

Foreword

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The work proposed here aims to call the attention of sociology towards food, re-evaluating its importance as an object of study for the sociologist.

The present work is part of the sociology of everyday life and the sociology of material culture (see, for example, the writings of Appadurai A., Douglas M., Levy-Strauss C., Maffesoli M., Miller D., Poulain J-P., Sassatelli R., Secondulfo D.) and tries to focus on food and food dynamics as important cultural elements which explain values, principles and social and individual lifestyles. Lifestyles, values, principles and even the subject are represented by food and, in the specific case analysed here, by the communications created around it.

From the earliest reflections, as an object of study, the food has been considered in its communicative impact. Actually anthropologists and psychologists have always observed with great attention food as a way of socialization.

In fact, the dynamics related to food were a reflection of the relations between the members of a group (company, family, clan, etc). The analysis has always focused on a meso and macro level of study, ignoring the micro level, the size closer to the subject.

In this context, we continue the work done in another recent publication (Secondulfo D. and Viviani D (eds.) (2013), *Mangiar simboli. Cibo, benessere e cultura materiale*, QuiEdit, Verona). The communicative impact of the food is analyzed in its close relationship with the subject.

Food becomes an important element in the interests of self-reported consumption because the dynamics and food choices manifest taste and social and individual lifestyles. These are tools of construction of the subject's own self. The food is a tool that helps the subject in the construction of his identity and the representation of himself.

The analysis presented here explores the theme of food from the point of view of communication, as an element that represents the current cultural dynamics.

All this transforms our vision of food, which loses its value as a traditional element that nourishes the body, but is close to a virtual dimension, which brings up its symbolic value, its appearance.