



AsiaSapes
Contesting Borders

ASAA
20TH BIENNIAL
CONFERENCE

8-10 July 2014 at the University of Western Australia, Perth

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The pace of globalisation has made contestation of national borders a key part of both lived realities and academic analysis. Global problems increasingly demand international engagement and cross disciplinary approaches. As an integrating theme of the 20th Biennial ASAA Conference we focus on both senses of border-crossing – national and disciplinary – in the multipolar world.

Although the term 'landscape' is well-worn, '-scape' has become a productive suffix, spawning such terms as ethnoscaples, technoscaples, mediascaples, ideoscaples and so on. Appadurai and like-minded scholars use the term 'scapes' to account for the movement of peoples, technologies, money, images, ideals and ideologies throughout the world. This Conference seeks to emphasise the involvement of Asia as a region of origin, transmission and reception in such flows, extending from the local to the global in scale. The first decade of the 21st century has seen the beginnings of a shift towards redefining 'Asian Studies' as a platform of collaboration between disciplines and cultures rather than simply an investigation of Asia as a defined and bordered space. This Conference aims to encourage reflection upon how the region has played a part historically in processes of imaginative world building, as well as considering the material processes and structures in which these ideational constructions are based.

It follows that the Conference Theme will also problematise the regional classifications of bordered entities within Asia. The viability of regional delimitations has been queried since the formation of Asian Studies programs in the Cold War period. On the other hand, as Emerson presciently noted in 1984, while such labelling may be an exercise in fiction, it is perhaps most like science fiction, since labelling something that does not yet exist may facilitate its eventual emergence as a reality. Clearly, institutions like ASEAN now provide some material foundation to the concept. Similar dilemmas have been the object of scholarly critiques in regard to West Asia, the Middle East, and indeed all the so-called constituent regions, and Asia itself. This Conference seeks to encourage further thought on how the intensified processes of multiple and complex social, economic and cultural tessellations have impacted on the construction, shifting and dismantling of borders within which we experience and understand Asia.

Panels and individual papers that engage with these key concepts are invited from all areas of Asian studies, from those who teach, research and study Asia, providing an opportunity for scholars to present their own research and to keep abreast of current scholarly discourse. We encourage panels and papers in the following areas:

- Anthropology, sociology & inter-disciplinary studies
- Archaeology
- Cultural studies
- Economics, trade & business
- Ecology and environment
- History
- Language, education & communication
- Law
- Literature and translation
- Politics & international relations
- Science policy and collaborative research