

CALL FOR PAPERS

A TASTE OF HOME

Food, identity, place and memory in Europe from a historical perspective (19th-20th centuries)

Brussels
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Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
Social & Cultural Food Studies (FOST)

The essential role food and taste play in feelings of safety, belonging and rootedness, as well as anxiety, exclusion and up-rootedness, is widely recognized by social scientists. These feelings strongly coalesce around the idea of 'home' and the multiple contexts and actors that determine 'home' and that are in turn influenced by it. 'Taste' is similarly influenced, yet being one of our senses, it is also specifically well-suited to perceive and express views about 'home'. As words, concepts and places, both 'home' and 'taste' provide starting-points for fascinating research opportunities. By investigating the way these concepts are constructed and the way they interact, this conference wishes to tackle issues that involve food and drink, foodways, recipes and cuisines, and their relationship with place (household, city, region, nation), identity (regional, class, ethnic,...) and memory from a historical and European perspective. The main focus concerns the feelings and consequences of temporal and geographical displacement in relation to real and imagined 'home(s)' during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Keywords

Food and foodways, tradition, authenticity, familiarity, locality, domesticity, nostalgia, homesickness, migration, national identity, trans-nationalism and trans-culturalism.

Possible themes

Sources and methodology:

- The availability of sources and methods in order to study taste and home from a historical perspective.
- The expression and representation of taste and home in source material.
- Qualitative analysis of taste (close reading, inter-textuality,...).
- ...

Recipes, food, foodways, cuisine and material culture:

- The importance of a changing context and the transformation of tastes.
- The (re-)construction/(re-)invention of so-called familiar, local, traditional or authentic foodways.
- Home-cooking and mothers' and grandmothers' culinary knowledge.
- The (re-)construction/(re-)definition of homely foodways from a migratory perspective.
- Kitchens and kitchen utensils as means of (re-)creating homely tastes.
- The role of food packaging and advertisements in valorising or idealising the past.
- The use of taste by institutions (tourism, political parties,...).
- Migration of products.
- ...

Theoretical angles

- What is taste? What is home?
- Does home have a taste? Does taste have a home?
- What is the relation between taste and home?
- ...

Abstracts (in English – maximum 300 words) and a short academic CV have to be sent in **before 15 March 2011** to Anneke Geyzen (ageyzen@vub.ac.be) and Olivier de Maret (odemaret@vub.ac.be). The organising committee will announce the accepted abstracts by 15 April 2011. The deadline for preliminary full papers to be presented at the conference and in view of possible publication is 1 December 2011.

For more information: www.vub.ac.be/FOST/taste-of-home (online after 1 January 2011).