

BA History, Early Modern History, Fall/ Winter 2018-19

**Block Seminar from November 8 to December 20, 2018, Thursdays 10-14, Room C6-200 Main Building**

## You Are What You Eat: Food, Health, and the Environment in the Americas, 1500-1850

**Lecturer:** Asst. Prof. Dr. Eleonora Rohland, Department of Iberian and Latin American History, Center for InterAmerican Studies (CIAS)

**Office hours:** Tuesdays 5-6 p.m., X A3-242

### Course Summary:

At first contact with the indigenous peoples of the 'New World', Europeans were not only confronted with so far unknown human societies, but also with unfamiliar environments that provided strange new foods. In the contemporary humoral-pathological medical understanding of the time, the human body and mind were imagined as permeable and changeable by cosmic, climatic and nutritional factors. Correct nutrition and one's geographic-climatic setting became defining aspects of personal and even collective identity. So, the – for us – humoristic title of this course in fact represents the early modern worldview on food, health, and the environment quite well.

In this seminar we will explore the above nexus of subjects by working with a mix of research literature, conceptual approaches and primary sources. Geographically we start with Columbus' experiences in the Caribbean in 1492-94, we then move to Central America, back to the French Caribbean, and to the southern United States. That is, we are traveling through Spanish, French and British colonial history in these regions of the Americas. Apart from looking at specific foodstuffs, we also follow questions such as which climatic conditions were required for their growth and which role climate played in recurring food shortages and famines.

This 'historical contextualization' course will be held in seven blocks of 4 lessons and a closing 2-lesson block. *You Are What You Eat* is one of two seminars that can be chosen in context with the main seminar *Iberian Expansion. Spain and Portugal in the 'New World'*. *Introduction to the Colonial History of Latin America*.

**Requirements:** Ability and readiness to read texts in English. Active class participation and attendance. 15 min. presentation according to the structure outlined in the syllabus below.

**Exam Paper:** *Hausarbeit* of 20-25 pages on one of the seminar themes (or on a focus of your choice within the thematic field of our course).

## Syllabus

Date	Subject	Texts	Presentations
08.11.2018	<p><b>Introduction of students and syllabus</b></p> <p><b>1492: Unfamiliar Environments: Famine in Paradise?</b></p> <p>First contact of Europeans with the Americas in the Caribbean, unfamiliar environment, climate, peoples, and foods</p>	<p><b>Literature:</b> Crosby, Alfred W. <i>The Columbian Exchange. Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492</i>. 30th anniversary ed. Westport: Praeger, 2003., Chapter 3</p> <p><b>Primary sources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Colombo, Cristoforo, James E. Kelley, Bartolomé Casas, and Oliver Charles Dunn. <i>The Diario of Christopher Columbus's first voyage to America, 1492-1493</i>. The American exploration and travel series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.</li> <li>- Anghiera, Pietro Martire. <i>Acht Dekaden über die Neue Welt [Decades of the New World]</i>. Texte der Forschung. [1.-2. Aufl.] ed. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972.</li> </ul>	
15.11.2018	<p><b>Environment, Health and Nutrition in the Early Modern Americas</b></p>	<p><b>Earle</b>, Rebecca. <i>The Body of the Conquistador. Food, Race, and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492-1700</i>. Critical perspectives on empire. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Introduction and chapter 1.</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on <b>1 Earle</b> and <b>2 Kupperman</b>; according</p>

	<p>Early modern humoral pathology; connection of body and environment; Spanish colonial experience with New World foods; impacts of climate on food availability in early Jamestown</p>	<p>Blanton, Dennis B. "The Weather is Fine. Wish You Were Here, Because I'm The Last One Alive. 'Learning' the Environment in the English New World Colonies." In <i>Colonization of Unfamiliar Landscapes. The Archaeology of Adaptation</i>, edited by Marcy Rockman and James Steele. 190-200. New York: Routledge, 2003.</p> <p><b>Kupperman</b>, Karen Ordahl. "Apathy and Death in Early Jamestown." <i>The Journal of American History</i> 66, no. 1 (1979): 24-40.</p>	<p>to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one research question</li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation groups:</b></p>
<p><b>22.11.2018</b></p>	<p><b>(Latin) American Climate, Indigenous Agriculture and Foods</b></p> <p>Climatic patterns influencing environments and societies in the Americas: the El Niño Southern Oscillation; how we learn about past climates in Latin America; Meso-American foods in</p>	<p>Adamson, George, and Richard Grove. "Introduction." In <i>El Niño in World History</i>, edited by Richard Grove and George Adamson. 1-15. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.</p> <p><b>Prieto</b>, María del Rosario, and Facundo Rojas. "Climate History in Latin America." In <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Climate History</i>, edited by Sam White, Christian Pfister and Franz Mauelshagen. 213-24. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.</p> <p><b>García Acosta</b>, Virginia. "Mais und Weizen in prähispanischer und kolonialer Zeit." <i>[Maize and Wheat in Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Times]</i> In <i>Mais. Geschichte und Nutzung einer Kulturpflanze [Maize. History and Use of a Crop]</i>, edited by</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on <b>1 Prieto</b> and <b>2 García Acosta</b>; according to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> </ol>

	pre-Columbian and colonial times	Daniela Ingruber and Martina Kaller-Dietrich. 59-76. Frankfurt a. M.: Brandes & Apsel, 2001.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one research question</li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation Groups:</b></p>
29.11.2018	<p><b>Historical Research Fields, Conceptual Approaches: Climate History, Famine Research and the Concept of Vulnerability</b></p> <p>The field of climate history; the problem of determinism; connecting climate and famines; vulnerability as a lens to study famines</p>	<p><b>Mauelshagen</b>, Franz. <i>Klimageschichte der Neuzeit 1500 – 1900 [Modern Climate History 1500-1900]</i>. Geschichte kompakt. Darmstadt: WBG, 2010, chapter I and II.</p> <p>White, Sam, John L. Brooke, and Christian Pfister. "Climate, Weather, Agriculture, and Food." In <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Climate History</i>, edited by Sam White, Christian Pfister and Franz Mauelshagen. 331-53. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.</p> <p><b>Collet</b>, Dominik. "Predicting the Past? Integrating Vulnerability, Climate and Culture during Historical Famines." In <i>Grounding Global Climate Change: Contributions from the Social and Cultural Sciences</i>, edited by Heike Greschke and Julia Tischler. 39-57. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2015.</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on 1 <b>Collet</b> and 2 <b>Mauelshagen</b>; according to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one research question</li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation groups:</b></p>

<p><b>06.12.2018</b></p>	<p><b>Food, Identity, and Power</b></p> <p>Deepening entanglements I: connecting the environment, food, race/ethnicity, social stratification and power in Spanish and British colonial America and the United States</p>	<p><b>Earle</b>, Rebecca. "'If You Eat Their Food ...': Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America." <i>The American Historical Review</i> 115, no. 3 (June 1, 2010 2010): 688-713.</p> <p>Chaplin, Joyce E. "Natural Philosophy and an Early Racial Idiom in North America: Comparing English and Indian Bodies." <i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i> 54, no. 1 (1997): 229-52.</p> <p><b>Vester</b>, Katharina. <i>A taste of Power. Food and American Identities</i>. California studies in food and culture. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015. (chapter 1)</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on <b>1 Earle</b> and <b>2 Vester</b>; according to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one research question</li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation Groups:</b></p>
<p><b>13.12.2018</b></p>	<p><b>Food, Economy, and Slavery in the Caribbean</b></p> <p>Deepening entanglements II: Mercantilism, plantation economies, slavery and food provisioning in the French Caribbean</p>	<p><b>(1) Mandelblatt</b>, Bertie. "How Feeding Slaves Shaped the French Atlantic: Mercantilism and the Crisis of Food Provisioning in the Franco-Caribbean during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." In <i>The Political Economy of Empire in the Early Modern World</i>, edited by Sophus Reinert and Pernille Røge. 192-220: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.</p> <p><b>(2) Mandelblatt</b>, Bertie. "'A Land where Hunger is in Gold and Famine is in Opulence": Plantation Slavery, Island Ecology, and the Fear of Famine in the French Caribbean." In <i>Fear and the Shaping of Early American Societies</i>, edited by</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on <b>Mandelblatt (1)</b> and <b>Mandelblatt (2)</b>; according to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> </ol>

		<p>Lauric Hennenon and Lyndal H. Roper. 243-64. Leiden: Brill, 2016.</p> <p><b>Primary Source:</b></p> <p>Compare the English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alexandre Exquemelin, <i>A History of the Buccaneers of America</i>, Boston: Benjamin E. Mussey &amp; Co., 1835. (original 1684)</li> </ul> <p>with the German translation (1679) which is a faithful translation of the original Dutch version:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alexandre Exquemelin, <i>Die americanische See-Räuber...</i> Nürnberg: C. Riegels, 1679. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2005gen0001/?sp=6">https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2005gen0001/?sp=6</a></li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one research question</li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation groups:</b></p>
<p><b>20.12.2018</b></p>	<p><b>Plantations, Cash Crops and their Transatlantic Entanglement: Sugar and Cocoa</b></p> <p>Deepening entanglements III: Transatlantic consumption patterns, food-production and consumption and gender, American foodstuffs and transatlantic diffusion of material culture</p>	<p><b>Mintz</b>, Sidney Wilfred. <i>Sweetness and Power. The Place of Sugar in Modern History</i>. New York, New York: Viking, 1985. (chapter 1)</p> <p><b>Norton</b>, Marcy. "Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics." <i>The American Historical Review</i> 111, no. 3 (2006): 660-91.</p>	<p>2x 15 min. presentations on <b>1 Mintz</b> and <b>2 Norton</b>; according to the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Author, relevance of text in author's complete publications</li> <li>2. subject, context and core thesis of the text</li> <li>3. summary of the text</li> <li>4. formulate 1 thesis and one</li> </ol>

	<b>Summary and final discussion with culinary delights from the Americas (everyone brings something for the buffet)</b>		research question  <b>Presentation Groups:</b>
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## **Bibliography Seminar *You Are What You Eat***

### **Literature**

#### **Introductions**

Journal: Food & History

Forster, Robert und Orest Ranum. 1979. Introduction. In *Food and Drink in History*, herausgegeben von Robert Forster und Orest Ranum, S. vii-xiii. London: The John Hopkins University Press.

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### **Individual Products**

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- Mintz Sidney W. 1985. *Die süße Macht. Kulturgeschichte des Zuckers*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
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- Lippi, Donatella. 2013. Chocolate in History: Food, Medicine, Medi-Food. In *Nutrients* 5 (2013): S. 1573-1584.
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### **Argiculture/ Land-use**

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### **Humoralism/ Nutrition**

- De Barros, Juanita. 2009. Health and medicine in the circum-Caribbean, 1800-1968. (*Routledge Studies in the Social History of Medicine*). Herausgegeben von Juanita De Barros, Steven Palmer und David Wright. New York: Routledge.
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## **Caribbean**

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