

Project Title Oral Histories of
Food and Migration

Team Information **Digital Initiatives Librarian:** Eugene Rutigliano **Faculty Members:** Dr. Christopher Fink (OWU), Dr. Sara Steinert-Borella (Franklin University Switzerland), and Dr. Elisa Ascione (Umbra Institute) **Information Services Instructional Technologist:** David Soliday **Post-Baccalaureate Fellow:** Olivia Geho

Project Description The project's objective is to develop an oral history project focused on food and migration that will be conducted Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) starting in Summer 2019, and that will link to projects at two other sites: Franklin University Switzerland (FUS), and the Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy.

Food and migration are multifaceted and inform each other. Food serves as an identity marker of immigrant groups as well as for local traditions. This project will explore the interplay between food and migration in various community settings through the collection of oral histories, allowing those interviewed to voice their food stories. Ultimately, we hope to record and examine how food reflects the challenges of migration while at the same time ensuring the continuity of communities. Migration manifests itself in communities in a range of ways and can be explored across national and political borders or socioeconomic and class borders - from immigration and emigration to gentrification. Food is often reflective of the challenges and meaning of societal change, particularly migration, so the overall goal of this project is to explore the lived experiences of those operating within these migration-informed foodscapes, and their perceptions of the various features of the sociopolitical, cultural, economic, and physical environment that shape those experiences.

On a secondary level, this project is designed to involve students in the study of food, migration, and import and export of local food traditions. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the utility of oral history in social inquiry and experience in all phases of oral history methodology.

Specific
objectives:

- To plan the building of a digital resource where the data from this oral history work will be shared, and take tangible steps toward its realization.
- In the long run, to use the oral histories in courses as a pedagogical tool - in both Chris Fink's Food, Culture, and Society course and a Qualitative Research course that he teaches. Further, he hopes to continue the data collection for this project in the Qualitative Research course for the next several years, and to involve students in the planning, recording, and

analysis of the data and in the building of the digital resource where the data will be shared.

- To connect the oral history work at OWU to oral history work occurring at a partner Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA) school - Franklin University Switzerland, where Sara Steinert-Borella and her students are recording the food heritage and traditions of the Alpine areas in parts of Switzerland and northern Italy, and at the Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy, where Dr. Elisa Ascione and her students will be recording oral histories as part of the “Mapping the Perugia Foodscape” project.

The Role of ILiADS While the conception of the oral history portion of the project is well-developed, we hope to use our time at ILiADS for several things. First, we would like to explore various platforms for presenting the resultant data from the project. We’ve considered using Omeka and Scalar for this, but we realize there are a range of possibilities and would like to get advice and time to work through these options. We also would like to get advice and support focused on issues surrounding sharing and presenting oral history data in a public-facing realm, using text, mapping, and audio clips. We hope to also work on the relationship between the public-facing presentation of these data, and the tools we might use to analyze and index them beforehand. Finally, we want to explore options for mediated access to the full archive of the oral history interviews, transcriptions, and metadata. Eugene Rutigliano and Chris Fink will be the two project team members attending ILiADS to work toward these goals.

Project Timeline

- May 2019 - planning meeting between Chris and Sara at FUS - Chris will already be in Italy during this time
- June 26 through July 1 2019 - Oral History and Global Course Connections workshops, American University in Bulgaria (Pending GLCA/GLAA Approval)
- July 2019 - Chris Fink and Eugene Rutigliano attend ILiADS to work on the aforementioned aspects of this project
- August through Dec. 2019 - Student directed readings on topic and initial meetings with community partners - Google Hangout meetings between Franklin, OWU, and Umbra teams as project development work continues
- January through March 2020 - Data collection at OWU, FUS, and Umbra sites
- February / March 2020 - Visit to FUS and Umbra for Chris Fink to aid in data collection as part of AlpFoodway and Perugia Foodscapes portions of project
- January through May 2020 - digital presentation development
- June 2020 - Presentation of initial findings at Food Studies Conference -

Perugia, Italy

Sustainability We feel strongly that this project is sustainable in the long-term in several realms. First, the oral history project itself is going to be embedded in the qualitative research course that Chris Fink teaches at OWU for the foreseeable future. Students will be involved in collecting oral histories for the project both in that course, and in independent research work with Chris in the coming years. Chris is anticipating carrying this scholarly direction forward outside of class as well, in his research work in food studies. The project arms at FUS and Umbra are also planned to be embedded in courses and curricular initiatives at both institutions - at FUS in a course and research project in collaboration with the AlpFoodways project, and at the Umbra Institute as a project within the Food and Sustainability Studies (FSS) program. Chris is partnering with FUS on a GLCA/GLAA oral history grant (pending approval), and is on the curricular advisory board for the FSS program at Umbra, so the connections with those arms of the project are ongoing. Second, the audio data from the project will be stored in the university's institutional repository, Digital Commons @ OWU - the OWU library has a vested interest and the resources to ensure the long-term viability of the data. The metadata and transcriptions will also be stored in the Commons - which are backed up to DuraCloud, and hosted on Amazon S3 servers.

For the website itself, we will work with the OWU Information Services office, specifically David Soliday, Instructional Technologist, on strategies to ensure that both the content and the structure of the public-facing web presence for this project are hosted and stored with long-term sustainability in mind.

Primary Review (KGD):

Is this a collaborative project that includes students? Will they bring a team with the appropriate content or other expertise to ILiADS?

Yes - but the bulk of the student collaboration fits in after the ILiADS experience. They do have a Post-Bac fellow. They bring appropriate content, but I am unsure of their expertise.

Is the work proposed for the week of ILiADS feasible? If not, what would make it achievable?

Yes.

Are there areas of this proposal that need further development prior to the proposal being accepted? If so, please provide comments or prompts for that development.

No.

Which areas of expertise would be ideal for a liaison paired with this team?

A liaison familiar with digital exhibits tools. Experience with oral history digital exhibits would also be of value.

Any other concerns or comments about this proposal?

No.

MM - This all sounds interesting and like something Eugene, Dave, and Olivia can support. I'd encourage them to consider the Omeka - OHMS integration. We're just getting started with it here and could share our Ohio wisdom with the team.