

Ex-position Feature Topic Call for Papers
Food: Sacrificial, Spiritual, and Secular

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Publication Date: June 2021 (Issue No. 45)

Submission Deadline: November 30, 2020



The journal is pleased to collaborate with The Fourteenth International Conference of the Taiwan Association of Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Studies (TACMRS) and publish a feature topic on the theme of their October 2020 conference. Submissions from scholars not participating in the conference are also welcome.

Food, whether secular or spiritual, physical or metaphysical, human or nonhuman, has been an important issue throughout the history of this planet. Human history is a long story of appetitive contest with nature and the environment, while consumption is an empowering practice that involves struggle and sacrifice. The matter of food may illuminate or complicate histories of labor, leisure, science, production, ethical considerations, religious discourse and practices, and environmental concerns.

Eating and drinking are not only biological behaviors but also acts filled with deeper significance. In the Book of Genesis, God endows humans with ascendancy over the natural world, just as Noah is instructed that every living thing is a potential meal for humankind. The rules for the edible and nonedible in the Bible concern the establishment of a communal identity. In Greek mythology, the change of the seasons is caused by Persephone's eating of the seeds of a pomegranate in Hades. In the *Iliad*, Achilles's refusal to eat indicates both his super- and sub-human status. Eating and drinking in many religions also serve as fundamental metaphors for human connectedness with the divine. For Christians, the Eucharistic bread and wine denote the continuing presence of Jesus in the world, whether in sign or reality, as is graphically portrayed by the Ugolino episode in Dante's *Inferno*.

Food, drink, and modes of consumption have been crucial topics in many fields and periods. Plato and Xenophon, for example, considered a symposium the perfect place and time for philosophical inquiries, where the banquet of wisdom could be consumed. In medieval English romances, banquets and feasts are not only social occasions but also venues where miracles and mysteries happen. In Thomas More's *Utopia*, the moral meanings and ethical implications of diet are treated in the context of the design of the farms and dietary treatises. Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* shows how food intakes were thought to influence

the balance of the four bodily humors when Petruccio denies Katherine meat in an attempt to quench her feisty temper. Lady Mary Wroth's 1621 prose romance *Urania* reflects the social changes around banqueting with particular reference to the court of King James I. In Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, the protagonist's excessive desire, social abnormality, and moral degeneration is demonstrated by the consumption of parrots, nightingales, peacocks, and ostriches. In the visual arts, food and drink also serve as important cultural repositories of numerous allegories and symbols. While Cornucopias celebrate abundance and thanksgiving, apples in devotional paintings frequently symbolize redemption. Furthermore, in material culture, importation of exotic food bore witness to the burgeoning globalization evidenced by frequent international trade and cultural exchange. Oranges stood for wealth in regions such as Flanders after being imported from Spain, while pineapples with their crown-like bracts made their way to European furniture and paintings as images of power after being imported from South America.

To explore the important issues of food/drink/consumption, this feature topic welcomes papers from scholars working in all fields such as anthropology, geography, history, literature, art, politics, sociology, religion, and cultural studies from the pre-modern to the early modern periods. Topics for consideration may include (but are not limited to):

- Art and visualization of food/drink/consumption
- Boundaries of the edible and nonedible
- Critical explorations of food/drink/consumption
- Culinary writings
- Politics of food/drink/consumption
- Religion, heresy, or the sacred forms of food/drink/consumption
- Food/drink/consumption and fasting, festivity, or medicine
- Food/drink/consumption and emotions, obsessions, or language
- Food/drink/consumption and gender, racial identity, or society
- Food/drink/consumption and the moralistic/legislative
- Food/drink/consumption and ecology, philosophy, or theology
- Food/drink/consumption and Medievalism or technology

****For information about TACMRS and the conference:**

<https://2020tacmrs.wordpress.com>

<http://tacmrs.org.tw/main.php>

****For submission guidelines of the journal:**

<http://ex-position.org>