

**The Fourteenth International Conference of the Taiwan Association of Classical,
Medieval and Renaissance Studies (TACMRS)**

**23-24 October 2020
National Taiwan University**

Call for Papers

Food: Sacrificial, Spiritual, and Secular

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 inquisitions, 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 Petruchio 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 conference 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 might 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

TACMRS warmly invites papers either in English or Chinese that reach beyond the traditional chronological and disciplinary borders of Classical, Medieval, and Early Modern Studies. This conference will comprise Paper sessions and a Roundtable discussion for pedagogy. Paper proposals and sponsored panel proposals (with individual paper abstracts) are welcomed. To ensure the quality of the papers

presented, the presenters should submit drafts of full papers by the end of August 2020. Selected full papers will be peer-reviewed and published in a special issue of *Ex-position*.

Please submit proposals (250 words for English, 500 words for Chinese) along with a one-page CV to tacmrs.ntu@gmail.com by 6 January 2020. The Conference will take place on 23-24 October 2020 at National Taiwan University in Taipei, Taiwan. There is no registration fee for the conference. Please note, presenters should be members of TACMRS if they reside in Taiwan. Membership application forms can be downloaded from the TACMRS website or via email upon request. For more information, please visit the 2020 TACMRS Conference website at <https://2020tacmrs.wordpress.com/> and the TACMRS website at <http://tacmrs.org.tw/main.php>.