

Across Time, Space, and Matter: A Panel Discussion on Food in the Hispanic World

ON THE OCCASION OF the twenty-fifth anniversary of the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center (KJCC) at New York University, the Center was interested in organizing a series of programs and events to reflect on food as a nexus for discussions about philanthropy, social justice, and cultural exchange across the global Hispanophone. We at the KJCC were especially interested in thinking about how food (discourse and matter) could be an occasion to study, challenge, and rethink the linguistic, geographic, and material boundaries that traditionally define fields like Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Peninsular studies. In its transfer across different times and spaces, while also carrying, conserving, and sustaining ideas and traditions from points of origin and exchange, we felt that through this interdisciplinary discussion of food, the KJCC could serve as a platform for bringing together scholars from food studies who might otherwise not sit across the same (virtual) table from each other. Organized in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the online roundtable, which took place on February 24, 2022, stretched across five time zones and three continents and brought together scholars whose work has made important interventions in the field of food studies as well as their adjacent fields of study, which include (but are not limited to) early modern and colonial studies, transatlantic studies, Latin American and Caribbean studies, Catalan studies, and Iberian studies. The guests in the panel were Rebecca Earle (Warwick University, UK), Melissa Fuster (Tulane University, US), Lara Anderson (The University of Melbourne, AU), and the panel's moderator was H. Rosi Song (Durham University, UK). The event was organized by Jordana Mendelson, Director of the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center at New York University, with the support of KJCC Associate Director Laura Turégano and the creative team of Laia Cabrera and

Isabelle Duverger, who produced the original online roundtable, which can be viewed here: www.kjcc.org/event/roundtable-food-and-the-hispanic-world-across-time-space.

Having come together to plan the panel and to engage in a lively exchange of ideas during the session, the panelists, with the support of the moderator and the organizer, brought forward the desire to share this discussion in print. The conversation that follows is a slightly revised version of the online conversation that includes a list of works mentioned during the event. We share this print version with the same intention as the panel had in its origin: to study, share, debate, and generate conversations about food in the Hispanic world that foreground points of convergence and departure, so that we may keep this conversation about food moving, since movement was one of the recurrent themes of the roundtable discussion.

H. ROSI SONG: Food is something that can unite but also divide us. We develop tastes and attachments to ingredients, dishes, traditions depending on where, when, and how we grew up, with whom we shared our meals, who cooked for us or for whom we prepared meals. To think about *food* in the (global) Hispanophone means to think of food across a wide geography, a long historical period, contact between people from different races, products from different fauna and flora, and, above all, to think of *movement*.

We could examine, for instance, how food-related products or practices traveled with people. And how these practices sustained them until they reached their destination. Once people and their food arrived in new geographies, how have these products become part of their new environment? Was this process a natural one or a forced one? Of course, we should not forget the journey back, how new products and

knowledge traveled to the point of origin transforming landscapes and food practices that are now deeply ingrained in national food imaginaries. What does it mean to recognize that staple ingredients in traditional dishes in Europe come from foreign land? What matters? The ingredients or the preparation of them?

We have gathered this roundtable to consider these questions as a starting point to think through together how these movements happened at individual levels but, unsurprisingly, also as the result of systemic power changes, political interests, and the need for survival. Perhaps we could ask Rebecca a question to begin our discussion. As a historian, can you get us started by talking about food and movement? What would you say is the impact of movement (exploration, travel, migration, diaspora) in food practices? In what ways do you think food changes or, in a way, stays the same?

REBECCA EARLE: The way we eat is profoundly shaped by movement. Movement of people, movement of plants and animal, movement of ideas. Let me start with a few words about the movement of people. Our diets have long been shaped by the movements of people. Foods traveled because people traveled. One of the most consequential travels, for the history of food, is Columbus's inadvertent arrival in the Caribbean in 1492. As we know, this encounter with an unfamiliar continent, and its unfamiliar peoples, was a considerable surprise to Europeans. Among the many surprising things that Europeans encountered were a vast number of new foods — tomatoes, potatoes, chocolate, maize, sweet potatoes, pineapples, vanilla, chile peppers, peanuts . . .

During the Spanish conquest of the Americas, two scenes typify the encounters between Europeans and Amerindians: a battle, and a shared meal. When Indigenous peoples and Iberians did not try to kill each other, they often exchanged foodstuffs. Hungry Spaniards were often desperate for food, and Amerindians were curious about the peculiar things consumed by the exotic bearded strangers. Spanish chronicles are full of descriptions of such communal meals. In December 1492, Columbus recorded in his journal that after landing on one Caribbean Island he offered a local ruler “Castilian food” (92). Columbus did not describe the king's reaction, beyond noting that he ate only a mouthful, giving the rest to his entourage. Other accounts offer more detail. A sixteenth-century Italian traveler wrote that on being given a Spanish meal, one group of Amerindians in Venezuela, “laughing at such food,” threw it to their dogs (Lovera 1997).

Unequivocal hostility, however, does not typify all aspects of what historians call “the Columbian exchange” — the global dissemination of foods that followed in the wake of the

European invasion of the Americas. Over the next centuries, foods from the Americas spread all over the world. By the early seventeenth century, pineapples reached India, peanuts and maize were being grown in China in the same years, and madrileños were using chile peppers to spice up their foods. Writing in Spain in 1590, the Jesuit priest José de Acosta felt no need to describe the chile in his account of new-world plants because “by now this is a well-known thing, and hence not much need be said about it” (Acosta 2002). At the same time, native peoples in the Americas were adding new foods to their own diets — from lettuces to pigs.

Over time, out of these complex blendings of new- and old-world ingredients and culinary systems emerged the distinctive set of cuisines that form the basis of what today are called “Mexican” or “Colombian” or “Argentine” food, whose characteristic dishes are extolled by nationalists, savored by young and old, and desired by emigrants far from their homelands. After all, for many people, food holds a particular power to instill a visceral sense of national identity. Speaking of the iconic Mexican dish mole poblano, one Mexican writer insisted that to reject it “could practically be considered an act of treason” (Reyes).^{*} Virtually all of the Latin American dishes today considered as “national” reflect the blending of ingredients from different parts of the world that resulted from the Columbian exchange. Argentine bife de chorizo with a malbec and chips, or an enchilada suiza, or Brazilian moqueca (whose very name comes from the Kimbundu language of Angola) — all these dishes are the result of the hybridization of eating practices that followed in the wake of European colonialism, which brought grape vines, cattle, dairy products, and West African palm oil to the Americas.

American foods moved all over the world because people were moving all over the world. It was almost certainly Portuguese sailors who carried pineapples and peanuts to India and China. And it was enslaved West Africans who brought palm oil and rice — and the expertise to grow them — to the Americas. European conquistadors carried with them not only weapons but also seeds for radishes and wheat, breeding pairs of pigs and sheep, and many other staples of the Iberian diet. And they were the ones who took the chile pepper back to Spain, where women started adding it to sausages to create the chorizo we know today. Foods traveled around the world because from the fifteenth century people were traveling around the world in ever greater numbers. The movements of these foods trace out the movements of people.

Sometimes it's the movement of plants that prompts movement of people, rather than the reverse. We may be used to thinking that people were the only ones with agency — that we moved foods around, but that foods didn't

move us around. Yet sometimes the plants do move us. About 2.5 million years ago in Africa, savannah land—grasslands—began to increase, and as a result early hominins began to move out of forests into these new open grasslands, where they learned to eat a different diet. In other words, plants from the savannah colonized new environments, and people followed in their wake—the movement of plants caused a movement of people, and new diets.

There are of course more recent and more historically devastating examples. Let's return to the Hispanic world. The introduction of sugarcane into the Caribbean by Columbus in the 1490s led directly to the forced movement of millions of people from the west coast of Africa to the Americas. The great majority of the people taken as captives from West Africa to labor in the Americas were sent to the new-world sugar plantations that devoured the lives of millions of men and women. Sugar, as they said, was made with blood. A key part of colonialism involved the deliberate introduction of new plants into Europe's colonies in order to grow them as commercial commodities. Sugar, coffee, tea, bananas, cacao—all these different food plants were deliberately moved from their places of origin into European colonies, with a view toward cultivating them for profit. Bananas are not originally from Central America and the Caribbean; cacao is not native to West Africa—their presence in these regions is part of deliberate effort to use European colonies to grow commercial crops for export. You can see that this is a really global process. In all cases, the idea was to grow these crops using unfree labor, whether indentured workers or enslaved people or convict labor. Europeans introduced commercial crops grown with unfree labor into every zone they colonized. So the movement of these foods around the world resulted in a vast movement of peoples around the world.

Finally, I want to say a little about how the movement of ideas has also shaped how we eat. Let's think about our concepts of health and nutrition. From the late nineteenth century, new scientific ideas began to emerge that sought to explain how food nourishes the body by using ideas derived from chemistry—ideas like the calorie, vitamins, proteins. This was a new way of looking at food, and it quickly spread all over the world. Scientists in India grappled with how to interpret ancient ayurvedic dietary guidance in light of these new ideas. Politicians in Colombia and Mexico designed new programs that aimed to reshape popular eating habits in line with these new understandings of what was and was not good to eat. The global circulation of new understandings of nutrition had a direct impact on public health policies and on everyday eating habits in many parts of the world.

It's worth recalling, too, that “ideas” don't include only the concepts devised by scientists or trained scholars. The practical know-how involved in preparing a meal also constitutes a form of knowledge. The spread of culinary and agricultural expertise is another important part of this history. After all, seeds, plants, and animals do not transform themselves into food automatically—people do this, so the expertise and knowledge of farmers and cooks is also crucial to the formation of new eating habits. It was from Indigenous Meso-American women that Europeans learned how to enjoy chocolate, or tortillas, for instance. On other occasions foods spread but without the important agricultural and culinary knowledge that surrounded them in their areas of origin. When maize reached Italy in the sixteenth century it arrived without the complex process of “nixtamalization”—the soaking of dried maize kernels in lye, which unlocks their vitamin content. As a result, heavy consumption of maize often caused pellagra, an ailment largely unknown in Meso-America itself.

So the way we eat is profoundly shaped by the movements of peoples, who brought new foods with them as they traveled the world. The introduction of new plants itself often provoked further movements of people, and the movement of ideas, as the world became ever more interconnected, also shapes our eating habits, for instance as we embrace new ideas about what is healthy, or fashionable.

Coming back to the Hispanic world, the thing I would like to stress is the intimate link between today's eating habits and the legacy of colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade. Together, these moved peoples and foods all over the Hispanic world, profoundly altering diets. The British-Sri Lankan novelist Ambalavaner Sivanandan expressed really clearly how the movement of peoples around the world today reflects the history of colonialism. “We're here because you were there,” he said. Movements of people in the past create new connections that continue to manifest themselves today. The same is true of food. The foods we eat are often here because we were there, and because everyone traveled. Thomas Sankara, the former President of Burkina Faso, also put it really clearly: “So, do you not know where imperialism is to be found? . . . just look at your plate!” (Cusack 2000).

There's so much more to be said about all of this, but perhaps I should stop here, at least for now.

RS: We often hear the phrase “Food is politics” or “Food is political.” In what ways do you think this is correct? Or, given your research, what should we understand when food is connected to politics? I think other words that are becoming increasingly connected with food are justice, activism, sustainability . . .

MELISSA FUSTER: Food is definitely political! My work has addressed this at different levels, from individual discourses and actions, to changes at the community and policy level. The influence of politics has been greatly outlined by scholars, particularly the amazing work of Marion Nestle in her book, *Food Politics*, among others. I have applied this work for research examining the political influence in policymaking in Latin America, as in the case of dietary guidelines in the Hispanic Caribbean (see Fuster 2015) and my comparative analysis of taxes on sugary beverages in Mexico and Chile (see Fuster et al. 2021). Given the continued influence of economic interests in regulation—it is, of course, a topic for a much lengthier discussion!

Back to our discussion today, the political aspects of food discourses are closely tied to the ideas of food and movement discussed by Rebecca, where the forces behind such movements were also inherently political. My book, *Caribeños at the Table: How Migration, Health, and Race Intersect in New York City*, examined the global, political forces as drivers for migration, the creation of foodways—in the diaspora and in the Caribbean, and the resulting health outcomes in US-based communities, as a way to best understand the persisting diet-related inequities affecting these communities, particularly my Puerto Rican community. The political aspect of foods comes out in different ways. An example is in how Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Dominicans spoke about their cuisines. Many of the foods that we consider traditional are linked to our colonization and slavery histories. As beautifully outlined in Ortíz-Cuadra's book *Eating Puerto Rico*, we got the bacalao (codfish), pork, to name a few, from the Spanish conquistadors, while plantains were brought to the Caribbean as part of foodways developed as part of slavery. These foods were incorporated to the native, Taino (Arawak) diets, including local animal proteins and root crops, like the yucca.

Fast-forward to today, the Spanish influence has been replaced by the United States as the political and economic force in the region, influencing the foodways of these island contexts in different ways. In Puerto Rico, we see the open influx of foods and brands from transnational corporations and the decimation of agriculture, brought from our ongoing colonial relationship with the United States. But then, to address the important, second part of your question, we are also seeing the resurgence of an interest in agriculture, being a political statement, pushing back against the colonial status quo. Food interventions have been key in grassroots movements, as the case of comedores sociales—community kitchens or tables—that are present at local protests and in response to disasters, as in the case of the 2017 devastating Hurricane María.

LARA ANDERSON: Food, in my research, is inherently political, as food discourse functions to either uphold or resist centralist, authoritarian, or subnationalist political projects. Rebecca's research also shows the way in which eating, or more specifically the potato, became part of modern politics. As her research demonstrates, there is a resistance when democratic governments try to manage eating habits, with people questioning whether such control is more suited to totalitarian governance. This degree of discursive control was a feature of Spain's two dictatorships, but there is also evidence of the talk of food being used to influence how Spaniards' view food and their national identity during times of democracy.

As I have discussed in relation to the Primo de Rivera and Franco dictatorships, we can view food discourse as a potent biopolitical tool (see Anderson 2020). During the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, individual eating choices were controlled to uphold the regime's modernizing agenda while, as part of the Franco biopolitics, individuals were managed and submitted to strict discipline and appropriate behavior as the state promoted a stoic, patriotic, ultra-nationalist gendered and healthy body. Official discourse and food media converged to control the citizenry's behavior and thinking about Spanish food culture and identity.

As Tiago Saraiva explains, “every fascist regime of the interwar period became obsessed for making the national soil feed the national body” (9). Saraiva gives examples from different regimes, writing in the case of Mussolini that the Italian dictator was obsessed with freeing Italy from the slave of the foreign grain, while the Nazis insisted food independence as a “necessary condition for both the biological survival of the race and its political independence” (2016: 71). The Francoist officials had Mussolini's program of reform in mind, as can be evinced from the many references to Italy's stoic embrace of reform. More importantly, and through a biopolitical lens, it is possible to view texts about and images of oranges as playing a critical role in upholding Francoist governance. A range of experts, including government authorities, speak authoritatively about oranges, thereby putting into circulation a truth discourse about this Spanish-grown fruit. Together, these different government agencies and the food media promote a discourse about food consumption that targets individual behavior as the solution to Spain's food problems. According to this all-encompassing discourse about food, if Spaniards put patriotism before their own individual preferences, the country will be able to remain economically and culturally “free” from outside forces.

Of interest is the official newspaper *Alimentación nacional's* report on a short film titled *La naranja* (*The Orange*),

which ran at the Avenida José Antonio theatre. The cartoon-style film tells “the history of the orange up to its appearance in Spain.”* Relevant to the view inherent to Francoist autarky that Spain should be both economically and culturally shut off from the rest of the world is the way in which the article deals with the film’s narration of the orange’s introduction to Spain at the time of Arab rule. According to the article, once in Spain the orange abandons “its exoticism and, thanks to our soil and our sun, which give it new life” is quickly embraced as a national treasure (4). As a fruit that grows prolifically in Spain, the orange symbolizes Spain’s capacity to feed her own people. However, in order to maintain the notion — inherent also to autarky — of Spain as culturally shut off from the corrupting forces of foreign influence, the article must first free the orange of its exotic and foreign origins.

Spain’s oranges are also rendered 100 percent Spanish through references to their ubiquity in Spanish art and literature. *Alimentación nacional* reminds readers of the important place of oranges in the literature of Azorín, which sought, as critics have shown, to define an eternal notion of Spanishness. Also mentioned are Joaquín Sorolla’s depiction of orange gardens in his typically Spanish landscapes, such as *Entre naranjos* (*Amongst the Orange Trees*), which he painted in 1903 for the well-known Argentine medical doctor José R. Semprún. Sorolla’s painting — described as “a cheerful picture of a Valencian theme” — is important not only for what it says about the bonds of Hispanidad but also for its idyllic depiction of the culture or lifestyle associated with Spanish oranges (*Alimentación nacional*: 4). With Azorín and Sorolla occupying a place as canonically Spanish in the style and content of their work, *Alimentación nacional* casts oranges as iconic for their place in the cultural production of two such Spanish greats.

RS: It would be fair to say that all of us in this panel work on food from an academic perspective and need to pay attention to the difference between material and discourse. What’s your experience on food and writing (and reading) about food? Why is it important to pay attention to the discourse(s) around food?

LA: In writing about food, there is a need to differentiate between food as material object and food as discourse. If the food we ingest sustains us both physically and emotionally, then equally important is food discourse which does not just describe food but is also inherently political and instructs us in the uptake of our multiple and often competing identities. One scholar to differentiate between food as object and food as discourse is Sidney Mintz, who reminds us of those

national cuisines brought into being by the political reality of the Central State and not necessarily reflective of the national diet. In contrast to regional cuisines, which are eaten daily, Mintz believes that it only makes sense to talk of a national cuisine when we have in mind the contents of a book, a restaurant, or some notion, in contradiction to another (23). In response to these claims about national cuisine as little more than textual artifice, [Priscilla Parkhurst] Ferguson (2004) underscores just how influential this textually driven culinary discourse has been in forming views nationally and internationally about what it means to be French. My research also argues for the importance of texts or discourse to the construction of a national cuisine in Spain from the nineteenth century onward, and several scholars have demonstrated the existence of textually reliant cuisine in a number of other countries, which can be seen as evidence of transnational connections between different nations in the use of food discourse to construct national cuisines.

Indeed, when in late nineteenth century Spain, Spanish intellectuals began to think about the contours of a Spanish national cuisine in the context of nation building as well as insisting on the importance of freeing their cuisine from the hegemony of neighboring France’s cuisine, they highlighted the importance of discourse to any culinary nationalist projects.

At the same time as making suggestions about food as material object in making the unorthodox suggestion that the then King serve olla podrida at his birthday banquet, Dr. Thebussem and the King’s chef (1888) concluded that for Spain to have a recognizable national cuisine, a book would need to be written containing recipes from the diverse regions. This would solidify the idea of a regionally diverse national food culture, while helping Spain’s citizenry to know more about foodstuffs and recipes from across the country. Dr. Thebussem reiterated the importance of culinary multiplicity to Spanish culinary nationalization.

Writing his guide at the request of a centralizing government, Dionisio Pérez’s choice of pen name (Post Thebussem) and dedication to Dr. Thebussem make clear the genealogy of his thinking on Spanish Cuisine. *Guía del buen comer español* (1929) has remained influential amongst Spanish food writers and cookery book authors, particularly for its showcasing of regional cuisines in the context of nation building and the importance of discourse to culinary nationalism.

It is interesting to note that the concept of food as discourse has been at the heart of Spanish gastronomy since its origins in the late nineteenth century Spain. In the absence of a Spanish national cuisine at the time of a lackluster nation building, Spain’s pioneering gastronomes insisted on the

textual codification of Spanish culinary traditions. This discourse has been gendered, as I have shown elsewhere, with mainly men taking up positions of authority in setting the boundaries of Spanish gastronomy, which has been closely linked to national culture. It's interesting to note that in the late nineteenth century, Emilia Pardo Bazán (2007), the canonical author who distanced herself from her sex in the realist novels and essays she published, wrote a cookery book and not a gastronomic text like her male counterparts.

RS: Bringing the conversation back to food and the Hispanophone, there are foods that seem to be closely linked to its culture, such as the potato, the orange, peppers, corn, rice. Could you talk about one that has impacted your research? How and why?

RE: I've been working on the global history of potatoes for a ridiculously long time (see Earle 2019). Potatoes are a quintessentially global food—they are grown in virtually every part of the world, and most people think of them as completely ordinary and “local.” Their very names suggest they are from “right here”: “Idaho potatoes,” “Darjeeling red round,” “King Edward”—wherever “here” is there is probably a potato variety associated with it. At the same time, all these potatoes, Darjeeling red rounds and Irish lumpers alike, originated from a very specific part of the world. The potato's cradle area is the long spine of mountains that run from southern Chile through the Rockies—the American Cordillera. It was along this spine that potatoes were first eaten, and first domesticated. No one outside of it had ever seen or eaten a potato before the European invasion of the Inca empire in the early sixteenth century. Since then, they have spread all over the world, where, as I said a moment ago, they are generally considered to be “from right here” rather than from far away. When a French traveler visited the Andean city of Bogotá in the 1820s, he was surprised to see what he called “European” potatoes on sale in the market alongside other vegetables that he considered to be more exotic and local to Colombia. For this French traveler, in other words, potatoes were so European that he assumed they were a European import. Potatoes, in other words, are an incredibly successful immigrant insofar as they have managed to integrate so thoroughly that most people don't recognize that they originated somewhere else.

This perhaps points, again, to the interconnections between the histories of food and the histories of people. People—sailors, merchants, soldiers, peasants, missionaries—were responsible for moving American foods around the world. Their movements, in turn, were prompted by the larger historical processes underway during their own

lifetimes. Out of these movements of peoples and foods came new ways of eating. It's important to understand the historical processes that took the potato to, say, China, where it is now widely eaten—China is now the world's leading producer and consumer of potatoes—but it's also important to recognize the ways in which, as it moved around the world, the potato itself changed. Peasants in early modern Europe and scientists in twentieth century India both played a role in developing new varieties of potato that thrived in their new environments, and cooks all over the world discovered new ways to prepare this protean tuber. When things travel, they undergo sea changes, and can emerge transformed.

MF: Plantains. The plantain is a key ingredient in cocinas caribeñas. The fruit is not native to the Americas but brought over to be part of slave diets—as other foods like breadfruit. The journey of plantains to the Caribbean resulted in associations of the fruit with slavery and, later on, poverty. As part of slave diets, it provided satiety and bulk to the diet, along with a basic level of nutrition. Beyond the slave plantation diets, given that the plantain plant is relatively easy to grow, it gradually evolved to become basic sustenance and as a food consumed by the uncultivated rural population. Actually, nowadays, for families that have a big enough back yard, it is common to grow plantains on the island.

The plantain is a key ingredient in many Caribbean diets. This was reflected in how the caribeños I interviewed for my book described their traditional diets. Puerto Ricans (and some Dominicans) highlighted the mofongo, and Dominicans mentioned the mangú. While plantain-based dishes were discussed less among Cubans, they mentioned the mariquitas and the fufu—the latter, also consumed in the other islands. What made this more interesting was how plantains were not only used to discuss national identity but also differentiation. This was reflected in my interviews, as plantain was used, in a subtle, unconscious way, to create hierarchies between caribeños, where the role of plantain in the cuisine was tied to poverty.

This came up, for example, when Cubans and Puerto Ricans spoke about Dominicans eating mangú for breakfast. This was often done with astonishment, and an added comment as in, “how can they eat that!” The mangú, a dish made of boiled green plantains mashed with butter, was seen by fellow caribeños as being too heavy, and its consumption was tied to notions of poverty, where people had to eat a heavy breakfast to “work on the field”—even if such practice was discussed in hyper-urban settings, as in the case of New York City! Some of this was also discussed when Cubans spoke about Puerto Rican cuisine, differentiating Cuban cuisine

from that of Puerto Rico, through the greater use of plantains by Puerto Ricans. In the work, I argue that plantains, through its described “heaviness” and “starchiness”—not often associated with healthy diets—was also used to present implied racial hierarchies within these communities today.

LA: Oranges. An important function of food discourse from the first two decades of the regime was to create a taste amongst readers for autochthonous foodstuffs suited to Spain’s autarkic political economy, such as oranges and rice. In producing readers or subjects with a taste for local, rather than foreign foodstuffs, official food discourse sustained the Francoist biopolitics as individual taste was managed for the well-being of the collective body. Significant, too, was the way in which this discourse produced in readers a belief in Spain’s capacity to feed her own people, whilst remaining closed off to food imports.

As already referred to, the role played by oranges under the Franco regime, during the Primo de Rivera regime, oranges were also linked both symbolically and literally to the regime’s politics. If, in the early 1930s, orange consumption was used to create citizens with a belief in regeneration and modernization, just some ten years later, oranges would be drawn on to produce autarkic subjectivities. The Franco regime cast the orange as the ideal produce of autarky in its attempts to create an increased appetite amongst Spaniards for this locally grown fruit. The shift in the symbolism of oranges is an important example of the ways in which officials appropriated Spanish food culture for broader political and cultural purposes. In both regimes, an oversupply of oranges was a driver of the “eat more oranges” campaigns, yet the meaning attached to orange consumption varied considerably.

RS: And, finally, perhaps a fitting way to finish our discussion would be to think again about *movement*, especially in our present world, and ask you, in what ways do you think food (in the global Hispanophone and beyond) will (and should) change?

LA: While food is constantly changing due to a circulation of food as both material object and discourse which sees food being deployed in a transnational context, food is also increasingly being used to demarcate and bolster national identity. In the transhispanic world, food travels between continents and countries, resulting in a fusion of food cultures from both

the old and new worlds. However, the return of the extreme right—which is particularly apparent in some Latin American countries—has meant that food is used negatively in the name of nationalism to create tensions and conflict between different groups of people. It will be of interest to see if in the context of the transhispanic world how this tension between culinary nationalism and the sharing of food culture will evolve. One hopes that food is used positively to bring people together and that we all remember the food stuffs or aspects of food culture that have united us over the centuries.

MF: Food is constantly changing, and movement is continuing to bring new flavors and preparations to cuisines, globally. Traditional diets are not static. In Latin America, I have seen the emergence of the Decolonize your Diet movement, as a response to the colonial influences, and, in some ways, moving for more sustainable, plant-based diets, assuming that this was the mode of eating among the natives in the past. In general, this coming back to the historic traditional food responds to global trends, as in the case of the slow food movement, or farm-to-table, or food justice approaches, empowering people through agriculture, having the means for sustenance, pushing against processed foods and transnational food and beverage companies. I think we’ll see more innovations for sustainability, re-discovering ingredients or using technology to change what we eat, as seen in the increase in plant-based options and vegetable-forward cuisines.

RE: The ongoing war in the Ukraine reminds us of how interconnected our eating habits have become: the shortage of sunflower oil from the Ukraine is leading some food producers to increase their use of palm oil, whose manufacture in parts of Africa and southeast Asia has caused serious environmental damage: the demand for biscuits in the UK is affected by conflict in eastern Europe, which in turn has implications for Indonesia. The movement of people—such as the movement of Russian troops into Ukraine—shapes the systems of food production in distant parts of the world. I don’t feel it’s my place to say how foodways in the Hispanic world *should* change, but I am interested in the increasing focus on recuperating Indigenous and pre-Columbian culinary practice (see for instance the work of Sioux Chef—<https://sioux-chef.com>) and look forward to seeing how these initiatives will reshape the ways we think about the history of eating in the Hispanic world. ☺

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