



**Inter-Asian Connections II: Singapore
CALL FOR WORKSHOP PAPERS
DEADLINE – MAY 31, 2010**

**WORKSHOP TITLE:
Reproduction Migration in Asia**

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The rise of “reproduction migration”—movements of people for the purpose of maintaining and reproducing people on a daily and generational basis—is a significant social development in Asia, especially after the 1997 financial crisis. In many parts of the region, international migrations for marriage, the provision as well as the receipt of care, and education are increasing faster than conventional labor mobility. Built on a wide-range of existent but largely discrete case studies, this workshop seeks integrative frameworks in order to theorize the migrations of care workers, domestic maids, students, spouses, entertainers, medical tourists and others. The concept of “social reproduction”—how society is organized structurally and over time surrounding the everyday production of life—will be central to our discussion. While the notion of social reproduction has a long history, our discussion will be informed by two specific new developments. First, the rise of “anthropogenetic capitalism” that concerns how men produce men, instead of how men produce goods, as evidenced by the fact that health care, education and entertainment are among the fastest growing industries, brings social reproduction to the core of the economy. Second, the processes of social reproduction are transnationalized with increasing reproduction migration. Thus, the distinctions between the productive and the reproductive, and between the national and the transnational, are profoundly blurred.

The workshop will focus, by no means exclusively, on the following sets of questions:

First, how should we understand the increase of reproduction migration in the context of crises in conventional material accumulation (e.g. 1997, 2008, and numerous other local crises)? How does reproduction migration enable the commodification of social reproduction and at the same time exacerbate the moral anxiety about it?

Second, what is the relationship between reproduction migration and the nation-state? Reproduction migration helps sustain national social reproduction, but is also seen as disruptive of established patterns and ideologies of reproduction. For example, how are international marriages facilitated and regulated to reconcile this tension? What are the implications of student migration on education institutions’ function as a reproducer of the national culture?

Third, how should we rethink about gender, social difference and intimate labor? Reproduction migration brings people of different categories into intimate contacts. Why do employers prefer migrants who are supposedly different from themselves, often in primordial terms, for providing intimate labor? How are difference and intimacy transmuted to each other? Why does women’s reproductive labor have to be “denaturalized” (by looking after non-relatives) in order to be socially valued, while “natural” intimate labor remains morally desirable?



The prospective participants must have worked on reproduction migration empirically and the paper must be conceptually oriented towards the notion of social reproduction. We especially welcome contributions that integrate ethnographic investigation into political economy analysis. The workshop will also reflect on general strategies of theorization in social research in Asia.

For additional details and application guidelines, please visit the Conference website - <http://www.ssrc.org/pages/conference-on-inter-asian-connections-ii-singapore-december-8-10-2010/>.