic religious organizations that linked the growing rate of immigration to criminal

undergrounds in urban areas” (Ellis 2009, 54). Ellis also mentions rumors that circulated that ice cream was, in fact, invented by some of America’s founding fathers rather than having been brought over by Italian immigrants (Ellis 2009, 61). The rumors were later proven false, given that there was no possible way to make ice cream during the eighteenth century, and ice cream was actually invented between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with the invention of machines that could churn and freeze the cream, which was also used by Italians to create gelato (Ellis 2009, 61-62).

Another way in which xenophobic reactions occurred in response to the foodways of many immigrants was the appropriation or ‘Americanization’ of many immigrant foods. Like Ellis, Gabaccia also mentions how Americans would take ethnic food and try to “Americanize” it or give it American origins. She states that before World War I, efforts were made to inculcate nationalism among the general population, including immigrants, and one way was to “Americanize” foreign foods (Gabaccia 1998: 123). For example, instead of using the German term ‘sauerkraut’ Americans would call it “victory cabbage” (Gabaccia 1998, 123). In short, many efforts were made to limit the spread of ethnic foods in America, from forcing ethnic owned stores to shut down because of government regulations, to generating myths linking immigrants to increase in criminal activity, to changing the names of foods and their origins all together.

Hart-Celler Act (Immigration Act of 1965) and Ethnic Revival

There are many ‘ethnic’ cuisines that are popular and celebrated in the United States today. What brought about this dramatic change from the prior widespread

xenophobic fear in the U.S.? Despite the influx of immigrants and their distinctive cuisines, American cuisine had become more homogenous taste due to industrialization along with the two World Wars (Gabaccia 1998, 55 and 69). With the development of industrialization came the transformation of American cuisine from “farm-produced foods” to “processed foods” that were produced in “faraway corporate factories” (Gabaccia 1998, 55). Americans, along with many immigrants, began purchasing foods from grocery stores instead of local producers due to the development of industrialization. Between the two World Wars, immigrant groups stopped receiving imports from their home country and started to use food items in the United States. For example, Italian immigrant groups could not receive olive oil from Italy during the two World Wars, so they resorted to using olive oil produced in California (Gabbaccia 1998, 69-70). Because of the halt to trade during both World Wars, along with an increase in the industrialization of the national food market, the foodways and tastes in America between Americans and immigrant populations became more homogenous. According to Gabaccia, however, a change occurred in the 1960s which she terms an ‘ethnic revival’. This ‘ethnic revival’ began when many descendants of immigrant, African, and Native American communities started to demand that their histories and ways of life to be recognized. Gabaccia states:

The ethnic revival that began in the 1960s was a cultural and political reaction of long-time Americans against the Cold War and its intensely nationalist celebrations of cultural consensus... Racial minorities initiated this ethnic revival or “new ethnicity” by demanding recognition for their unique histories and ways of life...For these new ethnics, the task at hand was to undo the cultural effects of

three generations of assimilation. Not surprisingly, food became an integral part of that effort (1998: 176).

It could be argued that the social, political, and economic conditions of the United States during the 1960s catalyzed this ethnic revival. The decade began with the election of President John F. Kennedy, who aimed to generate laws and reforms “to eliminate injustice and inequality in the United States” (History 2018). Following Kennedy’s assassination, President Lyndon B. Johnson developed programs that sought to fight a war against poverty as well as racial injustices that had held the nation down for centuries (History 2018). The legislation put into place by both of these presidents, along with the rise of different civil rights and peace movements, encouraged racial minorities to seek recognition for their cultural histories and cuisines.

Another important politico-legal change that occurred around the same time as the ‘ethnic revival’ was the implementation of the Immigration Act of 1965, also known as the Hart-Celler Act and the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. The Immigration Act of 1965 was implemented to correct what President Lyndon Johnson considered to be one of America’s “cruel and enduring wrongs,” the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act (Kammer 2015). The 1924 Immigration Act was implemented just after World War I because Americans feared a large influx of immigrants following the war. This act reflected reactionary racism and ideologies of racial superiority. It restricted certain types of immigrants that were allowed to enter the United States (Kammer 2015). The number of immigrants allowed to migrate to the United States from southern and Eastern Europe, along with Asia and Africa was largely restricted, while immigrants from northern

Europe faced little to no restriction. In “The Hart-Celler Immigration Act of 1965,” senior research fellow for the Center of Immigration Studies Jerry Kammer stated:

The 1924 law established a quota system based on national origins. It directed nearly 70 percent of the immigration slots to northern Europeans, cutting back drastically on immigration from southern and eastern Europe. It maintained formidable barriers against immigration from Asia and Africa, while leaving immigration from the Western Hemisphere unrestricted (2015).

It was not until the early 1960s when the United States government decided to get rid of the quota system. President John F. Kennedy and then President Lyndon B. Johnson, along with the support of former Representative Emanuel Celler and former Senators Philip Hart and Edward Kennedy, put into place the Immigration Act of 1965. In an article published shortly after the implantation of this act, former Senator Edward Kennedy stated, “The national-origins quota system was conceived in a radical period of our history—a period when bigotry and prejudice stalked our streets, when fear and suspicion motivated our actions toward the world around us,” (1966, 149). The Immigration Act of 1965 lifted these restrictions on certain nationalities of immigrants, allowing immigrants from all over the world the opportunity to migrate to the United States. Studies have shown that the Immigration Act of 1965 drastically shifted immigration patterns over the next fifty years. In “The Immigration Act that Inadvertently Changed America” Tom Gjelten (2015) states that before the Immigration Act of 1965, “seven out of eight immigrants in 1960 were from Europe; by 2010, nine out of ten were coming from other parts of the world.” With the increase of immigration of many different countries from around the world, along with an ongoing increase in

technology around the time of the 1965 Immigration Act, the generation of a transnational or deterritorialized nationalism began to occur.

Conclusion

The question of whether or not it is possible to arrive at a definition of American cuisine today is a complex one. Some may argue that there is no definitive “American cuisine” but rather that there are many different cuisines that are prevalent in America, many of which are derivative of ‘ethnic cuisines’ brought over to America by immigrant groups. ‘Ethnic’ cuisines were not always celebrated in America. Many immigrant groups were prevented from spreading their cuisines throughout America due to the xenophobic fears and nationalistic intentions of many Americans. With the ‘ethnic revival’ that occurred in the 1960’s, along with the implementation of the Immigration Act of 1965, Americans are more accepting of ethnic cuisines today than they have ever have been.

In the next chapter we will discuss the development of Afghan cuisine and restaurants in the United States, the establishment of the two restaurants I will be speaking about, and the ways in which a deterritorialized national identity is expressed throughout the cuisine and the space of these restaurants.

CHAPTER FOUR: AFGHAN CUISINE AS “CONFLICT CUISINE” IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. AREA

Introduction

Since the Russian Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, along with the rise of the Taliban regime and al-Qaeda in the late 1990s, thousands of Afghan people have had to flee their home country due to war and conflict. Many of these people sought refuge in neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan, and then migrated again to countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. Within the United States, Afghan immigrants and refugees began settling in cities such as New York, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. I had the opportunity to become familiar with members of the Afghan community in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, and also to get to know owners, workers, and customers of two prominent Afghan restaurants and banquet halls in the D.C. area, Jahan Restaurant and Banquet Hall and White Tulip Restaurant and Banquet Hall. This chapter will discuss how Afghan cuisine in the Washington D.C. area can be considered a ‘conflict cuisine’ as well as the ways in which these restaurants and banquet halls are used as ‘ethnosites’ for the Afghan community in Washington D.C. to keep alive certain traditions and senses of nationalism for their own country, in which many feel that culture does not exist anymore.

Afghan Cuisine as a ‘Conflict Cuisine’

Many immigrants and refugees who are forced to leave their home country due to conflict face a harsh reality once they arrive in the United States. A Washington D.C. news source issued an article in the summer of 2017 featuring a former Afghan war interpreter, Mohommad Mashooq Dowlati, who is now working for a food truck in Washington, D.C. called “Taste of Persia.” Mr. Dowlati described the difficult process of getting used to life in the United States. He was given “special immigrant visas” (SIVs) for him and his family because of his assistance to the United States military and the danger in which it placed him and his family. He felt that because of his past experience working as an interpreter for the Afghan military he would be able to find a job working for the government in the United States, or at least a desk job that would offer him benefits. He quickly found out that this was not the case. Even though the United States government helped him come to the U.S., he said they provided little help to him trying to start a new life or look for a job. That is why he decided to work in the food truck business (Soh 2017). At the time that this article featuring Mr. Dowlati was written, around 15,000 Afghans were facing similar struggles. This is a principle reason why many immigrants that come to the United States end up working in the food industry, and often in the particular food industry in which produces and serves the food that is associated with their home culture and cuisines, Like Mr. Dowlati (Soh 2017, Forman 2014). The same kind of dynamic lies behind the establishment of the two Afghan restaurants in which I did fieldwork, Jahan restaurant and banquet hall, located in Alexandria, Virginia and White Tulip restaurant and banquet hall, located in Sterling, Virginia.

Immigration stories

Hassan, owner of Jahan Restaurant and Banquet Hall, refugee

Hassan is the owner of a very prominent Afghan restaurant and banquet hall located in Alexandria, Virginia, in the heart of the D.C. metropolitan area. When I met Hassan, he began telling me that he immigrated to America in 1994, and worked as a busboy in an Afghan restaurant owned by a family friend. He knew little to no English when he moved here. He had worked for the Afghan military before coming to the United States, but did not wish to express further on his immigration journey. Hassan is very much involved in not only the Afghan community of the Washington metropolitan area, but also with many different members of U.S. Congress. With his restaurant being in close proximity to Capitol Hill, many of his customers are those who work for the United States government. Hassan has catered and hosted events for many different Congress members, ambassadors, and the Governor of Virginia.

Samir, owner of White Tulip Restaurant and Banquet Hall, refugee

The White Tulip Restaurant and Banquet Hall is located a little further outside of Washington D.C. than the Jahan banquet hall, but is still known as one of the most popular restaurants where the Afghan community hosts events. White Tulip is owned by Samir. When I went to White Tulip to meet Samir, he took me into his banquet hall area, served me tea, and began to discuss how he immigrated to the United States and began the restaurant business.

Back in Afghanistan during the 1980s, Samir was a journalist for a popular newspaper in Kabul. He explained that once the Russian invasion happened, many journalists decided to flee the country because of their fear of being punished for articles they had written in which they had voiced their political views. Samir told me how he had hidden at the bottom of a potato truck in order to cross the border into Pakistan. There, he was able to obtain a visa in order to come to America. Once in America, Samir, like Hassan, knew very little to no English. He ended up working in the kitchen for a friend of a friend's restaurant in New York City in order to provide for his family. During this conversation Samir kept mentioning how he had to work very hard and has taken no time off since the start of his work in the United States. After a few years working in New York he decided to move down to Northern Virginia, where the Afghan community had started to grow due to the influx of immigrants and refugees following the Russian Invasion as well as the Taliban rule in Afghanistan.

Once in Northern Virginia, Samir used his knowledge of working in a restaurant for many years and decided to open up a fast food chain that served grill kabobs, Afghan style. He opened multiple locations in and around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. His very first was in the Springfield Mall; the next was in Dulles Town Center, and following that in Tyson's Corner Mall. Samir stated that when he opened up the Afghan kabob chain in Tyson's Corner, it was located right next to a Five Guys Burger and Fries. The following year his Afghan kabob place surpassed Five Guys as the number one seller in the mall. Eventually, Samir sold the kabob chain and decided to open up the White Tulip Banquet Hall and Restaurant.

Abdul and Sadia, immigrant and refugee

While doing fieldwork in Jahan and White Tulip, I became close to two customers who frequented these restaurants, a couple, whom I will call Abdul and Sadia. After telling Abdul and his wife Sadia about the research I was doing on the expression of nationalism through cuisine, they invited me over to their house for a home-cooked Afghan meal with their daughter, Medina. While eating a beef and potato dish with the staple Afghan side of rice, both Abdul and Sadia opened up to me about their different experiences immigrating to America. Abdul immigrated to the United States in 1968, before the Russian invasion had begun to earn an American education. Sadia, on the other hand, immigrated to the United States as a refugee in the 1980s, in the midst of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. These two had completely different stories to share in this regard.

Abdul told me that when he first came to the Washington, D.C. area in the late 1960s there was not much of an Afghan community. “The community started getting big after 1980...because of the Russian invasion...before that there were no refugees, very few immigrants” (Abdul, personal communication February 2018). Abdul explained to me that he witnessed the major increase in the Afghan community in the 1980s, as by this time he had already become a United States citizen, and was helping many different Afghan families migrate to the United States that were seeking refuge during the time of the Russian Invasion. Abdul said, “I sponsored four families at that time, and now they are all very successful, they have businesses and things. It wasn’t that hard to bring them

here. Churches were bringing them here and helping them for 18 months, teaching them the languages and things. Social services provided them with a place to live, and until children became of age they were getting medical insurance. There were big (Afghan) communities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Virginia, and Maryland.” His wife Sadia added that today, there are Afghan communities all over the United States. Sadia added that more recently, with the American involvement in Afghanistan after 9/11, there were many Afghans who worked for the Americans while they were in Afghanistan. A lot of times when these Afghans are working for Americans, they would feel unsafe and threatened by the Taliban or al-Qaeda, so the American government would give visas for these Afghans to migrate to America.

I asked Abdul if his sense of national identity had shifted between 9/11 and the presidential election of Donald Trump. Abdul said, “You see, the problem is we don’t have a country to really count on anymore, because Afghanistan is in so much trouble. I went back to Afghanistan and the culture there has changed so much that it is not the same country, it is not the Afghan culture that I identify with, that I grew up with. I cannot call that my country anymore because that is not me, that is not what my father stand for or what my grandfather stand for.” Abdul explained how he felt that national identity of Afghanistan that he identified with consisted of honesty, trust, love, unity, and following the law, none of which exist in the country anymore he feels. “The younger generation identifies with a different Afghanistan because they have not been there.”

The Restaurant as an ‘Ethnosite’: Creating the Imagined Community of Afghanistan Through Food, Décor, and Events in Jahan and White Tulip

Abdul’s comment that the Afghanistan that he identifies with no longer exists anymore speaks to the way in which many members of the Afghan community help keep their traditions and sense of Afghan nationalism alive by means of the community and events that occur in these restaurants. First the Russian regime and then the Taliban and al-Qaeda has destroyed the sense of what is home for these people. So they create home through the spaces of these restaurants and banquet halls like Jahan and White Tulip. Through invented traditions such as events that are held, décor, and cuisine at these restaurants and banquet halls, an imagined community is created for the Afghan immigrants that long for their home country that to some of them, no longer exists.

The restaurant as an ‘ethnosite’

Along with the study of conflict cuisines and anthropological studies of the expression of identity through cuisine, scholars have shown how ethnic restaurants serve as places for people to express their cultural identity and maintain a connection to their home country (Crowther 2013: 203). While providing the economic opportunity for immigrants to grow and maintain a life in America, ethnic restaurants such as Jahan and White Tulip also provide the space for the Afghan community in Washington D.C. to express their cultural identity, thus creating a sense of national identity transnationally, in a different country than their home country.

Food

The food that is produced, bought, and sold in both White Tulip and Jahan is one of the main ways in which people from the Afghan community that frequent these restaurants are able to keep a connection to their home country of Afghanistan. Both restaurant owners explained to me how they take pride in offering the most authentic Afghan food to their people.

One of the main aspects of Afghan food that both Hassan and Samir spoke about and that they make sure is present in the cuisine served at their restaurants is freshness. During a few of my trips to White Tulip, I sat in the restaurant section, which is styled to be more like a buffet. Drinks such as green and black tea and water are at one end, followed by a row of hot trays holding rice, different kinds of spiced vegetables and chickpeas, and chicken, beef, and fish kabobs. While enjoying a nice beef kabob during one of my visits, I noticed that during the two hours that I was there, a waitress came to change out the naan bread twice. At the time, I was dining at this restaurant with Sadia, who told me she had been a friend of Samir and his wife for years. I asked Sadia why the waitress kept taking away and bringing out more bread. Said explained to me that once the bread was no longer hot because it had started to get a bit hard, it was no longer considered fresh. Samir wanted all of his customers to enjoy fresh Afghan food.

On many occasions, Hassan, the owner of Jahan, explained to me the importance of freshness when it came to Afghan cuisine. One day, while visiting Jahan, Hassan ended up bringing lunch to the table for both of us while we had an interview. Each plate held beef and chicken kabob, two different kinds of rice, a salad, chickpeas, and a side dish

called *subzi*, which, according to Hassan was fried spinach. Another server followed Hassan, carrying a piece of naan bread, which Hassan motioned towards and said “fresh out of the oven!” I thanked Hassan and the server for bringing all of the dishes out. The aroma of the food that sat in front of me was mouth watering, with different herbs and spices filling my nose. As Hassan sat down I picked up my fork to start eating as he ripped off a piece of naan bread and dipped it into the subzi, grabbing rice at the same time. “I hope this does not offend you,” he told me while smiling, “because Afghan people love to eat with their hands.” After assuring him I did not find his ways of eating offensive, we began to discuss the food we had in front of us. He explained to me in detail what each of the items on the plate was and how it was prepared. “Is this food similar to food that you would cook at home today or while you lived in Afghanistan?” I asked him. Hassan responded that it was indeed very similar to food that he would cook at home. “All Afghan food is prepared in the same way: it’s fresh. Some may have different tastes because different people use different spices and such,” Hassan told me. He then pointed to the beef and chicken kabobs that I was currently cutting up to mix with some subzi and naan. “Those kabobs take about two days to prepare. You see, Afghan kitchens are not like American kitchens. We can’t prepare things in five minutes and give it to you like they do at McDonald’s or at some sandwich shop. Everything here is fresh.” Hassan’s comparison of his “fresh Afghan cooking” to American fast food is an example of gastro-nationalism. Through this comparison, Hassan emphasizes his nationalism towards Afghanistan through the cuisine he prepares in his restaurant in the U.S., hence, deterritorialized nationalism. He explained in detail the ways in which the

kabobs were prepared, cutting and cleaning the meat, cooking them over charcoal for hours at a time. He kept emphasizing that everything cooked in his “Afghan kitchen” was fresh.

On another occasion visiting Jahan, Hassan gave me a tour of the kitchen in the restaurant. The kitchen was preparing for a big wedding event that evening, so there was a lot of activity for me to see and Hassan had wanted me to get the “physical experience” of the kitchen, rather than just explaining to me what Afghan food is all about. As we walked through the kitchen I dodged servers bringing out food and cooks gathering their ingredients. Once in the kitchen, Hassan kept emphasizing that the difference between his restaurant and other restaurants is that everything in his kitchen is cooked fresh. He explained how other restaurants will prepare things ahead of time, sometimes days in advance, and freeze them, reheat them in a microwave or an oven, and serve them to their customers. He took me over to a long grill that was covered in charcoal with sticks layered in seasoned meats on top, the smoke creating yet another mouth-watering aroma. He pointed the grill and said, “See? This is all fresh! No room for a freezer here.” Hassan told me that everything was cooked like how it was cooked at “home.”

I asked him what he meant by home, and he told me home was Afghanistan. “In Afghanistan, we do not use and most times do not have freezers, therefore we cannot freeze the food, you see? This is traditional Afghan, this is how the Afghans cook and prepare their food.” To Hassan, no use of a freezer in his restaurant acts as a tradition, which also links his transnational ties back to Afghanistan. We walked over to a station in the kitchen where a woman was preparing *samosas*, which are fried pastries filled with

savory items such as beef, potatoes, and spices. Hassan picked up one of the samosas that was being prepared and put it into a pot of hot oil that was near us. He wanted to show me how quickly everything needed to be done, in order to serve the customers the freshest food. After a few minutes when the samosa was fried, he put it on a plate and topped it with a yogurt sauce and told me to have a taste. “You see? Fresh,” he said, with a triumphant smile on his face as I ate the crispy and spicy samosa.

The freshness of food and ‘authentic’ ways of cooking are, for both Hassan and Samir, important ways to give to the Afghan community a ‘taste of home.’ But it is also how they define the Afghan cuisine against other cuisines in order to reaffirm cultural identity. As Hassan stated, comparing it to other more American food places such as McDonald’s or chain restaurants such as Applebee’s, the food in his restaurant is never frozen. On many occasions while attending events held at Jahan and White Tulip, workers and customers made statements about Afghan food, comparing it to other kinds of cuisine. Their comments conveyed a sense of gastro-nationalism, a way of defining themselves against other ethnic groups. Gastro-nationalism presumes that the cuisine of one culture is a projection of the collective cultural identity of a community or nation-state, then praise of or tolerance to a particular cuisine can be seen as praise of or tolerance to the heritage and culture of that particular community (DeSoucey 2010, 433). To give one example, I attended a concert event that was held in Jahan’s banquet hall one evening and was approached by an older Afghan gentleman. He asked me if I liked Afghan food and if so, which dishes did I like. I expressed to him that I enjoyed many rice dishes, kabobs, and subzi. The man responded by telling me that Afghan food was

actually the healthiest food of all of its neighbors, such as Pakistani or Indian food. “Afghanistan has the best tasting fruits and vegetables, you should try some time.” This man’s statement was full of pride for his country and expressed gastro-nationalism through indicating that food from his country was superior to other nation-states. Hassan also told me that if someone came to his banquet hall that was not Afghan asking to have a wedding, he would only serve Afghan food. When I asked him why not that the food from their country, he explained that one of the reasons the people want to have the wedding at his banquet hall is because of the quality of food. “And besides,” he mentioned, “Afghan food is better than their food anyways.”

Décor

Another way in which a transnational connection to Afghanistan is made within the space of these Afghan restaurants is the décor. While the White Tulip restaurant contained very little to no decoration and the banquet hall was only decorated for special events, Jahan on the other hand had many different decorations within the restaurant space.

The first things many visitors notice when they walk into Jahan are three photographs above the hostess stand. One is of the owner, Hassan. In the middle is a photograph of the current president of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani. The third photograph is of the current president of the United States, Donald Trump. On a wall next to the hostess stand is a large print of the famous photograph “Afghan Girl” taken by Steve McCurry in the year 1984. This photograph is of a young Pashtun girl named Sharbat Gula who, at the time, was in a refugee camp on the Afghan-Pakistan border during the

Russian regime in Afghanistan (Simons 2016). This photograph became National Geographic's "most successful in its distinguished history" and increased nationalistic feelings for many Afghans during the refugee crisis in the 1980s. This photograph also had an impact on the amount of help being given to the Afghan immigrants and refugees in the 1980s. McCurry stated in an interview with CNN "People volunteered to work in the refugee camps because of that photograph...Afghans are incredibly proud of it, as the girl is poor but shows great pride, fortitude and self-respect" (Simons 2016). Having this photograph hang in Jahan is an expression of pride and national identity for Hassan, and for many of his customers. "It is the most famous photograph in the world," Hassan told me.

On the wall opposite the print of "Afghan girl" a large miniature recreation of a small village behind a glass casing hangs above the fireplace. The miniature village is built into snow-topped mountains, and seems as if houses are built on top of houses all the way up these mountains. The tiny grayish houses have some sort of lights coming out of the windows. Hassan told me that this was a recreation of the village he grew up in back in Afghanistan. At first he told me that the only reason he ended up putting this miniature recreation of his home village in the restaurant was because he "had an empty space on the wall." Eventually he told me that it was a reminder of his home, and being in his restaurant, he is able to look at where he came from and where he is today.

Lastly, in Jahan, the hallway leading from the restaurant into the banquet hall is covered from floor to ceiling with photographs of Hassan and many different people who have visited his restaurant. Some are famous Afghan singers and actors, some American

government officials. But the photograph that really stood out for me was of Hassan with Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani activist for female education. Like many of the Afghan immigrants and refugees that fled Afghanistan in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Malala had lived in a town in Pakistan that had been taken over by the Taliban. In the year 2012, a member of the Taliban had shot Malala for in the head voicing her opinion and standing up for the right of education for females in Pakistan (Yousafzai 2013). After surviving this tragic accident, Malala went on advocating for the right for females to get their education in Pakistan, and won the Nobel Peace Prize in the year 2014 (Nobel Prize.org 2014). The décor in Jahan—such as these photographs—contributes to the creation of a space for deterritorialized nationalism. That is nationalism for a country in which Hassan and many of his Afghan customers can no longer return to.

Ceremonies and Events

Both Jahan and White Tulip banquet halls are home to many different kinds of ceremonies and events for the Afghan community around the Washington metropolitan area. Many different weddings, concerts, and religious events occur in the spaces of these restaurants. During my fieldwork I had the opportunity to attend a concert and a wedding ceremony held at the Jahan banquet hall. The concert took place on a Saturday evening in October, and was attended by many different well-respected guests from the Afghan community in the area, such as famous Afghan actors, writers, singers, as well as the United States ambassador to Afghanistan. The main event for the night was the famous Afghan Canadian singer named Hangama. While speaking to a few guests at the concert,

many of them kept referring to Hangama as a “legend” and one of the most well respected artists in the Afghan community in North America. As I watched her perform, I recognized her from a photograph with Hassan that was near the photograph of Hassan with Malala. The entire event took place in Farsi. Hassan would come up to me and tell me who were the most respected guests in the Afghan community: “That guy sitting at the table there, he is married to a woman who’s sister was married to the Afghan King,” or he would point out the occupation of certain people, such as different writers, professors, actors, and people in the government. Since only Farsi was spoken at this event, and many different singers from Afghanistan and different Afghan communities from North American were there, I argue that this event, like many other concert events held in both Jahan and White Tulip, are significant ways in which the Afghan community gathers and reinforces the imagined community of Afghanistan.

Jahan and White Tulip have also hosted religious events and ceremonies, including weddings, funerals, and even creating “makeshift” mosques for prayer events. In early March 2017, Jahan hosted a group called “MakeSpace” to hold their Friday prayers for the Muslim community in the Northern Virginia area (Qureshi 2017). MakeSpace is a group that hosts similar pray readings and gatherings that any mosque in Northern American would, but opens its doors to “cater to an increasingly diverse generation of American Muslims” (Qureshi 2017). MakeSpace allows divorced, LGBT, and single mother Muslims to attend their events, which many traditional mosques are known to not allow.

Conclusion

Through the cuisine that is served, the décor of the restaurant, and the events that take place in the banquet halls at both Jahan and White Tulip, Afghani immigrants to the U.S. express a deterritorialized nationalism for Afghanistan. The events and the cuisine are, using Hobsbawm's (1983) term, invented traditions for the Afghan immigrant communities that help generate the sense of an imagined community through the ethnosite of these restaurants.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE OTHER NATIONALISM

Introduction

In the last chapter, I discussed how the Afghan community has developed a transnational nationalism and an imagined community within the spaces of Jahan and White Tulip banquet hall. In this chapter, we will discuss the ways in which the ethnosites of these restaurants express a sense of nationalism for the United States, thus creating a sense of dual dual nationalism.

Culinary Diplomacy and Conflict Cuisines

The previous chapter discussed the different ways the Afghan immigrant community was able to express their nationalism towards Afghanistan along with keeping alive a transnational connection to the country through the space of Jahan and White Tulip and cuisine. While cuisine and ethnic restaurants are cultural aspects and spaces that allow for the expression of identity, they also are ways cultures can learn more about one another (Forman 2014, Chapple-Sokol 2012, Crowther 2013).

Cuisine is a way in which cultures can become more knowledgeable about one another and, as mentioned above, it has played a part in diplomatic relations between many cultures and nations for centuries (Chapple-Sokol 2012). This culinary diplomacy plays a part in the way in which many conflict cuisines, including Afghan cuisine, in the

DMV come in contact and bridge a cultural gap with local community members. Through their exposure to conflict cuisines, people in the DMV can become more knowledgeable of the culture behind the cuisine, and gain a further understanding of reasons as to why it is a part of the cultural fabric of the DMV (Forman 2014). Ethnic restaurants are great places for immigrant groups and local community members to “bridge cultural barriers” (Crowther 2013, 204). This chapter will explore the ways in which these restaurants help develop a relationship with local communities in the D.C. metropolitan area and express their sense of nationalism towards America, along with how the Afghan community dealt with questions of nationalism and loyalty after 9/11.

American Nationalism in Jahan and White Tulip

“Giving Back” to the American people

The first time I met Samir at White Tulip he began to tell me his immigration story—from Afghanistan to the United States. While eating a delicious *shir berenj*, a creamy rice pudding topped with cardamom, Samir discussed the most important lesson he has taken from immigrating to the United States: “hard work lets you achieve anything.” Samir explained to me how, in his time in the United States, he has not taken any vacation time, but he has made enough money to be able to support his family and eventually start his own business. He mentioned to me many times how important it was to him to teach this lesson to his children, “In this country, you can do anything you want as long as you are willing to work hard for it.” Samir expressed his gratitude to the

United States in our discussion, saying that his way of saying thank you was by offering the American people the best quality Afghan food.

Hassan felt a very similar way about the United States. He explained that the American people have been not only kind enough to let him and many other people from his home country of Afghanistan seek refuge in the United States, but also have given them the opportunity to make a life for themselves and to start businesses such as Hassan's. "American people have let us come and live here and have let me own this restaurant. We should be giving back to them by giving them the best Afghan food." He mentioned once again how terrible it would be to freeze the food he served to customers because it would not be the best quality Afghan food. "By giving them the best quality Afghan food we are giving back to the American community."

American Nationalism in Jahan

From comments mentioned on the website to the photograph of President Donald Trump hanging above the hostess stand, the décor in Jahan contains many aspects that portray a sense of American nationalism, side by side many of the other objects mentioned in the previous chapter that display Afghan nationalism. On the "About" page for the Jahan website, it states that due to being in the heart of Alexandria, a suburb of Washington, D.C. that is home to many members of Congress, Jahan caters and hosts events for many of the people that work on Capitol Hill. The site states that Jahan was "gifted by our special friends on the Hill, the actual American Flag that flew over the U.S Capitol Hill." The restaurant has this flag hanging on the wall, near the hallway that

contains all of the photographs that were mentioned in the previous chapter. Near the photographs of Hassan with various members of the Afghan royal family and government as well as with Malala Yousafzai, hang many other photographs of Hassan with different members of the U.S. Congress, all of whom have attended and eaten the cuisine at Jahan.

One evening while I was helping Hassan set up for a Somali wedding that was taking place in the banquet hall of Jahan, he walked me through the hallway where all of the photographs hang and explained who the different people were that he had taken pictures with. As we were talking, two girls in their late teens were laughing as they walked passed us in the hallway. They stopped to talk to Hassan about the photograph of Donald Trump that was hanging above the hostess stand in the front of the restaurant. “So, if Donald Trump came into the restaurant, would you take a photo with him?” one of the girls had asked. Hassan answered that, of course, he would. The girls began to ask him if he liked Donald Trump, Hassan simply answered that he had to like him because he was his President.

9/11 and Xenophobia

While cuisine and the space of these ethnic restaurants are ways in which immigrant communities can express their identities and bridge cultural gaps between immigrant and local communities, xenophobic ideologies still exist. While doing fieldwork at Jahan and White Tulip, I met a few people from the Afghan community that were willing to discuss ways in which xenophobia, in particular, Islamophobia, has affected the community.

Islamophobia

Islamophobia can be defined as “hatred, hostility, and fear of Islam and Muslims, and the discriminatory practices that result” (Green 2015, 9). There have been many arguments over the term Islamophobia because Islam is a religion, not a race and some, therefore argue, that it cannot be a form of racism. Scholars Todd Green (2015) and Erick Love (2013) offer their arguments for why Islamophobia is, in fact, a form of racism. They note that what is considered as today’s “Middle East” has a different geographical meaning. Love states that the Middle East, “...has been extended to reach from Morocco all the way to Pakistan,” (2013:71) Love then goes on to mention that we now have a “global racial system” that encompasses many different cultures, such as Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus, along with Afghanis, Pakistanis and more, as the same and ignore their cultural diversities. Many Muslims live in countries outside of what is considered to be the Middle East, such as Indonesia, and there are many other religions that are prominent in “Middle Eastern” countries, such as Christianity and Judaism. Love states, “While Islam is certainly a religion and not a race, and Muslims are a highly diverse groups, Islamophobia is in fact a form of racism,” (2012:71).

Many news sources indicate that not only did hate crimes against Muslims and those presumed to be Muslim spike after 9/11 in the United States, but they also increased during the 2016 election of Donald Trump (Frumin and Sakuma 2016, Lichtblau 2016, Kuek Ser 2016). Islamophobia is not limited to the U.S. In the beginning of April 2018, letters were left on the doorstep of many mosques in London, United

Kingdom, advertising for a “Punish a Muslim Day” (Hassan 2018). This letter indicated that a person who attacked someone that was Muslim would be “awarded” with points. For example, ten points were to be rewarded for verbally abusing a Muslim, and 100 points would be awarded for beating up a Muslim (Hassan 2018).

Medina, the daughter of Sadia and Abdul, was very open to me about her experiences dealing with xenophobia and in particular, Islamophobia following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Medina stated:

When 9/11 happened there was a huge fear within the immigrant community. My mom stopped calling herself Afghan, we stopped speaking Farsi outside, I was even told to tell people I’m Mexican. If there was any Arabic writing on the car we removed it. People were very on guard. Being Afghan didn’t mean anything until 9/11. I was in third grade. There were discussions in the classroom, people were being treated differently. Muslims were being treated differently. I was called into the principles office because someone would say something to me that was inappropriate. People would ask if Osama Bin Laden was my uncle.

Other Forms of Xenophobia in the “DMV”

While Medina and many other Afghan-Americans and Americans and immigrants from other Middle Eastern countries experienced different forms of xenophobia and Islamophobia following the terrorist attacks on 9/11, many other immigrant communities in the Washington metropolitan area have experienced forms of xenophobia as well. For example, the Korean immigrant community that is predominantly in Annandale, Virginia, and the Ethiopian community in the Shaw area of Washington, D.C. have faced pushback from xenophobic ideologies from others in their neighborhood (Chacko 2018).

The Korean immigrant community in Annandale, Virginia became known as “Koreatown” in the late 1980s and early 1990s due to the influx of Korean immigrants (Chacko 2018). Shopping centers, restaurants, and grocery stores began to open with names and advertisements written only in Korean. Buses full of Korean immigrants from other cities on the East Coast would come most weekends to Annandale to do shopping and attend certain events with other Korean immigrants in Annandale. Some of the local community members of Annandale tried to counteract Koreatown by trying to establish an Annandale Village Center that would “express Virginian identity and history” (Chacko 2018). While the Annandale Village Center ended up not being established, it was still a form of pushback that was generated by xenophobic ideologies of local community members in Annandale.

Ethiopian immigrant communities in the Shaw and U Street neighborhoods of Washington, D.C. have likewise faced xenophobic ideologies and tension from black Americans since the 1980s (Chacko 2018). Elizabeth Chacko (2003) discusses in her article the different ethnic tensions between Ethiopian first and second-generation immigrants and the black community in Washington, D.C. Chacko discusses how there was a constant battle with racial identification within the young Ethiopian immigrant community. Many of the young Ethiopians “desire to have an identity separate from that of native Blacks” and this was due to “negative experiences with members of the (black) group,” such as being “vocally critical” of Ethiopians and making fun of their accents and language (Chacko 2018, 498).

Conclusion

Can you dislike the people but still like the cuisine?

Scholars such as Forman (2014) argue that a study of conflict cuisine can bridge the gap between immigrant cultures and local communities in the Washington, D.C. area. Forman makes the argument that these conflict cuisines can promote a greater understanding for Americans about why these immigrants (or refugees) left their home countries and how they establish themselves in new ones. Forman states:

This new take on the town and gown divide may actually help bridge a gap that often exists in the United States: distrust of newcomers, or more significantly, misunderstanding about different cultural norms, and may help overcome xenophobia (2014).

Through a study of conflict cuisines, Forman argues, people in the Washington, D.C. area can become more knowledgeable of the culture behind the conflict cuisine, gain a further understanding of reasons as to why that culture came to the area, which may result in a decrease of xenophobia. Yet, in today's globalized world, we also find ourselves in an age of increased xenophobia and Islamophobia. With rumors of walls being built and the implementation of strict immigration laws (potentially the start of a reversal of the Immigration Act of 1965?), along with Brexit, one question that arises is whether or not, and how, cultural traditions brought by migrants to the U.S. are accepted. So, the question is, how can the teenage boy that chants, "build that wall" to a group of Hispanic teenagers turn around and enjoy some *empanadas* and *tamales* from the Mexican restaurant down the block? It is more than likely that the people who created the "Punish a Muslim Day" flyers have enjoyed a kabob from an Afghan restaurant or a curry from an

Indian restaurant. People who express and act on xenophobic ideologies and dislike a certain cultural or ethnic group may, in fact, still like the food, because there remains for them a disconnection or lack of knowledge of the connection between cuisine and cultural identity (Carman 2017). With this, I argue, that Forman is in some ways right: an education on or the increase in knowledge of conflict cuisines would be a significant step towards decreasing xenophobic ideologies.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the creation of a deterritorialized nationalism that is created through the relationship between nationalism and globalization. With the constant migration flows throughout the world, along with an increase in technology and forms of communication, immigrant communities are able to develop and maintain transnational connections to their home countries. This transnational connection allows for opportunities for immigrant communities to maintain a sense of nationalism for their home countries through invented tradition.

In this thesis, I have explored the creation of an imagined community through the spaces of the Afghan restaurants Jahan and White Tulip. With the invented traditions of ceremonies, cuisine, material culture, such as photographs, and décor, the Afghan immigrant community in the Washington, D.C. area is able to express a sense of nationalism for Afghanistan as well as for the U.S., and maintain a transnational connection to a country that some Afghan immigrants feel does not exist anymore.

Moving Forward: Now What with the Talks of a ‘Muslim Ban,’ walls Being Built, and Increasing Xenophobia?

In the early months of 2018, the United States Citizenship and Immigration services removed the phrase “a nation of immigrants” from its mission statement

(Gonzales, 2018) The recent political shifts brought about by the Trump presidency has brought up much discussion regarding the topic of immigration. With it has come debate with respect to what it means to be American and who has the right to come to America and become an American. Many different immigrant groups are also expressing their fears due to the discourse of and policies being enacted by President Donald Trump. With talk of building walls to keep the “others” out, enforcing stricter border control policies, and placing a travel ban to and from majority Muslim countries, it comes as no surprise to find out that xenophobic fears are intertwined with the fears of immigrants living in this country.

America was always known as a place for immigrants to come and seek refuge from discrimination and persecution, a land of endless opportunity. One of the things about America is that “In America, you can come here and take up many American traditions but also practice your own cultural traditions” (Medina, daughter of Afghan refugee, personal communication March 2018). Medina’s comment aptly exemplifies the principal argument of this thesis: that Afghani immigrants (as well as other immigrant communities) are able to simultaneously express their national cultural identity and their transnational identity through one major cultural tradition, Afghan cuisine and the space of Afghani restaurants in the United States.

This thesis consisted of stories and information gathered from immigrants, refugees, and second-generation immigrants from Afghanistan and further explored their expression of deterritorialized nationalism through Afghan cuisine and the space of Afghani restaurants established in the DMV. The findings of this thesis are starting points

towards significant future research projects regarding the development of deterritorialized nationalism in the context of the expression of identity through cuisine and restaurants for ethnic communities throughout the United States. Further research directions include exploring if and how different kinds of deterritorialized or transnational nationalisms develop among various immigrant communities not only in the metropolitan areas in the United States, but also more rural areas throughout the country. These kinds of future research endeavors should contribute to a better understanding of differences in the expression of identity between immigrant groups in urban and rural areas of the United States, as well as the reasons for these differences.

REFERENCES

- American Immigration Council. 2017. "Immigrants in the District of Columbia." Fact Sheet. Last modified October 16, 2017.
<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-washington-dc>
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, London, United Kingdom.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*. Ed. Paul A. Erickson and Liam D. Murphy. 2013. 4th ed. University of Toronto Press. Pp. 511-518.
- Ariely, Gal. 2011. "Globalization, immigration and national identity: How the level of globalization affects the relations between nationalism, constructive patriotism and attitudes toward immigrants?" *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*. Sage Journals. Vol. 15. No. 4. Pp 539-557.
- Barber, Benjamin. 1995. *Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy*. Times Books.
- BBC News. 2018. "Afghanistan profile – Timeline". BBC News Asia. Last modified January 31, 2018. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12024253>
- Bernal, Victoria. 2005. "Eritrea On-Line: Diaspora, Cyberspace, and the Public Sphere."

American Ethnologist. Vol 32. No. 4. Pp. 660-675.

Carman, Tim. 2017. "The humble power of immigrant restaurants: 'You can't hate someone if you like their food.'" *The Washington Post*.

Chacko, Elizabeth. 2018. "History of Migration to the United States: Issues and Flows." *Teach-In on Global Migrations and Refugees*. Center for Contemporary Arab Studies.

Chacko, Elizabeth. 2003. "Identity and Assimilation among Young Ethiopian Immigrants in Metropolitan Washington." *Geographical Review*. Vol 93. American Geographical Society. Pp. 491-506.

Chapple-Sokol, Sam. 2012. "Culinary Diplomacy: Breaking Bread to Win Hearts and Minds." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 8. 161-183.

Counihan, Carole. 2008. "Mexicanas' Food Voice and Differential Consciousness in the San Luis Valley of Colorado." *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. 2013. Routledge. 3rd ed. Pp 173-186.

Crowther, Gillian. 2013. *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*. University of Toronto Press.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. (1973). *Anti-Oedipus : capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis :University of Minnesota Press

DeSoucey, Michaela. 2010. "Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union." *American Sociological Review*. American Sociological Association. Pp. 432-2010

Dossa, Parin. 2014. *Afghanistan Remembers: Gendered Narrations of Violence and*

Culinary Practices. University of Toronto Press.

- Ellis, Bill. 2009. "Whispers in an Ice Cream Parlor: Culinary Tourism, Contemporary Legends, and the Urban Interzone." *Journal of American Folklore*. Vol. 122, No. 483. 53-74.
- Forman, Johnanna Mendelson. 2014. "Conflict Cuisine: Teaching War Through Washington's Ethnic Restaurant Scene." *Public Diplomacy Magazine*.
- Frumin, Aliyah and Amanda Sakuma. 2016. "Hope and Despair: Being Muslim in America After 9/11." NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/9-11-anniversary/hope-despair-being-muslim-america-after-9-11-n645451>
- Gabaccia, Donna R. 1998. *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. Harvard University Press. Boston, MA.
- Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press
- Gjelten, Tom. 2015. "The Immigration Act That Inadvertently Changed America." *The Atlantic*. Last modified October 2nd, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/10/immigration-act-1965/408409/>
- Green, Todd H. 2015. "What Is Islamophobia?" *The Fear of Islam: And Introduction to Islamophobia in the West*. Augsburg Fortress.
- Gonzales, Richard. 2018. "America No Longer A 'Nation Of Immigrants,' USCIS Says." *National Public Radio*. Last Updated February 22nd, 2018. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/02/22/588097749/america-no-longer-a-nation-of-immigrants-uscis-says>

- Hall, Kathleen D. 2004. "The Ethnography of Imagined Communities: The Cultural Production of Sikh Ethnicity in Britain." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science*. Vol. 595. Sage Journals. Pp. 108-121.
- Hassan, Jennifer. 2018. "'Punish a Muslim day' generates anger, fear and solidarity in Britain." *The Washington Post*. Last Updated April 3rd, 2018.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/04/03/punish-a-muslim-day-generates-anger-fear-and-solidarity-in-britain/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.0539ff4d539b
- Heldke, Lisa. 2013. *Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a Food Adventurer*. Routledge. New York, NY.
- History. 2018. "The 1960s." *History.com Articles*. <https://www.history.com/topics/1960s>
- Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." *The Invention of Traditions*. Cambridge University Press. Pp 1-14.
- Kammer, Jerry. 2015. "The Hart-Celler Immigration Act of 1965: Political figures and historic circumstances produced dramatic, unintended consequences." *Center for Immigration Studies*. Last modified on September 30, 2015.
<https://cis.org/Report/HartCeller-Immigration-Act-1965>
- Kennedy, Edward M. 1966. "The Immigration Act of 1965." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol 367. American Academy of Political and Social Science. Pp 137-149.
- Kuek Ser, Kuang Keng. 2016. "Data: Hate crimes against Muslims increased after 9/11." *PRI's TheWorld*. <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-09-12/data-hate-crimes->

against-muslims-increased-after-911

- Lichtblau, Eric. 2016. "Hate Crimes Against American Muslims Since Post 9/11 Era." The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/18/us/politics/hate-crimes-american-muslims-rise.html>
- Long, Lucy M. 1998. "Culinary Tourism: A Folkloristic Perspective on Eating and Otherness." *Southern Folklore*. Vol. 55. Iss. 3. 181-105
- Love, Erik. 2013. "Beyond Post 9/11." *Context* Vol. 12 No. 1. Pp. 70-72. American Sociological Association.
- Mintz, Sidney W. 1996. *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*. Beacon Press. Boston Massachusetts.
- Nobelprize.org. 2014. "Malala Yousafzai – Facts". Nobel Media AB 2014. Accessed March 10, 2018. https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2014/yousafzai-facts.html
- Qureshi, Madiha Waris. 2017. "Between Disengagement and Changing Paradigms – A New Path for America's Mosques." Patheos.com. Last modified March 3rd, 2017. <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/altmuslim/2017/03/between-disengagement-and-changing-paradigms-a-new-path-for-americas-mosques/>
- Ritzer, George. 1993. *The McDonalozation of Society" And Investigation Into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*. Pine Forge Press.
- Roudometof, Victor. 2014. "Nationalism, globalization and glocalization." *Thesis Eleven*. Vol. 122 (1). University of Cyprus, Cyprus. Sage Journals. Pp. 18-33.

Simons, Jake Wallis. 2016. "The Story behind the world's most famous photograph."

CNN Style. Last modified December, 2nd, 2016.

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/steve-mccurry-afghan-girl-photo/index.html>

Singer, Audrey. 2013. "Metropolitan Washington: A New Immigrant Gateway."

Research in Race and Ethnic Relations. Vol 17. Emerald Group Publishing. Pp. 1-32/.

Schiller, Nina Glick, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc (1995). "From Immigrant

to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly*. Vol 68. No 1. Pp 48-63.

Soh, June. 2017. "Afghan Refugee Makes Tough Transition to US." VOA News USA.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/afghan-refugee-makes-tough-transition-to-us/3909495.html>

Srinivas, Tulasi. 2006. "'As Mother Made it': The Cosmopolitan Indian Family,

'Authentic' Food and the Construction of Cultural Utopia." *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*. Vol. 32, No 2,. Pp 191-221

Tomlinson, John. 1999. "Globalization and Cultural Identity." *The Global*

Transformations Reader. 2nd Ed.

Wahab, Shaista and Barry Youngerman. 2007. *A Brief History of Afghanistan*. Infobase

Publishing. New York, NY.

Wilk, Richard R. 1999. "Real Belizean Food": Building Local Identity in the

Transnational Caribbean." *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 101. American Anthropological Association. Pp. 244-255.

Yousafzai, Malala. 2013. *I Am Malala*. Salarzai Limited.

BIOGRAPHY

Kristen Powell graduated from West Potomac High School, Alexandria, Virginia, in 2011. She received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Mary Washington in 2015 and received her Master of Arts in Anthropology from George Mason University in 2018.