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(Article begins on next page)



International Conference

Foodologies

Nourishment, Language, Communication

June 14-15, 2021

University of Turin - via Webex: <http://bit.ly/foodologies>

Book of Abstracts

The Conference is organised by University of Turin (UniTo),
in collaboration with New York University (NYU),
under the scientific direction of Prof. Simona Stano.

It has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020
research and innovation programme
under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement No 795025.

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“Geometric dessert” by Dinara Kasko (@dinarakasko).

Ed. by Simona Stano (2021)

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June 14, 2021

9:00 – 9:20 | *Opening Remarks* - **Simona Stano** (University of Turin - New York University), “Foodologies”

9:20 – 10:20 | *Food, Ideology, and Common Sense* – chair: **Franciscu Sedda** (University of Cagliari)

Massimo Leone (University of Turin - Shanghai University), “The Right Face of Food: Semiotic Ideologies of Orientation in Everyday Life”

Anna Maria Lorusso (University of Bologna), “The Boundaries of the Edible”

10:20 – 12:00 | *Food, Myths, and (Sense) Regimes* – chair: **Francesco Mangiapane** (University of Palermo)

Jesús Contreras Hernández (Universitat de Barcelona), “De la escasez a la abundancia; del hambre a la salud: de los mitos alimentarios del pasado a los mitos alimentarios del presente”

Dario Martinelli (Kaunas University of Technology) “Veganism and Carnism – (Semiotic) Analysis of a (Semiotic) Conflict”

Lisa Märckz, Nele Langebraun and **Michael Gibbert** (Università della Svizzera Italiana), “On-farm Slaughter in Switzerland: Feeding Sustainable Omnivorous Societies”

12:00 – 13:00 | *Book presentations 1 – Special Semioboomer*, hosted by **Gabriele Marino** and **Bruno Surace** (University of Turin), with **Simona Stano**

Franciscu Sedda (University of Cagliari), *Su porceddu. Storia di un piatto, racconto di un popolo*

Luca Cesari (essayist and historian of gastronomy), *Storia della pasta in dieci piatti. Dai tortellini alla carbonara*

13:00 – 14:30 | **Lunch break**

14:30 – 16:00 | *Food, Trust, and the Media* – chair: **Massimo Leone** (University of Turin - Shanghai University)

Maurizio Ferraris (University of Turin) “In Food We Trust”

Tiziana Andina (University of Turin) “Nurturing Trust: Between Transgenerationality and Digital Technologies”

Kristian Bankov (New Bulgarian University - Sichuan University) “Gastromaniac. How Food Influencers Create Trust”

16:00 – 18:00 | *Food, Cults, and Trends* – chair: **Jenny Ponzio** (University of Turin)

Martina Corgnati (Brera Academy) “On the Last Supper’s Tables”

Amy Bentley (New York University) “Food and Modernity in Post-Vatican II American Catholicism”

Daniela Fargione (University of Turin) “‘Eating with your eyes’: The Celebration of Gluttony in American Culture”

Marcel Danesi (University of Toronto) “The Semiotics of Fast and Junk Food”

June 15, 2021

9:30 – 11:00 AM | *Texts, Senses, Meanings* – chair: **Simona Stano** (University of Turin - New York University)

Gianfranco Marrone (University of Palermo), “Post-gastromanie et langage: de la communication à l’énonciation”

Ugo Volli (University of Turin), “Art and Syntax of Food: Antonia Klugmann’s Culinary Idiolect on a Menu”

Nicola Perullo (University of Gastronomic Sciences), “Epistemology: A Relational Aesthetics Through Wine”

11:00 – 12:00 | *Identities, Cultures, Imaginaries* – chair: **Antonio Santangelo** (University of Turin)

Isabella Pezzini (Sapienza University of Rome), “Tables italiennes. Mythologies de Federico Fellini”

Mohamed Bernoussi (Moulay Ismail University), “How to Recognize the Political Regime of a Dish”

12:00 – 13:00 | *Book presentations 2 – Special Semioboomer*, hosted by **Gabriele Marino** and **Bruno Surace** (University of Turin), with **Simona Stano**

Fabio Parasecoli (New York University) and **Mateusz Halawa** (Polish Academy of Sciences), *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities*

Emily Contois (University of Tulsa), *Diners, Dudes, and Diets: How Gender and Power Collide in Food Media and Culture*

The Conference is organised by the University of Turin (UniTo), in collaboration with New York University (NYU), under the scientific direction of Prof. Simona Stano

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Participation is open and free of charge

Conference link: <http://bit.ly/foodologies>

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Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/COMFECTION/>

Image: “Geometric dessert” by Dinara Kasko

Abstracts



Foodologies

Simona Stano

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In his famous essay *Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption*, Roland Barthes (1961) suggested that food “is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical or nutritional studies. It is also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior” (ET 1997: 21). Already in the 1950s, in fact, he pointed out the ideological connotation of food, insisting on various examples taken from the food universe in his analysis of modern-day “mythologies” (Barthes 1957). Food choice and practices, in other words, can be seen as acts of signification allowing people to establish and sustain their identities. These acts, as well as the multiple cultural representations that support and are supported by them, serve as vehicles through which ideological expectations are circulated, enforced, and transgressed.

This has become even more important in present-day “gastromania” (Marrone 2014): not only do we eat food, but also and above all we talk about it, we describe it, we comment on it, we share its pictures on social networks, etc., thus investing it with multiple meanings and values that in turn mediate our gastronomic experiences. What is more, in contemporary societies the agro-food industrialization has eroded the socio-cultural constraints that used to regulate the gastronomic universe, thus allowing for more autonomy and freedom in food choices, but at the same time creating insecurity and “gastro-anomy” (Fischler 1979). Food has thus become the object of an individual decision, which has further increased the role of contemporary mythologies in (re-)establishing an “order”, that is to say, a logic or system of reference, in everyday eating. Concurrently, digital technology has made it easier to produce and share such mythologies, improving access to information and knowledge, but also resulting in the spread of unverified data and fake news (cf. Stano 2020). We will deal with these crucial issues from a semiotic point of view, pointing out the main aspects of a critical study of food.

Simona Stano is a Tenure-Track Assistant at the University of Turin (UNITO, Italy) and Visiting Research Scholar at New York University (NYU, US). She has been awarded a Marie Curie Global Fellowship for a research project (COMFECTION, 2019-2021) on the semiotic analysis of food communication. She collaborated as Senior Researcher with the International Semiotics Institute (ISI, 2015-2018), and as Visiting Researcher with the University of Toronto (UofT, Canada, 2013), the University of Barcelona (UB, Spain, 2015-2016), Kaunas University of Technology (KTU, Lithuania, 2015-2019) and Observatorio de la Alimentación (ODELA, Spain, 2015-2016). Her research focuses mainly on food semiotics, corporeality and communication studies, and on such topics she has published several papers, edited journals and two monographs (*Eating the Other. Translations of the Culinary Code*, 2015; *I sensi del cibo. Elementi di semiotica dell'alimentazione*, 2018).



The Right Face of Food: **Semiotic Ideologies of Orientation in Everyday Life**

Massimo Leone

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Every Italian knows that the morphology of bread is not neutral, and manifests its axiology in specific syntactic configurations and pragmatic contexts: placing a loaf of bread ‘upside down’ on the table is usually considered as awkward, impolite, or even as a bad omen, while holding a sandwich ‘with the wrong side out’ is inelegant and condemnable. More generally, the scenes and scripts of food involve not only a gastronomy but also a gastro-toponymy, which draws from common sense, or even from its codified texts, insights about the correct orientation of people, food, and objects: who is going to sit facing the door during a Chinese dinner; where it is admissible that chopsticks point to at a Japanese table; which is the right orientation of cutlery at a British high table; etc. In these as in other circumstances, the semiotic gaze seems to surmise that food and eating have a sort of abstract face, which is important to respect in order to preserve the sacrality of eating. Reflections on such phenomenon may pave the way for a more general consideration of the ‘semiotic ideologies of orientation’ in everyday life.

Massimo Leone is Professor of Philosophy of Communication, Cultural Semiotics, and Visual Semiotics at the University of Turin, Italy, and Part-Time Professor of Semiotics at Shanghai University, China. He is the Principal Investigator of the ERC Consolidator Project “FACETS – Face Aesthetics in Contemporary E-Technological Societies”; he is the Editor-In-Chief of *Semiotica* (Walter de Gruyter).



The Boundaries of the Edible

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From 1 January 2018, the law that allows to eat edible insects was also introduced in Italy. After three years, insect-based food is struggling to fit in and the eating habits of Italians have not undergone any radical change. But are insects *really* edible in Italy?

The question I ask naturally has to do with the actual acceptability of this element in our food culture, which does not vary according to a renewed legislation, but rather has to do with the *semiotic regulation* of a series of cultural values. In a semiotic perspective (that also adopts a pragmatic-Peircean approach), in fact, meaning is also a disposition to act; therefore, if a work is not carried out on the meaning of a given category, it will be difficult to change the disposition to act, and the opposite process (to enable new possibilities of action, thus trying to change the meaning of the term “insect”) will be ineffective.

What we will reflect on will be the negotiability of *common sense*, because there is no doubt that in Italy, in terms of common sense, insects are not a food. We will therefore try to understand what are the semantic incompatibilities (or areas of friction) that separate the universe of insects from the universe of food. After this semantic analysis, we will be able to consider the communication strategies to manage the problem, starting with the analysis of the rhetorical strategies that have been put in place by those interested in communicating this new product, sometimes explanatory-argumentative strategies, other times dissimulating strategies.

Anna Maria Lorusso is Associate professor in the Department of Philosophy and Communication of Bologna University, where she teaches “Semiotics of Culture” and “Analysis of Media Communication”. Since 2017 she is President of the Italian Association of Semiotics. Among her last books in English: *MemoSur/MemoSouth. Memory, Commemoration and Trauma in Post-Dictatorship Argentina and Chile* (ed., along with A. Sharman, M. Grass Kleiner and S. Savoini London, Critical, Cultural and Communications Press, 2017), *Cultural Semiotics* (London, Palgrave-MacMillan, 2016). She published in 2018 a book about post-truth (*Post-verità. Fra reality tv, social media e storytelling*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2018) and she is now working on a book on common sense.



De la escasez a la abundancia; del hambre a la salud: De los mitos alimentarios del pasado a los mitos alimentarios del presente

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A lo largo de la historia, intentar conjurar la amenaza de la escasez y del hambre ha movilizado recursos de todo tipo, materiales y simbólicos, reales e imaginarios. Nunca, sin embargo, los conocimientos desarrollados y aplicados han sido suficientemente satisfactorios como para evitar el hambre y/o la enfermedad. Por esa razón, al tiempo que se han seguido buscando nuevas soluciones o recursos para los problemas más o menos concretos se han buscado o se han imaginado “soluciones definitivas” para el problema del hambre: desde el *maná* bíblico hasta las aplicaciones de la biotecnología y la nutrigenómica pasando por el *árbol del pan*. La historia real y la literatura de ficción nos ofrecen numerosos ejemplos de cómo se ha imaginado en el pasado la solución alimentaria para la sociedad del futuro. Hoy, sin que haya desaparecido el hambre, la percepción de los problemas se centra en los problemas de salud y en las amenazas a la sostenibilidad provocadas, en parte, por las soluciones encontradas a la escasez. Y, a nuevos problemas, nuevos mitos.

Jesús Contreras Hernández es Catedrático Emérito de Antropología Social (UB). Investigador contratado por el C.N.R.S. (Francia, 1986), Visiting Professor en Cambridge University (1992-93), Chaire d'Excellence del Centre national de la Recherche Scientifique-Région Centre (2007-2008), Profesor Invitado por la Universidad Paul Valéry (Francia, 2010) y Profesor Invitado por la Facultad Latinoamericana de de Ciencias Sociales (Ecuador, 2013). Entre sus últimas publicaciones, cabe citar: “Nutrients: Are They Also Good to Think?” (2016), “Usos y abusos de las patrimonializaciones alimentarias (2017), “Paradojas alimentarias de la globalización” (2018), “Hambre en la abundancia” (2019), “Que los árboles no nos impidan ver el bosque: alimentación, salud y sostenibilidad” (2020).



Veganism and Carnism: (Semiotic) Analysis of a (Semiotic) Conflict

Dario Martinelli

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The paper presents a few insights into the cultural and ideological confrontation between veganism and carnism. During the last decade particularly, the vegan lifestyle has enjoyed an increasing popularity among diverse layers of society, and most of all a transition from a hardly-tangible phenomenon to a very visible and outspoken one, generating often-hard reactions from the community of “carnists” (after Melanie Joy). The conflict, among other things, has also brought to the fore a number of questions related to the different communication strategies of the two parties – making the issue an intimately-semiotic one. The presentation will briefly introduce veganism and carnism in a socio-cultural and ideological sense, and then will focus on the communication strategies the two paradigms/lifestyles employ in order to convey their values and market their products and actions.

Dario Martinelli (1974), musicologist and semiotician, is Full Professor of History and Theory of Arts at Kaunas University of Technology, and is also affiliated to the University of Helsinki, as Adjunct Professor in Semiotics and Musicology, and to the University of Lapland, as Adjunct Professor in Methodologies of Semiotics and Communication Studies. He is also Editor-in-chief of the series “*Humanities – Arts and Humanities in Progress*”, published by Springer. As of 2021, he has published thirteen monographs and ca. 150 among edited collections, studies and scientific articles. His most recent monographs include: *The Intertextual Knot* (Springer, 2021, forthcoming), *What You See Is What You Hear* (Springer, 2020), *Give Peace a Chant* (Springer, 2017), *Basics of Animal Communication* (CSP, 2017), *Arts and Humanities in Progress* (Springer 2016), *Lights, Camera, Bark!* (*Technologija*, 2014), *Authenticity, Performance and Other Double-Edged Words* (*Acta Semiotica Fennica*, 2011), *A Critical Companion to Zoosemiotics* (Springer, 2010). Besides his affiliations, he has been visiting professor in four academic institutions, and has been giving ca. eighty lecture courses in fourteen different academic institutions in Europe.



On-farm Slaughter in Switzerland: Feeding Sustainable Omnivorous Societies

Lisa Märckz, Nele Langebraun and Michael Gibbert

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Current food trends and movements are not only based on social and environmental issues but also particularly because people become more and more aware of the horrible conditions that most nonhuman animals have to endure in the food industry. As Hartmann & Siegrist (2019) have pointed out, “The enjoyment of meat and simultaneous disapproval of hurting animals create an ambivalent relationship with meat consumption”, which includes not only production and distribution of a product per se, but especially the birth, the raising and nurture — respectively tracking and killing — and eventually the slaughter of a nonhuman animal. Factory farming evokes more and more people to turn vegetarian or vegan or to develop a conscious nutrition plan for which they select so-called “ethical” resources. But putting animals as products on a scale that goes beyond the issue of animal rights, it quickly becomes obvious that the consumption of meat, milk, and eggs concerns the largest economical and ecological problems we currently face on the planet: climate change, human health and hygiene, diseases, the exploitation of resources and fragmentation of land, the occupation of space, and food quality. Food production crucially depends on a variety of natural resources — healthy soil, water, ecosystem services, and genetic resources. Using these resources in an abusive manner creates problems for food security (UNEP, 2016) but none of them fit inside the concept of economic efficiency that has dictated food production in recent decades (Spaargaren et al. 2013). Consequently, while our societies have become increasingly wealthy, our natural wealth has decreased drastically in recent decades (Dasgupta, 2021).

A practice that addresses all of these issues is on-farm slaughter. In Switzerland some farms are already experienced in having their cattle killed and slaughtered either on open pasture or on farm ground, and its demand is growing. With it come many advantages as it avoids the long and stressful transport to slaughter houses — which not impacts the mental and physical health of livestock but further impairs meat quality as a result of increased adrenaline secretion, and contributes to carbon emissions. Further, factory farming is a mode of production which is only efficient and beneficial in a very narrow sense — it destroys natural resources and natural capital, it provides poorly paid jobs with a high probability of accidents, and it produces a quantity which eventually becomes industrial food waste. With a focus on on-farm slaughter and other practices of sustainable farming we look into relationships between human consumers and nonhuman products, and how farmers make sense of the concepts of resources and efficiency in food production. Our empirical work in situ covers the entire process of animal husbandry of Swiss farms in the context of food security for humans and a sustainable and ethical farming for the environment. By ethnographic fieldwork on farms through interviews, participant observation and analytic observation of events we will provide insight into alternative ways of meat production which potentially secure future nutrition in omnivore societies.

Lisa Märckz is a trained zookeeper and Master of Arts, currently PhD student at Università della Svizzera italiana. She studied Biosciences, American Studies, African Studies and Ethnology with a focus on human-nonhuman relations (University of Rostock, University of Mainz, University of Zurich, University of Bern). She published her bachelor thesis on the border(s) between humans and other animals by documented cases of human children that have been raised by dogs respectively wolves during their childhood. Her master thesis explored human relationships to “the wolf” in the context of the return of wolves to central Europe. Current research includes European wolf management, and customer-product relations of humans and livestock.

Nele Langebraun comes from a background of economics and politics. After graduating with a BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from the University of Oxford, she worked at the European Parliament as Parliamentary Assistant (2015-2017), and more recently obtained an MA in Environmental and Food Economics from the University of Milan. She is currently working on her PhD at the Institute of Marketing and Communication Management at Università della Svizzera italiana. Her research focuses on the emerging multi-disciplinary field of sustainability transitions. It explores both the methodologies – qualitative and quantitative – applied to the study of sustainability, and possible pathways towards a more sustainable future.

Michael Gibbert is a trained chef-turned-professor of Marketing at the Institute of Marketing and Corporate Communication at Università della Svizzera italiana. He studied Business Administration at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland (Ph.D.) and the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa (MSc.). He was associate professor at Bocconi University (Italy, 2003-2010), post-doc at Yale University (USA, 2002-2003), and research assistant at INSEAD (2000-2002). He wrote about theory of innovation, strategic marketing, business theory, and research methodology. As director of The World Challenges Programme (Lugano) since 2017, he teaches international students in a South-North Learning network with Helsinki, Stockholm and Stellenbosch and published the book *The Sustainability Grand Challenge: A Wicked Learning Workbook* (2020).



In Food We Trust

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People claim they trust biological, organic food from the farmers, but then they buy food at the supermarket, and soon they will do so online. It is evident that there is a contradiction here, which is interesting not so much in pedagogical terms, but rather to understand what food really means to human beings — something that goes far beyond mere rationality and is intertwined with religious motives. After all, if we are careful with food — while not really caring, say, about the real composition of the fabrics we wear — it is because food is something that is not just outside of us, but goes inside us, becoming part of our body. Therefore, one is never quite careful enough about food and yet, at the same time, since one has to eat, one does not hesitate to grab the first street food that happens to be available, or to microwave something bought at the supermarket. Understanding this aspect means recognizing the complexity of food, and therefore initiating a communication and education strategy that does not limit itself to dietary and moral recommendations, but grasps the symbolic depth of food. My paper aims to analyse this aspect from three standpoints.

Food and childhood. People are so unlikely to change their eating habits because their relationship with food was formed in childhood, and indeed was their first relationship with the world. This is a very deep and secret sphere, full of symbolic meanings hardly accessible from a purely rational perspective. Advertising firms have understood this very well, whereas food awareness campaigns haven't really.

Food and pleasure. In the public discourse, food is systematically connected to health, for obvious and well-founded reasons. It should not be forgotten, however, that food is also, and constitutively, a source of pleasure — the ultimate one indeed. As to health, pleasure is not linked to a true / false dichotomy, but rather to a good / bad one: this is another aspect that should be enhanced in food and which is now lacking, even in advertising (it is rarely said that a food is good, more often than not people insist that it is healthy).

Food and sacredness. Food awareness campaigns are essential to ensure a minimum information level, but only work to a certain extent. However, historically, the great narrative on food has been religious, and has been affirmed through the sanctification of certain foods (typically bread and wine in Christianity) and the tabooization of others (alcohol, pork, etc.). Understanding the mechanisms of sanctification, of sacrifice (which is related to food, let us not forget it) and of tabooization enables a different and successful perspective on the dimension of food and the trust it must inspire.

Maurizio Ferraris wrote more than sixty books that have been translated into several languages. The last one is *Documanità. Filosofia del mondo nuovo* (Laterza). Full Professor of Philosophy, he is the President of the LabOnt – Center for Ontology and Deputy Rector for Humanities Research at the University of Turin. He is columnist for 'La Repubblica', for 'Neue Zürcher Zeitung', and for 'Libération'. He is also the director of "Scienza Nuova", an institute of advanced studies – dedicated to Umberto Eco and uniting the University and the Polytechnic of Turin – aimed at planning a sustainable future, both from a cultural and from a political point of view.



Nurturing Trust: Between Transgenerationality and Digital Technologies

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The talk will address the issue of trust in relation to food and, more generally, the food chain and will attempt to provide an initial answer to the following questions. What is trust and why does it play such an important role in our relationship with food? How do memory and perception help to strengthen and consolidate it? What role does transgenerationality play in trusting relationships? How can digital technologies facilitate a proper relationship with food and a proper relationship between practitioners and consumers?

To answer these questions, we will approach the concept of trust from a philosophical perspective and attempt to offer a definition of the notion of trust. We will then go on to illustrate the characteristics of trust in traditional contexts and outside the use of digital technologies, and we will show how the notion of transgenerationality plays a fundamental role: food, in fact, is not only a tool to ensure nourishment, but it is rather a real material and immaterial heritage that is preserved and handed down between generations. Finally, we will identify some peculiarities of digital technologies able to enhance social transgenerationality and, therefore, to improve the relationships of trust between food operators and consumers.

Tiziana Andina is Full Professor of Philosophy at the University of Turin, Italy (<https://labont.it/people/tiziana-andina/>). She is an expert in metaphysics and ontology with a specialization in social ontology and philosophy of art. Since 2016 she is the director of the research center, LabOnt – The Laboratory of Ontology at the University of Turin (www.labont.it). Her recent publications concern social ontology, transgenerational actions, relationship between generations and problems of social justice, fostering the interdisciplinary research between philosophy, social sciences and law. Among the most recent titles: (ed. by), *Bridging the Analytical Continental Divide. A Companion to Contemporary Western Philosophy*, Brill 2014, *An Ontology for Social Reality*, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016, *What is Art? The Question of Definition Reloaded*, Brill, 2017 and *A Philosophy for Future Generations. The Structure and Dynamics of Transgenerationality*, Bloomsbury Academic, forthcoming 2021.



Gastromaniac: **How Food Influencers Create Trust**

Kristian Bankov

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Following a research on the role of the face in creating trust between influencers and their followers in general (forthcoming 2021), I will develop the same approach on the concrete sphere of food influencers. What are the main communication strategies, how the value in such interactions is created and what typology of influencers can be identified: to answer these questions I will use an innovative semio-economic approach and interviews with two important representatives of this category in Bulgaria.

Kristian Bankov (born 1970) is a Professor of semiotics at New Bulgarian University and Department Chair of the Southeast European Center for Semiotic Studies. His interest in semiotics dates back to the early 90s when, as a student in Bologna he attended the courses of Prof. Ugo Volli and Prof. Umberto Eco. The scientific interests of Prof. Bankov were initially in the field of continental philosophy of language, he then focused his research on sociosemiotics, consumer culture, and recently in new media and semiotics of digital culture.



On the Last Supper's Tables

Martina Corgnati
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In 14th century mural paintings and frescoes in Northern Italy, new and lively details are made visible even in ancient iconographies that, in previous times, remained veiled or uncertain. Among them, the *Last Supper*, a usual scene in the cycles related to Christ's life and miracles, shows not only a range of different emotions and reactions but a well-settled table, rich of plates, dishes, foods and drinks; items which are very material and very symbolic at the same time. That richness of details is especially evident when these cycles are compared with more ancient ones, where the table itself is barely visible. On the other hand, new variations and realistic objects appear in many, if not in the majority of the artistic images after Giotto's time, when his revolutionary style started to be widely imitated.

The purpose of this study is to take into consideration some of the many *Last Supper's* tables from both historical and symbolic points of view, focusing especially on Bolognese and Riminese schools frescos, as well as some Lombard painted oratories and churches, where *Last Supper* is frequently included among other images. *Last Suppers'* menus will be studied in relation to evangelic sources and iconographic traditions.

Martina Corgnati is an Art Historian, professor of History of Medieval Art at the School of Cultural Heritage in Brera Academy in Milan, where she now serves as Head in the Department of "Communication and Didactic of the Arts". She is specially interested in Medieval iconography, Art History in Western Europe between IX and XII centuries and relationships between ancient and modern art. She is author of several books and hundreds of contributions related to those subjects and curated many exhibitions in Italy and abroad. Among them, *Donne e cibo nell'arte. Dalla Natura Morta ai disordini alimentari, exh cat. Musumeci, Aosta, 2005-2006*.



Food and Modernity in Post-Vatican II American Catholicism

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This paper tells the story about a Catholic monk named Herman Zaccarelli who saw an opening in post-World War II Catholic America for the updating and modernizing of food in religious institutions. Brother Herman founded The Food Research Center for Catholic Institutions in 1961 on the campus of Stonehill College outside of Boston, MA, which ran conferences and seminars for monks and nuns that sought to change their approach to cooking and eating. Zaccarelli, a product of mid-twentieth century American cultural ideas and mores, grounded his efforts in religious obligation and located the change he sought within the “spirit of Vatican II.” Many of the new ideas and practices ran counter to long-held habits and rituals regarding food—habits of restraint, asceticism and sacrifice, which set up intergenerational tensions. This story focuses on food to illustrate these larger tensions and transformations in post-WWII American Catholicism.

Amy Bentley is a Professor of food studies at New York University. A historian with interests in the social, historical, and cultural contexts of food, she is the author of *Inventing Baby Food: Taste, Health, and the Industrialization of the American Diet* (2014), *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (1998), and editor of *A Cultural History of Food in the Modern Era* (2011). Co-editor of the book series *Food in Modern History: Traditions and Innovations* (Bloomsbury), her current projects include the *Food and COVID-19 NYC Digital Archive*.



“Eating with your eyes”: The Celebration of Gluttony in American Culture

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Food as spectacle is a long-standing phenomenon, an analog of prodigality that participates in an aesthetic of excess and extravagance (Parkhurst Ferguson 2014). With the increasing trend of food entertainment industry and an audience provided with unprecedented agency, narratives about food have flooded digital platforms (Pason 2015, McCarthy 2017, Kirkaburun et al. 2020). Two of the trendiest forms of public eating I explore here are competitive/speed eating, a practice originated in Japan in the 1990s, and mukbang, the South Korean internet fad of interactive binge eating, both a current craze in the United States. Labelled as food porn gone wild, these practices lever the voyeurism of millions of consumers watching food being gorged by socially-gratified performers. The consequences of these shows of culinary over-indulgence are dramatic: they enhance disordered eating habits, addiction, and poor table behavior that sanction greed and gluttony while excluding real-life social interaction. In addition, by focusing on *female* food excess on display, my research interrogates issues such as corporeality, thinness culture, hypervisibility, and gendered hegemonic rules of eating. This will be further discussed through the analysis of two American novels: Ruth Ozeki's *My Year of Meats* (1998) and Alexandra Kleeman's *You Too Can Have a Body Like Mine* (2015).

Ruth Ozeki's semi-autobiographical novel explores unhealthy practices and the fake conduct of both corporate agribusiness and globalized media through the parallel stories of two women. Jane Takagi-Little is an Asian American documentary filmmaker who works for *My American Wife!*, a reality show sponsored by BEEF-EX, the national industry lobby whose primary aim is to reach the Japanese market. Each week, the TV program features one special recipe prepared by a “typical” American housewife, who also incarnates “traditional” American values. Each episode, then, also exports a heteronormative ideal of sanitized and hyperfecund femininity that the Japanese audience is supposed to buy together with the meat. Akiko Ueno, instead, is the frail, anorectic-bulimic, infertile (and thus abused) wife of Joichi Ueno, the representative of the advertising agency advocating U.S. meats and whose toxic machismo compels her “to consume both the visual and the culinary content” (Black 232) of the show and to rate each episode in terms of interest and authenticity.

Abundance and consumerism are also at stakes in Alexandra Kleeman's novel, where an unnamed woman, A, lives with her roommate, B, and boyfriend, C, who is a pornography addict. A eats mostly popsicles and oranges and watches endless amounts of TV advertisements, especially those for Kandy Kakes, a totally synthetic dessert. Also this novel features a reality show called *That's My Partner!* and focuses on a normative beauty that exists only on TV. Both American stories concern sex and pornography, consumption and appetite, real food and reality television and might be considered as forerunners of today's American mukbang and a critique of food indoctrination.

Daniela Fargione holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she was a Fulbright scholar. She currently teaches Anglo-American Literatures at the University of Turin. Her research interests include: environmental humanities (food, migrations, climate change); the interconnections of contemporary American literatures and the other arts (music, photography); literary translation. Among her latest publications: *Contaminazioni ecologiche. Cibi, natura e cultura (Led Edizioni, 2015)* with S. Iovino; *Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie (Il Mulino, 2018)* and *Trees in Literatures and the Arts. Human Arboreal Perspectives in the Anthropocene (Lexington, 2021)* with C. Concilio. For more information: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Daniela-Fargione-2>.



The Semiotics of Fast and Junk Food

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Much has been written on the health dangers posed by fast and junk foods and much has also been written on their connection to American commodity fetishism. But the more fundamental *raison d'être* behind the fast food phenomenon may reach into humanity's past and even into specific centers of the brain that control pleasure. Whatever the truth, this article will take a critical look at the fast food phenomenon from the standpoint of its meanings and why it originated in the first place. It envisions fast-junk food as sign systems with inherent meanings that change and adapt to cultural shifts. Junk food is actually an anomaly when it comes to historical traditions of cuisine and eating. It is not consumed at meals, but rather as snack food on the go or in response to some hunger urge or desire. It spread broadly in the context of youth culture in America in the twentieth century, but soon morphed into a type of everyday snack eaten by people of any age. This transformation of its meaning is part of a symptomatology inherent in consumerist cultures, whereby objects of any kind (including food) are produced quickly, cheaply, and faddishly, reflecting a discontinuity with historical traditions. The story of junk food corroborates, in a way, Barthes' critique of consumerism as a culture of commodification and it also points out the power of socioeconomic forces to transform historical meaning structures.

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Post-gastromanie et langage:

De la communication à l'énonciation

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Qui parle dans un texte gastronomique ? Quel est le sujet qui, en constituant ce texte (plat, gouter, diner, etc.), se pose à son intérieur comme simulacre de sa production, comme possible image du cuisinier ? Et encore : à qui il parle ? Quelle est la forme de cet autre sujet qui, au moment de manger, trouve inscrite sa propre image dans ce qu'il mange ? En d'autres termes, comment passer, dans une perspective d'analyse sémiotique du discours culinaire, de la notion naïve de communication à celle, plus technique, d'énonciation ? A quelles conditions est-il possible de parler d'une véritable énonciation culinaire ? Mon intervention essaiera de répondre à ce genre de questions, avec quelques exemples d'analyses des produits alimentaires de la dite *post-gastromanie*.

Gianfranco Marrone teaches *Semiotics of Arts*, *Semiotics of Gastronomy*, and *Semiotics of Media* at Palermo University. He is the Director of the "Centro internazionale di scienze semiotiche" (Urbino), and the "Circolo semiologico siciliano" (Palermo). His last books are: *Introduction to the Semiotics of Text* (2021), *La fatica di essere pigri* (2020), *Semiotics of Animals in Culture* (2018), *Sémiotique et critique de la culture* (2017), *Semiotica del gusto* (2016), *Gastromania* (2014).



Art and Syntax of Food: **Antonia Klugmann's Culinary Idiolect on a Menu**

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From a semiotic point of view, food is a rather poor system on a semantic level, where it works mainly for connotation, metaphor and metonymy. On the other hand, it is very rich in terms of the signifier, much more than verbal language, due to the variety of materials, treatments, rules of combination and exclusion. To put this wealth in order, it is necessary to distinguish levels of analysis in order of inclusion: a) the single component, b) the dish, c) the meal consumed, d) the menu, e) the offer (from a local or of a chef), f) the culinary style (of a culture or society, of a period, of a religion, g) edible from a biological point of view. Each level involves a syntagmatic and a paradigmatic axis, with exclusions, mandatory traits, correlations. Furthermore, each level is determined by the higher ones and determines the lower ones (opposition also enters into the determination). To empirically address these relationships, the report will start from a concrete level d): the 2020 summer menu of the starred restaurant “L’Argine” by a young Italian chef, Antonia Klugman, showing its internal organization, the determination of the lower levels and dependence / opposition of higher ones. In this way we will try to define the idiolect of this chef, using her own description of the dishes on the menu as a meta-language for her analysis.

Ugo Volli is Professor Emeritus of Semiotics at the University of Turin. He taught in a number of international universities, including Bologna, IULM, Brown, Haifa, New York University. He was awarded an honorary doctoral degree from the New Bulgarian University. He is the editor in chief of “Lexia – Journal of semiotics” and is member of scientific boards of many international journals. His last books are *Periferie del senso* (Aracne 2016) and *Il resto è interpretazione* (Belforte 2019).



Epistenology: A Relational Aesthetics Through Wine

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Conventionally, a wine expert is a human individual subject that is able to detect features and qualities from a liquid, “wine”, meant to be an object to measure, analyse and judge. I will propose an alternative picture of wine knowledge and appreciation, based upon a relational paradigm of aesthetic engagement. According to such a model, wine is not an object to be measured but a relation to make within a processual flux. Consequently, appreciation has not much to do with distal judgment but with participate collusion.

Nicola Perullo is Full Professor of Aesthetics. His recent works: *Estetica ecologica. Percepire saggio, vivere corrispondente* (Milano, 2020), *Epistenology. Wine as Experience* (New York, 2020), *L'altro gusto. Per un'estetica dell'esperienza gustativa* (Pisa 2021).



Tables italiennes: Mythologies de Federico Fellini

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Les manières de table sont révélatrices des valorisations explicites et implicites d'une culture, par rapport à la nourriture et plus en général aux relations sociales. Pour pouvoir les détecter et en faire un objet d'analyse sémiotique, nous pouvons les étudier sur le terrain, ou bien à partir de textes. Ces derniers peuvent être des manuels, des véritables grammaires du savoir vivre, ou des histoires, des reportages, des romans ... Une textualité particulièrement adaptée pour les saisir en situation, dans leur dimension de sémiotique syncrétique, est l'audiovisuel. Cette contribution essaie de traverser le cinéma de Federico Fellini, très attentif aux comportements sociaux et à leurs renversements possibles, pour reconstruire les systèmes d'être à table italien qu'il propose dans ses films, et en particulier celui romain et populaire, exemplaire pour son caractère inclusif et sa vitalité à toute épreuve.

[EN] Table manners reveal the explicit and implicit valuations of a culture, in relation to food and more generally to social relations. In order to detect them and make them an object of semiotic analysis, we can study them in the field, or from texts. The latter can be manuals, grammars of how to live, or stories, reports, novels... A textuality particularly adapted to seize them in situation, in their dimension of syncretic semiotics, is the audiovisual. This contribution tries to cross the cinema of Federico Fellini, very attentive to the social behaviours and their possible reversals, to reconstruct the systems of being at table Italian that he proposes in his films, and in particular that Roman and popular, exemplary for its inclusive character and its vitality to any test.

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How to Recognize the Political Regime of a Dish

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This paper draws on the hypothesis that plates and food, as other texts or signs such as clothes, places and spaces, literary works, etc., constitute concentrated significations of the culture to which they belong. Dishes shape and are shaped by culture; they influence behaviors and standardize them through the repetition of actions dictated by the nature of the ingredients and the way they are presented. Recipes aim at policing and directing ingredients towards a finality according to a regime of taste and a set of values. A dish, therefore, presents an organizational model that manages several heterogeneous elements in its own way and at the same time expresses a specific vision of identity and otherness.

We will deal with such issues by analyzing two typical dishes. *Soupe* is a French plate, while *Harira* is a Moroccan one. Both of them are famous and very present on the table. But these two plates are not only made in two different manners; they also represent two opposite ways of dealing with different ingredients and alterity or identity in general. Therefore, we will analyze them as texts characterized by a specific syntax and reflecting a special content, which shape a *Model Eater* and express a specific model of organization linked to specific political regimes: the French republican model (the former), and the Moroccan monarchical or Arab-Muslim one (the latter).

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