Dear colleagues and friends,

The good news first: The Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS), a Centre for Advanced Studies now operated by the Cluster to succeed it as an independent institution in 2017, has just selected its first group of Fellows. Furthermore, a Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS), home to one of the largest hybrid collections of South and East Asia in Europe, will be built in the vicinity of the Cluster to open its doors in 2018.

Closer to the here and now, the 5th Annual Conference has just taken place from October 9 to 11, 2013. About 200 participants and 32 speakers from eight different countries came to Heidelberg to explore the administration of empires under the title “Managing Empires: Cooperation, Competition, Conflict”. Earlier this fall, in September, Prof. Thomas Maissen left Heidelberg to become Director of the German Historical Institute in Paris. He is succeeded in his capacity as Co-Director of the Cluster by Prof. Joseph Maran. In addition, Oliver Lamers has been named interim Scientific Project Manager.

As always, this newsletter brings to you the new publications in the Cluster’s book series, the new members of the Cluster and public events that took place over the past months.

Please enjoy the read and have a good winter semester!

Best regards,

Prof. Dr. Barbara Mittler
Acting Director

Oliver Lamers
Scientific Project Manager (interim)
Managing Empires - Cooperation, Competition, Conflict

About 200 scholars from Heidelberg and around the world attended the Cluster’s fifth Annual Conference from October 9 to 11, 2013. The theme was “Managing Empires. Cooperation, Competition, Conflict”. Plenary panels in the morning were devoted to broader themes around the subject of the conference, while a number of smaller afternoon panels mirrored the wide-ranging research in the cross-regional and transdisciplinary setting of the Cluster. The topics of the four morning panels spanned various topics such as aspects of public administration in European painting, the Chinese Imperial examination system, the role of global elites and diplomats during the financial crisis. The conference was organised by Prof. Diamantis Pana-giotopoulos on behalf of Research Area A “Governance & Administration”.

Keynote Lecture by Michael Broers

Under the title: “Nuestras Indias? The European Origins of European Colonialism: Cultural Imperialism in the First Napoleonic Empire and the Subaltern Europe”, Michael Broers discussed whether Napoleon’s imperial policy could be considered as the origin of European colonialism in Asia. Michael Broers is Professor of Western European History at Oxford University.

Keynote Lecture by Carol Gluck

Prof. Carol Gluck gave the second keynote lecture. Under the title “Modernity in Common: Japan and World History”, she discussed the term modernity in the context of Japan and analysed Japanese history from the nineteenth century until the present. Carol Gluck is Professor of History, East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University.

Digital Humanities Café

Researchers from Heidelberg Research Architecture (HRA) and research project A13 “Subaltern Diplomacy” offered a Digital Humanities Café during the conference. Guests were able to explore projects with a cup of coffee. In addition, the HRA and project A13 “Subaltern Diplomacy” also introduced their research during lunch sessions on both days of the conference.
A Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS) will be established at Heidelberg University by 2018. For this, a complex of buildings next to the Karl Jaspers Centre will be remodelled and extended to house a modern hybrid library. CATS will unite the South Asia Institute, the Centre for East Asian Studies, the Institute of Anthropology, and the newly founded Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies. A Digital Humanities Unit will support the development of digital tools and resources.

Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies

The Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) has been founded in April 2013 to continue the Cluster’s mission after the end of the second funding period. As an Institute for Advanced Studies, it will assemble scholars from all over the world to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue. Starting in spring 2014, senior and junior fellows are invited each year to join the HCTS to pursue their research and to engage in discussions with other fellows as well as graduate students.

Cluster provides funding for Graduate Student Workshop

The Research Areas and the Graduate Programme of the Cluster have initiated an annual competition that offers graduate students funds to organise academic events. These events will enable them to further pursue questions and ideas that develop within their peer groups. Rudolph Ng (GPTS), Anna Sawerthal (D19) and Johanna de Schmidt (MC12) won the first round of funding. They will organise a two-days conference in January 2014.

Advanced Training for Junior Researchers

“Making an Academic Career” is a new programme designed to prepare postdoctoral researchers for an international academic career. It offers, amongst others, advice for appointment procedures at universities worldwide, as well as training to improve skills in management and leadership. The modules will be held between November 2013 and May 2014.

M.A. Transcultural Studies

A new group of M.A. students have started to work at the Cluster in the winter semester of 2013. The programme continues to attract interest from around the world, which resulted in about 150 applications from international students this year.

Graduate Programme

Eight new students have joined the Cluster’s Graduate Programme in October 2013. The successful candidates have been selected from around 200 applicants from more than 30 countries. The selected students come from China, Germany, India, Lithuania and Taiwan.

Project on Knowledge

The processes of knowledge production and circulation in China are the topic of a new research project involving Prof. Barbara Mittler, the Cluster’s Acting Director. Coordinated by Prof. Joan Judge (York University), it was recently granted a fund of 250 000 Canadian Dollars by Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Global Medicine Network

The network “Advances in Research on Globally Accessible Medicine” (AROGYAM) has started with a workshop held in Edinburgh. It is based on a cooperation between researchers in Europe and India. It includes several Cluster members from Research Area C.
Digital Humanities at the Cluster

Creating the “new” Asian Woman
Prof. Christiane Brosius (Chair of Visual and Media Anthropology) leads the new research project “Creating the ‘New’ Asian Woman: Entanglement of Urban Space, Cultural Encounters and Gendered Identities in Shanghai and Delhi”, or “SINGLE.” The project will make use of an online platform for both the analysis and the creation of an interactive public gallery. It is based at the Cluster and collaborates with partners in the UK and The Netherlands. It is funded by “Humanities in the European Research Area” (HERA).

Search and Retrieval of Indic Texts
Prof. Birgit Kellner (Chair of Buddhist Studies) will collaborate with Prof. Sheldon Pollock (Columbia University) on a project called SARIT, which stands for “Search and Retrieval of Indic Texts”, but also happens to be the Sanskrit word for “river”. The project’s task is to collect and digitise Sanskrit texts on Buddhist philosophy, Vedic hermeneutics, and literary theory. It also aims to provide a collaborative platform for Indological researchers.

New Junior Research Group
The Cluster has set up a Junior Research Group in Digital Humanities. The group is a cooperation with the Heidelberg Graduate School for Mathematical and Computational Methods in the Sciences and supported by the University’s Field of Focus 3. The group will help set up links between Digital Humanities projects throughout the university. It will be led by Dr. Armin Volkmann who has previously worked at the Universities of Würzburg and Frankfurt.

Advanced Use of Visual Resources
Matthias Arnold, who is responsible for visual resources in the Heidelberg Research Architecture, has become a member of several committees of the Visual Resource Association (VRA). Amongst others, he is a member of a committee which develops unified standards for the use of visual resources in the digital humanities.

Closing Ceremony of the SFB “Ritual Dynamics”

After eleven years of fundamental research on rituals, their change and dynamics, the Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) “Ritual Dynamics” concluded its work with an ceremonial finissage. Since 2002, the SFB was funded in three consecutive periods by the German Research Foundation. Several SFB members were affiliated with the Cluster, including its speaker, Prof. Axel Michaels, and deputy speaker Prof. Bernd Schneidmüller.

SHORT NEWS

Film on Travelling Cinemas
“Like ants for sugar”, a film on travelling cinemas in India by Shirley Abraham and Amit Madheshiya, is being pitched at festivals this year. The two filmmakers are former Visiting Fellows of the Cluster.

New Servers for the Cluster
The IT department acquired six new servers. Two will be used to provide fast operations of the Cluster’s internal computer networking services. The other four will be used for the development of large-scale database projects of the Heidelberg Research Architecture (HRA).

Newsletter Autumn 2013
Joseph Maran becomes Co-Director

In July, the Cluster members elected Prof. Joseph Maran as the new Co-Director at the General Meeting. Joseph Maran is Professor of Pre- and Protohistory at Heidelberg University and a member of MC8 “Appropriating Innovations”. He succeeds Prof. Thomas Maissen, beginning in September 2013. Prof. Maissen left the Cluster to take up a position as Director of the German Historical Institute in Paris.

New Ombudsman Tonio Hölscher

Prof. Tonio Hölscher is the new Ombudsman of the Cluster. The Ombudsman can be addressed in cases of inter-personal or inter-institutional problems when these cannot be solved directly by those who are involved in the situation. Prof. Hölscher is emeritus Professor of Classical Archaeology at Heidelberg University. He has been one of the Principal Investigators at the Cluster since its very beginning.

Scientific Project Manager

Oliver Lamers has been named Interim Scientific Project Manager after Dr. Isabel Gallin left the Cluster in September. Dr. Gallin had replaced Dr. Alexandra Heidle-Chhatwani in June 2013. Oliver Lamers had previously been the Cluster’s Graduate Programme Manager.

New Cluster Members

- Esther Berg, JRG “Transcultural Dynamics of Pentecostalism”
- Dr. Ljuba Merlina Bortolani, MC10 “Cultural Plurality”
- Alexander Darus, Webmaster
- Matthias Deininger, JRG “Transcultural Dynamics of Pentecostalism”
- Apl. Prof. Dr. Jörg Gengnagel, MC9.2 “Changing Sacred Waterscapes”
- Said Reza Kazemi, JRG “Demographic Turn”
- Mona Kirsch, A28 “Commerce in Sicily”
- Christoph Mauntel, A27 “World Orders”
- Dr. Patrick McAllister, associate member of “Buddhist Studies”
- Frances Niebuhr, MC9.2 “Changing Sacred Waterscapes”
- Jule Nowoitnick, temporary support M.A. & GPTS
- Dr. Katja Rakow, JRG “Transcultural Dynamics of Pentecostalism”
- Dr. Sophie Roche, JRG “Demographic Turn”
- Lea Stepan, MC9.3 “Water as a Contested Element”
- Chen Shuai, MC13.2 “Reasoning in South Asian and Tibetan Buddhism”
- Swetlana Torno, JRG “Demographic Turn”
- Dr. Armin Volkmann, JRG Digital Humanities
- Ulrike Wischnewski, MC8.2 “Innovation Management”
- Dr. Astrid Zotter, B19 “Ageing in a Transcultural Context”

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Philipp Stockhammer

A new research project by Dr. Philipp Stockhammer (Research Area D) and Jun. Prof. Johannes Krause (Tübingen) has been funded by the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences within its new WIN-Kolleg programme for young researchers. He has furthermore won a research fund by the British Mediterranean Archaeological Trust for a project that continues the work of the former project D2 “Materiality and Practice”.

Emily Mae Graf

The Confucius Institute Headquarters have awarded Emily Mae Graf a one year scholarship. In Beijing, the GPTS candidate will study at the People’s University of China and conduct research at the Lu Xun Museum.

Mareike Ohlberg

The Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies has offered Mareike Ohlberg a postdoctoral fellowship to research at Harvard University. As a former GPTS student, she has recently completed her doctoral project on propaganda strategies in China.

Humboldt Research Award

Prof. Christian Henriot has been awarded the Humboldt Research Award. Prof. Henriot collaborates with Prof. Mittler and has been a member of Project B4 “Transcultural Visuality Reading Group” and B11 “New Urban Imaginaries”.

Newsletter Autumn 2013
New Books in the Cluster’s Book Series

The last few months saw the publication of a number of new volumes of the Cluster’s book series “Transcultural Research - Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context”. The series, which is published by Springer, features peer-reviewed books by scholars from historical and empirical disciplines.

“Chinese Encyclopaedias of New Global Knowledge (1870-1930): Changing Ways of Thought” is the title of a new book edited by Prof. Milena Doleželová-Velingerová and Prof. Rudolf G. Wagner. A collection of pioneering studies analyse Chinese encyclopaedias compiled between 1870 and 1930. At the time, few modern schools had been established in China, but modern knowledge was highly sought after. Therefore, encyclopaedias became vital sources of information for an entire generation.

“Asian Punches. A Transcultural Affair” has been edited by Prof. Hans Harder and Prof. Barbara Mittler. The book analyses late nineteenth and twentieth century Asian versions of Punch, a satire magazine which originated in Great Britain, and related satirical journals. It covers an area from Egypt and the Ottoman Empire in the West via India to China and Japan in the East. Scrutinizing the spread of both textual and visual satire, it casts a wide-reaching comparative glance on the genesis of satirical journalism in Asia and Europe.

“Yoga Traveling: Bodily Practice in Transcultural Perspective” is the title of a book edited by Prof. Beatrix Hauser. It focuses on yoga’s transcultural dissemination in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The essays in this volume explore some of the turning points in yoga’s historic-spatial evolution and their relevance to its current appeal. The authors focus on central motivations, sites, and agents in the spread of posture-based yoga as well as on its successive (re-)interpretation and diversification.

“Archaeologizing’ Heritage? Transcultural Entanglements between Local Social Practices and Global Virtual Realities” is the title of a new volume edited by Prof. Monica Juneja and Dr. Michael Falser. This book investigates what has constituted notions of “archaeological heritage” from colonial times to the present. It includes case studies of sites in South and Southeast Asia with a special focus on Angkor, Cambodia. Contributions range from architectural and intellectual history to historic preservation and restoration.

FURTHER BOOKS

Falser, Michael; Juneja, Monica (eds.). “Kulturerbe und Denkmalpflege transculturell. Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis”. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2013. This volume aims to open up new avenues to approach the concept of cultural heritage in non-eurocentric and non-nationstate oriented ways.

Hüsken, Ute; Michaels, Axel (eds.). “South Asian Festivals on the Move”. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013. The book discusses festivals in South Asian traditions in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Germany. The basis of the book is a workshop-conference that took place at Oslo University in 2011. Many of the participants were members of the Cluster project “Religions on Stage” or members of the SFB “Ritual Dynamics”.

Meyer, Carla; Patzel-Mattern, Katja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk (eds.). “Krisengeschichte(n). ‘Krise’ als Leitbegriff und Erzähl muster in kulturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive”. Stuttgart: Franz-Steiner Verlag, 2013. The book discusses the role of the term “crisis” and whether it is suitable as a key concept in the field of cultural studies. It aims to answer questions of how to identify historical narratives of crises and how to describe a crisis in its structure and impact. The volume is the outcome of a conference that was held at the Cluster.
E-Journal

The new issue of the Cluster’s e-journal Transcultural Studies is available at www.transculturalstudies.org. It features four essays which focus on investigating problems of transcultural mobility. The essays span a time period ranging from the second millennium BCE to the late twentieth century. Yu-Chih-Lai shows how the court of Emperor Qianlong in the 18th century transformed information and images from Europe, by analysing representations of the cassowary bird. Takeharu Ōkubo’s essay sheds light on the study of Roman law by the 19th century Japanese philosopher Ono Azusa. Diamantis Panagiotopoulos explores how material and design of foreign objects were perceived in the second Millennium BCE Eastern Mediterranean, and Barbara Mittler focuses on moving, destroying, and enjoying “bourgeois” books during China’s Cultural Revolution.

Handbook on Rituals and Ritual Dynamics

The book “Rituale und Ritualdynamik - Schlüsselbegriffe, Theorien, Diskussionen”, edited by Prof. Christiane Brosius, Prof. Axel Michaels and Prof. Paula Schrode, examines key terms, theories and discussions of rituals and their dynamics. The handbook represents ten years of research at the SFB “Ritual Dynamics”. It is intended to serve as a handbook for students of cultural studies and social sciences, but also addresses a more general public. In total, it contains 28 articles on the most important aspects of ritual theory, ranging from the terms “ritus” and “ritual” to “rituals and myths”, “ritual object” and “ritual transfer”.

Film on Pentecostalism in Singapore

A new Cluster film portrait introduces Junior Research Group Leader Dr. Katja Rakow and her research on Pentecostal megachurches in Singapore. Over the last decades, Pentecostal Christianity has increasingly developed into a global phenomenon that has shown a strong ability to adapt to different cultural contexts. In multi-ethnic and multi-religious, but secular Singapore, state control necessitates ongoing negotiations and transformations of religious discourses, practices and identities that produce new forms of Singaporean Pentecostalism.

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

Articles


Debut Novel

Somnath Batabyal, a former postdoctoral research fellow at the Cluster, has written his first novel. “The Price You Pay” is a story told through the eyes of a veteran news editor, a trigger happy cop and the ambitious reporter Abhishek Dutta. As he unearths one sensational scoop after the other, Dutta soon discovers that in the Delhi of crime and politics, there are no permanent friends or enemies and it is every man for himself.

Online Bibliography

Visit www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/publications
Summer School Attracts Young Scholars

Young scholars from all over the world attended the Cluster’s Summer School “Sites of Knowledge: Space, Locality, and Circulation between Asia and Europe” from August 4-8, 2013. The participants attended lectures and explored the significance of space and locality for the generation and circulation of knowledge in group work and seminars.

In his keynote lecture “Sites of Knowledge: Scales, Typology, Operations”, Christian Jacob (CNRS, Paris) discussed the current trends of a history of knowledge relying on the spatial paradigm. The Summer School finished with poster presentations by the participants. The event was organised by Prof. Joachim Kurtz, Professor of Intellectual History and Speaker of Research Area C “Knowledge Systems”, and Dr. Martin Hofmann, Assistant Professor of Intellectual History.

International Conference in Brazil

“For the benefit of the people: Public works, government and society in the colonial city (16th to 18th century)” was the title of a conference that took place in Brazil from August 7-10, 2013. The conference was co-organised by PD Dr. Susan Richter (Research Area A) and Dr. Jorun Poettering (Universidade Federal Fluminense). Researchers discussed the development of cities and modern citizenship in the context of colonial cities. The conference included a talk by PD Dr. Susan Richter and by Michael Roth, both members of research project A4 “Bureaucracies”.

Conference on Indo-German Dialogues

An international conference titled “Philosophy and Science - Indo-German Dialogues and Dimensions” was held from July 11-13, 2013, at Heidelberg University’s South Asia Institute. The conference focused on intellectual exchange between India and Germany over the last two hundred years. It elaborated the variety of the scientific interactions and intellectual and institutional contacts. It was organised by Prof. Dhruv Raina and Prof. Hans Harder (Research Area B) and co-funded by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Cluster “Asia and Europe”.

FURTHER EVENTS

Conference at SOAS

In September, Dr. Kerstin von Lingen, Anja Bühler and Lisette Schouten presented the work of Junior Research Group “Transcultural Justice” at a conference at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. The Conference was held to mark the 70th anniversary of the United Nations War Crimes Commission.

Lecture Series in India

“Humboldt’s Heirs” is the title of a lecture series co-organised by the Heidelberg Centre South Asia, part of which is the Cluster’s branch office. The series started on May 1, 2013, in Hyderabad and continued in New Delhi and Mumbai. The lectures aim to bring together scholars from different fields as well as to foster intellectual exchange between India and Germany.

Research Area Retreats

Each of the four Research Areas organised a retreat this summer to promote an interdisciplinary dialogue between junior and senior researchers at the Cluster. During these two day events Cluster members come together to present their work in progress. They also discuss and develop theories and methods of interdisciplinary research fruitful to addressing the dynamics of transculturality.

Online Event Calendar

Visit www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/events