

## **Call for Papers**

### ***Paradoxes of Domesticity: Christian Missionaries and Women in Asia and the Pacific***

**9-10 August, 2012  
Australian National University**

**Co-convended by Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly**

We are pleased to invite proposals to our conference, “Paradoxes of Domesticity: Christian Missionaries and Women in Asia and the Pacific,” to be held on August 9-10, 2012 at Australian National University. This is an interdisciplinary, inter-regional conference that focuses on the encounters between Christian missionaries and women in Asia and the Pacific with the aim of understanding the “paradoxes of domesticity” that emerged.

Research in women’s history has shown that the relationship between the domestic and public spheres has always been permeable and complex in practice despite rigid binaries set in the ideological opposition of the domestic as feminine and the public as masculine. The tensions become even more pronounced in the era of Western imperialism, when the transnational interactions between people, material goods, ideas and images developed at an unprecedented pace.

The engagement of Christian women missionaries with women in Asia and the Pacific was a central feature of these dynamic transnational encounters. Their encounters across the domains of religion, education and family sometimes reinforced and sometimes challenged what constituted the “domestic” in the age of the Western modern. Much research on the topic has privileged the perspectives of Western missionaries. However, relatively little research has been done from the viewpoint of the local people who accepted, resisted or appropriated the new religion and culture.

The central focus of this conference will be on the agency of Asian and Pacific women in linking their past religious, familial, and cultural practices with newly introduced “modern” Western ideals and practices. In doing so, the conference aims to reveal the relatively unknown histories of women in Asian and Pacific Christianities and show how intimately their histories were entangled with the diverse colonial and semicolonial contexts across Asia and the Pacific.

Potential topics include:

- 1) the shifting notions of the public and the private,
- 2) the legacy of mission schools in the history of the modern woman,

- 3) tensions between colonial powers, mercantile influences and missionary forces in their visions of the 'new woman',
- 4) the development of the idea of domesticity in transcultural encounters especially apropos of child-rearing and home management,
- 5) the development of modern ideas of the self as fostered or constrained in transcultural interactions,
- 6) changes and reforms in material culture and bodily practices evinced in domestic architecture, domestic routines like cooking and cleaning, dietary changes, clothing, hairstyles, personal adornment, entertainment and patterns of work and leisure.
- 7) transformations in women's relation to religion, and notions of spiritual authority

Interested scholars and PhD students are encouraged to submit an abstract (250 words) and a brief C.V. to [korea@anu.edu.au](mailto:korea@anu.edu.au) by March 30, 2012. We will notify the status of proposals by April 20. Those selected to present will be required to submit full papers (approximately 8,000 words) by July 15. All participants will be provided with accommodation and travel allowances thanks to a generous grant from the Academy of Korean Studies for the project entitled *Transnational Humanities in Korea Studies*, and support from Margaret Jolly's ARC Laureate Project: *Engendering Persons, Transforming Things: Christianities, Commodities and Individualism in Oceania*.

Conference organizers plan to publish an edited volume of selected papers based on the conference outcomes.

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