

Identity (Trans)formation in a Creative Industry: Ferran Adrià and the Rise of Spanish Creative Cuisine, 1983-2003¹

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Abstract

Creative fields are characterized by the ongoing coupling and de-coupling of art and business to protect creativity from business routines. In this paper, we study how identity transformation processes and creative field changes interact with the coupling and de-coupling of art and business. In particular, we argue that the interplay between identity transformation and field change generates paradoxes in the actual management of the relationship between artistic and business processes.

We describe the transformation of identity and the link to field changes in Spanish cuisine by studying the case of Ferran Adrià,² a leading creative chef in the Barcelona area acting as a maverick in the field. By describing the stages of development of Adrià as a leading chef over the last decade,

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² Ferran Adrià: “Considered the best chef on the planet. He has achieved everything: prestige, money, highest honors, the ownership of the restaurant where once upon a time he arrived as an apprentice. Yet above all, he is the author of the revolution of Spanish cuisine in the mid-1990s. The freedom of thought. The breaking of taboos. The intense quarter-of-a-century biography of this humble genius [...] coincides with the revolution of gastronomy in our country. A journey from zero to the infinite.” Rodríguez, 2002, p.42.

we outline the two following paradoxes: de-coupling creativity and business activities leads to a better coupling of creative ideas with business opportunities, and establishing routines and rigidities unleashes creativity. Grounding the theory in Ferran Adrià's story, we also derive a broad model for the interplay of identity transformation, the coupling and de-coupling of art and business, and field change.

Key words: identity transformation, creativity, field change, organizational paradox, haute cuisine.

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Introduction

This paper argues that by coupling and de-coupling art and business, identities in Spanish cuisine have been transformed. In more general terms, this study of the process of identity transformation within broader field dynamics seeks to contribute to the theoretical debate on the role of interest and agency in institutional changes.

The interplay of micro foundations of field changes and institutional dynamics at the macro level is still a primary object of debate within organizational theory. Within the New institutional approach, a clear research agenda has emerged on the study of change based on the analyses of field dynamics (Scott et al., 2000) and institutionalization processes (Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002). This research agenda is aimed at addressing the limitations of new institutionalism in explaining change (Powell, 1991; Dacin et al., 2002).

Many scholars have tried to investigate the micro foundation of field changes, providing institutional to social movement arguments (DiMaggio, 1986; Rao et al., 2003). Under these views, institutional dynamics both affect and are affected by identity transformation processes. From the first perspective, institutional dynamics shape the frames each actor is encouraged to align with in order to mobilize action and resources in the field (Snow et al., 1986). From the second, identity transformation fuels field changes by redefining the role of the actors. In order to become institutionalized, new forms and practices need both a rationality criterion and new social identities enacted by the actors at the micro level (Rao et al., 2003).

As DiMaggio (1986) argues, the institutionalization of new forms needs to be rooted in the interest of institutional actors and in their action as institutional entrepreneurs. The “institutional work” required in promoting field changes is all about the adoption of scripts, accounts, structures and processes that legitimate the new forms. In other words, in order to promote new typifications at the field level (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), structure and agency are required to

transform the existing identities.

How structure is needed to transform identities has been investigated in relation with the shaping of the institutionalization processes (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). The link between agency and transforming identities has been studied from the perspective of robust action in order to entangle interest and action (Padgett & Ansell, 1993).

The relationship between identities and typifications is very close. As role identities have meaning only in the social context that produces them (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), typifications and, in broader terms, the process of institutionalization of new forms and practices, are enacted by new identities and these, in turn, enact new courses of action. Hence, institutionalization processes do reflect interest and agency in the field.

We explore the role of interest and agency in a field's transformation in the context of creative industries. Creative or cultural industries are those that provide goods with "an aesthetic or expressive rather than clearly utilitarian function" (Hirsch, 1972, 642) and have an extraordinary impact on consumers' values, attitudes and life styles (Lampel, Lant & Shamsie, 2000). Creative professionals are characterized as active agents who seek to express their inner vision in their works of art and see that these works reach the audience (White & White, 1965; Becker, 1982; Menger, 1999; Caves, 2000). Therefore creative professionals operating in a field could constitute a critical case to explore the relationship between identity transformation and field change.

We intend to provide a detailed account and conceptualization of a creative individual's identity transformation occurring within a field's changing landscape. We argue that successfully managed identity transformation by a creative professional is at the core of the creative field's change. Our study reveals that by resolving the coupling-decoupling paradox of art and business, actors in creative industries seek to flexibly align themselves with the frames and institutional logics of

the two different domains (art and business). In the same vein, actors put structure in the field to “protect” their identities and, in so doing, affect the process of typification in the field. The degree of protection required is determined by the degree of distinctiveness needed to support an artistic enterprise (Alvarez et al., 2005).

In order to address these issues, we describe identity transformation within Spanish cuisine by examining the case of Ferran Adrià, a leading chef of the “nueva” Spanish haute cuisine, analyzing the stages of his identity development. Identity transformation is described as embedded in the process of field change, taking into account the interplay between multiple institutional models, the role of actors and the coupling and de-coupling of business and art. From this description, we can lay the foundation for a grounded theory on the relations between identity transformation and organizational and field changes.

In our view, managing creativity implies the management of interest and agency in order to transform identities, thus affecting the institutionalization processes at the field level. In this line, the challenges and paradoxes of managing internal processes and structures reflect the micro dynamics of identity transformation. Our case is aimed at providing a detailed description of the interplay between identity transformation and field change, and the paradoxes underpinning this interplay.

Research Methodology

The perspective developed here is grounded in an in-depth, longitudinal study of a critical case (Yin, 1994): Spanish creative cuisine chef, Ferran Adrià. Adrià has not only gained international reputation as the world’s most creative chef (the only chef among the 2004 *Time* magazine 100 world’s most influential people), but has also contributed to the increasing international popularity and competitiveness of Spanish cuisine. It is a critical case of a creative individual who has shaped a singular style, discovering and remaining

true to his creative calling, and at the same time transforming his identity along with the organization of his creativity and business. The study design was inductive and open-ended as we sought to identify themes from the data (Ibarra, 1999). Several iterations between the data and the extant literature took place before these themes and their related concepts and relationships became clearer.

Data Collection

Data on the trajectory and work of Ferran Adrià, his past and current collaborators, his restaurant “El Bulli” (meaning “small bulldog” in Catalan), and the range of other creative and business initiatives in which he is or has been involved, came from a variety of sources. First, we accessed the electronic press archive of El Bulli and read through hundreds of articles and interviews in newspapers and magazines. Second, in addition to the archive we collected press clippings from the local, national, and international press. Third, we drew heavily from the personal accounts of Ferran Adrià and his partners, Juli Soler and Albert Adrià (Ferran’s sibling), as co-authors of the trilogy dedicated to the evolution of El Bulli’s cuisine (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2004; 2003; 2002), covering the periods 1983-1993, 1994-1997, and 1998-2002, totaling over 4,000 pages with accounts of creative, organizational, management, and cuisine-related aspects of their trajectory. Fourth, we watched TV programs and studied a 50-minute documentary on Ferran Adrià (Herrero & Casal, 2004), in which the chef explains his creative methods, techniques, and concepts. Furthermore, one of us attended a round table discussion on the topic of innovation in which Ferran Adrià participated, and notes taken. We also had a two-hour interview with Toni Massanés, Director of the ALICIA Foundation, an international center dedicated to the culture of cooking and gastronomic research, an initiative of Ferran Adrià with the support of the Catalan authorities and Caixa Manresa. He has known Adrià and his team for a long time and currently works closely with him on the development of the Foundation’s agenda. As an expert in the field, Massanés helped us to

understand the evolution of Spanish creative cuisine in relation to the major trends in French cuisine (both classic and nouvelle). Next, we also collected and analyzed 31 articles (627 words on average per article) written by Ferran Adrià with the help of a co-author, and published daily in August 2001 in *El País*, a major Spanish newspaper. In these articles, Ferran Adrià comments on the role of traveling as a creative method, and reveals a series of methods and techniques used by himself and his team in the generation of new ideas when visiting foreign countries. Finally, we also included the accounts of Carles Abellan, a former collaborator of Ferran Adrià, who belongs to the new generation of elite Catalan chefs, as published in his book (Abellan, 2005). Appendix 1 provides a list of the data sources which allowed us to develop a holistic understanding of the case, and provided the basis for unraveling themes and categories relevant to this study on identity transformation and field change.

We collected data mostly in English, Spanish and Catalan, with a few exceptions consisting of articles on and interviews with Ferran Adrià published in other languages (e.g. French, Italian, and Portuguese). To preserve the original meaning and context of the data as much as possible, we initially worked with the documents in their original language. Translations into English of relevant quotes and insights took place at the stage of open coding, when we had to decide on labels for the phenomena, identifying meaningful categories with specific characteristics and dimensions, and then connecting them in a coherent model.

Data Analysis

In this paper, we report insights of the data analysis and their subsequent conceptualization and analytic generalization. Data analysis was an inductive, iterative process of grounded theory development. It followed techniques and procedures suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998). We also addressed issues raised by Whetten (1989, 2002) on what constitutes a good theory. First, we

independently read through the wide range of data sources we had collected and those we continued gathering during the process of analysis, in case they offered new insights. At several points in time and until we reached agreement, we discussed our interpretation of the vast amount of information we had collected and what categories we could extract from it. The texts suggested categories at three different levels: categories related to the creative individual, categories associated with the organization of creativity and business, and categories that captured the environment as a context in which the individual and organizational behavior took place.

We sought to develop a multi-stage, multi-level model of identity transformation in a creative industry. The stages used in tracing the chef's identity evolution and the organizational changes at El Bulli followed the breakdown proposed in the trilogy of Adrià, Soler, and Adrià (2004, 2003, 2002): 1983-1993; 1994-1997; 1998-2002. The first stage was further differentiated into two periods: 1983-1986 and 1987-1993, which were considered as separate phases for the purposes of our study. The four stages exhibit differences in individual identity and the organization of creativity and business and also relate to a changing field and general environment.

After the general themes of identity transformation, coupling and decoupling of creativity and business and field change emerged, we continued with the microanalysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During this process, we mined the data for categories with specific characteristics, dimensions and relationships. General categories were developed at three levels of analysis (individual, organization, and environment). These emerged and were refined in continuous movement between data and theory. The data that was fractured and labeled in this way was then re-connected through axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to shape a description and an explanation. Finally, we also employed selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to put together and clarify our findings. We complemented the 'what' of the model (e.g., its categories) with issues such as who, when,

where, why, and how (Whetten, 1989), addressed as far as the data and extant theory allowed. We continued the analysis until the themes, conceptual categories and their relationships appeared to be sufficiently grounded empirically and theoretically.

The availability of a range of data sources allowed for the triangulation of evidence (Eisenhardt, 2002). For example, we compared the chef's accounts of his style and the organization of his creativity and business across different media and over time. Accounts were found to be consistent.

We present the results of the case study below. First, we provide a brief summary of the peculiarity of Spanish creative cuisine and, in order to reveal its distinctiveness, compare it with French classic and nouvelle cuisines. The context description is followed by a concise account of the evolution of Ferran Adrià's identity and the organizational aspects of his creativity and business.

From “Nouvelle” to “Nueva” Cuisine: The Changing Language of the International Gastronomy Field

Gastronomy has been defined as the systematic pursuit of culinary creativity and excellence (Ferguson, 1998). Initially, its target was the court and the aristocracy, though modern culinary creativity moved it to restaurants (Ferguson, 1998; Rao et al., 2003) initially with chefs as employees and, with the arrival of nouvelle cuisine, also as restaurant owners. Like any field that has undergone structuring, haute cuisine has its institutions, convention setters and guardians. Among these are the *Guide Michelin* and a wealth of professional magazines, as well as culinary and other journalists and scholars who theorize on the cuisine, events, demonstrations and prizes that provide visibility to chefs and influence their reputations. These field actors and institutions put pressure on accomplished and aspiring elite chefs to comply with conventions. These conventions were highly codified in

the French classical tradition in the writings of Escoffier and Carème, among others, when the role of the chef was to copy a recipe with mastery. French nouvelle cuisine returned the initiative to the chef and with it, the liberty not only to adopt and adapt but also to invent anew.

Haute cuisine, with its continuously updated pecking order, provides very high visibility for star performers but also very high volatility of the reputations of those at the top. In this competition for *Guide Michelin* stars and recognition and renown, “Competition among high-price restaurants in major cities has focused media interest on the culinary “signature” dishes or techniques of individual chefs who are regularly featured in restaurant reviews and celebrated in magazine and newspaper articles” (Ferguson & Zukin, 1995: 193).

The culinary discourse of gastronomic writings such as cookbooks, journalism, literary works, etc., determines the features and is responsible for the distinctive positioning of this cultural field (Ferguson, 1998). Food journalism has gone upscale, and newspapers and magazines are dedicating top talent to it (Brown, 2004). The movement is away from recipes and what is hot towards “well-reported stories with timely angles” (Brown, 2004). Quoting a newspaper managing editor, Brown (2004) reveals that “A newspaper usually reflects what the culture is doing, and I think that’s why you’re seeing so much more devotion to food journalism”. The sophistication of reporting has to do with the depth of knowledge brought by writers to their stories.

Nouvelle cuisine, which at the end of the 1960s initiated a major transformation of the nature and identity of haute cuisine (see Rao et al., 2003, for an enlightening account of Nouvelle cuisine as an identity movement) thereby liberating the chef’s creativity from Escoffier’s conventions, has become an establishment. By the end of the 1990s, however, the centuries-long hegemony of France as the epicenter of international haute cuisine was being challenged by other creative cuisines.

According to critics, among these alternatives to French hegemony was the new Spanish cuisine which began to flourish in the late 1970s. This cuisine emerged under the influence of Nouvelle cuisine and with the end of the dictatorship in Spain and the subsequent creative renewal and economic advancement of the country. A New York Times article (Lubow, 2003) announced the arrival of “The Nueva Nouvelle Cuisine” (“nueva” being the Spanish word for the French “nouvelle” and the English “new”), initiating a wide media debate with its explanation of “How Spain Became the New France”. Articles in the international press followed suit, questioning the French superpowers in cuisine and noting the surprising rise of Spanish creative cuisine. Spanish critics argued that this rise was the result of an evolutionary process taking place over the last quarter of a century (Rodríguez, 2002).

To understand this evolution, certain political, economic and social trends in Spain are worth noting. Like France in 1968, Spain in 1975 underwent important political changes. The dictatorship came to an end and a liberation movement was initiated across many different sectors, including haute cuisine. In 1976 Paul Bocuse, an emblematic figure of French Nouvelle cuisine, in a talk to a selected group of chefs gathered in Madrid, inspired Juan Mari Arzak and other Basque chefs to plant the seeds of what would soon become known as new Basque cuisine. Ten years later, another renowned French chef, Jacques Maximin, pronounced a phrase that has been acknowledged as responsible for Ferran Adrià’s realization of the importance of creativity, eventually triggering the emergence of Catalonia as the other epicenter of the “nueva” Spanish haute cuisine. Finally, according to critics and academics, Spanish haute cuisine is currently in its third generation of elite chefs. “25 years ago, Spanish haute cuisine didn’t exist. These days it is considered to be the most avant-garde, creative and innovative in the whole world. A culinary revolution that was started in the Basque Country and refined in Catalonia, and which presently comprises the best and most extensive generation of chefs our country has ever produced. Educated,

intelligent and hedonists: they strive to be themselves” (Rodríguez, 2002, p. 41). With Spain’s economic prosperity, households’ disposable income increased and with it, the role of a meal changed from fulfillment of a necessity to a social activity for entertainment and pleasure. These conditions of political freedom, economic prosperity and social change shaped a context propitious to the rise of the new Spanish creative cuisine.

Table 1 compares the French *ancien régime*, classic and nouvelle cuisines with the new Spanish creative cuisine. The comparison is performed along six essential dimensions, which capture individual, organizational and field aspects of the regime. These dimensions are: the role of the chef, the service and the role the service plays, the meals and their consumption, the type of inventories and ingredients, the art form – which has been used metaphorically to define the regime - and finally, the major external shocks in the context.

Table 1
The evolution of identity and organization in haute cuisine:
A comparison of four regimes

Culinary Regime Dimension	<i>Ancien régime</i> (French)	Classical cuisine (French)	Nouvelle cuisine (French)	“Nueva” cuisine (Spanish)
Role of the chef	Artist, owned by patrons or nobles	Master of the codified grammar of culinary practice; lacks technical autonomy; Freedom to establish own restaurant	Innovator, Creator, Autonomous in business and technical terms	Scientist, Creator, Theorist Autonomous
Service/role	The court and the Parisian aristocracy (elite)/ Rituals outside the plate	Restaurant (elite)/ Rituals outside the plate	Restaurant (elite)/ Serving through the plate	Restaurant Home (elite/masses)/ Service as didactic activity; humor, irony
Meals/Consumption process	Public Encounters/Long	Intimate encounters/Long	Intimate encounters/Short	Intimate encounters/Long
Inventories/ingredients	Huge inventories/little freshness	Huge inventories/little freshness	No inventories/fresh ingredients	Some inventories/fresh ingredients
Related art form	Spectacle	Architecture	Painting	Real-time TV/Fashion show
Context/external shocks		French revolution	May 1968, Paris	1975, end of dictatorship in Spain

Identity Transformation in a Creative Industry: The Case of Ferran Adrià and the Rise of Spanish Creative Cuisine, 1983-2003

Ferran Adrià is the emblematic chef of the three-star Michelin restaurant El Bulli, near Roses, Girona. Table 2 provides a chronological account of key milestones in the evolution of Ferran Adrià and El Bulli.

Table 2
Timeline of critical events in the development of Ferran Adrià's creativity

- 1981 Juli Soler begins to occupy the position of manager; two years later, two Michelin stars are awarded and El Bulli becomes a well-regarded restaurant.
- 1983 In August, Ferran Adrià enters as visiting chef, but only for a month because this period coincides with his military service. He is offered a job as a *chef de partie* for the next season, and he accepts.
- 1984 In October, Ferran Adrià becomes the chef, along with Christian Lutaud. This same year, he and Juli Soler (the restaurant manager during this period) decide to create and develop a catering service differing from known standards and with one objective alone: passion and respect for food that, above all, would be aimed at fulfilling customers' desires, even though they might be breaking with tradition.
- 1986 Ferran Adrià works alone as chef.
- 1987-1989 In this period, Juli and Ferran devote themselves to developing an authentically personalized method of cooking by attempting to seek gastronomic purity, after coming to the conclusion that El Bulli makes up an important part of their lives and is not just a job. They begin to renew the dishes from the viewpoint of modernizing the cooking tradition nearest to them: in other words, Catalan and Spanish cuisine.
- 1990 They take on the running of the restaurant as a business. They begin investments by restoring the terrace, creating a car park and fitting out the dining room. This year, they recover the second Michelin star.
- 1992-1993 They build a totally new kitchen. This means having the facilities they have always dreamt of. Now they can develop the kind of cooking that they really want to do. This is the point of departure for their dream of having a great restaurant. In 1993, the book *El sabor del Mediterráneo* is published with a print run of 12,000.
- 1994 They begin to develop evolutionary cuisine, in which ideas and techniques acquire more importance.
- 1995 They set up in Barcelona a catering company (elBullicatering) under the direction of Eduard Roigé. The quality and prestige of banquets increase year after year to reach levels seldom reached before.
- 1997 The elBullitaller project begins to simmer at elBullicatering. The basic function of elBullitaller is the creation and search of new concepts, techniques and recipes so that each new season in Cala Montjoi, El Bulli can offer its devotees the sensitivity, the enthusiasm and the sensations that they deserve. From this moment on, this is the place from which all the collaborative projects with a variety of companies, restaurants and hotels spring forth, thanks to the help of the staff, with Albert Adrià and Oriol Castro taking the lead.
From this year on, Ferran Adrià begins to develop his work as an advisor to major quality brands. He works with enthusiasm and tenacity in his efforts to break with tradition. He undertakes each new collaborative project energetically, and his ideas, combined with the images of the best companies, are always surprising. This work was carried out with the former chefs of El Bulli: Marc Cuspinera, Eduard Bosch and Marc Puig-Pey.
The collaboration with Chocovic begins.
The publication of the book *Los secretos de El Bulli* with a print run of 60,000.
- 1998 The collaboration with the Casino Gran Círculo in Madrid begins by creating personalized cuisine that is adapted to the atmosphere of La Terraza restaurant. The Casino Gran Círculo de Madrid is the best elBullicatering venue in the capital. In addition to offering external catering, the banquets in its sumptuous dining rooms and in the restaurant on the terrace are clear exponents of all of

- Ferran Adrià's creations.
 El Bulli obtains its third Michelin star.
 Monthly collaboration in *Woman* magazine.
 Publication of the books *50 nuevas tapas*, *70 nuevos platos ligeros para el verano* for *Woman* magazine, *Los postres de El Bulli* by Albert Adrià (print run, 12,000) and *Cocinar en 10 minutos* (print run, 25,000).
- 1999 Collaboration with Olis Borges to do research on oils and nuts, initially resulting in 10 natural aromatic oils.
 The collaboration with hotel Hacienda Benazuza begins.
 The publication of the book *Celebrar el milenio con Arzak y Adrià* (print run, 30,000).
- 2000 The dream comes true: elBullitaller moves to Portaferriosa, 7: a space to develop everything that has to do with creativity.
 Work with Juan Mari Arzak, Pedro Subijana and Karlos Argiñano to select and create recipes for Kaiku Gran Cocina for their quality packaged products. Premises are opened in Madrid for elBullicatering.
 Collaboration with Catalunya Ràdio begins.
- 2001 NH Hotels. Ferran Adrià and Juli Soler direct an ambitious research and development project with the chain of NH hotels, aimed at creating and establishing new concepts on their premises in the mid and long term.
 Collaboration with Caprabo in the development of new products, new ideas for supermarkets, the future of shopping, and cooking at home.
 Collaboration in the design of an Ola dinner service with Gemma Bernal and Cerámicas Mongatina (CIM) and new pieces on a yearly basis.
- 2002 El Bullihotel is created. This is a small chain of hotels whose geographic location, service and food make each of them unique. The Hacienda Benazuza in Seville is the first clear exponent of this philosophy.
- Collaboration with Lavazza for the study and development of new products related to coffee.
 - A trilogy of books is being planned that will take a look at the last 20 years of El Bulli cooking: *El Bulli 1983-1993*, *El Bulli 1994-1997* and *El Bulli 1998-2001*.
 - "10-minute Cooking", a TV program is filmed that will show how to prepare dishes on a daily basis in the least possible time (10 minutes in real time) and in a simple and enjoyable way. Ferran's purpose is to help people cook at home.

Critics have affirmed that this “chef from Spain is challenging the establishment” (Matthews, 2004). An article in the *Financial Times* claimed that “Spanish artist-chef Ferran Adrià has spearheaded a renaissance in his country’s haute cuisine. There is a theory behind his pioneering gastronomy” (Aspden, 2004). Hence, he is considered a motor for the field’s transformation. For his contribution to revolutionizing the culinary field not only in Spain but also internationally, he was selected by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world in 2004. He is a critical case of a creative individual who, having started at the periphery of the gastronomic field and being self-taught, has been able to define and

diffuse his own identity and style, and to achieve recognition and renown, both in Spain and internationally.

He is considered a ‘pioneer’ in the true sense of the word: He has brought all the latest artistic trends of the 20th century to the art of cooking (Massanés, in de la Serna, 2004). Many art-related metaphors have been used to describe his role and influence in the field of gastronomy, such as comparisons with Picasso and Dalí (Kotkin, 2002; Oppenheim, 2003; de la Serna, 2004). Parallels have been drawn between his work and the performing arts: “A 30-odd-course tasting menu at Adrià’s restaurant, El Bulli [...] is closer to interactive performance art than to anything most of us know as dinner” (Bremzen, 2005: 101). Others have compared the experience at his restaurant with a show: “The greatest show on earth: The extravagantly theatrical, witty creations of Ferran Adrià have taken the art of cooking to new heights at the Spanish restaurant El Bulli” (Jacobs, 2004). In an interview, the chef himself described what happens at his restaurant as real-time TV: “What we do here is real-time TV, and discipline, concentration and nerves are necessary so that everything comes out right” (Adrià, in Villalobos Bregasa, 2004: 32).

In the accounts of Ferran Adrià himself, what makes him distinctive is his approach: “Nouvelle cuisine was creative. My approach is to investigate. It’s not the same. This takes a team, equipment, money, time. We have one rule here: It has to be new. It may be good, but if we’ve done it before, it doesn’t matter” (Ferran Adrià, in Matthews, 2004: 42). The *2005 Guide Michelin* describes El Bulli as a ‘Gastronomic Mecca’, remarking on the “High level of professionalism, qualified staff and cuisine overflowing with imagination”.

When analyzing Ferran Adrià’s trajectory, we followed the stages identified and defined by him and his closest collaborators, as we believe such a breakdown best captures the identity transformation

and organizational change as experienced by El Bulli's team. We then examined elements of the evolution at the individual, organizational, and field levels, which provided a multi-stage, multi-level view, sensitive to both continuity and change in identity and organization.

Below we examine identity transformation and organizational change in four stages: 1983-1986; 1987-1993; 1994-1997; 1998-2003. Table 3 provides a summary of this multi-level, multi-stage account.

Table 3
Ferran Adrià: Identity Transformation, Organizational, and Field Changes

Stages	1983-1986	1987-1993	1994-1997	1998-2003
IDENTITY TRANSFORMATION				
Occupation	Learning the professional field's conventions Visiting chef/Co-chef (Apprentice)	Quest for identity in the local heritage Professional chef (Professional)	Revolt against the conventions Cuisine as vocation (Maverick)	Diffusion, Recognition and Renown Cuisine: service to society (Master)
Style (Principal creative method)	French classical and nouvelle cuisine (Copying)	Mediterranean Cuisine (Adaptation)	Personal Cuisine (Experimentation)	Personal Cuisine (Definition - Diffusion)
Influence	none (enters haute cuisine at the periphery)	minor (legitimate player who respects the conventions and gains acceptance in the field)	major (recognition by peers and by the field's gatekeepers)	greatest (renown - beyond peer group and local field)
CHANGE IN ORGANIZING CREATIVITY AND BUSINESS				
Organizing the business(es)	Restaurant El Bulli (employee, not owner) Consulting projects for restaurants and hotels on an ad-hoc basis	Restaurant (co-owner with Juli Soler since 1990) Consulting projects for restaurants and hotels on an ad-hoc basis	Restaurant (co-owner), open only 6 months a year Founding a catering business in Barcelona	A series of businesses: Restaurant (co-owner), open only 6 months a year, for dinner only elBullicatering (Barcelona and Madrid) – the catering business elBullicarmen – dedicated to consulting projects for big clients elBullihotel

				elBullimedia “Royalties” for expertise/development and leverage of the brand
Organizing the creativity	Sporadic visits to and internships in the restaurants of elite French chefs	1991-1992 – for the first time, temporarily dedicating time for creativity – at the workshop of a Catalan sculptor	Inventing and experimenting with new techniques and methods Temporarily dedicating creative time and space: workshop at the Talaia restaurant Since 1997 incubating a creativity workshop at the premises of the catering business	Identifying, defining and diffusing concepts and techniques Founding a Creativity Workshop in 2000 (a laboratory for new ideas), with dedicated space, time, team, and resources ALICIA Foundation (R&D and social work in food and gastronomy)
Core team	Part of a hired team, managed by Juli Soler Working as co-chef (sharing responsibilities)	Own team with brother Albert Adrià, co-owner Juli Soler, and trusted others (“family”)	Enlarging and professionalizing the team	A team dedicated to creativity Various teams coordinating the businesses Executive constellation: a permanent team that brings business and creativity together
FIELD CHANGE				
Context	Dominance of French Nouvelle cuisine (1 st wave) Rise of new Basque cuisine; Juan Mari Arzak at the forefront	(2 nd wave) Rise of new Catalan cuisine; Ferran Adrià at the forefront	3 Spanish restaurants are recognized by the <i>Guide Michelin</i> as three-star restaurants	Dominance of French cuisine challenged by Spanish creative cuisine (3 rd wave) A new generation of Spanish chefs

(1983-1986) Apprentice: Learning the Gastronomy Field's Conventions

Ferran Adrià joined El Bulli in 1983, first as visiting chef, and then as co-chef in 1984. He was hired by Juli Soler, manager of the restaurant since 1981 in representation of the owners, a German couple. Until then, the menu of the restaurant's chef, Jean-Paul Vinay, had been described as "nouvelle". El Bulli had already become known for its haute cuisine, manifested in the star given to it by the *Guide Michelin* and the influx of international tourists as clients.

This initial stage of Adrià's trajectory was dedicated to the study and processing of the gastronomic tradition with a special emphasis on French Nouvelle cuisine as the tradition he inherited from his predecessor at El Bulli. In the words of Ferran Adrià, Juli Soler and Albert Adrià, "we passionately committed ourselves to this 'expropriation' of culinary heritage" (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2003: 45). Getting to know what already existed was considered "the only way to propose something new" (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2003: 45).

In 1985, Albert Adrià, Ferran's brother, joined the team at El Bulli. The two siblings and the rest of the team started traveling to France and visiting elite French restaurants, taking internships with renowned French chefs, buying cookbooks and gathering recipes and ideas. In 1986 during such a visit to France, Ferran Adrià had the opportunity to meet and listen to renowned chef, Jacques Maximin, who explained that 'creativity means not copying', a phrase that would have a profound impact on Ferran Adrià and which has had a lasting influence on the trajectory of the chef and his restaurant. Inspired by Maximin's comment, Ferran Adrià initiated his quest for creativity and personal style. In this quest he first returned to the roots of his local heritage.

(1987-1993) Professional: Quest for Identity in the Local Heritage

This period, defined by the chef as “Mediterranization”, is characterized by the return to his roots and the exploration of Catalan and Spanish cuisine. As El Bulli’s team explains, at this phase they “stop being French”. Despite their attempts to break with French cuisine, however, they continued to combine some novel, daring ideas with traditional dishes in the menu. Old and new coexisted to maintain legitimacy in the field until a new identity was established.

The purposeful development of a personal cuisine by Ferran Adrià began in 1987 when he took control of the kitchen, becoming the sole chef at El Bulli. In 1990, together with Juli Soler, he took over the business, convincing the restaurant owners to sell them the restaurant. As the new owners of the restaurant, Soler and Adrià combined the creative and the business side under the same roof. They started investing in infrastructure and a new, expanded kitchen which would become the center of the chef’s creativity in the next stage of his trajectory.

As a first attempt to distance business from creativity, Ferran Adrià spent the winter of 1991-1992 in the workshop of Catalan sculptor Xavier Medina Campeny, separating in time and space the creation of new ideas from his activities at the restaurant. At the workshop, sculptor and chef had conversations on art and creativity, and new ideas were born to be used in the following year’s menu at El Bulli.

At this stage they also received recognition from the field. After a 1992 visit to the restaurant, the French celebrity chef, Joel Robuchon, shared with the media his impressions of the exceptional inventiveness of Adrià. His opinion, which received a lot of publicity, attracted critics and gastronomy-driven customers to El Bulli. In 1993, Ferran Adrià and Juli Soler published the book, *El Bulli: el sabor del Mediterráneo* (El Bulli: The Flavor of the Mediterranean), their first attempt to reflect upon and conceptualize the emerging identity of

Adrià and El Bulli. The book marks the end of the period of professionalization and the beginning of the following stage which broke away from both conventions and heritage, paving the way for the (trans)formation of Adrià's and El Bulli's distinctive identity.

(1994-1997) Maverick: Revolt against the Conventions

Equipped with improved infrastructure and new kitchen facilities, the team at El Bulli embarked on the invention of their own, idiosyncratic style. What had been learned in the two previous stages - the French nouvelle cuisine conventions and the Mediterranean culinary heritage - was now "archived" in the organizational memory. At this stage creative experiments and explorations started taking place anew. The team's discoveries included creative methods, such as deconstruction and minimalism. According to Adrià, at this stage "[we] began to integrate humor and irony into our dishes. It was a time of provocation, and professionals in the industry began to take sides, indignant reactions on one side and fervent support on the other" (Matthews, 2004, p. 41). The team sought to open up its conception of creativity and create novel concepts and techniques. Since 1994, the technical-conceptual creativity with which they experimented "mark[ed] one of the most important differences between a simply creative cuisine and a cuisine that is evolving" (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2004: 111). They continued their reflection on the forming of the style of El Bulli, and their awareness of what this style was about: "In 1996 we [...] knew [...] that creativity, surprise and innovation were going to be the motors of El Bulli" (Adrià, Soler, and Adrià, 2003, p. 271).

At this stage both the identity and the organization of creativity and business underwent a transformation. It was when the chef and his team felt the necessity to professionalize the creative process: "We raised a hurdle to ourselves, which required a commitment to creativity on a daily basis, as there was a clear purpose to bring new concepts and techniques to life" (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2003: 7). At

this stage, another important decision marked a step towards further creative freedom: the abandonment of ‘à la carte’ dishes and their replacement by a *menú degustació* (tasting menu). It meant the freedom “not to be subjects to any dogma, not to give in to fads, not to make a decision before we have considered it in depth and allowed us to cook what we felt like and what we thought our clients sought” (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2003: 271).

As Carles Abellán, a former member of the chef’s core team explains, Ferran Adrià “made me question everything, rethink everything... There was one requirement: the interest to comprehend the “why” of everything. It was about a very tight collaboration and evolution, which the entire team lived in a profound way. It was like an open colloquium... It was a privilege to be there. We used to spend 24 hours a day together” (Abellán, in Moret, 2005: 33-34).

The idea of having a dedicated space and time for creativity developed further when they began consulting for a new restaurant in Barcelona, Talaia. During the design and operation of Talaia, Adrià and his team used the restaurant’s facilities to experiment with ideas. In 1997, the nascent initiative of a creative workshop was incubated in the Barcelona Aquarium, at the premises of elBullicatering, an organization that Adrià and his team created to serve the catering market. For the first time, there were two professionals responsible for coming up with new ideas: Ferran Adrià’s brother, Albert, and Oriol Castro, who Albert defines as his alter ego and a symbiotic complement.

At the end of this period, El Bulli received its third star from the *Guide Michelin*, a recognition that placed Ferran Adrià and his team at the top of the culinary world and which came as an acknowledgement that his deviant style was accepted by the field. However, “In order to be at the top you need to have the best team; what distinguishes us from the rest is that we are one big family, and we have the best team possible” (Adrià, in Oppenheim, 2003: 31). This family has a core,

which consists of the owners of El Bulli, Ferran Adrià and Juli Soler, and the pair at the heart of the creativity workshop, Albert Adrià and Oriol Castro. Ferran Adrià describes Juli Soler, his business partner, as 50% of El Bulli, in all senses. He explains that “Juli takes care of the money side of things. I concentrate on my hobby which is coming up with dishes” (Villalobos Bregasa, 2004, p. 32). As to the brothers Ferran and Albert, their creative relationship is described as “perfect symbiosis”. In the words of Albert Adrià, “Ferran and I have a great creative relationship, expressed in the connection and harmony that are produced between his creations and mine. This results in a sense of continuity during the meal” (Albert Adrià, in Wright, 2001: 46). Such is also the bond that unites Albert Adrià and Oriol Castro, who share the reins of El Bulli’s Creativity Workshop.

(1998-2003) Master: Diffusion, Recognition, and Renown

At this stage, Adrià completed the transformation of his identity and embarked on its diffusion locally and internationally, beyond the elite clientele of haute cuisine to also encompass the mass market. Organizationally, this stage was characterized by a further de-coupling of the creative and business activities of Adrià and his team, followed by a number of couplings at the restaurant and in different businesses and consulting projects. In addition, cosmos and chaos co-existed and creativity went hand in hand with systematic methods, procedures and practices.

The three-star El Bulli is described as “pure folly, creative passion” (Fancelli, 1999, p. 24). However, this creative passion is strictly combined with order: “Aside from being the haute cuisine temple of the day, El Bulli is a model of discipline and order. For only 6 months a year, 32 chefs and more than 20 assistants take on the challenge of providing 55 people every day with the latest inventions from this brilliant alchemist” (Villalobos Bregaza, 2004, p. 30). At this stage, it became more and more difficult to combine continuous creativity with

the absorbing obligations of the business. Commenting on how the idea of having a Creativity Workshop came about, Ferran Adrià explains that “This project arose the day I realized how difficult it was to combine constant creativity with very little time and all the obligations and responsibilities involved in running a restaurant” (Adrià, in Oppenheim, 2003: 29). In 2000, the Creativity Workshop, which since 1997 had been incubated at the premises of elBullicatering in Barcelona’s Aquarium, moved to permanent premises near the Boqueria market in Barcelona. Headed by Albert Adrià, it became a laboratory for systematic experimentation and documentation of new ideas.

The Creativity Workshop is not only separated in space from the main business, the restaurant El Bulli. Its activities are also differentiated in time from the restaurant production: “For six months a year, Adrià closes his restaurant and, along with his brother, Albert, El Bulli’s pastry chef, Pere Castells, a chemist, Luki Huber, an industrial designer, and Oriol Castro, El Bulli’s chef de cuisine, he plays with food, scrupulously documenting every permutation. And the questions – some of which are clearly threatening, even heretical to the gastronomic status quo – never stop: What is a meal? What is a dinner? What is a chef?” (Bourdain, 2003: 82)

Asked about a typical day at the Creativity Workshop, Albert Adrià explains: “Every day’s work is planned out ahead of time, usually always the night before. We go to the market first thing in the morning and buy the produce that we have decided on the night before, depending on what we’re working on. Back at the workshop, we start off with different tests. At four o’clock, the three of us get together (Ferran Adrià, Oriol Castro and Albert Adrià) and we assess what we’ve done, bringing together all the ideas and sensations that have come up throughout the day. And that’s what we do for 6 months of the year; any longer and we’d all go crazy” (Albert Adrià, in Vicente, 2003).

Dedicating space, time, team, and resources to creativity through the Workshop was important for sustaining high levels of experimentation and invention. Similar to research and development activities, from approximately 5,000 experiments that take place in the workshop, the team creates about 500 dishes, of which 25-50 go into the following year's menu. However, these innovations reach not only the restaurant, but also the range of applications and consulting projects for companies and organizations that have sought Ferran Adrià and his team's advice on how to become more creative and innovative or attract younger segments of the market (e.g., the hotel chain NH Hotels, Borges, the Spanish company that elaborates and commercializes a wide range of edible oils and that teamed up with Ferran to research novel flavors for olive oils, or Lavazza, the Italian coffee company).

At this stage, not only the creative activities were organized separately in a dedicated space with a devoted team. The various businesses were also organized in a range of different organizations: from elBullicatering (which extended operations from Barcelona to Madrid), elBullihotel (focusing on the hotel business), and elBullicarmen (in charge of the different consulting projects). Thus the workshop centered on creativity, the restaurant on blending creativity and business, and the catering, hotel and consulting organizations on channeling creative ideas into business initiatives and projects that would generate the resources necessary to further nourish the creativity and support the resource-intensive restaurant.

It is a requirement of the chef that all businesses in which he and his team engage in should have a creative element. In the words of Ferran Adrià, "With the reasonable prices we charge (menus priced at 120 euros), which don't exist at this level anywhere else in Europe, we simply couldn't make ends meet. I could set up a separate factory-style catering outfit, but I'm not interested in opening up businesses if there's nothing creative involved" (Adrià, in Ivorra, 2002: 120). A recent article compares the range of business initiatives undertaken

by Ferran Adrià and his team with a ‘creative island’: “Ferran has made his money through other means and with dignity. He lent his image to the Lavazza brand of coffee, with a world-wide launch and then just over a year ago, oils. And he is soon to launch the first Nhube, a space that combines restaurant, relaxation and leisure facilities for the NH Hotels chain [...] he launched elBullihotel, a luxury hotel concept, with only 45 rooms and an international level of gastronomy. But it’s more than that. It’s a kind of creative island, where things happen, courses, events or performances, first rate conference speakers [...]” (Ivorra, 2002: 120).

Commenting on the gradual introduction and diffusion of creative ideas born in the Workshop across projects and businesses, Adrià admits: “Creating is not something mystical, an enlightenment that comes to you from above. It’s simply a job. A job that’s something like industrial design, although much more fragile: coming up with a great idea’s not enough; you’ve got to put that idea into practice every day. Catering’s more like this type of design. I run a catering business in which I’m gradually introducing the things I’ve discovered at El Bulli. I call it *prêt-à-manger*. I couldn’t use that name for the business since it had already been registered in London, but the concept is perfect: culinary collections for autumn-winter and spring-summer” (Adrià, in Fancelli, 1999: 22).

With the professional recognition and wider renown based on a series of initiatives directed at the mass market and broad audiences, Ferran Adrià has developed and leveraged a very strong brand: “[...] for the past few years of practically rabid press interest, the chef has got involved with, and lent his name to, a host of projects that are separate from his restaurant. There is no doubt about it; the Adrià name has become a marketable commodity. So how does he reconcile the creative aspect of his work with the commercial?” (Simon, 2004: 12). Adrià has been able to reconcile the creative and commercial aspects of his work through the capitalization of a paradox: on the one hand, he maintains creativity and business organizationally separate, which

allows him and his team to be focused on each of these activities with dedication and excellence; on the other hand, he tightly connects the novel ideas born in the creative organization with commercial acumen, cascading the discoveries of his creative lab along the range of businesses.

Paradoxes of Creativity

From the analysis and description of the four stages which we discussed in the previous section, in our conceptual work on the case we identified two paradoxes essential to understanding Ferran Adrià's identity (trans)formation: (1) De-coupling of creativity and business for better coupling of creative ideas with business opportunities, and (2) unleashing creativity by establishing routines and rigidities. They are briefly described below.

Paradox 1: De-coupling Creativity and Business Activities for Better Coupling of Creative Ideas with Business Opportunities

Along with the evolution of Ferran Adrià's identity, there is a parallel organizational development that makes this identity transformation possible and sustainable. It has to do with the organization of creative and business activities. In the first stage of Adrià's trajectory at El Bulli, these activities are un-coupled: there are owners who deal with the business side through the manager they have appointed, Juli Soler, and there are two co-chefs who together shape the creative side of cooking. During the second stage, what we observe is a progressive coupling of creative and business activities. Soler and Adrià become joint owners of the restaurant and start introducing changes (e.g., a very large kitchen), which allow more room for creativity in the business. While the coupling of creativity and business is increased through the ownership of the restaurant, at the same time the germ of de-coupling is introduced when Ferran Adrià spends the winter of 1991-1992 at a sculptor's workshop, separating in time and space (for

the first time in his trajectory), the creative activity from the business. Over time, this initially informal divide is deepened and formalized: first, with the establishment of a creativity workshop in separate premises near the restaurant; then in another restaurant in Barcelona which they have been asked to help develop; followed by their catering business, for the first time with a dedicated team of two professionals; and, finally, in their own premises in Barcelona, spatially separated from the restaurant, with a larger dedicated team and a dedicated time period (during the six months in which the restaurant remains closed). In this gradual spatial and temporal de-coupling, Adrià and his team are able to alternate their main focus between creativity and business while at the same time seek continuous coupling of ideas born in the creativity workshop with opportunities that have been identified in the restaurant, hotel, catering, and consulting businesses. Thus, paradoxically, the de-coupling of creativity and business eventually serves for a better coupling of creative ideas with business opportunities.

Finally, this de-coupling/coupling paradox of creativity and business is expected to reach an even stronger expression in a new initiative, commenced in 2004, with the ambition, intentions and resources to have an impact not only on gastronomy and business, but also on society. It is the ALICIA Foundation, to which Adrià is advisor and which is sponsored by the Catalan authorities and the bank, Caixa Manresa. The Foundation will soon have spacious premises available for research and development in the area of cuisine. It seeks diffusion not only among chefs but also among households and society at large, as it also involves training programs and social initiatives.

Paradoxically, an outcome of the coupling and de-coupling of art and business is the possibility for better business exploitation of idiosyncratic artistic ideas. This has increasingly allowed the chef to reach out from the classroom to the mass market. According to Ferran Adrià “[...] the real revolution in terms of new cuisine is that chefs now venture out onto the streets” (Cartán, 2004, p. 40). He continues,

“we used to be on a more elitist wavelength. Now what we are doing is culinary prêt-a-porter. We’ve broken the taboo that what we are doing in El Bulli, no-one else can do.” (Adrià, in Cartán, 2004: 40). In this sense, Adrià can be considered responsible not only for revolutionizing Spanish creative cuisine. He is the trigger for yet another culinary revolution: placing haute cuisine within the reach of the masses. As Adrià explains, “The revolutionary concept lies in the fact that top-ranking chefs have gotten together to help people eat more healthily and this, on an economic level, is also important” (Villalobos Bregaza, 2004, p.31). Adrià has succeeded in diffusing this massification of haute cuisine. As a journalist concludes, “I used to view his difficult-to-replicate cuisine as essentially a diversion for an elite; but I am beginning to see Adrià as a culinary prophet, changing the vocabulary of cooking, opening up a new world of sensations, and – by showing that the humblest of ingredients are as worthy of respect as caviar, truffles and the like – putting the experience of luxury eating within everyone’s grasp” (Jacobs, 2004).

Paradox 2: Unleashing Creativity by Establishing Routines and Rigidities

Another paradox in Ferran Adrià’s work is how creativity is freed by the introduction of routines and rigidities in the process, such as systematic experimentation and discussion of new ideas, as well as strict documentation of their content and their development. This is different from what Balazs (2001) defines as a common characteristic of the French elite chefs - the paradox of innovation of the dishes and the rigid formalization and standardization of the preparation process. In the case of Ferran Adrià, in addition to the formalization of the preparation process, there is a formalization taking place at the stage of development of new ideas. Several methods, such as list generation, traveling notes and documented experiments, among others, are used to standardize the creation of new dishes.

A revealing account of this formalization of creativity is available in

the 31 essays of Ferran Adrià published in the Spanish national newspaper *El País* in August, 2001, which detail the process of identifying, drawing up and codifying new ideas in the working trips to Australia, Japan, USA, Thailand, etc., undertaken by the chef and his closest creative and business partners (Planellas, 2002). During these trips the team members become professional “idea hunters”, following a series of well-established practices and symbolic rituals which allow them to gather, discuss, describe and synthesize their experiences and occurrences.

Another method for creativity is list generation. As Adrià explains, “What I do - and it’s something that’s useful - is type a series of lists into the computer: base ingredients, garnishes, cooking methods, temperatures, textures, vinaigrettes, aromatic herbs and spices, flavors ranging from sweet to sour, etc. Then I combine these variables because they help me to think and, above all, to discover that these really aren’t immovable categories” (Adrià, in Fancelli, 1999, p. 24). Another essential method for formalizing and standardizing creativity is the continuous sense-making of what they do at the workshop and at El Bulli, and its theorizing through the development of concepts, techniques, and methods, which constitute a universal code easier to transfer across geographical boundaries and professional fields than ingredients and recipes. According to Albert Adrià, “Creativity could be measured in a pyramidal way, where technique and concept are positioned at the highest level” (Vicente, 2003). In general, activities such as reflecting, teaching, and theorizing are characteristic of Ferran Adrià and his team. The published books, DVDs and public demonstrations become the vehicles for diffusion not only of the idiosyncratic style of the Catalan chef but also of the conventions that govern his unique cuisine. The trilogy on the evolution of El Bulli, co-authored by his business partner, Juli Soler, and his brother and creative partner, Albert Adrià (Adrià, Soler & Adrià, 2004; 2003; 2002), is an attempt to theorize not only on the gastronomic aspects of his cooking between 1983-2002, but also its organizational and value-related dimensions.

In this sense, activities that have to do with the description, definition, and diffusion of the new identity and logic allow identity and organizational changes to settle in and enhance their acceptance. The media for their description and diffusion are books, courses, and demonstrations that allow conceptualizing the evolution. Concepts provide the highest order diffusion of ideas due to their universal character. Creative individuals actively manage the reception of new cultural objects through signaling or rhetorical strategies (Jones, 2002; Bielby & Bielby, 1994; Czarniawska, 1997).

The Model: Identity Transformation, Organizational and Field Change

On the basis of the in-depth case study, we have developed a preliminary conceptual model which is detailed in Figure 1. In this model, identity transformation triggers and is sustained by a change in the field, as well as in the organization of business and creativity.

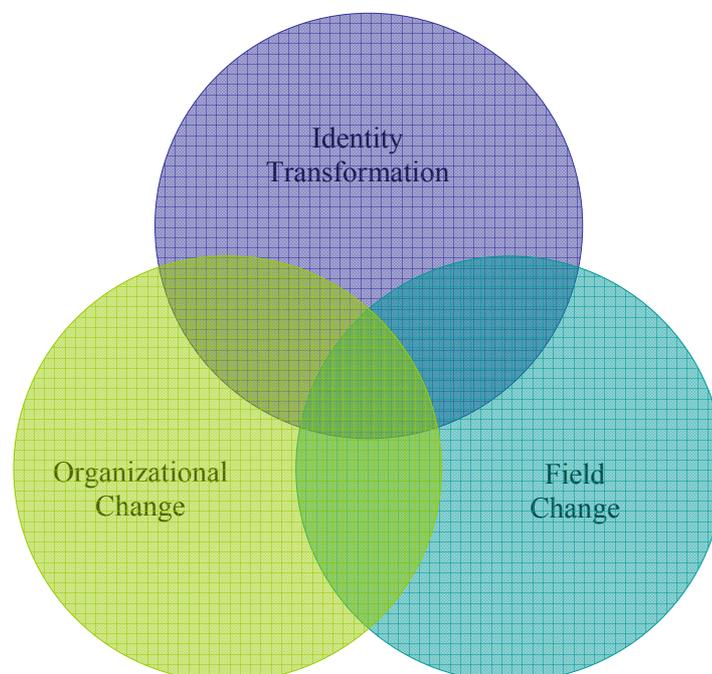


Figure 1
Alignment between identity transformation, organizational and field changes in creative industries

Identity Transformation. Identity change has been studied by various organizational scholars (e.g., Gioia et al., 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Corley & Gioia, 2004). In this study we borrowed the concept of “identity transformation” from Fiol (2002) because, in her definition, the emphasis is on the intentional identity changes which agents are consciously attempting to implement. The stages of identity transformation we observed in this case are the mastering of conventions and heritage, the subsequent breaking away from them, and the establishment, diffusion, and recognition of a distinctive identity. In this process, the individual role changes from apprentice to professional to maverick and, finally, master. Members of professions value individual autonomy, as revealed by the study of the revolt of elite French chefs against the constraints of classical cuisine (Rao et al., 2003). In the quest for autonomy “[...] insiders with expertise can attack existing logics and social identities because these inhibit autonomy, creativity, and freedom, and they can proffer new logics and identities on the grounds that these expand individual autonomy and, by implication, enlarge professional control” (Rao et al., 2003: 805). Finally, if identity transformation has been successful, the creative individual achieves reputation, which – as do Lang and Lang (1988) – we distinguish between recognition by peers and the broader and more universal notion of renown.

Organizational Change in the Coupling of Creativity and Business. Parallel to identity (trans)formation, there is an organizational transformation that provides an adequate context for identity development and, at the same time, allows for further changes in the identity. The quest for independence is associated with a loosening of the coupling of the creative and business domains over time, in which they remain responsive (e.g., creative ideas are cascaded along business opportunities; resources obtained from business activities are invested in fostering creativity), but retain their separateness and identity (Weick, 1976). The paradox which our case revealed was that, alongside the loosening of the coupling over time, there was a parallel

process of tightening of the coupling in which purposeful efforts to document creative ideas and subsequently apply them in the business domains were made. We argue that to resolve this distance paradox, Thompson's (1967) insight that both rationality and indeterminacy could be present in the same system occupying separate locations is insufficient. Creativity and business could occupy separate time and locations, yet for an advantage to be achieved in a creative industry, these then need to be coupled or integrated. In this sense, the idea of loose coupling is appealing, yet it also fails to make explicit what mechanisms allow the elements to be put together so that, while responsive, they maintain their separateness and identity.

As Amabile (1996, 1997) pointed out, creativity is a social process that is triggered, enhanced or hampered by certain organizational contexts. The change at the organizational level is a change in the nature of the relationship between creativity and business. Initially, at the stage of learning the field's conventions and getting to know the local heritage, the relationship between a creative individual and business owners is based on a contract. In the best of cases, it is still an agency relationship in which the owners' objectives do not necessarily fulfill the expressive needs of a creative individual (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000). When the maverick identity is in the making, the creative individual seeks to become the owner of the business, giving him or her the freedom to explore and experiment with new ideas outside of the field's zone of acceptance. Having his/her own company overcomes the issue of access to the field (when production structures serve as gatekeepers to talent) and also limits the restrictions that may have been imposed on creativity when there is not necessarily an alignment between the owner-manager's purposes and the quest for authenticity and identity by a creative individual (Alvarez & Svejenova, 2002). Thus, a creative individual becomes the owner of the means of production of his or her artwork by coupling the creative work with the business. Menger (1999) talks about the artist-firm. Álvarez et al. (2005) consider the firm as a lever, which creative individuals intentionally create to shield their idiosyncrasies

from the isomorphic pressures of the field. At this stage, the business becomes a shelter for creativity, yet the latter is still not an autonomous activity.

Once the creative individual has secured freedom through his/her own production infrastructure, the next stage is to enhance this freedom by gradually de-coupling creativity from business. This de-coupling is manifested in various organizational processes, such as separating creativity from pure business tasks, both in time and space, as well as in terms of the team that is dedicated to it. Such differentiation, as acknowledged by contingency theorists (e.g., Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967), has to be followed by subsequent integration so that business can benefit from novel ideas (linking creativity to business), and creativity can benefit from the resources and opportunities which the business provides. In this case, business and creativity have dedicated space and time, yet they are also purposefully and continuously integrated through a range of mechanisms. Finally, when a maverick becomes a master, gaining reputation and renown, creativity and business become connected in a paradoxical relationship. On the one hand, they are separated organizationally. On the other, creative inputs are constantly fed into the business and guarantee its competitiveness and profitability. At this stage, the creative organization becomes the motor of the business.

Field Change. Changes at field level are the outcome of several factors. As remarked by Powell (1991) and Mazza and Strandgaard (2004), changes may spring from external shocks, boundary spanning, diffusion of changes from the periphery and regulatory waves. When mavericks are successful in gaining recognition by peers for their idiosyncratic identity, they bring changes to the field itself by re-shuffling power among the players. In this sense, mavericks act as boundary spanners or endorse changes that have emerged at the periphery of a field to make it affect the core. In the artistic domain, we can also assume that mavericks may bring to the fore radical

transformations of codes and languages whose general acknowledgement can be perceived as an external shock. This is the case of several “revolutions” in painting and the visual arts (e.g., White & White, 1965).

These changes can remain enclosed within their iron cages as forged by the mavericks within the field (Alvarez et al., 2005), or they can manage to diffuse their identity and gradually become the standard for the field, challenging previous legitimate practices. In this process of diffusion, the mavericks may face support or resistance and even opposition. Further understanding of the connection of identity transformation, organizational and field change is necessary and will enhance our knowledge of the micro-macro connections in institutional fields.

Conclusion

This paper suggests that the quest for identity in creative sectors cannot be understood without the organizational transformation that accompanies it and makes it possible for it to take place, settle in, and diffuse. In addition to organizing, the process of reflecting upon and theorizing on the process of identity transformation is essential for gaining acceptance, recognition and renown, as well as for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage on the basis of creativity.

This paper seeks to contribute to the literature on individual identity (for an extensive review of the literature on identity, see Howard (2000) and Cerulo (1997)) by providing a longitudinal perspective of identity transformation interwoven with organizational and field change. It also adds a micro perspective to studies of identity movements (Rao et al., 2003) and group-driven processes of identity change (White & White, 1965). Last but not least, it contributes to the better understanding of the role of interest and intentionality, which has been insufficiently addressed by the New institutional theory

(Vaughan, 2002), by shedding light on how the micro behavior of a creative individual not only triggers change in his or her own identity, but also transforms organizational structures and deeply institutionalized conventions of dominant regimes in a creative field.

Further research is needed on several of the issues that we have unraveled in the study but were unable to pursue in depth in the present article. First, a better understanding of the nature of paradoxes and their resolution in creative industries is needed. While Lampel et al. (2000) identified five polarities which managers need to be aware of if working in the cultural industry, we believe our understanding of these tensions could be refined with further in-depth, comparative studies which take context into account (Rousseau & Fried, 2001). Second, our study revealed that haute cuisine as a traditionally highbrow sector undergoes trends similar to what Silverstein and Fiske (2003) labeled new luxury goods, which target the trading up by a sophisticated mass market willing to pay a premium. The consumption of these “masstige” goods and services needs to be understood better, as it changes the rules of the game in creative sectors with traditionally elitist appeal. Next, the importance of self-reflexivity and theorizing by players engaged in creative industries is worth further exploration, as it may provide some salient clues on how new identities and institutional logics could diffuse if powerful institutional actors and gatekeepers are unwilling to endorse them.

The popular press is an influential player in the production and legitimization of management ideas and practices (Mazza & Alvarez, 2000). Similar to its role in management, the specialized and popular press in haute cuisine is actively involved in shaping reputations and acknowledging field changes. Hence a better understanding is necessary of how the press facilitates or hampers the transformation of identities in structured fields and how it contributes to the magnifying or diminishing reputations and to the achievement of recognition and renown.

Last but not least, while the creativity-business tension has been widely acknowledged (Lampel et al., 2000; Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000; White & White, 1965), the paradox of freeing creativity by introducing routines and rigidities has been less studied by scholars interested in creative industries. While some attempts to understand creativity and innovation in a systematic way have been made (e.g., Leonard & Swap, 1999), there is a need for further investigation, especially in an era in which creativity is at the heart of achieving sustainable advantage (Florida, 2002). In this quest, preserving the idiosyncratic style and authenticity (Lampel et al., 2000; Alvarez et al., 2005; Svejenova, 2005) of creative professionals is essential for achieving both distinctiveness and commercial success.

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Appendix 1. Data Sources

Sources in Spanish

(a) 1 semi-structured interview with Toni Massanés, Director of ALICIA, an initiative of Ferran Adrià with Caixa Manresa and Generalitat de Catalunya, and an expert in *haute cuisine* (10 May 2005, duration: 2 hours, recorded).

(b) Notes from attended Round table with Ferran Adrià at the Innovation Forum (Forum de la Innovación, CIDEM, Barcelona, 15 November 2004).

(c) Adrià, Soler & Adrià (2004, 2003, 2002): 3 volumes (*El Bulli, 1983-1993*; *El Bulli, 1994-1997*, and *El Bulli, 1998-2002*) by Ferran Adrià, his business partner Juli Soler, and his creative partner and brother Albert Adrià with personal accounts of the core members of the team and reflections and conceptualization of their evolution. (over 4,000 pages and 3 CDs).

(d) Herrero, G.; Casal, P. (2004) *Au Gourmand. A Documentary* (50 min). Tornasol Films and Continental Films. Features Ferran Adrià explaining the evolution of his creative methods, concepts, and techniques.

(e) 31 articles in *El País* (August 2001) with personal accounts by Ferran Adrià, written in collaboration with Xavier Moret, describing the travels of Ferran Adrià and his team to different countries as a creative method and source of new ideas and inspiration. (627 words per article on average).

(f) Planellas, M. (2002) “Los viajes de Adrià”. <infonomia.com> (9 September 2002)

(g) <<http://www.caixamanresa.es/alicia/>>. Website of ALICIA: Alimentació i Ciència al Servei de la Societat. Foundation promoted by the Generalitat de Catalunya and Caixa Manresa.

(h) <<http://www.nh-hotels.com/site/fastgood/es/que-es.htm>>. Website of Fast Good restaurant, outcome of Ferran Adrià's consulting work with NH Hotels.

(i) Castán, P. (2004) "Ferran Adrià. Interview", *El Periódico*, 10 September, pp. 40-41.

(j) De la Serna, V. (2004) "Ferran Adrià: el Picasso de la cocina", *Descubrir el Arte*, V. 60.

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(p) Vicente, A. (2003) "Albert Adrià. Director del Taller de El Bulli". *Diario Vasco*, 11 February.

(q) Villalobos Bregasa, C. (2004) "Ferran Adrià, hombre de negocios", *Capital*, 46, July, pp. 30-32.

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- (a) <<http://www.elbulli.com/>>. Official website of El Bulli in English.
- (b) Guyot Guide.
- (c) Aspden, P. (2004) “Dishing Out a Culinary Philosophy”, *Financial Times*, 6 June.
- (d) Bourdain, A. (2003) *Hottest Destination: Spain*. Food Arts.
- (e) Chua-Eoan, H. (2000) “Cooking Up Surprises”, *Time*, 13 November. (Special Issue: “Innovators Time 100: The Next Wave”)
- (f) Echikson, W. (2003) “Death of a Chef”, *The New Yorker*, 12 May, pp. 61-
- (g) Fayward, J. (2000) “The Cuisine Artiste”. *Time*, 13 November. (Special Issue “Innovators Time 100: The Next Wave”)
- (h) Graff, J. (2004) “Ferran Adrià: Gastronomic Innovator”. *Time*, 26 April. (Special Issue “The Time 100: The A-list of the world’s most influential people”)
- (i) Jacobs, M. (2004) “The Gastronomic Genius of El Bulli”, *Telegraph Magazine*, 31 July.
- (j) Kotkin, C. (2002) “Ferran Adrià: the Salvador Dalí of the Spanish Kitchen”, *The Wine News*, May.
- (k) Lubow, A. (2003) “A Laboratory of Taste”, *The New York Times Magazine*, 8 October, pp. 38, 8 pages.
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(n) Ryan, N. R. (2002) “Ferran Adrià”, *Great Chefs Magazine*, 12 January, pp. 53, 67-68.

(o) Simon, C. (2004) “The World According to Adrià”, *Restaurant*, n. 62 (7-20 April), pp. 11-

(p) Von Bremze, A. (2005) *Food & Wine*, February, pp. 101-

(q) Wright, C. (2001) “El Bulli: The Science of Dessert”, *Pastry Art & Design*, February, pp. 44-

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