

Titel

Ambiguous Eating and Bodies in Global Asia – Perspectives from Critical Food & Development Studies

Convener

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Format

Single session (6 participants, including conveners)

Description

The globalisation of the agro- and food systems have touched down and acquired new and huge markets in Asia, characterized by potent and aspirational consumers. Global economic integration is coupled with a growing commercial and consumerist interest in the body – also in the body that eats and is being fed. Striving Asian markets have thus attracted growing investment capital in the fields of body and beauty industries, retail, convenience food, gastronomic franchising and industrial branding. In the midst of nutrition transitions, regulatory policies and development interventions target persisting malnutrition, food-related diseases and food insecurities.

Having been subject to food insecurity over decades, consumers increasingly have to manoeuvre within diversifying food options coupled with questions of access and exclusion, conflicting food, body and health discourses and in a context in which consumption and production systematically decouple. It is the transgressive nature of food, its delineation, crossing and exceeding of spatial, discursive, behavioural and material boundaries (Jenks, 2003; Goodman and Sage, 2014; Ehlert and Faltmann, forthcoming 2018) that make this panel focus on 'food anxieties' to stress the ambiguous nature of the relationship between humans and food. Food, its consumption and surrounding discourses offer insights into people's class-based, racialized and gendered embeddedness within global capitalist food systems. Moreover, it can be academically approached within codes of body ideals and conduct (Lupton, 1996; Probyn, 2000; Cairns and Johnston, 2015), social norms, taboos on food provisioning and responsibility (DeVault 1994) and productivity and governance (Featherstone, 1991; Foucault, 1977, 1978).

What forms of agency and new ways to connect to food do people pursue in their everyday lives in times where contradicting messages and normative accounts circulate, issued by the food industry, the media and developmental policies? How do governments, industries as well as notions and practices of development shape the structural conditions and ambiguities of transitioning food systems?

This panel invites papers that in one way or another relate to such conflictive moments and contexts of agency and structural power over what and how people consume food in Asia. Invitations from scholars working in the broad fields of critical food and development studies promises to open up space for constructive discussions from various disciplinary backgrounds and theoretical perspectives. We are looking for papers that focus (but are not limited to) on the following topics:

(Gendered) Food-related self-objectification, body policing and eating disorders; Food Safety and Food Insecurity; Food Waste; Counter Narratives and hegemonies; Social food movements, food policies and agro-food industries; Human-animal relations/animal welfare

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