

# Globalization of food assignment

Sociology



The Globalization of Food In Matthew Rerstart's book Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest, he states that " the Spanish Conquest is a mere episode in the globalization of access to resources of food production. The plants and animals of certain Old World environments and regions have a greater potential as food, and the peoples of those regions have enjoyed advantages over others as a result. " (145). In this, he asserts that the " big picture" reason for the Spaniards to come to America was simply food.

He is taking a step back to look at the substratum underlying the mound of glorious reasons to claim Latin America for Spain. That because of the Spaniards' access to better food through out their history, the Spaniards evolved faster thus advancing in technology more quickly and eventually they were able to cross the Atlantic and explore, conquer, but also to grow food. With food comes life, and this very basic human understanding allows Rerstart's statement to be a true one. Food is a necessity, something that we can not live without, so it makes sense that an aspect of the new world's richness would be land to grow food on.

With the growth of food comes the growth of settlements, colonists, communities, an economy, and then taxes that can be put on a developing town to benefit the conquistadors and the crown. The foundation for the Spaniards hopes and ambitions was food, whether consciously or consent intently. Through out Rerstart's book, the reasons for the Conquest that every one knows about and therefore have created myths about: gold, power, exploration, all can be tied to food. They came to America so they and those who followed them could live Spanish lives, and to have Spanish lives you had to eat Spanish food.

Restart also talks about the globalization of food; that the Spanish would bring their food to the new world and spread it over the natives. This is different than sharing, which implies an equal give and take from two parties. That was not the mentality of either group. The Natives had already been living in a conquest society for centuries. They were accustomed to being taken by a party, and though the Spanish had different ideas of what “conquer was, the Natives already knew that new people meant new customs. There was no gentle connection between equal cultures.

The dominant culture told you what to believe, what to speak, and who to call the imperial person or persons you paid tribute to. They enforced such orders with a show of strength, and if you disobeyed, your life was at risk. The Spanish even had a document you read to your new subjects informing them of this demographic change called the Requirement, or ‘the Requirement’. It read as follows; His Majesty and I, in his name, will receive you... And will leave your women and children free, without servitude so that with them and with yourselves you can freely do what you wish... And we will not compel you to turn Christians. But if you do not do it... With the help of god will forcefully enter against you, and will make war everywhere and however can and will subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and His Majesty, and will take your wives and children and I will make them slaves... And I will take your goods and will do to you all the evil and damages that a lord may do to vassals who do not obey or receive him. (87)

This shows that the Spanish does not share, but spreads; seeks to push customs and laws onto a subject rather than strive to understand one another.

There is some question as to whether the Requirement was even understood by the Natives it was being read and translated to. But because the Natives were used to conquerors bulldozing the law above, they accepted it (for the most part) and moved on. They still woke up every morning and went out to the field to work, still had babies, still ate dinner. What did it matter who they were paying tribute to as long as they paved it. Over time the Spanish food and culture spread with the continuation of Spanish explorers and colonists so that eventually we have the Latin American culture known today.

By globalization their food, the Spanish integrated with the underprivileged Natives and thus brought them to the Spanish level of advantage. This did not happen without an initial set back though, as Restart points out later. This set back was disease. Restart states, " In the case of Europeans introducing new foods to Native Americans, the parallel introduction of Old World diseases made the encounter especially uneven" (145). Here he points out that Spanish-Native integration didn't happen over night. There was conquest, followed by war and disease, finally acceptance, and then over time as the Spanish grew there crops,

Spanish-Native culture was intertwined and advanced to the status of European culture. Restart's point in his statement has value. You must think of his idea, the globalization of food being a factor of the Spanish Conquest, not in a particularly literal sense, but rather in a big picture kind of way. Restart knows Court's was not thinking about making European food global when he and 200 other Spaniards sought to control the area we now know as

Latin America. But on a larger scale, better food brings better life, and a better life was what the conquistadors were out to find.