



## Course Schedule Summer Semester 2012

### FOCUS: "KNOWLEDGE, BELIEF AND RELIGION"

#### 1. From the Literati Studio to the Laboratory: Sites of Knowledge in Asia and Europe

*Joachim Kurtz* Tu, 14-16 KJC-112

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Many recent historians of science and thought have argued that "all knowledge is local." But what can we learn from scrutinizing the specific sites where diverse forms of knowledge are generated, stored, and circulated? The seminar will address this question by looking into a broad array of locations implicated in the knowledge economies of early modern Asia and Europe. Focusing in particular on the transcultural dimension of public institutions such as schools, libraries, and museums as well as private salons and studios, to name but a few relevant sites, our aim will be to determine how and to what extent places can shape actors and ideas.

#### 2. Buddhism as Philosophy / Philosophy in Buddhism

*Birgit Kellner* We, 10-12 KJC-112

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This seminar surveys and critically examines a range of historical and contemporary positions that formed around these questions in Europe and Asia. Such positions include 19th century views of Buddhism as a purely rational discipline of enlightenment, or more recent visions of Buddhist philosophy as they are expressed in readers and history books. Positions that we shall investigate further include scholarly assessments to the effect that philosophy in Buddhism is a rational interpretation of mystical experience, the idea that philosophy in Buddhism merely serves an apologetic function (to defend a religious teaching in a hostile environment), or the view that Buddhist philosophical analysis has a genuine spiritual function similar to (as seen by Pierre Hadot) "philosophia" in ancient Greece.

#### 3. Wang Guowei on Literature, History, and Philosophy

*Joachim Kurtz* Tu, 11-13 KJC-112

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Wang Guowei (1877–1927) was one of the most erudite polymaths living through the transition from the Qing empire to the Chinese Republic. Equally conversant in Chinese, Japanese and "Western" learning, Wang played a crucial role in formulating a vision of engaged scholarship that did not succumb to political expediency. Covering the whole range of subjects that have come to define the humanities in modern China – literature, history and philosophy – his work reflects and creatively addresses many of the tensions that have shaped Chinese thought in a



globalizing world. In this seminar we will closely analyze a selection of Wang Guowei's most challenging essays, letters, and poems.

#### 4. Gender, Religion and Politics in Japanese History

*Anna Andreeva* We, 16-18 KJC-112

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This course will focus on the historical conceptualizations of gender and their reflections and interactions with the fields of religion and politics in premodern Japan (500-1600). Through thoughtful and critical discussion of the selected readings, we will explore a wide range of roles played by women and men, by looking at different geographical and class contexts and gendered religious practices, while keeping a firm gaze on the comparable cultural, religious and political circumstances of premodern China and Korea.

#### **FOCUS: "SOCIETY, ECONOMY AND GOVERNANCE"**

#### 5. Economic Crises from a Japanese Perspective

*Harlad Fuess* Mo, 13-15 KJC-112

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This seminar explores periods of economic transition in Japan and East Asia with a focus on transcultural economic developments since the nineteenth century. It asks how the "opening" of the region to outside "world market" economic forces fundamentally altered its socioeconomic and political structure, especially in times of economic crisis. A special feature of this seminar will be its emphasis on an exploration of Japanese voices in a comparative perspective, which means that besides English an emerging reading ability of Japanese scholarship at the advanced undergraduate level is desirable. The course, however, upon the instructor's permission may also be open to students who have no Japanese language skills and are interested to supplement the Japanese perspective by readings of historical primary sources in other languages.

#### 6. Transcultural Korean History

*Harald Fuess, Yonson Ahn* Blockseminar KJC-112

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This seminar explores the long history of geographical Korea from the "Three Ancient Kingdoms" to Contemporary Times by paying attention to how peoples of the peninsular interacted culturally and politically with those in today's China and Japan with due consideration to other international influences. Special emphasis will be given to Periods of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1910), the Japanese Colonial (1910-1945) and the postwar period leading into a division into a Northern and Southern Korean state by examining seminal English-language works and key international debates on the historiography of Korea within the East Asian region.



## 7. Feeding the People: The Moral Economies of Grain in Early Modern Europe and East Asia

*Martin Hofmann, David Mervart* We, 14-16 KJC-112

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The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 Britain was only one conspicuous moment in an ongoing controversy surrounding the possibility and desirability of free trade in essential foodstuffs. Was it politically prudent, morally acceptable and strategically sound to subject grains as the staple victuals (rice in most parts of East Asia, mainly wheat in Europe) to the same regime of free commercial exchange as other commodities? How far could the responsibility of governments of whatever description for sustaining peace and order be said to entail responsibility for ensuring supply of basic sustenance? And how far could such responsibility be outsourced to the market? What was the right politics and philosophy of grains?

These issues belonged among some of the central concerns for policy-makers and theorists alike, in the increasingly populous societies of early modern western Europe as well as Japan and China. While on the one hand the inter-regional and international long-distance trade in basic foodstuffs has been identified as the main factor which freed early-modern populations from the spectre of famine, on the other hand the perceived profit-making from the commodity on which lives depend, especially in the times of dearth and scarcity, consistently evoked indignation and unrest, thus accompanying some of the most common outbreaks of social and political instability throughout 17th and 18th and into the 19th century.

The seminar explores a range of moral and political dilemmas posed by grain trade, East and West: arguments exchanged, regulatory measures imposed on production and distribution, policies considered and implemented to ensure a stable supply of the sustenance foodstuffs, and institutions both formal and informal spawned by it (from local mutual insurance self-help schemes to country-wide commodity exchanges complete with hedging and speculation). This setting provides a common perspective applicable to the pre-modern histories of both ends of Eurasia. It should also help us understand the complex pedigree of many debates and predicaments which are still with us in the 21st century (not only in the shape of EU's Common Agricultural Policy or Japan's or China's regulation of rice imports and exports).

## 8. Communication and Empire

*Paul Fletcher* Fr, 10-12 KJC-112

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Communication was a key ingredient in the British Empire's ascendancy to power in South Asia. Swords and arms may have played a critical role but secrecy, espionage, and diplomacy more commonly substantiated British occupation and rule. The famous power of the British navy was buoyed by a highly sophisticated system of administration and bureaucracy, which was used to control and govern the colonies on an everyday basis. As one part of this system, official correspondence formed the practical and symbolic link between the colonies and the Home government, thus rendering possible the concept and existence of empire. Roads, railroads, bridges, and canals brought rational order to space, facilitated the circulation of people, goods,



services, and capital, and impacted on the experience and reality of millions of people. This course seeks to familiarize students with the forms, functions, and consequences of the communications used by the British in their rule of South Asia from the beginning of the nineteenth century until independence, providing them with an opportunity to conceptualize the relationship between communication and power from a global and interdisciplinary perspective.

## 9. China intimate: private lives in a globalising society

*Tina Schilbach* Mo, 11-13 KJC-002

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This seminar will introduce students to the cultural politics of private life, personal relationships and the domestic in contemporary Chinese society. A particular focus will be on a transcultural perspective. In this, students will be invited to assess how China's globalisation process has affected the nature of the private and to analyse how these changing patterns in inter-personal dynamics relate to wider postmodern social theories around family, kinship, romance or friendship.

Despite sweeping economic change the past three decades of reform in China have seen only cautious transitions in the public and political spheres of civil society. However, the reform process has opened up new spaces for personal lives, and

the emancipation of individual agency in the private pursuit of consumer lifestyles. home ownership, web activism or romantic relations. China's new private world has been celebrated as a place where people can practice civil society. Yet, scholars have also been more critical, arguing that the spaces of personal life not only contest the underpinnings of power but also reproduce them. As "consumer citizens" and calculating individuals eager to use inter-personal networks "to get ahead", wider

social concern seems limited. At the same time, for many Chinese people, family offers a safer space that is particularly important at times of severe social and economic insecurity. Though challenged by generational conflicts and the migration experience, family life continues to play a significant role in managing uncertainty. Finally the personal relationships people cultivate have simply become more diverse, and - for

both rural and urban Chinese - increasingly include a new set of emotional expectations that go beyond an economics of class, power or social mobility.

Following of socialist practices of private life, the seminar will proceed to familiarise students with the growing anthropological literature on China's micro-environment, including case studies of the home, childhood, urban middle-class youth, rural migrant women, middle age and later life as well the diaspora.



## FOCUS: "VISUAL, MEDIA AND MATERIAL CULTURE"

### 10. From Modernism to the Global Contemporary – a transcultural view of genealogies, geographies and displays

Monica Juneja Th, 9-11 KJC-112

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The lecture course analyses critically the canonical genealogies and explanatory frameworks of artistic modernism which take as their starting point the metropolitan cities of Euro-America. By exploring the migrant trajectories of objects and practices that make up the category of modernism, it will argue for a transcultural approach to art historical concepts which do not forever remain rooted to their parochial (Western) points of origin; instead they undergo processes of translation and reconfiguration in new settings. The course will examine the formative encounter of the European artist with the non-European world which shaped the modernist revolt against established codes and practices. It will then focus on the dialogical relationship of artists in colonized and post-colonial settings of South and East Asia with metropolitan modernism which was translated, appropriated and recast through a range of expressive forms. In what ways has the global proliferation of Asian contemporary art through exhibitions and biennales together with the availability of new sites of cultural action beyond the west, challenged some of the main ideological premises of the avant-garde? By analyzing the nexus between expressive forms such as the masquerade, mimicry, performative excess or monumentality and the quest for artistic selfhood among Asian artists, the course will examine the ways in which locations in Asia could become sites of a globally constituted cosmopolitanism. The lecture course can be taken together (optional) with a seminar/tutorium preparatory to an excursion to the dOCUMENTA 13.

### Wie betrachtet und konzeptualisiert man Kunst der Moderne bis zur globalen Gegenwart in transkultureller Perspektive? (Tutorium)

Franziska Koch Th, 11-13 KJC-002

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Das Tutorium begleitet und vertieft die Vorlesung "From Modernism to the Global Contemporary..." von Frau Prof. Juneja und bereitet inhaltlich auf eine Exkursion zur dOCUMENTA 13 (6. - 9. August 2012) vor.

In jeder Sitzung wird ein Text, der auf die vorausgegangene Vorlesung Bezug nimmt, gemeinsam diskutiert und künstlerische Positionen analysiert, die Licht auf verschiedene Aspekte moderner bis zeitgenössischer Kunst werfen. Das Tutorium erarbeitet transkulturell perspektivierte Ansätze zur Lösung der Fragen, was moderne bis zeitgenössische Kunst in einem globalen Kontext auszeichnet, wie man sie betrachten kann, wie verschiedene theoretische Ansätze unseren Blick verändern, welche Kontexte und Funktionen (vom Atelier, über das Museum bis zum Markt) sie bestimmen und welche Rollen der Künstler, Kurator und Betrachter spielen.

Die Veranstaltung untersucht besonders Texte, die im Vorfeld der dOCUMENTA 13 in der zugehörigen Reihe "100 Notizen - 100 Gedanken" veröffentlicht wurden und beschäftigt sich



schwerpunktmässig mit den Künstlerinnen und Künstlern, die in Kassel ausstellen werden. Aus Kurzreferaten hierzu sollen für die Exkursion individuelle Kompetenzbereiche entstehen z.B. zur Installationskunst, zum Video, zur Malerei, zur Materialästhetik sowie zum Verhältnis von Kunst, Politik und Markt. Diese Kompetenzen sollen die gemeinsame Diskussion vor Ort bereichern. (Da die Teilnehmerzahl für die Exkursion begrenzt ist, wird den Teilnehmern/-innen des Tutoriums und/oder des Oberseminars von PD Dr. Schröder Vorzug gegeben und ein Auswahlgespräch Voraussetzung sein.

## 11. Let's talk about Love: Studying romance and other Emotions in globalizing South Asia

*Christiane Brosius* Th, 11-13 KJC-212

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Are emotions expressed and groomed alike everywhere across the globe? If not, what is different, why, and how can we research a topic such as this from a transcultural, media-based and anthropological perspective? This seminar features media and images centre-stage as they are very important for the communication and negotiation of feelings: be they 'manifested' in love letters and songs, films or online dating portals. How can we understand 'globalised sentiments' in the age of transnational migration, where long-distance relations of kinds require a careful and often risky 'emotional economy' of agents involved. Why does Bollywood 'touch' a cord across ethnic boundaries, why do we believe that online dating might lead to 'the right one'? Can we better understand why Valentine's Day is also an event that arouses moral panic and hatred among certain groups of people, at certain times, in different places? We also look at experts of relationships and romance, such as radioconsultant 'Love Guru', therapists, or spiritual leaders and ask what role they play in rapidly developing and changing urban environments in South Asia. What happens to other sentiments and social relations when the love for being in love seemingly overshadows all and everything; does 'arranged marriage' come to an end because of individual preferences? What about 'spiritual love' going global, as in the case of new religious movements such as Art of Living, or Amma? We will also consider historical depths and explore how some of today's moral panics about 'culture' and 'tradition' must be traced back to the colonial era, Victorian morality and religious reform movements.

## 12. Imaging Disaster - Lecture

*Monica Juneja et al.* Mo, 18-20 KJC-212

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The violence unleashed by natural disasters exposes human beings to the most elemental of borderline situations. Human will and capacities, poised on the precarious frontier between nature and culture - a frontier defined differently by each epoch and culture - are forced to undergo an ordeal of life and death. Disaster - viewed as a condition of emergency - becomes the site of survival or failure not only of individuals but of entire communities. The series of lectures planned jointly by the Universities of Heidelberg (Cluster of Excellence Asia and Europe) and Darmstadt will investigate specific culturally formed patterns of action and collective ways



of coping brought forth by catastrophic events. This makes all disasters, even those which unfold in the heart of "nature", profoundly socio-cultural happenings. For survivors the experience of disaster can become a search for meaning: in what terms is the encounter with elemental violence perceived, interpreted, described and interiorized? In order to express that which defies description, cultures take recourse to visual media: verbal images, myths, signs, symbols and films. Representations of calamities domesticate and contain them as icon. Various dimensions of the event - signs of imminent danger, the shock of disaster, destruction and ruin, escape und rescue, overcoming danger, victory over the elements, help for the victims - have generated a repertoire of motifs with a view to portray disaster through a wide range of media, across time and history.

The analysis of the way disasters are imagined and visualized is the theme of this series of lectures, in two senses. First, it will address methodological questions pertaining to a transcultural vocabulary and iconography of disasters and second, it intends to systematically analyze the event of disaster and its medial representation as a complex and composite socio-cultural process.

### 13. Imaging Disaster - Seminar

*Monica Juneja et al.* Blockseminar KJC-112

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The seminar will investigate ways of visually representing the experience of natural disasters across Europe and Asia ranging from pre-modern myths of deluge to present day media portrayals of catastrophic happenings. To begin with, this would involve studying the genesis of different genres of images, the intentions of their patrons, their proliferation and the often multi-layered readings engendered through their circulation in different contexts or their translation from one medium into another. Further we will address the question as to the range of functions images serve in seeking to visualize experiences which defy description - functions such as moralising, sublimating fear through aestheticizing, gratifying voyeurism and deployment for political and religious purposes. It remains however an open question whether such culturally shared aspects rest on "anthropological constants". In other words, the dynamics of both globally common features as well as culturally constituted differences that shape explanatory models and visual representations of natural disasters call for historical explanations what kind of transfer, appropriation, reformulation, and translation on the one hand, refusal and rejection on the other, have images across Europe and Asia, ranging from the mythical floods of Gilgamesh to the globally familiar scenarios of climatic disaster undergone, in what ways do they continue to evolve as part of transcultural entanglements? Does the transcultural approach need to be combined with a comparative perspective? The regional focus of the selected case studies to be discussed here will be Western Europe, the Mediterranean, South and East Asia.





#### 14. A transcultural approach to Beauty

*Laila, Abu-Er-Rub* Tu, 15-17 KJC-212

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Beauty may lie to some extent in the eye of the beholder, nevertheless concepts of beauty are always culturally bound and are thus related to other realms like concepts of body, health, philosophy, art and religion just to name a few. The main focus of the seminar will be to trace how local concepts of beauty have been changed through intercultural encounters throughout history. We will begin with reading and discussing theories of aesthetics and beauty (e.g. from Umberto Eco and Roger Scruton) and continue with case studies from different cultural contexts. These will include, for instance, how a cult of health and beauty developed in Germany and America at the turn of the 20th century, how the German trend traveled to China; why Japanese Geishas blackened their teeth to be beautiful, how global beauty peagants changed urban beauty ideals in India and Nigeria, and why Eastern European und Brazilian beauties travel to Asia to work as models.

We will further briefly examine the depiction of beauty in Western and Eastern art and how beauty ideals in contemporary media are transformed in different localities due to intensified globalising processes. At the end of the seminar we will aim at answering questions like: How has modern medicine with its capability of transforming bodies through various technologies (e.g. cosmetic surgery) shaped concepts of beauty on a global scale? How is this linked to the global rise of consumer culture? Which role di the cosmetic industry and globally disseminated advertising and fashion images play in that process? Participants will write a visual essay on a self-chosen topic.

#### 15. Meiji Cultural Politics and their Reflection on Artistic Production

*Mio Wakita* Fr, 10-12 Seminarstr 4 / ÜR Kunstgeschichte Ostasiens

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This seminar examines the artistic activities which were closely related to the ongoing process of nation building during the Meiji period (1868-1912). The Meiji government utilized the potential of Japanese arts and crafts not only in promoting the image of Japan on an international level, but also in obtaining foreign currency which Japan desperately needed in order to cope with the difficult terms arising out of unequal trade treaties with Western countries. On a national level, Meiji cultural politics revolved around the re-structuring of the indigenous art system, yielding a number of novel artistic activities in consequence.

After a general introduction to the topic, their diverse forms are analysed in the course of the seminar, ranging from export arts and the political representations of Japanese pavilions at world fairs, to national issues including political representations of the Emperor (goshin'ei), and nudity in Japanese paintings (ratai-ga ronsō) as well as the creation of yōga and nihonga paintings. By covering the impact of Meiji cultural politics on arts both in the national and international arenas, the seminar attempts to present a whole picture of Meiji artistic practices both as industry and as centres of new representational practices, which are often discussed as separate issues.