



# **Foodscapes, Foodfields, and Identities in the Yucatán (CEDLA Latin America Studies)**

*Steffan Igor Ayora-Diaz*

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The state of Yucatán has its own distinct culinary tradition, and local people are constantly thinking and talking about food. They use it as a vehicle for social relations but also to distinguish themselves from "Mexicans." This book examines the politics surrounding regional cuisine, as the author argues that Yucatecan gastronomy has been created and promoted in an effort to affirm the identity of a regional people and to oppose the hegemonic force of central Mexican cultural icons and forms. In particular, Yucatecan gastronomy counters the homogenizing drive of a national cuisine based on dominant central Mexican appetencies and defies the image of Mexican national cuisine as rooted in indigenous traditions. Drawing on post-structural and postcolonial theory, the author proposes that Yucatecan gastronomy - having successfully gained a reputation as distinct and distant from 'Mexican' cuisine - is a bifurcation from regional culinary practices. However, the author warns, this leads to a double, paradoxical situation that divides the nation: while a national cuisine attempts to silence regional cultural diversity, the fissures in the project of a homogeneous regional identity are revealed.

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