

# NEWSLETTER

Fall 2015



## Featured News

**Distinguished Lecture on “The Female Artisan: Gu Erniang and the Craft of Inkstone-Making in the Early Qing”**  
(November 19, 2015, HKU; presented by the Institute and the School of Chinese)

Prof. Dorothy Ko of Barnard College, Columbia University, an esteemed scholar with innovative, multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional methods, visited the Institute this fall as part of the Institutional Enhancement Scheme.

Prof. Ko is a cultural historian who specializes in gender and the body in China. She delivered a lecture that focused on an unusual woman, Gu Erniang (fl. 1700-1725) of Suzhou, who was more famous than her male kin and colleagues as an innovative inkstone-carver. Prof. Ko argued that Gu’s career and fame was enhanced by the professionalization of handicraft trades and the affinities between inkstone-making and epigraphy in the early Qing, and she concluded

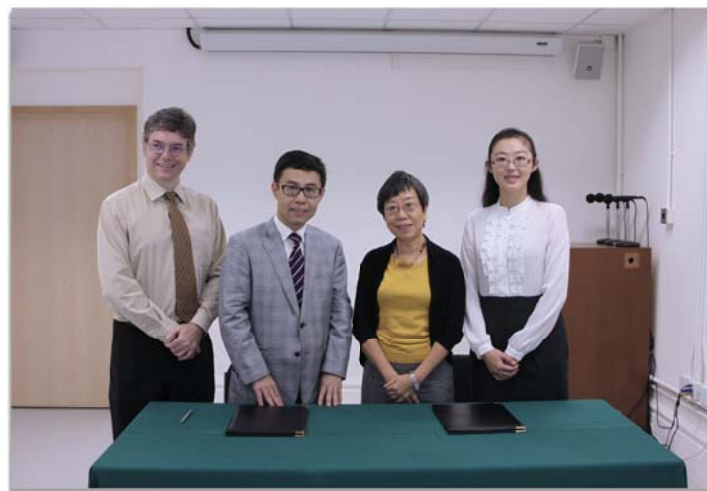
with a discussion of the methodological challenges of restoring the artisan to their rightful places in Chinese history.

Prof. Ko has also taught a postgraduate seminar course on “Technology, Medicine and Body” at the Institute this semester and engaged in the Institute’s events during her stay.



*A lively discussion with Prof. Dorothy Ko and Dr. Chan Wing Ming after the lecture*

## “Rethinking Spirituality and Religion in Asia” Cluster Receives Donation for Projects



*(From left) Dr. David A. Palmer with CEO of NeoUnion, Mr. Alfred Cheung, Prof. Angela Leung and Dr. An Wei*

Prof. Angela Leung accepted the first installment of a generous HKD 718,452 donation from NeoUnion ESC Organization, a Hong Kong based international organization focusing on educational, scientific and cultural development, on behalf of the “Rethinking Spirituality and Religion in Asia” Cluster this fall. Cluster Principal Investigator, Dr. David A. Palmer and students joined the signing ceremony of the Cooperation and Donation Agreement on October 28, 2015 in May Hall. NeoUnion’s support will help fund the cluster’s research on spiritual and religious development in China, and sponsor a Post-doctoral Fellowship for nurturing young researchers working on these topics.

## Collaborations

### Inter-Asian Connections V: Seoul

Workshop directors and conference organizers selected 111 papers from a competitive pool with over 280 applications representing 18 countries for the Inter-Asian Connections V conference, to be held in Seoul from April 27 to 30, 2016. Successful applicants will present their papers at one of the following ten concurrent thematic workshops exploring the varied ways mobilities and connections are conceived in and across Asia, past and present:

- Conviviality beyond the Urban Center: Theorizing the “Marginal Hub”;
- Forced Migration in/of Asia: Connections, Convergences, Comparisons;
- Frontier Assemblages: Political Economies of Margins and Resource Frontiers in Asia;
- Genealogies of Financialization: Reframing Sovereignty in Asia (1600–present);
- Geo-political Economies of (Post) Developmental Urbanization in East Asia;
- Knowledge Mobilities and the Prospects for InterAsian Urbanisation;
- Logistics of Asia-Led Globalization: Infrastructure, Software, Labor;
- Mecca InterAsia;
- Mediated Populism across Asia; and,
- The Social Economy and Alternative Development Models in Asia.

Details of the program are available at [www.ssrc.org/pages/interasian-connections-v-seoul-2016/](http://www.ssrc.org/pages/interasian-connections-v-seoul-2016/).

## Postgraduate Programs

### Institutional Enhancement Scheme

Next spring Prof. Xiang Biao, Professor in Social Anthropology at Oxford University, will spend four and a half months at the Institute under the Institutional Enhancement Scheme, which enables esteemed scholars to visit the University for up to a semester. Prior to joining Oxford, Prof. Xiang worked as a research officer at the International Organization for Migration and a postdoctoral fellow at the Asia Research Institute and Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis at the National University of Singapore. He is an exciting anthropologist working on migration in Asia, and will be teaching a course titled “Mobility, Governance and the Anthropological Imagination” during his time at the Institute. Prof. Xiang will also participate in the “Hubs, Mobilities and Asian Urban” Cluster, working closely with Institute colleagues and students.



### Postgraduate Student Adrian James Wright Obtains Competitive Research Grants

Congratulations to our PhD student, Adrian James Wright, who received two competitive research grants for his PhD research this year. The Institute awarded him the Sin Wai-Kin Junior Fellowship for Research Postgraduate Students in 2014-2015, which enabled James to conduct preliminary doctoral research and fieldwork preparations in Japan this summer 2015 on the use of ‘social’ robots for elderly care and childcare. In addition the prestigious Konosuke Matsushita Memorial Foundation, based in Osaka, Japan, selected James as recipient of its research grant this year. The Matsushita Research Grant will partially support James’ fieldwork in Japan next year while he is affiliated with the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology.



### Call for Applications for Admission to Research Postgraduate Programs

Applications for admission to the Institute’s MPhil and PhD programs in 2016-2017 are now open. We invite interested candidates to refer to the details on research postgraduate programs and application procedures on our website, [www.hkihss.hku.hk](http://www.hkihss.hku.hk).

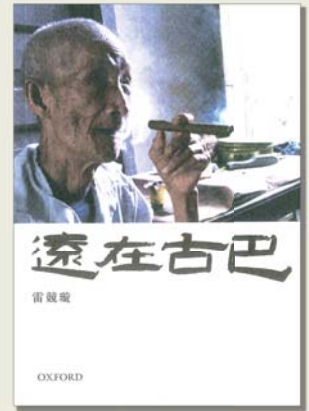
The **First Clearing Round** applications are open from **December 2, 2015 to April 30, 2016**.

Enquiries can be made by email to [ihssrpg@hku.hk](mailto:ihssrpg@hku.hk).

## Publications

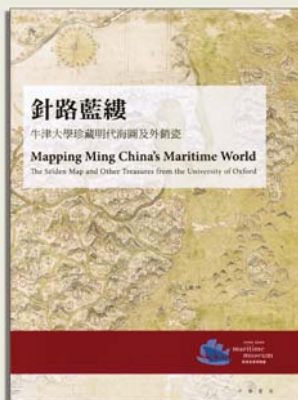
雷競璇：《遠在古巴》，牛津大學出版社（中國）有限公司，2015。

In the winter of 2010, Dr. Louie Kin Shuen (former Honorary Research Associate) traveled to Cuba in a quest to trace his late father's journey and experiences on the island. Unexpectedly, Dr. Louie encountered a little-known Chinese community living in Havana, whose members were left stranded by the Cuban Revolution. Like the dilapidated Chinatown found in the capital, this overseas Chinese population in Cuba had been largely forgotten and was in decline. With as little as 300 first-generation Chinese Cubans still surviving, Dr. Louie embarked on a race against time to document their unique history and memories. This volume is a collection of the fascinating oral histories collected by Dr. Louie over a 20-month period and a valuable addition to the scholarship on Chinese diaspora. The book is an output of the "Documenting the Oral History of Overseas Chinese in Cuba" project, funded by the Lee Hysan Foundation and supported by the Institute.



王惠玲、羅家輝：《記憶景觀—香港仔漁民口述歷史》，三聯書店（香港）有限公司，2015。

Fisheries and fishing communities have long played an important role in the history and culture of Aberdeen. Yet few are aware of this rich heritage that has greatly impacted Hong Kong local history. In this book, co-author Dr. Wong Wai Ling (Research Officer) constructs a memoryscape of Aberdeen, detailing personal life stories of Aberdeen fishermen and captures the relationships between the people, the community and the sea. These accounts enable readers to imagine Aberdeen's past, reflect upon its significance, and grasp the connections between sea and land dwellers. This compilation is a product of the University's "We are With You" project, an initiative supported by the Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS) and sponsored by the Chow Tai Fook Charity Foundation.



Kam Wing Fung, Jiarong Chen & Tom Christensen (eds.), 針路藍縷：牛津大學珍藏明代海圖及外銷瓷 *Mapping Ming China's Maritime World: The Selden Map and Other Treasures from the University of Oxford*, Chung Hwa Book Company (H.K.) Limited, 2015.

Published for the 2014 exhibition "Mapping Ming China's Maritime World – The Selden Map and Treasures from University of Oxford", *Mapping Ming China's Maritime World* is a bilingual catalogue telling the story of the maritime world of the late Ming-era China (mid-17th century) and features the Selden Map from the Bodleian Libraries reproduced to full scale as well as collections from the Bodleian, Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, the Hong Kong Maritime Museum and renowned local collector Dr. Tam K.L.

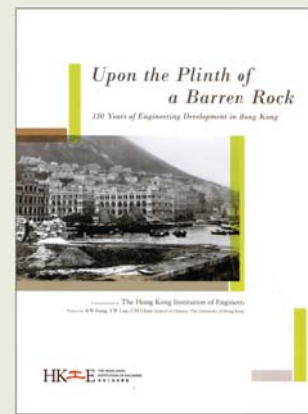


Kam Wing Fung & Jiarong Chen (eds.), 明代海洋貿易、航海術和 underwater 考古研究新進展：香港海事博物館國際會議論文集 *New Research into the Maritime Trades, Seafaring and Underwater Archaeology of the Ming Dynasty: Hong Kong Maritime Museum International Symposium Proceedings*, Chung Hwa Book Company (H.K.) Limited, 2015.

*New Research into the Maritime Trades, Seafaring and Underwater Archaeology of the Ming Dynasty* comprises of 19 papers presented at the international academic symposium of the same title, which was held in conjunction with the "Mapping Ming China's Maritime World – The Selden Map and Treasures from University of Oxford" exhibition. The volume introduces the latest research on the historical implications of the Selden Map of China, rutters, underwater archaeology of Ming shipwrecks, seafaring of the Ming dynasty, and the relationship between China and Southeast Asia during the Ming dynasty.

**Kam Wing Fung, YW Lau & CM Chan (eds.), *Upon the Plinth of a Barren Rock: 130 Years of Engineering Development in Hong Kong*, Chung Hwa Book Company (H.K.) Limited, 2015.**

Co-authored by Dr. Fung Kam Wing (Honorary Associate Professor) and two other scholars – Dr. Lau Y.W. and Dr. Chan C.M. – this volume provides an updated narrative of the development of the engineering profession and the institutions representing Hong Kong’s engineers from 1842 to 1975. The book traces the history of each engineering body up to the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, and takes the reader through many phases of the city’s development. In the background of all this is the interaction between the institutions and the society at different periods at large, showing how professional associations served as a vital link between Hong Kong engineers and the government, the largest patron of local engineering projects. This English edition is based on the Chinese publication 《肇路藍縷以啟山林——香港工程發展130年》published in 2013.



**Upcoming Activities**

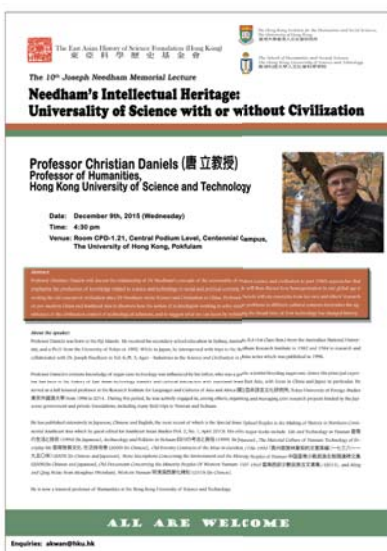
**Subsequent Visit by Hung Leung Hau Ling Distinguished Fellow in Humanities, Prof. David Der-wei Wang (December 5, 2015, HKU)**

Prof. David Der-wei Wang, Edward C. Henderson Professor of Chinese and Comparative Literature at Harvard University, will be making his follow-up visit to the University as Hung Leung Hau Ling Distinguished Visiting Fellow in Humanities this December. Coinciding with his visit to the Institute, international and regional scholars of Chinese language and literature will gather together to examine the implications of Sinophone studies – a new field which has emerged in the United States as well as across Asia in recent years – in a special workshop on “Sinophone Hong Kong: Issues and Debates”.

Prof. David Der-wei Wang and Prof. Shih Shu-mei (HKU Chinese) will guide the discussions, joined by seven other scholars, with each analyzing Hong Kong culture and literature from and against Sinophone perspectives and questioning the connection, or lack thereof, between Sinophone studies and Hong Kong studies. On the same day, Prof. Wang and Prof. Shih will also speak at a public forum on this topic. More information on the workshop and forum and event registration are available at [www.hkihss.hku.hk/events/sinophone](http://www.hkihss.hku.hk/events/sinophone).



**The Tenth Joseph Needham Memorial Lecture – Needham’s Intellectual Heritage: Universality of Science with or without Civilization (December 9, 2015, HKU)**



This year’s Joseph Needham Memorial Lecture has the pleasure of having Prof. Christian Daniels, Professor of Humanities at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), to discuss the relationship of Dr. Needham’s concepts of the universality of modern science and civilization to post 1980s approaches that emphasize the production of knowledge related to science and technology in social and political contexts.

Prof. Daniels plans to explore how homogenization in our global age is eroding the concept of “civilization” since Dr. Needham wrote *Science and Civilization in China*. Citing examples from his own work and other scholarship on pre-modern China and Southeast Asia, he plans to illustrate how the notion of technologists working to solve similar problems in different cultural contexts diminishes the significance of the civilization content of technological solutions, and to suggest what we can learn by rethinking the broad issue of how technology has changed history. This event is jointly presented by the East Asian History of Science Foundation, the Institute and HKUST.

## Workshop on “Moral Foods” (January 11, 2016, HKU)

In January 2016, the Institute will host an international group of scholars to its workshop on “Moral Foods”, a book project meeting resulting from the International Conference on “Food and Health” held last December. These experts on China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea, and Malaysia, will examine the moral values and meanings of food in the construction of modern health regimes and identities in Asia from the colonial/modern state-building period, roughly the 19th century, to the present. The event is sponsored by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange and the Strategic Research Theme in China-West Studies of the Faculty of Arts at The University of Hong Kong, and organized by the Institute research cluster, “Science, Technology, and Medicine in Asian Societies”.

## Departmental Seminar Series

- January 20: “Disunifying the Nation: Modern Disciplines and Knowledge Transplantation in China, 1912-1949” by Dr. Wang Liping, The University of Hong Kong
- March 23: “Listening to Television: Daily Life and Communal Viewing in 1970s China” by Prof. Nicole Huang, University of Wisconsin-Madison

## Public Program

**Talk Series on “Chinese Financial Family: Exploration, Consolidation and Innovation” (「華人金融家族：開拓、整固與創新」系列講座)** (December 5, 12 and 19, 2015, Hong Kong Museum of History)

A series of public lectures jointly organized by the Institute, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Museum of History will take place over three Saturdays beginning this December. The “Chinese Financial Family: Exploration, Consolidation and Innovation” talk series is a continuation of a larger project investigating the crisis management and corporate governance practices of Chinese business families and it will bring together researchers to share their findings on various financial families in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China.



## Recent Activities

**Knowledge Exchange Event on “Cantopop in Hong Kong – Three different periods of development and three different styles” (《香港的粵語流行曲—三個時期、三種不同風格》)** (October 14, 2015, HKU)

More than 50 turned up for the highly informative and interesting talk by Prof. Liu Ching-chih, Honorary Institute Fellow, on the development and transformation of Cantonese popular music (“Cantopop”) in recent decades. Prof. Liu’s presentation was accompanied by commentaries from guest speaker Dr. Ng Chun Hung (Sociology) and moderator Dr. Elizabeth Sinn (HKIHS), each of whom offered additional sociological and historical perspectives on the issue. Attendees were then treated to a lively debate about the trajectory and state of Cantopop in the 21st century.



(Left) Dr. Elizabeth Sinn introducing Dr. Ng Chun Hung (on her right) and Prof. Liu Ching-chih. (Above) Audiences enjoying the engaging talk by Prof. Liu Ching-chih and Dr. Ng Chun Hung

**Starting-up Biology: BGI and the making of life in Shenzhen (October 26, 2015, HKU)**

In the second of the Science, Technology, Medicine in Society (STMS) Colloquium Series, Prof. Hallam Stevens of Nanyang Technological University presented excerpts from his interdisciplinary ethnographic study of the Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI), one of the world's largest organizations for fundamental life sciences research. Prof. Stevens postulated BGI should be perceived as a unique kind of "start-up" that draws deeply on the local culture and "spirit" of Shenzhen, blended with the ethos of Silicon Valley entrepreneurialism. Rather than a "factory", BGI's laboratories comprise a model polity, enacting a youthful, modern, productive, innovative, cosmopolitan, meritocratic society for China.



**Public Lectures**



**Tektonikon and Surfacescape: Architecture and the Body in the Premodern Age**  
(November 17, 2015, HKU; presented by the Institute and the Faculty of Architecture)

This public lecture by Prof. Marvin Trachtenberg, Edith Kitzmiller Professor of the History of Fine Arts at New York University explored the relationship between premodern concepts of the body and the experience of architecture. Prof. Trachtenberg suggested that study of the authorship question of the *Pazzi* chapel reveals limitations of the modernist ocular regime. He thus proposed two new categories of analysis – *Tektonikon* and *Surfacescape* – as alternative paradigms to the building-as-body syndrome in medieval and Renaissance architectural thought and practice.

**Forum on "Recent Research in Gender and Ming-Qing Culture" (November 24, 2015, Hong Kong Baptist University)**

Prof. Dorothy Ko (Honorary Professor and Visiting Professor) and Dr. Ji Li (Research Assistant Professor) participated as speakers at the "Recent Research in Gender and Ming-Qing Culture" forum this November. Co-organized by the Institute, with main organizers the Hong Kong Baptist University's Department of History and the Mr. Simon Suen and Mrs. Mary Suen Sino-Humanitas Institute, this meeting also included other HKU panelists such as Dr. Wu Cuncun (Chinese), Dr. Yang Binbin (Chinese), Dr. Song Geng (Chinese) and Dr. Loretta Kim (Modern Languages and Cultures).

**Departmental Seminar Series**



In the Institute's Departmental Seminar series, the main themes addressed this fall were on social media and technology. Dr. Tom McDonald (HKU Sociology) shared findings from his 15-month ethnographic study in his talk "Between Perseverance and Manipulation: the Art of Accumulation on Social Media in Rural China". In his study of QQ – China's most popular social media platform, Dr. McDonald outlined the complex bureaucracy behind its level system, and examined the changing attitude of some rural Chinese towards these systems and its associated social status, showing how desires to accumulate levels influence their practices of internet use in everyday life. Dr. McDonald also drew a parallel between level accumulation on QQ and prior literature on gambling to argue that the emphasis on honest effort and intentional distortion in user accounts highlighted a self-cultivatory aspect in the practice.

In November, Prof. Naubahar Sharif (HKUST), one of the Institute's Honorary Associate Professors and supporting researcher of the "Science, Technology, and Medicine in Asian Societies" Cluster, spoke about "Global Technology Leadership: the Case of China". In his presentation, Prof. Sharif laid out the premise that China is positioning itself to assume global leadership in technology within the coming few decades and identified three sources of competitive advantage for China's ascent in the global technology stakes. Using statistical evidence and multiple examples, Prof. Sharif assessed China's prospect for growth and provided an overview of how a massive domestic market, the country's centralized power and willingness to employ state-sponsored industrial policy and government support, and the continued transformation of markets worldwide would offer China a path to imminent global technological leadership was offered.



## Interdisciplinary Lunchtime Seminar Series

The fall instalment of the 2015-2016 Interdisciplinary Lunchtime Seminar Series had featured six presenters in the past three months. It began in September with Prof. David Cheng Chang (HKUST Humanities) and Dr. Zhou Taomo (NTU Humanities and Social Sciences) who spoke on “Prisoners at Death’s Door: Chinese POWs as U.S. secret agents in the Korean War 九死一生：韓戰美軍徵用中國戰俘從事敵後諜報工作探秘” and “Diaspora and Diplomacy: China, Indonesia and the Cold War, 1945-1967” respectively. The following month saw another two speakers – Prof. Shaw May-yi (HKUST Humanities) and Dr. Cecilia Chu (HKU Architecture). The former talked about “‘One China’ in the Eyes of Millennial Youth in Hong Kong and Taiwan’, while the latter gave a lecture on “Envisioning Urban Futures: Spectacle, World Heritage, and Emergent Activism in Macau”.

These were followed by lectures on “Enchanted Industries: An Ethnographic Study of the Production of Hollywood and Hong Kong Film and Television Entertainment” by Dr. Sylvia Martin (HKU Sociology) and “The Chieftains of Shan-Dai Borderland Between Yunnan and Burma from the Ming to the Qing Dynasties: The Dowry Lands, the Decentralized Institution and the Burmese Kingdoms” by Prof. Ma Jianxiong (HKUST Humanities) in the month of November. The fall series will conclude with a final presentation in December. We look forward to announcing the new schedule with seven sessions for the upcoming semester soon.



*Clockwise from top left: Dr. Cecilia Chu, Prof. David Cheng Chang, Dr. Zhou Taomo, Prof. Shaw May-yi, Prof. Ma Jianxiong, and Dr. Sylvia Martin*

## Public Program

### Contemporary Chinese Documentary Series – Meet the Director: China Dreams Series “A Story of Birth” ( 中國夢系列「家庭錄像——一個關於生育的故事」) (November 20, 2015, HKU)

The most recent film event in our popular Contemporary Chinese Documentary Series took place in the Institute’s newly renovated lecture hall in May Hall on November 20, 2015. We screened the film “Home Video: A Story of Birth”, directed by 22-year old Wang Qiong ( 王瓊 ) and produced by Jian Yi ( 簡藝 ) of IFChina studio. Through the personal narrative of the director, the film tells a powerful story of gender, sex, birth control, and social political power over women’s bodies. Over 40 students and colleagues attended the screening of Ms. Wang’s documentary. Director Ms. Wang, Jian Yi and Mr. Li Yihong ( 李藝泓 ) of IFChina also led an animated discussion with engaged audience members after the screening. The event is co-sponsored by the Institute and Shun Hing College of HKU. The IFChina team also participated in a forum entitled “IFChina: What if China?” (「青原色：講述生命故事，提升文化自覺」) to communicate with HKU students, and attended the Shun Hing College’s high table dinner on November 20.



*(Left) Mr. Li Yihong of IFChina with film director Wang Qiong, producer Jian Yi and Dr. Li Ji during the discussion session which drew great interest and comments, including one from the Institute’s Assistant Professor, Dr. Gonalo Santos*

## Institute's News

### Prof. Angela Leung as Honorary Guest at Inauguration Ceremony of the Department of Medical Humanities at Zhongshan School of Medicine (October 22, 2015, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou)

Prof. Angela Leung was invited as honorary guest speaker at the newly created Department of Medical Humanities at Zhongshan School of Medicine, Sun Yat-sen University (SYSU) (中山醫學院醫學人文教研室) inauguration ceremony in October. Prof. Leung delivered an address on "Glocalizing Medicine in the Canton region in Late Qing China" (《晚清廣州地區疾病與治療的全球在地化》). SYSU is a long-time institutional collaborator of the Institute and one of our most important partners in China. The establishment of the Department of Medical Humanities will further the study of medical humanities as well as the cooperation between the two institutions.



### May Hall Restoration Completed

After several months of construction, the main entrance of May Hall has finally been restored, and the exterior staircase connecting May Hall and Eliot Hall was successfully removed. Visitors can now enjoy a splendid view of the three-storey Edwardian-style building in its original beauty, characterized by the red brick and white inlays common among British college buildings in the early 20th century.

Built in 1915, May Hall was originally used as an independent student hostel. The Hong Kong SAR Government designated it as a Grade I historic building, a title for selected structures, according to the Antiquities and Monuments Office, with "outstanding merits of which every effort should be made to preserve if possible." The University allocated it to the Institute in 2012. May Hall not only provides the physical space necessary for the Institute's development, but it is also emblematic of the humanistic tradition that the Institute aims preserve and re-create. We would like to express our gratitude once more to everyone who has worked tirelessly on this endeavor.

## Personalia

### Visiting Professor

Prof. Xiang Biao, School of Anthropology, University of Oxford, January to May 2016.

### Visiting Scholars

Prof. Paul A. Cohen, Fairbank Centre for Chinese Studies, Harvard University, October to November 2015 and January to February 2016.

Prof. Nicole Huang, Department of East Asian Languages and Literature, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 2015 to October 2016.

### Staff Appointments

Dr. Izumi Nakayama has joined the Institute as Research Officer from December 2015.

### Staff Departures

Dr. Daniel Trambaiolo, Post-doctoral Fellow, left the Institute to join the Department of Japanese Studies as an Assistant Professor in September 2015. We are delighted for Daniel as he advances his career and wish him every success in his future endeavors.

*If colleagues have news to share with the Institute, please email your materials to [sycheng2@hku.hk](mailto:sycheng2@hku.hk).*

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

Room 101, May Hall, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong  
[www.hkihss.hku.hk](http://www.hkihss.hku.hk)

General Enquiries and Information: (852) 3917-5011 | [ihss@hku.hk](mailto:ihss@hku.hk)  
Postgraduate Programs: (852) 3917-5772 | [ihssrpg@hku.hk](mailto:ihssrpg@hku.hk)