ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Introduction: Food and Cultural Heritage

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Philosophers have recently paid increasing attention to the aesthetic and artistic worth of food (Korsmeyer 2005; 1999; Kuhen 2005; Monroe 2007; Myhrvold 2011; Quinet 1981; Scruton 2009; Smith 2007; Sweeney 2007; Telfer 1996; Todd 2014). These studies, for example, look at the sensory experience that taste can provide, as well as its hedonic components, representational possibilities, and capacity to convey complex meanings. A dish's aesthetic value, so it seems, is determined by how it affects an individual's sensory, emotional, psychological, and cognitive state.

Culinary items, such as specialty foods, cooking processes, and eating patterns, however, go beyond the limits of aesthetic and hedonic experience. Scholars from various disciplines have discovered that meals and recipes play an important role in identity formation, influencing both who we are and how we see ourselves. UNESCO has recently begun to acknowledge the significance of food as a cultural legacy by including traditional recipes, and cooking and dining traditions on its list of intangible heritage.

Despite this growing interest, the relationship between food and cultural heritage is still largely undertheorized, and many of the philosophical questions it raises remain unanswered. In this symposium, we look at some underappreciated normative and aesthetic issues related to food-related characteristics, such as the nature of food authenticity, the role of experts and stakeholders in identifying specific recipes, the nature of social norms in culinary traditions, as well as the notion of heritage value.

The symposium's overarching goal is to draw aestheticians' attention to cutting-edge themes at the intersection of multiple disciplines and interests, such as food studies, heritage conservation, and public policy. As the articles in the symposium demonstrate, clarifications and proposals for resolving or dealing with culinary heritage controversies could certainly benefit from the contributions that aesthetics as a philosophical discipline can provide. This, in turn, can help recognize the impact

of the field outside of academia while also promoting cross- and inter-disciplinary collaborations.

The symposium consists of three short articles that are very well connected to one another, engaging on related issues from often opposing perspectives. The piece by Patrik Engisch perfectly embodies the vision animating this project. Engisch examines culinary heritage controversies through a move of philosophical jujitsu, challenging our most fundamental assumptions about the subject. He discusses the concept of heritage value and whether culinary items can have such a value. Engisch explores a variety of possible accounts of heritage value, leaning toward a form of monism, that is, the view that heritage value is a distinct type of value that a culinary item bears in light of its significant role in the unfolding of humanity. While Engisch's contribution raises doubts about whether culinary items can have heritage value, it does invite us to question commonly held beliefs and delve deeper into culinary, and more broadly, cultural heritage issues.

Paloma Atencia-Linares and Miguel Ángel Sebastián's article complements and develops some fundamental issues raised by Engisch's paper. They are more concerned with the appraisal of heritage value and its conditions of appropriateness than with the identification of that value in culinary items. They believe that when we witness culinary heritage controversies, such as when Spaniards protested Jamie Oliver's use of chorizo in paella, we are not really witnessing disputes about taste. Disagreements arise when, they argue, different parties disagree on the appropriated set of internal social norms governing a specific culinary practice. Similarly to Engisch, Atencia-Linares and Sebastián raise skeptical concerns: in this case, they question whether it is possible to decide which set should prevail. They suggest that, in contrast to other aesthetic practices, culinary practices are too informal, with participations that are too loosely connected and testable to find principled solutions to culinary heritage disagreements.

Andrea Borghini, Matteo Ravasio, and Andrea Lorenzo Baldini concentrate specifically on this aspect, namely the community or group of reference that is associated with an item of culinary heritage item: the stakeholders. These authors argue that we cannot properly approach culinary heritage controversies while ignoring the role that relevant groups – however difficult it may be to identify them practically – play in identifying and judging certain food items. This article, in particular, maintains that, contrary to what Strohl (2019) suggests, some issues of authenticity cannot be resolved through an appeal to reasonable judges. Stakeholders, according to Borghini, Ravasio, and Baldini, occupy an existential position – that is, they have perceived shared values, local histories, socio-political sensibilities, and goals – and thereby occupy a privileged position in identifying and evaluating items of culinary heritage.

The three articles set out to bring new notions, ideas, perspectives, and problems to the table of philosophical discussion about food and culinary heritage in the hope of stimulating further reflections and debates. These, in turn, may have a significant impact outside of academia, given the enormous cultural, economic, and political impact of programs like the UNESCO list of intangible heritage.

This symposium follows a panel discussion held at the 2023 College Art Association Meeting in New York. The ASA sponsored that panel, for which we are grateful. We would also like to thank the current and previous editors of JAAC for their assistance in bringing this symposium into being.

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