

Towards decolonial transdisciplinary research: *The humanities in food studies*



A workshop hosted by the

critical food studies

Transdisciplinary humanities approaches

Programme

21 November 2019

Life Sciences Auditorium
University of the Western Cape

Offered as a collaboration between:



Supported by:



A workshop hosted by the Critical Food Studies: Transdisciplinary Humanities Approaches Programme aimed at generating conversations, fostering transdisciplinarity, and encouraging relevant theorising and methodological work on food studies.

Note: This, a development of the year's seminar series, and will be the first in a series of postgraduate conferences hosted by the CFS Programme. The most promising presentation in terms of content, methodological approach and theorising will be published on the CFS website, and the presenter will receive an award.

8:00- 8:30

Registration and Tea *Life Science Auditorium Space*

8:30- 9:00

Opening Comments

Desiree Lewis, University of the Western Cape: Aims of the Workshop and the Creation of a Research Community in Transdisciplinary Humanities Work

Glen Ncube, University of Pretoria: Reflections on Interdisciplinary postgraduate research in the humanities: what makes for a "good" thesis?

9:00-10.30

Panel Session #1: *Consumer culture and food branding*

45 minute presentation and 45 minutes response and open discussion

Sheetal Bhoola, University of KwaZulu-Natal:

Halaal Tourism as a marketing strategy for Durban Tourism: its viability and possible economic contribution to Durban Tourism

Ammaarah Seboa, University of the Western Cape:

An exploration of Halal food branding semiotics and positioning in selected foodscapes in Cape Town

Jacina Januarie, University of the Western Cape:

A social semiotic analysis of linguistic landscape of tuckshops in Eersteriver, Western Cape

Respondent: Lynn Mafofo

10:30: 10:45

Tea Break *Life Science Foyer*

10:45- 12:15

Panel Session # 2: *Foodways and Social Identities*

45 minute presentation and 45 minutes response and open discussion

Pamella Gysman, University of the Western Cape:

Foodscapes as Identity Expression: Food Choices and Tastes among Middle-Class Blacks in Post-Apartheid South Africa"

Tracy Liebenberg, University of Pretoria:

'Eating on tour or touring to eat: Culinary tourism on the rise?'

Thando Mthimukulu, University of Pretoria:

South African culinary tourism: what's on the menu?

Zandile Queen Finxa, University of Pretoria:

Farming in the Capital: Creating Culinary Experiences with Cultural Innovation

Respondent: Desiree Lewis

12:30-13:30 Lunch *Life Science Foyer*

13:30-15:00 **Panel Session #3: Complexities of "Experiencing" Food: Methodological Innovations**

45 minute presentation and 45 minutes response and open discussion

Stephen Hahlani, University of Pretoria:

An Actor Oriented History of Mbare Musika Fresh Produce Market, Zimbabwe 1930-2019.

Sarita Ranchod, University of Western Cape:

Engaging the senses and making meaning of the Oranjezicht City Farm Market: An Embodied Black Feminist Engagement

Pralini Naidoo, University of Western Cape:

The (mine)field: negotiating the nuances of fieldwork

Respondent: **Glen Ncube** followed by open discussion

15:05-15.20 Tea Break *Life Science Foyer*

15:20-16:50 **Panel Session #4: Humanising Food Movements and Activism**

45 minute presentation and 45 minutes response and open discussion

Haidee Swanby, University of Western Cape:

Food Sovereignty as Freedom

Busiso H. Moyo, University of the Western Cape:

Towards Food Justice for South Africa: Security, Sovereignty and the Politics of Malnutrition

Nolukholo Mabharwana, University of the Western Cape:

Food security at UWC: An exploration of actions and programmes to address student hunger.

Respondent: **Donna Andrews**

17.00-17.45 **Concluding Discussion**

Key issues raised: led by **Lynn Mafofo**

Announcement of (and award to) Most Promising Presentation: **Glen Ncube**

Closing: **Donna Andrews**

18:00-18.45 Dinner *Life Science Foyer*

19:00- 20:00 Play

My Daily Bread: Performed by students from the Gender Equity Unit, UWC

ABSTRACTS

Halaal Tourism as a marketing strategy for Durban Tourism: its viability and possible economic contribution to Durban Tourism.

By Sheetal Bhoola

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Abstract

Durban Tourism is yet to market itself as a Halaal friendly destination, despite the global onset and interest in Halaal Tourism, which services the Muslim populous globally. Durban is home to 3% of South Africa's Indian Diaspora of which at least half of this populous are of Islamic faith. Therefore, Durban is home to numerous restaurants, eateries and takeaways that cater for people of Islamic faith. In addition, Durban is home to some of the oldest Mosques in South Africa and yet the destination is not adequately marketed. This qualitative study serves to identify and resonate the need for the city to be marketed as a Halaal Tourist destination. Interviews are conducted with 20 restauranteurs and 5 Islamic organizations in Durban to determine the possible economic contribution that Halaal Tourism can make to the Tourism sector. Other focuses include an investigation of tourism activities In Durban that people of Islamic faith may enjoy whilst visiting the city as well as whether the availability of Halaal food will be a viable central focus central to marketing the destination as a Halaal tourist destination.

Key words: Halaal Tourism, Halaal food, Islamic tourists, Durban

An exploration of Halal food branding semiotics and positioning in selected foodscapes in Cape Town

By Ammaarah Seboa

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

The Islamic religion is quite strict in laws around food. Its followers, the Muslims are particular when it comes to food consumptions as they are only allowed to consume Halal food. The Islamic dietary laws define foods that are Halal as lawfully acceptable for consumption and the food to avoid food is termed Haram. However, halal practices are not always easy in the food industry as has been seen through many Islamic councils around the world suing companies for not complying with the laws to pertaining to the Islamic religion. The term halal is a complex one as it does not just pertain to the condition of food products, but it is also a way of life for Muslims. In terms of research, a little has been written on understanding the concepts of Halal and Haram. Previous studies have focused on the consumer's intention to purchase halal foods, as well as the privilege that halal foods have in the marketplace and the halal brand. Whilst the food should be clearly marked Halal, it is not always known to the public how the food is branded or positioned and the kind of semiotics that are used to brand or mark such

foods. In cases where not all foods are labelled, Muslims have to be literate to read the semiotics of food to determine whether it is Halal or Haram. This study therefore adds to the literature by trying to understand the semiotics and practices in the halal food market positioning and branding. It explores the halal concept, especially within the South African context with the aim to profile the kinds of semiotics that are used to brand the halal food and the way these foods are positioned in relation to food security among Muslim communities in Cape Town. This study makes use of qualitative, interpretive data which was captured through a camera. It employs a critical multisemiotic discourse analysis which includes both aspects of critical discourse analysis and aspects of multimodality in order to uncover the phenomenon of the halal food brand, as well as to show how these foods are positioned in selected foodscapes and the implications thereof.

Key words: Halal, branding, positioning, foodscapes, awareness

A social semiotic analysis of linguistic landscape of tuckshops in Eersteriver, Western Cape.

By Jacina Januarie

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

Tuckshops' bright coloured commercial signage coupled with creative business names is not an unfamiliar sight in South African communities. To date, most research about tuckshops has either focused on tuckshops at schools and/or tuckshops and their link to xenophobia. Very few studies in the linguistic landscape (LL) field have conducted research on qualitative, ethnographic research on the production and consumption of tuckshop signage. In response to this, this research will conduct a social semiotic analysis of the semiotic landscape of tuckshops in Eersteriver in Cape Town. Drawing on photographic material and walk-talk interviews with tuckshop owners and customers, this proposed research project aims to explore the range of semiotic resources involved in the sign-making process of tuckshops. Food can be considered semiotic resource that contributes to semiotic landscape of tuckshops. To this end, the proposed project also aims to explore the food perceptions held by both tuckshop owners and customers and how food as a mode contributes to the popularity of tuckshops. This study contributes to the limited research done on the consumption and production of tuckshop signage in the LL field.

Keywords: Linguistic landscape, tuckshops, Eersteriver, social semiotic analysis, walk-talk interviews.

Foodscales as Identity Expression: Food Choices and Tastes among Middle-Class Blacks in Post-Apartheid South Africa

By Pamella Gysman

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

Historically, food has been central to black South Africans' communal style of social organisation. It was used to show love, ubuntu, belonging and acceptance, and to build and maintain social relationships (Puoane et al., 2006). Apartheid and the displacement experienced, disrupted historical foodscales such that food and food practices became raced and classed. Recent food research explores black South Africans' food practices reveal links between the history and dispossession of black South Africans and their contemporary foodscales (for example, Puoane et al., 2006). Specially, it highlights the values and social meaning attached to food, as well as global influences on food choices and practices (Dlamini, 2015). This thesis will build upon and explore how and why middle-class South Africans living in urban areas of Cape Town are articulating senses of self and belonging in relation to food. It undertakes a scholarly study of middle-class black South Africans' deep interest or involvement in what the mass media and popular culture in contemporary South Africa frequently highlights, namely (among other things): cookery programmes, high-end dining, "healthy" eating, and eating as leisure. This study will also explore specific attitudes and relationships to food items and eating practices with classed and racialized connotations. My aim in the thesis is to explore the complex and often elusive forms of belonging and identification configured around food as a highly prominent site for middle-class blacks negotiating a "sense of self". Preliminary research through observation and media analysis has led me to speculate that, for many middle-class black South Africans today, the memory or generational victimhood (in the case of born frees) hold ideas of eating under apartheid for blacks to have vividly symbolised black subjection: poverty, powerlessness and the absence of choices or pleasures. The proposed research thesis will explore this hypothesis and focus on the complex ways in which middle-class black South Africans (possibly often contradictorily and complicatedly) affirm their dignity and autonomy through attitudes and responses to food. The research will draw on interviews, media analysis as well as participant observation. In using these varied methods, I seek to explore the complex meanings attached to how and why middle-class black South Africans relate to food in the ways that they do.

Keywords: identity expression, belonging, symbolic racism, cultural capital, tastes, foodscales, race, middle-class blacks, habitus

'Eating on tour or touring to eat: Culinary tourism on the rise?'

By Tracy Liebenberg

University of Pretoria

Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyse the role of food in human history and how this mundane instinctive act has been contextualised and “consumed” over time within the broader tourism domain. This paper proposes a three-fold exploratory study on this research objective, by firstly focusing on the history of food as it stands, and how this notion of human nourishment transitioned and transformed societies and societal constructs to date. Secondly, the paper explores the consumption of culinary experiences by investigating foods’ role within the broader tourism domain, and its adherent relationship with tourism, that ultimately created the thriving “culinary tourism” sub-sector. Lastly, the report will also consider food’s inherent identity, uniqueness and symbolism by benchmarking various global North and South case studies, where authentic food tourism experiences are created in everyday life. Additionally the study will also outline foods’ changing role in the current experience economy, popular media and special interest tourism niches, as well as how its role is continuing to systematically change as we enter the “digital age”.

South African culinary tourism: what’s on the menu?

By Thando Mthimukulu

University of Pretoria

Abstract

This paper aims to highlight the link between food and tourism. Food is a vessel to deliver a multisensory experience, while tourism is an activity involving travel to experience difference. Essentially, this paper looks into how food could be an asset for the development of tourism in South Africa. It highlights how food which is rich in history and is an edible artefact of our heritage and could be utilised as a tool to communicate aspects of history and culture, making it a unique identity maker and marker. This paper will also look at that uniquely South African food spaces as tourist attractions.

Key words: Gastronomical Tourism, Culinary Tourism, Food Tourism, Identity, Travel, Tourist Gaze, Indigenous Foods.

Farming in the Capital: Creating Culinary Experiences with Cultural Innovation

By Zandile Queen Finxa

University of the Pretoria

Abstract

This paper aims to highlight a response developed by an urban university in South Africa’s capital city to access to freshly grown produce that is purposefully cultivated for culinary training. The University of Pretoria is a research-intensive university in an urban environment. The university has an experimental farm where it recently established a facility called “Future Africa”, a postgraduate hub dedicated to the study of sustainable agriculture, horticulture, and innovation, and recently, also a potential food source for Consumer and Food Science students. Culinary Arts students now have access to indigenous plants that were purposefully grown to create farm-to-table cultural

experiences based on what is available while simultaneously also delivering a more affordable fine dining experience. By using less well-known crops in innovative and more palatable new ways, a demand for more indigenous dining experiences is created. Consumers increasingly seek personalised dining experiences that are also sustainable, which is helping to reshape the view of farming in urban environments. An African Indigenous dinner held at the Future Africa campus served as a case study for the use of indigenous plants - which are not often explored within an urban culinary context - to create a fine dining experience. Preliminary findings as well as reflections from the chef and the event manager for this function will be shared. The value of this paper is that it reports on the use of indigenous produce in fine dining, aiming to stimulate broader acceptance of indigenous produce as everyday food products, and the conservation of South African cultural foods. The emphasis on indigenous plants in a more formal culinary context also aims to highlight the need to preserve traditional foods and practices established and used by indigenous people.

Key words: Cultural Innovation, indigenous plants, urban, culinary, dining experiences

An Actor Oriented History of Mbare Musika Fresh Produce Market, Zimbabwe 1930-2019.

By Stephen Hahlani
University of Pretoria

Abstract

The history of people dominated markets is often ignored in urban food systems studies. For this reason little is known about the complexity of the markets and the contribution they make to urban food supplies and distribution. They continue to be misunderstood, stereotyped, even by the state, and invisible in food systems. This has been the case of Mbare Musika, a fresh produce market situated in Harare (Zimbabwe). While there are many previous studies on Mbare Musika, there is little work that focuses on its history. The absence of adequate statistics and written documents partly explains the relative lack of interest in its history. As a result, this research uses ethnography, oral histories and archival research to explore the origins, growth, survival, organisation, function of and changing attitudes towards Mbare (Musika) fresh produce market. This is to unpack its history and complexity and promote an appreciation of its role in food supplies and distribution in Harare and beyond. The central issue is to account for actors' experiences and how this contributed to the birth, survival and shaping the market over time. The study employs the concept of socially embedded economic relations to examine the role of economic, political, economic, religious and cultural factors in knitting the network of participants at Mbare Musika together. An actor oriented history of Mbare Musika is essential in making visible actors' combined efforts to knit and shape a strong institution that plays a crucial role in bringing food to the final eater in the city and how best to strengthen these for future and changing food needs of the city.

Keywords: people dominated, food systems, fresh produce markets, Mbare Musika, socially embedded, actor oriented.

Engaging the senses and making meaning of the Oranjezicht City Farm Market: An Embodied Black Feminist Engagement

By Sarita Ranchod

University of the western Cape

Abstract

This paper presents work-in-progress that engages with a study of an urban farmer's market in Cape Town South Africa, the Oranjezicht City Farm Market (OZCFM) that sells locally-grown and organic fresh produce; secondary products made from such produce, including 'gourmet' and 'artisanal' products; and freshly-prepared food and beverages. This study is an attempt to make sense and meaning of the OZCFM as a largely middle-class market space in a deeply divided, unequal and segregated city, from an embodied Black feminist perspective. In drawing on Black feminist thought (Hill-Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981, 1994) I engage with intersectionality as an analytical and theoretical tool, including critiques of intersectionality that suggest insufficient engagement with class dynamics and capitalism. I assess the extent to which an intersectional analysis that deliberately engages class and capitalism may be useful to this study. I draw on feminist epistemological contributions of Black and African-American feminists that engage with the politics of what we consciously feed our material, embodied selves, in the context of the neoliberal agri-food industry. Here I consider the work of Pat McFadden (2018), bell hooks (2015), Desiree Lewis (2016, 2017) and Donna Andrews (2017), including more recent interventions that engage with materiality and the senses, experienced by the embodied self, in relation to space and others – in this instance, the space of the OZCFM. Feminist auto-ethnography that validates Black feminist lived experience in knowledge-production will be used to enable an embodied engagement that takes materiality (Grosz, 2010) and viscosity (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2008) into account. Located in the city of Cape Town – a city, whose legacies of slavery, colonialism and apartheid continue to be keenly felt in the post-apartheid period, and where neoliberal capitalism as form of governance has been firmly embraced, both at a city and country level – the study additionally engages with how the market positions itself through its physical layout, the perspectives of its owners, stall-holders and visitors/consumers; its own communications, including online and social media; and how it is represented by external, online media.

The (mine)field: negotiating the nuances of fieldwork

By Pralini Naidoo

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

Fieldwork within communities which may or may not be framed as a researcher's own comes with its own unique set of challenges and epiphanies. In this paper I reflect on my journey into the field and the encounters which have muddied the ground of my own sense of what being an insider and outsider might mean. Although insider/outsider conundrums have been prolifically theorised and been revisited in scholarly work, in this paper I reflect on the idea of belonging or not belonging –inside to what and outside to

what. We are aware of the power of research and the politics of producing knowledge, as much as we are aware of how knowledge produced about the 'other' has essentialised, exoticised or denigrated the other, usually in service to deeply embedded western centric power structures and systems. Researchers from 'the margins' have sought to centre their outsideness or marginality, while some have strategically claimed a firm positionality as insider within these marginalised communities in order to 'talk back' to and resist dominant narratives. This paper recognises that the concepts of insider and outsider cannot be clearly delineated. It also examines how the fluidity and 'muddyness' of the in-between –between text and lived reality, between insider and outsider and between researcher and researched – may provide the humus for new imaginings.

Food Sovereignty as Freedom

By Haidee Swanby

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

Food Sovereignty is concerned with power and control in the food system while calling for structural and redistributive reforms around land, water, and agricultural resources such as seed and markets (Holt Giménez and Shattuck 2011). Food Sovereignty can be defined as the right of people to democratically control or determine the shape of their food system, and to produce sufficient and healthy food in culturally appropriate and ecologically sustainable ways in or near their territory (Edelman *et al* 2016). The Food Sovereignty Movement is inherently visceral and relational – rooted in grassroots natural food production and connected across the globe around advocacy, learning and solidarity (La Via Campesina 2019; Nyeleni 2007). However, due to a hegemonic ontology that is exaggeratedly rational and ill-equipped to accommodate the visceral, the very soul of the movement can be smothered in its cradle in the arguably necessary process of trying to mainstream it through institutions. This paper asks if the concept of sovereignty, with its deep political history, is a territorializing force, locking us into a hierarchical and deeply dependent relationship with the State. It explores the concept of sovereignty through one of its synonyms – freedom - through a new materialist feminist lens. This lens shifts attention from a rights-based approach, finding that freedom is not bestowed, but “emerge(s) in the middle of things, the in-between space in which humans and non-humans intra-act”. (Barad 2007). It asks what embodied food sovereignty looks like – how the body, its biology, effects and sensations can expand or unsettle notions of food sovereignty embedded in collective and organised struggles.

Key words: food sovereignty, food security, freedom, unfreedom, new materialism feminism

Towards Food Justice for South Africa: Security, Sovereignty and the Politics of Malnutrition

By Busiso H. Moyo

University of the Western Cape, South Africa

Abstract

The aim of this paper will be to provide a clear understanding of the underlying rationales and schools of thought that have constituted food justice practice in South Africa. This will be achieved by examining the potential for food policy in South Africa to be informed by human rights. Specifically, by analysing the relevance of two global rights-based paradigms for food policy making: “food security” and “food sovereignty” - in the context of demands and advocacy for food justice in South Africa. Both security and sovereignty concepts are located within a human rights narrative and thus offer an opportunity to inform action towards achieving the Right to Food. By utilising Foucault’s theory of discourse and Fanon’s sociogenic principle as theoretical-praxes for the imperial relations of food this study seeks to examine the global political economy of food and illuminates the social and economic consequences of malnutrition. The paper draws on Marxist and sociogenic frameworks to underpin the research. The point of departure is that there is widespread recognition that food system change is essential to address all forms of malnutrition. However, to do so will require addressing wider issues of who controls the food supply, and thus the influences on the food chain and the food choices of the individual and communities. Significantly, while public health discourse draws on numerous literatures on food, it is yet to draw from literature on food sovereignty in particular. I wish to show in this paper how the ‘food sovereignty’ alternative offers new avenues for interrogating food policy for public health. Alongside, another main concern of this paper has to do with the anti-politics of food and as such I will also delve into power relations within the food security paradigm and how these are achieved.

Key words: Food Knowledges, Ecofeminism and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Food security at UWC: An exploration of actions and programmes to address student hunger.

By Nolukholo Mabharwana

University of the Western Cape

Abstract

Food is a basic human need for survival, health and productivity. Nationally, South Africa is food secure, while households continue to be food insecure. Hunger is also a challenge in South African universities. Student hunger negatively impacts on student’s academic progress and health. Universities have intervened to deal with hunger by establishing formal and informal food programs. The aim of this project is to investigate the various food programs that exist within the University of the Western Cape and to explore the role and perceptions of stakeholders such as University academic staff and student’s in combating hunger on campus. The study will employ quantitative research methods. The researcher intends to collect data using two different questionnaires. Sampling methods to be used are snowball and total population sampling. Data in this study will be analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The findings will be interpreted by numerical methods. All ethical considerations pertaining to permission and consent will be adhered to.

Key words: Hunger, food, food security, food insecurity, university, students, academic staff, feeding schemes