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CCR Seminar Series

2011

Tim Winter
(CCR & UWS)

Recycled Buildings: Challenging Sustainability in an Era of Air-Conditioning

Around 50 per cent of all carbon emissions come from the built environment. It is widely recognized that recycling buildings and their conservation is more sustainable than new construction. Yet conserving and extending the lifespan of buildings is an inherently complex process. Since the early 1990s the language of 'adaptive re-use' has become increasingly popular, and whilst various successes can be highlighted, it is an approach that has had only a limited impact in regions as dynamic as Asia. This paper considers, but moves beyond questions of architecture and design to consider some of the wider socio-cultural forces at play which determine the degree to which the built environment can be recycled or not. Accordingly, the paper focuses on the topic of air, and in particular the energy intensive culture of air conditioning.

The history of electronic air-conditioning in Asia is a relatively short one, stretching back just a few decades. The buildings of a pre-air-conditioning era consume far less energy vis à vis thermal comfort, and their preservation and recycling for that reason alone is important in the name of urban sustainability. But as this paper reveals, the issue of air and its regulation stands pivotal to such questions. To illustrate this the paper draws on the work of Gaston Bachelard and Steven Connor; extending their notion of 'the material imagination of air' into the context of today's air-conditioned cities of Asia. Themes which bind built environment sustainability with modern urban culture that, have hitherto, largely remained dislocated in their analysis will be brought together.

Tim Winter is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre For Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney. He has published a number of books on heritage, development, modernity, urban conservation and tourism in Asia, and is editor of the forthcoming Routledge *Handbook on Heritage in Asia*.

Jenny Chio

(China Research Centre, UTS)

Village Videos: The Cultural Politics of Media in Rural, Ethnic China

Recent research on media commercialization in China has revealed the ways in which even a state-led media system like China's is not entirely under state control. Nevertheless, one area of media studies in China that has remained under-explored is amateur, or semi-professional, media as a form of cultural production and as the site of particular consumer practices. This talk aims to critically assess the complexities of non-state media production, consumption, and circulation through the case study of videographers and viewers of ethnic Miao festival videos in Guizhou province. These videos are produced explicitly for sale within localities, but outside of commercial distribution channels (which in China are inevitably tied to national or provincial level government media offices).

As my preliminary research in rural Guizhou province has shown, there is a vibrant media world of video recordings of ethnic festivals and competitions (namely bull-fighting, singing, and traditional dance) taking place throughout the region. This talk explores the popularity of amateur media productions made by semi-professional videographers who sell them locally in shops and markets. The content of these videos, ranging from ethnic festival performances to bull-fights and other traditions, re-imagine rural and ethnic identities by finding visual ways to represent rural socio-cultural lives. As a form of non-state media production, amateur media productions indicate new attempts at local levels to make sense of national narratives and transnational expectations of rural, ethnic identity in contemporary China.

Jenny Chio completed her PhD in Socio-Cultural Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, in 2009. She also holds a Masters degree in Visual Anthropology from Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Her current research focuses on local media practices in rural, ethnic minority regions of China. She has co-edited a volume with Professor Wanning Sun, titled *Mapping Media in China: Region, Province, Locality* (forthcoming, Routledge), and has conducted extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Guizhou and Guangxi on ethnic tourism, development, and contemporary patterns of rural migration and sociality. She is completing a book manuscript based on this work, provisionally titled *A Landscape of Travel: Mobility and Visuality in Rural, Ethnic China*, and has an article on the migrant's experiences of tourism and travel forthcoming in the journal *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*.

From 2009-2012, Jenny is serving as an elected Board Member of the Society for Visual Anthropology, a section of the American Anthropological Association.

Date

Thursday October 13, 2011

Time

2pm - 4:30pm

Venue

Building EB, level 2,
room 21 (EB.2.21)
Parramatta Campus
([view map](#))

Convenor

Greg Noble
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[Click here to RSVP](#)