

Wine, Transgression, and Excess: Essays on Feasting Inspired by the Ackland Art Museum Collection

By the students in Professor Inger Brodey's
"The Feast in Philosophy, Film, and Fiction" course
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Cultures far and wide have discovered the practicalities and pleasures of fermented fruit or grain, particularly in producing alcoholic beverages. Echoes of these beverages can be seen in the vessels on display in this gallery: the small sake cup for Japanese rice wine; the ancient Greek lacquer-ware *kylix* for sharing wine in a *symposium* setting; the German glass Pilsner *Stein* for drinking beer; the Kiddush cup for the communal consumption of sweet grape wine during the Jewish Shabbat; and from China, both the porcelain tankard made for European beer consumption as well as the much older porcelain wine vessel used domestically for pouring rice wine into smaller vessels.

Leon Kass describes the attraction of these kindred beverages: "Wine gladdens the heart, loosens the tongue, and enlivens the soul. Under its influence, we forget our troubles, lose our inhibitions, speak our minds: *In vino veritas*. A psychic midwife, wine delivers us of hidden insights and new affections" (*The Hungry Soul*, 125). In our readings, particularly Plato's *Symposium* and T.S. Eliot's response to Plato in his play *The Cocktail Party*, we can see that alcohol is associated with insight and can function as a psychic medicine at times.

And yet, Plato's *Symposium* also witnesses the drunken and unmeasured behavior of at least one of its guests. To quote again from Leon Kass' *The Hungry Soul*: "wine, like other human foods ... partakes of the moral ambiguity of the human. [...] It can enhance and it can destroy [our] humanity" (127). No object could testify better to the excesses associated with the culture of alcohol consumption than the porcelain "vomit pot" in our exhibition.

Wine also suggests the insatiable aspects of human curiosity and hunger. Historically, this insatiability reveals itself in the (establishment of and) transgression of cultural taboos. Both lithographs on display here depicted a violation of food taboos, both in quantity and choice of meat: in one a man violates the taboo against eating horse meat and in the other, the Lord Mayor violates a variety of religious and other taboos in his gluttonous dream.

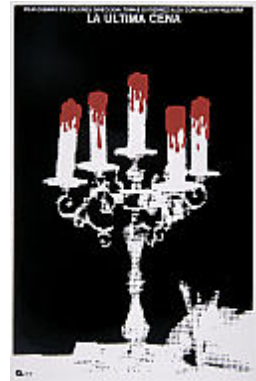
Tea and its kindred caffeine-bearing beverages (including coffee and drinking chocolate), also manifest themselves differently across material cultures, while simultaneously pointing to shared human needs that unite the human experience. Both the German glass cup and saucer and the albumen print of the simulated Japanese tea gathering attest to the lasting and sophisticated associations with tea, a drink whose attraction originated in its power to overcome (or at least delay) the need to sleep.

Finally, two of the pieces on display relate to specific religious connections between food and sin, as understood in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition. Rose Piper's depiction of Eve and the serpent from the *Book of Genesis* depicts fallen human nature through an act of temptation and eating. *La Ultima Cena* poster depicts not only the Last Supper where Jesus proleptically commemorates his redemption of sin through an act of eating, drinking, and remembrance and by emphasizing the connection between blood and wine. We have come full circle: wine like culture can either enlighten us or reveal violence or concupiscence suppressed beneath the surface of our polished surroundings.

Thanks to Sarah Elizabeth Morris, Caroline Culbert, and especially Carolyn Allmendinger for help our class assemble this exhibit and guide book.

--Inger Sigrun Brodey

René Azcuy Cárdenas
Cuban, born 1939
La Última Cena, 1977
color screenprint
Gift of Dr. David L. Craven, 2008.43.3



"La última cena: Horrifying Holiness"
By Ky Barefoot

Paul René Azcuy Cárdenas created this movie poster for Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's 1976 film *La última cena* (*The Last Supper*). In the film, a Cuban slave owner reenacts the Last Supper with his slaves in order to convert their souls and prove he has their best interests at heart. When they rebel the following day, he has them all beheaded. Echoing the slave owner's terrifying perversion of Christ's Last Supper, this poster portrays a version of the Last Supper that encompasses horror instead of sanctity.

Upon first glance, the eye is attracted to the red blood gushing from the candelabra. The eerie resemblance of blood oozing out of nowhere and wax slowly dripping down candles disturbs viewers. Positioned against the blackness, the pixelated candelabra also disturbs. It appears like it was photographed at a crime scene and plastered on the cover of a newspaper. Thus, the candelabra exudes a foreboding, criminal presence. Enveloping the candelabra and adding to its foreboding presence, the black darkness elicits fears of the unknown and feelings of dread.

Feelings of dread increase after viewers read the title and realize the gory connection to Christ's Last Supper. Viewers are startled by how the poster countervails holy tradition and presents the Lord's Supper as one of murderous bloodshed. They become curious about the film and its perverse connection to the Last Supper. They wonder whose blood drips down the candles, and whose hands are responsible for murder. Thus, by eliciting feelings of horror, the film poster engages viewer curiosity and does what it was meant to do—convince people to watch the film.

Honoré Daumier
French, 1808 – 1879
Scene of a Horsemeat Diner,
from *Croquis Parisiens*, 1857
lithograph
Gift of Susan Schulman and Carolyn Bullard
in honor of Timothy Riggs, 2011.29



“Hierarchy and Hippophagy”
By Emily Byrd

In Honoré Daumier's 1857 lithograph, *Scene of a Horsemeat Diner*, the caricaturist critiques the immoralities acted out by the societal elites in order to maintain their bourgeois status. The forces in power in nineteenth-century France influenced the consumption of horsemeat on a large scale during the Siege of Paris, symbolizing a loss of humanity through a loss of the ability to distinguish food that is fit for consumption. Though this alimentary anomaly began out of desperation among the lower rungs of French society, it was borne out of a situation contrived by the pride of the French aristocracy, and it was the people of the upper class who sustained it out of a sense of loyalty to self-serving nationalism. This particular piece is part of a series of lithographs by the caricaturist about how Parisian elites played a role in normalizing the eating of horsemeat by hosting a well-publicized dinner featuring horse meat in every dish (Bertleson). Daumier used this event to show how bestial the upper class was willing to become for the sake of maintaining the status quo. The ability of humans to limit their consumption and differentiate between appropriate and forbidden food sources is part of what the philosopher Leon Kass says is essential to the separation between man and animal—a distinction that Daumier is playing with in this depiction of inhuman hippophagy.

Unidentified artist
Japanese, 20th century
Sake Cup
porcelain
Gift of Simon Kriger, 63.14.9



“Drunk with Manners”
By Mai Dvorak

In the early seventeenth century, Korean artists introduced porcelain to Japan, marking the beginning of a new art industry and trade. Porcelain is formed by the use of *touseki*, a white clay, which is heated to extremely high temperatures to form vessels, as seen in this *sake* cup. This *sake* cup, created in the nineteenth century, shows the exquisite craftsmanship of Japanese artisan Senzan, with a blue plum branch decoration on the exterior. The plum branches were painted with a blue underglaze and red decorative glaze to enhance the look of the ripened plums. The plum branches and fruit were most likely depicted due to their prevalence and use in Japanese culture and use in food and drink.

This *sake* cup would customarily be used for dinner parties or personal use within the home. *Sake* is fermented rice liquor unique to Japan and dates back more than two thousand years. When drinking *sake*, it is customary for individuals to pour the alcohol for their companions before accepting a drink themselves. By pouring alcohol for others rather than oneself, it creates an atmosphere where everyone is a guest and serving one another. It is a way of showing community as well as putting others' enjoyment before your own.

Hieronymus Mittnacht
German, active in Augsburg, died 1769
Kiddush Cup, 1759-61
silver-gilt, engraved and chased
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 99.21



“Kiddush Cup”
By Amy Dwalin

This Kiddush cup, by Hieronymus Mittnacht c. 1759 – 1761, is made out of silver and engraved with Hebrew words and images of flowers. The Hebrew inscription reads, “Guard the Sabbath day and keep it holy as the Lord your God has commanded you” (“Kiddush Cup”). While the cup is beautiful and luxurious, such an object was owned not just by the very wealthy. A family of somewhat modest means might save money in order to buy ornate ritual objects, since the beauty of such objects is thought to enhance the *mitzvot*; however, Kiddush cups are not intrinsically holy (Greene, 36). Certain objects, like Torah scrolls and fringed prayer shawls (*tallitot*), are treated with special ritual care. These objects receive burials, for example, when they are no longer fit for use (Greene, 37). The holiness that the Kiddush cup contributes derives from its use rather than its essence. It aids in the sanctification of the Kiddush blessing and the Shabbat dinner, but it is not itself a holy object. This parallels feasting in that the components of a feast do not by themselves create a feast. Rather, they must be used in a certain way. Just as the Kiddush cup must be used in a very particular way to create – or enhance – holiness, the food, company, stories, jubilation and socializing must be combined in the right sort of way in order to have a feast.

Vomit Pot with Floral Decoration, c. 1750-51
Porcelain with underglaze cobalt blue decoration
Richard D. Pardue Collection in honor of Dr. Christiaan J. A. Jörg
2012.18.1



Tankard, c. 1720
Porcelain with iron red (rouge-de-fer) and gold decoration
Richard D. Pardue Collection in honor of Amanda M. Hughes
2014.39.3



"Intake and Regurgitation as Equals in the Feast"
By Amy Dwalin

Both the Tankard and Vomit Pot with Floral Decoration are items exported from China by the Dutch East India Company ("Blue and White Wares"). The artists are unknown (Ackland Art Museum, 21 - 22). The shapes of the items were likely to have been commissioned by Europeans. That is, the shapes are not original to China ("Blue and White Wares"). Both are made from porcelain (Ackland Art Museum, 21 - 22). The Tankard is decorated with "iron red" and gold, whereas the Vomit Pot with Floral Decoration is decorated with a cobalt blue underglaze (Ackland Art Museum, 21 - 22). Both are decorated florally, with delicate stems connecting the flowers to one another. The Vomit Pot with Floral Decoration is very likely from the Geldermalsen, a Dutch East India Company ship that wrecked in 1752 ("Blue and White Wares"). The vomit pot is considered a rare item; it is even thought that most vomit pots currently in existence are from the Geldermalsen ("Blue and White Wares"). Although it was speculated that they were used as chamber pots for young children, the consensus seems to be that they are more likely to have been used in the way suggested by their name ("Blue and White Wares"). That is, they were used to contain the vomit of a person who had perhaps eaten too much at dinner ("Blue and White Wares"). In contrast to the Vomit Pot with Floral Decoration, the Tankard was used for drinking. It is likely to have been used for beer ("Tankard," and Sawinski).

The juxtaposition of the two objects represents a unique perspective on the feast. This perspective is that we should not only *tolerate* excess. Rather, we should treat it as just as essential to feasting as is eating or drinking.

Although the origins, materials and decorations of the pieces are very similar, their uses are quite opposite. In fact, it is not difficult to imagine a situation in which both are used in the very same night. Someone might drink a lot of beer out of a tankard and then become sick as a result. The person would then resort to using the vomit pot. The vomit pot is an interesting object because it involves the recognition of one's own lack of self-control. That is, unless vomit pots were used exclusively for those with stomach ailments such as viruses or food poisoning, they were owned with the expectation of eating or drinking too much. It seems unlikely that such an ornate object would be reserved only for the very sick, so they were probably used for casual eating and drinking to excess. If used in a public setting, this lack of self-control would be on display to all others in attendance. Rather than being a point of shame, it is symbolically held in the same esteem as the drinking of beer, for example, because the vessels for each are equally ornate.

In fancy contexts, we dine with fine utensils and dishes. It is thus not surprising that the Tankard is beautifully decorated. However, it might strike us as unusual that a vessel used to contain vomit should be equally ornate. Vomiting is, after all, not something that is usually considered pretty. However, it can be *made* pretty in the sense that it can be recognized as part of the feast rather than something that happens separately from the feast. This is the suggestion of the paired items; they stand on equal ground with one another, for they are equally ornate.

Rose Piper

American, 1917 – 2005

Eve and the Serpent (“Sarpent He Came Roun’ de Trunk;

At Miss Eve His Eye He Wunk”), c. 1988

acrylic on Masonite

Gift of Roxie Nicholson, 2012.1



“A Narrative on the Anti-Feast”

By Brent Eisenbarth

How do paintings convey narrative? Rose Piper’s painting *Eve and the Serpent* (c. 1988) and Hendrik Bary’s lithograph *Wine is a Mocker* (c. 1670; see “What is Wine” below) answer this, capturing a trickster’s wink at the viewer. In each work, a deceiver serves an “anti-feast”; when juxtaposed, the two works contrast temptation and the folly that can result from it.

Piper’s piece exhibits motion. With her head tipped, Eve reaches out to the snake, coiled about the tree. His wink and the bright colors paint an alluring picture of temptation. This motion is fitting as *Eve and the Serpent* originates from an African-American slave song “Dese Bones Gonna Rise Again,” titled after a resurrection prophesy in Ezekiel 37:7-8. Although absent here, Adam was present in the original Hebrew text (Parker).

While Piper’s colorful, active work showcases temptation, Bary’s *Wine is a Mocker* sketches the result. As its title suggests, the mocker’s foolish wink inadvertently mocks himself. Juxtaposed with Eve and the snake’s gracefulness, the mocker’s erratic teetering and his wife’s drunken slumber complete the narrative of sin. Furthermore, both works depict marriages that lack communion, showcasing an anti-feast. Eve instead dines with sin in Piper’s painting, while the husband’s drunken antics sow strife in Bary’s lithograph.

In both cases, the deceiver severs relationships. Matthew 5:23-24 commands that should one remember a standing conflict with a friend, he must give up his grudge before leaving a gift at the altar: “First go and be reconciled.” If God refuses sacrifice offered in strife, then how much more so is a divisive meal, defined by sin, the narrative of an anti-feast.

Unidentified artist

German

Pilsner Glass with Anemones, c. 1890

enameled glass

Gift of Dorothy and S. K. Heninger, Jr., 2001.30.16



“Beer and Art Nouveau: Culinary Culture and the Northern European Bourgeoisie”
By Brady Gilliam

Upon analysis, the *Pilsner Glass with Anemones*, c. 1890, provides insights into the social environment of later nineteenth-century Northern Europe. The Art Nouveau style of painting on the nineteenth-century pilsner glass, as well as its function as a vessel for beer, demonstrate the appropriation of visual culinary art – a domain that had until then remained cultural property of the aristocracy, defined by standards of style unattainable to all but the disproportionately wealthy ruling class – by the Northern European bourgeoisie. Beer was historically the Northern commoner's drink, but nineteenth-century innovations in beer making allowed the drink to attain a previously absent level of sophistication in the public eye. Not only did beer making itself become refined, but the drinking of beer and the culture surrounding it did as well: glasses began to take various shapes, each having a special function for a certain type of beer. The forms and styles of culinary art that were accepted as fashionable in Europe no longer originated solely from the culture and tradition of the aristocracy. The subsequent Modernist art movement reinforced this trend of the popularization of high culture. The anemone painting on the nineteenth-century pilsner glass that is the subject of this essay is done in the Art Nouveau style. If beer seemed coarse in the eyes of the old nobility, then so would have seemed the painting on this glass, with its simple, vigorous plants. By drinking beer from ornately decorated and specially-designed glasses done in the Art Nouveau style, the upper-middle classes of Northern Europe were elevating what was once a peasant's drink to the level of high cuisine and thereby redefining culinary sophistication.

Johann Joachim Kändler
German, 1706 - 1775

**Apollo, from the Bath of Apollo centerpiece, c.
1748**

porcelain with clear glaze

Gift of the William E. Shipp Estate, by exchange,
2012.7



“The Luxury of the Centerpiece”
By Josh Green

For many years Europe’s porcelain was imported from China, with pieces often designed and produced with European style and taste in mind. However, beginning around 1710, artists in the German Meissen factory learned to produce porcelain and began creating works of art like the Apollo. Johann Joachim Kändler, the artist who created this particular piece, worked at the Meissen factory for over forty years after leaving the service of King Augustus II of Poland (Yamauchi). During his life, he was one of the most well known porcelain sculptors in Europe.

The Ackland’s *Apollo*, from the Apollo Bath centerpiece, is a porcelain sculpture of the god Apollo reclining on a flower-covered rock. Apollo sits partially clothed with his right arm outstretched and his head encircled by laurel leaves. Apollo is a fitting subject for such a centerpiece as he is the god of music, poetry, and other fine arts (Atsma). Originally, the sculpture was part of a set that included a number of nymphs designed to surround the reclining god, but all elements except the centerpiece have been lost to history (Manners). It is likely that this particular piece was designed for a dessert table, as floral imagery was especially popular for dessert centerpieces. Interestingly, the centerpieces of dessert tables used to be created from sugar until porcelain was readily available in Europe (Nichols).

On view in Gallery 15 of the Museum’s first floor.

Unidentified artist

Japanese

Stacked Food Boxes in Handled Holder

lacquer

Lent from a North Carolina Private Collection,

L2003.059.0011a-f



“The Portable Feast”

By Martha Isaacs

This *jūbako* (or layered box), equipped with a handle for efficient carrying, emerged in Japan as a device for transporting meals to elite social events, such as theatre productions or cherry blossom festivals. *Jūbako* boxes derived from *bentō* boxes, which originated in the fifth century when samurai and warriors needed to carry rice from home on long journeys. The boxes developed into wooden lacquered boxes during the Azuchi-Momoyama Period from 1568 to 1600, and meals could be served in such structures for tea parties and social gatherings. The Ackland Art Museum’s specific *jūbako* box likely originates from the late eighteenth century in the Edo period of Japan, when samurai became the ruling class and *jūbako* became more luxurious, filled with sesame seeds and side dishes for upper-class recreational outings. Particularly ornate *jūbako*, often decorated with fruit or oyster designs such as the box in the Ackland, surfaced during special occasions to entertain guests or host special ceremonies. Lacquer ware gained its value from its difficult crafting, for the lacquering process required thirty-three stages, including preparing the wood, applying powdered clay to hide the texture, and several applications of high-quality lacquer, a heat resistant material from *rhus verniciflua* tree’s sap. The Ackland’s *jūbako*, complete with a striking red interior, demonstrates *shu* lacquer made from adding cinnabar coloring. Often decorated with gold and silver or the owner’s crest, these containers did not provide commonplace meals for Japanese masses, but served as special objects saved for holidays such as New Year’s celebrations.

Hendrik Bary, Dutch, c. 1640 – 1707, printmaker

Frans van Mieris, Dutch, 1635 – 1681, designer

Wine Is a Mocker, printed 1670

engraving

The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 2013.22.2



“What is Wine?”

By John Ligtenberg

Wine is a Mocker, a 1670 Dutch print by Hendrik Bary after Frans van Mieris, is part of a popular genre of didactic art which depicts scenes with multiple, anonymous characters engaged in everyday activities. In this particular work, a sleeping woman and a mischievous, pot-pouring man are engaged in opposite activities, and yet are given equal importance, which complicates the genre convention of deriving a single moral from the art, and instead makes a critique of two different, but equally reprehensible, effects of drinking.

The two characters are as far apart as can be. A woman sleeps while a man with a roguish expression empties the contents of his bowl over her head, and it is unclear which character, the sleeping woman or the man, is influenced by wine, or whether both of them show a different aspect of drunkenness. In the latter case, the woman is in a drunken stupor and therefore vulnerable, but the even, soft lighting on her skin gives her beauty. On the other hand, the man’s humorous face is rendered terrifying by harsh lighting; the dark shadow of his nose over his left eye reminds one of a black eye, and his expression is that of a flamboyant jester. Thus the play of light in the image captures two different effects of drinking, neither of which is flattering to the recipient.

Fachschule Steinschönau
Austrian or German
Wheel-carved Cup and Saucer, c. 1905
glass
Gift of Dorothy and S. K. Heninger, Jr., 2001.30.22ab



“Art in a New Age”
By My Linh Luu

The wheel-carved glass cup and saucer (c.1905) were produced by Fachschule Steinschönau a trade school and company in Steinschönau, now part of the Czech Republic. They embody the movement of avant-garde artists away from the nineteenth-century traditional and conventional aesthetics. Indeed, in contrast to the ostentatious furniture and ornaments imitated in the palaces of the French kings, Art Nouveau no longer abides by the old standard of taste. Here, one can notice the simplicity of the décor of the object. The stalk of the strawberry plant is illustrated with fine strokes drawn horizontally and vertically on the sides of the object. The delicacy of the lines and colors, as well as its predominantly clear glass surface, emphasize its simplicity. This lack of décor reflects thus the end of the Empire Style in 1815 and the beginning of a new era for Western art. At the same time, while monarchies die out and as waves of nationalism become more prominent, countries use their own authentic art and literature to show their independence. In Steinschönau, once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, glassmakers in Bohemia distinguished themselves as experts of glass-making craftsmanship, a source of national pride. The theme of nature, represented with a simple fruit plant instead of exotic flora, reveal a fascination with the local natural world as well as a more original approach to art. Ultimately, the cup and saucer embody elegance and simplicity, as well as a way of life that connects, rather than contrasts, with art across social and geographic boundaries.

Unidentified artist
Chinese, Song dynasty (960 - 1279)
Wine Vessel
ceramic
Gift of Lena J. Stewart, 2000.4.1



“Wine in Ancient China”
By Jennifer Lyu

With origins as far back as 1600 B.C. during the Shang Dynasty, the intricacies and structure of Chinese wine vessels such as the one in the Ackland’s collection have helped historians discover the importance of wine and its many uses throughout Chinese history.

The wine vessel was first commonly used in rituals as a channel through which the living and the dead could communicate, strengthening ancestral ties and helping to preserve family tradition and culture. If you look closely to the marks on this specific vessel, there are spiral designs incorporated around the base. Many historians believe the Chinese saw the cyclical nature of these spiral designs as a symbol of unity or the blending of different elements together to create a dynamic whole. The elements of the living and the dead, reality and mythology are, in effect, all becoming connected as one entity in the use of this vessel, thus bringing one closer to family traditions and the great divine.

Wine became popular among kings and noblemen of Ancient China. This elite class often drank wine for the purpose of leisure and enjoyment. It was soon discovered that wine’s bitter, sweet, and pungent elements gave it the abilities to kill all pathogens and act as a healing mechanism to treat many diseases and illnesses. Medicinal wine became well known as a preservative for kings’ corpses, as well as a treatment for snakebites, carbuncles, and other itches. Excessive drinking and indulgence by kings, such as Di Xin of the Shang Dynasty, led them to neglect their royal duties and may have helped gradually to steer the dynasty to its downfall.

Attributed to Makron
Greek, Attic, active c. 500 - 475 BCE
**Cup (Kylix): Reclining Drinker;
Youths at a Drinking Party**, c. 475 BCE
terracotta, red-figure ware
Ackland Fund, 62.14.2



“The Capacity of a Wine Cup”
By Tommy Moorman

A kylix is a Greek drinking cup with a wide brim and shallow bowl. The cup stands on a short stem on the bottom, and attached at the sides are two handles. The particular kylix on display in the Ackland’s permanent collection is decorated on the sides and on the inside of the bowl with images of reclining drinkers. Kylices were associated with symposia: occasions where male Greek citizens gathered to drink and be social. The figure in the bowl is playing a favorite game of the symposium, *kottabos*, in which one flings wine from one’s cup at another person. In ancient Greece, wine and drinking were viewed as evidence of humanity’s capacity for rationality and empathy, as well as for self-destruction. Leon Kass, in his book *The Hungry Soul*, argues that wine has the capacity to relieve stress and facilitate positive relationships with others, but at the same time brings our latent animalistic tendencies to the surface. The Greeks seem to understand this, as evidenced by the characters in Plato’s *Symposium*. The characters of the play all gather to drink together and bond over the shared enjoyment of wine, yet the wisest of them, Socrates, does not get drunk. Conversely, the most intoxicated character of the story, Alcibiades, makes a fool of himself. The construction and imagery of this kylix displays a friendly attitude towards wine in Greek culture, while the *Symposium* suggests that the Greeks were aware of the hidden dangers of drinking.

On view in Gallery 12 of the Museum’s first floor.

Unidentified artist (initials: "M. G.")
British, 19th century
A Lord Mayor's Day Night Mare, 1830
lithograph
The William A Whitaker Foundation Art Fund,
2011.22.3



"Hungry for Power"
By Rachel Murray

A Lord Mayor's Day Night Mare is a satirical work of art by Charles Motte that portrays a newly elected mayor after his celebratory feast. The gluttonous act of the lord mayor can be seen in the variety of animals that surround him as he sleeps, torturing him as though they are ghosts returning to haunt their consumer. Each of the animals depicted in the piece is representative of a food typically served at the Lord Mayor's Day feast, and the abundance reflects the wealth and power within the British political system. The number of exotic animals perhaps also represents corruption and excessive domination of other cultures during a time of extensive colonization. The amount of food that one consumes mirrors one's social rank – and thereby one's influence over those of a lower social status. Thus, through his lithograph, Motte not only establishes a connection between feasting and gluttony, but a deeper connection between consumption and corruption.

Associated with the Chequer Painter
Greek, active in Campania, active c. 410 - 380 BCE
**Kylix (Drinking cup) with Woman, Bather, Satyr,
and Maenad**, c. 400 BCE
terracotta
UNC Art Department Collection, 58.11.1



“Vanity and The Vine”
By Markella Patitsas

The kylix is a drinking cup specially designed for use in ancient Greek symposia, or drinking parties. The sensual design of the cup, with its gentle curves and painted representation of a voluptuous woman, evokes the erotic atmosphere that surrounded symposia. Flute-girls, prostitutes, drinking games, and lovers' play all contributed to the symposium being known as a setting for revelry and amorous spectacles. In Plato's *Symposium*, however, the attendees turned towards a philosophical discussion of nature of love, or *eros*, and each of the seven speakers offers his own perspective on the subject. The discussion culminates in Socrates' speech on the “ladder of love” - a metaphorical ladder by which one translates their physical attraction to beauty into a divine yearning for beauty, and communion with the form of love itself. The speech makes it clear that beauty and love are inseparable, and are in fact, mutually dependent. This idea has etymological origins and words such as “to kalos” (“the good” or “the beautiful”) capture the close relationship between love and beauty. Since the Greeks believed outer beauty reflected one's inner qualities, they put great care into their appearances. The depiction of a woman and her mirror on this kylix reveals that a tradition of vanity was embedded in Greek drinking rites.

Unidentified artist
Japanese
Men Eating, 19th century
albumen print
Gift from the Stephen White Collection of Japanese art,
2003.33.1.41



“Staging Japanese Men”
By Alexis Rose

In *Men Eating*, the people are not in a formal situation. Three of the men are wearing *happi* or a cotton robe-like vest. This could symbolize that the three men are all working together for the same festival performance or to show that they are workers in the same place. The man wearing the long kimono has a rope around his waist and something resembling a sheath can be seen coming from him. The sitting man is the only one wearing pants. They seem like a mixed group of people, yet they all have the same *hachimaki*, a Japanese headband, in common. Generally, the *hachimaki* are made having a similar motif to the *happi* they will be worn with.

Men Eating was taken by Felice Beato, an Italian-British photographer who mainly took photographs of East Asia. *Men Eating* was made during a time when “orientalist” ways of portraying and patronizing Japan was popular in Europe and the United States. This albumen print was originally in black and white and was later tinted, presumably also by Beato. The overall main colors are the blue from their clothes and the brown from the ground, basket and other background items, although they are slightly faded. Most of the objects seem to be in proximity to the man serving the food for convenience. Only one person has food, one person has a teacup and another one is reaching for one. Compared to the other food related objects, only the teapot is oddly out of reach from the man wearing pants.

Hieronymus Mittnacht
German, active in Augsburg, died 1769
Kiddush Cup, 1759-61
silver-gilt, engraved and chased
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 99.21



"The Eighth Day: Holy Feasting in the Jewish Tradition"
By Maggie Rutherford

The Kiddush cup in our display was completed by Hieronymus Mittnacht in 1761 and was intended for use by Jewish families celebrating Shabbat. Judaism, rich in ceremonial observances enacted through *halakhah* (the law that shows "the way"), employs certain sacred feasting tools for the sake of commemorating religious truths.

Objects like the Kiddush cup perpetuate tradition through their artful form and function. The physical nature and spiritual significance of Mittnacht's cup conjure notions of the Sabbath (seventh-day rest) and of *menuha* (the life to come). A Hebrew phrase reading, "Guard the Sabbath day and keep it holy as the Lord God commanded you" is engraved around the cup's rim, suggesting the holiness of Shabbat. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly in an analytical sense, its octagonal nature seems to represent the idea of *menuha*, or remaining in God's presence. *Shemini Atzeret*, which follows the weeklong "Feast of the Tabernacles" during the season of atonement, is an annual "eighth-day" holiday in the Jewish tradition that encompasses *menuha* as an extension of Shabbat. The cup in its entirety characterizes Jewish hope found in the present life and in future deliverance.

Celebration of this hope in drinking wine from the Kiddush Cup evokes "a delight to the soul and a delight to the body," to use Heschel's words in *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*. Participating in the Kiddush ritual reaped a pious pleasure for owners of this cup, a physical and religious nourishment emerging from such holy feasting. *Halakhah*, expounded through Shabbat (and the usage of the Kiddush cup), led Jewish families to consider *menuha* and the ultimate abidance in the presence of their God.

Fachschule Steinschönau

Austrian or German?

Wheel-carved Cup and Saucer, c. 1905

glass

Gift of Dorothy and S. K. Heninger, Jr., 2001.30.22a



“Class in a Glass: The Socioeconomic History of Glassware”

By Madison Schroder

A notable aspect of feasting is often the use of ornate dishware for the occasion. While morning coffee or tea may not be the first image conjured by the word "feast," the decoration of a coffee or tea cup may be just as revealing of the occasion of its use and the social class of its users as dinnerware suited for a full meal. Decorated dishware was once something that was likely only possessed by the wealthy, but with advancements in manufacturing, such pieces became easier to mass-produce, requiring investigation of the particular object to make assumptions of who may have used it.

The cup and saucer set here is comprised of clear glass with strawberry fruit and leaf designs around the circumference of both the saucer and the mouth of the cup, with small yellow-green flower details. It was made approximately in the year 1905, and is attributed to “Steinschönau,” a city in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. The region, also known as “Bohemia,” was a well-known source of clear glassware since the early eighteenth century because of their discovery of a much higher quality type of glass. Once the glass had been blown, crafters would engrave, paint, or add gold leaf to the pieces. By the time this cup was made, the glassworkers had moved into mass production. The middle class were then capable of purchasing decorative glassware, and could use it for special occasions to create a more upscale appearance than that allowed by plain glassware.

Honoré Daumier
French, 1808 – 1879
Scene of a Horsemeat Diner,
from *Croquis Parisiens*, 1857
lithograph
Gift of Susan Schulman and Carolyn Bullard
in honor of Timothy Riggs, 2011.29



“Horse Meat and Taboo”
By Kerry Walsh

Honoré Daumier was a French lithographer who over the course of his lifetime drew over 4,000 lithographs. These lithographs were mainly satirical, and appeared in his French satirical newspaper, *La Caricature*. Daumier enjoyed criticizing the French government, and also the members of legal professions (judges, attorneys, etc.). One of his lithographs, *Hippophagia* (1857), gathered a lot of backlash because it advocated for the consumption of horsemeat. At the time of its publication, France was entrenched in social disorder and chaos. The government had still not recovered from its monarchical overthrow during the French Revolution of 1789, and with the Industrial Revolution rapidly transforming Europe, France struggled economically. Instead of becoming a successful empire like Britain, France experienced long bouts of starvation, leading France’s impoverished social class to buy horsemeat because of its vast availability and cheap prices. However, though horsemeat was not a taboo in France, the consumption of horsemeat is a taboo elsewhere around the world. Daumier’s lithograph demonstrates that horsemeat is edible, and should not be condemned otherwise. Many critics of horsemeat complain that it is too tough, but that is generally due to the meat being overcooked. Instead, one should look at the health benefits of horsemeat – it is high in caloric value and in protein. Originally a critique of the French government, Daumier’s lithograph can also be portrayed as his argument for the consumption of horsemeat.

Unidentified artist (initials: "M. G.")
British, 19th century
A Lord Mayor's Day Night Mare, 1830
lithograph
The William A Whitaker Foundation Art Fund,
2011.22.3



“Gluttony and the Lord Mayor’s Day Feast”
By Madison Whalen

Published in 1830, Charles Motte's political cartoon, *The Fatal Effects of Gluttony: The Lord Mayor's Day Night Mare* features a British Lord Mayor haunted by dreams of his day's meals. From fish to fowl to feral-looking deer, the animals that the Lord Mayor has consumed throughout the day are coming to exact their revenge, armed with weapons and murderous stares. The Lord Mayor is lying in his bed that conveniently looks like a dining table, pinned down by a massive tortoise, as a frog wields two opened champagne bottles as guns. A frog is standing on top of the bedside table, atop the day's menu - filled with too many delicacies to count. The 1830s were a time of political and social friction in London, and the Lord Mayor's Day highlighted these tensions. A celebration to inaugurate the new local Lord Mayor of London, Lord Mayor's Day reinforced the Lord Mayor's devotion to the British crown, a symbol of wealth and extravagance: two things that the upper class in London had plenty of, but the lower and rising middle classes did not. The gluttony of the Lord Mayor's Day Feast was a visible division between the haves and the have-nots. The political cartoon begs the question: is the real sin here gluttony, or indulging in gluttony while willfully ignoring those who go without?

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