Conceptualising the Mobilities of Events: Geopolitics and Materialities in Transit
By Prof Kevin Hannam

Date : 11 Jan 2016
Time : 10:00 - 11:30
Venue : The Deck, FASS Faculty Lounge Level 2
        21 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119077
        National University of Singapore @ KRC

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

CHAIRPERSON

Dr Michiel Baas, Asia Research Institute, 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 Zizek’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

Kevin Hannam is Professor of Tourism Mobilities at Leeds Beckett University, UK and a research affiliate at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Previously he was at the University of Sunderland, UK as Associate Dean (Research) and Head of the Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Events. He is a founding co-editor of the journals Mobilities and Applied Mobilities (Routledge), co-author of the books Understanding Tourism (Sage) and Tourism and India (Routledge) and co-editor of The Routledge Handbook of Mobilities Research and Moral Encounters in Tourism (Ashgate). Forthcoming publications include the edited books Event Mobilities and Tourism and Leisure Mobilities (Routledge). He has extensive research experience in South and South-East Asia and has published his research in many leading journals. He has a PhD in geography from the University of Portsmouth, UK and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS), member of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) and Vice-Chair of the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research (ATLAS). In 2015-16 he was awarded a Vice-Chancellor International Scholarship to the University of Wollongong, Australia.

REGISTRATION

Admission is free. We would greatly appreciate if you RSVP to Ms Tay Minghua via email: minghua.tay@nus.edu.sg.