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# Beyond Culinary Colonialism: Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Liberal Multiculturalism, and the Control of Gastronomic Capital

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**Beyond Culinary Colonialism: Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Liberal Multiculturalism,  
and the Control of Gastronomic Capital**

Sam Grey & Lenore Newman

**ABSTRACT:** This article builds on the food sovereignty literature to ask pointed questions about the interplay of market forces and political liberalism. Specifically, we use cuisine as a lens to interrogate the assumption that multiculturalism is compatible with Indigenous food sovereignty. Because multicultural inclusion is the means by which Indigenous Peoples' gastronomies are commodified and alienated, they experience not *gastronomic multiculturalism* but *culinary colonialism*. Accordingly, food sovereignty in colonial contexts must embrace both the active sharing and the mindful withholding of food as political acts, and acknowledge that culinary culture is not simply a market commodity but also a politically-embedded process. In drawing together the threads of this argument, we advocate for a broadening of the discussion on Indigenous food sovereignty to include the resistance and resurgence enacted through gastronomy.

**KEYWORDS:** gastronomic multiculturalism; culinary colonialism; Canada; Peru; Indigenous food sovereignty; traditional foods

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## **Introduction**

While a significant portion of the food systems literature is devoted to the perils of liberalism run amok – specifically the impacts of globally hegemonic *neoliberalism* – there is an absence of work on the negative fallout for food systems politics when liberalism operates at its normative best, as *liberal multiculturalism*. The most promising examples, here, come from Indigenous foodways, work on which tends to adopt an apolitical perspective (see Hobart 2016; Morris 2010; and Abarca 2004 for exceptions), and the growing literature on Indigenous food sovereignty, which has yet to investigate liberal multiculturalism as capitalism's mode of political engagement. Moreover, food sovereignty scholarship has not counted cuisines among the many products or processes under investigation, part of a broader “underappreciation [of] how food cultures can exacerbate inequality” (Steckley 2016, pp. 549, 560).

To address these gaps, we move along three converging lines of argumentation. First, we map the politics of recognition in liberal multicultural states onto cuisine in particular, to reveal the failings of a multicultural approach to gastronomy. We show how such an approach champions efforts, incentives, and policies to promote local food systems that backfire in the Indigenous case, either excluding or appropriating their cuisines. Further, through case studies in two disparate liberal multicultural Settler states (Canada and Perú), we show how this harms Indigenous Peoples by

rhetorically eliminating the central pillar of their foodways – Indigenous lands – while alienating and commodifying their culinary heritage. To describe this phenomenon, we introduce the concepts of *gastronomic multiculturalism* and *culinary colonialism*. Second, we build on the food sovereignty literature to ask pointed questions about the interplay of market forces and political liberalism. Specifically, we interrogate the assumption that multiculturalism is compatible with, if not an actual promoter of food sovereignty, based on its operationalizing of an empowering ‘cosmopolitan localism.’ For Indigenous Peoples in particular, such multicultural inclusion is usually deleterious. Consequently, we argue that the definition of food sovereignty must include the right to hold gastronomic capital back from the market. Finally, building on these arguments, we advocate for a movement away from the prevalent cultural conception of Indigenous foodways to a more political framing, in order to better grapple with the specificity of Indigenous experience, and in the inverse, a broadening of the discussion on (Indigenous) food sovereignty to include the resistance and resurgence enacted through gastronomy.

In writing this piece we had several ambitions. We began by attempting to bridge two academic literatures – that on foodways and that on food sovereignty – that have thus far remained largely at arm’s length from one another. We see our contribution, here, as offering gastronomy as not only a ‘bridge,’ but a necessary (and thus far omitted) food sovereignty lens. We also strove to trouble assumptions about liberal pluralism, specifically the work that ‘tweaks’ multiculturalism and that which overlooks it altogether, along with the widespread championing of multicultural ‘sharing’ that disregards context and motivation. Accordingly, we sought to ‘bring the politics back in,’ while reminding scholars of the obfuscations that cultural approaches perform, by undertaking explicitly political scientific analyses. These included a sustained and thoroughgoing engagement with Settler colonialism that remains rare in the academic work on food, even when that work deals with Indigenous food systems, foodways, and food sovereignty, and which underscores the fundamental consonance of anticapitalism and anticolonialism. Finally, we feel our piece contributes important suggestions, underscored by key caveats, about new directions for food systems research and new avenues for food justice activism.

### **Multiculturalism & gastronomy**

Thanks to waves of immigration into liberal Settler states, the historical narrative of the White ‘pioneer’ became increasingly misrepresentative of the growing nation. In such rapidly pluralizing societies, liberalism’s commitment to flatline equality proved unworkable without significant tweaking – fine-tuning that took the form of special cultural and political accommodation for minorities, along with the valorizing of culture itself. Both this ideology and the policies it engenders are known as *liberal multiculturalism*. While consolidating the national cultural identity, liberal multiculturalism contains political conflicts based in structural inequalities by shifting the focus from redistribution (of resources) to recognition (of cultures) (Fraser 1995). This *politics of recognition* rests on a commitment to revaluing disrespected identities by changing marginalizing patterns of representation and

communication. Yet despite promises of mutuality, multiculturalism's recognition is asymmetrical. As Day observes, it is "not equal, reciprocal, and freely given, but a partial and grudgingly bestowed gift from a canonical Self group to a series of problematic Others" (2000, p. 217). Nevertheless, recognition has been near-universally embraced, contributing to what Zizek (2009) calls the "culturalization of politics." This is perhaps to be expected, given multiculturalism's roots in anthropology's rejection of cultural evolutionism. Transposed to the political realm, this produces a view of cultures as socially fundamental, firmly bounded, and democratically equivalent (Eriksen 2015).

If *political multiculturalism* refers to the ideology and set of policies intended to recognize minority identities, *gastronomic multiculturalism* describes this approach as applied to cuisine. Gastronomic multiculturalism is thus the embrace of minority cuisine in the celebratory construction of a unified, national food culture. This incorporation publicly lauds the uniqueness and dynamism of its contributors, thereby ameliorating their marginalization, while increasing the accessibility of their cuisines (see, for example, Inness 2006).<sup>1</sup> It ostensibly levels 'food hierarchies' (Steckley 2016), acknowledging how, in Morris' words, "the public culinascape can be read as a map of race relations" (2010, p. 6). Yet as Kymlicka (1995) reminds us, gastronomy invites easy mixing of minority and majority, diversifying without challenging liberal individualism. It singles out cuisine, along with music and clothing, as *authentic* practices to be preserved by the originating culture and consumed by others. Alibhai-Brown (2000) famously christened this the 3S model: 'saris, samosas, and steel drums.'

Hiebert and Ley (2003) describe political multiculturalism as involving a progression from assimilation to pluralism to combination. We suggest that gastronomic multiculturalism can also be divided into stages: initial *suppression* of subaltern cuisines; followed by an authenticity-seeking *plurality*; and finally, a *convergence* dominated by creolization. (This progression is not necessarily universal or linear; nevertheless, this model can be found with surprising consistency in quite diverse locations.) The initial stage is often accomplished through the denigration of minority cultures' cuisines as less refined or palatable. This is sharply illustrated by the anti-Italian slur, 'garlic-eater,' once so common that it appears in the quintessentially American film *It's a Wonderful Life*. The subsequent *plurality* stage is marked by the conscious segregation of authentic cuisines, as anonymous authorities freeze historical processes and "measure the degree to which something is more or less what it ought to be" (Appadurai 1986, p. 25). Finally, Newman (2017) proposes a movement from these authentic culinary experiences to a *creole*, defined as the long-term mixing of two or more elements grounded in a local culture. Mehta notes this happening in diasporic locales, where food "becomes the language of [...] métissage, or *creolization*, and provides the locus of self-conception and identity" (2009, p. 20). This end-stage of gastronomic multiculturalism – a lauded 'cosmopolitan localism' – is made possible by the balancing of regional food strategies with the consumption of fairly-traded foods, so that every culture can embrace its culinary heritage (Morgan and Sonnino 2010). As a happy corollary, these foods

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<sup>1</sup> This differs from Hage's culinary 'cosmo-multiculturalism,' in which certain elements of ethnic cuisine are singled out as high-quality commodities bestowing 'class-cultural capital' (2000, 201).

can be enjoyed by all, increasing culinary diversity while augmenting the potential for food sovereignty. Examples can be straightforward, such as butter chicken pizzas (an in-situ mixing); or subtle, as with shiso mojitos (reflecting a desire to position the local in a global system beyond the nation-state). Creolization, then, reflects a breaking of the separation that plurality maintained.

Yet there is a stark difference between Indigenous gastronomies and minority cuisines in the praxis of gastronomic multiculturalism. The latter are often praised in food policy and tourism, encouraged as components of inclusive, sustainable economic development. Indigenous cuisine is either overlooked or else appears de-Indigenized within the national culinary culture – an outcome catalyzed by its having travelled a very different, *colonial* path to multicultural incorporation.

### **Colonialism & cuisine**

Political multiculturalism in Settler states was framed around the problem of *ethnic minorities*, and so was neither originally intended nor theoretically equipped to grapple with *national minorities* like Indigenous nations. Indigeneity, unlike ethnicity, has an irreducible territorial dimension made up of two claims: the inherent right to specific lands, and to self-determination on those lands. Multicultural recognition is thus ill-positioned to deal with Indigenous groups, who demand not better inclusion in the Settler state, society, and market, but affirmative distinction from these configurations. Wolfe points out that multiculturalism misrepresents Indigenous Peoples as “just another tile in the [...] mosaic” (2001, p. 874) in order to recast their aspirations as coincident with those of Settler citizenship. Accordingly, Indigenous Peoples view multiculturalism with some suspicion, spotting, in its flattening of difference, colonial assimilation by another name (Fleras, 2012; Maaka and Fleras, 2005). Naturally, multicultural policies play out differently in different locations, yet with a consistent effect on Indigenous gastronomy and the politics of what we here term *culinary colonialism*.

Veracini describes Settler colonialism as defined by external domination, enacted through displacement and unequal relations. “Colonists,” he writes, “move to a new setting and establish their ascendancy” (2011, p. 1). We assert that gastronomy is just such a novel frontier, and define culinary colonialism as the extension of Settler jurisdiction over, and exploitation of, Indigenous gastronomy.<sup>2</sup> Rather than the lateral sharing of minorities’ culinary heritage, Indigenous control over Indigenous foods is always subordinated. Gastronomic multiculturalism’s suppression/plurality/convergence model does not apply; instead, Grey and Patel (2015) discern an alternative progression: initially the destruction of Indigenous food systems as a tool of war (*conquest*); followed by forced conversion to a Settler diet (*assimilation*); before the revalorization of Indigenous gastronomy for Settler consumption (*appropriation*). Indigenous cuisines are thus gentrified, reoriented toward the demographic that originally sought their eradication.

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<sup>2</sup> This differs from Heldke’s “culinary colonialism,” which refers to a gastronomic “culture-hopping” accomplished through consuming the cuisines of primarily Third World cultures, “motivated by a deep desire [...] somehow to own an experience of an Exotic Other to make [oneself] more interesting” (2001, p. 78). It also differs from Mehta’s (2009) “culinary colonization,” in which the imposition of Western values renders (in her case, Caribbean) food cultures inferior, even hated, inspiring feelings of shame in cultural insiders.

The restaurant world is replete with chefs specializing in dishes from outside their cultural heritage. Recently, Indigenous cuisines have made this cut. Such colonial incorporation accomplishes several key erasures: the severing of cultures and political struggles from the foods arising from these contexts; the relative inability of source communities to prepare and market their own menus, or to control the interpretation/alienation of their cuisines; and often the inaccessibility of the ingredients, made available for mainstream dining, to the groups for whom they have multiple, overlapping significances. At the same time, growing interest in Indigenous cuisine has hidden environmental consequences, as foodstuffs are displaced from their ecological niches and deprived of their original stewards in the name of amping-up production.

Food sovereignty, for Indigenous Peoples, asserts the imperative of, and both the right and responsibility to, cultivate/hunt/gather traditional foods on traditional lands; to nurture Indigenous cultural practices around food preparation, consumption, and storage; and to decolonize the local and national food culture to augment both Indigenous health outcomes and cultural resurgence (Grey and Patel 2015). This is a call that cannot be answered via a multicultural mode of engagement. In fact, gastronomic multiculturalism is not only unhelpful here, it is the conduit by which Indigenous cuisine is commodified and sold to the wider society. Even the most defensible arguments backfire in this case – for example, Morgan and Sorrino’s (2010) normative claim about the multilateral benefit of ‘open access’ to cultural heritage takes on a much darker tone, since this practice is contiguous with the ongoing project of ‘opening up’ Indigenous resources for non-Indigenous use.

The characterization of Indigenous foods as *traditional* and *novel* is what drives the demand for access, reinvigorating the elsewhere abandoned ‘culinary authenticity’ discourse. In Settler colonial contexts, authenticity is often both a signifier of approved iterations of, and a mode of external determination over, Indigeneity itself – what Wolfe (1999, p. 163) calls “repressive authenticity.” Of course there is no *authentic* cuisine, since gastronomy is neither a static practice nor a timeless product. The irony here is that ‘traditional’ Indigenous cuisines are creative responses to a wide complex of colonial forces, including government rations, enclosure, and the suppression of traditional knowledge (Grey and Patel 2015).

Ultimately, telling colonized peoples’ stories by cooking their cuisines constitutes erasure through re-narration. It was certainly perceived as such by the group Stop Romanticizing Colonialism! in its protests against Portland’s Saffron Restaurant, whose menu is built around the foods of the British Empire. Defence of the tone-deaf gastronomic theme cited an attempt to “focus on something positive[:] [t]he outcome of joining two cultures” (Rothbaum 2016). Gastronomic multiculturalism is therefore not merely the veneer atop culinary colonialism, it is its justification. In the popular consciousness, disparate elements are consensually merged into a harmonious, richer whole. This is the politics of recognition playing out in the culinary colonial sphere – but what *recognizing food at the table* overlooks is that *tables cannot be set this way*. We illustrate this fact by looking at two very different

Settler liberal multicultural states, Canada and Perú, and the gastronomic multiculturalism in which Andean and Pacific Northwestern Indigenous Peoples are currently embroiled.

### **Gastronomic multiculturalism & culinary colonialism: Two case studies**

The Peruvian Altiplano

#### *Multiculturalism in Perú*

Colonial Perú was governed according to a hierarchically-organized ethnic and racial separation intended to preserve the distinctions that map phenotypes onto cultures (Yrigoyen Fajardo 2002; Arocena 2008). Only post-independence did the focus change from Christianizing and civilizing segregated ethnicities to assimilating them, denying the reality of pluralism: constitutions under the Republic asserted a homogenous, criollo/mestizo, Catholic, Spanish-speaking national identity, which formally endured from 1821 to the 1990s. Throughout the twentieth century, Indigenous movements levied pressure for constitutional recognition of cultural rights against official policies of ‘assimilation’ (beginning in the 1920s) and ‘integration’ (starting in the 1940s). Official attempts at destigmatization saw Quechua and Aymara groups renamed campesinos (peasants) in the early 1960s.

Cultural diversity was still far from a national virtue as of the 1979 Constitution, which paired “respect and affirm[ation]” with a commitment to the “cultural advancement” of Indigenous Peoples (Art. 161). The 1993 Constitution finally acknowledged the longstanding pluricultural national makeup. This swing was arguably an attempt to resolve external pressures: a surge of democratic constitutional reforms throughout Latin America, the rise of regional and global Indigenous movements, and Perú’s ratification of ILO *Convention 169* (Lee Van Cott 2000; Hooker 2005). The mood had shifted globally, with multiculturalism ascendant, and Perú was anxious to be seen as progressive (Grey 2011). That multiculturalism was domesticated – specifically, it overlaid and reproduced longstanding geographical, cultural, and racial hierarchies.

Identity is also curiously apportioned in Peruvian multiculturalism. Generations of Spanish Settlers had modified their own cultural loyalties to found a new identity – the *native Peruvian* – while imposing a variety of other ethnic and class designations on the land’s original inhabitants (Devine 1999). This dismantling of the contemporary category of Indigenous paced with efforts to appropriate the historical one. In Perú, since at least the late 1600s, it has been common to assert political, artistic, or intellectual legitimacy by claiming Inkan descent (Mannheim 1984; Greene 2005). Yet at the same time as ideologues, intellectuals, political elites, and nation-builders enthusiastically embraced even the most anti-colonial Inka of the past, they showed no desire to affiliate themselves with existing, ‘provincial’ Indigenous communities (IWGIA 2011; Mendoza 1998; Greene 2007). The attempt to resolve this contradiction bifurcates historical (aristocratic and extolled) and contemporary (degraded and vilified) Indigeneity. Méndez (1995) famously referred to this as ‘Incas sí; indios, no’ (‘Inkas yes; Indians, no’).

Multiculturalism did not emerge as official state policy until after the turn of the millennium, ushered in by future president Alejandro Toledo's use of Inkan symbols and claim of Andean heritage. Yet his administration's Andean, Amazonian, and Afroperuano Peoples' Commission still contained twenty-four appointed, non-Indigenous state officials and just nine elected Indigenous and Afroperuano representatives (Greene 2006). This belies not only the mandate (and name) of the ministerial entity, but also the fact that Perú is one of the few countries where Indigenous Peoples constitute a majority (CIA 2013). Reading this demographic advantage against profound political and sociocultural disadvantage reveals Peruvian multiculturalism as a system of differential, managed inclusion – a characterization that also describes the recent incorporation of Indigenous foods into the national cuisine.

### *Andean Peoples & novoandina cuisine*

Despite being systematically suppressed right from the time of the conquistadors, Indigenous Andean cuisine has a long tradition of outward influence. *Ceviche* probably derives from the Runasimi word for *tender fish*, and we certainly get *jerky* from their term for salt-dried camelid meat, *ch'arqui*. Yet despite the global diffusion of Andean traditional foods – most famously, the adoption of the potato to feed Europe's Industrial Revolution – inside Perú, a culinary hierarchy has held for centuries. Even today most restaurants serve rice or pasta, considered more cosmopolitan starches, over peasant varieties of potatoes (called *papa*, and viewed by the Quechua as literal relatives) and *kinwa* (paradoxically, a food with “international celebrity status”) (Kerssen 2010).

Increasingly, though, these traditional foods are driving modern Peruvian gastronomy. Several disparate culinary initiatives came together in the 1990s to create New Andean cuisine (*cocina novoandina*), defined as a gastronomy whose “goal is to *rescue* the typical ingredients of the *ancient* Andean culinary traditions while using the preparation and presentation methods of international cuisine” (OECD 2012, p. 93, emphasis added). This phrasing is curious given that chef Bernardo Roca Rey shopped for the first *novoandina* dish at a market in Ica, a thriving Peruvian city of a quarter-million (Deutsch and Murakhver 2012), rather than pilfering them, Indiana Jones-style, from a crumbling Inkan temple. Spurring this turn to the culinary local has been growing attention to Lima as the “gastronomic capital of South America” (Le Cordon Bleu 2016b; Sainsbury 2012). In 2004 *The Economist* referred to Peruvian food as “one of the world's dozen or so great cuisines,” which the Guardian followed up by proclaiming it “[t]he real reason to visit Peru” (Economist 2004; Doran 2008). Consequently, Peruvian chefs began seeking out Indigenous ingredients, and fusion dishes arose rapidly, including *quinotto* (a *kinwa* risotto) and *kiwicha* (amaranth) *paellas*. This is a thoroughly ironic about-face: Spanish Settlers actually outlawed *kinwa* cultivation, and the crop only survived in the most inaccessible regions of the high Andes.

Andean native *papa* are today the main players in the “culinary revolution” driving Peruvian gastro-tourism (GRAIN 2000; Muller 2009; Scurrah, Anderson, and Winge 2008). The International

Potato Centre fed this trend by partnering with culinary institutes in Lima to create a gourmet pedigree for peasant crops (Dias and da Costa 2008). This appears to exemplify the progression from *suppression* to *plurality* to *confluence* in gastronomic multiculturalism, with correlative multilateral benefits – and Andean Indigenous Peoples have strategically mined the notion.

In 2005, Quechua farming communities successfully lobbied for legal recognition of papa (Argumedo and Stenner 2008). This co-initiative with the National Office for the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture yielded *Supreme Decree 009-2005-AG*, the text of which establishes May 30th as the National Day of the Potato, and notes the tuber's "goodness," its role in Andean food security and cultural diversity, and the "national pride" it inspires (Argumedo and Pimbert 2005; Muller 2009). This was a key premise in the Indigenous argument for a more supportive policy environment: one in which they have secure and sustainable access to the resources necessary to develop novel food products, govern their food systems, steward their agrobiodiversity, and successfully market their crops – in other words, to pursue Andean Indigenous food sovereignty (Argumedo and Pimbert 2005). The communities also drafted an agreement, based in Quechua law, to repatriate stolen landraces from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research's potato gene bank in Lima (where they were being 'conserved' for use by private industry and private-industry-driven philanthropy) (Grey 2011). This move was couched in the novel proposition that Indigenous territories, peoples, and practices form a seamless whole, and that this 'bioculture' merits multilateral protection from disembedding, commodification, and alienation.

Such efforts gained ground because emerging analyses pointed to Perú's comparative advantage in transgenic-free agro-biodiversity, which fed into an increasing global demand for novel, high-quality, *traditional* food products (CIP 2008; Dias and da Costa 2008; Lapeña 2007). In a 2007 speech inaugurating Lima's University of the Pacific, celebrity chef Gastón Acurio declared Andean foods a national resource and *cocina novoandina* a potential "global brand" (Peru Food 2007). Products were developed for specific markets, since tourists', gourmards', and local consumers' palates diverge (Dias and da Costa 2008). This gastronomic boom is openly credited with pushing policy development on native crops, particularly "the revaluation of *our genetic patrimony* at all levels of society" (Muller 2009, p. 58, emphasis added). A year after *Supreme Decree 009-2005-AG*, *Law No. 28477* made the Ministry of Agriculture, local and regional governments, and other public and private organizations responsible for promoting the consumption of native crops, with a caveat – emanating solely from Indigenous communities – that these activities focus on sustainability (Muller 2006).

The National Research Council describes Indigenous foods in Perú, grown and eaten continually over millennia, as the "lost crops of the Incas," and "lacking a modern constituency" (NRC 1989, p. 3). Le Cordon Bleu describes Perú's culinary heritage as "a fusion of many different cultures, [...] the result of the various *migrations* that took place over the centuries," listing these as Spanish, African, Chinese, Japanese, and *Incan* (2016a, emphasis added). The language of "rescue," "recovery," and "rehabilitation" everywhere characterizes the uptake of Indigenous foods by the mainstream –

including in quotations from the President of the Peruvian Society of Gastronomy (de Paz 2012). Such a portrayal is especially jarring since the Society characterizes itself as “[going] hand-in-hand with two ideas: nutrition and social inclusion” (de Paz 2012). Further, until shockingly recently, novoandina ingredients were part of a suite of meats, grains, and tubers classified as “dirty Indian food,” rather than “real food for real people” (Markowitz 2012, pp. 35, 9).

In 2012, chef Bernardo Roca Rey (not just the originator of *cocina novoandina* but also the former Vice-Minister for Cultural Heritage) described Andean grains as “so fashionable,” and Andean tubers as “soon [to] be fashionable” (de Paz 2012). Yet rising gastronomic stardom can function against environmental, cultural, and economic justice for Indigenous Peoples. Urban gourmards and gourmets do not necessarily care, or even know (or want to know) about the thousands of varieties that Indigenous communities develop, grow, and consume, and which have ecosystemic, nutritional, and cultural significance. Just as unconcerned are consumers outside of Perú, for whom endorsements from everyone from NASA to Oprah Winfrey sparked an interest in *kinwa*. Fifty countries now grow this pseudo-cereal, formerly restricted to Andean cultivation (Economist 2008). Peruvian farmers began to focus on the few commercial varieties, abandoning thousands of local strains to threatened status while simultaneously shifting traditional cultivation to more soil-exhausting modes – striking a profound blow to the megadiversity that is the sole bulwark against crop loss from climate emergencies in the third-most climate change-affected country on Earth (Takoko 2011; Cherfas 2016). As domestic prices rose, domestic consumption fell (though the relationship between the two was not as straightforward as news outlets claimed) and households switched to less nutritious substitutes (Bellemare et al. 2016; Mohan 2016). Prices eventually deflated, falling just as quickly as they had risen (Cherfas 2016; Economist 2008; Mohan 2016). The corollary of gastronomic novelty is that foodie attention tends to wander, creating instability and additional risk for Indigenous communities.

The multiculturalism-mediated marriage of Indigenous and nationalist goals was never a comfortable match, and both process and outcome were further distorted by market logic. Demand-side economics entails raising consumer awareness while providing incentives to motivate a particular, macro-economically beneficial choice. Despite their marginal contribution to the national economy, the commercial potential of Andean native crops coupled with (or motivated) recognition of their wider significance, particularly their contribution to “the maintenance of lifestyles and traditions *which are the essence of being Peruvian*” (IIAP 2004, emphasis added). The catch is that ‘growing recognition’ seldom translates into tangible gains for Indigenous communities.

The paradigm culinary shift in Perú was largely contained in the coastal region, dominated by the national capital – where it might have increased urban Indigenous Peoples’ access to elements of their culinary culture, as gastronomic multiculturalism purports to achieve through its enlightened ‘cosmopolitan localism,’ if their average annual household budgets did not fall well below the amount needed to dine in *novoandina* style. Further, much of this revalorization amounted to the gentrification of Indigenous gastronomy and assimilation of traditional foods, as pre-existing privilege in taste and

access remained intact. “Essential” lifestyles and traditions, and “gastronomic and culinary richness” were heralded under the banner of a multiculturalism that subsumed Indigeneity within a nominally mestizo identity and claimed Indigenous patrimony as a national heritage. So in the end, Peruvian gourmets and gourmands collectively said “yes” to papas and kinwa, the food of the Inka, and “no” to the contemporary Andean Indigenous agriculturalists whose modern labours (intellectual, spiritual, and physical) maintain these seed lines. Policy support for innovative Quechua efforts to promote a highland ‘eco-gastro-tourism’ has yet to materialize.

## The Pacific Northwest

### *Canadian multiculturalism*

There have been discrete cultures, ethnicities, and even nations within Canada’s borders since the country was founded, but up until the 1970s it dealt with this pluriculturalism by attempting to integrate everyone to an Anglo-Saxon norm. It was contestation around the 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, an attempt to resolve Québécois political demands, that led to Canada being the first nation-state to declare multiculturalism its official policy (Haque 2012). Indigeneity was excluded from the terms of the Commission, which addressed the demands, instead, of activists representing “white minorities” (Kymlicka 2007). Eight years later, the *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework* policy document promoted creative exchanges among cultural groups, who were encouraged to retain and foster their identities. The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) formally enshrined the country’s plural heritage in the Constitution, acknowledging multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic; after which the 1988 *Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism* asserted the freedom of all members of society to preserve, enhance, and share their cultural heritage. Accordingly, Kymlicka (1995) describes a shift from the assimilation of immigrants to the enshrining of the right to practice one’s culture.

Yet arguably, Canada’s first ‘multiculturalism policy’ was the 1969 attempt to repeal the *Indian Act* – the antiquated, racist legislation that even today authorizes the federal government to “regulate and administer in” the lives of Indigenous persons and communities. In the cause of creating a “just society,” the *White Paper* sought to “enable the Indian people to be free – free to develop Indian cultures in an environment of legal, social, and economic equality with other Canadians” (DIAND 1969). This meant eliminating Indian status and wiping out the unique relationship Indigenous nations had with the Canadian state, including nullifying treaty rights and land title and abolishing reserves. Resistance to this proposal triggered the contemporary Indigenous rights movement in Canada. In fact, the pushback was strong enough that the *White Paper* was officially abandoned a mere thirteen months after its release – the original Act was seen as the only protection against a flatline equality that reduced Indigeneity to one ‘heritage’ among many.

Paradoxically, the formal adoption of multiculturalism galvanized Canadian identity, with Environics (2015) noting its further strengthening, as a national symbol, since 2012. Rolling out multiculturalism included promoting the understanding that plurality is both fundamental to Canadian identity and an invaluable resource in shaping the country's future; thus diversity has been reinterpreted as a defining ingredient of the Canadian self (Adams and Langstaff 2008; Day 1998). In 2011, foreign-born Canadians constituted almost a fifth of the total population – the highest of any G8 country – while 13 of its 200 “ethnic origins” had surpassed the 1-million persons mark (Statistics Canada 2016b). Indigenous persons in Canada also number just over one million, or 4.3% of the population (Statistics Canada 2016a). This demographic correspondence certainly contributes to ideas about a broader equivalence of Indigenous and minority groups. As of 2016, 34% of Canadians “[believe] Aboriginal peoples are no different from other ethnic or cultural groups,” “[place] low importance on Aboriginal history and culture as defining Canada,” and “[demonstrate] a lack of interest in learning more about Aboriginal peoples.” Moreover, two-thirds of Canadians feel that Indigenous Peoples have a “sense of entitlement,” which 14% further describe as “unhealthy” (Environics 2016). At the same time, Canadians' endorsement of the articulation between immigration and multiculturalism has held steady, if not improved (Environics 2015). These false equivalences, erasures, and uneven appreciation carry over to the gastronomic sphere.

### *People of the salmon*

Salmon is an iconic food of the West Coast, and one of the few recognized elements of Canada's national cuisine (Stewart 2000). But salmon has always been an Indigenous staple: villages in what is now British Columbia first arose on estuaries, rivers, and streams where the fish ran (Johnsen 2006). The development of technologies for fishing, processing, and storing salmon led to the permanence of these villages, which in turn allowed further technological development and more nuanced systems of stewardship (Muckle 2007). Moreover, the fish is considered a relative of the people – its own nation– and several groups, including the Haida and the Snohomish, self-describe as ‘People of the Salmon.’ Salmon are also central to the potlatch, a well-known yet much misunderstood ceremonial complex. As Nuu-chah-nulth Chief Umeek explains to Turner (2005), the potlatch functions to redistribute resources, especially food, between and within communities, without increasing ecological stress. An example of a gift economy exchange, Lichatowich further describes the potlatch as “temper[ing] the effects of natural highs and lows in salmon abundance,” promoting nutritional and economic stability (1999, p. 35).

In a departure from culinary colonialism's usual trajectory, Canadian salmon was never targeted for eradication. Being native to every European river that drains into the Atlantic, and featuring in narratives from Norse folk-tales to Arthurian legend, Settlers arrived on Canada's West Coast with a well-developed appetite for the fish. The first salmon canneries sprang up in British Columbia within a dozen years of the province's founding, with large industrial fishing operations supplying both local

trade and emerging export markets (Schreiber 2006). These canneries intercepted the runs before they could spawn, while expanding mining, forestry, and agriculture damaged the spawning grounds (Harrison 2011). Settlers reacted to the ensuing crash in salmon populations by protecting and expanding their own access: canneries began processing chum, traditionally smoked by Indigenous groups but passed over by colonial fisheries in favour of the fattier (and earlier-running) sockeye and chinook (Hoar 1951). Not for another generation would Settlers develop a taste for smoked salmon, whose price tag would keep it a novelty food of the wealthy up through World War II.

Starting in 1888, legislation restricted Indigenous fishing to food purposes, outlawing both sale and barter, as well as traditional fishing methods. By 1915 even food-fishing was considered a threat, to be controlled by a blanket federal permit system assessing Indigenous ‘need’ (Wadewitz 2012). Harris (2008) finds this strategy operating in tandem with the reserve system to open up choice resources through Indigenous dispossession. There was a third pillar, though: immediately preceding this colonial capture of Indigenous fisheries, the state outlawed the potlatch. That ban lasted from 1885 to 1951, ensuring that at least one full generation grew up without the key social, economic, ecological, cultural, and political scaffolding the ceremony provided. Cole and Chaikin (1990) explore the cultural damage this inflicted, linking the ban directly to the seizure of salmon for Settler consumption and export.

With the salmon fishery diverted to Settler markets, Indigenous communities found themselves cut off from a “cultural keystone species” (Garibaldi and Turner 2004). They never accepted these legal bounds, though, and arrests were common from the very first year of the permit system. In this case, Indigenous resistance culminated in the partial reestablishment of Indigenous food sovereignty via legal challenge: a 1990 Supreme Court case, *R. v. Sparrow*, found that Musqueam First Nation had the right to fish for food, social, and ceremonial (FSC) purposes, a pronouncement Isaac (1993) describes as a turning point in official relations with Indigenous nations. In its wake, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) initiated an Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, and treaty negotiations since have included fisheries rights (Pinkerton 1994). In 2009 FSC was expanded to recognize the right of Indigenous communities to sell fish.

One outcome of this shift has been the initiation of ‘co-management:’ decentralized common property institutions, or “arrangements whereby governments and Aboriginal entities [...] enter into formal agreements specifying their respective rights, powers and obligations with reference to the management and allocation of resources” (RCAP 1996, p. 640). In the case of Pacific salmon, harvesting is coordinated by Ottawa and individual First Nations, the DFO apportions fish to each band, and tribal councils allocate fishing rights to band members. As Goetze (2005) observes, because they dodge explicit definitions of Indigenous rights and jurisdiction, governments are more likely to negotiate co-management agreements than, say, land claims, and to act far more quickly on urgent issues under such protocols. What co-management fails to resolve is the tension between Aboriginal fisheries, commercial operations, and the sport sector; market actors and sport fishing organizations

have lobbied collectively against Indigenous access (Pinkerton 1994). Here is where the public's understanding of Canadian multiculturalism and misunderstanding of Canadian history presents a particular hurdle: Indigenous nations are seen as an unfairly privileged special interest group. In fact, in 2006 Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper referred to the system as “segregated” and “race-based,” and swore to oppose Aboriginal fisheries (Rud and Kines 2006). Violent clashes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishermen are common, typically instigated by the latter in protest of this *undemocratic* advantage (for example, the ‘Burnt Church Crisis’).

In 2013 Pacific salmon was declared BC's official fish, described by the province's Environment Minister as “a significant economic driver [...] due to commercial and recreational fisheries” (CBC News 2013). Yet despite being an inherently adaptable species, habitat destruction, the effects of climate change, and a long history of overharvesting have dramatically decreased wild salmon populations (Beamish 1995; Miller 2000). In 2009 alone, almost twelve million failed to return to their spawning grounds (Globe and Mail 2017). This is especially troubling since, as Johnsen notes, “the importance of salmon to the native economy cannot be overstated,” and many Indigenous livelihoods still follow the yearly run (2006, p. 7). Because wild stocks are declining while consumer demand rises, a salmon farming industry has emerged – despite significant evidence of the industry's harmful environmental effects, including damage to wild stocks. Many Indigenous representatives argue that rather than establishing fish farms, the focus should be on protecting wild Pacific salmon habitat (Gerwing and McDaniels 2006). In August 2016, in fact, Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Elders served 72-hour eviction notices to two Japanese-owned salmon farms (Hernandez 2010).

Although Indigenous foods have graced Settler tables since at least the nineteenth century, Indigenous dishes made their debut much more recently – smoked salmon being a prime example. Also enjoying a contemporary upswell are fusion dishes that incorporate salmon into immigrant cuisines, most famously the BC roll, a variety of maki sushi. Salmon was recently named one of the fifty “most Canadian foods,” along with other Indigenous staples such as bannock, pemmican, and Saskatoon berries, while the fish has been used to brand BC (Patel and Sibonney 2010; Hashimoto and Telfer 2006). Smoked salmon is a mainstay in tourist gift shops, typically sold in cedar boxes adorned with Salish art, though seldom purchased from Salish peoples, while the marketing of salmon as a source of high-quality protein and omega-3 fatty acids is driving global demand (Gerwing and McDaniels 2006).

Yet still, Indigenous cuisine is absent from the academic literature and the Canadian culinary landscape, a state reflecting longstanding assimilation efforts. 1947's *Citizenship Act* folded Indian Affairs into a new Department of Citizenship and Immigration, with the goal of creating a unified category of Canadian in which Indigenous Peoples were “immigrants too” (Bohaker and Iacovetta 2009, p. 427). The apolitical, historical-anthropological scholarship on Indigenous foodways emerges from this period, which lasted until the late 1960s, while mention of a living Indigenous cuisine is still exceedingly rare (see Lemelin, Koster, & Youroukos 2015 for an exception). On the ground, Indigenous gastronomy lacks both consumer and policy support. As Rich Francis, a Tetlit Gwich'in and Tuscarora

chef, notes, government regulations around wild food “don’t allow us to fully express ourselves” (Abraham 2017), while Indigenous-run and traditional food eateries often disappear as quickly as they appear. The Ucluth First Nation’s Kwisis Feast House on Wickaninnish Beach, named one of the top five Indigenous restaurants just a year ago, is shuttered today; while in the provincial capital, foodies can get frybread from fusion restaurants, eliminating the need to seek out the Songhees Nation’s Seafood and Steam food truck. Moreover, these culinary sources are actually equivalent; multiculturalism, eclipsing colonialism in both the national memory and popular imagination, makes it so.

## Discussion

In New Zealand, Morris (2010) describes the incorporation of Maori foods into the national food culture as reflective of a specific desire to consume their cuisine *from without*, as Indigenous Peoples are associated with lesser culinary and service skill. In other words: a love of Maori food is best satisfied by non-Maori chefs and restaurateurs. This can be seen even more blatantly in Peru, where Indigenous foods are being salvaged’ from their ‘dirtiness’ by celebrity chefs and cosmopolitan foodies, to be incorporated into a more elevated gastronomy. In Canada, by way of contrast, Indigenous foods have benefitted from a selling of Indigenous cultures generally – BC, after all, was recently the site of an Olympics heavily branded with Indigenous symbols.

Indeed, over the past several decades the discourse undergirding multicultural policymaking has increasingly been marked by notions of the *profitability* of ethnicity. Abu-Laban and Gabriel identify this “marketing and selling of diversity” as a phase-demarking shift away from the initial, postwar multicultural values of a just society (2002, p. 171). Under this logic, Indigenous cultures, long denigrated in the cause of forced assimilation, cannot be rendered profitable without first being valorized. The market-valorization of cuisine, as our case studies reveal, can be accomplished either via the *exclusion* of Indigeneity (as seen in Peru, where Quechua are passed over in favour of the more noble, essentially fictive, and conveniently long-deceased Inkan ancestors of the modern nation) or its *subsumation* (as seen in Canada, where Canadian-ness encompasses ‘Aboriginality’ in all its contemporary variety). These paths map similar gastronomic ends, though: Quechua restaurants may be far fewer, less accessible, and less newsworthy than their counterparts in Canada, yet Canadians have still not awarded Indigenous restaurants patronage sufficient to keep their doors open. At the same time, Indigenous dishes, from bannock/frybread to traditionally syrup-smoked (candied) salmon can be purchased in locations as mundane as the corner grocery store on Canada’s West Coast; just as one can partake of novoandina cuisine from Qosqo to Lima without ever eating a *Quechua* meal.

This is not to overlook the important differences in these cases. Although both countries are liberal democracies steered by policies of multiculturalism, politically Canada has entered a period of combination and convergence while Perú still struggles to navigate the vestiges of pluralism. The legal contexts are also markedly different: Peruvian Indigenous Peoples cannot assert treaty rights, nor has

the discourse of inherent rights penetrated the legal mainstream in Perú. However innovative, protocols derived from Quechua law have thus far been adhered to voluntarily by the parties; their fate upon legal challenge is unclear. And although the tipping-point *Sparrow* decision in our Canadian case involved what was, at the time, a non-treaty nation, it unfolded against a constitutionally-enshrined recognition of Aboriginal rights that goes well beyond Perú's wavering accommodations.

Nevertheless, in both Perú and Canada, society and state operate on the false equivalence of Indigenous and minority groups; undertake powerful narrative erasures; and show an uneven appreciation and weak grasp of Indigeneity, along with a disinclination to improve that understanding. The market incentivizes the incorporation of Indigenous foods into the gastronomic mainstream under such conditions: necessarily valorizing only those aspects of Indigeneity that seem likely to motivate consumer spending, and thus reinforcing ignorance and expurgation. As a result of the interplay between these three, Indigenous cuisine is either absent from Canadian and Peruvian food policy and tourism, or else appears de-Indigenized through reclassification as a national heritage and reinterpretation by non-Indigenous chefs and restaurateurs. Policy and consumer support in both countries is lacking, while governments in each undertake marketing campaigns that offer Indigenous foods as part of the national (or provincial) brand. Perhaps most pressingly: in neither Canada nor Perú does the incorporation of Indigenous gastronomy include concern for the fate of the threatened ecosystems from which these cuisines arose, and in which they still root, even as a source of the raw, 'native' ingredients non-Indigenous chefs desire. In both cases – the 'cultural keystone' species of salmon and papas, both seen as literal relatives of the People – availability to Settlers was ensured at the expense of Indigenous access.

In terms of our central thesis, the most important consonance is that the mindful withholding of food from the market system has, in both Perú and Canada, been a key scaffold of Indigenous food sovereignty. A combination of environmental advocacy, the assertion of inherent rights, and Indigenous resurgence has meant the de facto removal of certain food 'resources' from economic development, while both Peruvian and Canadian legislative measures have secured a kind of limited culinary decolonization by affirming Indigenous Peoples' unique access, governance, and stewardship rights to food resources, along with their redirection to Indigenous communities. This has invariably occurred at the sharp end of Indigenous resistance – including the everyday resistance of gastronomic practice.

## **Conclusion**

Dewing (2009) interprets the concept of a multicultural society in three ways: as a sociological fact, as a state ideology, and as a policy with political implications. Multiculturalism arrives in cuisines via all three, but primarily as a praxis: an experiential mix of a state ideology, naturalized and internalized; the sociological fact of cultural diversity in highly plural nation-states; and government policies driving the local, regional, and national food culture. Progressing in stages from assimilation through pluralism to combination, political multiculturalism strives to construct a unified, liberal

democratic national identity via the affirmative recognition of cultural difference. We have argued that gastronomic multiculturalism follows a similar transit in producing a national multiethnic culinary identity, progressing from suppression to plurality to convergence/creolization of cuisines, recognizing the value of ethnic ingredients and techniques. Because Indigenous Peoples share unique historical justice claims and a fundamental territoriality that cannot be elided, and because their aspirations orbit not equal incorporation but affirmative distinction, multicultural policies offer few – if any – dividends. They thus experience not *gastronomic multiculturalism* but what we have here termed *culinary colonialism*: a historical transit from destruction and denigration of ingredients and cuisines; to forced assimilation to a Settler gastronomic norm; to cultural appropriation of Indigenous foods and dishes. In the gastronomic sphere, multicultural policies and practises are the means by which Indigenous foods enter the mainstream as alienated commodities. Food systems justice, and the very definition of food sovereignty, thus requires recognition of Indigenous Peoples' right to hold gastronomic capital back from the market.

If our argument is sound, and the *active sharing* and *mindful withholding* of food and cuisine are necessary expansions of Indigenous food sovereignty, this sends clear cues to allies. Education, activism, and policymaking must support Indigenous Peoples as the narrators of their own gastronomies, as well as their determinative say in whether and how they will participate in the national culinary culture. Issues of Indigenous self-determination and decolonization are opaque to many citizens in liberal multicultural Settler states, including other food sovereigntists (Desmarais and Wittman 2014), inspiring reactions from dismissal to confusion to trepidation. In gastronomic encounters, these prerogatives become downright *unappetizing*; eating, after all, is an act of warm enjoyment (or not), rather than critical engagement. And when food and politics do mix, the tendency to pit Indigenous rights against Settler environmental ethics carries over into cuisine – for example, the flood of negative reviews for, and an international petition targeting, Nēhiyaw chef Joseph Shawana' Ku-kum restaurant in Toronto, after seal meat appeared the menu (Whalen 2017).

What we call for, then, is not only greater food systems literacy (Widener and Karides 2014), but a literacy rooted in Indigenous rights and colonial history, as well as solidarity strategies suited to decolonizing cuisine in particular. For example, Steckley (2016), in her study of Haitian food politics, calls for a strategic 'dietary solidarity;' while provenancing initiatives, which have yielded some notable successes for Indigenous producers (Reid and Rout 2016), might be adapted from food products to dishes, restaurants, and recipes. Such initiatives should accompany material support for Indigenous communities to develop novel food products, to manage their own foodscapes, and to market their own cuisines. Bookending this commitment is an active defence of the choice to keep Indigenous gastronomic capital out of the market system. Finally, supporting Indigenous food sovereignty, by definition, entails affirming the inherent and treaty rights under which Indigenous Peoples may cultivate, hunt, gather, steward, *and prepare, serve, and eat* traditional foods *on traditional territories*.

Moving forward, we should remember that La Via Campesina, in its *misticas*,<sup>3</sup> undertakes the free exchange of culture – but under conditions of reciprocity and trust, not market appropriation. What ‘reciprocity’ and ‘trust’ would look like in contemporary Settler colonial states, and how those conditions might be made to obtain, is a deserving subject of future research. Unfortunately, multiculturalism also deeply inflects food systems research, reproducing itself (and its erasures) across academic and policy fields. One example would be the recent work on ‘culturally appropriate foods’ and ‘ethnocultural vegetables,’ both enrichments of ‘cosmopolitan localism’ (Bond and Feagan 2013; Adekunle, Filson, and Sethuratnam 2012). Yet the concept of ‘ethnoculture’ is emblematic of a broader partitioning of issues into political and cultural spheres, endorsing the problematic assumption that culture is somehow outside of politics, subject to choice, and practicable under any status quo. We are concerned that such an approach obscures contemporary struggles and troubling histories through a powerful appeal to longstanding, intuitively coherent, and morally comforting narratives – narratives of multiculturalism. A greater awareness of the specificity of Indigenous peoples could anchor a much-needed, conscious movement back to *the political* from the outermost environs of *the cultural* in our analyses of food systems.

Cuisine is simultaneously a symbol, a practice, and, especially for subaltern groups, a mode of both traditional knowledge transmission and decolonization. It is one of the many complex, historically grounded, and interlocking ways in which people understand and assert their relationship to place through food. Gastronomy thus merits greater consideration in the scholarship on food sovereignty, as the field now enters its ‘second generation’ (Edelman et al. 2014). This is not only a fitting, but a necessary broadening, since Indigenous Peoples do not segregate food systems politics in this way: portioning gastronomy off as an apolitical or lesser aspect. Cooking and consuming Indigenous cuisine is, everywhere, an everyday act of resistance and resurgence. Conversely, the language of food sovereignty has proven particularly useful in studying Indigenous food systems politics, a fact that explains its rapid uptake in recent years (Daigle 2017). Further, it is this dialect in particular that has helped move the conversation beyond food-as-commodity and a view of food security as a lucky outcome of the black box of liberal policymaking (after all, food sovereignty is about the process, not merely the product). We assert that cuisine, here, is an important, overlooked lens.

A multicultural society’s public palate is an assertion of its character; as Lu and Fine write, “[t]hrough the consumption of ethnic cuisine we demonstrate to ourselves and others that we are cosmopolitan and tolerant” (1995, p. 539). In gastronomy especially, multiculturalism reaches its zenith: nothing could be more celebratory and unifying than a national, megadiverse cuisine in which minority cultures are lauded as equal contributors, and in which lateral incorporation ensures the justice of the sharing. The colonial capture of Indigenous gastronomy is masked by this process, through which

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<sup>3</sup> *Misticas* are ceremonies used to build cross-cultural solidarity (“unity in diversity”) among peasant groups. Every La Via Campesina meeting opens with a *mistica* (Martinez-Torres and Rosset 2010).

Indigenous Peoples finally become ‘immigrants too.’ In our case studies, looking at the impact of multiculturalism on cuisine reveals how liberalism’s lack of concern about the pathways food travels – whether by market, gift, or barter – combines with its emphasis on markets as producing freedom, to endorse an ambivalence about who contributes to markets, under what terms, and whose choices (and correlate freedoms) are thereby enhanced. Including Indigenous Peoples’ gastronomic politics under the rubric of food sovereignty thus enriches our understanding of these struggles as not only *anticapitalist* but *anticolonial* – and more, projects whose radical potential is a function of the fundamental consonance between the two. It also highlights the fact that liberal multiculturalism, as capitalism’s mode of political engagement in highly plural societies, is incompatible with the deepest goals of the food sovereignty movement.

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