

I ♥ Korea

Homo-Racialized Desires and White Asian Cosmopolitanism in Thailand



DREDGE B. KANG

Thursday

October 20

11:30AM

Location:

AnSo 134

Because of Hallyu, Thais are professing their love for all things “Korean,” including beauty. In popular discourse, Koreans are referred to as “white.” My concept of the “white Asian” sheds light on current processes of Asian racialization, while simultaneously provincializing Euro-American understandings of whiteness. Becoming white Asian—that is, achieving cosmopolitan status—is linked to East Asia, middle class consumption, and intimate relationships. Focusing on beauty work, I show how embodying Koreanness consolidates the achievement of white Asian status while continuing to perpetuate the marginalization of those with dark skin and low social status in Thailand.

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Co-sponsored by the Anthropology of Asia Talk Seminar Series

