



INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN ASIAN CULTURES AND THEOLOGIES (IASACT) 2024

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

Theme:

The Poetics, Politics, and Performances of Spaces

RATIONALE

IASACT 2024 foregrounds the importance and significance of researching, writing, and reflecting on spaces. Space is central to human existence. Space underscores the location of human communities within the intricate, complex, and interconnected relationships that shape their lived experiences. In their liminality, human communities occupy in-between spaces grounded in physical reality. At the same time, they occupy imagined spaces between a precarious existence and true flourishing. Spaces are sites of social and political relations that both engender and attenuate power in its varied forms. They can reveal and conceal meaning. They can manifest the everyday and capture the remarkable. Spaces are also co-generative of ethnic, class, religious, theological, gender and sexual identities, and thus lend form to distinct embodiments. Spaces are locations that create and foster knowledge, codes, signs and ideologies which are both beneficial and detrimental to human existence. In this regard, spaces often become synonymous with distinctive places. Reflections on spaces also highlight ecological niches and areas where non-human communities abound alongside their human counterparts. In many Asian expressions of culture, humans and the more-than-humans are deeply embedded in the highly complex networks of body spaces that make up the earth.

14 JUNE - 13 JULY 2024

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

We are interested in Asian scholarship on Asian issues that critically addresses questions such as, but not limited to, the following:

1. What compelling narratives emerge from spatial modes of existence that are characterized by vulnerability with the possibilities of flourishing?
2. How are normative and diverse embodiments of ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality and ability conditioned and materialized through enabling and disabling spaces?
3. How do we reimagine and reconfigure spaces that consider various renderings of the speculative built environments and spaces amidst the challenges of the climate crisis?
4. How do theologies, spiritualities and religions conceptualize the ideas of space in a manner that expresses a sense of the sacred?
5. How are spaces created in digital platforms that afford new opportunities for representation and reality?
6. How are universities or higher education institutions responding to the ongoing challenges to restrict liberal and democratic spaces on campus?
7. What are the ways by which religion or spirituality influences the gathering, curating, and displaying of material objects in architectural spaces such as museums and monuments? What conceptual frameworks about the intertwining of space, religion, and aesthetics emerge from the aforementioned activities?
8. What are creative and innovative ways to (re)conceptualise urban and rural spaces? How are such spaces shaped by capitalist notions, market forces, technological and media advances, and urbanization and migration?

IASACT 2024 recognizes the value of interdisciplinary engagement as a basis for exploring the full range of questions about the theme.

Accordingly, we invite anyone with research, professional, or practical interest in the theme to contribute to exploring the role of Asian cultures, religions, and spiritualities on critical issues of the politics, poetics, and performances of spaces. Research could offer empirical data (interviews, media analysis, contextual analysis, and creative approaches) or theoretical analysis.

Possible subthemes, far from being exhaustive, are as follows:

- The poetics of space
- The politics and power of space
- Theoretical frameworks of space in the humanities
- Sacred and holy spaces
- Speculative spaces in architecture, science fiction, and other fantasy literature
- The intersections of speculative, religious, and aesthetic spaces
- Spaces of resistance in the everyday lives of people
- Educational spaces
- Movable spaces and shifting identities due to migration
- Gendered, sexual and sexed spaces

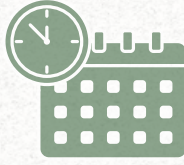
"We are united in love, care and sharing even though we come from different countries, cultures and religions."

"An invaluable opportunity for cross intercultural, interreligious, interdisciplinary, exchange, dialogue and learning experiences. Where you know, remember and understand and make memories! "

Scholars of IASACT 2023

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Arrival: 14 June 2024 (Thursday)
Opening; 17 June 2024 (Monday)
Departure: 13 July 2024 (Saturday)



IASACT 2024

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 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

IASACT 2024

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

IASACT Dean and
Adjunct Associate
Professor
Department of Cultural
and Religious Studies,
CUHK



JEANE PERACULLO

Professor and Chair
Department of
Philosophy
De La Salle University
in Manila



JOSEPH N. GOH

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

Deadline of application: March 22, 2024

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.