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# Mao's Travelling Mangoes: Food as Relic in Revolutionary China

[Adam Yuet Chau](#)

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A relic is usually a small thing that is a fragment or concentration of something larger, an inanimate thing reminding one of a previously live thing or person; it has power and therefore is revered and worshipped. Well known examples of relics include the Buddha's remains ( *sarira* ) and the

remains of Jesus Christ and Christian saints. Things used or touched by high religious personages are often treated by worshippers as powerful relics. For example, it is rumoured that when the Dalai Lama travels and stays in hotels, the hotel management is often bombarded by requests from Tibetan Buddhists to give or sell to them the (unwashed) towels and toiletries used by His Holiness. Because the Dalai Lama is considered the reincarnation of a bodhisattva, the things he has touched or used become something similar to the Buddha's relics.

A relic is usually...

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