EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues and friends,

it is my pleasure to present to you the latest edition of our newsletter. First, I would like to thank Barbara Mittler, who, during her time as Acting Director, poured all her intellectual and organizational passion into the pre-application for the new Excellence Strategy – constantly urging everybody to improve it.

However, it was not only Barbara, who spent a substantial amount of time and energy on the application. Thank you everybody inside the Cluster and beyond, who worked so hard on this paper, giving your valuable and careful input, sharing your enthusiasm and helping us to shape the Cluster’s future.

We handed in the pre-application at the beginning of April and it might seem as if we could take a short rest. However, we should already prepare the full application, since there is only little time between the end of September, when we will know, whether we may submit a full application, and the end of December, when it would be due. I invite you to participate actively in the debates and workshops that will be announced in the near future.

I am certain that Heidelberg University and especially the Humanities and Social Sciences gained a lot from the multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary work at the Cluster. Now I am looking forward to seeing how the tandem fellowships and startup projects we offered for the academic year 2017/2018 will further stimulate our work in the transition period. Let us continue to look ahead and hope that the new Cluster of Excellence will enrich us.

I would also like to draw your attention again to the “Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach”. The archive has started a project to collect German textual and visual material from Asia. If such material is available to somebody for this purpose, please feel free to let me know.

This newsletter, again, shows how active, innovative and full of ideas you, our Cluster members, are and I hope that you all enjoy the read. I am looking forward to a semester full of inspiring research activities and events!

Best regards,

Prof. Axel Michaels
Acting Director

Dr. Oliver Lamers
Scientific Project Manager

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Laying of the Foundation Stone for CATS

On February 17, the foundation stone for the Center for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS) was laid in a festive setting at the construction site. Gisela Splett, Federal Secretary of Finance, and Theresia Bauer, Minister of Science of the federal state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, emphasized the importance of transcultural research for the future development of Heidelberg University in their speeches. They also acknowledged CATS as a milestone for the Asian Studies in Heidelberg.

Prof. Bernhard Eitel, President of Heidelberg University and Jürgen Odszuck, First Mayor of the City of Heidelberg, stressed the innovative concept behind CATS and its importance for the university and the city. Profs. Barbara Mittler and Axel Michaels, Managing Directors of CATS, presented an outlook onto the research and studies at CATS. Afterwards, the partners involved in the creation and construction of CATS placed symbolic objects into a cassette that was then immured into the foundation stone. The final closing of the stone, with the assistance of the guests of honor, completed the ceremony.

CATS is currently being built at Campus Bergheim of Heidelberg University. It will unite the South Asia Institute, the Center for East Asian Studies, the Institute of Anthropology and the Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies.

Epilogue to HERA SINGLE

The HERA project “SINGLE”, in which Prof. Christiane Brosius and her team represented the Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies (HCTS), successfully ended in September 2016. The three-year project analyzed the new cultural geographies of gendered urban space in Delhi and Shanghai, focusing on ‘single’ women across the life-course.

SINGLE was featured in the brochure “Kulturen im Dialog” by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Also, the final report was uploaded to SINGLE’s website in November. It evaluates the project’s main research objectives and their development. The short film “Moving the City #1” by Sheba Chhachhi, created within SINGLE, is now available on the website as well. It depicts the negotiation of the body and subjectivity by single women in Delhi who traverse the city, crossing borders of class, caste and neighborhood.

Also, the article “‘New Asian Woman’ - Entanglements of Urban Space, Cultural Encounters and Gendered Identities in Shanghai and Delhi (SINGLE)” was published as a cooperation of the HCTS with the University of Amsterdam and Birkbeck College at the University of London.

CATS-Schülerlabor

An info and network meeting about the initial projects of the CATS-Schülerlabor took place on March 7 at the South Asia Institute at Heidelberg University. With the aim of getting German High School students interested in the broad field of Asian Studies, the student lab will provide workshops offering an Asian perspective to the latest topics. In addition, as the first collaborative project of the Center for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS), the CATS-Schülerlabor recently announced its call for teaching projects. Researchers are welcome to participate in the project by proposing teaching modules and contents to the project.

Exchange Programs

Students of the Master “Transcultural Studies” have the option to spend their third semester abroad. The Cluster’s partner programs encourage the students to participate in a research internship or study exchange to develop their own ideas or collect research data for their master’s thesis. In Japan, exchange programs were established with Kyoto University and the University of Tokyo. Furthermore, students can study abroad at the University of Hyderabad in India and Seoul National University, which is one of South Korea’s most prestigious universities. Moreover, an exchange program with Yale University is under development.
Welcome of New GPTS Scholarship Holders

Seven new doctoral students were welcomed to the Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies (GPTS) on October 24 at the Karl Jaspers Center. For three academic years, the GPTS students have now got the chance to conduct their doctoral research at the Cluster. The candidates were selected from more than 80 applications from over 40 countries and chosen in a highly competitive process. Five of the new members, Sijia Cheng (“A Cultural History of Animal Waste in Late Imperial China”), Maksym Grinenkos (“Transwar Japanese Foreign Resource Trade, 1930–1960”), Dikshya Karki (“Cinematic Kathmandu”), Aida Murtic (“Transcultural Urban Landscape: Towards Reading Spatial Images of Sarajevo”) and Lisa Zhang (“Chinese Philosophy as Translingual Practice”) will receive a monthly scholarship. In addition, associated memberships were offered to Rosanna Sirignano, who receives a grant by the Geschwister Supp-Stiftung for her project “Female Anthropologists in the Arab World: European Orientalism and Palestinian Culture in the Field Notes of Hilma Granqvist (1890-1972)” and Kyonghee Lee, who works on “Conservative-Reformist Visions of Rural Self-Governance in East Asia in the Interwar Period” as part of the joint HERA project “East Asian Uses of the European Past” at the Cluster.

New Joint PhD Training Program

A joint PhD training program in Asian and Transcultural Studies was established with Ca’ Foscari University in Venice, the foremost research center of East and South Asian Studies in Italy. The aim is for the two continental European universities with strong humanities programs to jointly train the next generation of scholars in Asian, European and Transcultural Studies. Doctoral students will be able to obtain a double degree from the Faculty of Philosophy at Heidelberg University and from the Faculty of Asian and African Studies at Ca’ Foscari University in Venice. The students in the program will be supported by multi-year scholarships.

Welcome of New MATS Students

On October 11 – 12, 48 new students commenced their Master in Transcultural Studies at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”. The students from almost 40 countries were welcomed by Scientific Project Manager Dr. Oliver Lamers, who gave them a general introduction to the Cluster. The program coordinators Jule Nowoitnick and Marian Gallenkamp introduced the new students to the aims, structure and regulations of the Master program. Afterwards an informal get-together was organized by current students of the MATS. On the second orientation day, the students met the HCTS Professors, who introduced their chairs and research, followed by a final session and Q&A with the program’s Focus Advisors. This semester’s curriculum covers a wide range of topics, such as the global history of concepts, global economic history or transcultural perspectives on Chinese art.

The M.A. Transcultural Studies is a two-year full-time program, in which students attend seminars and lectures that introduce them to methods and theories of Transcultural Studies, as well as to specific topics within their study focus. The programme also includes semesters scheduled as a mobility window.
Fellowship for Cathrine Bublatzky and Franziska Koch

Dr. Cathrine Bublatzky and Dr. Franziska Koch, both Assistant Professors at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”, were awarded fellowships by the Elite Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme of the Baden-Württemberg Foundation. The Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme (Elite-Programm für Postdoktorandinnen und Postdoktoranden) offers fifteen scholarships for a funding period of three years.

Dr. Bublatzky’s project “Contemporary Photography as a Cultural Practice by Diasporic Iranians in Europe” will explore the visual culture of contemporary photography as central medium of socio-political expression in the light of ongoing political restriction and repression.

The project of Dr. Koch is titled “The Artist Works (Trans-)Culturally: Nam June Paik and Other Fluxus Artists Negotiating Collaborative Authorship”. It aims to examine collaborative artistic practices and changing notions of authorship in the context of the “Fluxus” artist network.

DFG Research Funding for Joseph Maran

Prof. Joseph Maran, Director of the Cluster, received a continuing grant from the German Research Foundation (DFG) until 2018. His research project, “Excavation in the Northwestern Lower Town of Tiryns: Lifeworld and Cultural Practice in a Newly Founded Sector of the Settlement of the Mycenaean Post-Palatial Period”, started in 2013 and rests on an international cooperation with scholars from Greece, Israel and the Netherlands.

During the 12th century B.C., after conflagrations, the Mycenaean center of Tiryns (Argolid) expanded, just when the other centers suffered a decline. A new part of settlement in the Northern lower town, built immediately after the palatial conflagration, accounts for this unusual dynamic. Therefore, the location lends itself for investigating the architectural designs that were regarded as appropriate at that time.

The main goal of the excavation, which is a cooperation with the Greek Antiquity Service, is a better understanding of development planning and using the remains of this settlement as an archive of changes in the social and cultural history of this time. Moreover, established analytical methods will be supplemented with a wide spectrum of microarchaeological methods of scientific analysis.

APPOINTMENTS

After the summer term, Dr. Jürgen Schaflechner, Cluster member and Assistant Professor at the Department of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures, will spend a year at Princeton University. He obtained one of the prestigious Fung Global Fellowships and will work at the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS) as part of a group of six international fellows on the research topic “The Culture and Politics of Resentment”.

Prof. Jörg Gengnagel accepted the call as Chair for Indology at the Julius-Maximilians-University of Würzburg. Prof. Gengnagel was coordinator of research projects MC 9 “Waterscapes” and MC 9.2 “Changing Sacred Waterscapes” at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”. Jörg Gengnagel also had the provisional management of the chair of the Department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology) at the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University.

Prof. Frank Grüner accepted a call as Professor for Eastern European History by Bielefeld University. Frank Grüner was part of the teaching staff of the Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) for the Chair of Cultural Economic History and member of MC 11 “Changing Minds”. He coordinated the research projects B6 “Harbin” (pilot project), B10 “Harbin” and MC 11.2 “Melancholy”.

Cathrine Bublatzky

Franziska Koch

View on the excavation in the Northwestern Lower Town of Tiryns
DAAD-JSPS Funding for Harald Fuess

Prof. Harald Fuess received funding for his project “Entangled Pasts in a Global Present: Gender, Labor and Citizenship”. He will conduct it together with Yoko Nagahara, Professor of History at the Graduate School of Letters at Kyoto University. The funding, a cooperation between the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), facilitates three workshops for researchers and young scholars from both universities. The workshop series has started on April 14 at Kyoto University. The project focuses on Japan’s and Germany’s emergence as newly formed nation states in the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, it emphasizes their establishment of empires abroad such as Germany in Africa and Japan in Korea and China. In this way, the history of the German and Japanese empire, its implication for the present and its current representations are examined. The team from Heidelberg consists of M.A. Takuma Melber, M.A. Andreas Eichleter, Dr. Steven Ivings, M.A. Maksym Grinenko, Dr. Till Knaudt, Dr. Jaok Kwon-Hein and Dr. Hyojin Lee.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & FUNDING

Dr. Anna Andreeva received a three-year grant by the German Research Foundation. Her new project is entitled “Buddhism, Medicine, and Gender in 10th–16th Century Japan: Toward a Transcultural History of Women’s Health in Premodern East Asia.”

Prof. Christiane Brosius and Laila Abu-Er-Rub were given a conference and fieldwork grant for their project “Forum Urban Spaces” by the Field of Focus “Self-Regulation and Regulation: Individuals and Organisations”. The “Forum Urban Spaces” is an initiative of the Chair of Visual and Media Anthropology. Its main aim is to connect scholars across disciplines interested in the processes of urbanization. The initiative seeks to promote innovative ways to research city spaces and urban imaginaries transdisciplinarily and transregionally.

Sijia Chen received a six-month residential scholarship to join the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin from September 2017 to February 2018. Sijia Chen’s doctoral project is “A Cultural History of Animal Waste in Late Imperial China”.

Dr. Andrew Flachs, Volkswagen Postdoctoral Fellow, was approved a grant of 9.400 Euro by the Volkswagen Foundation. With this funding, he hosted a workshop at the Cluster in April on the theme “Development, Identity, and Political Ecology in South Asia”.

Prof. Harald Fuess received external grants to further develop Korean Studies at Heidelberg University. The Korea Foundation, the Academy of Korean Studies and the German Research Foundation provide funds to co-finance a lectureship in Korean Studies for five years until 2022 and support a major academic conference to take place on May 19-21, 2017 on “Korea in Global History”. This was facilitated by Professor Fuess, who negotiated an agreement with Seoul National University.

Dr. Daniel Münster received a travel grant from the Foundation Fiat Panis for the project “Food Fortification in Sri Lanka: An exploration of how doctored food is used within the newly implemented nutrition and food programs”. The grant will fund Lauren Tuchman’s fieldwork in Sri Lanka for her M.A. thesis.

Frances Niebuhr received the Yad Hanadiv Summer Fellowship, which will give her the opportunity to stay at Tel Aviv University for six weeks from the middle of May to the end of June. During this time, she will progress in her research on the Dhārī Dēvī temple and the Srinagar Hydropower Project in Uttarakhand.

Federica Lume Pereira and Julia Poerting received a funding support for the completion of their doctoral degree from the Graduate Academy of Heidelberg University. Julia Poerting is PhD student at the Cluster; Federica Lume Pereira is PhD candidate in the Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies. The completion grant supports doctoral candidates in the final phase of their doctoral training.

Dr. Davide Torri was offered the research fellowship “Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe” from the Käte Hamburger Kolleg. The fellowship enables further studies on patterns of entanglement between Shamanism(s) and Buddhism in an effort to bridge the gap between the different fields of Anthropology, Buddhist Studies, Himalayan Studies and Central Asian Studies.
MEMBER ACTIVITIES

On November 29, Cluster member Dr. Jürgen Schafelechner screened his film “Thrust Into Heaven” at the Karlstor Cinema. The film deals with the highly complex issue of alleged forced conversion and marriage of Hindu women in Pakistan. It is the outcome of project MC 3.4. “Negotiating Religious Identities among Hindu Communities in Pakistan” and focuses on Sanjesh Dhanja, an activist whose NGO promotes Pakistani-Hindus’ cultural identity and fights for their rights as equal citizens of the Islamic Republic.

On February 24, the KlangForum Heidelberg invited Prof. Barbara Mittler to a concert at the Alte Aula of Heidelberg University. In the project “Neue Klänge aus dem Reich der Mitte”, Asian and European musicians met on stage. The ensembles SCHOLA HEIDELBERG and aisthesis presented contemporary compositions. Their performance was embedded in discussions that Prof. Mittler had with the composers about their pieces.

On February 10, Swetlana Torno participated in an interdisciplinary research colloquium on migration, which was organized by the Institute of Public Health and Department of General Practice and Health Service Research together with partners from the Psychosomatic Unit and the Institute of Anthropology at Heidelberg University. Her lecture focused on „Care obligations and practices in the context of labor migration in Tajikistan“.

On February 21, Dr. Sophie Roche gave a lecture on “The Moscow Cathedral Mosque in the Life of Migrants from Central Asia” at the Central Asia Program at George Washington University in Washington. Her talk unfolded the social life of migrants in, around and through the main mosque in Moscow. She also participated in a panel discussion on “Preserving Culture at the Fringes in Authoritarian States” at Duke University on February 15.

PD Dr. Michael Falsers gave a lecture at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University with the title “Angkor Wat: From Jungle Find to Global Icon. A Transcultural History of Heritage” on March 22. His talk was co-organised by the Institute for Liberal Arts and Sciences of Kyoto University. By examining unresearched dimensions of the 12th Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat, Falsers argued for a conceptual and connected history.

Dr. Eliane Etmmièluer, Alumna and Associate Member of the Cluster, gave a speech on “L’exil du patriote Abou Naddara et l’origine de la presse satirique illustrée arabe à Paris” at the seventh session of the Séminaire Transfopress at the University Paris-Diderot on December 12. At the Cluster, Eliane Etmmièluer collaborated with the Heidelberg Research Architecture (HRA) on the project “Abou Naddara Collection”.

Prof. Monica Juneja curated the exhibition “Stories in Miniatures”, a collection of Indian paintings that is on display in the Kupferstich-Kabinett at the Residenzschloss in Dresden from March 3 to June 5. The exhibition was prepared in cooperation with the CSMVS in Mumbai and shows two virtually unknown sets of miniatures that were part of the collection of Indologist August Wilhelm Schlegel. The paintings were produced in a workshop in Golconda in South India for a market of avid collectors in European cities.

On January 15, Prof. Barbara Mittler held the 2017 Annual Yip So Man Wımorial Lecture at the Auditorium of the Asian Center at the University of British Columbia on March 15. In her lecture entitled “Living the Cultural Revolution - Impact Events and the Making of Cultural Memory”, she explored how the all-encompassing experience of living through the Cultural Revolution has influenced the making of cultural memory in and beyond China and why people appreciate the products of this period in Chinese history despite its horrors.

Julia Poerting gave a talk on “Organic, Natural, Local – Hybrid Practices, Lively Soils and Conscious Consumption of Organic Agriculture in Pakistan” at the „Second International Conference on Environment: Production of Nature“ at the Lahore School of Economics in Pakistan. The conference took place on December 15-16, 2016, with researchers from Pakistan, India, USA, the United Kingdom and Germany.
MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Cluster Researchers in Canberra

On February 20-21, Dr. Kerstin von Lingen, Milinda Banerjee, Takuma Melber and Lisette Schouten participated in a workshop in Canberra, Australia, as representatives of the Cluster “Asia and Europe”. It took place at the Australian National University and was organized by the University of Marburg in collaboration with the Australian National University. The financial support for the workshop came from the German Research Foundation.

The event joined historians from Germany, Australia and India to discuss the role and experience of Indians in the vast region East of India during the Second World War and the conflicted loyalties and difficult pragmatic choices they were faced with. The discussion also addressed the ambivalent attitudes of Japanese authorities, indigenous residents and Allied commands towards Indians. The workshop also functioned as a possibility to identify new potential for innovative collaborations in research.

PD Dr. Michael Falser was invited to Kyoto University as a Visiting Professor and gave a lecture series on “Introduction to (Global) Art History” from the beginning of February to the end of March. The lecture series comprised seven sessions and aimed at giving an introduction to the discipline of Art History in general and to the most recent methodological approaches in particular. By examining unresearched dimensions of the 12th Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat, Falser argued for a conceptual, connected history.

Prof. Monica Juneja gave the keynote lecture at the festive opening of the 34th German Kunsthistorikertag, which took place at the Technische Universität in Dresden from March 8 - 12. The speech entitled “Did you come here to find history?” Globalität als Horizont und Praxis für die Kunstgeschichte” addressed the conference’s theme “Kunst lokal – Kunst global”.

AWARDS

Yusen Yu, PhD candidate in the Graduate Programme of Transcultural Studies (GPTS), was awarded the MEM Graduate Student Prize for his outstanding paper on “Ilkhanid-Timurid”.

Middle East Medievalists (MEM) is an international professional non-profit association of scholars interested in the study of the Islamic lands of the Middle East during the medieval period, defined roughly as 500-1,500 C.E. Each year the Board of Directors of MEM offers a prize for the best graduate student paper on a medieval topic at the annual Middle East Studies Association Meeting.

Cluster Members in Public Lecture Series

In the context of the public lecture series “Gegenwartsliteratur und Zeitdiagnostik”, Prof. Barbara Mittler and former Director of the Cluster, Prof. Rudolf Wagner, gave a lecture on “Vom Dissidenten zum Staats schreiber? – Mo Yans Schnapsstadt und … wie das Blatt sich wendet”. Prof. Frank Grüner talked about “Im Schatten des Imperiums. Polnische Identitäts suche nach 1989 in Andrzej Stasiuks Reiseroman ‘Der Osten’” and Prof. Daniel König gave a lecture on “Der Islam als Folie für Schreckensvisionen. Zur literarischen und gesellschaftlichen Relevanz von Boualem Sansals ’2084 – das Ende der Welt’”. The lectures took place in December and January and were organized by the Faculty of Modern Languages during the winter term. They focused on literary works that are critical of society.

Prof. Harald Fuess was invited to give a keynote address on “Cholera, Extraterritoriality and Free Trade in Meiji Japan”. The speech took place on March 20 at the Department of Asian and African Studies at the Pallazzo Vendramin of Ca’ Foscari University, Venice.

Visual for the keynote address of Harald Fuess
ARTICLES

Article on Advertisement in Shanghai in the 1930s

Xue Yu and Garima Goel, former Master exchange students at Heidelberg University and the Cluster “Asia and Europe”, wrote an article on “Modern Pill in a Modern City: Decoding an Aspirin Calendar Poster from 1930s Shanghai”. Published in the academic journal “Baessler-Archiv” in December 2016, the article is a result of the seminar “Transcultural Modernism(e): Jugendstil and Art Nouveau in Europe and East Asia”, led by Dr. Anna Grasskamp and Sabine Schenk.

In their article, the authors situate an isolated Bayer Aspirin advertisement poster within the social and economic context of a fast changing Shanghai in the twentieth century. At that time, advertisers used the popular calendar posters with portraits of “beautiful women” to sell everything from soaps to sandals. Visual codes embedded in the advertisement poster are analyzed along with the life of actress Ruan Lingyu, who is featured in the advertisement.

BOOKS

Book on Renegades in Ottoman Elite Society

Tobias P. Graf published his monograph “The Sultan’s Renegades. Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575-1610” in March at Oxford University Press. The former Cluster member’s publication is the result of his dissertation project, which was supervised by former Cluster Director Prof. Thomas Maissen in the context of project A7 “Ottoman Empire”. His volume covers Christian renegades within the Ottoman elite society as well as their contacts to other Christian Europeans.

Book on News Reporting in Nineteenth-Century India

Dr. Amelia Bonea published the volume “The News of Empire - Telegraphy, Journalism, and the Politics of Reporting in Colonial India, c. 1830–1900” with Oxford University Press in August 2016. Her book discusses the development of English-language news reporting in nineteenth-century India by studying various means of communication. Telegraphy, for example, came to play an important role in the conduct of journalism. Dr. Bonea is a former member of projects B9 “Information Flows” and C12 “The Asian Sea” at the Cluster.

Book on Pearl Harbor

Takuma Melber, Lecturer and Coordinator of the M.A. Transcultural Studies at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”, published the volume “Pearl Harbor - Japans Angriff und der Kriegseintritt der USA” in October 2016 with C.H. Beck. The book examines the historical processes and consequences of the attack of Japan on Pearl Harbor - a historic event, which numerous conspiracy theories are based on - and demonstrates the close-up perspectives of various actors, including that of the Japanese attackers.

Book on Exchange and Consumption

Dr. Pascal Firges, Associate Member of the Cluster, published the monograph “French Revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire: Diplomacy, Political Culture, and the Limiting of Universal Revolution, 1792–1798” with Oxford University Press in January. The monograph is based on Firges’ dissertation and obtains valuable new insights into the revolutionary process through examining the political and cultural impact of the French Revolution on Franco-Ottoman relations and the French communities of the Ottoman Empire.
Book on Post-Earthquake Nepal

“Breaking Views. Engaging Art in Post-Earthquake Nepal” was co-edited and co-authored by Prof. Christiane Brosius, Chair of Visual and Media Anthropology at the Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies and published with Himal Books. The volume, funded by the Mohr-Foundation Hamburg, presents artists’ and scholars’ perspectives of the time after the earthquake in Nepal in 2015 through photographs, interviews and essays. These perspectives reflect friction, fragility and precarity as much as perseverance and resilient strongholds. The book’s center-stage are the photographs, interviews and an installation of artist Sanjeev Maharjan.

Book on Military Masculinity

Nicolas Schillinger, former doctoral student at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”, recently published his dissertation “The Body and Military Masculinity in Late Qing and Early Republican China. The Art of Governing Soldiers” with Rowman & Littlefield. The volume examines the cultivation of new soldiers, officers and civilians between 1895 and 1916 by the Qing government. By disciplining their bodies and reconfiguring their identities as military men and citizens, a lasting legacy was left on Chinese military culture and recreated military masculinity and the image of men in China. Schillinger’s work at the Cluster applied to project A4 “Bureaucracies - The Fascination of Efficiency”.

Book on War Crimes Trials in Asia

“War Crimes Trials in the Wake of Decolonization and Cold War in Asia, 1945-1956: Justice in Time of Turmoil” was edited by Dr. Kerstin von Lingen, Independent Research Group Leader at the Cluster, and was published by Palgrave Macmillan in November 2016. The volume features contributions by members of Junior Research Group “Transcultural Justice” and reflects the results of a 2014 international symposium held in Heidelberg. The book investigates the political context and intentions behind the trialling of Japanese war criminals. Hovering over the trials was the critical question what was justice for the Japanese in a world where all sides had committed atrocities.

New Issue of Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art

Dr. phil. Franziska Koch, Assistant Professor to the Cluster’s Chair of “Global Art History”, was a guest-editor for the latest issue of the “Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art” on ‘Chineseness’ in contemporary art discourse and practice, published in June 2016. The volume is the result of proceedings of an international symposium in Lisbon, which was co-organized by Franziska Koch and supported by Lisbon University’s Faculty of Fine Arts and the Cluster “Asia and Europe”. The special double issue intends to demonstrate the necessity and advantages of addressing ‘Chineseness’ as a global discursive as well as aesthetic and artistic, practice-related subject, exploring three overlapping foci.
Publications for Free Download

Since February, eight publications that can be downloaded for free, have been available on the Cluster’s homepage. Seven volumes are part of the Springer book series “Transcultural Research – Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context”, which mainly presents peer-reviewed books by members of the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe”. Among them are the volumes “Transcultural Turbulences”, “Transcultural History”, “The Nation State and Beyond”, “Modernity’s Classics”, “Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization”, “Structures on the Move” and “Citizenship as Cultural Flow”. The book series examines processes of cultural exchange in an interdisciplinary way, while eschewing strictly geographical definitions of “Asia” or “Europe”.

Additionally, the volume “Passing through Shanghai” is presented by Heidelberg University’s newly founded publishing branch, Heidelberg University Publishing (heiUP). The book is the first volume of “Heidelberg Studies on Transculturality” – the Cluster’s new Open Access book series in the humanities and social sciences. The series is part of a collaborative project with the Heidelberg University Library and made possible by a grant from the German Research Foundation.

Article by Monica Juneja

Prof. Monica Juneja published the article “Jenseits der Glaswand. Museen der Moderne und die Herausforderung der Globalität” in the 27th issue of the Magazine of the German Federal Cultural Foundation. The article examines the history of Modern Art, critically reviewing the great Modern Art collections along the axis Paris-Berlin-Vienna and New York, where neither non-European Modern Art nor the Eastern European Avantgarde have found any recognition. It therefore calls for a revision of the old museum concepts, categorizations and quality criteria towards a more reflected, global and transcultural approach.

Students Visual Essays on Cultures of Photography

As a result of the seminar “Cultures of Photography. (Post)colonial Archives and Photography in Africa and South Asia”, visual essays by students of the M.A. Transcultural Studies at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”, and students of the University of Duisburg-Essen were published online.

Combining art history, photography and visual anthropology, the interdisciplinary seminar brought together students from three institutions: the universities of Heidelberg and Duisburg-Essen and the Folkwang University of Arts. In the seminar, students discussed historical and contemporary photographic positions and projects in Asia and Africa that are closely related to urban space and notions of modernity, freedom and liberalism.

The publications as well as the seminar were part of a cooperation between Dr. Cathrine Bublatzky from the Chair of Visual and Media Anthropology at the Cluster “Asia and Europe” and Kerstin Meincke from the Chair of Art History and Theory at the University of Duisburg-Essen. The visual essays were published on Atomic Wiki with the support of the Heidelberg Research Architecture (HRA), which is the Digital Humanities Department at the Cluster “Asia and Europe”.

Students in the seminar
Jour Fixe “Managing Transculturality”
On January 26, the Jour Fixe “Managing Transculturality” took place at the DAI Heidelberg Cultural Center. The event was chaired by Cluster members Profs. William Sax and Diamantis Panagiotopoulos. It was open to the public and the panel included graduates of the M.A. Transcultural Studies along with three outside experts: Karin Heyl, Head of the Department of Culture, Sport and Society at BASF, Michael Mwa Allimadi, Chairman of the Foreigners’ and Migration Council of the City of Heidelberg and Dr. Victor Taratukhin, Chair for Information Systems and Information Management at the University of Münster.

A brief introduction to the theme of ‘transculturality’ by the chairs was followed by three presentations from graduates of the Cluster who are now working in a field of transculturality outside the university. The event aimed at exchanging ideas and insights about the relevance of understanding transcultural processes and agents in non-academic spheres such as science, politics, NGOs and global businesses. The Humanities outside the academic orbit were of particular interest to the panel and were tackled by exploring the career opportunities of young researchers and students of the M.A. Transcultural Studies beyond the university.

The Jour Fixe is a regular event of the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” held two times during each semester.

Cluster held General Meeting
On February 10, the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe” held its second General Meeting in the winter semester 2016/2017 at the Karl Jaspers Center for Advanced Transcultural Studies.

Acting Director Prof. Barbara Mittler headed the meeting and reported the latest news from the Cluster, such as events planned and grants for research or conferences and gave an update about the latest publications, awards and appointments and the developments in respect to the Excellence Strategy. She also informed the Cluster members about the plans of Prof. Joseph Maran and Prof. Axel Michaels to retire from their positions as Directors of the Cluster. Prof. Monica Juneja and Prof. Nikolas Jaspert are candidates for their positions and elections will be held in the next General Meeting.

Prof. Axel Michaels talked about the “Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach”. The archive has started a project to collect German textual and visual material from Asia. Axel Michaels invoked the Cluster members to let him know if such materials are available to somebody for this purpose.

Dr. Andrea Hacker, Managing Editor of the Cluster, introduced the brochure “100 Books on the Dynamics of Transculturality”, which was recently produced by the publications office and features one hundred of the books that researchers have produced as an outcome of their work at the Cluster.

Conference on Global Regionalism in Architecture
PD Dr. Michael Falser, coordinator of the Cluster’s research project D18 “Picturesque Modernities”, organized the international conference “Picturesque Modernities: Architectural Regionalism as a Global Process (1890 - 1950)”. As a collaboration between the German Center for Art History Paris, the University of Poitiers, the University Paris-Sorbonne and the Association d’Histoire de l’Architecture, the conference took place from November 30 to December 2, 2016 at the German Center for Art History in Paris.

Between 1890 and 1950, the pan-European movement helped to reinforce regional identities through the language of regionalist building styles and thus contrasted the International Modern Movement with its rationalist and cosmopolitan agenda. European nation states such as France, Great Britain, the Netherlands or Germany entered a late-modern phase of political saturation and a stronger need of cultural self-definition. The conference focused on transnational approaches that set the different European colonial contexts between 1890 and 1950 in relation to each other. These approaches can also help to conceptualize the recent interrelated effects between globalization and decentralization.
Jour Fixe by Ivo Smits: “Emblem as Episteme”

The Cluster held its first Jour Fixe in the winter term on November 17, 2016, at the Karl Jaspers Center. After an introduction by Prof. Harald Fuess and Prof. Melanie Trede, Prof. Ivo Smits from Leiden University gave a talk on the topic “Emblem as Episteme: Decoding the European Image in Early Modern Japan”.

Prof. Smits’s lecture compared two differing views of Japan on Holland, which was a heteronym for ‘Europe’ in Early Modern Japan (1600-1868). He compared an eighteenth-century Japanese encyclopaedia with an emblem book, which was a major representative of Renaissance and later European worldviews. The images in that book were not invariably ‘realistic’ and had instead to be understood symbolically. The encyclopaedia, on the other hand, focused on the transfer of empirical knowledge and originated from studies of Rangaku (“Hollandology”). In this way, Japanese scholars were confronted with two wholly different categories of images from the West. Hence, Prof. Smits’ presentation asked, how Early Modern Japanese intellectuals negotiated their confrontation with two European worldviews at the same time.