

RESEARCH SEMINAR

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Geography of Religion and Migration in Sinophone Societies

11 Aug 2023 (Fri)

10:00 – 11:30 am (UTC+8)

Rm 221, Chen Kou Bun
Building, CUHK

In the past two decades or so, the world has witnessed the increasing salience of religion in shaping the politics and moral landscape of contemporary societies. The return of religion in public spheres has stimulated the “postsecular turn” in geography that invites scholars to reflect upon the role of religion in addressing the neoliberal and capitalist malaises in a secular age. In this seminar, I will present two sets of empirical research related to religion and migration in China and Singapore respectively. In the first study, I will present the everyday experiences of a marginalised group namely “Christian rural migrant workers” who arise from the intersection of China’s religious revival, rural-to-urban migration and rapid industrialisation. I show how migrant workers in Shenzhen utilise Christian discourses, ethics, and institutions to rework, negotiate and sometimes come to terms with the exploitation inflicted by both state and industrial capitalism. In the second study, I elaborate on how “Chinese religion” was transplanted and reproduced in the overseas Chinese societies in Singapore. I explore the spatial-affective networks of Chinese religion in Singapore and how these networks of Chinese beliefs and deities shape the geopolitical and geoeconomic interactions among Sinophone societies.

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Quan Gao is a cultural geographer who works at religion, migration and overseas Chinese studies. He holds a PhD degree from Newcastle University (2020). Prior to joining SYSU, he worked as a Research Fellow in Singapore Management University. His research has appeared in international journal such as Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Dialogues in Human Geography, China Quarterly and Geoforum. He was recently selected to the Young Elite Scientists Sponsorship Program by Chinese Association of Science and Technology (CAST) and was the first cultural geographer who obtained this award.



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