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Constructing National Identity Through Galician Homeland Tourism †

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Abstract: Galicia, a national minority and autonomous community of northern Spain, is often defined by its long history of emigration. While not the most common destination of Galician migrants, those that emigrated from the municipalities of Sada and Bergondo in Coruña had uncharacteristically large rates of migration to the United States. These migrants and their children continue to sustain strong ties to the perceived homeland and engage in repeat visits. Theories of transnationalism help to explain the continuity of identity, but it is with qualitative interviews with homeland tourists in Galicia that this paper will show how it is specifically through frequent visits to the homeland that these Galician-Americans are able to generationally sustain ties to the homeland and create a sense of national belonging. The frequent visits make it possible for many to create a strong Galician identity that is both transnational and locally situated. Through looking at the way these homeland visits construct a Galician identity, we can begin to form a new perspective on Galician nationalism, one that is reflected in the migrants and defined by mobility.

Keywords: national identity; transnationalism; immigration; emigration; migration; homeland tourism; Spain; Galicia; America

1. Introduction

Galicia is an autonomous region and national minority in northwestern Spain with a long history of emigration. Much of this emigration has been towards Argentina, Cuba, and other Latin American countries; however, this research focuses on the migrants who immigrated to the United States, an area that has been surprisingly understudied. While Galicia may have a long history of emigration, the US has one of immigration, assimilation, and Americanization. Often, immigrants are assumed to incorporate into the host society, melting into the 'melting pot', and becoming 'Americans'. However, scholars have been increasingly arguing that this is not the case, and instead, immigration can be approached as multidirectional, highly mobile, without a finite destination, and creating spaces of transnational social life. Not all immigrants who arrive in America stay and even those who stay often maintain connections to the homeland. These strong connections can even be reflected in second and third generations. Galician[1] migrants to the US and their descendants are an example of sustained ties to the homeland even generations after immigration. However, these Galician-American identities are obtainable through repeated homeland visits within a transnational field of continual mobility.

[1] Those from Galicia are referred to in this paper as Galicians. However, participants will often use the Spanish term Gallegos to refer to individuals from Galicia. Since this is the term participants preferred, it was preserved within the interview transcripts and the quotes presented in this paper.

2. Background

2.1. Constructing Nationalism through Tourism

Nationalism and national identity in this paper will most often be discussed in reference to either Galicia or the United States; however, Galician-Americans construct plural and multilayered identities that often fold in a strong connection to the Spanish state with a cemented notion of a unified Spanish identity. Additionally, participants also identified with America in ways that are highly multifaceted and at times tied to their identity as New Yorkers or other regional identities. Therefore, this paper takes the view that national identity is an active construction, constantly being imagined and reinvented within a collection of ever-changing layered identities. Borrowing from Benedict Anderson's (1991) notion of imagined communities, this paper presents Galician-American national identity not as a static construction but rather actively imagined through transnational practices and in conjunction with complex identity negotiations.

This research takes the approach that there are multiple ways in which Galicia is given meaning, focusing less on uncovering the origins and definition of Galician nationalism and more on the ways in which the nation is constructed or imagined by homeland visitors for purposeful aims. Tim Edensor (2002) sees the nation as performed in the banality of the everyday interconnected with the global and international. National identity in this way is not static or fixed but rather is represented, contested, consumed, and performed in multiple ways and at different moments. This paper also follows Anderson's (1991) view that the nation is an imagined community that is intentionally constructed for purposeful aims. However, it is not the accuracy of the way in which the nation is reproduce that is being explored here, but rather the various ways in which the national community is imagined.

In approaching nationalism as multifaceted both at the level of the banal and the international, it leaves room for an interpretation of how tourism is involved in the process of imagining the nation. The concept of tourism as a whole can itself be viewed as reinforcing Benedict Anderson's (1991) theory of imagined communities, as tourists are actively told how to remember, forget, and imagine the nation. Pretes (2003) builds on Anderson's notion of the census, map, and museum in the establishment of modern nations and argues that these three institutions are all still currently implemented through tourism in order to reinforce the national community and help to produce a national image. Pretes also shows how these institutions intentionally nationalize landscapes and contribute to the imagined community.

Tourism imbues sites with symbolic meaning (MacCannell 1992). These sites are presented to tourists as symbols of the nation that both reflect existing signifiers of the nation and construct new ones (Palmer 1999). Edensor (2002) presents tourism as a performance that is acted out by both the nation and the visitor. This performance of tourism can simultaneously reinforce existing national narratives, construct new competing national narratives, and provide the opportunity for tourists to challenge the performance (ibid). Tourism then performs the nation on multiple levels in a matrix connected to the other matrices of daily life. For example, Spanish tourism, even small-scale regional tourism, performs to tourists within the borders of the nation, but through the performance, this imagining will reify the nation to an international audience in an industry where tourism is also connected to the nation's economic success in the global arena. It is through the interconnected matrices that national identity in the local and everyday sphere is reproduced, which gives the nation its authority and durability in a globalizing context (Edensor 2002).

Through the act of tourism and being a tourist, the national community is reinforced and reimagined by domestic, international, and homeland tourists. Tourism markets and sells the nation both nationally and internationally, reducing national identity to elements of commercial profitability (Aronczyk 2013). This economic nationalism that is produced through tourism informs much of the growing trend of 'commercial nationalism' (Volcic and Andrejevic 2011, 2016) and 'consumer nationalism' (Castelló and Mihelj 2018) in the literature. Commercial nationalism argues that in

an area of globalized neoliberal capitalism, the nation is being sold or being used to sell products while simultaneously, marketing and public relations strategies are being used by the public sector for economic and political aims (Volcic and Andrejevic 2016). In other words, tourism is a main player in commercial nationalism that "involves a simultaneous nationalization of the commercial and commercialization of the national" (Castelló and Mihelj 2018, p. 561).

Tourism acts as an example of the increased mobility and interconnectivity of the globe that eludes to the decreased relevance of the nation (Urry 2007). However, as Edensor (2002, p. 29) states, "Globalisation and national identity should not be conceived in binary terms but as two inextricably linked processes." Theories of commercial nationalism show how tourism plays a large role in making nationalism an element of increasing global capitalism. Nations exist in an international context, where the nation is imagined alongside and in reaction to other nations where "international consciousness is integral to the modern consciousness of nationalism" (Billig 1995, p. 87). In contrast to this globalized view of nationalism, theorists, such as Anthony Giddens (1985, p. 119), have described the nation as a "bordered power-container", where the nation is seen as existing within fixed geographical boundaries. However, in their article criticizing methodological nationalism, Wimmer and Schiller (2002, p. 307) argue that social scientists have incorrectly followed the assumption that the nation (its economy, politics, and society) exists only within its borders, "thus removing trans-border connections and processes from the picture". Wimmer and Glick Schiller therefore make the claim that in order to understand nationalism, we must not separate it from transnationalism.

2.2. Transnationalism, Tourism, and Nationalism

In a lecture given by Benedict Anderson in 1992, he argues that global capitalism is creating a new form of nationalism, that of 'long-distance nationalism'. This nationalism is defined by generations of immigrants who instead of being "turned into Frenchmen, Australians, Germans, and Americans" are continuing a sense of nationhood and political involvement in their ethnic countries of origin (Anderson 1992, p. 12). Long-distance nationalism is seen as a consequence of transnational social networks (Fouron and Nina 2002). Transnationalism allows for the conceptualization of experiences of migrants who sustain transnational networks; have a sense of national belonging to the ethnic homeland regardless of citizenship, home, or country of birth; and that make choices and actions related to these feelings of transnational belonging or long-distance nationalism (ibid.).

American ideology has been largely centered on the notion of America as a 'melting pot', where immigrants blend together to create a "new American type" (Glazer and Moynihan 1996, p. 135). It was believed that immigrants would, in time, break all ties to their homeland, where descendants would eventually become fully incorporated into the new host society (Fouron and Nina 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002). However, the melting pot theory of assimilation fell short. While immigrants have assimilated in some respects, they have also maintained distinct cultural and national identities. Glazer and Moynihan (1996) describe how it was not so much the distinctiveness of the immigrants and their values that prevented them from melting and assimilating into America, but the character of American society that did not view each immigrant group equally. While the civic nationalism of America allows for all the subsequent generations of immigrants to legally become Americans, when one would ask you what you are, American was not the predicted response (Glazer and Moynihan 1996).

While the idea of "straight line assimilation", where the success of new immigrants is considered to be dependent on assimilating to the new society, is still a familiar concept within academia and policy discourse, more and more this traditional form of immigrant assimilation is being replaced by the idea that immigrants maintain certain ties to their homeland (Levitt and Waters 2002). Theories of integration and 'segmented assimilation' allow for explanations of the diverse ways in which migrants incorporate themselves politically, economically, socially, and culturally into the new host nation (Brubaker 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993). Following the point made by Vertovec (2009) that maintaining a cultural or national identification with the homeland does not exclude any successful integration in the host country, this research utilizes the perspective of transnationalism to explain the ways

in which Galician-Americans construct a Galician identity alongside incorporation into the host nation. Levitt and Waters (2002, p. 12) have stated "transnational practices and assimilation are not diametrically opposed to one another". As Robert Courtney Smith (2006) found in his research on Mexican migrants in New York, immigrants themselves engage with assimilation concepts, seeing many of their transnational activities as contrary to the pull of Americanization. In the case studied here, Galician-Americans reflect the inference not to see assimilation as something that happens or does not, but rather something that immigrants actively engage or reject in multiple aspects of their life. Instead of viewing assimilation as the alternative to transnationalism, this research focuses on how identity is maintained and what role the migrants' American lives play in the way they engage with transnational life and construct a Galician identity.

Transnationalism argues that migrants, along with their children, "retain economic, social, and political ties to their homelands, live in transnational communities that simultaneously span two or more nation-states, and develop multiple and diffuse transnational identifications" (Tsuda 2009, p. 8). While there are examples of people moving and living across borders throughout history, it has only been recently that the scale of inter-nationalism has allowed individuals a greater ability to construct transnational lives (Portes et al. 1999). Fouron and Nina (2002, p. 171) use the term transnational migrant to describe migrants "who live their lives across borders". Migrants will listen to music and keep updated on the news from the homeland, and they will continue to eat traditional foods and maintain traditional cultural practices; many migrants will even become involved in political organizations and send money home in support of a cause. However, migrants make active choices that choose transnationalism.

Migrants can be seen as engaging in transnational or national life through their actions and choices. Individuals will 'choose the nation' in daily activities of their life (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008). From which products to buy to what church to attend, nationhood exists in the daily and institutionalized decisions that people make. Migrants will consciously, or even unconsciously, choose the nation when they make decisions to send their children to Spanish schools or not to teach their children Spanish, when they insist on speaking Galician at home or decide not to teach their children Galician, and when migrants gain American citizenship or pass their Spanish citizenship along to their children. Choosing the nation occurs when individuals make small choices, such as cooking traditional dishes, or large institutionalized choices, such as voting, education, or country of citizenship. Choices that choose Galicia happen alongside choices that choose Spain and choose America. Each time a national choice is made, it has the possibility to shape a network of national and transnational social relations (ibid.). For example, by choosing to send their children to a Spanish speaking school, an individual may meet other Spanish parents, and by sending their children to the Galician club to learn the traditional dace (*muñeira/muiñeira*), they may meet other Galician parents and their children are likely to make friends in these transnational communities. Therefore, the active choices that migrants and their children make in the banality of everyday life 'choose' a national community, creating different "transnational social fields" and reproducing more national choices (Fouron and Nina 2002).

Transnationalism, therefore, is beyond identity and it is more than simply continuing a connection to the ethnic homeland. Transnationalism is something that is done; it is an active engaged process (Vertovec 2009), and one that affects not only the transnational communities but also affects both the home and host countries. In fact, all nations, not just ones traditionally seen as migrant-receiving nations, are now experiencing an increased "proliferation of subnational and transnational identities" (Cohen 1997, p. 175). In this research, transnationalism is explored as a way of constructing a long-distance national identity, focusing on the transnational activity of repeat homeland visits. While much of the discussion around transnationalism is concerned with how these migrants construct transnational lives in their host society, this research focuses on the construction of identity in the sending nation. Maintaining a physical contact with the homeland through repeat homeland visits is a phenomenon that happens less with migrants that immigrate longer distances, such as Europeans who migrate to the US; therefore, homeland visits, as a recurrent part of transnational life, have been studied

more often between migrants within Europe (Wessendorf [2013] 2016). In studying second-generation Italians living in Switzerland, (Wessendorf [2013] 2016) describes reoccurring visits to the homeland as "concrete transnational involvement" and this level of involvement in the home country was seen as the foundation to maintaining an active transnational life. Smith's (2006) book *Mexican New York* also emphasizes the importance of homeland visits in maintaining a Mexican identity for the migrants. For Smith, the local community in both the home and host countries is essential to the construction of a transnational life, but he also emphasizes the importance of these transnational communities towards the imagined community constructed in the homeland region.

The migrants and their family studied in this research sit between the literature on return migration and diaspora tourism (also called roots tourism (Basu 2007), homesick tourism (Sabine 2015), genealogical tourism (Santos and Yan 2010), and many others). Return migration refers to a permanent return to a homeland from which the individual originated while diaspora tourism often focuses on the once-in-a-lifetime visit, a phenomenon where tourists attempt to connect their roots that have been, until the visit, fairly distant (King and Christou 2011). King and Christou argue for more study into these multiple short-term visits as part of transnational life. However, these forms of more long-term or rare visits still, as Storm, Eric (2019, p. 111) argues, "generally reinforced the regional and national identity of both returnees and hosts". Previous studies have discussed the outcomes of return visits through a diverse range of encounters from disillusionment to self-discovery; cases where the visit reinforced the ethno-national identity of migrants and their children or caused migrants to reaffirm a strengthened identity with the host county. First-generation migrants can often create a static vision of the homeland, imposing a stagnant cultural memory on the following generations (Harper 2005). These static images of the homeland can be inaccurate or become inaccurate over time, making homeland visits unable to measure up to the expectations of the "romantic fantasies of the 'old country'" (Cohen 1997, p. 185). Kim's (2009) research on Korean-American homeland tourists found that Korean-Americans often felt racially foreign in the US; however, after being excluded from the strict definitions of Korean cultural belonging in their homeland visit, they began to redefine their Korean identity. Korea, as a place, began to be defined less in terms of cultural belonging and more through ancestral and racial roots, reinforcing whiteness as a defining characteristic of claims to American identity. Additionally, there are also instances where these positive visits strengthen ethnic and national identity towards the homeland (Tsuda 2009). The role of homeland tourism on the construction or maintenance of a long-distance national identity is not straightforward and dependent on context (King and Christou 2011). However, what remains consistent through the literature on homeland visits is the contrast between mobility and place that individuals negotiate.

The increased mobility of society that has made tourism more accessible and reimagined the nation as consumable, economic, and global has also allowed for a transnational social sphere. However, the idea of homeland tourism is connected to a very static concept of "homecoming, homing, the need to 'belong', the search for 'roots'—all are evocations of the need for grounding, or 'placing'" (King and Christou 2011, p. 461). Duval's (2004) study of repeat visits by Caribbean migrants describes the visit as both a transnational practice and a pathway to permanent return. Ley and Kobayashi (2005), however, found that the frequent mobility of Hong Kong Chinese in Canada made long-term resettlements but with a continual movement back and forth throughout the life course, where Hong Kong and Canada made up one 'life world'. This tension between the fluidity of the transnational and fixed sense of belonging plays out in this research, where the visit connects participants to a fixed place.

The importance and impact of physical location and place on transnational lives is often understated by those studying transnationalism. Levitt and Waters (2002, p. 7) argued about transnationalism that the "ways in which connections to collectivities constituted across space seem to override identities grounded in fixed, bounded locations". This global mobility of transnationalism has also been referred to as solidarity without location, "rendering any strictly bound sense of community or locality obsolete" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 9). Fouron and Nina (2002, p. 196) define second-generation transnational migrants as "bounded not by the territorial limits of a state but by the boundaries of social fields".

This boundless and unfixed definition of transnationalism is reflected in the earlier discussion arguing against the 'container' view of the nation, of which tourism offers an example of nationalism in a globalizing transnational world. Additionally, in order to understand these repetitive return visits by Galician-Americans, it is essential to acknowledge this increase in mobility and internationalization that was not accessible to earlier generations and defines transnationalism (King and Christou 2011). However, while these authors are not wrong to emphasize the important phenomenon of being able to maintain social, economic, and political engagement transnationally, it goes against the findings of this research that emphasizes the experience of visiting the place and location of the nation as essential to the construction of a transnational life.

Though the nation is not conceived as container or existing only in its borders, the construction of national identity continues to be imbedded in symbolic associations to land and place. Rather than transnationalism creating a long-distance form of national identity that is placeless, this research confirms the argument made by Smith (2006) that the local informs a transnational identity:

> "Being a Ticuanense is not a cosmopolitan, placeless identity but rather begins as its opposite, a local, deeply rooted traditional identity that is lived in two countries at once, and evolves into something transnational but still local. Because migrants and their U.S.-born children can return regularly to Ticuani, its traditions and ability to confer authenticity make it important to many second-generation youths for whom being Mexican in New York has negative connotations of victimization and difficulty in school. In this way, assimilation and transnationalization become intimately bound." (Smith 2006, p. 11)

Just as in Smith's study, this paper argues that the visit allows for the construction of transnational identities and social networks, where the nation is embedded in ideologies of belonging to a fixed place. Within this long-distance nationalism, identities are constructed in both the home and host countries, with migrants simultaneously moving between moments of transnationalism and assimilation. These transnational identities are dependent on visiting the homeland while simultaneously impacting the homeland through their visits.

2.3. Galicia: Land of Migration

The homeland tourism that Galician-Americans engage in defies our traditional notions of tourism by blurring the relationship between host/guest and home/away. These homeland tourists in this research are not visiting Galicia for the first time, but rather they visit yearly or with a high frequency. They normally do not stay in hotels, and stay with family or own property. They do not always engage in traditional tourist activities, such as visiting marketed tourist destinations. In this way, Galician homeland tourists can be seen more as travelers, in that they do not often visit the main attractions or spend money on marketed tourist experiences. However, in this paper, I refer to Americans of Galician decent that routinely visit Galicia as homeland tourists, not visitors or travelers. While an argument can be made for referring to this group as travelers, I intentionally use the word tourism here to acknowledge the intentional temporary short nature of the visit and their similarity. Additionally, "Despite considerable evidence to the contrary, there is still a tendency to see tourism as a mindless frivolous activity and of travel as an avenue to great adventure and self improvement" (Chambers 2010, p. 5). In fact, those who define themselves as travelers define tourists as something they are not, but travelers themselves reproduce the social, economic, and environmental issues that they claim distinguishes them from tourists (Week 2012). Tourism has been described from this perspective of mass tourism that is highly commercialized and superficial, focusing on the consumption of tourist activities in contrast to engaging in an "authentic". While that form of tourism does exist, and is particularly evident in other areas of Spain, it is not the only way tourism is experienced. Tourists themselves are diverse, creating numerous ways to be a tourist and experience travel. Within the diverse and practically infinite ways in which to do tourism, MacCannell (1992) argues that the one thing tourists have in common is a search for an imagined "authentic" experience.

However, this search for the authentic is ultimately superficial, steeped in the nostalgia of the rural, and reinforces the exploitative power dynamics ingrained in tourism (ibid). All of the Galician homeland visitors, regardless of whether or not they engage in traditional tourist activities, are still in search of an 'authentic', sometimes nostalgic, Galicia, actively constructing their image of the imagined community through being a tourist.

Tourism in Spain is famously popular. In fact, Spain has been referred to as a success story for tourism and nation branding. Nation brander Wally Olins (2003, p. 162) states that after the civil war and decades of "isolated, autarkic, poverty-stricken, authoritarian anachronism, hardly part of Europe at all", Spain was able to transform into a "modern, well-off, European democracy" after the death of Francisco Franco. The brand started as a widespread tourism campaign that promoted modernized and sunny Spain with a logo designed by the famous Catalan artist, Joan Miró. This tourism logo encapsulated the whole of Spain's new image of European modernity (Aronczyk 2013). Through this image constructed by tourism, Spain "carefully orchestrated and promoted its re-entry into the European family" (Olins 2003, p. 162). While this narrative of the birth of a modern European Spanish image and a new tourist industry is overstated and simply incorrect (Pack 2008), the reality of this representation is that it continues to overemphasize the unity of a single image of the Spanish nation resting on tired stereotypes. Over the decades, tourism in Spain has presented a very narrow image of the nation, reproducing a cliched exotic orientalism invented by outsiders while also catering to the 'sun and sea' demands of the tourist market (Storm 2017). There were and continue to be attempts at promoting regional diversity, but images, such as bullfighting, flamenco, and fiesta, still dominate within much of Spanish tourism, representing a stereotypical version of the nation for mass consumption (Storm 2017).

While Galicia has never become a mass tourist destination as many other areas of Spain, tourism has been important in Galician history, both through building an imagined nation and through building its national identity in relationship to the Spanish state. In their study of the Swedish middle class in the early 1900s, Frykman and Löfgren (1983) describe how national identity became tied to the landscape and presented as inherently political. In a similar way, Santos and Trillo-Santamaría (2017) explain how the pilgrimage tourism of the Way of Saint James (el camino de Santiago) and the representation of landscape tourism created a political stance representing the nation as submissive and as part of a unified Spanish state. Through these tourism offers, Galicia "served to reinforce Spain as a nation-state" and "contribute to the building of and image of Galicia based on rural and social attributes lined to femininity, such as melancholy, which may lead to the rejection of Galicia as a political subject" (Santos and Trillo-Santamaría 2017, p. 104). While Galicia's main tourist attraction has been Santiago and the pilgrimage, it is Santos and Trillo-Santamaría's second point related to the construction of landscape through tourism that is most related to the construction of an imagined landscape within the homeland tourists in this article.

Landscape in general has long been studied as a social construct that is imbued with signifiers of cultural and national meaning (Cosgrove 1984; Schama 1995). Nations are often visualized by idealized landscapes, and landscape is actively constructed as national. Edensor (2002, p. 40) argues that since the rise of modern industrialism and emergence of the modern nation happened simultaneously, nations are "clothed in this rhetoric of the rural, a rural which most frequently encapsulates the genus loci of the nation, the place from which we have sprung, where our essential national spirit resides." Therefore, landscape often serves as an origin story of the nation, the ultimate and most pure form of national description. The rural landscape of Galicia acts in a similar way as an emotive national symbol. Both nationalists and the tourism industry in Galicia have drawn on cliched and exaggerated symbols of landscape in order to convey a Galician identity distinct from that of the rest of Spain (López Silvestre and González 2007). This visualization of Galicia as rural, green forests, mountains, misty weather, and rugged coastlines were used to distinguish Galicia nationally and politically through dualisms of "north versus south, the Atlantic vs. the Mediterranean, damp vs. dry, vitality vs. despair, rural vs. urban, feminine vs. masculine, i.e., Galician vs. Castilian" (López Silvestre

and González 2007, p. 246). Heritage tourism presents landscape as a cultural construction imbued with national meaning and where nostalgia for the past is communicated in order to build a national identity for the present (Palmer 1999). In visiting Galicia and experiencing the landscape, participants are engaged in activities that reproduce and reinforce the nation. Data from 2005 shows landscape and visiting family or relatives as the top two reasons why tourists visit Galicia (López Silvestre and González 2007). Just as Galicia is known for its landscape, it is also known as a land of emigration.

Spain overall has a significant history of emigration, known as one of the largest emigrating countries in Europe until about the 1980s (Gomez 1962; Serra 2003). Of all the autonomous regions in Spain, it is Galicia that was by far the largest emigrating province historically and most Galicians ended up migrating to the Americas (Gomez 1962; Núñez 2002). Data from 2016 showed that Galicia was the largest group of all Spanish citizens registered as living abroad, making up 21.85% of all Spaniards living internationally (Golías 2018). More recently the Galician newspaper, *La Voz de Galicia*, published a finding that Galicians are registered as living in a staggering 70% of the world's countries (Punzón 2019). They attribute this to the economic recession of recent years; however, this more contemporary flow of migrants follows a historical pattern of emigration. Núñez (2002, p. 234) explains that the historically large emigration of Galicians until around the 1950s was not the cause of extreme poverty but rather can be described as a choice that was made by migrants "within a context of limited opportunities" and potential for growth. Furthermore, as Lamela (2018) argues, in the Galician case, there has been a consistent back and forth flow of migrants for generations, something typical of not only the Galician migrant experience but a defining narrative of Galicia.

Galicia as a place of emigration is so cemented in Spanish popular knowledge that there are even common jokes about it, for example: 'What is the largest city in Galicia? Answer: Buenos Aires'. So deep is the impact of emigration that in many South American countries, the term 'Gallego' is used as a synonym for someone from Spain. In Galicia, migrants were part of the national narrative of the nation and considered a part of the imagined community of the nation (Núñez 2002). However, there have been diverse ways in which migration has been constructed in relation to the nation. Migrants have been presented through a narrative of nostalgia and homesickness and also as a people of adventure and success (ibid.). The Galician government itself imagined its nation as transnational, extending beyond its borders to the Galician communities abroad and even funding migrant return visits (ibid.). This impact and narrative of emigration is evidenced even in the Galician language: "The term 'morriña' is defined by the Galician Royal Language Academy as a 'melancholic and depressive feeling and mood, specifically or caused by a nostalgia for the homeland'" (Lamela 2018, p. 1). The impact of migrants on Galicia should not be reduced to simply an inclusion in the national narrative. Migrants were politically involved and set up associations in their home countries that sent back aid and supported causes (Núñez 2016). They were influential in funding and creating tourist infrastructure in Galicia and additionally contributed to creating and reproducing the rural folkloric imagining of the landscape and nation (Santos and Trillo-Santamaría 2017). Galician migrants were and are impactful in the banal imagining of the nation:

> "they continue to be an ever-present element of daily life. Return migrants fill Galician villages every summer, and many restaurants, shops and companies are named after the migration destinations of their owners. Moreover, migration has decisively contributed to reshaping the rural Galician landscape, since return migrants have introduced architectural styles partially transplanted from their host countries." (Núñez 2002, p. 251)

Historically, Galician emigrants to the US have been numerically insignificant compared to other Latin American countries, such as Argentina (Moya 1998), but if examined from the local community level, there were entire Galician municipalities where the majority of the emigrants left for the US, specifically New York. Those from the Galician province of Coruña were especially predominant in the United States (Pérez 2008). In her study on migrants from Galicia to New York, Pérez (2008) determined that since the early 20th century, the sending area of Coruña, with a significant history of migrants going to New York, were from the areas of Bergondo, Oleiros, and Sada (see Figure 1). This research

focuses on the municipalities of Bergondo and Sada, areas in which the majority of migrants went to the US. Looking at Figure 1, there is a clear prominence of emigration towards New York in Sada; however, in Bergondo, while New York is still the most common destination, when looking down at the parish level, certain areas presented much higher numbers of those emigrating to New York (Pérez 2008). While this sort of migration data is very difficult to determine due to the inconsistency in records and the multiple migratory patterns of many Galicians, the data can still show both the importance of social networks in migrant destinations and also the high impact of certain destinations on geographic areas. Initially, many of these migrants were men working in maritime shipping or labor; however, they were eventually followed by women and families, creating communities of Galicians from the same municipality living in close proximity in New York neighborhoods, many in Astoria, Queens, where the migrant association Casa Galicia (Galicia House) is still functioning (ibid.). It is this community of Galician-Americans that originated from Sada and Bergondo that continue to visit Galicia regularly and are the subject of this research. This paper argues that the construction of a transnational social field and a long-distance Galician identity by these migrants is dependent on the ability to return and visit Galicia, constructing a national identity based in both place and migration.

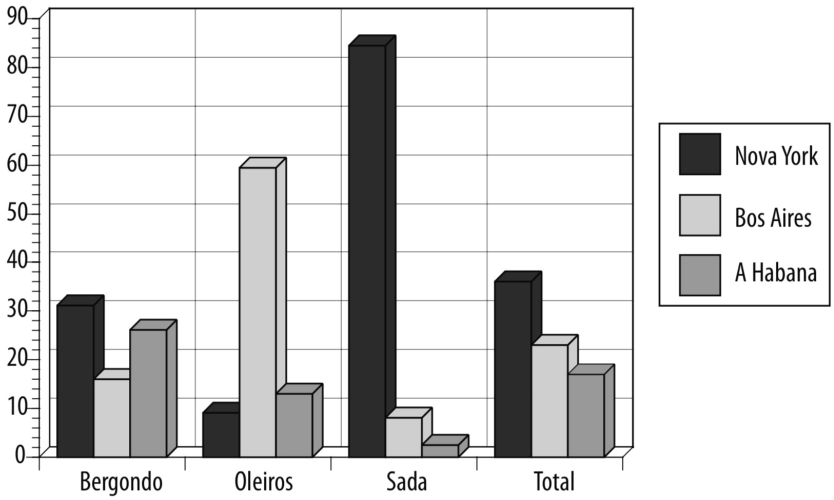

Figure 1. Percentage of migrants and their primary destinations of migration in Bergondo, Oleiros, and Sada from 1917 to 1941 (source: Pérez 2008).

3. Method

The findings of this research are based on semi-structured interviews collected with 21 homeland tourists in Galicia. Participants interviewed were those that self-identified as being of Galician descent (either born in Spain or the US), living in the US permanently, and making return trips back to Galicia. Research was conducted in the areas of Sada and Bergondo, two small adjoining counties in Galicia's Coruña region with a historical impact of emigration to the US. It is often stated by community members that it would be difficult to find a family in the area that has not been impacted by emigration to the US. Since the community is relatively rural, participants were recruited mostly through word of mouth fairly quickly. However, as a Galician-American that visits yearly and with family in this area, I already had a wide network to pass on information about the research and requests for interview participants. Having an understanding of the culture of this area also proved important for this research in acknowledging the intricacies of how these Galician-Americans construct a national identity. The mean age of the interviewees was 61, with ages ranging from 18 to 85. There were 6 males and 15 females interviewed. This research also conducted interviews of multiple "generations" within the same family, demonstrating the movement of Galician identity through a family. However, in doing so, this research acknowledges the difficulty in separating these participants into cohorts by generations.

Through the assimilationist 'melting pot' approach to immigration, migrants were thought to have arrived in the new host country and stay, making grouping into generations for analysis fairly straightforward. The first generation were those who arrived in the new host country, their children would then make up the second generation, and so on. However, this approach is contrary to the reality of the diverse migrant experiences. It ignores important differences in opportunities and language acquisition of those that migrate at different ages along with ignoring the reality of vastly different historical experiences regardless of age, distinct class determinants, inter marriages between generations, and multi-direction and even multiple return migrations (Eckstein 2002). The Galician migrants from the areas studied in this paper would often migrate to other countries, such as Cuba, before reaching the US. Additionally, families were often separated and would migrate at different times, with some members returning and moving back and forth between Galicia and the US (Pérez 2008). If transnationalism argues that the nation now exists beyond borders and migrants create transnational social fields that connect migrants and their host countries, then the traditional generation grouping does not account for the back-and-forth movement of people, ideas, and funds. Generations have therefore been conceived of by transnational scholars as existing on all sides of this transnational field, including those in the homeland (Fouron and Nina 2002).

The messy reality of migration makes it difficult to determine distinct analytical categories for analysis. Someone born in Galicia but moved to the US before they could remember and did not visit throughout their childhood versus someone born in the US to Galician parents but spent every summer of their childhood in Galicia would occupy different analytical groups from the traditionally conceived straight line assimilation categories of the first or second generation. In this research, analytical groups of generations sharing similarities of experience became increasingly difficult to determine and participants themselves were often unsure of how to categorize themselves. Therefore, Table 1 shows the demographic information about each interview that identifies, instead of generations, their country of birth and age at which they immigrated to the US. This, however, still obscures the reality that participants often made multiple migrations either between Galician and the US or other destinations. Some were born in Spain outside of Galicia before they moved to the US. Some were born in the US and to mixed-generation parents and others spent large portions of their childhood in Galicia.

Table 1. Participant information by interview number, including age, gender, birthplace, and age immigrated to the US if applicable.

Interview	Age	Gender	Birthplace	Age Immigrated
001	75	F	Spain	19
002	75	M	Spain	18
003	74	F	US	-
004	34	F	Spain	17
005	73	M	Spain	11
006	82	F	Spain	26
007a	78	F	US	-
007b	68	F	Spain	9
008a	65	F	US	-
008b	85	F	Spain	17
009	18	F	US	-
010	50	M	Spain	6
011	71	F	US	-
012	49	M	US	-
013	60	F	Spain	19
014	64	F	US	-
015	67	M	Spain	25
016	56	F	Spain	5
017	54	F	Spain	3
018	53	F	US	-
019	32	M	US	-

This research also acknowledges the difficulty in determining how representative the sample is of Galician-Americans. There were expectedly a high number of retirees who visited annually due to having the time and disposable income to do so. However, data on the numbers of individuals who identify as Galicians in America is not collected. Looking at census data can give a number of how many registered Galician voters there are in the US (about 9000 from Coruña according to 2019 data from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística). However, many of the participants interviewed have either renounced their citizenship or never acquired it in the first place. As Núñez has stated, "It is almost impossible to tally the total amount of Galicians who live outside their mother country nowadays" (Núñez 2002, p. 231). An effort was made to conduct phone interviews with younger Galician-Americans that could not afford the trip the year that the interviews were conducted; however, only one interview materialized from this.

This specific research topic of immigrant identity brought up delicate themes, such as racism and intolerance, issues surrounding the turbulent political history of the area, recollections of poverty, and nostalgia for those left behind. Therefore, the research process took ethical steps by ensuring confidentiality of the data, requiring informed consent from all interviewees before participating in the research, receiving ethical approval through the University of Bristol, giving participants access to their data, providing participants with an in-depth project information sheet, making interviewees aware that they could withdraw from the research at any point, and utilizing a less structured approach to interviewing in order to allow the participant to guide the topic of the interview more than most semi-structured interviews.

The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis. Topics analyzed in this research were coded through ordering and analyzing with reoccurring broad general themes followed by more specific sub-themes. Overall, the research included themes, such as memories of Galicia and times spent there, experiences of being Spanish in America, and the visit itself (reasons for the visit, how they are received, changes to the homeland, downsides of the visit, and reinforcing identity). All coding and analysis were done using Nvivo 9.

This research acknowledges that participants' age, socio economic status, gender, and additional identifiers will influence the way that participants visit Galicia and engage in homeland tourism. While this is not the focus of this research, I acknowledge that all Galician-Americans are not one homogenous group and a few even belong to additional national and ethnic groups. The following discussion presents data on how, through homeland tourism, these participants imagine a Galician identity, not ignoring the diverse identities of the participants but rather the way a Galician identity is managed and layered alongside this diversity.

4. Discussion

4.1. Galicians in America: Transnational Lives

In order to understand why many Galician-Americans of multiple generations make routine and frequent visits to the homeland and how they construct a Galician identity, it is first necessary to understand how they construct transnational lives in the US. Participants reflected on how in the past, there existed very insular communities of Galicians in New York. However, today, Galicians from the areas studied in this paper, while mostly still in New York, are much more widely dispersed and less unified than before. Therefore, transnational life is largely constructed not through a social field but rather through individualized household activities. This includes activities, such as cooking traditional dishes, watching Galician or Spanish television programs, following the news from Galicia, video chats with family and friends back home, celebrating holidays, and of course speaking in or utilizing to some extent both Spanish and Galician languages.

Participants described how, at certain times, they create an inflated focus on their Galician identity in the household environment, but it is not always consistent and definitely not always easy. This obsession to make all things at home Galician often pops up for these participants in

discussions around instilling a Galician identity and knowledge of Galician culture in their children. One participant (011) born in the US, reminisced on this approach of crafting an exaggerated Galician household when her kids were growing up:

> "Oh of course we grew up with [Galician] foods, [. . .] Yeah all these ethnic dishes. They grew up with uh, my son used to say that I was too ethnic, that son over there [. . .] he accused me one day of, 'Mom you're too ethnic'. That's how ethnic I was."

Participants recalled how they were raised with traditional Galician dishes and culture, and therefore worked hard to pass that along to their children. Other participants described how they knew they would create a more Galician household with their children in the future to make sure that their children had as much of the same knowledge of Galicia they grew up with. This cycle of a waxing and waning emphasis on Galician culture in households reflects themes within the literature on transnationalism that argues that assimilation and transnationalism are not always forces acted on migrants but rather are something migrants actively move back and forth between. For Smith (2006), it is not that migrants assimilate in some areas and not in others, but that transnational life can instead be understood in relation to many different factors that are not always consistent and can change throughout the life course. There are times in the banality of daily life when participants actively "choose the nation" and moments when they do not (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008).

Choosing Galicia within the household, however, is not easy. Spanish and Galician television stations often require an extra subscription and can be expensive. Navigating time differences and busy schedules for family conversations through video chats means that interaction with those living in Galicia is not as frequent as many would desire. However, for participants, the most difficult labor involved in constructing transnational households came from maintaining Spanish or Galician languages in the house and also sourcing/consuming authentic ingredients.

While the history of emigration and large number of Galician emigrants has made a significant impact on these communities in Galicia, Galicians in the US are a comparatively very small immigrant group. While there historically used to be more stores to consume products from Galicia and engage in social encounters (Pérez 2008), now participants make do with visiting Spanish, Portuguese, or French stores. One participant whose father is from Galicia and mother is Greek makes the point that in terms of migrants in the US, Spaniards as a whole are not a very large group, making choices to engage with Spanish heritage active and taking some amount of effort:

> "[. . .] there is also a bigger Greek community in New York than there is a Spanish one. Um so while I love my Spanish background as well it's a little harder to be immersed in it than it is in my Greek one." (009)

The small Galician immigrant groups also makes it difficult to create transnational lives outside of the household. However, transnational public spaces and life still occurs, especially in New York. There is a club for Galicians in New York called Casa Galicia (Galicia House), where many social activities, classes, and other functions take place along with having a restaurant that serves Galician food. Some participants in the New York area remember how, for their family, Casa Galicia was the hub of social life growing up. Participants created childhood friends in Casa Galicia that they see both in New York and on visits back to Galicia, and some even met their spouses at Casa Galicia. However, outside Casa Galicia, and specifically for participants not in New York, discussions of transnational life were often dominated by stories of the vast amount of labor involved in needing to explain their heritage to the wider society.

Maintaining the Spanish or Galician language for participants throughout the generations is a topic that also reflects the work and difficult choices in balancing between maintaining Galician ties and 'assimilating' to the US. Many interviewees express being torn between raising their children to speak Spanish and/or Galician or making sure they were prepared when they went to school in English. Interview 004 was one of the only interviewees that did not immigrate to New York at some point in

her migratory trajectory, though she does have family there. She acknowledges feeling alone in the responsibility and difficulty in passing down knowledge of her national heritage to her two-year-old son, lamenting that since they cannot visit yearly, he will not be able to have the same opportunities to develop a Gallego or Spanish identity:

> "I want to but again I don't think that it's possible. Because he's never gonna have the, you know, summers at grandma's house. Um but, you know, I'm hoping that I can keep, keep part of it, part of my Spanish culture, give him that. [. . .] keep speaking to him in Spanish. I think it's a very important thing because he'll keep that a lot, hopefully for many years. Uh bringing him to Spain, I know I can't bring him here every summer but maybe a couple, every couple of years [...]" (004)

She additionally notes that she also aims to "Make him a lot of cocido", a Spanish culinary dish. But even if she maintains speaking to him in Spanish and cooking him food, she acknowledges that without being in Galicia, it will not be the same, "It's my son, he's never gonna know this." Participants acknowledge that the lack of a cohesive transnational social field in the US means that visits to Galicia are essential to instilling an identity in their children.

Outside of their own family or small social circle, it is rare for participants to meet anyone from Galicia. However, they often discuss this inherent feeling of an imagined shared experience with strangers that are also Galician:

> "But it's always very interesting to find a Gallego and when you find those people who have some relation to Galicia, it's amazing how you bond, and you just talk about Galicia. And it's almost like a sisterhood/brotherhood kind of sense. And I probably only see these people once or twice or whatever and it's amazing. [. . .] I think it's a very strong proud culture that people are proud to be Gallegos so when you find a person from Galicia, it just brings everything together you know. [. . .] no matter how little we know of each other, you're a Gallego it's a cultural bond there even though I wasn't born there." (018)

Even with this pride in being from Galicia, in the US, many participants tell people they are Spanish not Galician, because Galicia is a fairly unknown region and national minority. They tend to switch between using both terms in an interview. However, in the US, when they say they are Spanish, they are still often faced with ignorance about Spain and have to navigate complicated situations around what the term Spanish means in a country with a large community of Spanish-speaking immigrants from South and Central America. One participant described the process behind how to answer questions about where he was from:

> "Most of the time I just say Spanish, right? And I've gotten reactions. If you say, 'I'm a Spaniard' and they happen to be Spanish then they think you're snotty and you're trying to say making sure you don't get confused with a South American or Central American. Right? So, so you get like an attitude there whereas it's ok for a Columbian to say he's Columbian I don't see him saying, 'I'm South American', somewhere one of those countries. Right? I don't understand. And then the other thing is you know I've found throughout my life that a lot of people don't even know where Spain is so then it becomes an embarrassing moment. Then I have to explain that it's European and not somewhere south of the border." (010)

Participants are constantly weighing what is easiest to be described as in each situation while also simultaneously navigating America's history of racial classification.

In researching the construction of Galician identity through repetitive homeland visits by Galician-Americans, this research found participants eager to share their experiences of racism in the US as an explanation for the way they experience pride in being Galician both in Galicia and in the US. Participants repeated stories about people thinking Spain was in South America and being told they were not white. One younger participant (019) in his 30s told a story about how his nickname

in school was "The Mexican". Older generations often described being confused for Puerto Rican. However, regardless of age, participants recounted being racially categorized 'incorrectly' and therefore receiving racial slurs and other forms of prejudice. This discussion of racial prejudice was accompanied by two reactions. Firstly, participants used stories of prejudice to describe how proud they were to be from Spain, and even more so from Galicia. One participant recounted how being called a 'spic', an offensive term used in the US towards non-white Hispanics, increased her identification as Spanish.

> "And there was this Irish family the Handleys over there, Julie can tell you, I smacked the hell out of him because he called me a spick and from then on I always said, 'I'm from Spain! I'm from Spain!' I was like so proud to be from Spain."

The prejudice in the US therefore acted as one of the many reasons that participants felt a strong affinity for and the continual need to visit the homeland through multiple generations.

Secondly, participants reacted to racial prejudice and ignorance about Spain through an increased and intensified romanticization of Galicia's Celtic past. Participants do not describe Spain as a European and therefore 'white' country; rather, they explain how the part of Spain they are from is Celtic and therefore more white than people think of when they hear participants are from Spain: "When people usually think Spain they think south. They're used to bull running and stuff and I have to explain that it's not really that" (009). This reductive image of Spain as equivalent to southern Spain or bullfighting falls in line with the literature that identifies these romanticized exotic stereotypes of Spain as being constructed by foreigners but reproduced by the tourism industry (Storm 2017). Participants experience these stereotyped images firsthand and describe having to utilize the Galician landscape to describe the diversity of Spain. It is common for Galician-Americans to compare their country with Ireland instead of the rest of Spain. They cite the green landscape, rocky coasts, rainy weather, and bagpipes: "I always say, 'Can you picture Ireland? The green, the hills, the valleys, lots of lakes? That is Galicia, that is Galicia.' [. . .] There's no difference I said there really is none" (014).

While Galicia is distinct from the rest of Spain and does have a historical Celtic influence, Galicians and even government organizations, such as the tourism board, have engaged in overemphasizing Galicia as a Celtic nation. Many groups ruled Galicia but "none of these groups ever 'mastered' the region"; not even the Celts (Gemie 2006, p. 27). But whether these narratives of a Celtic Galicia are imagined or not, these constructed versions of history "have real, material and symbolic effects" (Hall 1990, p. 226). Just as Anderson (1991) argued, it is not whether these claims to a Galician Celtic nation are factual that is of concern here, it is the way Galicia is imagined as Celtic that is central to the construction of a Galician identity.

Galicia's landscape is often presented for political aims as green, wet, and rural in contrast to the arid Mediterranean south, creating oppositions between the more dominant southern image of Spain and Galicia (López Silvestre and González 2007). Participants use these narratives of landscape and an imagined Celtic past to create these same binaries and separate them from that of the rest of Spain, creating a narrative of national identity for specific aims. They use this representation of Galicia as a reaction to being categorized by the wider society as "not white". It acts as a way that Galicia is constructed as 'whiter' and culturally distinct from the rest of Spain, but also as a nation whose identity is bound as equally to history and culture as it is to landscape and place. Similarly, in their research on second-generation Haitian youth, Fouron and Nina (2002) showed how participants were rejected by American society based on race, creating an increased identification with being Haitian and engagement in the transnational community. While this research does not intend to analyze the American racial system or critique participants for playing into the highly stratified racial society of the US, it does argue that the way participants are consistently defining and legitimizing their national heritage impacts the way in which they use the visit to construct a Galician identity as white and in reaction to being told by American society that they are not white.

4.2. The Visit: Constructing a Galician Identity

These repeat homeland visits that are common among Galician-Americans in this region are an essential activity necessary in order to engage in not only a transnational life, but the construction of a Galician identity. The homeland trip was often viewed by participants as an obligation in order to claim this identity. However, before participants were able to reflect on the necessity of the visit itself, most interviews constructed an image of Galicia as a nation of emigrants. Consistent with the literature on how the Galician government moved between contradictory representations of Galician emigration, participants imagined Galicia as the nostalgic rural, where poverty drove emigration, along with the narrative of Galician inherent qualities of success.

Galicia was described and imagined as the rural idyllic, where the nostalgia of the traditional lived: A place where community still thrived and "everybody knew everybody" (003):

> "[Galicia is] a beautiful country type of environment, you know, where people lived off the land, they did not have a lot of money, they did not have a lot of education. But they basically made the most of what they had and knew, and they did it to their fullest extent. They lived their lives to the fullest extent" (012)

This participant also described this narrative of the rural traditional through the lens of innocence.

> "But I still think in this area they retain a little bit of that innocence as well. So, it hasn't fully gone off the deep end like you would see in Madrid or even more so in Barcelona. Barcelona's way off on the other side. In fact, Barcelona, I think is almost, it's not Spain. Madrid is a lot more like Spain. And then uh and in Galicia still retains I think a little bit of that uh, that innocents". (012)

Barcelona and Madrid represent the urban modernized while Galicia still represents the rural traditional, and therefore innocent. His description of Galicia reflects an identity similar to that of national representations of rural landscape, submissive and traditional while simultaneously nationalizing the landscape as Galician (López Silvestre and González 2007; Santos and Trillo-Santamaría 2017).

This narrative of the rural lifestyle close to nature embedded in national landscape was simultaneously used to construct Galicia as a place of migration. The rural was also associated with poverty and hardships that lead to emigration. It was important for participants to describe how they became a family of immigrants with a dual Galician-American identity in order to explain why it is so important for them to make return visits to the homeland. These family immigration histories highlighted themes of economic struggles, family separation, and the hardships of immigration in the Galician migrant experience that lead to a wider perspective of how these participants understood what it is to be Galician.

Participants recounted their family history of immigration, starting with economic hardships and widespread poverty, and explaining how the rural landscape could not provide opportunities for many in the area and acted as a catalyst for the initial migration process. Families generally did not emigrate all at once; it was a slow process, where in the midst of this poverty, little by little, families would make their way to America:

> "All the families here, every family up and down this road here, and your grandmother, all of them lived the same way. Absent husbands and little, one by one, they would take their children away. There was no life here, there was no way to earn a living except if you, you know, the ground and sometimes the ground didn't produce anything. There was no future for them. The future was in the United States. And it was sad. It was very very sad and very difficult on the families and these women". (011)

It was out of economic necessity that families were driven to immigrate. But this immigration process was painful and emotional. These stories were recounted and felt in many different generations of immigrants; however, they were most emotional and frequently referred to by those who had first-hand experience.

> "007b: I just remember when we left, my mother screaming and crying and because we had left my brother here. He was sick and he couldn't go at the time and my mother screaming. That stays with you that screaming that she did at the time.
>
> 007a: Did your brother, did that brother end up dying here?
>
> 007b: Yes, he did. Yeah, yes yes."

> "The people across the street they were raised in this house and the middle child came out with a box full of money, went like this [shook the money] and said, 'I don't have to go to America'. And I told him, 'You're lucky. You don't know what it is to have to leave your country'". (013)

Participants recounted narratives of immigration demonstrating the sacrifices that were made for their family. Those who lived through the Franco regime added an additional layer of suppression of national identity into their narrative.

Through these migration stories, the Galicia that their families emigrated from was not constructed as the nostalgic rural landscape many had described; it was also presented as the rural impoverished landscape of emigration. However, it also became the starting point for the eventual narrative of success:

> "Before it was like Vietnam and now it's uh now you know basically now basically it's different it's completely different. You know because in those years they were farmers, so they have cows, cows in the house, pigs, chicken". (015)

This participant who left Galicia at the age of 25 in the late 1960s goes on to describe how "everything is better now" and how Galicia has "caught up" with rest of the world and the 21st century. Galicia is therefore constructed as rural nostalgic innocence along with the narratives of both emigration as a consequence of poverty and the success of Galicians. One US-born participant describes seeing the changes throughout time from her first visit in 1978 to now:

> "I mean they sacrificed a lot you know. They went through many many years of not having and now they have everything that we have in the United States. You know they're on par so to speak with you know with the West, with you know United States and England. And you know there's a prosperity here that they never had before. From '78 to the present and they have everything". (011)

Through these stories of sacrifice and success, participants have constructed the Galician character as hard working, a people that have overcome a lot, and are proud of what they achieved. These stories constructed an image of Galicia not as poor with extreme hardships but rather these stories acted to produce an image of Galicia as defined by the strength and hard work involved in overcoming these struggles. For one US-born interviewee, the "one quality that seems to define Gallegos that they're hard workers and that they travel the world to do the best for their families" (014). This participant defines Galicia through narratives of migration and frequent global mobility as hardworking and successful. Additionally, through their continual visits, homeland tourists are simultaneously creating this mobility and narrative of success since through their regular return visits to Galicia, this dual identity emerges as proof of these hardworking qualities. The ability that they can now visit becomes essential to the Galician experience as it demonstrates having what they coded as Galician qualities of sacrifice, a strong work ethic, and success. However central to the way participants both interact with Galicia as a place and the imagined community is the lens of experiencing Galicia through continual visits.

Galician migrants in this study choose to make return visits rather than permanently moving to Galicia. In fact, many are very adamant in their refusal to move to Galicia, because they see themselves as Americans who are Galician not as Galicians. When asked why she came to Galicia every year, one participant who left Galicia when she was nine exclaimed that she comes back "Because I'm a real

Gallega! I mean I love the United States that's my number one. My number two is Galicia, Spain. I'll be honest with you" (007b). Participants were generally very strong in their conviction that they are American first but that being American does not exclude them from also identifying as Galician.

> "I will always be American first and then Spanish. No no. That I'm very certain of, I'm American first always and then Spanish. And I'm very proud of being Spanish, or Spanish ancestry, I should word that right. I am an American of Spanish ancestry and I'm very proud of my Spanish ancestry. And I think I've passed that on to my children. That's why we're here. I'd like to pass that on to my grandchildren". (011)

This interviewee was born in the US but visits regularly because she sees herself as Spanish; she states that she wants to pass her heritage on to her grandchildren as well, and that is why they are visiting. An essential part of identifying as Spanish/Galician is having been there, the visit.

Through these habitual visits, participants were able to experience what they identified as markers of Galician cultural identity and community life that they could not in the US, most of which were centered around food. For example, participants cited visiting Galicia and eating the local barnacles called percebes that are impossible to get back in the US and which were described as tasting like the pure Galician sea (001). They go to the local fairs and festivals in the towns, engaging in a community life in public sphere they do not often experience in the US. They spend time with family who visits or lives there along with friends and other Galician-Americans visiting during the summer. But participants do not come just for the cultural activities that are inaccessible in the US, they come because Galicia for them is an embodied identity, a feeling of home that can only be experienced through the visit. The emotion and feelings of home that participants described by just being in Galicia were what drew them back and what were essential in creating an imagined Galician identity. Going back to Galicia regardless of how much it has changed over the years brought back emotional memories for participants. One participant who left Galicia at the age of six explains: "When I come back now, um. I mean obviously this has changed a lot so it's not exactly what I remember. But I still feel that home feeling" (012). This concept of feeling at home has been described within return visitors as a concept that shifts through the visit (Baldassar 2001). While both the US and Galicia feel like home, it is through continual visits to Galicia that participants are able to feel fully at home in both countries. With very little family left in Galicia, one participant describes what keeps bringing her back every year: "My roots. That's it. And it's hard to pull up from that. It's hard" (001). What brings them back year after year is the emotional connection to the physical place itself, and that experience is an essential component to claiming a Galician identity. The place itself becomes part of their identity. As one US-born participant describes, "There are ties you know there are definitely ties. It becomes part of you. [Galicia] just becomes part of you."

One participant that left Galicia at the age of 19 and, like many others, visits every year and owns property there stated that it is difficult to understand why she and so many others feel obligated to return every year. She couldn't quite put her finger on what it was, but she acknowledges that this mobility back and forth to Galicia has just become part of what Galician-Americans from this area do and it has now become unavoidable:

> "Galicia is in you. You take the Gallego from Galicia, but you never take Galicia from the Gallego, ever. Every Gallego I know, and I know hundreds of them, they come here every summer they go to Casa Galicia, the Gallego clubs in New York, their children marry Gallegos, those children come back, those grandchildren come back. It's something in this place that pulls you back" (013)

While highly sentimental, these frequent trips were also seen by participants as a duty or chore, which they are happy to do but as still something obligatory. The continual visits were necessary, an essential component to be able to claim a Galician identity. Participants describe yearly visits as a "habit" (008a) and even a "punishment" (008b). This description of the visit as something participants

are forced to do refers to how the visit is perceived as essential for identification as a Galician-American; it becomes part of who they are, it is perceived as inescapable. While individuals must partake in this continual mobility between Galicia and America to identify as Galician, Galicia then becomes imagined both as a physical location and an identity defined by constant mobility, rather than emigration.

While some Galician-Americans do return more permanently, often when they retire, those that visit every year choose not to. Even though they choose not to move back, their experience exists intertwined with relatives and friends that have moved back, even family that has moved to other parts of Spain and other countries worldwide. The example of visiting is just one experience that demonstrates the complexity of migratory flows but also demonstrates the mobility at the core Galician identity for these Americans. Many participants had siblings, parents, and other family that did decide to move back permanently, some had family that moved back temporarily, and some had family that lived there for half the year and the US for half the year. But for these participants, their choice not to move back was not seen as a big deal. For participants, being Galician is a transnational activity; some people move there, others visit. Being Galician-American is being involved in multiple return visits surrounded by family that chooses to return permanently or temporarily, and other family that visits the US simultaneously. They choose to live in the US within a transnational social field that is dependent upon the mobility of return visits. Making visits to the place is not only essential to Galician identity but transnationalism, as a defining characteristic in how they experience being Galician. This constant movement between the migration and return or return visits makes migration a continual process rather than a destination. It also breaks down traditional conceptual categories of home vs. away, immigration vs. emigration, and returning vs. migrating.

Galicia, for these participants, exists as a physical place that must be experienced by visiting, it is constructed through images of rural landscape used to evoke romantic notions and innocence, and through a landscape of impoverished hardships that act as the catalyst of emigration imagining Galicia's past through the lens of migration. Through these visits, alongside the reality of the multiple patterns of mobilities experienced by their family and friends, the visit become their transnational social field of constant mobility, where the physical location of Galicia as the foundation of their dual identity still matters and is essential to the construction of a Galician-American identity. It is therefore the visit that bridges the gap between Galicia as a physical and embodied location that is tied to identity and Galicia as experienced through emigration and multiple mobilities.

5. Conclusions

Galician-American homeland tourists studied in this paper view regular visits to Galicia as essential to constructing a Galician identity. Set alongside the difficulty in creating a transnational social network in the US, Galician migrants use the visit to construct an identity that is at its core continually mobile and transnational. Even though the visit forms the core of establishing a Galician identity, it was not removed from the experience of American immigration and the wider society participants experienced. Participants intentionally 'choose the nation' in daily life with varying degrees of involvement at different moments in the life course of the participants. Moving between actions of assimilation and transnationalism breaks down the idea that these two concepts are static or mutually exclusive. The experience of having Galician heritage in the US, a country with a large number of migrants from Latin America, was met with racial assumptions in which participants formed a strong, specifically northern, Spanish identity. Galician-Americans drew on the landscape and imagined history of Galicia to act against a social system that often categorized them as 'not white'. The visit therefore allowed both an identity with a place that had only a very small transnational public sphere in the US and one that could be geographically and culturally constructed as Celtic, northern, and 'white' as a reaction to the stratified racial system in the US.

Galicia was imagined by participants as Celtic, as the rural idyllic, as impoverished, and as a story of success and overcoming hardship. The visit for participants fits an even larger narrative of migration that their families had endured. Family narratives of migration fed into the coded characteristics

of Galicians being hard workers that make sacrifices for their families evidenced in the success of these migrants who are able to afford return trips, financially support community development, and purchase property in Galicia. Participants ultimately viewed the visit as an obligation, something that Galician-Americans must do to be "real" Galicians. Visiting Galicia was essential to an identity of an imagined community embedded in place and defined by migration. Galician identity was described as something embodied, claimed only after having been there. However, it was seen as an identity that is highly mobile within the context of multiple flows back and forth. It is the prominence of the physical place, in needing to visit Galicia to be Galician, for these migrants that places the local at the center of transnational identity, a subject that has been largely approached through the "'invisible hand' of globalization" (Smith 2006, p. 241). This locality in contrast to the placelessness often used to describe transnationalism is important in understanding how nationalism is constructed for migrants but also how the local and transnational are both sustaining elements of these migrants' experiences of being Galician. This transnational identity is built in contrast to transnationalism's claim of subverting the local and in contrast to traditional ideas about unidirectional and permanent flows of migration.

In Galicia, a land often defined by emigration narratives constructed through transnationalism, should not be ignored from the wider conversation on nationalism. National identity, and the imagined national community, is multifaceted and imagined in numerous ways. Galicia, and additionally Spain, is continually imagined and reimagined by flows of migrants and migration, adding new perspectives to the ways in which nations and nationalism in Spain can be understood.

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