

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN ASIAN CULTURES AND THEOLOGIES (IASACT)

Inviting you to join a 4-week
forum for research, reflection and
writing

20 JUNE TO 19 JULY 2025

Divinity School of Chung Chi College,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Theme:

Framing Foodscapes in Asia: Patterns, Problems and Prospects

RATIONALE

As ubiquitous as food may seem to be in everyday life, it is essential for human survival. The astounding diversity of food includes meat and animal byproducts, seafood, insects, grains, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, and processed foods. Aside from providing the necessary nutrition that promotes and maintains physical energy, growth and health, food has a positive influence on mental and emotional wellbeing. Moreover, food preparation, distribution, and consumption hold great significance for many societies and belief systems. Food can determine the insiders and outsiders of a society, and bring people together or drive them apart. It can elevate or diminish the social status of consumers. Religious rituals frequently deploy food as channels between the human and the divine, and strive to create and preserve a sense of communal intimacy. Nevertheless, countries and global communities have become increasingly attentive to issues of food safety, security, and sovereignty. The United Nations is arguably the world's foremost leader in this regard. Among its Sustainable Development Goals – a global blueprint for peace and prosperity among the peoples of the world – is Goal 2: Zero Hunger, which aims to end hunger by 2030. The United Nations's predictions that 600 million people worldwide will be hunger-stricken by 2030, and that the world population will reach 9.7 billion by 2050 suggest an imminent global food crisis. The World Food Programme's efforts to fight hunger, for which it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2020, underscores the reality that despite myriad global advancements, hunger still remains a crucial concern in many parts of the planet. The phenomena of new diseases, prolonged warfare, and diverse environmental changes continue to adversely impact food productivity and accessibility on numerous levels. Contemporary cooking and eating practices and habits are often reduced to profit-driven acts of commercial entrepreneurship and fleeting moments of sustenance for survival. Food thus occupies a central but complex location in human existence.



IASACT 2025 invites scholars to critically explore the topic of foodscapes in Asia – meaning the spaces, linkages, and activities, with their attendant patterns, problems and prospects – from the production to the consumption of food in Asian contexts. While we offer a menu of the following themes that traverse the areas of food safety, security, sovereignty, and social and spiritual sensibilities for your consideration, we are also open to other creative ideas that are flavoured with interdisciplinary and intersectional possibilities:

Health, Hunger, and Healing

- Aging, food for the elderly, and life expectancy
- Biological, chemical, and physical contamination
- Efforts to localise Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- Infection, illness, and disease
- (Mal)Nutrition, nutrition imbalance, and impaired nutrient utilisation
- Medicine, and patient care
- Student diet and food security in higher education institutions



Consumption

- Consumer behaviours, fashions, choices, and preferences
- Vegetarianism and veganism

Production, Perplexities, and Possibilities

- Abiotic stress, greenhouse gases, and climate change
- Agriculture 4.0
- Animal welfare, wild fisheries, and other wild food sources
- Deforestation, erosion, and soil depletion
- Farmers, and community co-ops
- Genetic modification
- Global food market, trade restriction, and legislative change
- Safety standards, and certification
- Supply chain, and labour shortages
- Wastage and loss

IASACT is a place for junior scholars to build their network in their research career.

IASACT provides a conducive environment for the scholars to learn and grow together.

**Scholars of
IASACT 2024**

Civilisations, Cultures, and Customs

- Commensality, hospitality, and food-sharing customs
- Culinary arts, haute cuisine, and celebrity chefs
- Cultural, ethnic, class and national identities
- Dining practices, social cohesion, and community development
- Ethics, spirituality, and theology
- Evolution of food practices in multicultural societies
- Globalisation, and transnational juxtapositions and flows
- Practices, habits, and desires of eating
- Religious bonding and building
- Religious dietary restrictions, and regulations



PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Arrival: 20 June 2025 (Friday)

Opening: 23 June 2025 (Monday)

Departure: 19 July 2025 (Saturday)



IASACT 2025



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Selected scholars must be available for all activities taking place in Hong Kong:

- Opening & Orientation
- Brief Presentations of proposals
- Full presentation of research
- Regular individual meetings with the assigned mentor
- Submission of a final paper before departure
- Mini-conference or special lectures

SCHOLARSHIP & ALLOWANCES

The institute will:

- Sponsor airfare, while giving special consideration to those with financial difficulties or special needs
- Cover room and meal expenses of all scholars
- Provide a stipend of US\$1000-US\$1500 to cover basic costs related to research and writing



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- A mentor will be assigned to provide academic advice for research and publishing throughout the program
- Additional advice by relevant resource persons may be arranged where available
- Online & Physical access to the University Library System of the Chinese University of Hong Kong will be available



DELIVERABLES



- A mid-term presentation on the research progress (framework, methodology, plans, difficulties, and findings or tentative conclusion)
- Written commentaries on at least two other research projects upon their presentation
- A research paper offering empirical data (interviews, media analysis, contextual analysis) or theoretical analysis

ELIGIBILITY

Priority will be given to emerging scholars of Asian descent who:

- are working in Asia
- have a professional affiliation with an Asian higher education institution
- are early to mid-career faculty or researchers; (i.e. those who have completed a postgraduate degree within 5 years)
- are those currently involved in postgraduate programs (but not in their final semester)
- have already started their research and are seeking advice and support to develop the research to an advanced stage
- possess spoken and written English proficiency

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications must be submitted **online** and should include the following attachments:



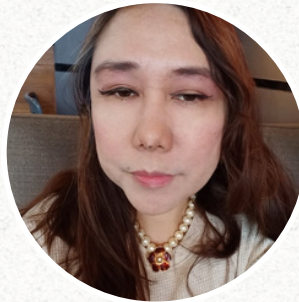
- an updated CV (not exceeding two pages)
- a project abstract with objectives and description of no more than 1,500 words, not including footnotes and bibliography
- a brief outline of the expected output (not exceeding two pages)
- a recommendation letter from the affiliated institution

MENTORSHIP



KUNG LAP YAN

Dean, IASACT,
Adjunct Associate
Professor,
The Chinese University
of Hong Kong



JEANE PERACULLO

Professor and Assistant
Dean of External Affairs
and Lasallian Mission,
College of Liberal Arts,
De La Salle University
Philippines



JOSEPH N. GOH


Senior Lecturer in
Gender Studies,
School of Arts and
Social Sciences,
Monash University
Malaysia

ENQUIRY



 <http://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/academics/iasact>

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If you encounter difficulty in accessing the online form, please register by email and send the required documents to iasact@cuhk.edu.hk.

Deadline of application: 28 February 2025

