

Food and Utopia: Live Reviews

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Over the past decade, philosophers, historians, literary scholars, sociologists and economists have engaged in a debate on the political, economic, health, environmental, racial, gender and cultural implications of “food”, from which some thought-provoking publications have resulted. However, the intersection of Food Studies with Utopian Studies is very recent. Although some titles have proved to be groundbreaking (such as *Mapping Appetite: Essays on Food, Fiction and Culture*, 2007; *Food Utopias: Reimagining Citizenship, Ethics, and Community*, 2015; a special issue of *Utopian Studies* dedicated to the “food problem”, vol. 26, no. 1, 2015; and, more recently, an issue of *Cadernos de Literatura Comparada: Utopia e Alimentação / Utopia and Food*, no. 36, 2017), the majority of the publications deal mostly with everyday problems of intentional communities and when literary texts are addressed the transformative hope that is characteristic of critical utopian thinking is not fully explored.

Over the past two years, the members of the *Alimentopia/Utopian Foodways project* (funded by FCT – the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology) have reflected on this intersection, discussing productive ways of addressing the implications of food in utopian literary texts. Having found in the “questions” that Sargent Tower Sargent has formulated in his 2015 groundbreaking article “Everyday Life in Utopia: Food” (Who prepares, serves and cleans up after the meal? Who do people eat with? Where do meals take place? Are there any prohibited kinds of food or drink? What do people eat and drink? What are the biological and psychological consequences for human health? What happens to the leftovers?) a productive methodology, the research group is now exploring food-related titles to add on to Sargent’s set of questions.

This panel propounds the exploration of four food-related books in the form of “live reviews”. The aim is to reflect on the perspectives, conceptual tools and methodologies that each book proposes and discuss their potential to generate new readings of utopian texts.

Books to be “live-reviewed”:

Ariès, Paul (2016). *Une histoire politique de l'alimentation: Du paléolithique à nos jours*. Essais. Max Milo Éditions : Paris

Ferrières, Madeleine (2015). *Histoire des peurs alimentaires. Du Moyen Age à l'aube du XXe siècle*. Paris: Seuil.

Jovanovski, Natalie (2017). *The Feminist Politics of Contemporary Food Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Parson, Julie M. (2015). *Gender, Class and Food: Families, Bodies and Health*. London: Palgrave Macmillan