



Course Schedule

Winter Semester 2011/12

1. Introduction to Transcultural Studies

Joachim Kurtz et al. Tu, 11-13 KJC-212

The concept of transculturality can be used both as a heuristic device (e.g. multi-perspectivity and multi-locality) and focus of study (e.g. cultural entanglements). It is embedded in a large and very heterogeneous landscape of theoretical and methodological approaches that come from various disciplines and cover different thematic, historical and geographic areas. Jointly conducted by the five Cluster chairs, this lecture class will discuss the contributions and limitations of inherited and current notions of transculturality. Focusing on the three study areas of the MA TS, and the respective fields of research of the lecturers, theories and methods will be tested, e.g. in explorations of global art and exhibition practices, appropriations of philosophical and religious ideas, and the relationship between patterns of consumption and the exchange of commodities. The goal of the course is to introduce students to diverse disciplinary perspectives enabling them to frame their own studies of transcultural phenomena and perspectives.

FOCUS: "KNOWLEDGE, BELIEF AND RELIGION"

2. Knowledge on the Move – Science and Thought between Asia and Europe

Joachim Kurtz Tu, 14-16 KJC-112

This course will trace circulations of knowledge between Asia and Europe from the 16th through the 20th centuries. It starts from the premise that knowledge is never a mere commodity. The meaning, value, uses, and capacities of knowledge undergo frequent shifts and are almost always contested. Knowledge can become an object of desire, indifference, or revulsion. As such, it is appropriated, exploited, domesticated, molded, ignored, or rejected by concrete agents acting in specific circumstances; at the same time, it is embedded in structures of power, habitus, and convention that it helps to legitimate, stabilise, or subvert.

All these aspects need to be considered when analyzing the multiple ways in which knowledge travels. Most conspicuously, knowledge is transported and shared, voluntarily or involuntarily, by traders, migrants, missionaries, itinerant scholars, pilgrims, professionals, and other individuals or groups that cross boundaries of language and culture. But it also moves as encoded in texts, attached to objects, or embodied in social and cultural practices. Scrutinizing concrete examples from different regions and time periods, this class will try to understand the multilayered and extended negotiations that affect and shape knowledge in motion.



3. Global philosophies? Transcultural approaches to philosophy and its study

Birgit Kellner Th, 18-20; Fr, 9-11 (biweekly) KJC-112/212

Extended processes of cultural exchange, past and present, not only involve migrations of people and institutions, material artefacts and concepts. They also transport philosophical approaches, methods and systems of thought, and lead to encounters with unfamiliar forms of thinking that arouse philosophers' interest. Transcultural processes also frequently initiate discourses about the very concept of philosophy and its (porous) boundaries. The lecture series "Global philosophies? Transcultural approaches to philosophy and its study" at the Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe" invites distinguished scholars to explore the relationship between philosophy and its contexts within and across Asia and Europe, and to reflect on the transformations within and around philosophy that cultural exchange produces.

4. Global Buddhism

Markus Viehbeck, Anna Andreeva Mo, 11-13 KJC-112

Emerging from the Gangetic plain in Northern India, Buddhism continued to spread over large parts of South, Southeast, East and Central Asia. In Europe, information about the Buddhist religion was made accessible in the wake of missionary and colonial endeavors since the seventeenth century and Buddhism was established as an object for academic studies in the nineteenth century. By the late nineteenth century, means of transportation had improved sufficiently to ensure frequent encounters between Buddhists of Asian origin and interested individuals especially from Europe and North America. This trend has increased ever since and (further enhanced by the means of modern long-distance communication) in the twentieth century Buddhism has become a truly global religion with the formation of institutions and networks that operate on a transnational level.

In the seminar, we will gain an overview over the historical development of Buddhism from the late nineteenth century until the very present and investigate the complex forms of interaction between various (Western and Asian) agents in the formation of Buddhist movements that might be termed "global."

Topics of interest include: Modernist Buddhism in Ceylon, Ambedkar and his "Neobuddhism," Engaged Buddhism (e.g., Sulak Sivaraksa), Buddhism & Science (Japan & North America), Cyber Buddhism, Buddhist organizations in Germany (including an excursion to a local Buddhist centre).

5. The Religious Traditions of Pre-modern Japan from a Transcultural Perspective

Anna Andreeva We, 14-16 KJC-112

This course introduces the major themes in Japan's religious and cultural history, while paying a special attention to the processes of appropriation and re-configuration of the religious traditions and ideas originating in India, China, and Korea in pre-modern Japan.



What concepts played a major role in the emergence of ancient Japanese polity and kingship? What notions of geography and space can be seen in the ever-shifting religious landscapes of ancient and medieval Japan? How were these complex cosmologies constructed and changed over time? How did they support the major political and economic frameworks of Japan's pre-modern society? Which religious and cultural figures left their mark in Japanese history, and why do they continue to be remembered? These questions will be among our many tools of enquiry about Japan's past. Moreover, in asking such questions, we shall be urged to think how our understanding of the past correlates to or influences our understanding of the present, in a broader transcultural context.

6. Orientalism and Religion

Dominic Steavu Tu, 16-18 KJC-212

An overlooked by-product of modernity is its compartmentalization of religion as a segregated sphere of human activity, distinct from and very often diametrically opposed to the secular mainstays of science and the nation-state. Orientalism is one of the prime arenas where such contrasts were articulated and perpetuated. However, Orientalist discourse was formulated as a result of post-Reformation transcultural encounters with new, and primarily religious ideas rather than as a response to a shifting economic and geopolitical landscape.

While on the one hand, religion is a modern Western construct, it was initially formulated as a conciliatory analytical category. This inherent tension is reflected in how the concept is exploited by imperialist, nationalist, and post-colonial discourses. This class will attempt to define the complex relationship between Orientalism, modernity, and religion by considering a panoply of perspectives from India, China, Japan, and Europe.

FOCUS: "SOCIETY, ECONOMY AND GOVERNANCE"

7. Global Economic History of Europe and Asia

Harald Fuess Mo, 13-15 KJC-112

For a long time historians have debated the issue why the industrial revolution originated in Northwestern Europe when other parts of the world at various times seem to have reached stages of economic development variously described as proto-industrialization or industrious revolution, which could have almost enabled them to reach the next step of an economic breakthrough. Moreover, much debate has been going on every since about the issue of what so-called late developing nations or regions need to do to catch-up with what has become known as the first world. In the meantime the hopes, expectations or fears are all about Asia taking over world economic leadership and changing the European and even American economic and political hegemony, which seems to be facing a gentle but almost inevitable relative decline. This class will review the classical and current arguments for the occurrence of



global economic development in such an asymmetrical but entangled fashion while introducing the perspective of cultural economic history with its emphasis on cultural norms and practices into our interpretation of how economic cultures change over time and place.

8. Languages of Politics between Europe and East Asia

David Mervart We, 10-12 KJC-212

Students in departments of politics worldwide nowadays trace the history of their discipline to Aristotle and Hobbes, rather than Mencius or Ogyu Sorai. Yet, until comparatively recently, the societies of East Asia spoke to themselves in their own highly sophisticated conceptual languages of the norms of good government, qualification for office, or sources of political authority. How did they come to adopt the vocabulary of 'nation' or 'liberté' or 'Recht' instead? We cannot fully understand how this remarkable shift took place unless we know what went on before. Not merely a specialist course in interconnected histories of political discourse, the class intends to offer a situated insight into how the contemporary world came about and what are some of the older fault lines under its surface.

Through a series of case studies, we will trace the terms of exchange between the two different worlds of thinking about politics. On examples of primary texts (in translations where relevant), we will first establish what were some of the common frames of reference, in Europe and East Asia, used in speaking about the aims and limits of government as well as about duties of the rulers and the ruled. Then we will look at the points of encounter, be it when 'China' or 'Japan' are appropriated as idealised types in the various domestic debates by 17th- or 18th-century European observers and theorists of government, or be it when the Japanese or Chinese interpreters seek to make sense of 'Europe' and render its influential concepts (like 'citizen' or 'parliament') intelligible to their compatriots.

The chronological span of the materials introduced is thus delimited by the end of the 19th century with the centre of gravity in the early-modern period, with forays into the respective classics that informed the debates at both ends of Eurasia.

9. Writing the Waves

Harald Fuess, Martin Dusinberre Mo, 16-18 KJC-112

For the majority of historians, trained to study the history of land units, the thought of writing maritime history is daunting: by its very nature, the sea is a fluid object of study, and the ships that sail on the sea cross established nation-state boundaries and disciplines. The last decade, however, has seen a profusion of new work as historians have grappled with these challenges.

This course focuses on four such studies—the pioneering work of Greg Dening (Captain Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty, 1992), and three more recent books:

- Robert Harms, *The Diligent: A Voyage Through the Worlds of the Slave Trade* (2002);
- Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution* (2005);



- and Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (2007).

Close readings of these four books, combined with shorter, theoretical discussions of maritime history, will raise fundamental questions of what it is to write the history of the waves, and how we might integrate such studies with more traditional land-based histories. Students will be expected to have developed their own maritime history project, with a particular focus on Asia, by the conclusion of the course.

FOCUS: "VISUAL, MEDIA AND MATERIAL CULTURE"

10. Global Art History – Theories and Methods

Monica Juneja Th, 9-11 KJC-212

Today we agree that the Reichstag wrapped up in bales of fabric is a work of art or that Ai Wei-Wei's politically transgressive "Self-portrait" rightfully enjoys the autonomous space of art. We take for granted that individuals located in different corners of the globe and who may have never met each other share this understanding, given the mobility and media connectivity of the present. What are the consequences of contemporary globalization for the history of art? Can the discipline be made global and if so, how and by whom? Recent years have witnessed different attempts in Europe and the United States to "globalize" art history by extending its frame to encompass the "world". The lecture course begins with a survey of these theoretical models of "World art studies". It will then introduce the concept of transculturation and compare its analytical potential with that of earlier notions such as diffusion, transfer, hybridity or influence which have formed the staple vocabulary of art history. The theoretical discussion will be elaborated in thematic units drawn from regions of Europe and Asia to investigate the possibilities of narrating the histories of artists, objects and displays from a transcultural perspective. To what extent did the mobility of individuals and objects, the awareness of other cultures, practices of collecting, appropriating and reconfiguring alien forms shape the history of artistic creation and its reception? We will try to examine the diverse range of responses, which varied according to time, region and historical context, to such phenomena. Looking at the world of art through a transcultural lens would mean questioning some of the intrinsic values of art history such as originality and uniqueness. This would involve bringing back excluded materials and questions centre-stage: in what ways did the presence of objects, not always categorized as "art" from the regions of Asia, Africa or South America within collections of European elites, artists or museums and their modes of reception, reuse, sale and Transcultural Studies display prove to be constitutive of cultural achievements associated with major art movements such as the Renaissance, Rococo or Cubism?

11. A/Effective Prints: Popular Visual Culture in India and Greater China

Barbara Mittler, Christiane Brosius Tu, 11-13 Akademiestr. 4-8 / Sino R201



Popular prints - propaganda posters as well as greeting cards, comics caricatures and advertisements - change the world. They do so by enabling images, words and thus, ideas and stories, to circulate into diverse directions, at great speed and in considerable variety. These images, words, ideas and stories in turn e/affectively become part of the lives and thoughts, the emotional households, mindmaps and memories of people, across time and space. In this seminar, we will study the ways in which the world of popular prints has a/effectively shaped the imaginaries as well as the lives and realities in India and (Greater) China in their respective long twentieth centuries.

The seminar is explicitly interdisciplinary and encourages Magister/Master students from the fields of Transcultural Studies, Chinese Studies, South Asia Studies, History, Art History, Anthropology etc. to explore the tools and concepts of studying cultural processes and entanglements through the lens of printed media. Of major interest will be strategies of social distinction, of gender, ethnic, national or cultural identities, of youth/old age and consumer culture, of politics and propaganda, of religious change and migration.

One key interest in the seminar will be to enable participants to see and discuss cross-cultural connections - either between Europe and Asia, or within Asia, to study the flow of ideas, through printed media, into new contexts; to explore the appropriation of foreign elements into local settings, and thus to become well-equipped in discourses on cultural practice, media issues related to localisation and globalisation, and concepts and methods of image and media analysis.

12. Varieties of urbanisation: a cultural anthropology of Asia's global cityscapes

Christiane Brosius, Tina Schilbach Tu, 13-15 KJC-212

In this seminar, students will explore the "global city" as a conceptual and empirical tool for engaging in transcultural studies and theorising its possibilities. Cities in India and China (especially New Delhi and Shanghai) will serve as case studies for Asian varieties of urbanism. Their history and contemporary form are closely connected to Western global-city models, but are also informed by a dense matrix of local lives, national politics and regional developments. Moving beyond the macro-perspectives of political economy and economic geography, the seminar will familiarise students with the rich contributions that an anthropological approach can make to framing the urban in a globalising Asian context. Through exposure to a varied range of cultural studies methods, including ethnography, visual studies (film, art, architecture) and social anthropology, the seminar will foster a critical appreciation of everyday life as an agent of urban change, juxtaposed against the global city as dazzling branded entity, grand national show-case and uncompromising cosmopolitan hierarchy.

The seminar programme will start off with identifying key conceptual maps and theoretical works of global city research, and re-connect them to the history of New Delhi, Shanghai, and others. Moreover, we will look at select themes of urban governance and social engineering which produce the visual spaces and social realities of contemporary Delhi and Shanghai, comparing them with the forms and expressions they take in the quotidian experiences and



individual narratives of urbanites living through these transformations. The unsettling programmatic of rapid visual, spatial and social change that seems to be so characteristic of Indian and Chinese cityscapes, will be subjected to critical evaluation and commentary.

Topics may range from cities and social groups (e.g., middle class, youth, work migrants, women, students) to the city as a religious, festival and leisure place; architecture and urban planning (e.g., gated communities, informal settlements, heritage sites, art galleries); spatial practices (e.g., clubbing, pilgrimage, tourism, settlement demolition and regeneration), to mention only a few.

13. The exotic, the picturesque, the colonial and the classical – A transcultural enquiry into modern architectural history between Asia and Europe

Monica Juneja, Michael Falser Blockseminar KJC-212

The seminar will investigate the phenomenon of transcultural relationships as they unfolded through the medium of architecture from the 18th to the 21st centuries at different sites in Asia and Europe. It will comprise of a combination of theoretical readings and empirical case studies that will investigate architectural phenomena not explicable from within the parameters of an architectural history framed by the nation-state. The range of subjects to be analyzed through individual presentations includes exoticizing structures of the 18th century that proliferated across Europe in gardens, aristocratic residences and spaces of leisure, those erected during the world exhibitions of the 19th and 20th centuries, building practices in colonial contexts of South, Southeast and East Asia and the constitutive role of building experiments in the colonies for the emergence of "regional" styles in Europe.

14. Visual Modernities and Artistic Avant-gardes in 20th Century Japan, China and Europe in a Transcultural Perspective

Franziska Koch, Mio Wakita Blockseminar Seminarstr. 4 / ÜR Kunstgeschichte Ostasiens

The seminar studies visual modernities and artistic avant-gardes in several regions across East-Asia and Western Europe spanning a period between 1900 and 1989. The key question of our analysis is how diverging as well as entangled forms of "the modern" evolved in the field of art and visual culture in such distant and culturally distinct places as Paris, Tokyo, Berlin, Shanghai or Beijing. Several local modernist movements, their manifestos and artworks will serve as exemplary starting points of our discussion.

We will study the kind of media, strategy and claims that artists groups used when positioning themselves in relation to the visual and artistic mainstream as well as to the wider modernization of their particular social contexts: e.a. the Chinese Woodcut Movement, German Expressionism and Dadaism in the first decades of the 20th century, the Japanese Gutai Group or the Euro-American Fluxus movement mid of the century, and Xiamen Dada as well as radical body art in China during the 1980s. We will critically ask whether and to what extent these



movements referred to a (shared) canon and discourse of “the modern” (of Western origins): How did the artists demarcate their artistic notions and practices from previous ones, which aspects unite or distinguish their often provocative activities from one another, and what characterizes their relationship with dominant Western or Asian art centers and hegemonic narratives?

The transcultural perspective will help to call into question conventional interpretations of Modernism which often argue in Eurocentric ways. The seminar pays special attention to modern visual technologies such as photography, film and the news media as well as modern transport systems in the different socio-historical settings, because such media did not only accelerate the circulation of artistic works, agents, and their concepts, but are often also constitutive for an avant-garde aesthetic regarding the material as well as iconographic levels of the works.

The seminar consists of three regular sessions (1 preparatory, 1 session on basic theories of “modernism” and “avant-garde” concepts, 1 wrap-up session) and two whole-day sessions for the actual presentations. It is conceived for advanced BA-students and MA-students of the first semester onwards.