

Charles Phelps Taft Research Center at the University of Cincinnati

Summer Research Fellowship Application

Each section (I-V) should be placed at the start of a new page. All required materials must be included in a single document, uploaded to the electronic submissions system, no later than 5PM on the published day of the deadline. This program requires a letter of support from the applicant's department head. Applicants should submit their application with enough time for the letter to be uploaded to the submissions system prior to the close of the deadline. Taft does not accept an obligation to review applications that have not received the required documents by the close of the deadline.

I. General Information

- a. Name: XXXXXX
- b. M#: XXXXXXXXX
- c. Department: XXXXX
- d. Position: XXXXX
- e. Project title: "The *Santa Cruzada* Manuscript: Dating and Contextualizing an Unpublished Cookbook from Mexico."
- f. Probable Results of a Grant (such as external funding, publications, or presentations): 1 article, 1-2 presentations, possibly 1 edited volume.
- g. Other Funding Applied For or Received for This Project (list source and amounts requested and awarded): None

II. Budget

- a. Requested Research Supplement: NA

III. Project Proposal

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

I am submitting a research proposal entitled "**The *Santa Cruzada* Manuscript: Dating and Contextualizing an Unpublished Cookbook from Mexico**" for consideration for a Taft Summer Research Fellowship. My research project involves studying a newly found manuscript

which contains a series of cooking recipes typical of Mexican *novohispano* (New World colonial) cuisine. The manuscript, handed down over the course of several generations by a family from Guanajuato, Mexico, has been kept in the family archives with very little knowledge by its current owners about its origin, authenticity, and importance. The manuscript owners, the Cortés López family, have generously allowed me to examine the manuscript, with the hopes that I will be able to provide them with further information about it. Since the manuscript is anonymous and bears no specific title, I refer to it as the *Santa Cruzada* Manuscript, after the document in which it is bound, an old Papal Bull that acts as a cover and reads “*Bula de la Santa Cruzada a favor de Maria Ramona, para los años del señor 1794 y 1798.*” (“Bull of the Holy Crusade in favor of Maria Ramona, for the years of the Lord 1794 and 1798”).

The handwritten manuscript contains about 58 recipes, and it seems to have been written by at least two different authors. As part of my study, I will examine the recipes, ingredients, cooking techniques, measuring units, and even any calligraphic and linguistic clues embedded in the text, as tools to date and contextualize the manuscript. Additionally, I will look at the writing style and type of paper used, and compare this cookbook to others written or published around the same time period. So far, I have carried out some preliminary work on this text, which has resulted in one conference presentation detailing my first impressions and hypothesis about the book. At this point, I believe the manuscript dates from either the XVIII or the XIX centuries, but much more work is needed to narrow down the precise century, and to reconcile the discrepancy between the contents of the text –a collection of cooking recipes,- and the much older religious document used to bind it. I have consulted about this with Prof. Ken Albala, Professor of History and Food and Gastronomy at the University of the Pacific, and his assessment is that it is not uncommon to find extraneous things bound together, or to find old paper, even medieval manuscripts, used in bindings or to make cover boards for later printed books. This may indeed be the case for the *Santa Cruzada* Manuscript. Thus, my research will include a study of the Papal Bulls sold in the New World by the Catholic Church, explaining their relevance as signs of social status and religious observance. The fact that this manuscript is bound in one of these documents would indicate that its owner, Maria Ramona, belonged to an upper-class family of colonial Mexico.

GOALS AND EXPECTED RESULTS:

I will rely on my previous experience as a scholar of old cookbooks to study this manuscript in detail, with the goal of developing my findings into at least one scholarly article and one or two conference presentations. Ultimately, I aim to have the entire manuscript published with an introductory study. My goals include to accurately date the manuscript and to place it in its historical and geographical contexts, showing its significance as an example of early Mexican cuisine. As numerous scholars have already shown, a country's identity is invariably reflected in its food. Thus, this little cookbook can provide us with a glimpse of the life of wealthy families in Mexico during the XVIII-XIX centuries. A close reading of this text can greatly contribute to our knowledge of the evolution of Mexican cuisine and illustrate the nascent blending of Old World and New World ingredients and cooking techniques, in a time when food was quickly becoming a powerful status symbol and a social and racial indicator in the New World.

As part of my research, I will try to find out more about the manuscript's provenience, ownership, and how it was handed down. Other questions that I will address include: How does the handwriting change, and how many people were involved in its writing? Does the scale of the recipes suggest a professional cook, or a smaller household? Was it meant to be an heirloom to hand down to later generations, or an aide memoire? I believe attempting to answer these questions can lead to some potentially very interesting revelations. Additionally, I will compare this manuscript to other cookbooks from Mexico and Spain dating from the XVII, XVIII and XIX centuries, in order to determine 1) whether the recipes contained in it are originals or copied from other cookbooks; and 2) whether the dishes it contains are XVII, XVIII, or XIX century dishes. My preliminary work suggests that the recipes are original and not copied from other works, but more research is needed to fully confirm this.

I plan on using the summer months to study this manuscript in depth, compare it with other texts, dig deeper into the bibliography, and put my findings into writing by the end of the summer or beginning of Fall semester. I am not requesting any travel supplement funds, since I can work with a high-quality electronic copy of the manuscript, and at this point do not require travelling to Mexico to work with the original manuscript.

IV. Taft Grant History:

Please list your grant history with Taft for the last 5 years, in reverse chronological order. Please list project title, the name, date, and amount of award, as well as development of the project subsequent to the grant, e.g. publication.

- Taft Publication Subvention (\$1,500), *From The Other Shore/ De la otra orilla*. Valparaíso Editions. 2018. Result: One book of poetry published.

- Taft Domestic Conference Grant (\$1,184), “The Santa Cruzada Manuscript: Solving the Mysteries of an Unpublished 18th Century Cookbook from Mexico.” *The Meaning of Food. Interdisciplinary Conference on Representations of Food in the Arts & Humanities*. Elon University, Greensboro, North Carolina, March 25-28, 2018. Result: One conference presentation.

- Taft Faculty Release Fellowship (\$1,300). *Madrid: A Food Biography*. Fall Semester 2016-2017. Result: One book published.

- Taft Domestic Conference Travel Grant (\$1,038.76). “Manzanas, aguardiente y platos de sal: el alimento como metáfora en *Poeta en Nueva York*.” RMMLA Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 6-9, 2016. Result: One conference presentation.

- Taft International Travel Grant (\$657). “Food Fight: Survival and Ideology in Cookbooks from the Spanish Civil War.” Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery. Oxford, England, July 3-5, 2015. Result: One conference presentation, published in conference proceedings.

- Taft Domestic Conference Grant (\$496). “De pichones y sonetos: La conexión poética entre Juan Gil-Albert y Federico García Lorca.” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, University of Kentucky, Lexington. April 2015. Result: One conference presentation.

V. Curriculum Vitae

Please include here a current (updated within the last month) curriculum vitae of no more than

