

Stigmatization, Identities and the Law: Asian and Comparative Perspectives

23-24 June 2020

Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

As one of most dynamic regions in the world, impressive growth in Asia sometimes happens at the expense of marginalization. Individuals who do not fit normative ideals, who are deemed economically unproductive, or who do not participate in heterosex-centered reproduction are often regarded as different, even deviant, and come to take on or are given identities that are marginalized. These include, but are not limited to, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, the elderly, gender and sexual minorities, never-married parents, or unmarried people. Stigmatization can be pronounced in homogenous or insular societies and communities that use “culture” and “tradition” as a justification to extract conformity. It can also appear where the self-sufficiency of individuals and heterosexual, biological and nuclear families are touted as moral virtues that align with neoliberal and anti-welfare ideologies.

Social processes of stigmatization involve a range of interactions and relationships. They include being treated as burdensome and unproductive members of society, or a threat to the social order. They also refer to the processes of responding to such treatment by coming up with strategies, taking action, or deciding not to take action. How do these processes emerge and transform, and what do they look like? How do people respond to differential treatment based on their stigmatized identities at home, at work, or against state authorities? How are they protected or persecuted under the law and what forms of recourse do they have? What do these experiences tell us about the manner in which law matters to identities, human relationships, and social life?

This workshop, organized by Lynette Chua (Law and Liberal Arts) and George Radics (Sociology) of the National University of Singapore, in collaboration with David Engel (SUNY Buffalo, Law), Rosie Harding (University of Birmingham, Law) and Sida Liu (University of Toronto, Sociology and Law) aims to bring together papers that analyze the relevance of law to stigmatized identities, particularly where encounters of differential treatment occur within the family, at the workplace, or in relation to state actors. Papers selected for the workshop will be considered for a special issue in a peer-reviewed, international journal.

The papers should offer insights based on empirical research and original fieldwork at Asian sites, or bring comparative perspectives that shed light on Asian experiences using empirical research at non-Asian sites. The workshop welcomes scholars from a wide range of disciplines, such as anthropology, history, law, political science, and sociology, to investigate the intersections of stigmatization, identities and the law. While papers that highlight the role of law or rights certainly speak to the theme of the workshop, so do papers that show how and why people often resort to non-legal framings and solutions even though law or rights are available to them.

Those who are interested in the workshop should submit their application and paper abstract of 300 words [here](#) by **31 August 2019**. Selected participants will be expected to cover their own travel costs, whereas accommodation will be provided by the organizers. Selected participants have to submit their full-length papers of 9,000-10,000 words, including notes and references, by 15 May 2020. Please direct questions about administration and logistics to Wendy Wee (wendywee@nus.edu.sg) and queries about the workshop’s substantive content to George Radics (radics@nus.edu.sg).