

Abstract

Participatory Exclusion: The Moral Economy of Local Citizenship in China and Hong Kong

This lecture explores the moral economy of local citizenship. The emphasis will primarily be on rural China, but it will conclude with some consideration of how the concept of local citizenship might be applied to contemporary Hong Kong. “Local citizenship” encourages us to consider how ideas about who deserves what under what conditions affects distribution of collective resources and the inclusion or exclusion of particular categories of people in these distributional systems, and how this can operate at scales below that of the nation. For China, local citizenship is most fundamentally affected by the *hukou* system. The moral economy of local citizenship has its own dynamics, but is transformed by shifts in the overriding political economies. Rather than a dual urban/rural distinction, the entitlements of residents of some rural areas are more privileged than urban residents, and some resist becoming urban. A variety of recent issues in Hong Kong, such as mainland mothers and the politics of “integration”, might be usefully considered in terms of local citizenship.