

## A b s t r a c t s

*Falko Schnicke*

### **Historians in Pain. Perceptions of the Body and Scholarship in the 19th Century**

By means of analysing concepts of illness and health among nineteenth-century German historians, this article shows how deeply the body influenced their very definition of academic research. In letters and obituaries, historians connected intellectual work with corporeality and physical ability in order to prove their middle-class work ethic and to highlight their productivity. In their perception of masculine scholarly identity, physical dysfunctions meant dysfunctions in historical study. The article argues that a broader view of academic research, which takes into consideration the body's role, is necessary to understand how gender implications permeated academic subjects.

*Annika Raapke*

### **Pasta and Sympathy. Food and Emotional Belonging in Letters from the 18th Century French Caribbean**

Letter-writers from the 18<sup>th</sup> century French Antilles tended to position themselves within the range of gustatory experience and preference they shared with their readerships, thus performing their affective belonging and stabilizing and strengthening emotional ties. By sending foodstuffs back to their homelands – together with letters in which they outlined specific situations for the consumption of these foodstuffs – they made use of the affective quality of food and taste. This allowed them to convey their emotions, and to participate in shared food and taste experiences while remaining physically absent.

*Maren Möhring*

### **Culinary Tourism On-Site. Early Event Gastronomy in Colonial and World Exhibitions**

Food played a central role in World Fairs, as well as in Colonial and Trade Exhibitions, which has not yet been sufficiently recognized in (historical) research. Attracting the masses, restaurants and pubs on the exhibition grounds functioned as the fair's main meeting points. Food products and drinks also formed a substantial part of the exhibited objects. Moreover, cooking and eating practices of Non-Europeans, who had been recruited for the ethnological divisions of the exhibitions, played an intrinsic role in the spectacle of 'the other'. These three dimensions will be discussed on the basis of source material from two exhibitions in Germany, namely the Berlin Trade Exhibition of 1896 and the Saxon-Thuringian Industrial and Trade Exhibition in Leipzig in 1897.

Food has long been considered a central aspect of one's culture and was thus used in the exhibitions to construct and perform colonial, national, as well as regional identities. Food, particularly those which are unfamiliar, can evoke strong feelings spanning across a spectrum from delight to disgust. Visiting the exhibitions not only meant that one could see 'the world', but that it was also possible to smell and taste it. The sensual act of exposing oneself through eating unknown foods may have functioned to confirm Eurocentric world

ordering of the exhibition, but the experience may also have brought established social and cultural boundaries into question.

*Silke Hackenesch*

**'These Black Americans Appear to Be the Color of Chocolate or Walnut or Caramel'. Chocolate as *Racial Signifier* and Constructions of Blackness in the United States of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

This contribution argues that chocolate is a racial signifier, and as such has been used in self-reference by African Americans: It can relate to mixed race identities as well as constructions of Blackness. In the early twentieth century, chocolate found its way in scholarly and popular treatments of colorism in an attempt to describe various skin shades. Writers of the Harlem Renaissance used it in order to envision an aesthetically appealing and affirmative Blackness. In the postwar period, chocolate regained significance in the expression 'Chocolate City', originally a reference to Washington, D.C. with its majority of African American residents. Drawing on Ernesto Laclau's theory of collective identity formation and applying it to various examples, the article discusses the usage of the food metaphor "chocolate" as a racial category in texts about and by African Americans.

*Monica Rüthers*

**Nostalgic Food Practices in Postsocialist Russia**

Russian food politics protect and sponsor popular Soviet brands that are perceived as healthy and natural in contrast to chemically contaminated imported foods. This paper investigates "Soviet" ice cream in its role as a nostalgic food item. Promoted as evidence of a better, homely past, its reminiscence facilitates identity formation and the demarcation between the self and the other. Cultural attributions turn the "cold delicacy" into an emotionally invested Soviet comfort food of legendary "pure milk" quality, offered by the paternalistic state and its food industry. The pickled gherkin is the exact opposite, a symbol of self-sufficiency and independence from the erratic Soviet retail system.