



INTERLOCUTOR

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Call for Papers: Volume V – 2026

Culinary Cultures: Politics, Aesthetics, and Representations

Food has been intrinsically represented in literature since times immemorial. Alexander Pope's "fumes of burning chocolate" and the sensual aesthetics of coffee brewing and drinking ritual, the opulent performativity of ornate China and silver crockery in "The Rape of the Lock" to the horrific depiction of food's constructed absence in modern novels like Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* foregrounding the hunger and scarcity of the man-made Bengal Famine, indicate the diverse nature of culinary class politics, its subsequent dehumanisation, and gastronomic elitism illustrating food's materiality beyond a source of sustenance.

Postcolonial theorist Arjun Appadurai in his seminal essay "Gastro-Politics in Hindu South Asia" (1981) has apprehended food as a crucial medium of contact between humans, in a society and culture that is constantly evolving based on regulation and evolution of such connections. Food Studies, as an emerging academic discipline facilitates interdisciplinary critical inquiries encompassing Literary and Cultural Studies, Gender Studies, Ethnographic Studies, Memoir and Life studies, Film and Media Studies, Dalit Studies, Performance Studies, Diaspora Studies, Disability Studies, Queer Studies, Ecocriticism, among others. Culinary cultural forms like cookbooks, food memoirs, food blogs and food vlogs, food

documentaries, culinary-travel writings, food novels, food essays, have subsequently emerged redefining the paradigms of research in humanities and social sciences reflecting a culinary or a gastronomic turn.

Roland Barthes' canonical essay, "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption" defines food "a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior". Food is not necessarily restricted to the quotidian reality anymore, it becomes a site of contestation, a field of politics and resistance, a repository of memories, where cultural identities are reconstructed and retained, and where ideologies and histories are conceptualised and perpetuated. As a cultural artefact, food simmers diasporic nostalgia of belonging, unifying the link with one's homeland in the host country. As a driving force in food memoirs and trauma narratives, food metaphors and recipes evoke culinary memories that are archived and performed along with socio-political identities that are shaped and consolidated through past recollections of affliction and resilience.

Highlighting the intersection of translation and food, memoirs like *Dalit Kitchens of Marathwada* use marginalised recipes to expose culinary discrimination and segregation, and forge counter cultures resisting patriarchal and casteist homogenisation. Cultural productions like *The Great Indian Kitchen* and *Mrs* foregrounding commonplace culinary practices and unaccounted domestic culinary labour enunciate kitchens as heterotopic sites of othering, drawing from Michel Foucault's 1967 lecture "Of Other Spaces". These films represent the kitchen as a temporal site of marginalisation where discipline and gendered injustice is structurally imposed. The kitchen as a heterotopic space of familial surveillance calls for a gastrofeminist inquiry, critically challenging the gendered culinary coding, practices and taboos across communities, societies, and nations. Culinary narratives, therefore, represent resistive storytelling prototypes to assert subaltern voices destabilising the hegemonic gazes and mainstream depictions by navigating through the history and contemporaneity of global mediations of famines, migration, colonialism, patriarchy, neoliberalism and neocapitalism.

The contemporary academic discourses interweave emerging culinary theoretical paradigms with critical praxis drawing from culinary activism reflecting the changing global neoliberal orders and gastronomic cultural representations (digital and non-digital), reimagining gastrosemantic culinary aesthetics and stylistics. Correspondingly, critical works like Anita Mannur's *Intimate Eating: Racialized Spaces and Radical Futures* (2022) explicate the culinary politics of "intimate eating publics", and "racialized subjects" that formulate chosen families beyond traditional heteronormative or nationalist structures queering and radicalising the concurrent culinary perspectives on intimacy and the act of eating alone in the context of globalised urban café cultures. Gastronomic intimacy further extends to stylised aesthetics of fetishising culinary excesses surpassing nutritional reality, emphasising the visual cravings of food over that

of nourishment in contemporary media. Lengthy scenes with close shots of food preparation and consumption in films like, *Like Water for Chocolate* (1992), *Chocolat* (2000), *Ratatouille* (2007), and the strategic employment of ASMR sounds for recipe narratives in culinary vlogs on new media contribute to the proliferating discourse of gastrosemantic sensuality, desire, and temptation, inviting critical engagement and research.

Coleridge's visionary words, "Water, water, every where, /Nor any drop to drink" echo in our minds when we are confronted with stark images of malnourished children in war-ravaged zones highlighting the severity of manufactured hunger crises and water scarcity. The brutality of androcentric culinary geopolitics propelled by westernised ideological hunger for power necessitates an urgent need to address the strategic disparities and inequities in global state policies by foregrounding a volume on food and hunger. Contextually, *Interlocutor Vol. V* will comprise a wide range of original, unpublished scholarly articles, engaging with ideas of culinary cultures and subcultures to underscore the intersections of power, identity, agency, memory, gender, caste, class, nation, sexuality, spatiality, among others. Suggested sub-themes are enlisted below. However, pertinent essays beyond the listed topics may be considered for publication if deemed suitable by the board of editors:

Suggested areas:

- Food, Marginalisation, and Resistance
- Food, Memory, and Trauma Narratives
- Food Sociability and Ideology
- Food Manners and Class Differentiations
- Food and Unseen Labour
- Culinary Cultures and Subcultures
- Café Cultures
- Food/Recipe as Text/Artefact
- Gastrofeminist and Gastroqueer Discourses
- Culinary Colonialism and Orientalism
- Food and World Literature
- Food in Visual Texts: Films, Vlogs, Documentaries
- Food and New Media
- Culinary Intimacy, Desire, and Sexuality
- Kitchen as Archive
- Food and Disability

- Politics of Cooking and Consumption
- Hunger, Scarcity, Free Meals and Politics
- Food and Diaspora
- Food and Environment
- Food and Performance
- Fasting, Charity, and Merit

Important Dates and Instructions to Remember:

- Last date of submission of Abstracts: **05.06.2026**
- Date of communication of selected Abstracts: **20.06.2026**
- Last Date of Submission of Complete Paper with Declaration, Similarity Check Report, AI Percentage Report, and Bio note: **20.07.2026**

Submission Guidelines:

- 9th edition of MLA handbook. Papers will be summarily rejected if not submitted as per the guidelines.
- Font type, size & spacing: Times New Roman, 12-point, 1.5 line spacing, UK English only (American English will lead to rejection)
- Email address for submission: **bescinterlocutor@thebges.edu.in**
- Word-limit: Abstract: 300 (maximum) [inclusive of the title and keywords] in a Microsoft Word Document. File named as 'Abstract_Abstract Title_Contributor's name'.
- Keywords: not more than 5 arranged in alphabetical order.
- The final paper should be strictly in the range of 4500-6000 words including everything except Works Cited.

Contributors are requested to refer to the ethical policy on the journal website before submitting abstract and final paper: See [publication ethics](#)

All abstracts and final papers will be thoroughly screened for plagiarism and AI generated content.

Non-compliance of the submission guidelines, journal ethical policy and submission of plagiarised or AI generated abstract/paper beyond accepted limit will be summarily rejected without any explanation.

For any other query, please refer to the journal website: <https://interlocutor.co.in/>, or contact as at our official email address: bescinterlocutor@thebges.edu.in