



WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS

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WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS-2023

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CTD: 17GS- GENDER, SEXUALITY AND WOMEN
SUB-DOMAIN: GENERAL TRACK

PANEL TITLE: RELIGION, FOOD AND FEMININITY – A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

CONVENOR: DR. ITISHREE PADHI
CO-CONVENOR: DR. OPESEN CHRIS
DISCUSSANT: DR. FRED H. BATEGANYA

ABSTRACT

Food and religion are reflections of a culture. Along with social, ethnic, geographical, and economic factors, food plays an important role in culture. Food also plays a significant role in connecting people with each other, their ancestors, Gods and with their wider kin groups. Religion on the other hand, influences and shapes food practices and strengthens human relations, directly or indirectly depicting the cultural identity of the group. It enforces rituals, beliefs, and practices with food, justifying what can or cannot be eaten by whom, clearly demarcating who should eat what and how, and by whom food needs to be prepared and served. Different cultures for this reason, exhibit food practices differently establishing their societal values and their faith in God. Symbolism and interpretation relating to food in religion and religion in food vary from one ethnic group to other, from one cultural community to another, but a common factor exhibiting women distinctly playing significant roles across diversities.

Beliefs and practices associated with religion and food, women’s role and how gender relationships are created, continued, and sustained. It poses questions on social harmony, social organization, and social order and also on inter-personal and inter-group relationships. Habits, practices, rules and beliefs relating to food and religion can be a sacrifice, totem and taboos and man-nature-God relationships; festivals, harvests, religion, art and culture; kinship and hospitality; multiculturalism, culture contact, and Diaspora; sharing, gifting, reciprocity and exchange; shrines and sacred centres, holy rivers; spirits and possession of God, and life cycle rituals .

This panel purposes to invite scholars, and academicians to join for a holistic discussion with these issues, and related issues from Anthropology and inter-disciplinary social science disciplines.

Keywords: Religion, Food, Femininity, Symbolism

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