

UC Center French Language and Culture Program Courses - Summer 2014
PCC 106. **Tastes of Paris: The Anthropology of Food**

Prof. Vincent Bloch

contact: vincent.bloch@sciencespo.fr

Office Hours

By appointment

Lecture

Wednesday/Thursday 15h00-17h00

(unless otherwise indicated)

Visits: (days/times will vary)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human food systems provide a unique window on culture. Eating is not only a biological need; it also reflects forms of human co-existence. Human food systems and ways of eating reveal traditional techniques, values and rituals, as much as they display significant social roles of hierarchy, power and authority.

In this course we will review the general principles of social anthropology and then come to understand them through the exploration of food as an object and reflection of culture. We will investigate the link between the biological, economic, and cultural aspects of human food systems, as well as how they determine the way we eat today. We will analyze the concept of Foodways, a social-cultural process leading to the construction of the self, collective identities, gender, and ethnicity. And we will consider how changes in foodways both reflect mutating social environments and challenge our capacity for social adaptation.

To this end, we will visit traditional open-air French markets, both comparing them to "ethnic" markets in the Asian and African quarters of Paris and sampling the wildly different foods on display. We will use and profit from our presence in Paris to test and evaluate French culinary history through on-site study excursions, tasting experiences, readings and discussions with food professionals.

We will learn how in reality so-called "authentic" foodways are always dynamic processes that integrate elements from different cultural encounters, ways of life and social trends. Indeed, through a study of the history of food in France and its empire and this as a counterpoint to that of the United States, eating will be studied, in the words of anthropologist Marcel Mauss, as a "total social fact". **4.0 UC quarter units.** [Suggested subject areas to which this course transfers over: *Anthropology, History, Sociology*]

Learning Objectives: Upon completing this class, you should be able to carry out the following tasks:

- to demonstrate your ability to actively observe foreign cultures through food;
- to describe the many ways food rituals reveal social and cultural identities;
- to explain how food habits influence personality and cultural identity;
- to enumerate your new food experiences and to explain their cultural meanings;
- to use analytical tools from class to improve your research and writing skills.

Required Texts:

Course Reader [CR]

Instructional Format: Material will be presented using a variety of methods including lectures, class discussions, group work, student presentations, films and local excursions. Some site visits will be integrated into class time; others will be assigned as homework.

Class Requirements: The following elements will be taken into consideration when determining your final grade: preparation and reading before class, short papers, quizzes, final exam, and research presentation. The weighted breakdown is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Class Participation | 10% |
| Food-Sample Presented in Class | 10% |
| Class Report | 20% |
| Written Research Paper | 30% |
| Quizzes | 10% |
| Final Exam | 20% |

Food Sample Report & Presentation: You will be asked to do a five-minute presentation about a food that is especially interesting to you. You will explain the history and origin of the food, how and where it is eaten, and the symbolism or meaning attached to it. And you will bring a small sample ready to be distributed to the entire class.

Class Reports: Choose between

1. **Ethnographic report.** Throughout the semester, you will probably observe many situations linked to French foodways: customers' interactions with waiters and waitresses, food shopping, lunch breaks, heated discussions etc. You are expected to write a two-page descriptive report. (I will provide instructions on how to write such a paper throughout the semester.)
2. **Open-Air Market Visits & Reports.** As a class, we will visit one market and you will be expected to visit two others outside of class (I will provide a list). You will write a report to compare and contrast the different settings, prices, types of vendors and buyers, interactions, and to analyse your observations in light of readings and class discussions.
3. **Senegalese Restaurant Experience Report.** After dining together in a Senegalese restaurant, you will write a two-page report based on your observations of norms and etiquette.

Written Research Paper & Presentation: You will choose a topic that interests you (to be approved by me for session 5) and write an 8-10 page research paper on the subject. As your papers should incorporate your observations, class readings and outside research, you must start thinking about interesting topics from the beginning of the class. Include at least three serious academic references and keep in mind that plagiarism is a serious offence and will not be tolerated. Please ask me if you have any questions with regard to quoting and citations. We will discuss the final paper more in-depth in class. Research papers are due by session 12 and students will briefly present their research to the class either during session 12 or during session 13.

Quizzes: These will comprise 6 yes/no questions based on the week's readings.

Class Participation is required both in the classroom and on our group visits. As per the UC Paris Attendance Policy, excessive absences and tardies will result in a lowered final grade. Please refer to UC Paris Academic Handbook for the policy on absences and tardies.

A Note on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense and could result in your dismissal from the program. All instances of suspected plagiarism will be reported to EAP for disciplinary action. If you borrow words or an idea from any source, whether it be a book, journal, magazine, the Internet, or a lecture, you need to indicate where the information came from. Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* identifies three different acts that are considered plagiarism: "(1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose

borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases [of other texts] into your own words" (Hacker 261). (By both citing the source of this definition of plagiarism and by "enclosing borrowed language in quotation marks," this syllabus has avoided charges of plagiarism.) If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please ask me.

A Note on Electronic Devices:

As a courtesy to your instructor and fellow students, please do not use cell phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, or other electronic devices during class, even to check the time. Make sure phones are turned off. Use of these devices will lower your participation grade. No recording (audio or visual) of class sessions will be permitted.

Recommended Readings (Available in the UC Center Library):

The following books are excellent additional sources pertaining to course content:

- Ashley Bob, Hollows Joanne, Jones Steve & Taylor Ben, *Food and Cultural Studies*. Routledge: London & New York, 2004.
- Boisard, Pierre. *Camembert: A National Myth*. University of California Press, 2003.
- Counihan, Carole and Van Esterik, Patty, (eds.). *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Routledge, New York & London: 1997.
- Counihan, Carole (ed). *Food in the USA: A Reader*. Routledge: New York & London, 2002.
- Flandrin Jean Louis and Massimo Montanari (eds.). *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. Columbia University Press: New York, 1999.
- Ferguson, Priscilla. *Accounting for Taste: the Triumph of French Cuisine*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Gabaccia, Donna R. *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Goody, Jack. *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Halweil, Brian. *Reclaiming Homegrown Pleasures in a Global Supermarket*. W.W. Norton & Company: New York & London, 2004.
- Mennel, Stephen. *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Urbana & Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996.
- Mintz, Sydney W. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. London & New York: Penguin Books, 1995.
- Spang, Rebecca L. *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture*. Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Trubek, Amy. *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession*. University Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

On-Line Reference Tools and Resources:

Anthropology of food, the webjournal dedicated to the social sciences of food. *Anthropology of food* is an open access bilingual academic journal in French and English. Since 1999, this journal is produced and published by a network of European academic researchers sharing a common intellectual interest in the social science of food.

<http://aof.revues.org/>

Food and Foodways, Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment. Restricted access.

http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/.U4cShdJ_veI

Tastes of Paris: The Anthropology of Food Course Schedule

| Session | Lecture & Discussion Topics | Class Activities | Student Assignments |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| 1 06/18 | FROM POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY TO SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY | Professor's food-sample presentation | |
| 2 06/19 | WHY STUDY THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF FOOD? FOOD AT THE CROSSROADS OF NEED AND CULTURE : A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE | | Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Introduction to the Original Edition</i> : 1-9; <i>Introduction & Chp.1</i> : 13-31; <i>Chp.14</i> : 168-177; <i>Chp.28</i> : 374-382. Counihan and Van Esterik (1997), <i>Chap 3</i> : 40-47. |
| 3 06/25 | FOOD, TABOOS AND RELIGIONS | | Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Chp.4</i> : 46-54. Counihan (1997) <i>Chap 5</i> : 59-71. |
| 4 06/26 | FEASTING AND FASTING FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE KINGS OF FRANCE | Film <i>Babette's feast</i> (extracts) | Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Chp.2</i> : 32-37. Mennell (1996) <i>Courts and Cooking. Chp.5</i> : 108-127. |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>5 07/02 + a weeknight evening to be determined</p> | <p>FOOD, MANNERS AND SOCIAL BOUNDARIES</p> <p>Topic for research paper due.</p> | <p>Dinner at a Senegalese restaurant in <i>La Goutte d'or</i> neighborhood.</p> | <p>Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Chp.15</i>: 178-185; <i>Chp.26</i>: 328-338.</p> <p>Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor (2004) <i>Chp.3</i>: 41-58.</p> |
| <p>6 07/03 (a three hour class session including tour from 12:00pm to 1:00pm)</p> | <p>THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TASTE</p> <p>Ethnographic Report due.</p> | <p>Tour of an open-air food market in Paris: <i>le marché d'Alligre</i>.</p> | <p>Mennell (1996) <i>Introduction & Chp.2</i>: 1-39.</p> <p>Berger, Peter L. and Luckmann Thomas (1967) Organism and Identity. In, <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i>, 180-183. New York: Anchor Books.</p> |
| <p>7 07/09</p> | <p>FOOD, ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY</p> | | <p>Counihan(2002) <i>Chp.8</i>: 91-108; <i>Chp.19</i>: 249-262.</p> |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---|--|
| 8 07/10 | FOOD AND GENDER Senegalese Restaurant Experience Report due. | Film <i>Haute Cuisine [Les saveurs du Palais]</i> . (extracts) Film <i>La grande bouffe</i> (extracts) | Mennell (1996) <i>Male Chefs and Women Cooks. Chp.8: 201-204; Chp.9: 230-266.</i> Counihan(2002) <i>Chps.21-24: 277-321.</i> Counihan and Van Esterik (1997), <i>Chp.22: 296-314.</i> |
| 9 07/16 | EATING IN, EATING OUT | Visit the three-star restaurant <i>L'Atelier Joël Robuchon</i> . | Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor (2004) <i>Chps.8-9: 123-152.</i> Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Chp.35: 471-480.</i> |
| 10 07/17 | FOOD AND GLOBALIZATION Open-Air Market Visits Report due | | Counihan and Van Esterik (1997), <i>Chps.24-25: 338-369.</i> Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor (2004) <i>Chp.6: 91-104.</i> |
| 11 07/23 | FRENCH "TERROIR", "AUTHENTICITY" AND ORGANIC FOOD | Film <i>L'aile ou la cuisse</i> (extracts) | Flandrin and Montanari (1999) <i>Chp.38: 500-515.</i> Aurier, Philippe (2005) <i>Exploring Terroir Product Meanings for the Consumer. Anthropology of Food(04): 2-21.</i> Vittersø, Gunnar, et al. (2005) <i>Local, Organic Food Initiatives and Their Potentials for Transforming the Conventional Food System. Anthropology of Food(04): 2-18.</i> |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|---|
| 12 07/24 | FOOD AND THE BODY Research paper due. Student presentations. | Visit TBA | Counihan and Van Esterik (1997), <i>Chps.15-18</i> : 203-255. |
| 13 07/30 | STUDENT PRESENTATIONS & REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM Student presentations. | | |
| 14 07/31 | FINAL EXAM | | |