Dear colleagues and friends,

I am proud to announce that the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) will be officially inaugurated on April 28. The HCTS is a central Institute of Heidelberg University, now operated by the Cluster to succeed it as a permanent institution in 2017. The first HCTS fellows have already joined and more will be arriving throughout the year. Furthermore, I am glad to welcome Prof. Daniel König as new Start-Up Professor for Transcultural Studies at the Karl Jaspers Centre.

During the last months, the Cluster has won funds to develop a business model for open-access publication in cooperation with the Heidelberg University Library. Moreover, I would like to draw your attention to a number of events taking place this semester, such as the Cluster’s Summer School “Politics of Near Futures”, the Annual Conference “Cultural Mediation”, and the exhibition “Von Atlantis bis Heute - Mensch. Natur. Katastrophe” at the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums of Mannheim.

This newsletter provides you with more detailed information on 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 summer semester!

Best regards,

Prof. Dr. Axel Michaels
Acting Director

Oliver Lamers
Scientific Project Manager
Inauguration of the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies

The opening ceremony of the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) will be held on April 28, 2014, at 4 pm in the main auditorium Alte Aula of Heidelberg University. Philosopher Prof. Avishai Margalit (Princeton) will give the keynote lecture on the topic “Proportionality: Justice in War, between Tribalism and Nationalism.” The ceremony will be opened by Prof. Bernhard Eitel, rector of Heidelberg University, Theresia Bauer, minister of Science, Research and the Arts in Baden-Württemberg, and Prof. Axel Michaels, director of the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe”. Subsequently, Prof. Matthias Kleiner, former DFG-president, will give opening remarks on the topic “Das ’Trans’ in der Wissenschaft”. The HCTS aims to enhance and internationalise research in Transcultural Studies and to support the growth of new research activities and the development of new and larger-scale research projects with this focus.

Start of HCTS Fellowship Programme

The first fellows join the HCTS this year to pursue their own research and to engage in discussions with other scholars. Researchers from Heidelberg University join as Junior or Senior Fellows. External fellows join the HCTS as Visiting Fellows with residence in Heidelberg during their fellowship. Scholars with own funding are carrying out their research as Associate Fellows of the HCTS. In total, 18 fellows are joining the HCTS this year.

HCTS Lecture Series started off by David Damrosch

On February 5, David Damrosch, Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University and currently Associate Fellow at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, started off this year’s HCTS Lecture Series. In his talk “Chronologics: Periodising Culture in a Global Age”, he spoke about the making and breaking of periodisations in a global context. The lecture series will be continued on April 28 at the HCTS inauguration by Avishai Margalit from Princeton, and on May 19 by David Armitage, Professor of History at Harvard University.

HCTS FELLOWS

Senior and Junior Fellows

Prof. Günter Leyboldt (English Department) and Prof. Robert Folger (Romance Department) joined the HCTS in March. Senior Fellows beginning in September are Prof. Hans Martin Krämer (Japanese Studies) and Prof. Gerhard Poppenberg (Romance Studies). Dr. Giulia Pelillo (Romance Department) and Dr. Philipp Stockhammer (Institute for Prehistory and Early History) joined as Junior Fellows in March.

Visiting Fellows

Prof. Nadja-Christina Schneider (Humboldt University, Berlin) started her research as the first Visiting Fellow. Prof. Daniel Leonhard Purdy (Pennsylvania State University), Prof. Ulrike Gleixner (Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel), Dr. Rebecca Gould (Yale-NUS College), Dr. Helena Grinshpun (Hebrew University), Prof. Susanne Marten-Finnis (University of Portsmouth), Prof. Helle Vandkilde (Aarhus University), and Dr. Maria Zarifi (Hellenic Open University) will join later this year.

Associate Fellows

Prof. David Damrosch (Harvard University), Dr. Martin Dusinberre (University of Newcastle), Prof. Eric Hayot (Penn State University), Prof. Christian Henriot (Université Lumière-Lyon 2) and Dr. Ana Carolina Hosne (Marie Curie Fellow) are Associate Fellows.
Winter School in Kyoto

Dr. Orion Klautau and Prof. Hans Martin Krämer, members of project MC7 “Political Legitimation”, have been successful with an application for organising the Santander International School. It is funded by Heidelberg University and Santander Bank and will be held in Kyoto, Japan, from March 9 to 18, 2015. Under the title “What is Caesar’s, What is God’s? A Transcultural Perspective on the Legitimation of the Political and Religious Spheres”, the winter school will undertake a historical analysis of the conceptual dichotomy between “religion” and “politics”.

Funding by University’s Field of Focus 3

Three projects by scholars of the Cluster are funded by Heidelberg University’s Field of Focus 3 “Cultural Dynamics in Globalised Worlds”:

- Prof. Melanie Trede and Eric Decker’s project “The Optimisation of the Digital Representation of Moveable Picture and Text Formats” started in March. Using HyperImage, they will digitise several Japanese illuminated handscrolls from the 14th to the 17th century.
- Since April, Prof. Christiane Brosius and Dr. Marie Sander cooperate in their project “Mobile Spaces: Urban everyday practices in transcultural perspective” with Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard and Prof. Dr. Beatrix Busse.
- PD Dr. Susan Richter’s project “Ideas and Language of Welfare” focuses on the understanding of public welfare in colonial societies from the 16th century to the beginning of the 19th century, starting in May.

Business Model for Open-Access Publications

The Cluster and Heidelberg University Library (UB) are collaborating on the development of an innovative business model for open-access publication of scientific books on the Internet. In the pilot project funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Cluster will publish the book series “Heidelberg Studies in Transculturality”. The project is coordinated by Prof. Axel Michaels and the director of the UB Dr. Veit Probst. Open-access experts Dr. Andrea Hacker and Dr. Martin Nissen are responsible for the implementation. Funding is provided by the DFG in the amount of 380,000 Euro over two years.

Graduate Programme

In 2013, the third group of doctoral students completed the Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies. The closing ceremony for the eight doctoral students was held in November.

New GPTS students are Saumya Agarwal, Ping-Heng Chen, Felix Eickelbeck, Anil Paralkar, Federica Lume Pereira, Oyndrila Sarkar, Anjie Sun, Jolita Zabarskaite. For the next round, the Cluster received 140 applications.

M.A. Transcultural Studies

63 students have started the M.A. Transcultural Studies in the winter semester 2013/14, among them 36 international students. The next application deadline for international students is June 15. At Heidelberg University, the M.A. Transcultural Studies is the most popular study programme among international students.

Institute for World Literature

The Cluster became an institutional member of the Institute for World Literature (IWL) of Harvard University. The IWL is an annual four-week programme aiming to explore the study of literature in a globalising world. The first participants of the programme will be Emily Graf from the Graduate Programme (GPTS), Petra Thiel from Research Area B “Public Spheres” and Eric Hodges from the Centre for East Asian Studies.
Graduate Student Workshop

For the second time, the Cluster welcomes applications by doctoral students for a “Graduate Student Workshop”. Successful applicants will receive funds to organise and implement an academic event according to their interests and needs. Applications can be submitted until May 10, 2014. The funding for the workshop is provided by the Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies (GPTS) and the Cluster’s four Research Areas. The Cluster’s first Graduate Student Workshop “Newspapers and Transculturality: New Approaches to Working with Historical Newspapers” brought together young scholars studying the history of newspapers. The event was organised by Rudolph Ng (GPTS), Anna Sawerthal (D19 “Kalimpong”) and Johanna de Schmidt (MC12 “Floating Spaces”).

Long-term Grant: New Project on Nepal by Axel Michaels

Religion and law in pre-modern Nepal is the topic of a new research project by Prof. Dr. Axel Michaels. The Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities supports the project over the next 15 years with three new positions for scientific researchers. The project will make an only partly explored corpus of documents and texts on religion and law in pre-modern Nepal accessible both in print publications as well as in digital resources.

Study Exchange with Japan

The Cluster/HCTS established a cooperation with the universities of Tokyo and Kyoto. It offers an exchange programme for master and doctoral students, especially from the Asian studies, economics, and political sciences. Two places for MA students at the Graduate School of Public Policy of Tokyo University, and up to five places for MA or doctoral students at the Kyoto University Asian Studies Unit are offered. In addition, three participants in the International Study Partnership with Kyoto will receive a scholarship funded by the German Academic Exchange Service. The other participants of the Heidelberg exchange with Kyoto University will be eligible to receive a scholarship for up to one year provided by the Japanese government.

SHORT NEWS

Chicago Lectureships

Jadwiga Kamola (GPTS) and Sandra Bärnreuther (C4 “Making India a Global Health Care Destination”) received the Heidelberg Prize Lectureships. The two lectureships are awarded each year by the University of Chicago in cooperation with the Cluster. They enable advanced graduate students to acquire teaching experience in a field broadly related to the discipline of history at the University of Chicago.

Internships at UN Office

Lisette Schouten (GPTS) and Saee Haldule (JRG “Agrarian Alternatives”) were offered internships at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The internships are open to graduate students of the Cluster specializing in a field related to the work of the United Nations and/or the League of Nations.

Documentary on Ageing

In December 2013 and January 2014, the shooting for the multimedia project of project B19 “Ageing in a transcultural Context” was conducted in Delhi and Kathmandu in cooperation with the filmmaker Jakob Gross. The web documentary covers various aspects of ageing in urban environments and presents parts of the fieldwork of Roberta Mandoki’s and Annika Mayer’s research projects. The multimedia project will be launched in 2015.
New Start-Up Professor

Prof. Daniel König joined the Cluster as a Start-Up Professor from the Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt in March. His research emphasises the historical and philological aspects of transculturality. His current research focuses on relations and entanglements between the Latin-Christian and the Arabic-Islamic spheres between 650 and 1600 CE (and beyond).

Karl Jaspers Prize for Hans Maier

The political scientist Prof. Hans Maier was awarded the Karl-Jaspers-Prize for his interdisciplinary academic work. It was handed over in a public ceremony at the Alte Aula of Heidelberg University in January. The prize is funded by Heidelberg University and the city of Heidelberg as well as the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies.

Fairbank Prize for Barbara Mittler

Prof. Barbara Mittler, co-director of the Cluster, was awarded the 2013 John K. Fairbank Prize for her book “A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture”. The prize was awarded by the American Historical Association during its 128th Annual Meeting in January 2014. In her book, Barbara Mittler examines the popularity of propaganda art in modern and contemporary China.

HCTS Professors

This summer semester, three of the HCTS Professors will be on sabbatical leave. Prof. Harald Fuess will be substituted by Dr. Christopher Gerteis of the London School of Oriental and African Studies. Dr. Andrea Bréard of Université for Science and Technology in Lille will fill in for Prof. Joachim Kurtz. Prof. John Taber of the University of New Mexico will cover for Prof. Birgit Kellner.

New Cluster Members

- Prof. Tanja Penter (Eastern European History)
- Claudius Teodorescu, HRA Programmer
- Michelle Pfeiffer, JRG “Digital Humanities”
- Karl Hjalte Maack Raun, JRG “Digital Humanities”
- Chenying Pi, HERA “Single Women in Asia“
- Prof. Ekkehard Felder (Department of German Philology)
- Prof. Ludger Lieb (Department of German Philology)
- Dr. Marcus Müller (Department of German Philology)

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Postdoctoral Fellowship

The Humboldt Graduate School has offered a postdoctoral fellowship to Dr. Julten Abdelhalim. The former member of the Cluster’s Graduate Programme is now affiliated with a new research initiative at the Humboldt-University of Berlin.

Karl-Steinbuch-Scholarship

Manuel Sassmann (MC13.1 “Standards of Validity”) and Gesa Stupperich (MC5 “Global Concepts”) from the Cluster, together with David Höppner and Qiu Zhiqiong from Heidelberg’s Institute of Sinology, have been awarded the Karl-Steinbuch-Stipendium for innovative research projects.

German Photo Book Prize

Amit Pasricha and Prof. Axel Michaels receive the German Photo Book Prize 2014 in Silver. Their publication “Heiliges Indien” documents and explains religious life in India and includes photographies of different houses of prayers as well as religious acts and festivals.

SAI-Award

Julia Poerting, PhD student of Junior Research Group “Agrarian Alternatives”, received the SAI-Award 2013 for her master’s thesis. The prize is awarded by the South Asia Institute (SAI) of Heidelberg University for outstanding theses of SAI graduates.
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 presents peer-reviewed books by members of the Cluster as well as scholars from both historical and empirical disciplines.


The new book “Entangled Histories. The Transcultural Past of Northeast China” was edited by Prof. Dan Ben-Canaan, Dr. Frank Grüner, and Dr. Ines Prodöhl. The articles in this volume focus on transcultural entanglements in Manchuria during the first half of the 20th century. This volume sheds light on various entangled histories in areas such as administration, the economy, ideas, ideologies, culture, media and daily life.

Further Publications


Nüsser, Marcus. “Large Dams in Asia: Contested Environments between Technological Hydroscapes and Social Resistance”. Heidelberg: Springer, 2014. This book analyses the various dimensions of the large dams controversy in Asia from a critical perspective.

E-Journal “Transcultural Studies”

The new issue of the e-journal Transcultural Studies is available at www.transculturalstudies.org. A paper by Ori Sela analyses the various ways in which philosophy transformed in the West from the 17th to the 19th century. Yue Zhuang’s paper examines oriental landscape scenes of “luxury” and of “the surprising” as described by Sir William Chambers, and analyses them in relation to Edmund Burke’s theory of the sublime and the beautiful. In “Sites of ‘Disconnectedness’”, Mio Wakita takes the tourist photography industry in Yokohama as an example and illustrates how it developed a unique image culture that spread from the port city of Yokohama to the West. Lastly, Arianna Dagnino’s paper “Global Mobility, Transcultural Literature, and Multiple Modes of Modernity” suggests that the literature of the early twenty-first century is marked by a transcultural sensibility.

Online Publication “Visual Pilgrim”

The project “Visual Pilgrim” by Prof. Christiane Brosius, Yousuf Saeed, and Suboor Bakht in cooperation with the Heidelberg Research Architecture has resulted in an online publication. Under the title “South Asia’s Islamic Shrines and Transcultural Visuality”, more than 10 essays enhanced with photographs and videos are available at www.visualpilgrim.uni-hd.de.

New Cluster Film Portraits

Four new film portraits on Cluster members have been produced. All films can be found at www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/films.

- Dr. Armin Volkmann and his JRG “Digital Humanities” are establishing a body of knowledge for digital methods and standards in the humanities.
- Prof. Melanie Trede analyses the frames and framings of images focusing on Japanese works travelling to Europe and vice versa.
- The film on Prof. Dr. Monica Juneja and the Chair of Global Art History shows how this relatively new research field aims to master the challenge of including transculturality into classic art history.
- Prof. Dr. Joachim Kurtz and the Chair for Intellectual History show the different approaches researchers take to grasp the concepts of knowledge production and knowledge circulation.

MORE BOOKS


Online Bibliography

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

How people cope with disasters illustrates a comprehensive exhibition organised by Prof. Gerrit J. Schenk and Prof. Monica Juneja as a result of their research project “Images of Disasters”. The exhibition will take place at the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums of Mannheim from September 7, 2014, to March 1, 2015. It will range from the ancient myth of the lost city of Atlantis to present day. Covering an area of 1000 m², about 400 objects and simulations will be displayed. The multimedia and interactive exhibition illustrates the human handling of disasters, which itself is part of the coping process.

Kick-off Workshop HERA Project

The project “Creating the ‘New’ Asian Woman” held a kick-off workshop in December. Coordinated by Prof. Christiane Brosius, the project analyses the entanglements of urban space, cultural encounters and gendered identities in Shanghai and Delhi. It is funded by the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA). In April 2014, the second 3-day workshop, training the researchers from the Netherlands and the UK in the digital humanities, took place at the KJC.

Conference on Power of the Copy

Dr. Corinna Forberg (MC5 “Global Concepts”) and Dr. Philipp Stockhammer (MC8.2 “Innovation Management”) organised the international workshop “The Transformative Power of the Copy.” It aimed to free the notion of the “copy” from its restricted understanding as an accurate effigy and to reach a new conceptualization of the notion of the “copy” and related terms.

Workshop Alternative Agricultures

“Cultivating Futures. Ethnographies of Alternative Agricultures in (South) Asian Landscapes of Crisis” was the topic of a workshop organised by JRG “Agrarian Alternatives” coordinated by Dr. Daniel Münster. Focusing on emerging alternative farming practices, scholars examined transcultural dynamics in the interplay of knowledge, technologies, power and economics.
Summer School 2014 “Politics of Near Futures”

Young scholars from all over the world are invited to this year’s Summer School “Politics of Near Futures: Possibilities, Prophecies, Prognoses.” It will take place at the Karl Jaspers Centre in Heidelberg from July 27 to 31, 2014. Applications are accepted until May 31. The Summer School will explore historical and contemporary ways of making sense of the future. Participants will study transcultural ideas of human and non-human near futures. That is, futures that are imagined by narrating contemporary potentialities into the future: as prophecy, estimate, prognosis, demographic planning, extrapolation or statistical calculation. The keynote lecture will be presented by Prof. Akhil Gupta (UC Los Angeles). The Summer School is organised by Junior Research Group Leaders Dr. Kerstin von Lingen, Dr. Daniel Münster, Dr. Katja Rakow and Dr. Sophie Roche.

Annual Conference 2014 “Cultural Mediation”

This year’s Annual Conference “Cultural Mediation: Creativity, Performance, Display” will explore the many ways through which cultural practice in its widest sense is translated, negotiated and interwoven. The event will be held from October 8-10 in Heidelberg and is organised by Research Area B “Public Spheres.” Keynote lectures will be given by Okwui Enwezor, director of the Haus der Kunst in Munich, and Prof. Dr. Erika Fischer-Lichte, Director of the Institute of Theatre Studies, Free University Berlin.

Summer School “Colloquial Tibetan”

The Chair of Buddhist Studies is hosting a summer school on colloquial Tibetan at the Cluster from August 4 to 27, 2014. Participants will learn the language as well as discover a fascinating culture with a rich heritage. Interested students can apply until May 15. The summer school offers an intensive language course which will develop the basic skills necessary for smooth communication. The focus will be on the Central Tibetan dialect, so the participants will be able to connect to a vast number of speakers in Tibet, as well as those in Tibetan communities in exile. The principal teacher is Jonathan Samuels (Chair of Buddhist Studies).

PAST EVENTS

Exhibition of Photography

The role of photography in anthropology was the topic of a seminar and an exhibition at the Kunstverein Heidelberg organised by Cathrine Bublatzky (Chair of Visual and Media Anthropology) in cooperation with the HRA.

Workshop on Global History

The workshop “Narrating an Entangled World” on the making of global history organised by projects A13 “Subaltern Diplomacy” and MC12 “Floating Spaces” took place in March. The workshop addressed challenges Global Historians face during their research.

Workshop “Pentecostalism”

Dr. Katja Rakow’s Junior Research Group “Pentecostalism” organised a workshop on “Studying Pentecostalism in a Transcultural Perspective” exploring Pentecostalism’s adaptability, the resulting transcultural entanglements and its inner diversity.

Seminar in Tajikistan

In March 2014, Dr. Sophie Roche’s Junior Research Group “Demographic Turn” organised a seminar at the State University of Khujand in Tajikistan to discuss different methods and subjects in ethnography and social anthropology.

Online Event Calendar

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