

**Department of Sociology**  
**University of Macau**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities**

---

---

**Seminar**

**Returnees' Hybridity and Its Upside and Downside**

by

**Prof. Chan Kwok Bun**

*Formerly Chair Professor of Sociology, Hong Kong Baptist University  
Ph.D. (York University)*

---

---

**Abstract**

In the past two years, Prof. Chan completed for the Central Policy Unit of the Hong Kong Government four major consultancy research studies of emigration and immigration, dealing with the life conditions of a diverse group of migrants: immigrant artists, immigrant professionals, and return migrants, in Hong Kong, Singapore and Israel. This paper will reflect on the life experiences of one group: return migrants in Hong Kong. One distinguishing characteristic of immigrants in general, and the return migrants considered in this paper in particular, is their differentness, which often marks them off against the sameness of locals, the stayers. This differentness is often in tension with sameness, which is not without its deleterious consequences. Differentness, to the return migrant, means creativity, but it is also a threat to the sense of security, certainty and continuity of the locals. Viewed sociologically, the fate of a return migrant, who himself has become more open-minded than before but who now lives in a society that is less than tolerant or appreciative of differences, depends largely on how his differentness is socially treated by the local others. You are or you become how you are treated by others. Social treatment, as an outer force, determines the inner psyche of the immigrant. It is here one locates the wisdom, and foresight, of classical sociology.

---

---

**4<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 (Thursday)**

**17:00 – 19:00**

**L205A**

**Language in English**

**ALL ARE WELCOME**