



Hong Kong/China: the materiality and ethical dilemma of transborder cultural politics

Free Public Lecture by Professor Eric Kit-wai Ma



Lecture Theatre, Level 3 (Swanston Street Level),
Design Hub, RMIT City Campus, Corner Swanston and Victoria Streets
Wednesday 6 November, 4pm
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The presentation will start with the history of Hong Kong/mainland cultural politics in the 1970s and the 1980s, when Hong Kong emerged as a satellite city of colonial modernity, and had become the object of desire for those Mainland Chinese who fancied a better life. In these two decades, Hong Kong/mainland cultural politics was largely embedded in the differentials of capitalistic materiality.

The second part of the presentation traces the new developments in transborder cultural politics since the mid-1990s, when the role of Hong Kong as a satellite modern city for mainlanders has greatly diminished, and when China has emerged as an aspiring giant in global capitalism.

The last part of the presentation focuses on the recent conflicts between local Hong Kong people and mainland tourists, shoppers and immigrants. The conspicuous consumption of mainland new rich in Hong Kong, as amplified by the popular media, has triggered a renewed sense of difference and resentment among the locals, which intensify the contradictions of local and national identification. Lifestyles become highly political when they are linked not only to tastes and affordability, but also to civic values and citizen rights.

Professor Eric Kit-wai Ma teaches communication at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His books include *Desiring Hong Kong*, *Consuming China* (HKU Press), *Hong Kong, China: learning to belong to a nation* (Routledge, with Mathews and Lui), and *Culture, Politics and Television in Hong Kong* (Routledge). His articles appear in journals such as *Global Media and Communication*, *Visual Anthropology*, *Cultural Studies*, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Social Text*, *Positions*, and *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*. He has written and edited more than 20 books in Chinese; the most recent ones include *Trends Factory: A Visual Ethnography* and *Mediated Modernity: A Dialogue between Communication and Social Theories*, both published by Fudan University Press. He writes columns for *Ming Pao Daily* (Hong Kong) and the *International Herald Leader* (Beijing).

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