

## **Adilah Ismail**

TITLE OF PAPER: JUXTAPOSING THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT: THE GROWTH OF GASTRODIPLOMACY

### **Abstract:**

Food is more than a survival tool and a primal biological activity for humans. It comes laden with connotations, practices and governing etiquettes and is a repository of cultures, identities and attitudes. The food choices of a nation is imbued with stories of migration, assimilation, regional identities and is a tangible narrative of a nation through its history. From lavish feasts in the Ottoman imperial courts to ships laden with exotic spices sent as gifts from the orient to the occident – food has been an important part of traditional diplomacy since time immemorial and shaped the contours of political interaction. My presentation explores how countries use their culinary heritages in modern diplomacy and will trace the recent growth of gastrodplomacy. It will briefly define gastrodplomacy – which is a new form of public diplomacy intersecting cultural studies, food studies, history and anthropology – and discuss its contemporary practices. This paper hopes to outline the importance of gastronomy as a modern instrument to create cross-cultural understanding, and how it has been incorporated into recent diplomatic activity. It will also attempt to highlight why an understanding of gastropolitics and culinary patrimony should be an integral aspect of a country's cultural diplomatic discourse

### **Biography:**

Adilah Ismail is an arts and culture writer based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She works as a communications consultant and freelance writer and also has experience in the corporate sector. Adilah comes from a background in English Literature and International Relations and was awarded the 2010 Indian Council for Cultural Relations scholarship for foreign students to study in India. Adilah has a B.A. (Hons.) in English from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi and recently completed a dissertation titled 'Sculpting Sri Lanka's Cultural Narrative Through Literature and Gastrodplomacy' while reading for a Postgraduate Diploma in International Relations at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. Her research interests are cultural diplomacy and gastrodplomacy. She is a contributor to the Sunday Times, Sri Lanka and Gourmet Circle magazine and her writing has appeared in international publications.

Email: [ismail.adilah@gmail.com](mailto:ismail.adilah@gmail.com)      <https://adilahwrites.wordpress.com>