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Elements in the Psychology of Religion

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RELIGION AND FOOD

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Religion and Food

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Abstract: Religion plays an important role in what and how we eat. Indeed, food is a critical component of religion – as well as a reflection of the other components that make religion unique. This fact is what necessitates greater attention toward food as a lens for understanding psychological phenomenon both within the psychology of religion and the social scientific community at large. Utilizing theories and exemplars from multiple disciplines, the authors discuss how food relates to four dimensions of religion – beliefs (Section 2), values (Section 3), practices (Section 4), and community (Section 5). Throughout the Element and in a concluding section, the authors provide exciting directions for future research. In addition to providing a review of our current understanding of the role of food and religion, this work ultimately seeks to inspire researchers and students to investigate the role of food in religious life.

Keywords: food, religion, culture, religious community, religious practices

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