



# Friday Seminar

## Imagining Social Change Through Policy Failures in China

This paper begins with a brief discussion of four ways of imagining social change: replacement, transformation, transition, and reconfiguration. Focusing on transformation and transition, the paper then asks: if examining or experiencing a particular social transformation, how can we understand the presence of things past? How do practices, logics, ideals, and things from the past inform, influence, or simply exist in the “new” social context? Understanding forms of continuity is simply the flip side of the coin of understanding change. Conceptualizing continuity intimately relates to imagining social transformation. The paper proposes two modes of understanding continuity: haunting and recombinant transformation. The paper ends by working through an example of the place of the past in the present: location based social control in the Great Leap Famine, the birth planning policy, and the recent Covid related lockdowns in Shanghai. How do the ideas of haunting and recombinant transformation differentially illuminate this continuity?

Apr 19

1:00 - 2:30PM

NAH 213

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