

Research Seminar

Representing peasant workers through documentary films in post-Mao China

Dr. Eric Florence

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Time: 11:30 – 13:30

Venue: DE307, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Abstract:

In this talk, Dr. Eric Florence will explore and document how Chinese peasant workers are represented in Chinese documentary films in post-Mao China. Interrogating how workers' experiences of migration and labor are mediated through a selection of documentary films, he will argue that these films provide a valuable vantage point in order to engage with the rich and highly contradictory features of peasant workers' identity and agency made of struggles, hardship, as well as disillusion, but also of desires, aspirations and hopes. The material used for this talk includes a selection of Chinese documentary films, popular literature, songs, ethnographic observation, as well as scientific literature on migration and labor in post-Mao China.

About the Speaker:

Dr. Eric Florence is the Director of the French Centre for the Study of Contemporary China, (CEFC, <http://www.cefc.com.hk>) and Associate Professor at the University of Liege. His research focuses on the cultural politics of labor in contemporary China. For the last fifteen years he has taken part to research on labor migration in China and research projects on international migration at the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (University of Liège, <http://www.cedem.ulg.ac.be>). His writings include "Migrant workers in the Pearl River Delta: Between Discursive Inclusion and Exclusion", in H. Entzinger et al. *Migration Between States and Markets* (Ashgate, 2004), "The Links between Academic Research and Public Policies in the Field of Migration and Ethnic Relations: Selected National Case Studies", *IJMS: International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 2005, vol. 7, no.1 (with Marco Martiniello, eds.), "Migrant Workers in the Pearl River Delta : Discourse and Narratives about Work as Sites of Struggle", *Critical Asian Studies*, 2007, vol. 39, no. 1, 120-150 ; *Towards a New Development Paradigm in Twenty-First Century China : Economy, Society and Politics* (Routledge 2012) ; "The Cultural Politics of Labour in Post-Socialist China: The Case of Subject-Formation and Identity Politics of Peasant Workers," in S. Bhattacharya and R. P. Behal (eds), *Vernacularity in Labour Politics*, New Delhi, Tulika Books, 2016, pp. 102-132 ; "How to Be a Shenzhener: Representations of Migrant Labor in Shenzhen's Second Decade," in Mary Ann O'Donnell, Winnie Wong, and Jonathan Bach (eds), *Learning from Shenzhen: China's Post-Mao Experiment from Special Zone to Model City*, Chicago, The Chicago University Press, 2017, pp. 86-103.