



1. Title:

Sophia Food Studies: Mobilities, Sustainability and Ethics

2. Contact Person:

James Farrer (*4066; jamescfarrer@gmail.com)

Members and Roles:

ICC members: **James Farrer, Takeshi Ito, John Williams, Akiko Frischhut**

ICC Collaborative Researchers: **David Wank, Chuanfei Wang, Mariko Iijima, Monica R. Carvalho, Lenka Vyletalova**

Student workshop participants (Sophia University): **Cloé Pipa-Despres, Nico Rallanza, María Alejandra Dorado Vinay, Ziao Li, Takayuki Yamamoto, Nagiko Shimooka**

3. Overview of Project:

This project fosters transdisciplinary food studies at Sophia University, starting with the ICC, and develops collaboration among the team members as well as researchers at other universities. We also involve GPGS students in our regular activities. We are partially funded by external grants, as outlined below, and received ICC support for editorial work and speakers for workshops and colloquia.



4. Public activities at the ICC in 2024-25:

- a. We hosted speakers at the ICC around food studies, looking at a wide variety of issues.
- b. We met for an internal workshop meeting to discuss readings and our own ongoing research.
- c. At the year's end, we hosted a workshop on "[migrant foodways in Japan](#)" with presentations by 10 scholars working on migrant foodways in Japan, with the plan for a journal special issue in *Gastronomica: the Journal for Food Studies*
- d. We continued to support the [Nishiogiology website](#), a website on neighborhood foodways in Tokyo.

5. Intellectual Questions and Methods

We aim to develop food studies as a field of inquiry and academic exchange with three empirical and theoretical keywords: mobilities, sustainability and ethics.

(1) Our project uses the term culinary mobilities to describe the organization of the food system as a constantly shifting configuration of producers, consumers, suppliers, and products. One of the central questions we have is the role of migrants in foodways. We have been working on this question for several years and will continue developing this concept in our workshops and publications.

(2) The second concept is sustainable foodways. Sustainability is an important keyword in food studies and encompasses environmental, social, and economic dimensions. Climate change is a key issue impacting sustainable foodways and would be one issue running through our discussions.

(3) We are also interested in developing a philosophical approach to food studies with an emphasis on food ethics. One of the fundamental problems we consider is how ethics relate to the aesthetics in food studies. We are also considering issues surrounding the ontology of taste and how taste relates to the other topics we are considering in food studies.

6. Record of Receiving External Funding:

- JSPS Kaken Grant, 2022-2025, "Neighborhood Gastronomy as a Grassroots Creative Industry: Resilience and Innovation in Response to COVID," ¥3,200,000, J. Farrer principal investigator.
- Key Coffee Shibata Yutaka Memorial Foundation Research Grant, 2024-25, "Foreign-Owned Restaurants and the Transformation of Urban Social Infrastructure," ¥1,000,000, J. Farrer principal investigator.



7. Impact of the Project since 2024

Chapters and articles related to this project:

- i. James Farrer and Chuanfei Wang. 2025. "Japanese Cuisine in Chinese Foodways," in Wendy Jia-Chen Fu, Michelle T. King, Jakob Klein eds. *Modern Chinese Foodways*. Boston MA: MIT Press, pp. 229-252.
- ii. Shanshan Lana and James Farrer. 2025. "Grounding a global career in local knowledge: an interview with James Farrer, professor in sociology at Sophia University, Japan" *Asian Anthropology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1683478X.2024.2449276>.
- iii. James Farrer, 2024. グローバル化する日本料理 "The Globalization of Japanese Cuisine" *Iwate Nippo - Monthly Report*, 21 10-11, Jun 27, 2024
- iv. James Farrer. 2024. "Indian Migrants in Tokyo: A Study of Socio-Cultural, Religious and Working Worlds. By Megha Wadhwa." *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 50, Number 2, pp. 489-493

Presentations at conferences and symposia related to the project:

- i. James Farrer, Alejandra Dorado-Vinay, "The political economy of culinary multiculturalism in Japan: foreign foodscapes and culinary hierarchies" *Global Foodscapes: Transnational Pathways of Food and Migration In and Out of Asia*, ARI NUS Singapore, March 10-11, 2025.
- ii. James Farrer "A Cultural History of Japanese Restaurants Outside of Japan" *French Society for Japanese Studies*, Université Paris Cité, Mar 12, 2025, invited.
- iii. James Farrer "Gastronomy as Migration Infrastructure: the Case of Japanese Restaurants in Europe," *Seminar: Migrations est et sud-est asiatiques en France depuis 1860*, EHESS Paris, Mar 4, 2025, invited.
- iv. James Farrer, Alejandra Dorado-Vinay "Migrant Foodways in Japan: An Emerging Migrant Foodscape" *New Pathways, New Perspectives: Migration to Non-Traditional Destinations*, BROKEX (ERC Horizon Project) and University of Oslo, Feb 27, 2025, participant.
- v. James Farrer, "From machi chūka to gachi chūka: positioning Chinese food in the Japanese foodscape," *New Perspectives on China's Extraversion*, BROKEX (ERC Project) and University of Oslo, Feb 25, 2025
- vi. James Farrer, "Small-scale Tokyo eateries as community spaces: from vigilance to mobilization," *Forschungskolloquium, Das Japan-Zentrum der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München*, Feb 12, 2025, invited lecture.
- vii. James Farrer, "How the Japanese Restaurants Spread Around the World and Created a Global Japanese Cuisine" *ICAS Speaker Series*, Institute of Contemporary Asian Studies (ICAS), Jan 27, 2025, invited lecture.
- viii. James Farrer, "Creating Urban Foodscapes: Urban Food Media and the Urban Lifeworld" *Japanese Culture & Society Seminar*, Dec 4, 2024, Department of Global Business, Hyogo University, Dec. 4, 2024, invited lecture.

ix. Paul Johann Kramer, Gabriele Vogt, James Farrer "COVID-19 and the Hospitality Industry in Japan: Navigating Diverging Expectations", Societies at the Crossroads – Germany and Japan in Comparison. 17th Conference of the German-Japanese Society for Social Sciences, October 23-24, 2024, German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ), Tokyo.

x. James Farrer, "Independent migrant restaurateurs and neighborhood foodways in Tokyo" Crossways of Knowledge: The 13th International Convention of Asian Scholars, University Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia, July 30, 2024, panel organizer and presenter.

xi. James Farrer, "Mobility, cultural infrastructure, and world-making: the case of Japanese culinary workers in Europe," IMISCOE Annual Conference, The Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology

xii. Takeshi, Ito. "A Local Turn to Organic Agriculture: Young Farmers, Social-Ecological Challenges, and Agroecology's Multiple Functionality in Japan." Panel: Youth, Mobility and Agrarian Change in Rural Asia: Insights from Rural Indonesia, Japan, and Nepal, Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Seattle, March 14-17, 2024

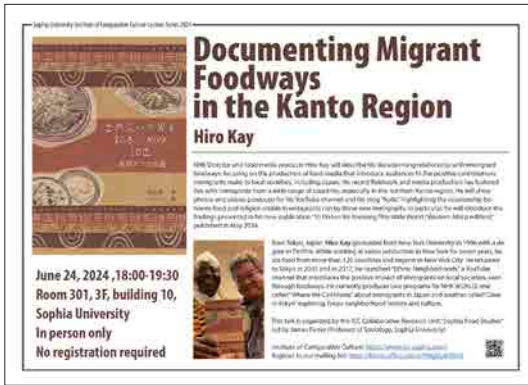
Lectures at the ICC related to the project:



i. ICC Workshop: [Migrant Foodways in Japan Workshop](#), January 24, 2025, 9:00~18:00

ii. ICC/KASA co-hosted Lecture: [Mapping Ecological Distribution Conflicts, Framing Environmental Justice Movements](#), Naw Thiri May Aye, University of Tokyo, July 19, 2024





- iii. ICC Lecture: [The Intersections of the Sensory, Multimodal and Ba](#): “The Tachinomi Project” Steven C. Fedorowicz, Asian Studies Program, Kansai Gaidai University, July 17, 2024.
- iv. ICC Lecture: [Documenting Migrant Foodways in the Kanto Region](#), Hiro Kay, NHK Director and Food Media Producer, June 24, 2024,
- v. ICC Lecture: [“The Whaling Issue Will Never End, even if Whaling Collapses,”](#) Akamine Jun, Hitotsubashi University, June 10, 2024.
- vi. ICC Lecture: [Vertical World](#): Creating a World-Beating Peruvian Restaurant in Tokyo, Santiago Fernández, The head of the kitchen Maz, a Michelin two-star restaurant, May 16, 2024.
- vii. ICC Lecture: [“Ways of Eating: Explorations in Food History and Culture:”](#) A Book Talk and an Invitation to Food Studies via Japan, Merry White, Boston University, April 25, 2024.

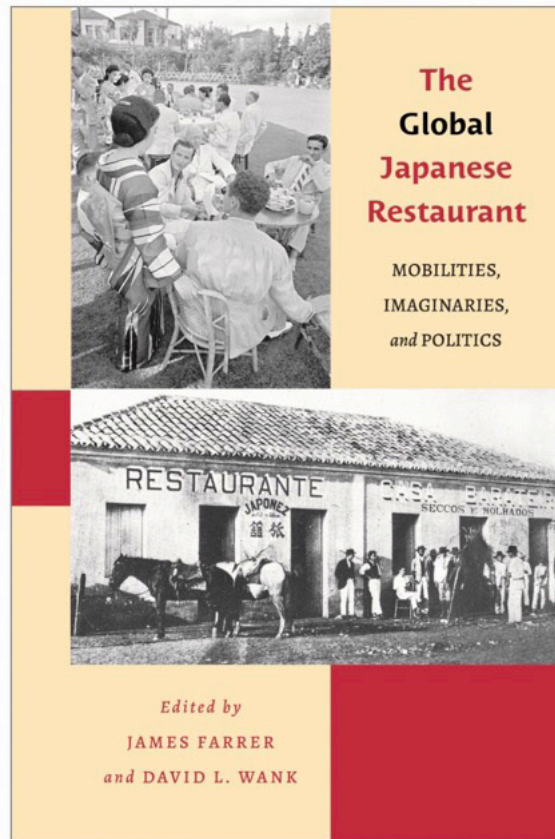


Presentations in media related to the research:

- i. Interview with James Farrer, [“Redevelopment and resistance in historic Nishiogikubo,”](#) The Japan Times, Tokyo, Mar, 2025.
- ii. Interview with James Farrer, “Chuo Line Culture” Magazine House, Croissant Magazine, Tokyo, Jan, 2025
- iii. NHK World, [“Dive in Tokyo: Nishi-Ogikubo](#) - Fertile Ground for Small Businesses,” featuring James Farrer introducing Tokyo neighborhoods, including foodways, Aug. 2024.
- iv. TBS, Matsuko no Shiranai Sekai [マツコの知らない世界;西荻の世界](#), featuring James Farrer and Nagiko Shimooka discussing Tokyo neighborhood foodways, June 25, 2024.
- v. The Nishiogiology website has continued to produce content on neighborhood foodways.
- vi. James Farrer serves as a member of the editorial collective for the leading food studies journal Gastronomica.

Recognition for our scholarly contributions:

- i. [2024 ASFS Book Prize](#) (Edited Volume Category), Association for the Study of Food and Society: James Farrer and David L. Wank (eds.). 2023. *The Global Japanese Restaurant: Mobilities, Imaginaries and Politics* (Series on Food in Asia and the Pacific). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.



- ii. 2023 Belasco Prize for Scholarly Excellence from the Association for the Study of Food and Society: James Farrer. 2021. "From Cooks to Chefs: Skilled Migrants in a Globalizing Culinary Field" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 47, Issue 10, pp. 2359-2375.
- iii. 2023 Nishiogiology was recognized by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs as an "exemplar of utilizing knowledge of Japanese food culture" (食文化「知の活用」振興事例): Nishiogiology public ethnography project.