CALL FOR PAPERS for PhD Students
Where is Home?
Place, Belonging and Citizenship in the Asian Century

Organized by the University of Amsterdam, the International Institute for Asian Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University, and the Institute for Culture and Society - University of Western Sydney

22-23 March 2013
Hong Kong Baptist University

In March 2013, Hong Kong Baptist University, the University of Amsterdam, the International Institute for Asian Studies and the Institute for Culture and Society of the University of Western Sydney will hold a two-day workshop examining the transformations of place-making and cultural citizenship in the era of Asian influence. During the first day, leading scholars in the field of cultural studies from different localities in Asia, including Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia and South Korea, will explore the notion of place and citizenship in the context of the geopolitical shifts that are taking place today. In the second day of the workshop, PhD students are invited to present and discuss their work with these scholars. This call for papers is for PhD students to submit their abstract. The best proposals will be selected; students from outside of Hong Kong will be fully funded for their travel and accommodation expenses. There will be no workshop fee.

Paper Proposals

» Maximum 400-word maximum abstract of your paper
» One-page CV
» Contact details of two referees

Please submit your proposals to Dr. Yiu Fai Chow yfchow@hkbu.edu.hk by 1 November 2012. The notification of acceptance will be announced before 15 December 2012.

The Workshop

How to feel at home in a world that seems so much in flux? Where is our home now that a financial crisis is haunting the world? Confronted with the limits of neoliberalism, can we imagine a different home, a different sense of belonging? And given the shifting geopolitical ordering of the world, what role can and does Asia play in such re-imaginations of home? And what does “home” mean when it is constantly under the threat of demolition, as is the case in today’s China? What constitutes a home when you are forced to migrate in search for a better life? These are the questions this workshop engages with.

The “rise of Asia” in the changing global context of the 21st century engendered real and imagined shifts in geopolitical power relations. While scholars have attended to the consequences of such shifts in economic and political terms, less attention has been given to the role of social and cultural processes in the “making of Asia” or to the ways in which such world-making constructions affect our sense of place and belonging: How does Asianization affect conceptions and practices of place, belonging and citizenship? A question that may well be formulated in a more banal way: How does Asianization affect our sense of home?

Questions of place, belonging and citizenship have been high on the intellectual agenda since the early 1990s, yet most of these studies take “the West” as their focus point. The Asian turn may urge us to rethink these notions. With the emergence of what may be termed a Global Modernity, or better: Global Modernities, “Asia” and its citizens are reconfigured in new ways. Although citizenship has always been defined as a legal and political relationship between the subject and the state, recent studies propose a broader concept of citizenship. The dynamics underpinning the way in which globalization affects place-making can be seen as articulating new definitions of “cultural citizenship.” What does it mean to be Asian today, how does one feel at home, in for example, Hong Kong? What does belonging mean in a place like Jakarta? And how can culture – be it art or popular culture – help to foster alternative imaginations of place, home and belonging, beyond the confines of the authoritative discourses of nationalism, capitalism and religion?

We aim to address these questions through the notion of “home.” What makes us feel at home in a specific locality? How is the sense of home connected to the production of place? And how are such constructions of home implicated in the already mentioned authoritative discourses of nationalism, capitalism and religion / philosophy (for example Islam or Confucianism) – the three interlocking discourses that seem to constitute the current rise of Asia? Can one construct a sense of home that moves beyond these discourses, or that challenges them? Or may a move towards homelessness, one that gestures towards a sense of cosmopolitanism, be a possible tactic to resist Asianization?