

Conceptualising the Mobilities of Events: Geopolitics and Materialities in Transit

By Professor Kevin Hannam

Date: 11 Jan 2016 (Monday)

Time: 10am - 11:30am

Location: FASS Faculty Lounge @ The Deck level 2, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, NUS Kent Ridge Campus

Chair: Dr Michiel Baas, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

Jointly organized by the FASS Cities Research Cluster, and the Migration Clusters of Asia Research Institute, and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore.

Abstract:

In this presentation I want to conceptualise events from the perspective of the mobilities paradigm. A great deal of research into events takes as a starting point spectacular mega-events such as sporting occasions like Formula One Grand Prix in Singapore. However, when scholars talk about mobilities they often evoke a momentary or temporary event, or a series of memorable events: walking, driving, running, flying, cycling, commuting, busking, sailing, boating, skiing, or even hunting. Mobilities are articulated in relation to, and as, a whole series of social functions and pursuits, from travelling to work and numerous leisure activities, to going on holiday, leaving a country in search of work or sanctuary, or hopping on a bus to get to the supermarket. Mobile events might appear to serve as contexts that provide meanings and purpose to a distinct action – from frantically leaving one's home to escape from a mudslide, to embarking on a protest march. Events are also how our mobilities become articulated as meaningful activities within different systems and categories of knowledge. Considering mobilities as events enables mobilities to be made legible as much more than an undifferentiated flow; as identifiable activities that might concern a particular organization or institution and frequently such events also involve multiple governance assemblages. Event mobilities can thus be understood as a 'network in time', with turning points, hinges, and 'eventful' punctuation points. Although mobilities depend upon various speeds, velocities, viscosities and flows they also involve various immobilities such as blockages, congestion, turbulence, friction and disruptions which hinge on events taking place in specific places. I draw upon and develop Slavoj Žižek's recent comments on the 'event' to consider the assemblages of event mobilities in terms of trauma, transformation, and transition, as well the framing of event mobilities through the media and various spatial materialities using examples from my wide ranging research in India and elsewhere.

About the speaker:

Professor Kevin Hannam recently joined the Carnegie Faculty at Leeds Beckett University as Professor of Tourism Mobilities from the University of Sunderland where he was Associate Dean (Research) and Head of the Department of Tourism, Hospitality & Events. Kevin is founding co-editor of the Routledge journal Mobilities (with John Urry and Mimi Sheller) and on the editorial board of the Journal of Heritage Tourism, Tourist Studies and Annals of Tourism Research. He has published books on tourism, in particular, the research monograph *Tourism and India* (Routledge) and the text *Understanding Tourism* (Sage). He has led substantial research projects in collaboration with other European universities as well as with industry. He has supervised sixteen doctoral students to completion. He has both organised international conferences and delivered keynote speeches. He is chair of the World Leisure Organisations Commission on Tourism and the Environment and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS). He holds a PhD in geography from the University of Portsmouth, UK and is a Visiting Fellow at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He has substantial external examining and curriculum development experience of both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in tourism, hospitality & events. He has also developed significant transnational educational partnerships in Singapore and Malaysia and led research into international student mobility.

Registration

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