Featured News

CRF Project “Making Modernity in East Asia: Technologies of Everyday Life, 19th-21st Centuries” (MMEA)

MMEA Plenary Conference and Advisory Board Meeting (December 7-8, 2017, HKU)

The CRF MMEA Project held its first Plenary Conference on December 7, 2017. The Plenary Conference comprised a public keynote lecture by Prof. Wiebe E. Bijker (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) on “How History of Technology Can Point to New Forms of Innovation Policy – Two Indian Cases”, followed by closed-door panel meetings focusing on the collective themes of infrastructure, everyday technology and East Asia as a region, enhancing the synergies among subproject groups, which included projects on food, gynocentric and pharmacotherapeutic technologies, transport and material infrastructure, and histories of automation and meteorological forecasting.

These events gathered more than thirty scholars from around the globe, including the MMEA Project Team, Advisory Board, representatives from partner institutions, invited local and international academic experts. An Advisory Board meeting was held on the following day to discuss the ways in which the MMEA Project could be established as a sustainable and international platform in Hong Kong for the study of technology in East Asia.

MMEA Subproject Workshops (December 9-11, 2017, HKU)

Two subproject workshops have been organized after the Plenary Conference - “Reproductive Labor and Gynocentric Technologies in East Asia, 1800s-2000s” convened by Dr. Gonçalo Santos with Prof. Suzanne Gottschang (Smith College) and Prof. Jacob Eyferth (Chicago University) on December 9 and 10, and “Pharmacotherapeutic Technologies in Modern East Asia” organized by Dr. Daniel Trambaiolo with Dr. Izumi Nakayama on December 11. The two workshops gathered together twenty scholars from Hong Kong, Mainland China, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and the United States at HKU for presentations and discussions, contributing to the establishment of an international interdisciplinary network of scholars working on science and technologies in East Asia.
(Clockwise from top left) Prof. Angela Leung presenting the food technology project. Listening attentively on her left is Prof. Wiebe Bijker. The first panel meeting starts. Prof. Fa-ti Fan making comments. Profs. Gregory Clancey and Christian Daniels exploring their views

(Clockwise from top left) Prof. Francesca Bray chairing the discussion of the first panel meeting, which Prof. Naubahar Sharif finds enjoyable. Dr. Daniel Trambaiolo presenting his subproject workshop, which engages Dr. Lawrence Zhang, Dr. Gonçalo Santos, Prof. Suzanne Gottschang, and Dr. Hallam Stevens in deep discussion
An Exhibition Preview (December 7, 2017, HKU)

In association with the Plenary Conference, an exhibition preview of “Infrastructure Imagination: Hong Kong City Futures, 1972-1988” was held. Curated by Ms. Dorothy Tang and Dr. Cecilia Chu with Ms. Christina Lo, Mr. Maxime Decaudin and Mr. Sben Korsh, the exhibition aims at revisiting infrastructure projects in Hong Kong from the last four decades. It features photographs from the Heather Coulson Photograph Collection, which have been donated to the HKU Libraries by Heather Coulson, a construction photographer who worked in Hong Kong during 1972-1988. It weaves together personal stories, historic films, oral histories from professionals and community members, and archival records that document the construction boom in Hong Kong in the last quarter of the 20th century. The public exhibition will open in March 2018.

“Making Modernity in East Asia” Lecture Series (November and December 2017, HKU)

The MMEA Project launched a new lecture series “Making Modernity in East Asia: Technologies of Everyday Life, 19th-21st Centuries”. Three sessions were held in the fall semester.

On November 2, Prof. Ngai Pun (Sociology, HKU) spoke on “Learning to Labor: ‘Student-laborers’ in the Age of Digital Capitalism”, examining the emergence of student laborers, a new generation of migrant workers and new forms of labor force in both manufacturing and service sectors in China, and their struggles.

Prof. Wan-wen Chu (Academia Sinica) delivered a presentation on “How Indigenous Industrialization Began in Postwar Taiwan” on November 23, illustrating how governmental efforts on the introduction of effective policies and improved infrastructures were crucial to Taiwan’s economic growth.

The public keynote by Prof. Wiebe E. Bijker (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) to the MMEA Plenary Conference (p.1) on December 7 was the third session of the MMEA Lecture Series. Prof. Bijker argued that interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration suggested new forms of technological engagement and policy formation. Such arguments also implied the possibility to reflect on the societal roles of humanists in the collective reflection on technological choices and to rethink relations between scholarship and policy formation, and how the history of technology can inform contemporary policy making and technology engagement by using two recent case studies in India.
Collaborations

Conference on “InterAsia Connections VI: Hanoi” (December 4-7, 2018, Hanoi, Vietnam)

The international InterAsian Connections Conference Series, a cornerstone of the InterAsia Partnership, is a long running collaboration between the Institute, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), Duke University, National University of Singapore (NUS) and Yale University. The series has gathered more than 500 scholars over five conferences, showcased innovative research from across the social sciences and related disciplines, and explored themes that transform conventional understandings of Asia.

The series will return in December 4-7, 2018 with a sixth conference to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam. It is organized by the Institute with its long-term partners SSRC, Asia Research Institute at NUS, Duke University Global Asia Initiative, Göttingen University Global and Transregional Studies Platform, Yale University (since 2013), and new partners Seoul National University Asia Center (since summer 2017), and Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

The conference will comprise both plenary sessions open to the general public, and closed, director-led thematic workshops addressing the following broadly conceived themes:

- Sites of InterAsian Interaction
- Territorial Sovereignties and Historical Identities
- Transregional Religious Networks
- Environmental Humanities in Asia
- Rethinking Conceptual Frameworks for the Rise of Asian Cities
- Infrastructures and Networks

The Organizing Committee will accept individual research papers applications. Details will soon be announced. News and updates are available online at www.ssrc.org/programs/child-component/interasia-program/interasian-connections-conference-series/interasian-connections-vi-hanoi-2018/.

Teaching and Learning at the Institute

Common Core Courses in 2017-2018

The two Common Core Courses offered - CCGL9028 “Gender, Health, and Globalization” by Dr. Izumi Nakayama and CCGL9051 “Technology, Power, and Culture in the Global Age” by Dr. Gonçalo Santos - in the spring 2017 were well received by HKU undergraduate students. They offered students interesting and interactive learning experiences.

In the coming 2018 spring semester, Dr. Nakayama and Dr. Santos will continue teaching and sharing some innovative and inspiring ideas through the Common Core Courses platform. More details are available online at: www.hkihss.hku.hk/en/common_core_2017-2018

Call for Applications for the Admission to Research Postgraduate Programs at HKIHSS, 2018-19

HKU First Clearing Round
Application period: December 2, 2017 to April 30, 2018
About our programs and application procedures: www.hkihss.hku.hk/en/admission_2018-19
Enquiries: (Email) ihssrpg@hku.hk
(Phone) (852) 3917 5772
Online application: www.gradsch.hku.hk
Institutional Enhancement Scheme supported by the Lee Hysan Foundation

Visiting Professors

Next spring, the Institute will welcome three visiting professors whose visits will be funded by the Institutional Enhancement Scheme.

Prof. Helen F. Siu (left), Professor of Anthropology at Yale University and Founding Director of the Institute, will return to the Institute for a year from January to December 2018. She plans to launch an intensive one-to-one research seminar for students whose research projects are in line with the research cluster “Hubs, Mobilities and the Asian Urban”. She will organize a series of events connecting Asia urban, infrastructure, sports, pop music, and political space. During her visit, Prof. Siu will also engage in the seminar programs organized by the Graduate School.

Prof. Ellen Hertz (middle), Professor of the Institut d’ethnologie, Université de Neuchâtel in Switzerland, will spend six months at the Institute from January through June 2018. Prof. Hertz will teach a postgraduate seminar course “Law, Norms and Social Order: Anthropological Perspectives” (IHSS 6004) and will give a public talk. She will also continue her engagement in the research cluster “Hubs, Mobilities and the Asian Urban”.

Prof. Dagmar Schäfer (right), Director of Department III (Artefacts, Actions, Knowledge) of the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin, will visit the Institute from January to March, 2018. During her visit, she will teach a postgraduate seminar course “Cultures of Innovation in East Asia’s History: with a Focus on Scientific, Medical and Technological Change” (IHSS 6003) with Prof. Angela Leung. In addition to teaching, Prof. Schäfer will give a public talk on “Politics and scientific change in dynastic China” and will work closely with Prof. Leung on the CRF MMEA Project, nurturing young scholars, and engaging with knowledge transfer activities.

Lee Hysan-HKIHSS Fellowship

With the sponsorship of the Lee-Hysan-HKIHSS Fellowship, HKU postgraduate or senior undergraduate students in the disciplines of Humanities and Social Sciences are supported and provided with the opportunities to undertake overseas research training for a period of up to one academic year.

Ms. Shuo Hua, a PhD student at the Institute and the sixth recipient of the fellowship, is currently on research visit to the Cluster of Excellence – Asia and Europe in Global Context: The Dynamics of Transculturality – in Heidelberg University. Ms. Hua studies and researches under the mentorship of Prof. Monica Juneja and Dr. Franziska Koch. During her study stay at Heidelberg University, she has participated in “Graduate Student Colloquium”, seminars on “Curating in a Globally Connected Art World”, “Mimesis”, and several reading and writing groups. She will give two colloquium presentations on her thesis project on Hong Kong as China’s Art Hub since the 1980s and one seminar presentation on the modern ink art movement in Hong Kong in the 1970s-1980s. Ms. Hua will return to HKU in January 2018.
Mr. Longwen Fu was selected as the seventh Lee Hysan-HKIHSS Fellowship recipient. He will spend six months at York University, UK from January to June 2018. Mr. Fu is currently a 4th-year PhD student conducting research on the socialization of junior medical doctors in contemporary China under Dr. Cheris Chan’s guidance.

Call for Applications for Lee Hysan-HKIHSS Fellowship for Postgraduate Students/ Senior Undergraduate Students
The Institute invites eligible students to apply for the fellowship in support of research visit and or study exchange in the fall semester 2018. Details about the scheme are available online at: www.hkihss.hku.hk/events/ies/cfa2018.pdf
Application Deadline: February 28, 2018

Publications

Elizabeth Sinn and Christopher Munn (eds.), Meeting Place: Encounter across Cultures in Hong Kong, 1841-1984, Hong Kong University Press, 2017.

The book volume presents detailed empirical studies of day-to-day interactions between people of different cultures in a variety of settings. It takes readers far beyond the traditional stereotype of “East meets West” by offering perceptive insights into Hong Kong’s role as a hub of multicultural interactions. The book volume grew out of the “Multicultural Encounters” workshop held in January 2013 at the Institute. The Japan Foundation has funded the workshop and the publication of the volume. Prof. Elizabeth Sinn and Dr. Christopher Munn are Honorary Professor and Honorary Fellow of the Institute. Prof. Sinn is also a core member of the Institute’s cluster “Hubs, Mobilities and the Asian Urban”. Details are available online at www.hkupress.hku.hk/pro/1589.php.


The book is an in-depth anthropological study of people’s lives along the Pamir Highway in eastern Tajikistan. Based on extensive fieldwork and through an analysis of construction, mobility, technology, media, development, Islam, and the state along the Pamir Highway, Dr. Mostowlansky, Joint Postdoctoral Fellow (HKIHSS and Faculty of Arts, HKU), shows how conceptualizations of modernity are both challenged and reinforced in contemporary Tajikistan. Details of the book could be viewed online at www.upress.pitt.edu/BookDetails.aspx?bookId=36710.
**Upcoming Events**

**Workshops**

**MMEA Subproject Workshops (April and May 2018, HKU)**

The MMEA Project Team has organized numerous subproject workshops in 2018.

Convened by Dr. Kam Wing Fung (HKU), a two-day workshop “Instruments, Meteorological Forecasting and Everyday Technology in China, Hong Kong and Japan, 1870-1950” will take place in April. The two-day event will bring together ten scholars and experts from Hong Kong, China, and Japan to examine the flow of meteorological technology and instruments from Europe-based archival materials of observatories and meteorological stations, drawing upon meteorological instruments in public and private collections to demonstrate their impact on the everyday life of people living in China, Hong Kong and Japan from the late nineteenth century.

In May, three subproject workshops will be held. In collaboration with the Fanhsu Corporation (凡止文創) of Taiwan, Dr. Izumi Nakayama, Dr. Lawrence Zhang and Prof. Angela Leung, plan a “Food Technology” workshop cum fieldwork in southern Taiwan, where a number of important “Farmers’ Associations” (nonghui 農會) are located. The Fanhsu Corporation will organize visits to some of these associations to study rice, tea, and soy growing, and related manufacturers. A post-fieldwork workshop will be hosted by the National Chi Nan University in Puli, a tea growing region. *East Asian Science, Technology and Society: An International Journal* (EASTS), a MMEA partner institution in Taiwan, is one of the co-organizers.

Prof. Naubahar Sharif (HKUST), MMEA Project Co-PI, together with two Collaborators Prof. Hallam Stevens (National Technological University, Singapore) and Tae-Ho Kim (Chonbuk National University, Korea) will organize the workshop “Indigenous Innovation and Everyday Technologies: the History of Automation and Future of Work in East Asia”. It aims at establishing an interdisciplinary network for East Asian scholars to look at industrial automation and social change as past, present, and future phenomena, seeking to promote a dialectic understanding between technological innovations and social change, and to explore the potential that the East Asian experiments might offer towards a worker-centered, socially sustainable path of technology development.

The third workshop to be organized in May 2018 is “Phones, Drones, and Disease: Epidemic Intelligence and the Future of Communication in East Asia” convened by Dr. Robert Peckham with Prof. Angela Leung and Dr. Gonçalo Santos. The workshop engages thirteen scholars, researchers and practitioners from science and technology studies, history, anthropology, medicine, and public health for two days of presentations and discussions on strategic uses of evolving communication technologies for managing disease in East Asia. A permanent Communication Technology and Health in East Asia Network will be launched at the workshop. The Network will have a dedicated website, which will be operational in late spring 2018.
2018 Ecologies of Urbanism Workshop on “Death and Life of Nature in Asian Cities” (June 14-16, 2018, HKU)

Led by Prof. Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan (Anthropology, Yale) and Dr. Anne Rademacher (Anthropology, New York University), the Institute’s cluster “Environmental Sustainability, Political Ecology and Civil Society” will host its third workshop, focusing on the theme of “Death and Life of Nature in Asian Urbanism”, at the Institute on June 14-16, 2018. Scholars from HKU, National University of Singapore, Yale University, New York University, Princeton University, MIT, and Duke University will be engaged in presentations and discussions, followed by fieldtrips in and around Hong Kong. The workshop is the third in the series, which aims to produce the third volume of the book project “Ecologies of Urbanism project”. The first two volumes, Ecologies of Urbanism in India: Metropolitan Civility and Sustainability and Places of Nature in Ecologies of Urbanism were published by Hong Kong University Press in 2013 and 2017, respectively.

Seminars (Spring 2018, HKU)

Interdisciplinary Lunchtime Seminar Series

The Interdisciplinary Lunchtime Seminar Series is one of the vital aspects of the Institute’s work where scholars share their expertise, showcase their work and engage in in-depth discussions with their peers and students. Six sessions will be organized in the spring of 2018. The first talk will be given by Dr. Robert Hellyer (History, Wake Forest University) on January 16, 2018. Information of individual talks will be announced. Stay tuned!

Departmental Seminar Series

In the second semester of 2017-18, two sessions will be held. The first one “Controlling the Population: From Family Social Science to Family Planning in the 20th Century China, Taiwan, and Korea” will be given by Dr. Elizabeth LaCouture (History, HKU) on January 17, 2018. More information will be announced.

Recent Activities

Conference and Workshop

Conference on “Science and Humanities in the 21st Century” (November 6, 2017, HKU)

The Conference on “Science and Humanities in the 21st Century”, focusing on the theme of Science and Religion, was held on 6 November 2017. It was organized and sponsored by the Institute and The Faith and Science Collaborative Research Forum (FASCORE) of the University. Over twenty scholars from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Singapore, and Canada participated in the conference. The papers presented covered a wide range of disciplines including natural and social sciences, philosophy, history, and theology, from Eastern and Western perspectives. The scholars discussed topics such as the challenge of artificial intelligence for the future of religion, multiverses and the fine-tuning argument, the question of First Cause in contemporary cosmology, philosophy and theology, developing a conceptual framework for Asian perspectives on science and religion, the history of science and religion research in China, and how to promote constructive dialogue between science and religion. The participants gave very good feedback for the Conference, stating that it was a huge success and hoping that similar events can be organized in HKU in the future.
Workshop for Research Postgraduate students (December 12, 2017, HKU)

With the objective of improving RPG students’ use of technologies for visual aid and presentations, the Institute hosted a workshop on December 12, 2017. Students gave 5-minute presentations on their individual research project, and were given suggestions on how to improve it through better use of technology and understanding of visual narratives. Dr. Lan Li, a Presidential Scholar in Society and Neuroscience at Columbia University, showed several of her visual projects as examples, and then worked with the students on the basics of storyboarding, reshaping and redesigning individual students’ presentations using Photoshop and Keynote.

Lectures and Seminars

Interdisciplinary Lunchtime Seminar Series

(Clockwise from top left) Prof. Kendall Johnson, Dr. Wai Yip Ho, Dr. Ying Zhou, Prof. Jenny L. Smith, Ms. Shirley Surya, and Dr. Oscar Sanchez-Sibony

In the first half of 2017-18 academic year, the Institute hosted six lunchtime seminars. In September, Prof. Kendall Johnson (SMLC, HKU) spoke on “The Sacred Fonts of the American Mission Press: Printing Mongolian in Canton between the Opium Wars” and Dr. Wai Yip Ho (Social Sciences, EUHK) gave a presentation on “Leaving the Arabian Peninsula, Choosing to Go East: The Case of the Yemeni Diaspora in China”. In the following month, Dr. Ying Zhou (Architecture, HKU) delivered a talk on “Urban Loopholes: Shanghai’s City Center Transformation since 1992” and Prof. Jenny L. Smith (Humanities, HKUST) shared her research finding on “Famine in the Age of Complex Emergencies: A Brief History of Humanitarian Logistics”. In November, two more sessions were organized: Ms. Shirley Surya (Design & Architecture, M+) talked about “Building the Design and Architecture Collection at Hong Kong’s M+ Museum” and Dr. Oscar Sanchez-Sibony (History, HKU) spoke on “How Finance Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Soviet Union”.

Departmental Seminar Series

(Clockwise from right) Dr. Till Mostowlansky, Dr. Niccolò Pianciola and Dr. Loretta Kim

In the framework of a Departmental Seminar on October 11, Dr. Till Mostowlansky (HKIHSS & China Studies, HKU), Dr. Loretta Kim (China Studies, HKU) and Dr. Niccolò Pianciola (History, Lingnan University) co-organized the event “Modernity, Materiality and Social Encounters in the Margins of the State: Salient Themes in the Study of Central Asia and China’s North.” Dr. Mostowlansky first introduced and read from his latest book Azan on the Moon: Entangling Modernity along Tajikistan’s Pamir Highway (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017). Dr. Kim and Dr. Pianciola then discussed the book’s central themes in relation to their own research on China and Central Asia before opening the floor for an engaging Q&A session with the audience.
Prof. Susanne Choi (Sociology, CUHK) gave a presentation on “Masculine Compromise: Migration, Family and Gender in China” on November 15, exploring how rural-to-urban migration changes family and gender dynamics, with a particular focus on men and masculinity, sharing with the audience stories of the migrant men and their families, to reveal another side to China’s sweeping economic reform, modernization, and grand social transformations.

Public Lecture by Dr. Alexander Morrison (September 21, 2017, HKU)

Dr. Alexander Morrison (History, Oxford) spoke on “A Russian Treaty Port on China’s Inner Asian Frontier? Colonial Vernyi as a ‘Plural Society’, 1854-1914”, exploring the emergence of “plural society,” a concept developed by J.S. Furnivall and the landlocked Russian Outpost on the Inner Asian frontier of Qing China. The lecture was organized by Dr. Till Mostowlansky with sponsorship from his project “Building Difference: Early Attempts at Materi ally Connecting and Dividing Colonial Badakhshan,” funded by the Institute’s Sin Wai-Kin Fellowship Scheme.

Spirituality, Religion and Society Lecture Series

Organized by Dr. David A. Palmer and Dr. Ji Li, the “Spirituality, Religion and Society Lecture Series” held four talks in Fall 2017. On September 18, Prof. James T. Richardson (Sociology and Judicial Studies, University of Nevada) spoke on “The Judicialization of Religious Freedom: The European Court of Human Rights and Minority Religions”. It was followed by a presentation given by Prof. Ke Wang (Cultural-Interaction, Kobe University) on “The Marginal Population of Overseas Chinese in Kobe, Japan” (「邊緣人」的歷史與歷史書寫—以日本神戶華僑為例) on September 22. This talk was jointly organized with the Department of Sociology. On November 6, the Institute collaborated with the Journalism and Media Studies Centre of HKU to present a lecture on “China’s Religious Revival” by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and journalist Mr. Ian Johnson. Dr. Ting Guo spoke on “The Radical Roots of Love: Christianity, Communism, and the Politics of ‘Love’ in Modern China” on November 30.
Dr. Shang-jen Li of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica in Taiwan, spoke on “Living and Dying in Shanghai: James Henderson (1830-1865), Medical Missionary to China” on October 24. In this lecture, Dr. Li talked about the medical career of James Henderson, a Scottish medical missionary. He also examined the relationship between British medical studies on tropical hygiene and medical topography and Henderson’s medical thoughts.

Public Program

Contemporary Chinese Documentary Series - Meet the Director

“Death by Design” by Director Sue Williams (November 8, 2017 HKU, organized with Global Asia Institute)

The documentary “Death by Design” (科技代價) by Director Sue Williams (韋蘇) premiered at HKU in March 2017 to a full-house, and returned by popular demand in November. The screening was well attended with over 100 audiences from local universities and the community.

“Murmuring Days” by Director Ko-shang Shen (November 17, 2017, HKU)

Forty members of the HKU community and the general public turned up for the screening of the documentary “Murmuring Days” (日日喃喃) directed by Ko-shang Shen (沈可尚). After the screening, Dr. Timmy Chen (Centre for China Studies, CUHK) moderated with Director Shen, guest speaker Dr. Harry Wu (Medicine, HKU) and the audiences.
**Personalia**

**Visiting Professors**

Prof. Helen F. Siu, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, January to December 2018.

Prof. Ellen Hertz, Institut d’ethnologie, Université de Neuchâtel in Switzerland, January to June 2018.

Prof. Dagmar Schäfer, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin, January to March 2018.

**Visiting Scholars**

Prof. Paul Cohen, Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard University, January to February 2018.

Mr. Leo Goodstadt, Trinity College, University of Dublin, January to March 2018.

**Staff Appointments**

Dr. Kyoungjin Bae has been appointed as Post-doctoral Fellow (MMEA) from January 2018.

Ms. Mathilde Biard has been appointed as Research Assistant from September 2017.

Ms. Ting Ting Shum and Mr. Peter Tam have been appointed as Teaching Assistant from January 2018.

Dr. Shirley Zhang has been appointed as Program Officer from January 2018.

**Staff Departures**

Dr. Max Hirsh, Research Assistant Professor, will join the Faculty of Social Sciences, HKU as Assistant Professor from early January 2018. He will continue coordinate with the Institute on the MMEA Project Team.

Miss Ivy Lau, Project Executive, left the Institute in early December. Dr. Jun Zhang, Research Assistant Professor, will leave us in late January 2018. We wish them every success in their future endeavors.

**Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences**

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If colleagues have news to share with the Institute, please email your materials to sycheng2@hku.hk.

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year