

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

# ALIMENTARY ENTANGLEMENTS

## FOOD, MATERIALITY, AND RELIGION

Organized by Shaheed Tayob  
and Margreet van Es  
Funded by the project  
Religious Matters  
in an Entangled World  
[www.religiousmatters.nl](http://www.religiousmatters.nl)  
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29-30 NOVEMBER 2022  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PHILOSOPHY AND  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
UTRECHT UNIVERSITY  
JANSKERKHOF 13  
UTRECHT  
THE NETHERLANDS



Utrecht  
University

# WORKSHOP THEME

As a material substance of ingestion, the consumption and production of food is always tied to particular places, notions of personhood and ways of imagining the world and one's place in it. From the symbolic and psychoanalytic insights on consumption, orality and sexuality to the structuralist notion of matter in or out of place, what we eat is often infused with desire, anxiety, fear, and violence as much as dialogue, exchange and belonging. Beyond the symbolic, food is a material substance central to the everyday life of labor, production, trade and domesticity.

Alimentary Entanglements, thus captures the complex ways that food articulates with questions of the body, self, home, religion, community, nation, livelihood and economy as always entangled in everyday political and ethical life. As a central workshop theme, the term elucidates how moral notions of the good, the divine and the righteous cohere around food, a material substance always implicated in relations of trade, exchange, production, labor and livelihood. For example, across the globe, seasonal migrants harvest fruits and vegetables for middle class homes under exploitative conditions of industrial production while having to navigate religious food taboos in often foreign and hostile conditions, giving rise to new configurations of religion, body and self. In significant ways the tastes, sight and smells of foods in themselves, and in the methods, technologies and techniques of production, preparation and presentation are crucial for understanding how relations to family, community, divinity, place, livelihood, belonging and nation are calibrated, with sometimes powerful implications for processes of exclusion and abjection. And the practice of abstinence, in its varied formations as fasting and dietary prescription but also as food movements for ethical consumption such as vegetarianism and veganism are significant for how people in particular places situate themselves in the world, in sometimes surprising and unpredictable ways.

To focus on food as a central object of enquiry is therefore necessarily to bring together a diverse range of scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds, each interested in the multiple ways that food as material substance is entangled with the ethical and political at different historical, geographical and disciplinary junctures. Since food as a vital substance bridges the symbolic and material, the personal and political, this workshop aims to generate a transdisciplinary and transregional dialogue on the ethical and political entailments of what is consumed, where, when and with whom. The workshop asks how a focus on food may provide a locus through which individual projects, commitments and disciplinary methods are enriched. The format will turn around paper presentations by invited participants, followed by discussion.

# PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

**Venue**                    Stijkkamer(room 0.06)  
                                  Janskerkhof 13, Utrecht

## **Tuesday 29 November 2022**

13:00–14:00    Lunch and Registration  
14:00–14:30    Welcome and introduction  
                          by Shaheed Tayob and Margreet van Es

**Session 1**            Food, Materiality, and Religion (I)  
14:30–15:30    Brad Weiss (William and Mary)

15:30–16:00    Coffee break

**Session 2**            Food, Materiality, and Religion (II)  
16:00–17:00    Margreet van Es (Utrecht University)  
17:00–18:00    Joud Alkorani (Radboud University Nijmegen)

18.00–21.30    Conference dinner for invited speakers  
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## **Wednesday 30 November 2022**

**Session 3**            Religion and Human-Animal Entanglements (I)  
09:00–10:00    Noha Fikry Ismail (University of Toronto)  
10:00–11:00    Shaheed Tayob (Stellenbosch University)

11:00–11:15    Coffee break

**Session 4**            Religion and Human-Animal Entanglements (II)  
11:15–12:15    Parama Roy (University of California, Davis)

12:15–13:00    Lunch

**Session 5**            Religion, Meat, and Morality (I)  
13:00–14:00    Eve Jochowitz (Inmolaraan)  
14:00–15:00    Mariska Jung (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

15:00–15:15    Coffee break

**Session 6**            Religion, Meat, and Morality (II)  
15:15–16:15    Julia Hauser (University of Kassel)

**Session 7**            Concluding Remarks  
16:15–16.45    Manpreet Janeja (Utrecht University)  
16.45–17.15    Birgit Meyer (Utrecht University)

17.15–18.00    Drinks for all participants