

The Shared Meal Introduction

Today's goal

See how meals define community. Use Berger's ideas to read images of ritual, home, and public life.

We are looking at

1. Leonardo da Vinci, The Last Supper (1495–1498)
2. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, The Peasant Wedding (1567)
3. Jean-François de Troy, Luncheon with Oysters (1735)
4. Jan Steen, The Merry Family (1668)
5. William Hogarth, Marriage à-la-mode: The Tête à Tête (1743)
6. Zhang Zeduan, Along the River During the Qingming Festival (12th c.)

Key ideas from John Berger

- "The sharing of bread was once a pledge that all would live."
- "To eat together is to affirm the common necessity of life."

Lesson map

1) Introduction: The Ethics of Sharing Food

- **Question:** What does sharing food represent?
- **Goal:** Introduce food as a moral act that builds community.
- **Link to Berger:** "The sharing of bread was once a pledge that all would live."

2) Sacred Meals and Rituals

- **Artworks:** *The Last Supper* (Leonardo), *Supper at Emmaus* (Caravaggio)
- **Question:** How do sacred meals use food to convey divine order or moral responsibility?

3) The Domestic Meal: Community and Care

- **Artworks:** *The Peasant Wedding* (Bruegel), *Luncheon with Oysters* (de Troy)
- **Question:** How do domestic meals reveal values of family and class?

4) Critiquing Excess and Decay

- **Artworks:** *The Merry Family* (Steen), *Marriage à-la-mode* (Hogarth)
- **Question:** What happens when food becomes a symbol of excess or moral decay?

5) Public Meals and Shared Society

- **Artwork:** *Along the River During the Qingming Festival* (Zhang Zeduan)
- **Question:** How do public meals reflect social order and shared culture?

6) Conclusion: What Makes a "Good" Shared Meal?

- **Key Question:** What do these works suggest about the ethics of shared meals?

Vocabulary

Perspective, gesture, ritual, procession, still life, satire, etiquette, civics, labor, abundance, scarcity.

Exit note

Write one sentence answering: What does a good table require?

Related Excerpts

Zhang Zeduan, Along the River During the Qingming Festival

Marriage a la Mode Story