CATSarena

SOCIAL DISTANCING IN ASIA

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Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies

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CATS LIBRARY

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

More than a year has passed since the ceremonial opening of CATS (Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies)—and how the world has changed! Yet our mission—of rethinking Asia and Europe from a transcultural perspective—has perhaps even become more important than before. We are very pleased, therefore, to present you with our first newsletter, CATSArena, which will appear twice a year from now, in order to share with all of you, some of our ideas, activities and news. CATSArena should give you a chance to participate in CATS lif/ve– even from a distance.

CATS brings together four institutions—the South Asia Institute, the Centre for East Asian Studies, the Centre for Transcultural Studies and the Institute of Anthropology —each with its own characteristics and specific orientations. But CATS is also a vibrant forum for joint and open minded scholarly debates beyond the regional limitations of its respective institutions, and beyond Asia. In our editorial article „Asia and Europe from a Transcultural Perspective" we therefore try to provide you with a more detailed picture of the aims and objectives of CATS in the future.

One of the great challenges in this first year of CATS is the Corona crisis. This is why our focus theme in this first issue is the topic of social distancing, and we will introduce different perspectives—from different places (e.g. Taiwan, Bangladesh, Australia, Kathmandu, Islamabad, Japan—and Heidelberg); different people (students, librarians, scholars, artists, activists and musicians); and different media (digital, analogue, audio-/visual, ancient and modern).

Campus of the Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies, Photo: Susann Henker, 2019

We hope that you will find this newsletter as interesting and informative as we did. And we are looking forward to hearing from you. Please do send us your feedback and write to us if you have any suggestions or criticisms:
arena@cats.uni-heidelberg.de

Asia and Europe from a Transcultural Perspective

Asia may be one of the great challenges of the 21st century. CATS, an Asia Centre of a different kind, is our answer to this. Transdisciplinary and transregional in nature, CATS brings together scholars from all over the world. It has a focus on Asia but in a dialogue with scholars from a wide range of regional and methodological specializations and seeks to train a new generation of Asia specialists who take a comprehensive approach to researching, understanding, translating and finally, communicating global challenges.

In times where populisms and fundamentalisms are on the rise, and when many are beginning to build walls to ward off so-called "pure cultures" from each other, CATS suggests to take a transcultural perspective. We explore those processes that bring cultures, societies and religions together or separate them. In other words, we do not (any longer) see cultures as more or less closed units, possibly still limited by the nation state, but as open entities, *semper apertus*, so to speak (the motto of the University of Heidelberg).

Disciplinary diversity, geographical breadth, historical depth and a great variety of languages are all hallmarks of CATS. Tapping into these rich resources, CATS proposes to practice a new type of transdisciplinarity which begins by theorizing both from Asia and from Europe: Asia and Europe have brought forth (trans-)culturally formed, diverse responses to the challenges at hand at any particular historical moment and articulated in many different lan-

librate disciplinary epistemologies and, in the long run, will enable a rethinking and reconfiguration of only seemingly self-evident institutional structures.

Researchers in CATS will thus attempt to overcome prevalent value dualisms that have treated Asia and Europe as distinct epistemic domains characterized by an inherent conceptual and methodological incommensurability. They will develop methods to overcome this barrier and to come to a historically more plausible, non-orientalist approach that helps uncover a dynamic and connected relationship between Asia and Europe. Such an approach would be both self-reflexive and an essential step towards the development of new epistemologies adequate to this task.

What would the world look like if Gandhi's concept of non-violence (*ahimsa*) had been incorporated into Western constitutions? What would change in our conception of "democracy" had we reflected upon Mencius' concept of *minben* (people at the roots)? What does it mean to think music, religion, the novel as a genre, or the portrait as a specific form of artistic expression, in terms that come both from Asia and Europe? These are the kinds of questions that might be addressed by the 120 or so scholars and about 1500 students from almost 90 countries and regions of the world who are today members of CATS.

Apart from the traditional tasks of Asian Studies departments (the teaching of Asian languages and knowledge of Asian cultures and societies) CATS will thus offer a space for novel dynamic forms of intellectual debate and exchange, including an institutionalized dialogue with the Social and the Natural Sciences, thus opening up new modes of conducting research in the Humanities and forming a language of learning, in and for an in-

creasingly interconnected world. We study more than 20 Asian languages and literatures, as well as musical, artistic and religious traditions and their multidimensional transformations, as our research thus focuses, on questions of cultural heritage and knowledge systems—including biodiversity. We focus on questions of man, environment and health and investigate how knowledge of the animate and inanimate world is generated and institutionalized, challenged and defended (for example, with reference to the great healing traditions of Asia). We are interested in the socio-economic dynamics of power, governance and administration: international relations, the future of democracy and political as well as economic interdependencies with and in the Asian region. Questions of social and demographic change are important to us, not least accelerated by urbanization and migration, but also by the new media. Urgent tasks such as preserving cultural diversity, dealing with the environment and migration flows as well as the future of social and political systems can only be tackled in a conversation that spans both Europe and Asia, and the world—Asia is as much part of the making of Europe as Europe has been in the making of Asia!

guages. Precisely due to their cultural diversity, these explanations need to be plotted onto a common matrix. Reading such materials "in-conjunction" is a step towards theorizing equitably from Europe and Asia (and, to think even larger, the world). This means breaking through the wall of incommensurability that has been erected between different epistemic regimes.

While a large number of disciplinary methods and paradigms in use today were originally formed on the basis of European experiences, they migrated in the wake of colonialism and modernizing efforts to regions at the European peripheries and in Asia. There, they were adapted to local conditions and ideological needs. Recognizing such processes not only as "colonial exports," but as transcultural phenomena in their own right, is an example of the critical reflexivity required in our transcultural endeavour. Integrating the knowledge of regions outside of Europe in disciplines such as musicology, philosophy, history, economics, politics and the like, will help reca-

by **Axel Michaels**
and **Barbara Mittler**
Founding Directors, CATS

In the calligraphy workshop, visitors could experience the traditional and skillful art first hand. Photo: Susann Henker

In the evening the Nepalese band Triplets got the crowd going. Photo: Susann Henker

25 June, 2019

Grand Opening

After his talk, Chinese conceptual artist Ai Wei Wei answered questions from CATS students. Photo: Susann Henker

Artist and women's rights activist Sheba Chhachhi, who lives in India, spoke about her installation "Winged Pilgrims: A Chronicale from Asia." Photo: Philipp Rothe

Official handover of CATS. F.l.t.r: Bernd Müller (Director of the University's Building Department), Jan van der Velden-Volkmann (Architect), Annette Ipach-Öhmann (Head 'Vermögen und Bau BW'), Edith Sitzmann (Finance Minister), Theresia Bauer (Minister for Science, Research and Arts), Professor Bernhard Eitel (Rector, Heidelberg University), Professor Axel Michaels and Professor Barbara Mittler (Founding Directors, CATS), Dr. Joachim Gerner (Mayor of the City of Heidelberg). Photo: Philipp Rothe
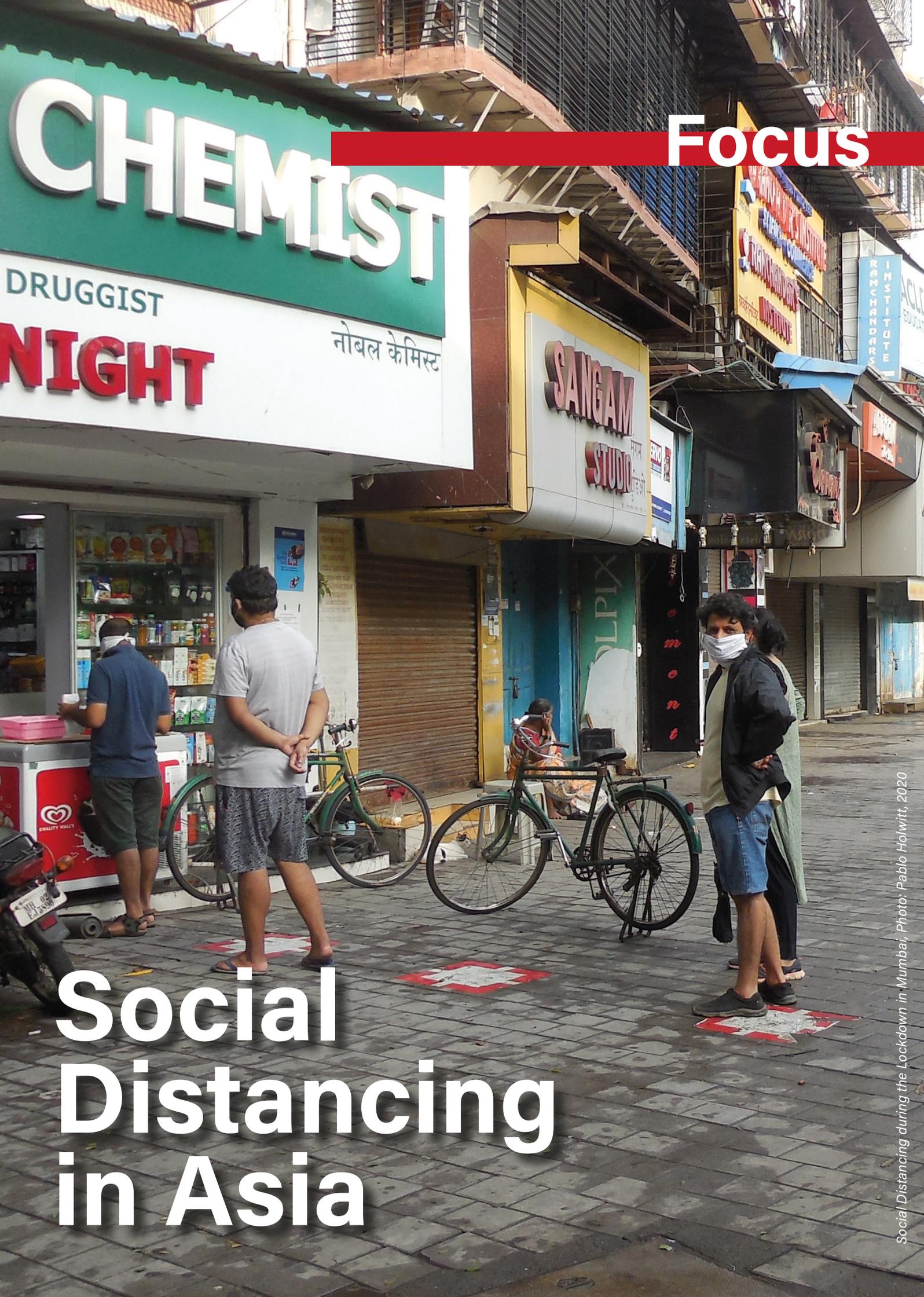
Social Distancing in Asia

Intercultural Distancing in India: auto-ethnographic Notes on the Agency of a Virus

by **Annette Hornbacher**
Professor for Anthropology

Anthropological fieldwork depends on close social contact to bridge the gap between diverse knowledge traditions and individuals. Our DFG (German Research Council) research project Tantric Text practices in North India and Bali is no exception. As experts on the Indonesian island of Bali (Annette Hornbacher) and Uttarakhand in North India (William Sax), we started to explore how historically related traditions have developed differently in culturally different modernities by investigating tantric practices in both regions.

But we hadn't counted on the subversive agency of a non-human being: the Corona Virus, which affected Indians' ideas and behaviour more quickly than their physical health, and more dramatically than we had ever imagined. Little was known at that point about a virus that destroyed the very basis of anthropological fieldwork: the creation of an atmosphere of mutual trust and friendship, as Malinowski famously put it. When we reached India around the end of February 2020, Corona seemed like yet another disease from China, which had just reached Europe but was nothing to be much worried about.

In India only a few isolated infections in Kerala had been reported, and Corona was hardly a topic of public concern. Himalayan tantrikas welcomed us for extensive discussions about healing and harming, without ever mentioning corona that seemed to haunt only industrialized countries. The Shaiva ascetics in Haridwar with whom we discussed theories of tantra and liberation passed the hashish-filled chillum from person to person without insisting that everyone had to shield her lips with a cloth as they used to for reasons of "ritual purity". One had just been invited to visit Germany to perform a ritual at the birthday party of his German friend in early April, and while we had started to worry about rising numbers of Covid19 in Italy and Germany, the baba was not at all concerned.

A similarly optimistic stance towards corona inspired an Indian colleague with whom we discussed the accelerating infection rates in Italy, and who was convinced that this could not happen in India: He said, the epidemics would be over with the beginning of the hot season because the virus was sensitive to heat, and he was passionate about indigenous healing plants with immune boosting effects.

But by mid-March, after the WHO had declared a global pandemic, the situation around us changed rapidly: Colleagues warned us per mail that their flights back to Germany had been cancelled, and the Indian government declared that all flights from and to Europe would be cancelled after the first of April, which unfortunately directly affected our return flight to Frankfurt: we booked another flight on the 25th of March.

By then, we noticed a shift in the reactions to us. Was it after a member of a group of Italian tourists had been tested positive in Haridwar, or because the Indian government had announced its new isolationist politics? The hotel manager in Haridwar surprised us with the news that a medical team would come to check us but did not answer my question if the team would also check the health of domestic tourists. In the end, we missed the team because we left, to stay in a remote lodge in the Himalaya foothills on the way to our last meeting with a tantrika.

When we finally established internet connectivity in this remote place after two days, the world had once again changed: messages from my daughter were confirmed by the German Embassy: "Leave India as soon as possible!" The 25th would be too late.

But what about our meeting? By then, many flights had been cancelled and it had become difficult to find yet another one because there was no way of knowing which airlines were still reliable. I was informed that the second flight would be cancelled too, while Germany was closing its borders, and India planned a radical lockdown and curfew.

When I finally got a connection with the German embassy a friendly voice told me that they could not help because they too were struggling with information that was changing to a degree they couldn't even have dreamt of two days earlier. However, she said the German government was planning to solve the problems of stranded tourists in Egypt but not in India. With two canceled flights back, and not enough money left in the bank account I tried to purchase yet another ticket, which had by then become exorbitantly expensive. But the internet signal was anyways too weak for bookings, and the friendly voice articulated regrets but no help. What would we have done without daughters in the UK and New York booking flights for us from Delhi to Abu Dhabi, Amsterdam and Frank-

furt? And all this time the sky was blue, the weather calm, the views stunning, and the surrounding villages a rural paradise with friendly farmers – worlds away from the human encroachment into wilderness, which was the original sin leading to the pandemic. Was India a better world or at least the better end of this world? Would it not also be better for us to simply stay – far away from an escalating Corona situation in Europe – and to continue our research?

Such fantasies seemed all the more seductive when, during a walk a friendly villager invited us for a cup of tea only to reveal that he was actually a Delhi policeman, who had just returned to his village from "pandemic duty" in the capital.

And was the nice policeman himself perhaps an exception? During our next walk in the forest and to a nearby village, I felt uncomfortable: Why did the villagers look so suspiciously or even hostile, when they saw us? Why did they not smile, but rather turn away?

Meanwhile, the state government had banned the entry of all foreigners with the consequence that taxi drivers refused to bring us to the Delhi airport, because they saw Europeans as contagious danger. One of them demanded a medical certificate of our health – But how could we possibly obtain this in the middle of the forest?

Just as we were trying to find a solution, our landlady rang to tell us that we should for god's sake stay in our room: the villagers had complained that two westerners had been hiking in the forests around their village. Moments later our cook burst in, obviously in a panic, warning us that the police were coming to throw us out (or to lock us in?) because Europeans were no longer allowed in Uttarakhand. He began shutting doors and windows, and warned us to keep quiet while he would tell the police that we had already left (rather absurd,

Juna Akhara Saddhus in Haridwar, Photo: Annette Hornbacher

since our car was parked in front). It transpired that the person who threatened to call the police was a notorious drunkard, who had made himself important. But who could tell which impression he would make given the increasing xenophobia? While we preferred to think of it as a comic interlude, we didn't yet know at that point that European tourists whose flights were cancelled, had been kicked out of their hotels in Mumbay, Delhi and elsewhere and were chased down the street by people shouting "Corona! Corona!" at them.

It goes without saying that xenophobic reactions to an allegedly 'foreign' problem were to some extent understandable as an 'all-too-human' reaction. Had not the president of the US labelled Corona a Chinese disease? And had not nationalist and racist prejudices in Germany motivated brutal attacks against refugees? In India, we experienced the other side of a similar problem: Corona had transformed white Westerners into an object of racist projections, fears and rage, and it triggered an open resentment that seemed like the spontaneous reversal of a sometimes obsequious politeness that could be seen as a relic of colonialism.

And of course, not everyone was hostile. Our cook tried to save us

from the police, and we owe our successful return to a local physician who had never met us before but provided handwritten health certificates, fed us a magnificent breakfast, and convinced a taxi driver to take us to Delhi. But still, the driver was clearly terrified as he stared at us with a panicked expression from behind his face mask and spoke only in monosyllables during the five-hour drive.

We reached home just one day before a total curfew would have made it impossible to even drive to the airport, and were truly relieved – but also shocked to realize how rapidly an atmosphere of mutual trust and friendship that remains the precondition of anthropological research could turn peoples minds into a generalized xenophobia many weeks before Covid 19 actually became a public health threat in India. Corona led to an unprecedented and spontaneous bottom-up social distancing before the term was even coined.

Palsy-Walsy and Extremely Surly Social Distancing

by **Prem Poddar**
Guest Fellow, HCTS

As the uncertainty of the interregnum stretches and seems as pliable as a virus-stained concertina, I cannot go anytime soon to my cottage in the multikulti hills of the Himalayas on the Indian side. It is a fortune shared by a considerable number of folks stuck elsewhere and everywhere on this beleaguered planet.

In my case it is the two-week quarantine in Delhi plus the hostility of the gaun (neighbourhood in Nepali) where my domicile stands. Corona-phobia against an otherwise habitual outsider: go elsewhere, prods the mantra. Small towners and villagers still assume Covid-19 to be a moneyed man's malady given that it emanated from overseas.

Reports appeared in the early stages of the pandemic that doctors and nurses and flight attendants were frequently barred from returning to their para (locality in Bengali) flats in Kolkata and migrant workers were summarily evicted from their kamras (rooms)in Delhi by landlords. Packed into a dank and fetid room with as many as five to six people, slum-dwellers (bastiwale)—factory workers, domestic servants, chauffeurs, plumbers, electricians and guards— continue to be bolted out of the gated communities they serve, underlining the imaginariness of a 'social contract' between the haves and have-nots.

India's 100 million homes, it is estimated, consist of only one room. Hardly any room to swing a cat or cross your legs, social distancing is at best a shaggy-dog story. Social distancing in a sociable and teeming nation of 1.3 billion with 464 persons per kilometre (in comparison to China's redoubtable 153), with as many as 50 to a toilet, leads to behaviour that can only be rendered as acquiescent and defiant at the same time.

An infinitesimal pathogen can only be humbled, not by the Leviathan, but by a sensible and energized populace. An India that has to throng to bus stations and railway terminals for days in order to native townships, or in desperation forced to walk hundreds of miles homewards, is not the mark of an empowered country. Division and discontent can be overcome if the social contract in actual fact provides people with cover, especially when risks arise.

From Epicurus to Hobbes to Kant to Rawls, the basic idea behind thinking the social contact is the 'original' agreement of all individuals subjecting themselves to collectively enforced social arrangements. For these arrangements to be legitimate, just, obligating, the device of socially distancing and disconnecting through class or caste or post-contract identities needs must to be placed under the muscular microscope of public justification, of what principles can be justified to all reasonable citizens or persons.

Notions of realizing justice are not unknown to ancient Indian rational thought either, in particular the ethical implications of Kautilya's arguments about the welfare of the people: "in the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king [i.e. the state] and in what is beneficial to the subjects his own benefit." With his concept of yogakshema (well-being of the people) some social welfarism is obtainable even though just institutions do not necessarily ensure social justice: niti, or political ethics conception of justice, in Amartya Sen's words, denotes "organizational propriety and behavioural correctness", while the nyāya conception "stands for a comprehensive concept of realizing justice".

The citizen dregs of sub-continental India, the left-behinds are not figments of mere imagination. There is a heavy price to be paid for low wages and zero-hours contracts. India has re-calibrated its social contract in the past to meet changing needs, with every Indian government piously placing poverty alleviation and bettering livelihoods uppermost on its agenda.

But the journey from Nehru to Modi has been perfunctorily patchy. From socialism (even if imperfect) to hyper-nationalist crony capitalism, the public road now is progressively potholed. In comes the pandemic which has altered the calculus even as the blemishes are magnified. It has pushed the reset button, allowing moral ground only to a polity and its leaders such as are prepared to offer the fairness of a new social contract.

Narratives and images from across the breadth of the country demonstrate how local markets adapted to rote governmental directives in the wake of the crisis. This picture is one of many such scenes not uncommon throughout South Asia: the chalk circles of social distancing are 'booked' by footwear outside a shop while the weary barefoot queue hunkers down on the kerb in exhaustion.

Covid is pronounced as kōvida or कोविद in devanāgarī, a Sanskrit word that means one who is skilled, enlightened, the possessor of wisdom. A WhatsApp mate playfully sends me this quip on the representation in the image:
'यही बात है, कोविद सभी हो जाए, और जो रह जाए वो ही बुद्धिहीन होंगे. यही मिथ्याभास चलेगा', or: Let all become covid, those that don't shall themselves remain unenlightened. Let this myth prevail.

"Quand on aime ses proches on ne s'approche pas trop"

Social Distance, Hygiene and the Handshake: a Chinese Perspective

Fig. 1 *Angela Merkel's "rebuffed" handshake attempt, 1.3.2020*[11]

by **Barbara Mittler**
Professor for Chinese Studies

No Handshakes, no Hugs and no Bises: Greetings have changed radically with the new Corona-Virus. Many probably still remember how, at the beginning of the pandemic in Europe, in early March 2020, Germany's minister of the interior, Horst Seehofer, amiably rebuffed Chancellor Angela Merkel declining to shake her hand—she nods, understandingly and laughs before taking her seat, but the image goes around the world (Fig. 1). *The Guardian* titles "The End of the Handshake"[1] and explains: "In Beijing, the capital of the country where the outbreak began, red billboards tell people not to shake hands but to join their own hands together in a sign of greeting (the *gong shou* 拱手)."[2] Loudspeakers everywhere tell people to use this "traditional gesture." And indeed, all over the Chinese-speaking world, as soon as the virus begins to spread, one reads the slogan *zhi gong shou, bu wo shou* 只拱手,不握手 ("only cup hands, do not shake hands", Fig. 2) and it is shown why: viral particles, germs, the dangerous droplets may accumulate in the hands, much better to shake one's own, not someone else's hands, then, "guarding etiquette and protecting health" 守護禮儀更護健康 (Fig. 3). And this "new" gesture is there to stay, in spite of the occasional "habitual" relapse: the memorable greeting scene—end of September 2020—between Taipei's mayor Ko Wen-je 柯文哲 (Ke
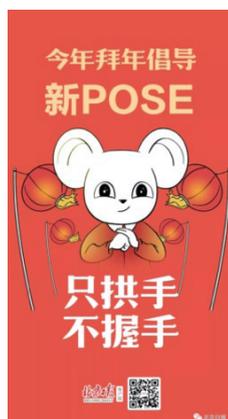
Fig. 2 *Beijing Daily advertisement warning of the handshake and introducing an alternative style of greeting:* 只拱手不握手 *"Only cup hands, do not shake hands"*[12]

Fig. 3 *Public Advertisement from Taiwan: "In greeting cup (your) hands instead of shaking hands, guarding etiquette and protecting health."* 拱手不握手-守護禮儀更手護健康[13]

Wenzhe) and Taiwan's President Tsai Ying-wen 蔡英文 (Cai Yingwen) where she rebuffs his handshake—quite obviously a gesture that for him is equally reflexive and naturalized as for Angela Merkel—is a strong sign, as she responds with the *gongshou* (Fig. 4): shifting asymmetries in cultural flows?

The global call for social distancing has significantly changed rules and gestures of conduct and etiquette that had travelled the world for centuries. The handshake is one such example. Today, China's equivalent of Wikipedia—the online encyclopedia *Baidu baike* 百度百科 (perhaps roughly translated to *A Hundred Systems, A Hundred Categories*)—tells us that the "handshaking ritual" *wo shou li* 握手礼, as it is called in Chinese, "is the most popular courtesy practiced in the world today 握手为礼, 是当今世界最为流行的礼节."[3] Yet less than a century ago, there was much doubt and criticism about this "hand-

shake ritual" in China. While the country showed herself inspired by many a foreign custom and practice—cultural flows were surely going East since the 19th century—the handshake was controversial from the beginning. As part of a virulent discussion about hygiene which had begun in China with the advent of foreign medicine, some would even consider the gesture as one of the most irresponsible acts that foreigners engaged in.[4]

One adamant critic of the practice, the writer and philosopher Lin Yutang 林語堂 (1896-1976), son of a Christian minister who, in his own words "first came to life" at Widener Library at Harvard, describes, in chapter VIII of his cheeky collection of essays *The Importance of Living*, entitled "Some Curious Western Customs" and first published in New York in 1937[5] that "One great difference between oriental and occidental civilizations is that the Westerners shake each other's hands, while we shake our own. 東西文化不同之點甚多, 而握手居其一。西人見面互相握手, 華人見面握自己手。"

And he continues: "Of all the ridiculous Western customs, I think that of shaking hands is one of the worst. I may be very progressive and able to appreciate Western art, literature, American silk stockings, Parisian perfumes and even British battleships, but I cannot see how the progressive Europeans could allow this barbarous custom of shaking hands to persist to the present day. I know there are private groups of individuals in the West who protest against this custom ... But these people don't seem to be making any headway, being apparently taken for men who make mountains of molehills and waste their energy on trivialities. I am one of these men who are always interested in trivialities. As a Chinese, I am bound to feel more strongly against this Western custom than the Europeans, and prefer always to shake my own hands when meeting or parting from people, according to the time-honored etiquette of the Celestial Empire ..."[6]

One of Lin's most important points, is hygiene: "Now consider the hygienic objections. The foreigners in Shanghai, who describe our copper coins as regular reservoirs of bacteria and will not touch them, apparently think nothing of shaking hands with any Tom, Dick or Harry in the street. This is really highly illogical, for how are you to know that Tom, Dick or Harry has not touched those coppers which you shun like poison? What is worse is, sometimes you may see a consumptive-looking man who hygienically covers his mouth with his hands while coughing and in the next moment stretches his hand to give you a friendly shake. In this respect, our celestial customs are really more scientific, for in China, each of us shakes his own hand. I don't know what was the origin of this Chinese custom, but its advantage from a medical or hygienic point of view cannot be denied."

His arguments put forth in the late 1930s had been rehearsed in China's news media for decades. The *Shenbao* 申報, one of the most important newspapers in China, published in Shanghai, would regularly warn of the dangers of handshaking. Chinese scholar, physician, and translator Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1874-1952), for example, an important broker between western-trained physicians and reform-minded practitioners of Chinese medicine, writes a long and engaged article in the *Shenbao* in 1913 in which he details how important hand hygiene is, and how dangerous, consequentially, every single handshake could be—as hundreds of thousands of infectious particles may be passed on.[7]

Throughout the years, articles

Fig. 4 *Taibei mayor Ke Wenzhe (left) offering a handshake, while Taiwan's President Cai Yingwen (right) responds with a gong shou.* [14]

that cast doubt upon the sanity of engaging in the "handshaking ritual" can be found regularly, often taking the form of curious scenes from foreign countries. In April 1929, President Hoover is reported to have limited the number of people he would greet by handshake to ten per day because he had, in fact, on a previous day had to greet more than 1750 people and his hand and wrist had badly swollen.[8] In May 1933 (Fig. 5),[9] the *Shenbao* reprints a Reuters report relating that the Fascist Party of Italy had forbidden handshaking, concerned with the fact that it could be unhygienic (因不合衛生也). The report explains that the Party "had ordered its members no longer to shake hands, but instead, to salute each other with a party salute (the right arm extended with the palm up)." In spite of such criticism and ridicule, the "handshaking ritual" established itself as the natural-
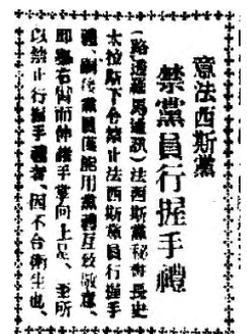

Fig. 5 *SB 7.5.1933*
意法西斯黨禁黨員行握手禮,
Article on the Italian Fascist Party who stop handshaking for concerns of hygiene.
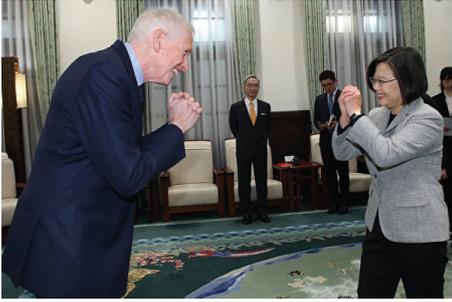
Fig. 6 Tsai Ying-wen 蔡英文 (Cai Yingwen) greeting an American Guest.[15]

ized form of greeting in China and Taiwan. This is so much so that in the days of Corona, trying to explain alternative ways of greeting—such as the *gongshou* 拱手—takes some effort. In "Six vintage ways to say hello 六種復古的見面問候方式", the

(anti-Chinese Communist Party, CCP) overseas Chinese newspaper *Epoch Times* 大紀元 therefore dedicates an entire article, including illustrations, to explaining how to use these long forgotten traditional greetings—the hand cup prominently among them.[10]

As the memorable scene between Taipei's mayor Ko Wen-je 柯文哲 (Ke Wenzhe) and Taiwan's President Tsai Ying-wen 蔡英文 (Cai Yingwen) brought us back, full circle to Angela Merkel and Horst Seehofer—and the end of the handshake—a new chance for alternative and, perhaps, more sanitary, forms of greeting appears to be in the offing. Anoth-

er report from Taiwan dating back to March, points a new direction: "Meeting foreign guests under epidemic conditions, Tsai Ing-wen does not shake hands but instead, cups her own hands in greeting 在疫情下接見外賓　蔡英文拱手而不握手". The accompanying photograph shows her American guest, who returns her greeting—with the same *gong shou* gesture (Fig. 6): as we engage in social distancing, we are living a moment of shifting asymmetries in cultural flows!

Prof. Dr. Barbara Mittler
joined Heidelberg University in 2004 and teaches Chinese Cultural Studies. Her research focuses on cultural production in (greater) China covering a range of materials, music, print media, visuality in China's long modernity.

1 The Guardian, 3.3.2020 "The End of the Handshake: Saying Hello during the Coronavirus outbreak." https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/03/the-end-of-the-handshake-saying-hello-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak"

2 Additions in brackets () by the author.

3 https://baike.baidu.com/item/握手礼 "The handshaking ritual".

4 Cf. Ruth Rogaski Hygienic modernity: meanings of healt and disease in treaty-port China, Berkeley: University of California Press 2014.

5 Lin Yutang The Importance of Living, New York, John Day: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1937. The advertising text on the book hints to some of the reasons for its success: "A wry, witty antidote to the dizzying pace of the modern world. Lin Yutang's prescription is the classic Chinese philosophy of life: revere inaction as much as action, invoke humor to maintain a healthy attitude, and never forget that there will always be plenty of fools around who are willing—indeed, eager—to be busy, to make themselves useful, and to exercise power while you bask in the simple joy of existence. At a time when we›re overwhelmed with wake-up calls, here is a refreshing, playful reminder to savor life's simple pleasures."

6 Lin Yutang The Importance of Living, New York, John Day: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1937, Chapter VIII.

7 丁福保 Ding Fubao 指頭之清潔與洒掃 (On Finger Cleaning and Scrubbing) 申報 Shenbao (SB) 16.8.1913. The warning of the dangers of handshaking can be found at the end. For Ding, see further Bridie Andrews "Ding Fubao and the Morals of Medical Modernization" EASTM 42 (2015): 7-37.

8 SB 6.4.1929 胡佛握手多而致疾 (Hoover getting hurt from excessive handshakes).

9 SB 7.5.1933 意法西斯黨禁黨員行握手禮 (Italian Fashist Party forbids handshaking ritual).

10 六種復古的見面問候方式 (Six vintage ways to say hello) 大紀元 Epoch Times 18.9.2020 https://www.epochtimes.com/b5/20/9/18/n12412719.htm

11 Source: Anadolu Agency/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images, The Guardian, 3.3.2020 "The End of the Handshake: Saying Hello during the Coronavirus outbreak." https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/03/the-end-of-the-handshake-saying-hello-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak"

12 Source: Sina 新浪財經 23.1.2020 https://finance.sina.com.cn/wm/2020-01-23/doc-iihn-zahk6005775.shtml

13 Source; http://jackylone.com.tw/

14 Source "Cai Yinwen sees Ke Wenzhe and greetsbut does not shake hands 蔡英文見柯文哲 拱手不握手" (Photo and reporting by Zeng Yuanxin 曾原信) Lianhe xinwen wang 聯合新聞網 United Daily News reporting, 29.9.2020, https://udn.com/news/story/6656/4896627

15 Source: Epoch Times 6.3.2020

On Greeting in Infectious Times

by **Axel Michaels**
Senior Professor
for Classical Indology

We had almost gotten used to the fact that greetings had become increasingly casual and obtrusive. More and more people greeted each other with hugs. The simple word greeting hardly ever sufficed, a handshake was standard anyway. And sometimes at least one cheek kiss was required, with the Swiss occasionally indulging in up to three.

In times of the coronavirus, this has become taboo. Besides wearing masks and washing your hands, keeping your distance to the people around you is the next most important measure of protection. But how should we greet each other now? Is there an alternative to the rustic arm clapping or the misleading raising of a hand?

The Indian Namaste greeting with its Anjali gesture seems a ripe candidate to replace our standard greetings in these times. This non-contact salutation stands for India like curry or yoga. There, hardly any business card is handed over without it; at the latest you'll encounter it on the Air India plane with its smiling flight attendants.

What does the Anjali gesture mean? Indian Internet forums say that it indicates the union of left and right, man and woman, or something similar. However, such meanings hardly apply to such ritual greetings in general and surely cannot be applied to its everyday use. If gestures have become overloaded with meaning, it is because the human being craves significance. But who is really speaking to God when he uses the German salutation 'Grüß Gott'? Who gets

high when he or she is greeted with 'High'? Gestures of greeting, like elaborate rituals, have a more of a social or communicative function than deep contextual meanings. This is why the Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman categorized these social techniques as interaction rituals. I myself would classify them ritualized behavior.

In India, the Anjali gesture is also used to greet deities and as a sign of respect for the other person, which implies a certain distance. This greeting gesture was already standardized in ancient texts, where distinctions were made between types of salutation, which included standing up, touching the feet, bowing, giving (or receiving) a head mark, called 'tika', or the gentle, wordless bending of the head. The form of the greeting was thus based on the social positions of the individuals in question and marked differences in rank, gender and age. The lower the rank, the more distance was to be maintained. Those in higher positions were not allowed to touch the 'Untouchables', sometimes not even their shadow; neither were they allowed to touch anything they had touched.

Perhaps it is then not really appropriate to introduce the Anjali gesture outside of India. However, the Anjali gesture has long since migrated from its Hindu roots (and sophisticated meanings) and has spread to Buddhist countries in the Far East in many different contexts. Given that the ubiquitous 'Western' handshake has long since become commonplace across South Asia and the rest of the world, why shouldn't the Anjali gesture be able to go 'viral'? In fact, Indian President Narendra Modi has already proclaimed this non-contact greet-

President Barack Obama clasped his hands in the traditional Anjali gesture after delivering remarks on India and America relations at the Siri Fort Auditorium in New Delhi, India
Source: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov

ing to be a role model for the whole world and pointed to Presidents Emmanuel Macron, Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu and Prince Charles, who have all already welcomed guests in this way. In any case, globalization, i.e. the moving together of people, goods and institutions, simply knows no cultural boundaries–neither for a virus nor for rituals.

This article appeared on March 10, 2020, in a shortened and slightly modified form in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. It is based on two earlier articles: a) "Gift and Return Gift, Greeting and Return Greeting in India. On a Consequential Footnote by Marcel Mauss", Numen, vol. 44 (1997), 243-69; b) "Göttern schüttelt man nicht die Hände. Grußgesten im hinduistischen Ritual", in: Christoph Wulf and Erika Fischer-Lichte (eds.), Gesten. Inszenierung, Aufführung, Praxis. München: Wilhelm Fink, 91-103.

Social Distancing: an Ancient Hindu Public Health Measure?

Girl with Anjali greeting in Chandighar (North India), Photo: Steve Evens

by **William S. Sax**
Professor for Anthropolgy of South Asia

Following the rapid spread of social distancing to slow the spread of the Corona virus, Hindu nationalists developed the thesis that the rest of the world was merely adopting practices developed thousands of years ago by "Hindu civilization." For example the Hindu form of greeting by holding the palms together, was at one point advocated by many public health experts, leading Sharma and Varshney (2020). Goel (2020) also argues that the anjali mudra, like the social isolation of mourners in India, is meant to avoid spreading germs, and Jains wear cloth masks in order to avoid infection.

Such scientistic claims are common within Hindu nationalist circles (see Michaels/Wulf 2020). It is claimed for example that ancient Indians mastered space flight, or that ancient Ayurvedic doctors were familiar with blood pressure and its effects thousands of years before the invention of the machine that first enabled its detection. This reflects the idea, common even amongst Professors of Ayurvedic medicine, that medical knowledge was complete at the time of the original revelation, and that new discoveries made in "the West" must, by definition, be of things that were already known to the ancients.

But if this is true, then the good days are truly gone, and ignorance is the order of the day. Witness the cult leader from Gujarat who, before his death from Covid 19 (after which he was praised by no less than Prime Minister Narendra Modi) was recorded on camera licking sweets before passing them on to his disciplines, thus raising the possibility that he infected thousands (Bench 2020). The confusion brought about by Hindutva scientism is well-known, and an easy target for ridicule. A more serious problem is the de-politicization of caste discrimination by re-defining it as a rational public health measure. Goel, for example, goes on to explain the exclusion of the lowest castes as follows: The Chandalas (Untouchables) were those who dealt with corpses, dirt, and dead materials such as leather. They were expected to live outside the village, perhaps because it was known that the work they did had the potential to spread disease.

In my view, the most intelligent response to such twaddle comes from anti-caste activists (Anand 2020, Gupta et al 2020, Kesavan 2020, Singh 2020), who make the obvious point that social distancing is based on science and the presumed universality of human bodies, while the "social distancing" associated with caste is explicitly hierarchical, and views low caste persons' bodies as inherently dirty and polluted. Singh makes the point with particular clarity when he writes that "(s)ocial distancing is a hygienic practice of keeping safe physical distance to avoid transmission of communicable diseases. Untouchability, on the other hand, is a practice of ostracising a minority group and denying them social equality." He goes on to relate stories of high-caste COVID-19 patients refusing to eat the food in isolation centres because it was prepared by lowcaste cooks, or of a woman who committed suicide after being harassed and tortured in her medical institution on the basis of her caste.

Several activist-authors compare caste itself to a virus: Anand for example writes that the "Brah-

mins instituted social distancing first, which it seems, led to the (caste) pandemic," and he quotes Ambedkar, who wrote that "(t)he condition for the sentiment of fraternity lies in sharing in the vital processes of life. It is sharing in the joys and sorrows of birth, death, marriage and food…

With a complete refusal to share the joys and sorrows of life how can the sentiment of fraternity take roots?" A system built on social distancing, writes Anand, "cannot value fraternity. It is, instead, based on selfishness, on narrow interests and deeply entrenched ideas of othering." And not only of the lower castes: Kesavan (2020) illustrates how the pandemic has given rise to new forms of chauvinist rhetoric, in which Muslims are portrayed as the "malevolent vanguard of a new kind of war, a coronajihad."

Gujarat Godman, Illustration: Reynold Mascarenhas
Source: https://www.arre.co.in/coronavirus/priest-gujarat-godman-covid-19-prasad-with-saliva/

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Japanese Masks to Ward off Evil: from the Collection of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg

Fig. 1 *Classical nō mask, the character Yorimasa, from the collection of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg (Slg.-Nr. 37242)*

Masks have become an everyday utensil with the spread of the Pandemic. This article provides an alternative view of masks warding off evil in Japanese traditional theatre.

by **Judit Árokay**
Professor for Japanese Studies

Masks of the Japanese *nō* theater have been favorite objects of Western collectors from the end of the 19th century. I would like to intraduce, here, a group of *nō* masks, 能面 from the collection of the Ethnographic Museum vPST Heidelberg, that were used in theatrical performances with the aim to ward off evil and to invoke welfare for the community.

Nō theater has its origins in the Japanese middle ages when ritual plays and dances during seasonal feasts, temple and shrine festivities and commedia dell'arte type popular theater were united to form a new type of performance. Soon, rather strict forms developed regarding the stage and scenery, the attire of the artists, their movements, the musical accompani- ment, the chorus, and the use of masks (Fig. 1). In most of the plays, only the principal character (*shite* シテ) wears a mask, all the other actors and the chorus appear without, albeit with completely emotionless faces. Facial expression is principally to be suppressed in order to emphasize the performance of movement and sound. The principal actor appears with his mask which he has put on in his dressing room in a semi-ritual process that symbolizes his transformation into a character. Given the religious background of *nō* theater, this transformation is thought of as something spiritual, often the transformation of a human into a divine or super-natural being like a god, the spirit of a living or the ghost of a dead person.

The masks are made of wood, with two small holes for the eyes, only allowing the actor to peep through for some orientation on the stage (Fig. 2) The mouth part is closed except for a slot which gives the voice a muffled, hollow sound and is an impediment for breathing. The masks are slightly smaller than human faces thus showing a part of the chin. The mask per se is expressionless or neutral, it gives almost no clues as to the feelings of the given character. Only a slight variation is possible: Tilting the mask upwards results in a more friendly, laughing expression, tilting it downwards in a sad or desperate one but in the end, it is the actor who is responsible for imbuing the mask with emotion through his performance.

The Ethnographic Museum in Heidelberg holds several *nō* masks. Especially impressive among them is a group of masks of the category of *okina* 翁 (Figs. 2–4). These masks are worn in the introductory pieces of a *nō* play that feature an old man with spiritual properties, the *okina*, who is supposed to pacify evil powers, call down wealth and prosperity for the community and long life for the people. *Okina* plays have a religious character reaching back to the beginnings of *nō* in classical times, and they are even associated with shamanistic practices. They were traditionally performed before the series of five *nō* plays started, as a kind of invocation of the gods. Nowadays *okina* plays are only staged for special occasions like the New Year's performance. The masks of *okina* predate any other type of *nō* masks and they have idiosyncratic

Fig. 2 *Back side of an okina mask, from the collection of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg (Slg.-Nr. 35926)*

Fig. 3 *Okina Mask, from the collection of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg (Slg.-Nr. 35926)*
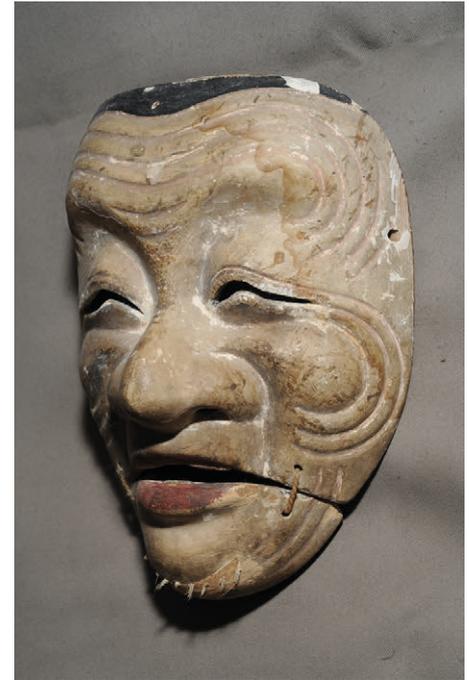
Fig. 4 *Okina Mask, from the collection of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg (Slg.-Nr. 35927)*

features. Their facial expression is friendly and laughing, they have a detached chin that is attached with cords giving the actor the possibility to move it. As the mouth part is open, the voice of the actor is less muffled than in the classical mask. (Figs. 3 & 4) The masks have stylized deep wrinkles on the forehead, and conspicuously on the cheeks and from the nose to the mouth, resulting in a lively and friendly expression. The curved eyes and the full lips convey happiness and content, befitting a character that is supposed to represent divinity.

There is no real narrative in the *okina* plays: Four dances are performed by three characters who enter the stage subsequently. First enters the *okina* accompanied by a person carrying a mask box. After incantations by the *okina* together with the chorus enters the *senzai* 千歳 (his name meaning thousand generations), a slightly younger character without a mask. As an exception to the rules of *nō* theater, the *okina* puts on his mask during the play, on the stage, while the *senzai* is dancing. This is supposed to emphasize the transformation

of the protagonist into a divine character. He wears a *hakushiki-jō* 白式尉, or white mask of an old man (Fig. 4). The third character, *sanbasō* 三番叟 (third old man), is wearing a black mask (*kokushikijō* 黒式尉) with the same traits as the *okina* and is supposed to represent a man from among the populace. His dance accompanied by rhythmic bumping and ringing of bells is far more agitated and impulsive than that of the *okina* and reminds of exorcist rituals.

The collection of the Ethnographic Museum in Heidelberg features several *okina* masks. European collectors were obviously fascinated with these types of masks, even though they seem to be more exotic than aesthetic in a classical sense.

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Getting Civic About Technology

by **Michał Chabiński**
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In the name of combating the COVID-19 pandemic, some governments rushed to expand their use of surveillance technologies to track individuals, causing general concerns about data protection. Shortly after the outbreak, the leading STEM journal "Science" published an article, arguing that the implementation of intelligent physical distancing via digital contact-tracing is hitherto the most effective tool in limiting the spread of the virus. While the German central government commissioned SAP and Deutsche Telekom to create such an app, this met with a wave of scepticism and discussion over data protection, the residents of Taiwan, on the other hand, enjoyed over one hundred various apps that supported the public in the daily fight against the virus. By utilizing existing technological infrastructure such as Public Warning System or National Health Insurance PharmaCloud, so-called civil hackers, supported by the 'Digital Ministry' released various applications that facilitated the public's access to supplies and information necessary to stop the spread of the virus. Taiwan has thus managed to create an extensive and unique system of disease spread prevention that prioritized the both privacy and well-being of its citizens. Despite Taiwan's regional proximity to the center of the outbreak in Wuhan, the government in Taipei thus managed to successfully prevent the spread of the virus. Taiwan's response to the outbreak has won global recognition.

The author's personal experience of witnessing both the Ger-
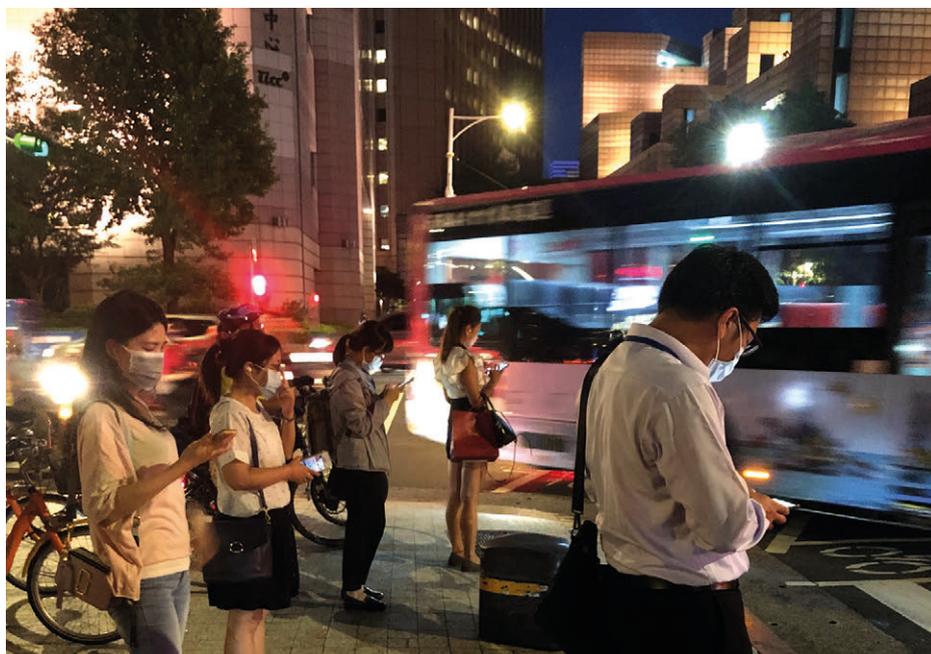
Passersby using their smartphones at the crossing in Taipei city center. Photo courtesy of the author

man and Taiwanese response to the pandemic motivated a comparative study of the German top-down approach – where the state assumed responsibility for the fight against the virus and for the creation of the technological means – against the highly democratic Taiwanese approach – where the responsibility for the fight was shared by civil society groups, while the state took on the role of coordinator. Taiwan's response might be seen an example that an active civil society, having an established communication channel with the government, can substantially raise the effectiveness of technological solutions in combating against a pandemic.

The article traces the origins of the Taiwanese civic technology movement to 2012, when a number of Taiwanese open source software developers, including Chia-Liang Kao and incumbent 'Digital Minister', Audrey Tang, began the g0v project with the aim to promote information transparency from the government and to create tools for citizens' participation. Their later engagement in the 2014 Sunflower Movement, which led to a political power shift in 2016, ensured long-term stability and support for the efforts of "civic hackers" in Taiwan, and laid the foundation for a coordinated response at the beginning of the COVID-19 epidemic.

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The Lingering Effects of Lockdown

by **Liu Cong** (Pen name)
*Social Science Scholar
living in Wuhan*

The full lockdown of the city of Wuhan in late January 2020, which included a full ban on public transport and motor vehicles, was announced and implemented without any prior warning to the local population. In the early days of the lockdown, Wuhan residents showed a strong spirit of volunteerism, building driver networks and offering hotel facilities to support medical staff -- a lesser-known aspect of the coronavirus response in China.

During the Lockdown, China relied on an existing social control system known as "grid management," which divides each local jurisdiction across the country into discrete "grids" that can be monitored by millions of low-level officials nationwide. In addition, so-called "imbedded cadres" would be dispatched to residential districts to implement the "close off and manage" policies. So-called "Imbedded cadres" (civil servants from various government agencies and government units, and others working in various capacities within the party-state system) would be sent to each residential compound. At their posts set up at the

A makeshift barrier outside a residential compound, watched over by an "imbedded cadre." Photo courtesy of the author.

entrance of the compounds, they woud question everyone entering or exiting, prohibiting any unauthorized movement. Only one person per family was allowed to go outside and purchase food and supplies every two or three days.

Most provincial borders were closed, and even arterial roads entering cities and villages were blocked off, preventing the movement of people. Inside Wuhan, citizens were allowed only to go to the hospitals located within their immediate administrative area.

From the point of view of the central government, the best solution was to reduce cross-regional mobility in order to limit the spread of disease, even if this meant mobilizing medical professionals from around the country to support Wuhan. Ultimately, more than 30,000 medical personnel from across the country were sent to support Wuhan.

Wuhan residents were the first in China to experience the smartphone-based "health code" system which labels citizens with different colors to assess their COVID-19 risk level based on their medical information and travel history. This system, which was implemented without any public discussion will most likely have long-term implications for data privacy in China.

ECHOWALL

HAPPY MO:MO: BUFF

NO MASK NO ENTRY

स्वास्थ्य सफा सुरक्षा

फैलन

मास्क प्रयोग गरौं

Social Distancing in Patan

Photo journal by **Frederic Maria Link**
Branch Office Kathmandu

The lockdown (bandabandi) in Nepal, and particularly in the Kathmandu Valley, was one of the strictest and longest in the world. It was announced in the evening of March 22 for the upcoming day and lasted almost four months, ending officially on July 21, but prohibitory orders were again imposed on the Kathmandu Valley starting from August 19 bringing everyday life to a halt and disrupting various annual festivals as well. Restrictions were eased from the middle of September, but measures to tackle the spread of the coronavirus are still in force.

The photographs were taken in preparation for a workshop of the DAAD project "Urban Transformation and Placemaking: Learning from South Asia and Germany" directed by Christiane Brosius.

Armed Police Force taking rest after clash with the local Newar community over the repeated shift of the Rato Machindranath Jatra. Photo: Pankaj Giri

East facing side of the Ashoka Stupa, Pulchowk.

A tailor at Kupondol took precautionary measures and is waiting for customers.

Poster on the chariot of Rato Machindranath informs about the safety protocol on the venue, Pulchowk.

Poster at Shri Chandesvari Mai, Phimbahal Pokhari, displaying information about the symptoms of the coronavirus and safety measures.

A fish vendor in Kupondol is waiting for customers.

Keeping the Distance: why Europeans Find it so Difficult to Learn from East Asia

by **Marina Rudyak, Maximilian Mayer** and **Marius Meinhof**

"We need not be at this point." Such was the verdict of virologist Isabella Eckerle commenting on the second lockdown in the German talk show "Hart aber fair (Tough but Fair)." With that, Eckerle, who heads the Centre for Novel Viral Diseases at the University Hospital in Geneva, contradicted all those who argue that it is still not clear how we should deal with this pandemic. Yet, when Eckerle pointed to the successful approaches in East Asia, she was interrupted by host Frank Plasberg: "they surely don't care much about democracy."

Plasberg's reaction is typical for a widespread rejection of East Asian strategies in dealing with the corona pandemic in Europe. Some—as in the debate about masks in spring—stress the Otherness of Asian cultures, invoking Confucian values or collectivism. Others, habitually reduce the debate to remarks about the Chinese surveillance state. Yet, thus keeping the distance does not get us anywhere.

Back to Normality?

The fact of the matter is that East Asian countries have largely returned to normality today. On 31 October, 130,000 people celebrated Taiwan Pride, Asia's largest LGBTQ parade. A total of 7 people have died of Covid-19 since the beginning of the pandemic in Taiwan and there have been no new infections for over 200 days and no lockdown, as in South Korea. In Vietnam, which has almost 30 million more inhabitants than France, only 35 people have died—in France, over 40,000 so far. China, too, has managed to bring the virus almost completely under control and the economy is recovering rapidly.

The goal of some of the massive restrictions on basic rights in spring this year was to gain time and to build up an infrastructure to keep the pandemic under control later on. Why have East Asian countries managed to do so while Europe has failed?

In East Asia, governments focused on rapidly suppressing local outbreaks, whereas in Europe local hot spots got out of control during the summer when epidemic measures were eased. East Asian countries tested on a massive scale and with public funding, while in Germany and other European countries testing was limited in availability and had to be paid for privately in some cases. East Asia implemented early and consistent infection chain tracing with the help of Big Data; while in Europe, digital networking in the health sector lags far behind. More importantly, perhaps, despite the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which offers the strictest protection of privacy in the world, a high degree of distrust towards digital technologies remains the rule: we prefer putting everyone back into lockdown to using an effective app on a mobile phone, or to allowing the digital monitoring of a few on quarantine. Our irrational scepticism towards face masks has no equivalent in East Asia.

The Principle of Eradication

From the outset, experts in Europe and East Asia adopted different strategies. After the experience with SARS in 2003, East Asian countries pursued the "principle of eradication." Australia chose a similar roadmap, aiming at preventing new infections as effectively as possible—successfully. In Europe, on the other hand, even the theoretical possibility of eradicating the virus seemed unimaginable. Instead, epidemiologists presented the familiar "influenza model," according to which the virus cannot be stopped only contained and a slow global spread must ultimately be accepted, as the only alternative.

The fact that these two radically different models to the pandemic exist is hardly ever mentioned in Euro-American discourse. Taiwan, South Korea, Vietnam, China and Mongolia are seldom mentioned, or their success in combating the pandemic is dismissed with general references to insularity or autocracy.

Instead of demonstrating a healthy dose of curiosity about the political, organisational, technical and medical measures that made some of these stunning victories over Covid-19 possible, there is aloofness and ignorance. Scepti-

Illustration of people wearing face masks in the crowd.
Source: https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/women-s-rights-and-covid-19

cism towards autocratic China has made a rational debate and pragmatic learning about how to deal with the pandemic more efficiently impossible and instead has highlighted the question of who is to blame, accompanied by a moralising undertone of regime critique.

Reservations about learning from authoritarian China are understandable, especially in the current charged geopolitical climate. But South Korea and Taiwan are liberal democracies. Blanket delineations between democracy and authoritarianism have made a differentiated understanding of East Asian prevention measures impossible.

The Habitus of Superiority

Asia experts in universities and think tanks across Europe could have helped point to successful approaches from Taipei to Seoul. Those with appropriate language skills have followed the corona outbreak in Asia closely from the start. A look at the European China Twitter in January would have been enough to see what was in store for Europe.

The intuitive distancing polemic against China's authoritarian regime and the stubborn ignorance of Asian success models can per-

haps best be termed epidemic *Orientalism*, the latter a mindset that precludes all learning, because the Other is seen as inferior and therefore, never possibly a model, only a foil for ideological demarcation. In talk shows and crisis meetings from Bern to Berlin, neither the "eradication model" nor the epidemiological expertise and experience of scientists from East Asia were heard. An opportunity missed when it would have been possible to seriously discuss alternative ways of contact tracing or local mass testing to be implemented successfully in Europe.

Orientalist prejudice and a habitus of superiority have made us fail in our handling of Covid-19. It is an attitude diametrically opposite to the self-image of liberal, enlightened societies. Should not open public discussion of different approaches and the ability to learn from others be our strength? European governments could have started a dialogue with leading East Asian experts in the spring. Already then, it was evident that it would be worthwhile looking for replicable concepts and instruments elsewhere. Instead, we now find ourselves in a second lockdown, with no predictable endpoint in sight. Isabella Eckerle was quite right: we need not be at this point.

A German version of this article appeared in Neue Züricher Zeitung, 20.11.2020:

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Corona as a Transcultural Student Experience

MATS-students' views and voices on the Covid19-pandemic

by **Takuma Melber**

In the lecture free period, in spring 2020 students of the Master's in Transcultural Studies (MATS) were writing term papers, were making preparations for or were already writing MA thesis. Everything looked like students' 'business as usual' for MATS students when in spring 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic took German academia. This article gives insights in student life at times of the Covid19-pandemic at its peak in Germany in spring 2020.

When the doors of Heidelberg University and all CATS facilities remained literally locked, living in Heidelberg far away from home became for international students in particular a mental burden. Concerns about family, friends and beloved ones at home were increasing.

During the lockdown international students in particular got the feeling to live in Heidelberg 'in absolute solitude', 'isolation' or of 'being in exile'. Others such as Chinese MATS student Wenting Liang experienced the Covid19-pandemic as being 'more independent from home' with the opportunity of having a view from abroad on the development of the pandemic in China. However, especially Chinese students got the feeling that 'Westerners' were looking down at them when the Covid19-spread in Europe started: They were warning of the dangers of the pandemic and tried to give for example flat mates advices to take the infection serious by wearing masks as a preventative measure (already before the German government gave respective official instructions). Unluckily, a few Asian and Asian-looking students were having unpleasant experience with acts of discrimination when wearing masks in the streets of Heidelberg but also in other European countries in times of Corona.

On the other hand, MATS-student Ryoko Hasegawa was 'impressed by the (German political) leaders' clear messages directed at the nationals and their solidarity, shown visibly through many banners hanged by the windows and in people's behavioral change in public spaces. To me, they reflected as a sign of trust between the government and citizens.' Most students tried to make the best of the special Covid19-situation: Nailya Salimbayeva started to acquire new languages and to practice photography and painting – while at the same time she was advancing her MA thesis. For coming to terms with the whole situation, students took also 'creative initiatives': Sophy Tio, for example, experienced the time of the 'German lockdown' in her home country Singapore. Struggling with keeping the balance between family life and academic work (even under the condition of time difference in synchronously conducted online classes), she started a home-bakery business – just for being able to fund her MATS-study.

Regarding study Paula Saez Bosch is offering a positive summary of the online semester: 'I had no idea such things like Zoom or Microsoft Teams even existed. I feel I have indeed learned new skills. For example, I learned to work with non-physical archives and realized the potential of online exhibitions: To give an example, I was at the Japan House London doing a virtual tour while wearing a pajama and laying in my bed.'

It is certainly no surprise that students were missing most the regular student everyday life: 'I really missed the interactions with my fellow students and ending online classes by logging out always felt so abrupt, leaving me feeling empty' told Miriam Gröning. Chinese student Jianlin Zhang added: 'The Mensa in the Altstadt, an important spot for me, not only for dining but also for regular social life, was not available anymore. I had to refrain myself from meeting friends and had to stay at home working on assignments. Some of my friends, who enrolled in Transcultural Studies with me in the same year will end up finishing studies without being able to be physically in Heidelberg – and no chance to say goodbye to each other in an acual farewell party. However, talking and socializing online became an essential part of our life.'

Miriam Gröning summarizes her situation with the following words: 'I was kept really busy by the online semester and was honestly surprised that I could stem the workload. It only worked out because we could not really have much of a social life anyway, I guess. I hope next semester will be better in terms of workload. I can deal with social distancing and restricting my contacts but I need a break every once in a while. I am glad that wearing masks is mandatory for example in shops and on the train. I try to avoid crowded places but I am generally feeling much more relaxed now than I have at the beginning of it all. Let's hope we can continue this way!'

Dr. Takuma Melber
is Historian by training and Coordinator of the Master in Transcultural Studies (MATS) at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS).

Comprehensive Documentation of Nepal's Cultural Heritage

by **Christiane Brosius** and **Axel Michaels**

Arcadia, a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, (www. arcadiafund.org.uk) has awarded almost €2.5 million to the Nepal Heritage Documentation Project (NHDP). The new grant will continue and expand the project for six years beyond its pilot phase (2018-2020), documenting endangered historical monuments in the Kathmandu valley. The NHDP is led by Dr. Christiane Brosius, Professor of Visual and Media Anthropology, and Dr. Axel Michaels, Professor of Classical Indology, at the University of Heidelberg. The project is a collaboration between the university and the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

The NHDP creates comprehensive digital records of Nepal's endangered historical monuments. These include temples, monasteries, palaces, and other historic buildings. The NHDP is the first project to comprehensively photograph, describe, survey, analyse these monuments, and make the records available in an open database. The new grant will continue the work in the Kathmandu valley, and expand it to western Nepal and other places that are culturally and historically related to the Kathmandu valley. The project aims to document and inventory more than 2,000 monuments, 2,500 inscriptions and 8,000 objects, as well as the unique intangible cultural heritage associated with the monuments: rituals, festivals and other social and religious events and practices. The project will also fo-

cus on the monuments endangered by earthquakes and urban change that have not yet been thoroughly documented. This initiative has already played an important role, for example, in the reconstruction of monuments after the devastating earthquakes of 2015.

The data resulting from the documentation will be added to the Digital Archive of Nepalese Arts and Architecture (DANAM) and Heidelberg University Library's image database, HeidICON. The team in Germany and Nepal comprises some 20 experts from the fields of history, architecture, ethnology, Indology and heritage management. IT specialists ensure high quality data management. The project works with Heidelberg University Library, the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) and the Institute for Spatial Information and Measurement Technology at Mainz University of Applied Sciences. In Nepal, the NHDP collaborates with the Saraf Foundation for Himalayan Traditions and Culture, the Department of Archaeology of the Nepalese government, the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust and UNESCO Nepal and other partners.

The Director General of the Department of Archaeology in Nepal, Damodar Gautam, has commented on Nepal Heritage Documentation Project (NHDP): "Such a detailed documentation will stand as a landmark not only for the preservation of potentially threatened cultural heritage but also for handing down the knowledge of the rich and extraordinary heritage to future generations, especially in and

of Nepal." According to Christiane Brosius, the project will "greatly strengthen the Asian studies and transcultural focus of the University of Heidelberg, especially research on cultural heritage, and will also have an impact on teaching".

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The buddhistic Pilachẽ Cidham Monastery in Patan before and after the earthquake in 2015 (photos: Bruce Owens, 2008, and Christiane Brosius, February 2019

Collaborative International Research Project: Religion, Medicine, and Women's Health in Premodern East Asia

by **Anna Andreeva**
Research Fellow, HCTS

In 2019, the American Academy of Religion and its International Connections Committee awarded an international research team, consisting of Dr. Anna Andreeva and colleagues based in the US, Taiwan and Switzerland, with a Collaborative International Research Grant. 2019 was the second most competitive year of the grant's history, and yet, the team project Religion, Medicine, and Women's Health in Premodern East Asia was selected from among the robust pool of applications.

Meeting in the collaborative interdisciplinary setting of Heidelberg's Centre for Asian Studies (CATS) with the support of its library resources for three days, the four scholars plan to read previously unstudied religious and medical sources on childbirth and women's health in classical Chinese and Japanese, while sharing and exchanging their own distinct expertise. Dr. Hsin-Yi Lin (Fo Guang University, Taiwan) has proposed to analyze several Dunhuang Buddhist manuscripts, dealing with pregnancy, abortion, and difficult childbirth. Dr. Anna Andreeva (HCTS, Heidelberg, Germany) will introduce Japanese Buddhist manuscripts and hand books, demonstrating the adoption of Indian and Chinese Buddhist and pharmacological knowledge on aiding conception. Dr. Jessey J. C. Choo (Rutgers University, USA) will focus on the Lingbao Daoist ritual manuals explaining the causes

of death in childbirth and the delivery of the souls of women who died in childbirth from the Blood Pool Hell. Dr. Daniela Tan (Zürich University, Switzerland) will investigate medical treatises containing theories of menstruation and structuring women's time regimes in medieval Japan. An interdisciplinary reading of these medical treatises, Buddhist sutras, esoteric talismans, and Daoist ritual manuals will result in their English translation with extensive cross-reference annotations that will create a new understanding of the not always cohesive religious and medical concepts of women's health in premodern East Asia. The texts and manuscripts proposed for reading and translation will shed light on key aspects of women's health as well as the impact of the application of expert knowledge on everyday lives of women in pre-1400 China and Japan. Due to the Corona virus travel restrictions, the team's meetings initially planned for March and May 2020 had to be postponed, but it is hoped that the four-member international team's research workshop will take place in Heidelberg later, in 2021.

Avalokiteśvara, the Merciful Mother (Ch. Cimu Guanyin 慈母観音, *Jp. Jimo Kannon). Hanging scroll. Paper, ink, colour. Early 20th century, after the Kano school. Private collection. Photo by Anna Andreeva.*

Global Korea: the Transnational Mobility of People, Goods, and Ideas

Education and Research Project on Korea, The Academy of Korean Studies (2019-2022)

Project Leaders
Prof. Dr. Anja Senz
Dr. Jaok Kwon-Hein
(Institute of Chinese Studies)

The professorship for Contemporary China and East Asian Studies at the Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS) has launched a new research project entitled "Global Korea: the Transnational Mobility of People, Goods, and Ideas," supported by the Academy of Korean Studies (2019-2022). The key objective of this project is to develop a better theoretical and empirical understanding of mobility between Korea and Europe. The project will ask: what are the characteristics, forms and patterns of movements of people, information, objects, and capital between Korea and Europe, in view of increased transnational mobilities today? What impact do these (im)mobilities have on questions of identity, power, and culture at both the practical and the discursive level? How do these influence everyday life? What is the historical, sociocultural and political significance, the consequences of these mobilities in a global context?

Doctoral candidate Xiaoying Jin, will investigate "Inclusion and Exclusion among Second-Generation East Asian Immigrants in Germany". She will examine how boundaries of 'otherness', specifically 'Asian-ness', have been forged among Korean, Chinese, and Japanese second-generation immigrants in Germany by comparing their migration process, the development of their sense of belonging and their perceptions of exclusion from German society. Moreover, she will clarify how the increased level of current transnational mobility of people and goods between Asia and Europe interconnects with constructions of 'Asian-ness' among second-generation immigrants in Germany as well as Europe more broadly.

The research project will be organizing annual workshops as well as international conferences, and provide scholarships for master students.

The project intends to inspire scientific conversations within and beyond the CATS but also to enhance education activities and academic exchange on contemporary Korea at CATS with a focus on a social science perspective. Teaching activities on politics, economics, and society in Korea shall broaden students' insights into contemporary Korea through regular guest lectures, visiting professorships and support for students writing theses related to Korea.

Prof. Dr. Anja Senz
is Professor for Contemporary Chinese Studies. Her research focuses on state-society relations in China, analyzing case studies from environmental governance, mobility studies and the development of Chinese borderlands.

Dr. Jaok Kwon-Hein
is Assistant Professor at the Institute of Chinese Studies. Her research interests include the sociology of development, labour and gender, and transnational labour mobility between Asia and Europe.

Xiaoying Jin
is currently a PhD Student at the Institute of Chinese Studies. She has studied public administration, Japanese studies, East Asian relations in Beijing, Kyoto, and Edinburgh before pursuing PhD study in Heidelberg.

DFG Project at the Institute of Japanese Studies
Mahāyāna in Europe

Japanese Buddhists and Their Contribution to Academic Knowledge on Buddhismus in Nineteenth-Century Europe

by **Hans Martin Krämer**
Professor for Japanese Studies

Be it the Dalai Lama, Zen centers, or the Thai Forest Tradition: Buddhism today is wildly popular outside of its countries of origin. This seemingly recent popularity actually has deep historical roots. Adding onto a first serious interest in the early nineteenth century, when Buddhist scriptures were made known in Europe by orientalists, a milestone of the spread of knowledge about Buddhism in the West was the participation of Asian Buddhists in the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. One of those participants was the teacher of D.T. Suzuki, the great popularizer of Zen Buddhism in the twentieth century, thus linking the nineteenth century to the success story of Zen.

In this well established genealogy, one important link is missing: the contribution of those Japanese Buddhists who were in close contact and dialogue with European orientalists towards the end of the nineteenth century. These contacts predate the World Parliament of Religions and had nothing to do with Zen. Instead, it was priests and lay representatives of the True Pure Land School that were most active abroad since the 1870s and shaped perceptions of Japanese Buddhism through their activities. And it was these activities that a recently concluded project at CATS, sponsored by the German Research Foundation (DFG), undertook to examine in detail.
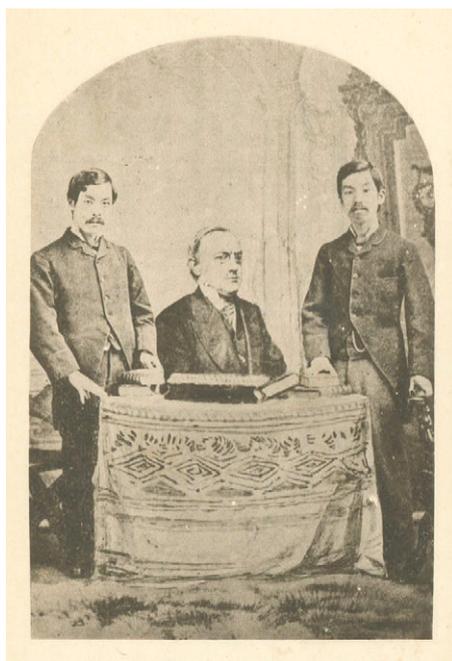
The Japanese Buddhist priests Nanjō Bun'yū (left) and Kasahara Kenju (right) of the True Pure Land School with the orientalist Friedrich Max Müller in Oxford, ca. 1880

The minor importance of Zen before 1900 was not the only surprising result of the work done within the project. Rather, intense debates about the relationship between religion, philosophy, and science in Japan led to a characterization of Buddhism at odds with what European orientalists had been stressing for decades, namely that Buddhism was essentially a philosopy. Although the philosophical merits of Buddhism were also debated in 1880s Japan, by the end of that decade it was rather the view that Buddhism was a religion that prevailed. That is to say, Buddhism was at its heart about belief, not about knowledge; it was not compatible with science, but rather complementary to it, offering a pathway to truths not accessible via scientific and rational methods, but no less valid.

Such views of Buddhism converged with ideas about religion that were beginning to gain currency in Europe. The reception of East Asian Buddhism thus dovetailed with a spiritualization of the concept of religion in Europe, leading to an increased acceptance of Mahāyāna Buddhism, previously shunned in Europe as a degeneration of "original Buddhism." The CATS project on *Mahāyāna in Europe* found that it was mainly due to the personal contacts Japanese Buddhists established in Europe and their publications in European languages that attitudes about Buddhism changed in Europe around 1900. This serves as an excellent example of agenda setting by non-Europeans and forces us to reconsider simplistic post-orientalist assumptions of European orders of knowledge as hegemonic in the nineteenth-century world.

A volume entitled *Learning from the West, Learning from the East: The Emergence of the Study of Buddhism in Japan and Europe before 1900*, edited by Stephan Licha and Hans Martin Krämer, will come out in 2021.

Prof. Dr. Hans Martin Krämer *joined Heidelberg University in 2012 and teaches Japanese Studies. He seeks to situate modern Japanese history within global history, using case studies from religious, social, and environmental history.*

New exhibition

Chapakhana – new Technology, new Markets, new Audiences

A Brief History of Book Printing in Northern India, 1800–1930

by **Nicole Merkel-Hilf**
FID Asien (South Asia)

Bookcover of the Urdu novel Mirʾāt al-ʿurūs von Naḏīr Aḥmad ([1871] 1949).

After being on display at Heidelberg University Library the exhibition on the history of book printing in northern India has now moved to the CATS Library to present rare books from the holdings of the CATS library and Heidelberg University Library.

The history of book printing on the Indian subcontinent can be traced back to the 8th century, when books were already produced in the Himalayan region using wooden blockprints. The first printing press with movable types was set up by Jesuit missionaries in Goa in 1556. In the following centuries, missionaries in particular turned out to be pioneers of printing by using the new technology to spread the Christian message. Initially book printing was limited to the coastal regions and southern India, but in the late 18th century letterpress printing also reached eastern India. The growing need for teaching material for the training of civil servants in the emerging colonial state contributed to the spread, as did the activities of missionaries who produced printing types for Indian regional languages and standardised fonts.

While printing presses with Indian owners were rare in the early years, the advent of lithography in the 1820s marked a turning point. Lithography developed into the preferred printing technique and promoted above all letterpress printing in the regional languages. The acquisition costs for this printing technique were low, which led to the establishment of numerous small printing companies by Indian entrepreneurs. Thus, book production opened up new fields of employment and earning opportunities for writers and calligraphers.

Technical innovation combined with the emergence of a new reading public led to the commercialisation of book printing from the second half of the 19th century. Print runs increased, many titles appeared in several editions, and new genres emerged in entertainment literature, such as novels and edifying literature. Book printing had become a strong cultural and political force.
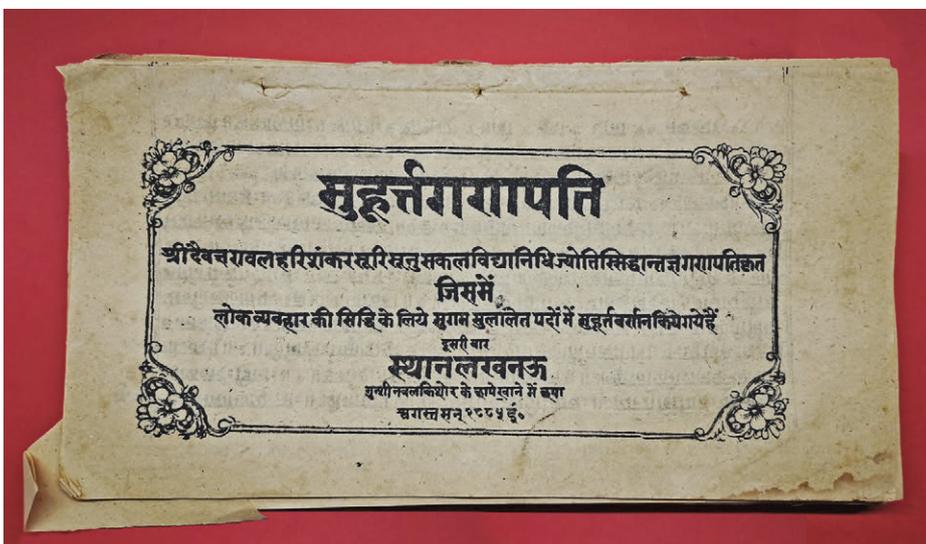
Lithographically printed edition of a 17th century text in pothi format.

The exhibition can be visited during the opening hours of the library:

Mon–Fri: 9 a.m.–8 p.m.
Sat: 12 a.m.–8 p.m.

Curators
Nicole Merkel-Hilf
Elizaveta Ilves
Dorothee Becker
(FID Asien / CATS Library)

Virtual exhibition
Daoist Ritual Manuscripts of the Yao
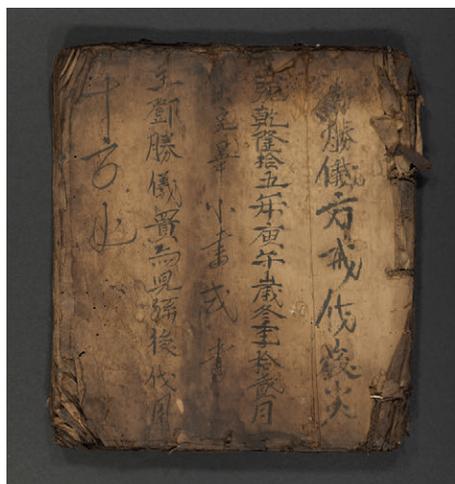
The manuscripts have their own will and can bring their owners harm if not treated respectfully...

Having been on display in the foyer of the CATS Library until recently, the exhibition "Bridges to the gods – Daoist ritual manuscripts of the Yao" is now online as virtual exhibition.

The Yao are a variegated category of ethnic groups known in China since the 7th century. Beginning with the early 19th century, many of them left China and moved to South East Asia. This includes the Lanten 藍靛 and Lu Mien 優勉, the original owners of the manuscripts that are now part of the Yao Manuscript Collection of the East Asian Department of the CATS Library. While the oldest of these manuscripts date back to 1750 and the most recent are from the 1980ies, the majority originates from the middle of the 19th century. They belong to a religious tradition that has been developed from Chinese Daoist origins but over time was adapted to the rituals and social structure of these non-centralized communities.

» https://projects.zo.uni-heidelberg.de/cats/library/exhibitions/yao/

On Display in Library Foyer
Murals of Tibet

Since February 2020, after more than one year residing wrapped up on its palette, and after being moved safely from our former SAI abode in Neuenheimer Feld to the CATS Library, the gorgeous book "Murals of Tibet" published by Taschen on dispkay in the foyer of the CATS Library.

The illustrations – printed in five colours including gold – are bound in a volume 70 centimetres high and 50 centimetres wide, the book weighs 23 kilograms. Six fold-outs give impressive panoramas of the paintings. The book rests on a foldable bookstand, made from recycled paper and designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architect and humanitarian pioneer Shigeru Ban.

Over a period of ten years, Thomas Laird photographed the murals in twelve Tibetan monasteries, temples and palaces. The presentation in the codex follows a route that might have been taken by pilgrims. A scholarly companion of more than 500 pages accom-

"A World Heritage landmark, this SUMO-sized publication presents the most precious surviving murals of Tibetan Buddhist culture. For the first time, these astonishing and intricate masterpieces can be appreciated in blazing colour and life-sizes resolution. Signed by this Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the book is a revelation for scholars, aficionados of Tibet as well as for practitioners of Buddhism, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness."

panies this book, where „… Thomas Laird contextualizes his journey in realizing this visual archive in a personal essay, Bob Thurman gives an insightful account of the spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism. Heather Stoddard researched all the site descriptions and captions of the murals throughout the book with the assistance of Cameron Bailey, except for those of the Lukhang, which were researched by Jakob Winkler." (Taschen Verlag)

You are welcome to browse through both the huge illustrated book and its companion in the foyer of the CATS Library. Our sincere gratitude for this generous gift goes to the humble donator who wants to remain anonymous.

» https://www.cats.uni-heidelberg.de/bibliothek/ausstellungen/murals-of-tibet.html.

My Semester Abroad at the UGM in Yogyakarta 2019/20

by **Marleen Lorenz**
MA Student, Anthropology

Hi, my name is Marleen Lorenz and I am studying ethnology and political science at the University of Heidelberg. From August 2019 to March 2020 I studied in Yogyakarta at the Department of Anthropology at Gadjah Mada University.

I chose the Gender Study, Child and Adolescent Studies and Southeast Asia / European Regional Ethnography courses, which were held in Indonesian. The university assigned buddies to the international students, organized an orientation event with a campus tour, an "expo" to get to know the student groups and a welcome dinner. I looked for my accommodation on site and decided on a homestay; a house on a quiet side street with flowers on the terrace and close to my language school and the campus - a house full of life, art and music and for me personally the perfect home.

In retrospect, I can say that my eight months in Indonesia unfortunately went by incredibly quickly.

From an ethnological perspective, I would state that I was able to experience a lot of theoretical content from my studies in practice and to experience for myself what it feels like not to be just a traveler abroad, but to try to take a step back, to observe and reflect. I suddenly had a very personal and emotional access to my otherwise theoretical studies and new questions arose. How far can anthropologists actually manage to maintain a certain neutrality with all the personal impressions that affect and change you very individually?

How do I react appropriately when a new friend touches my white skin and tells me with a smile

A visit to Borobudur, the world's largest Buddhist temple and UNESCO World Heritage Site, in Central Java

and without any reproach that he is jealous of the possibilities that I have with this skin color?

To be honest, I often quarreled with terms like "embodiment" and "cultural imprint" because I had the opinion that, by obtaining information, logical thinking and free will, you always have a choice of what you want from life and what concepts you have of the world. Thus, I was even more surprised to gradually notice in myself what cultural identity is. That in many cases I am willing and also able to adapt and integrate into a new culture, but my own view and my own feelings never really disappeared and there are limits to what I can actually understand as a stranger in another culture.

Some statements can only be understood properly if you have a better understanding of the language and know how to play with it. When you suddenly catch yourself communicating differently automatically, changing gestures, and adapting habits that you previously felt were completely unnecessary or even a waste of time. After a while I learned that central terms from our everyday life are only cul-

tural constructs (wealth, success - and above all the concept of time) and how cautious one should be about carelessly transferring them to other cultures.

In a conversation with my landlord, he said that for many people he knows from the "West", the so-called balance is missing. If you take away, you must give too, he said. If we destroy the environment, it destroys us. When people always strive for more and are never satisfied, it breaks them. According to him, it is always about balance. About taking and giving.

And Indonesia gave me a lot.

Can't Help Myself at the Venice Biennale

by **Giulia Pra Floriani**
*Doctoral Candidate,
Graduate Programme for
Transcultural Studies*

Outside the reinsuring environment of the Chinese Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale, the much less reinsuring work *Can't Help Myself* by Sun Yuan and Peng Yu, commissioned by the Guggenheim Museum in 2016, was featured in the Central pavilion curated by Ralph Rugoff in the Giardini area. The work consists of a huge mechanical arm that desperately tries to keep a dark red liquid inside the limits of the square space its sensors are programmed to control. Far from looking like a regular robot, the arm sometimes moves as if it was human, dancing in the glass cube that separates it from the audience.

According to the artists, the uncontrollable liquid that the machine keeps trying to contain conjures what they perceive to be art's essential elusiveness, its defiant refusal to being pinned down and fixed in place. Even if I see what they mean with this statement, I feel this work talks more about our contemporary reality. The robot suggested to me the existence of a mechanized control of society that keeps some human features but hides the human actor behind it, reminding me of facial recognition and the overwhelming technology-based social control in China. The curator Ralph Rugoff probably read this work in a similar way, as the work is shown together with a cement wall covered with barbed

Sun Yuan and Peng Yu, Can't Help Myself, exhibition view at the 2019 Venice Biennale.

wire (Teresa Margolles, *Muro Ciudad Juárez, 2010*), itself a strong symbol reminding us that segregation and violence are all around.

One of the features I find most powerful in much Contemporary art is that its focus is not necessarily the artist's intention, instead, the audience has an active interpretative role. Although their previous works realized with human bodies and fat reached the limits of blasphemy and illegality and had made me shiver as much as the spine-chilling 'scientific' exhibition of dead human bodies at the Heidelberg Altes Hallenbad, I should thank Sun Yuan and Peng Yu for letting me rethink some important issues, and I hope they will go on working with robots instead of human bodies.

Giulia Pra Floriani
works within the frame of the Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies to develop her Ph.D. thesis on photojournalism in China at the turn of the twentieth century. Before joining the Institute of East Asian Art History, she has studied Chinese language and art history in Venice, Xi'an and Beijing.

The Institute of Anthropology comprises two professorships, two associated professorships are located in the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies and the South Asia Institute. The regional focus in research is on the insular and the continental South East Asia as well as South Asia.

Institute of Anthropol

ogy

Highlights from the Institute of Anthropology

by **Guido Sprenger**
Acting Director

In the past few years, the Institute of Anthropology has deepened and widened its diverse research foci, with special attention to human-environment relationships, ritual, cosmology and religion. Its regional focus remains on Southeast and South Asia, with researchers studying both the insular and the mainland parts of this region. However, in teaching and research, close relations exist with regional studies on medical, media and urban anthropology.

For over one year now, Viola Thimm is funded by an Olympia Morata Grant for her analysis of the way middle class Malaysian Muslim women combine their pilgrimages to Arabia with shopping, with important implications for gender, fashion and religion.

Annette Hornbacher, together with William Sax of the SAI, is studying Tantric Text Practices in ethnographic comparison between Bali and North India, thus bridging the two main regions of anthropology in Heidelberg. They ask how tantric practices persist and what their signifcance is for ciontemporary people. The linkages they study are subtle, remote, concern esoteric knowledge and are often unacknowledged. However, they provide substantial new insights how tantric concepts are practiced until today.

Guido Sprenger is extending interdisciplinary collaboration in new ways with a project on self regulation and change, together with Christiane Schwieren (Economics) and Jan Rummel (Psychology). This also implies to fuse methods. The project will bring anthropology to behavioral science experiments and behavioral experiments to a remote region of Southeast Asia. Sprenger also continues with "Plural Ecologies in Conflict," a German-wide network of anthropologisrs working on Southeast Asia with international connections, that combines questions of the ontology of non-humans with political ecology. Here, theory develops directly from regional studies.

The Institute's teaching staff also continues to support student careers. Last year saw the publication of "Thinks Tanks, Silikon Valley und 'flüchtige Überwachung,'" a student-based volume edited by Andreas Kopietz and the late Ulrich Oberdiek (LitVerlag), while students, with support from Lukas Ley, will edit a forum in an upcoming issue of the prestigious journal Social Anthropology.

Despite the restrictions on attendance, the upcoming semester will a see a fresh round oft he institute's colloquium, featuring online talks by renowned international scholars – every other Tuesday from 5.00 to 7.00 p.m.

Prof. Dr. Guido Sprenger
joined Heidelberg University in 2010, after positions at the Academia Sinica, Taipei and the University of Münster. Studying Laos since 2000, he aims to understand the reality of spirits and the way societies reproduce by processing their social and natural environment.

The Ruins of Coastal Protection

by **Lukas Ley**
Assistant Professor

In March 2020, I conducted exploratory research on coastal development in the Mediterranean. I was interested in how governance and ecological transformations refashion the politics and poetics of coastal protection in France and Italy. I've been conducting research on coastal protection in Indonesia since 2014 and was looking to observe how social forces and climate change intersect to redefine and redraw the edge of the sea elsewhere. Insights from this trip fed into my application for a DFG Emmy Noether grant submitted in August 2020. In this report, I would like to offer some preliminary reflections on a potential site of this research project: Marseille.

On a sunny day, too warm for March, I visited the offices of a small start-up located in Marseille-Fos Port, France's leading seaport. The company Géocorail, founded in 2012, with a current staff of 8, reinforces sand beds and prevents abrasion to counteract the destruction of coastal structures, such as breakwaters, docks, or embankments. Géocorail is also the brand name of the patented electrochemical process that the company applies to prevent erosion. The process was originally designed by former employees of *Gaz de France*. It allows sediment found in seawater to aggregate and form a stone-like, solid mass, or, in more technical terms, a "calcareous mineral agglomerate." This agglomerate has properties similar to limestone or concrete. Géocorail can thus patch up cracked or fissured underwater structures. The in situ "germina-tive" process uses available non-organic material, such as sand or shells. It also binds anthropogenic wastes like glass shards. They are transformed into a durable support compound for rock, harbour and offshore infrastructure. To kick off this germinative process, engineers submerge metallic cathodes in seawater and send a low current through it. Reverse electrolysis then leads particles to gravitate to the grid and accrete. The company has tried to generate whole breakwaters from scratch using this procedure. Distinguishing themselves from the concrete industry, it calls their product "natural concrete."

I read Géocorail's efforts to extend the lifespans of humanmade coastal infrastructures as an expression of what Wakefield and Braun (2019:213) called the practice of "inhabit[ing] capitalist ruins in a more-than-human world." As they argue, humans may not stand at the center of these ruins, but other species and nonhuman actors. "Natural concrete" is the result of ascribing new meanings to and valorizing nonhumans, such as sediment and seawater. It signals a new imaginary and politics of infrastructuring the coast, moving on from sand-based construction. Géocorail is still at an experimental stage, as the material shows different results in different marine settings: for instance, engineers are testing it in the Wallis and Futuna Islands, a small French overseas territory in the South Pacific. These initial insights suggest that inhabiting our capitalist ruins depends on mobilizing nonhuman others and subjecting them to new regimes of value production.

Lukas Ley
is a social anthropologist and teaches political anthropology and urban studies at the Institute of Anthropology. He received his PhD from the University of Toronto in 2017. He is a member of the transnational Ethnography Lab (Toronto/Berlin) and the DFG-funded research network 'Infrastructure and the remaking of Asia through adapting, orchestrating and cooperating.' He also works as assistant editor for Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale.

20 x Manly Matters

by **Christiane Brosius**
*Professor of Visual and
Media Anthropology*

In 2017, Tasveer Ghar – A House of Pictures (Digital Archive on South Asia visual popular culture, founded in Heidelberg in 2006 by Christiane Brosius, Sumathi Ramaswamy and Yousuf Saeed), launched the theme 'Manly Matters: Representations of Maleness in South Asian Popular Visual Practice'. The collaborative invited young as well as senior scholars to research and contribute visual galleries and essays on the said theme. The culmination of this project funded by Ramaswamy's Annelies Maier Research Award and Tasveerghar's activities to capture the vibrant visual popular culture in and of South Asia took place in October 2020. Besides unique materials and foci, several authors are based at CATS, for instance Kama Mclean, the newly appointed Professor of South Asian History at SAI (Fig. 1), and Hans Harder, professor of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures at SAI (Fig. 2).

 Please visit Tasveerghar's website for more details and the open access essays:

» http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/manly-matters-vision-statement.html
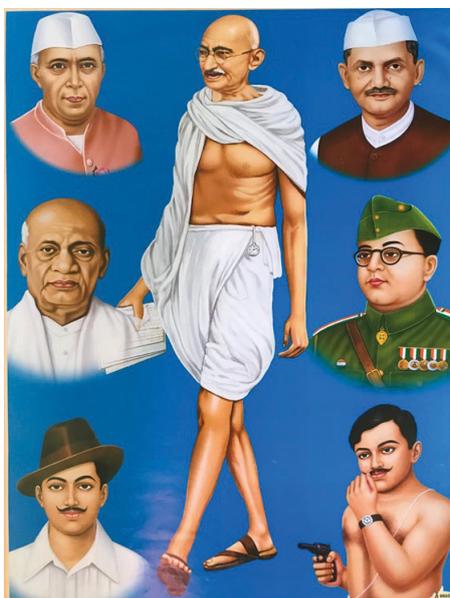
Fig. 1 *"National Leaders," published by Khanna Posters, purchased in New Delhi, 2007. Author's collection, from Kama Mclean's essay The Embodiment of Quicksilver: Picturing Chandrashekhar Azad*
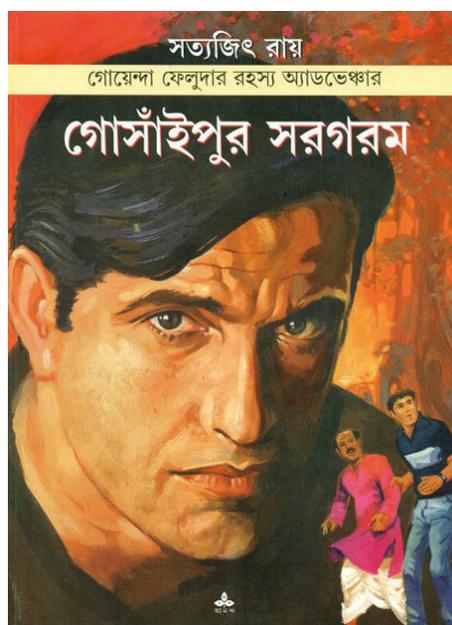

Fig. 2 *Cover image from Satyajit Ray's film "Gosainpur Sargaram" (Gosainpur in Heat) adapted as graphic novel by Abhijit Chattopadhyay, Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, 2010, in the essay by Hans Harder: Hypermasculinity in Bengali Comic Books.*

Balinese COVID-pills from *kapok* Thorns and the Pangolin in Old Javanese Court Poetry

by **Jiří Jákl**
Assistant Professor

In March 2020 I had a chance to visit a village of Padangan, Pupuan, in the Tabanan district in Bali, and study during a too-short fieldwork some of the healing practices of village *balians* (folk healers), in particular a remarkable effort to combat COVID-19 virus by locally-produced remedies. The island of Bali, a mostly Hindu enclave in Indonesia, the country with the world's largest Islamic population, is among the places most severely hit by the new virus. Quite unsurprisingly, the Balinese people employ a whole array of ritual and non-ritual means to suppress the virus. Among the most exciting local practices aimed to combat COVID-19 virus are the so-called 'COVID-pills' (*pil kobit*), a dry concoction obtained by a com-

plex and only partially disclosed process of boiling down a number of herbal and mineral ingredients. Though being rather secretive, my informants were keen to disclose the identity of a major element of the pills, which is the dried thorns of the kapok tree, a large tree that is well-known for its fibers, vegetable filements harvested from its pods, which had in the past a number of practical and medical uses: kapok fibres filled the mats and pillows, and its antibacterial properties made it useful to clean open wounds.

Interestingly, some senior informants expressed their belief that among the vectors behind the spread of COVID-19 virus in Southeast Asia are pangolins. This information almost instantly reminded me of my previous reading of Old

Javanese *kakawins*, court poems written in the literary register of Old Javanese, a language that was used in Java between the 9-15th centuries CE, and later also in Bali as a language of literature and ritual. The pangolin has a unique status in Old Javanese literature, a status which is unlike that of any other animals known to the pre-modern Javanese and Balinese people (Jákl 2019). Visual representation of a pangolin also figures in an enigmatic narrative relief on Candi Śiwa, the major temple in the Prambanan complex in Central Java. Surprisingly, as early as in the 9th century CE the pangolin was – for reasons not entirely clear – associated with the kapok tree, thorns of which are part of the remedy against COVID-19 in Bali today.

Publications
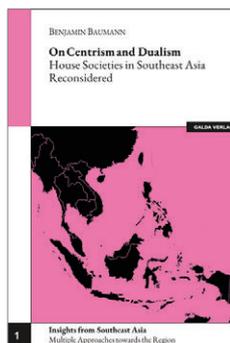
Benjamin Baumann
**On Centrism and Dualism.
House Societies in
Southeast Asia Reconsidered**
Glienicke, Galda Verlag, 2020

The starting point of this book is Shelly Errington's comparative model of Southeast Asian social formations. Although his model features prominently in anthropological discussions of the region, no detailed analysis of the comparative approach that produced the model exists. Baumann traces the genealogy of Errington's model and provides detailed explications of its basic theoretical premises. At the same time, his genealogical reading of this anthropological model presents an easy accessible introduction to Structural Anthropology's theoretical premises and a discussion of an alternative regionalization that transcends the geopolitical units of our scholarly common sense.
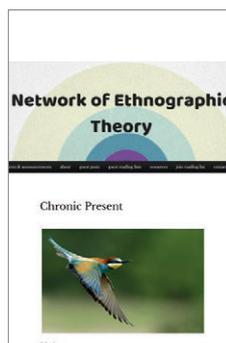
Lukas Ley
**EASA Network of
Ethnographic Theory
Guest Reading Lists.
Chronic Present**
Network of Ethnographic Theory
September 2020
https://networkofethnographictheory.wordpress.com/chronic-present

This reading list covers studies within anthropology and cognate disciplines that deal with situations where people are stuck in the present. As a social scientific concept, the chronic present attempts to account for the fact that certain individuals or communities entertain unproductive relationships to time and have little to no say in the making of the future. Assuming an unchanging present allows us to examine the cultural and social configurations that tie people to a certain position in time.

The chronic present further reckons with the emotional and bodily effects of an advanced encapsulation by the present by framing the perception and experience of stagnation and repetition.
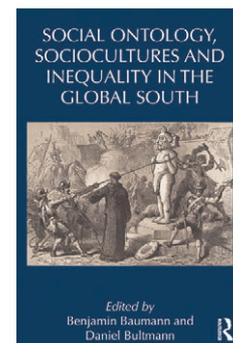
Benjamin Baumann,
Daniel Bultmann (eds.)
**Social Ontology,
Sociocultures, and Inequality
in the Global South**
London/New York, Routledge, 2020

All chapters of this edited volume focus on the relation between social ontology and structures of social inequality. The contributors argue that each society comprises several historical layers of social ontology that correspond to layers of inequality, which are referred to as sociocultures. Thereby, the volume explains why and how structures of inequality differ between contemporary collectives in the global South, even though all of them seem to have similar structures, institutions, and economies. The volume is the first book studying systematically sociocultures in the global South from an interdisciplinary perspective and one of the first to explore social ontology as interpretation of society. The individual chapters apply the same theoretical and methodological framework, which is explained in two introductory chapters. The volume covers Brazil, Cambodia, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Laos, and Thailand.

The Everyday in Corona Times. An Introduction to Visual and Media Anthropology

(Summer Term 2020)

by **Christiane Brosius** and **Cathrine Bublatzky**

Facing the unpredictable and complex situation caused by the Covid19 Pandemic, students and lecturers of this BA Seminar created a critical collaborative and experimental exchange about everyday life in Corona times from the perspective of visual and media ethnology.

The research based online class (and the resulting blog link), conceptualized and conducted by us with the kind support by Manvi Gautam, engaged concepts related to crisis and sudden changes, such as solidarity and surveillance, private and public spaces. Concepts and methods from visual and media ethnology helped to grasp the theme of social distancing in everyday life. We studied the affective and physical relations and processes by exploring how images and media create or make visible what is sometimes overlooked and of temporal quality.

Online group discussions and offline reading/writing sessions were used to consider the 'heart' of ethnology: social relationships, what/who defines and transforms them. 'Social distance' played a key role in discussing the question of access and restriction to protest spaces, in experiences of loneliness, but also the formation of new relations. Can social distance be coped with or even overcome through image and media production and what alternative everyday worlds emerge with and through them (see Italy: balcony music)? Can we see formations of solidaric practice in Covid19 times, new fabrics of cities? We observed the role of global and local protest or labour networks, production chains as well as class-based, religious or caste asymmetries – both in relation to lockdown policies and mobilities as well as pro-democracy protests.

The outcome of this class were student blog entries on the concepts of solidarity and participation, on home, family and civil society, around the partly overlapping themes of homing (creating and contesting the idea and experience of 'home'; familial and private life, home office, inequality and privilege); public and urban space (transformation of, access or restriction to public space and alternative publics); and participation, democracy and surveillance (apps and social media, protest and criticism).

Prof. Dr. Christiane Brosius
is Professor of Visual and Media Anthropology at the HCTS. She researches and teaches on urban transformation, artistic practices and cultural heritage and co-directs (with Axel Michaels) the Nepal heritage Documentation Project (NHDP).

Dr. Cathrine Bublatzky
is assistant professor in Visual and Media Anthropology at the Chair of Prof. Christiane Brosius at the HCTS. She researches and teaches visual and media cultures in the context of migration, museums studies and popular cultures with a focus on India, Iran and Europe.

Alltag in Corona-Zeiten
Eine Einführung in die Visuelle und Medienethnologie

https://alltagincoronazeiten.wordpress.com

The Centre for East Asian Studies comprises four professorships of Chinese Studies, two of Japanese Studies and two of East Asian Art History. Two Associated professorships are located in the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies. Additionally, regular guest professorships have been established in all three departments and a guest lecture programme focusing on the history, culture and society of Taiwan.

Centre for East Asian

Studies

Centre for East Asian Studies: Moving On

by **Joachim Kurtz**
Acting Director

The Centre for East Asian Studies (ZO) is looking back on an exceptionally busy year. Just as our three institutes (Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies, and East Asian Art History) finally moved into our shared new home in CATS—in fact even before all boxes had been unpacked and the stacks in our shining library were filled—the world ground to a halt due to a global pandemic that was first felt in the region we study. Adapting our teaching and research to this challenge was not an easy task for students, staff and faculty. Still, with creativity, patience, persistence and, above all perhaps, much humor and goodwill, we managed to stay on course, advance our many projects, and open up new routes of inquiry.

The following pages provide more information about our recent activities. The topics and formats reflect the wide array of subjects that researchers based in the ZO study, teach, and share with the broader public. Historically, the arc of our explorations stretches from the Neolithic to the twenty-first century; thematically, our work ranges from archeological and codicological studies through literary, historical, religious, and philosophical investigations to research in the areas of media studies, political science, sociology, and economics. Results are presented not only in academic publications and conference papers but also in newspaper articles, film and lecture series, podium discussions, exhibitions and concerts as well as a "laboratory" reaching out to high school students and their teachers.

Keeping all these formats accessible within and beyond the university was one of the challenges we faced over the past months. Relying on colleagues with an active interest in digital humanities, we added a virtual dimension to many projects and events. One example is the CATS Library's first online exhibition "Brücke zu den Göttern: Taoistische Ritual-Manuskripte der Yao" (Bridge to the Gods: Daoist Ritual Manuscript of the Yao), now accessible via

» https://projects.zo.uni-heidel-berg.de/cats/library/exhibitions/yao

Virtual links were also crucial for maintaining connections with scholars and students throughout East Asia, many of whom were affected not only by the viral threat but no less by political disruptions whose ferocity increased while the world seemed distracted. In times like these, our Centre's mission of studying China, Japan, and Korea in their overlapping regional and global contexts becomes ever more indispensable.

Prof. Dr. Joachim Kurtz
joined Heidelberg University in 2009 as professor of Intellectual History and Chinese Studies and currently serves as ZO speaker. His research focuses on cultural exchange between East Asia and Europe with special emphasis on philosophy, logic, political theory, and translation.

Ostasien Aktuell

Lectures and Working Paper Series

Project Leaders
Prof. Dr. Anja Senz
Dr. Jaok Kwon-Hein
(Institute of Chinese Studies)

"East Asia Today" (*Ostasien Aktuell*) is the title of a regular series of lectures and panel discussions organized since 2018 by the team of Prof. Anja Senz at the Institute of Chinese Studies. Thematically, the lecture series focusses on current political, economic and social issues in East Asia, including developments in the Chinese-speaking world, Korea and Japan, as well as the diverse exchange processes between the region and other parts of the world.

"East Asia Today—Working Papers" is a series that will make selected contributions from this lecture series available to everyone interested with the intention to broaden the scope of the discussion. All working papers are available in PDF format and can be downloaded free of charge:

» https://ostasien-aktuell.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/oawp/

For questions please contact

» ostasien-aktuell@zo.uni-heidelberg.de
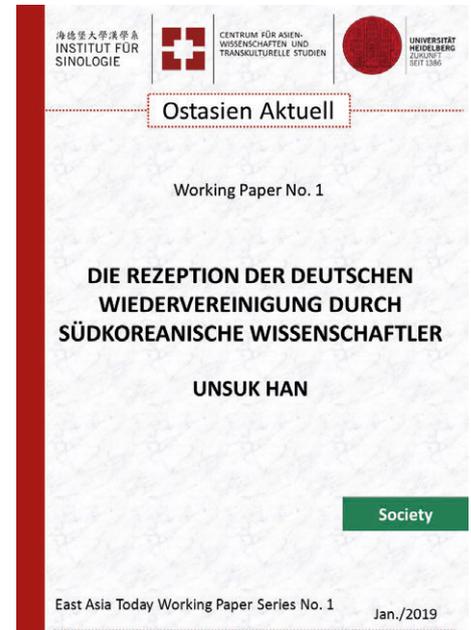
First issue of the "Ostasien Aktuell Working Paper" series.

Lecture series "Ostasien Aktuell (East Asia Today)"

Digital Literary Map of Japan: Project Prolongation for Two More Years

Project Leader
Prof. Dr. Judit Árokay
(Institute of Japanese Studies)

https://literarymaps.nijl.ac.jp

The idea for a Digital Literary Map of Japan was born at the Marsilius Kolleg. The aim is to visualize places of literary importance on a digital map of Japan. Poetic places (utamakura 歌枕, meisho 名所) are one of the most important rhetorical features in Japanese pre-modern literature. They pervade different textual genres and even the visual arts. Without an insight into their symbolism, it is impossible to grasp their meaning in a given context. The digital map visualizes the places on a map and integrates information about their topography, their history, with poetic examples. The project was funded originally by the Marsilius Kolleg, subsequently by the National Institute of Japanese Literature (Tokyo) and has now been extended for two more years with funding from Osaka University.

Mehr vom A/anderen w/Wissen—China School Academy Commences

by **Odila Schröder**
Project Member
China-Schul-Akademie
and **Barbara Mittler**
Professor for Chinese Studies

Recent studies have recognized a significant lack of knowledge about China and the failure to include China in German school curricula - prompting the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) to develop a strategy to improve „China competence" at German schools. The China School Academy (China-Schul-Akademie CSA), a project funded by the BMBF, has taken up work at the Institute of Chinese Studies, in September 2020. Under the direction of Prof. Dr. Barbara Mittler, CSA will develop educational tools and materials for teaching China in high schools across Germany to facilitate the integration of the history, the politics, and the (im-material) cultural heritage of China in the curricula of German schools at all levels.

In contrast to previous projects based in Heidelberg, such as the SHAN Schulteam project "China to the Schools—China an die Schulen!" which remains active at the Institute of Chinese Studies, and in cooperation and conjunction with the CATS Schülerlabor, CSA's main concern is not language teaching. Instead, the goal is to enable teachers in fields such as History, Politics & Economics, Geography, Ethics/Religion, Literature and Music to include Chinese case studies in their teaching. And while focused on China, the project will challenge teachers and students to dip their toes into broader questions of transculturality. Teaching regionally specific knowledge and taking a transcultural perspective shall raise an understanding that by knowing more about the other, we are potentially acquiring a richer perspective on what we know ourselves.

Over the course of four years, team members will develop so-called "seminar courses", typically taught in years 11-12 at German high schools. They will include a broad range of topics and approaches to China and offer students the opportunity to engage with primary materials and get to know different research methodologies. Further teaching materials for different levels will be developed in accordance with current school curricula. Course

Logo China-Schul-Akademie

materials will go through several rounds of testing at schools for didactic optimization. They will be made available on a digital Platform *ChinaPerspectives* which will include a wide range of audio-visual material, worksheets, as well as digital tools and a virtual classroom for blended learning.

Two project coordinators, Stefanie Elbern and Odila Schröder, and two doctoral students, Jonas Schmid and Marjolijn Kaiser, have now begun to review available sources, assess school curricula, and conceptualize suitable educational materials. First workshops and teacher training sessions are scheduled to take place later this year and in early 2021. Sebastian Vogt is responsible for the project's IT infrastructure, in particular its web-presence and a database of interactive teaching tools and materials.

Publications

Barbara Mittler,
Joachim & Natascha Gentz,
Catherine Vance Yeh (eds.)
**China and the World—the World
and China**
OSTASIEN Verlag, Gossenberg
Oktober 2019, 1.000 pp.
ISBN 978-3-946114-63-5

A wide range of topics is covered in this collection of four volumes of essays in honor of Rudolf G. Wagner former director of the Cluster Asia and Europe in a Global Context, one of the founding pillars of CATS. The expansive time frame from pre-modern to contemporary China reflect the breadth of his own scholarship. The essays are also testimony to his ability to connect with scholars across the globe, across disciplines and generations.

The first volume *(Transcultural Perspectives on Pre-modern China)* offers contributions relating to the pre-modern period. The first six on the early China period focus on conceptual questions of text interpretation and reconstruction, the following five on medieval China deal with religious topics and the last four, covering the late imperial period, address issues of the entangled relationship between self and other.

The contributions in the second volume *(Transcultural Perspectives on Late Imperial China)* are linked by a common interest in questions of transculturality, hybridity, contact zones and third spaces. In addition, the importance of translation as a cultural practice and new perceptions and understandings of the role of translation in Late Qing

cross- and transcultural interactions and the significant impact of particular actor networks involved in these translations emerge as significant questions.

The studies in the third volume *(Transcultural Perspectives on Modern China)* span a long twentieth century of cultural production in China. They deal with questions of readership and reception, and, related to this, of persuasion, legitimation and trust: how does one successfully draw an audience in China; how does one convince; what is an effective rhetorics or argumentation?

The fourth volume *(Transcultural Perspectives on Global China)* is testimony to the imprint Rudolf G. Wagner has made beyond many borders, with contributions from Indology to Egyptology and Theology, from world history, to world literature, to Esperanto as a world language, and talking about travelling concepts and objects such as tea, comics, and knowledge.

Pierre Monnet, Thomas Maissen,
Barbara Mittler (eds.)
**Les usages de la temporalité
dans les sciences sociales.**
Winkler Verlag Bochum
2019, 340 pp.

There is hardly a society that does not measure its time so that people can fill it, even inhabit it. Ways of representing and classifying time are extremely diverse. This volume studies these multiple ways of ordering time in the different fields of the humanities and the social sciences.
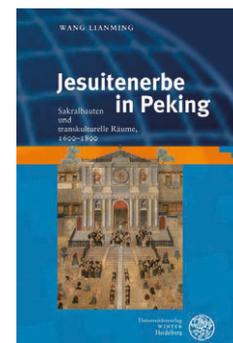
Lianming Wang
**Jesuitenerbe in Peking:
Sakralbauten und transkulturelle
Räume 1600-1800**
Universitätsverlag Winter Heidelberg
July 2020, 479 pp.
ISBN: 978-3-8253-6937-8

Focusing on three Beijing Jesuit churches and their related transcultural spaces, this volume offers insights into the development of Jesuit art and architecture and contributes to current debates in global art history. The first three chapters focus on questions of historicization, self-expression, and the Jesuit church as urban spectacle and a public "contact zone." Additional chapters address the entanglement of Jesuit sacred spaces with Qing imperial zones, placing the Beijing Jesuit garden in a larger sphere of global 17th-18th c. horticultural and hydraulic practices.
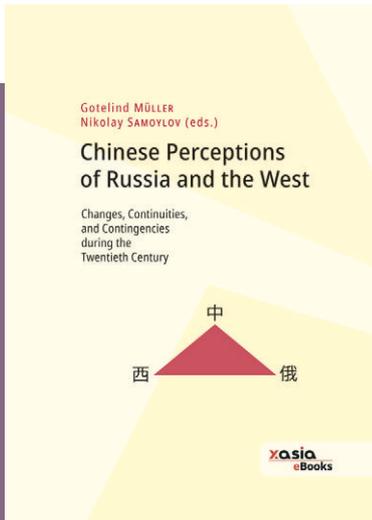
Gotelind Müller,
Nikolay Samoylov (eds.)

**Chinese Perceptions
of Russia and the West: Changes,
Continuities, and Contingencies
during the Twentieth Century**

A first edited volume has been published, stemming from a German-Russian project funded by the DFG-RFBR. In this project, the German-Russian research team from Heidelberg University and St. Petersburg State University has worked on exploring the topic together with colleagues from mainland China and Taiwan, concentrating on three major areas:

1. The field of socialization via a look into normative descriptions of Russia and "the West" in Chinese school textbooks which define images of the "other/s" from childhood on;

2. The field of literature and Chinese fictional representations of Russia and "the West" consumed by a Chinese reading public;

3. The field of visual and material manifestations which define images of the "other/s" in their own medial way and make them accessible also to a public far from purely dis- cursive levels and to those who do not actively look for them.

The book now published with CrossAsia eBooks aims at investigating changes and continuities in Chinese perceptions of Russia and the West during the 20th century, paying heed to the fact that the respective ascriptions and "frontlines" were historically contingent: who and what represented "Russia" or "the West" at a given time and place? Was "Russia" part of "the West", or not? And if it was, how? Which factors – foreign or indigenous – led to changes in Chinese perceptions and representations and why?
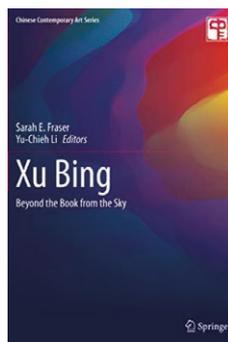
Sarah E. Fraser,
Yu-Chieh Li (eds.)
**Xu Bing:
Beyond the Book from the Sky**
Springer
June 2020, 240 pp.
ISBN: 978-981-15-3064-7

This edited volume positions Xu Bing's practices after his legendary *Book from the Sky* as a starting point to assess changes in the social and cultural conditions for art-making and the aesthetic turns in the development of contemporary Chinese art in the past 30 years. The volume contains transcripts of Prof. Xu's lectures as the *2015 Heidelberg University Heinz Götze Distinguished Professor* and eight additional essays. These explore themes such as Xu's animal works, audience participation, new ink, prints, realism, socialist spectacle, and word play. A critical question addressed in these texts is what carries art to a global level beyond regional histories and cultural symbols. The authors critically re-examine art practices in their multi-layered context.

Can Xu Bing's trajectory be seen as a micro-history of post Cultural Revolution Chinese art? How does the Xu Bing phenomenon relate to other contemporary art practices and discourses?

Getty Connecting Art Histories: Upcoming Dissertation Workshops in Heidelberg

Workshop Director
Prof. Dr. Sarah Fraser
(Institute of East Asian
Art History)

Connecting Art Histories participants engage in object-based inquiry with Dr. Margareta Pavaloi, acting manager of the Ethnographic Museum Heidelberg (Völkerkundemuseum Heidelberg), 2019.

Connecting Art Histories mentor Prof. Craig Clunas photographs a display at the Frankfurt Museum of Applied Arts (Museum Angewandte Kunst). Photo July 24, 2019.

„The power and vitality of any scholarly discipline rest on its ability to forge connections—among people and ideas and across international boundaries." Connecting Art Histories, a grant program by the Getty Institute in Los Angeles „aims to strengthen the discipline of art history globally and increase opportunities for sustained intellectual exchange across national and regional borders. The initiative springs from the recognition that art history develops fresh lines of inquiry when scholars from diverse regions, career stages, and academic training are able to inform each other's ideas and methodologies." (Getty Foundation Initiatives)

The Getty Connecting Art History Program at Heidelberg University is an initiative designed to mentor the next generation of art historians in East Asian Art History. Our program began in China 2013-2016 with fieldwork projects on 20th century Chinese art in Beijing, Chengdu, Chongqing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai. In 2017-2018 we conducted team research in Berlin, London, Lyon, Oxford, and Paris. During 2019-2021 the program is held in Heidelberg.

In 2021, the Institute for East Asian Art History will be organizer and host of Getty-funded international workshops for PhD Candidates in East Asian Art History selected from top-caliber institutions. Sessions, held at Heidelberg, will be augmented by research in European and U.K. museums.

The Dissertation Workshops will take place in Heidelberg,
July 26 – August 6, 2021.

- Doctoral participants are recruited from: Princeton; Ohio State; Universität Wien; SOAS-University of London; Peking University; Palace Museum, Beijing; University of Chicago; University of Pennsylvania; Universi- ty of Tokyo; Rice University; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Fudan University; and Universität Heidelberg

- Faculty Mentors include: Faculty from Heidelberg; Harvard University; Universität Wien; SOAS-University of London; University of Oxford; and UCLA

Lectures open to the University Community will be held on August 2-5, 2021, including Profs. Sarah E. Fraser, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Lothar Ledderose, Lukas Nickel, and Melanie Trede.

"If you look with different eyes … "

10 Years of Critical Dialogue with China at the Confucius Institute in Heidelberg

by **Barbara Mittler**
Professor for Chinese Studies

China and Germany are important international trading partners but they also enrich each other through cultural exchange. Over the past decade, the Confucius Institute in Heidelberg which celebrated its 10th anniversary on 10.10.2020, has devoted itself to enabling an open and critical dialogue between the two countries. On the occasion, which took place in the form of a live-streamed event in the Alte Aula, with no audience, University Rector, Dr. Bernhard Eitel, and Mayor of the City of Heidelberg, Dr. Joachim Gerner, both emphasized the important bridging function that the Confucius Institute fulfils— especially in times when China becomes a powerful and not always easy player to reckon with in global affairs. The Institute serves as a pivot between the fundamental research institutions on China and Asia in Heidelberg, brought together at the new Center for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS), and partners in industry, technology and economy as well as the city and the citizens of Heidelberg.

In a retrospective of some of the projects undertaken in the last ten years—the most spectacular among them the staging of Bun-ching LAM's chamber Opera WENJI: 18 songs of a nomad Flute (https://konfuzius-institut-heidel-berg.de/zer-ris-sen-wenji-auf-der-suche-nach-heimat/), a cooperation with the KlangForum and the Akademie für Darstellende Kunst Baden-Württemberg, performed to

Chen Peyee as WENJI in the Performance, directed by Johann Diel, Heidelberg, July 2019.
© Steven M. Schultz

much critical acclaim (and sold-out twice) for the opening of CATS in 2019 —the speakers at the ceremony repeatedly evoked the necessity for a transcultural dialogue to foster mutual understanding: "If you change your mood... If you look with different eyes..." those are the words of Zuoxian, king of the "Northern barbarians", as he courts Wenji, the woman he has kidnapped in Changsha, China (a "true" story from the 2nd century). He wins her heart, eventually, as he sings to her, plays the nomad flute for her, shows her the boundless beauties of nature in nomad land – and while they are not always in agreement, each begins to see with the eyes of the other, speak in the language of the other—understand.

Crossing borders can be terrifying and painful but it can also be beneficial: crossing borders allows for the broadening of our horizons and yet, it remains a challenge. The Heidelberg Confucius Institute has

taken up this challenge by teaching the Chinese language and reflecting critically on Chinese culture, past and present.

Only when we begin to speak the language of the other, only when, by absorbing more of the "other knowledge" (anderes Wissen), by knowing more about the Other (vom Anderen wissen), only through an informed approach to each other, can true communication happen. Only when we begin to cross borders, then, to get to know new worlds far beyond our own, can we decide how best to position ourselves: to know where to say yes—and no— but the dialogue must continue, as conflictual as it may be: the fate of the world is in our common hands (to modify a line from a poem "after Confucius" by Hans Bethge, set to music by Sigurd von Koch and performed at the event by members of the Klang-Forum, Marc J. Reichow, Piano and Matthias Horn, Baritone).

Students Curating a Painting Show

For the first time in the history of the Institute of East Asian Art History, two MA students were hired to curate a Japanese painting show in a museum. Emma Shu-hui Lin and Margó Krewinkel, had the opportunity to select Japanese hanging scrolls for a rotation of the Erwin Bältz Collection at the Linden-Museum in Stuttgart. The new installation was inaugurated on August 31, 2020, and will be on view at least for twelve months.

Prof. Dr. Melanie Trede, Margó Krewinkel, Emma Shu-hui Lin (Heidelberg University, and Susanne Barth (Director of Finance, Linden-Museum). Photo: Dominik Drasdow, Linden-Museum Stuttgart

A Transcultural Concert
Eingesperrt—Stimmen aus dem Kopfgefängnis
(Locked-in—Voices from the Prison in our Heads)

Concert publicity

by **Barbara Mittler**
Professor for Chinese Studies

On October 24th, at 8 pm, the Taiwan Studies Program at the Institute of Chinese Studies in cooperation with the KlangForum Heidelberg, will offer a concert featuring 3 world premieres by Chang Yu-Hui 張玉慧，Shen Ye 沈葉 und Clemens Gadenstätter on a theme which, although conceived long before Corona, is today, quite topical: "Locked-in—Voices from the Prison in our heads" reflects, transculturally, questions of exclusion and containment.

Austrian composer Clemens Gadenstätter in *die zelle* studies the example of a German locksmith, Julius Klingebiel (1904-1965), who becomes a painter of his inner worlds which he leaves on the walls of his isolation cell; Chang Yu-Hui, born in Taiwan and resident in Boston, USA, uses the example of facial recognition, which is being practised more and more as a matter of course all over the world. In *Saving Face*, she asks herself how this technique will delimit individual freedoms and identities. Shen Ye, finally, from Shanghai, in his *Space/Distance* takes the story of the Tower of Babel as his starting point, inviting his audience to relive the moment of being locked in and locked out by no longer being able to understand even the most simple things that may have appeared clear and well familiar just a moment earlier.

The concert will be premiered in Heidelberg's Lutherkirche/Hosanne Gemeinde and then go on tour to Karlsruhe, Göttingen and finally, Hannover.

Workshop

Rediscovering Cultural Memories with Digital Media

As part of IKO's series of career courses for majors and minors, Zhu Xiaowen will teach a class with a focus on documentary filmmaking techniques and digital photography. A media artist and Assistant Director of the Times Art Center Berlin, Zhu will hold 3 weekend workshops on experimenting with digital media by exploring narrative possibilities in subject matter. Participants will learn how to record and edit video interviews with artists and authors. Her course is entitled, "Rediscovering Cultural Memories with Digital Media." Participants integrate cultural heritage, personal narrative, and digital media to rediscover cultural memories as both researchers and storytellers. The course will include hands-on instruction, practical exercises, and artistic presentations.

Zhu Xiaowen is a Berlin-based artist and writer. A visual poet, social critic, and aesthetic researcher, her work studies how things and beings migrate across historical and contemporary time and space with a particular interest in personal witness and testimony. Zhu's artworks have been widely shown internationally, including at the Fowler Museum (Los Angeles), USC Pacific Asia Museum (Pasadena), Whitechapel Gallery (London), Whitstable Biennale (Whitstable, UK), Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum (Beijing), Chronus Art Center (Shanghai), ZKM | Center for Art and Media (Karlsruhe), V2–Institute for the Unstable Media (Rotterdam), Museum of Contemporary Photography (Chicago), and Strozzina Art Space (Florence). She has taught at the British Film Institute's Film Academy, Syracuse University, and Marymount California University. Her book *Oriental Silk* is forthcoming by Hatje Cantz (2020).

» http://zhuxiaowen.com/

Workshop Dates
I. Fri. & Sat., Nov. 13-14, 2020;
II. Fri. & Sat., Dec. 10-11, 2020;
III. Fri. & Sat., Jan. 15 & 16, 2021.

Enrollment
contact
Dinah Zank
dinah.zank@zo.uni-heidelberg.de
or
Lianming Wang
lianming.wang@zo.uni-heidelberg.de

Xiaowen Zhu, 2020

Oriental Silk, 2015, Dual-Channel HD Video Installation, 60 Min., Color, Sound, Courtesy of Xiaowen Zhu

Public opening: September 10, 2021

Special Exhibition on the Dynamics of Japanese Narrative Art at the Museum Rietberg, Zurich in 2021

CATS Arena

One scene from the "Tale of Genji" handscroll, Mid-17th Century, private collection, a recent discovery that will be shown in the exhibtion.

Melanie Trede, Professor for the histories of Japanese art, is co-curator of the special exhibition at the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, "Love, Fight, Feast: The Art of Storytelling in Japan". Five sections focus on: Devotion; Poets on the move; Love and Intrigue at Court; Heroes Fighting for Power; and Vanquishing Demons. The concept was developed together with Dr. Khanh Trinh (Curator for Japanese and Korean Art, Museum Rietberg), and Prof. Estelle Bauer (INALCO, Paris). The multi-media exhibits include ceramics, lacquer, metalwork, painting, prints, printed books, manga, and textiles from the thirteenth to the twenty-first centuries. The objects on loan derive from European institutions including private collections, some of which have never been on public display. Two separate exhibition catalogs in English and German will accompany the exhibition.

The Institute of East Asian Art History is now on Instagram.

We share the latest news around IKO and campus life, upcoming events, outstanding publications, international exhibitions, and more. We connect to museums, academics, students and artists from all around the world.

If you want to get our latest updates, please follow or contact us on Instagram!

@iko.heidelberg

Korean Art History with Prof. Burglind Jungmann

The Institute of East Asian Art History is proud to announce the special presence of Prof. Burglind Jungmann (formerly UCLA), a renowned scholar in Korean art history. Prof. Jungmann will teach three classes during the winter semester 2020/21:

- Lecture class: "Korean Art and Visual Culture: A Survey" (Tuesdays, 11am–1pm);

- Seminar "Korea through the Foreign Lens: Photographs of the late 19th to early 20th Century" (Wednesdays, 11am–1pm), and

- (Haupt-)seminar for BA and students: "Recent Developments in Korean Art History: Texts and Methods" (Tuesdays 2–4pm). Auditors are welcome.

Prof. Jungmann substitutes the Professorship in Japanese art history (Melanie Trede) during her research leave, covered by the Collaborative Research Center 933 "Material Text Cultures," sponsored by the German Research Foundation.

Sun Peidong, Visiting Professor in Heidelberg

Sun Peidong, formerly Professor of History at Fudan University, Shanghai, and currently visiting scholar at Sciences Po and EURICS in Paris, will be coming to Heidelberg regularly as a visiting professor, beginning in the summer term of 2021. Sun has taught courses at Stanford University and UC Berkeley and has just been offered the position of Michael J. Zak Associate Professor of History for China and Asia-Pacific Studies at Cornell University.

Sun Peidong is a social and cultural historian of the post-1949 period. Her research has centred on the history and contemporary implications of Chinese everyday life and politics. She has published on topics such as global reading practices, the politics of fashion, and mate choices in China. Sun Peidong is presently working on a book titled *Underground Reading of the Sent-down Generation: History and Memory of the Cultural Revolution*. She will be offering courses at CATS in cooperation with the Institute for Political Science.

Ishibashi Foundation Visiting Professorship for Japanese Art History

Due to concerns regarding the spread the Corona virus, the two invited Ishibashi Foundation visiting professors in Japanese art history at Heidelberg University needed to be postponed. In the summer semester of 2021, Prof. FURUTA Ryō, University of the Arts, Tokyo [Geijutsu Daigaku], a specialist in nineteenth to twentieth-century art, and a prolific curator of exhibitions will offer a seminar and lecture class in his field of expertise. In the winter semester 2021/22, Prof. Peter Kornick (Cambridge University), a worldwide authority in the history of the book with a focus on Japan and beyond, will also teach two courses in his field of expertise. Auditors are welcome.

Heinz-Götze Visiting Professor for Chinese Art History

Dr. Yu-ping Luk, Basil Gray Curator of Chinese Paintings, Prints and Central Asia, British Museum will be the 10th Heinz Götze Distinguished Guest Professor; she will offer two courses: on Dunhuang and the material culture of Chinese imperial women, January 11 and February 17, 2021. This will be followed by a 4-day excursion to London with a focus on the British Museum's collections, jointly-funded by Heidelberg University and the Heinz Götze Foundation. Dr. Luk's public lecture will be held on Thursday, January 21, 6 pm c.t. During the 2021 Summer Semester, Kuiyi Shen, Professor of Asian Art History and Director, Chinese Studies Program at the University of California, San Diego will succeed as the next Heinz-Götze Professor; he will teach in Heidelberg May 24 and June 22, 2021.

The South Asia Institute comprises seven professorships in Development Economics, Anthropology, Geography, History of South Asia, Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology), Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures (Modern Indology) and Political Science of South Asia. Furthermore, the Indian Government finances the Heinrich Zimmer Chair for Indian Philosophy and Intellectual History; Pakistan funds the Allama Iqbal Professorial Fellowship and Sri Lanka enables the Chair of Sri Lankan Studies. Three associated professorships are located at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies.

South Asia

Institute

South Asia Institute: Advanced Research on the Subcontinent

by **Marcus Nüsser**
Acting Director

The South Asia Institute (SAI) is happy to contribute to the novel and advanced format of the Arena, a newsletter initiative that introduces and reflects upon various topics of the broader research environment of CATS. It is my pleasure to introduce and point to some of the manifold academic activities by the seven departments of the SAI across a wide range of geographical areas and disciplinary themes.

First and most importantly we welcome the new chairholder Prof. Kama Maclean who joined us this summer as head of the department of History of South Asia at SAI. We are confident that her move to Heidelberg will help us to develop the research field of South Asian history but also foster the disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary links to colleagues in Heidelberg – a confidence that becomes even more evident when you read her introduction below.

It should also be mentioned that research projects SAI cover the entire geographical dimension of the subcontinent. This issue provides some portraits of research projects and academic activities from India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The examples focus on some of the most relevant aspects of globalisation and migration (Bangladesh), languages, religion and heritage (India) and social networking (Nepal). Other SAI projects deal with a diverse set of social, cultural and geographical topics including areas in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

A recent example for the outreach to general audiences can be found in the exhibition "Chapakhana" that sheds some light on the history of (book)printing in North India between 1800 and 1930. The exhibition will be on display in the CATS library, which is located at the core of the CATS institutions where it forms its visible and physical center. With its two departments it also contains enormous collections of books and other (re)sources from and about South and East Asia that is unique in Germany. We believe that CATS provides a unique academic environment for a deeper and broader understanding of South Asia in the context of other world regions.

Prof. Dr. Marcus Nüsser
Head of the Department of Geography and executive director of the SAI. His main research topics are human-environmental interactions, socio-hydrology and development studies with a regional focus on high mountain areas of South Asia.

New Monuments for a New India?

Reconfiguration of heritage regimes in Hindu nationalist India

Dr. Vera Lazzaretti
Researcher at the Department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia.

Lazzaretti's research fields include the anthropology of space and place; religion and politics; contested heritage; securitisation and policing; religious offence; temple politics; pilgrimage; Hindu nationalism; and ethnography.

Prof. Dr. Hüsken and Dr. Lazzaretti received funding from the new Flagship Initiative 'Transforming Cultural Heritage'. Dr. Lazzaretti was also selected as a DAAD PRIME fellow. Both will support her research on discursive and material entanglements of heritage and security in urban India.

by **Vera Lazzaretti**

In August Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of a new Ram temple in Ayodhya. As per a controversial Supreme Court decision, this will be constructed at the site of the Babri mosque, which was demolished in 1992 by mobs of Hindu nationalists. Modi paid tribute to 'the centuries-long struggle of Hindus' that enabled this event, presented as a *national* achievement.

In March 2019, another *bhūmi pūjā* had taken place at my field site in Varanasi, when the PM laid the foundation stone of the Kashi Vishvanath Corridor—an area of about 50,000 square meters centred on the Kashi Vishvanath temple, in which a monumental access path is being constructed to connect the temple to the Ganges river. Kashi Vishvanath is a pan-Indian pilgrimage destination, but also another symbol of the 'Hindu struggle' referred to above: because of its proximity to the much-disputed Gyan Vapi mosque, the temple has been identified by Hindu nationalists as the next place to be 'liberated' from the Muslim presence. The Corridor too was celebrated by Modi as a historic achievement and partial 'liberation' of Kashi Vishvanath from a congested neighbourhood of illegal structures.

The two events are deeply connected, not only because they revolve around targets of the same Hindu nationalist 'liberation' movement, but also because they establish what we may think of as 'new monuments'. 'New monuments' exhibit a 'modern' look—Modi insisted on the word *ādhunik*, (recent, new or modern) for the Ram temple and the Corridor is inspired by world-class aesthetics and ideas of smart-cityness. Their tendency towards futurity perhaps derives from Hindu nationalist discomfort with the Indo-Islamic heritage—heritage this is unequivocally embodied by the majority of Indian historic monuments. 'New monuments', then, try to exorcise and counter historic monuments, by commemorating and historicising the alleged 'centuries-long struggle of Hindus'. Through them, majority Hindus are being represented as somehow similar to oppressed racial minorities elsewhere, and the movement to 'liberate' temples (from mosques), or establish new ones, is linked to global demands for the removal of monuments that commemorate hegemonic cultures and racial discrimination. In the Indian case, though, the establishment of 'new monuments' is an attempt to write a version of history attuned with Hindu majoritarianism.

There is an urgent need further to unpack the functioning of such 'new monuments'.

Decorations at 'the Corridor' for Modi's inauguration on 9 March 2019 in Banaras (Varanasi). The Gyan Vapi mosque's minarets are visible behind the VIP stage. Picture by the author.

New Project on Globalisation, Mobility and Migration

by **Dieter Reinhardt**
Political Sciencist,
South Asia Institute,
Department of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures

This new project, which is coordinated by Dr. Dieter Reinhardt and Prof. Dr. Hans Harder (Head of Department, Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures), is conducted in cooperation with the "Verein zur Förderung der Bildung" (Salzwedel). The project is co-financed by Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Commission (2020-2022) and deals with the transnational identity networks and diaspora groups on the example of the Bangladeshi diaspora.

The global increase in migration is accompanied by new forms of self-organization by migrant groups and transnational identity networks. They are based on competing cultural, political and religious worldviews. Family and friendship structures, private financial transfers, continuous travel, associations and electronic communication techniques are constitutive elements of these self-organizations.

Using the example of the Bangladeshi diaspora groups in Germany and other European countries, the project analyzes the internal socio-cultural and political dynamics of these groups as well as their perception and assessment of socio-cultural and political developments in the respective host countries. On the other hand, the effects of state "integration policies" on these dynamics are examined. The project takes into account the specific migration experiences of diaspora groups that have existed for several decades, newly immigrated migrants with different professional qualifications and entrepreneurial activities, as well as of students and politically persecuted persons.
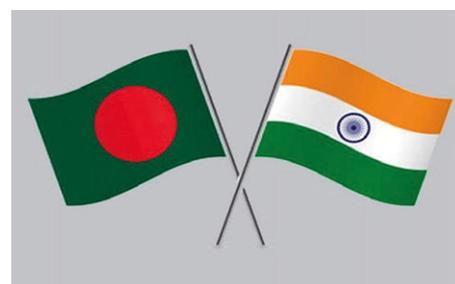
Flags of Bangladesh and India are seen cross-pinned in this photo symbolising friendship between the two nations

Source: https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/india-plans-air-bubble-deal-with-bangladesh-to-get-around-land-travel-restrictions-1597652884

Call for Papers: 15–17 March, 2021

Language Ideologies and the 'Vernacular' in South Asian Colonial and Post-Colonial Literature(s) and Public Spheres

Organized by **Prof. Nishat Zaidi** *and* **Dr. Saroj K. Mahananda**
(English Dept, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi) and **Prof. Hans Harder** *and* **Dr. Jürgen Schaflechner** *(Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures, SAI/ CATS, Heidelberg University)*

This international conference proposes to address recent formulations and debates regarding the status of regional languages of South Asia vis-à-vis English. The vernacular as a category commands a whole range of ambivalent meanings and has been a contested term ever since the colonial age. Implying a hierarchical set-up and the subjugation of "lower" languages under the "high variety" of English with its cosmopolitan positioning, the vernacular has also received empowering impulses and has been invested with qualities like groundedness and expressive strength. Thus in the thoroughly multilingual literary and public spheres of South Asia, a re-calibra- tion of the notion of vernacularity vis-a-vis language ideologies in the context of the ongoing rise of literary Anglophonia in South Asia and post-liberalization India seems relevant. Multilingualism covers up a host of hierarchical relationships, contact scenarios, historical and ongoing entanglements.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Submission of Abstracts: November 20, 2020
- Intimation of Accepted Abstracts : November 30, 2020
- Submission of Full-Length Papers : January 30, 2021

GUIDELINES FOR ABSTRACT AND PAPER SUBMISSIONS

Abstracts of about 300 words along with short bio-note of about 100 words be preferably sent by e-mail to vernacular-conference2020@gmail.com on or before November 20, 2020. Full-length papers of 6000-8000 words, citation style: MLA 8th Edition, should reach on or before January 30, 2021. For further queries and submissions kindly mail at vernacularconference2020@gmail.com.

German Ambassador Roland Schäfer and Cultural Attachée Paula Werner Visit the Nepal Research Bhawan

On October 18, 2019 German Ambassador Roland Schäfer and Cultural Attachée Paula Werner visited the Nepal Research Bhawan to tour the Kathmandu Branch Office of the South Asia Institute and form an idea about ongoing projects. During the informal meeting the newly appointed Resident Representative Frederic Maria Link showed the visitors around the premises and briefed them on the infrastructure and activities of the Branch Office. Prof. Axel Michaels explained the aims, working procedure and cumulative results of the Documents on the History of Religion and Law of Premodern Nepal project being conducted under the auspices of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and in cooperation with the National Archives Nepal. The ambassador was deeply impressed by this close cooperation and the historical depth of German-funded research in the host country.

Prof. Christiane Brosius then introduced the Nepal Heritage Documentation Project, funded by AR-CADIA. This project is a cooperation of the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Saraf Foundation and the Department of Archaeology Nepal and builds up the Digital Archive of Nepalese Arts and Monuments (DANAM). Keen interest was shown in the Archive and the question raised how one could expand knowledge of its existence to a larger public so as to make the wealth of information in it more widely accessible.

Participants from left to right: Rajan Kathiwoda, Roshan Mishra, Prof. Axel Michaels, Prof. Christiane Brosius, Ambassador Roland Schäfer, Resident Representative Frederic Maria Link, Ina Buchholz, Cultural Attachée Paula Werner, Secretary of the Branch Office Rajendra Shakya.

Kama Maclean takes up the Chair of South Asian History

I took up my position at the SAI on July 1, 2020, but was unable to travel to Heidelberg due to COVID. Fortunately I was able to fly to Germany in September to prepare for the Winter Session. I present below an overview of my research to date, which will inform my teaching at the South Asia Institute.

One of the key themes linking my research has been political and social communication, as Indian anticolonialism challenges Benedict Anderson's emphasis on the role of print capitalism in nationalist mobilisation. My early projects sought to explain the potency of political mobilisation in late colonial India, which thrived despite widespread illiteracy. This was one of the themes in my first book, *Pilgrimage and Power* (2008), on the Allahabad Kumbh Mela, which focused on the act of pilgrimage as an 'organic' communication mech-

anism, spreading ideas about colonialism, nationalism and modernity. Explaining how nationalist sensibilities became dominant in the early twentieth century has become an abiding theme in my work, leading me to study the dynamics of Indian nationalism in the interwar years, in *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India* (2015).

A Revolutionary History sought to make two contributions. Firstly, it demonstrated the centrality of anticolonial violence to the freedom struggle in India. I argued that narratives of the Indian freedom struggle had been predominantly framed as a triumph for the Gandhian ideology of nonviolence, but that there was much evidence to suggest that the interwar years were marked by urgent discussions questioning its viability. My book factored in the political impact of the north Indian revolutionaries, votaries of violence who coordinated attacks on colonial interests in an attempt to undermine British confidence and expedite decolonisation, on the broader nationalist movement. I argued that it was no coincidence that the Civil Disobedience Movement – often thought of as the second great anticolonial campaign directed by Gandhi and the Congress, after Non-Cooperation – substantially overlapped with a wave of revolutionary violence; I brought violent politics to the centre of historical narratives of interwar anticolonialism.

The second contribution of *A Revolutionary History* was methodological, making use of a range of somewhat unconventional sources – oral histories, memoirs, rumours,

popular culture and visual culture – to carefully present a textured and revolutionary account of underground Indian nationalist organisation, breaking with the teleologies of the past. In particular, I drew on photography and posters to show how they had been used to communicate ideas about revolutionary politics, particularly that of Bhagat Singh. A Hindi translation is currently under negotiation, and I am currently making the final touches on a revised second edition, which includes a postscript.

My next book was something of a diversion from my interest in political communication in colonial India. In the course of researching Indian anticolonialism, I frequently encountered references to the dominions, including Australia, in the archives. This led me to undertake a project funded by the Australian Research Council, focussing on the ways that racially-based immigration restriction by the so-called 'White Dominions' impacted on nationalist discourse in South Asia. The resulting book-length narrative, *British India, White Australia: Overseas Indians, Intercolonial Relations and the Empire* was published just as COVID set in, in March 2020. Although it is more a contribution to global imperial and colonial history, the book was shortlisted for the New South Wales Premier's Australian History Prize.

I am about to begin a new project that returns to North India in the interwar period, to consider the question: what would the history of Indian anticolonialism in the interwar period look like if it were written through sound? Historians have often sought insights into the history of anticolonialism in this period by focusing oratory and speeches of a number of leaders, and especially of Gandhi. A close analysis of these, however, indicate that the crowds who flocked to nationalist meetings were often unruly and almost invariably noisy, and the Mahatma often struggled to make himself heard. Elsewhere in Gandhi's collected works, we find that he attempted to bring order to nationalist soundscapes through the projection of music, songs and slogans; this is a vastly under-appreciated aspect of political organisation of the period. This project will therefore interrogate the political dynamics of interwar India through the lens and interdisciplinary methods of Sound Studies as a means of understanding the broader impulses informing Indian anticolonial thought and action.

These interconnected themes in my research – the twentieth century, multisensory methodologies, the dialectic between violence and nonviolence, and anticolonial thought – will inform my teaching in the Winter session in 2020-21. I will also continue as the editor of South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies.

Prof. Dr. Kama Maclean

Kama Maclean is the author of A Revolutionary History of Interwar India: Violence, Image, Voice and Text (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015) and Pilgrimage and Power: the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Her third book, British India, White Australia: Intercoloniality and the Empire, 1901-1947, was published by UNSW Press. It was shortlisted in the NSW Premier's Australian History Prize.

Kama is also Editor of South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies; a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and the Australia-India Institute. In 2019, she was Fellow at the National Library of Australia, supported by the Harold S. Williams Trust.

Her latest journal article publication was in History Workshop Journal on revolutionaries and proscribed publications.

In memoriam Dietmar Rothermund

A Giant in the Domain of German South Asian History

Professor Dr. Gita Dharampal
retired successor to Prof. Rother-mund, Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, India

A Giant in the Domain of German South Asian History On the morning of March 9th Professor Dr. Dietmar Rothermund, the eminent historian of South Asia and long-standing Executive Director of the South Asia Institute, passed away peacefully at his residence in Dossenheim near Heidelberg.

Born on 20th January 1933 in Kassel, and thus only a few days before the seizure of power by the German National Socialists, Dietmar Rothermund grew up in a country ravaged by fascism and war. During the early 1950s he studied History and Philosophy at the universities of Marburg and Munich. In 1956 he was awarded a Fulbright-Scholarship to study at the University of Pennsylvania and it was here that he completed his doctorate in 1959 with a dissertation on Pennsylvania in colonial times. What followed must be understood as serendipity: A stipend from the German Research Foundation brought him to India in 1960 and it was during this stay in India that he took the momentous decision to direct his research interest towards South Asia. In 1963 Dietmar Rothermund was offered the job of an academic assistant at Heidelberg University in the newly founded South Asia Institute that was established following the recommendation of Werner Conze. In 1968 he completed his Habilitation with a monograph that became a standard work entitled Die politische Willensbildung in Indien, 1900-1960; and shortly afterwards Rothermund was appointed Chair for the History of South Asia. In the subsequent years the foci of his academic work dealt with the history of political ideas in India, the agrarian system during the colonial epoch, the life and achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, and last but not least, Indian economic history. In 1991 Dietmar Rothermund initiated the Heidelberg South Asian Talks (Heidelberger Sudasiengespräche) as a form of exchange between representatives of academia, the economy, politics and public affairs. As an eminent historian, Rothermund functioned for many years as a very influential member of the board of the Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Asienkunde and participated for ten years in the Inda-German Consultative Group that had been established by the German Foreign Office. Between 1997 and 2006 Dietmar Rothermund headed the European Association of South Asian Studies. As early as 1988 he was elected Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in London; in 1994 he received the Hemchandra Raychaudhury Gold Medal of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta (India) and in 2011 the Rabindranath Tagore-Cultural Award of the Indo-German Society.

In view of his exceptional contribution to the South Asia Institute, his successful endeavour towards the advancement and transmission of knowledge on India and South Asia in Germany as well as his impressive academic writings, Dietmar Rothermund was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit in October 2011.

Professor Rothermund has worked in the field of social, political, intellectual and economic history with enormous creativity and an impressive output. Not only his German readership but also international scholars have profited from his magnanimous contribution: roughly 45 monographs, some 30 edited volumes and almost 200 academic articles. The international aspect of his impact is particularly significant since almost half of his writings has been published in English, a language that he mastered superbly, and his most important works (of which, first and foremost, his canonical tome "A

History of India" written together with Hermann Kulke) were translated into more than a dozen foreign (including non-European) languages. Dietmar Rothermund's fame as an eminent historian of South Asia has therefore a truly global dimension. His path-breaking status and unique position within the German historiography of India and South Asia is all the more surprising in view of his point of departure: as an American historian who dealt in his above mentioned dissertation from 1959 with the colonial religious history of Pennsylvania!

Apart from his astonishing productivity as a scholar – since his retirement in 2001 Rothermund almost tripled his annual publication score – he was driven by an ambition to lay an institutional foundation for South Asian Studies in Germany and Europe. This goal he truly achieved as exemplified by milestones such as the European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, (initiated in 1966), the already mentioned Heidelberger Südasien-Gespräche, the working group for Non-European History, or as editor in chief of Periplus, the yearbook of Non-European History, not to mention his leading role in both the Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Asienkunde as well as in the Inda-German Consultative Group. Indeed for several decades Dietmar Rothermund was functioning as a kind of „one-man political think-tank" in the realm of political and academic exchange between Germany and India. Until shortly before his death he continued to offer his profound insights and vast knowledge to a general public via the news media. For decades Dietmar Rothermund was approached whenever historical or current events in South Asia needed a sober and detailed analysis and his numerous contributions by way of newspaper articles or radio interviews provided a most welcome balanced perspective that

stood in stark contrast to the loud and sensational way in which global news was often presented.

Rothermund's close relation to India also had a very personal side: His Indian wife, Chitra, with whom he was married for almost 50 years, originated in Maharashtra; all their three children 3 have Indian names. During his regular and mostly yearly visits to India, he was able to establish many close and enduring friendships with an impressive number of influential South Asians. His recently published book My Encounters in India (Primus Books 2019) includes 133 vignettes of these encounters, amongst whom Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai, Narasimha Rao, Zakir Husain, Manmohan Singh und Jayaprakash Narayan figure most prominently.

Dietmar Rothermund combined a solid analytical approach of traditional scholarship with a unique blend of creativity and intellectual versatility that attracted younger academics in large numbers. As such he can also be considered as a spiritus rector of the most recent research field, namely the field of transcultural studies. As early as the 1990s he had established the German Research Foundation program dealing with the transcultural dimensions of European expansion (named „Transformationen der europaischen Expansion vom 15.-20. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur kognitiven Interaktion von europaischen und auBereuropaischen Gesellschaften"). Another example for his outstanding intellectual creativity was the international conference conducted in May 2013 on Memories of Post-Imperial Nations. Here he managed to combine current research on memorial cultures with processes of historical self-reflexivity in the former colonial nations. For me personally, it was an honour to participate in this groundbreaking endeavour. Also as his successor

in the SAi-Chair (2002-2018) I constantly benefitted from Dietmar Rothermund's generosity and his impressive „elder statesmanship".

It does not come as a surprise that for decades the SAi was known as „Dietmar's Institute", and this was the case not only in India but was also a well-known 'fact' among Heidelberg's taxi drivers, for whom the geographical location of the Institute (until 2019 in the campus Neuenheimer Feld) was easy to find, thanks to Professor Rothermund being one of their most frequent customers. Indeed, given his natural affability and congenial personality, he was extraordinarily approachable to and genuinely interested in interacting with persons from all walks of life, despite the fact that he belonged to the elite circle of recipients of the coveted Federal Cross of Merit in 2011.

Our esteemed colleague Dietmar Rothermund can certainly be considered the founding father of the SAi – nobody else has served the SAi as long as he did, and nobody else can claim to have had a greater impact on its development. There is no comparable German academic who has succeeded in presenting South Asia's past and present to a German as well as to a global readership with a unique combination of passion and precision that he alone possessed. Dietmar Rothermund is truly a giant on whose shoulders we, colleagues, researchers and students at the SAI, stand and continue to harvest the rich fruits of his stimulating and inspirational work. The South Asia Institute will preserve a most cherished memory of Dietmar Rothermund as an outstanding researcher, a charismatic colleague and an incredibly amicable human being.

Dr. Justyna Kurowska

Dr. Justyna Kurowska joined the Department of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures as Assistant as Wissenschaftliche Assistentin. She studied Indology at the University of Warsaw and Hindi at the Centre of Indian Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She received her PhD in 2019 at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Warsaw University on the modern Hindi novel's approach to death, dying and the dead body.

Prior to joining SAI, she held posts at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland), in two British Library funded projects within the "Endangered Archives Programme", at Uppsala University, and at Bonn University.

Her research interests include prison writing, memory studies, modern Hindi literature (with a focus on the novel, death, body, and violence), and written and oral narratives, especially of convicts from the penal colony in the Andaman Islands.

Dr. Suresh C. Chalise

Dr. Chalise holds a research scholarship by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and stayed at SAI from January to September 2020. Suresh C. Chalise received his PhD from Banaras Hindu University, India and undertook post-doctoral research at the Universities of Dortmund and Gießen, Germany. He served as ambassador of Nepal to the United States (2007-2008) and to the United Kingdom (2010-2014), and as Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister of Nepal (2006-2007). He is affiliated with the GP Koirala Foundation for Democracy, Peace and Development in Kathmandu/Nepal, an independent think tank for the promotion of peace, democracy and development.

Prof. Dr. Axel Michaels

The Josefine and Eduard von Portheim Foundation for Science and Art with the Ethnological Museum Heidelberg has a new board of trustees. At the meeting on October 2, the previous chairman, Lord Mayor Prof. Dr. Eckart Würzner, handed over the chairmanship to Prof. Dr. Axel Michaels. In 2019 Michaels had initiated the exhibition 'The Scholar's Choice', in which favorite pieces of the museum were shown and described by scholars from CATS.

Prof. Pralay Kanungo

Prof. Kanungo visited the SAI for two semesters (WS2019/20 & SS2020) as DAAD guest professor. He will continue to teach at SAI in the upcoming winter semester. Prof. Kanungo is an expert on Hindu nationalism and a Professor at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Philipp Zehmisch

Philipp Zehmisch joined the SAI as Assistant Professor of Anthropology in October 2020. His previous position as Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) had fatefully started on the Indian Independence Day, 15 August 2018, and ended with his "freedom" on the Pakistani Independence day 2020, 14 August 2020. Interestingly, as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies, LMU Munich (2015-2017), he had earlier con-duced ethnographic fieldwork on the legacies of South Asia's partition on both sides of the border. After experiencing logistical and methodological difficulties, Philipp decided to focus his current postdoctoral project "Dialectics of Partition: Ethics of Collaboration and Resistance in Postcolonial Baltistan" on the Pakistani side of the territorial division. Located in the geopolitically contested region of Gilgit-Baltistan, the research concentrates on analyzing affective, moral and embodied dimensions of processes of "bordering". Hegemonic nationalist discourse constructs Baltistan as a Pakistani borderland, where "Muslim" values are defended against "Hindu" India. Here, processes of cooptation and collaboration coexist with strategies of everyday resistance through the forging and revival of silenced cultural, ritual, social, and linguistic modes of belonging, derived, among others, from Baltistan's Tibetan heritage. Further, the project seeks to investigate the role of social media for cross-border relations between Baltis and their relatives in some parts of Ladakh.

Philipp's current research on borderlands, ethics, and globalization links up to his previous work in the fields of Political Anthropology, Critical Migration Research, and Postcolonial Studies, which was located in another contested margin of South Asia, the Indian Union Territory Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Major publications: Mini-India: The Politics of Migration and Subalternity in the Andaman Islands (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017); (co-edited with Frank Heidemann) Manifestations of History: Time, Space, and Community in the Andaman Islands (Delhi: Primus, 2016), and with Ursula Münster, Jens Zickgraf, and Claudia Lang Soziale Ästhetik, Atmosphäre, Medialität: Beiträge aus der Ethnologie (Berlin: Lit, 2018).

Frederic Maria Link

New Resident Representative of the South Asia Institute's Kathmandu Branch Office

Frederic Maria Link studied Geography, Anthropology and Modern Indology in Heidelberg and New Delhi and finished his studies in October 2014 with the thesis "Hum kya chahte? Azadi! (T)räume der Freiheit und Orte des Widerstands im indisch verwalteten Kaschmir". From July 2016 till September 2019 he worked at the Research Unit "Documents on the History of Religion and Law of Pre-modern Nepal" of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Since October 2019 he has been serving as the Resident Representative of the South Asia Institute's Kathmandu Branch Office.

In his doctoral thesis for the Geography Department of the South Asia Institute, he is investigating the lived and legal geographies of a peripheral border region in Far West Nepal, applying a methodology that combines an integrative, multiperspective with a microhistorical approach, interwoven with an empirically grounded geopolitical analysis.

Publications
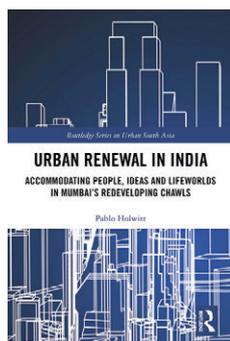
Pablo Holwitt (ed.)
Urban Renewal in India: Accommodating People, Ideas and Lifeworlds in Mumbai´s Redeveloping Chawls
London, New York, Routledge, 2020, 202 pg.

This book is an ethnography about a highly contested approach at urban renewal called chawl redevelopment that targets colonial architecture in central neighborhoods of the Indian megacity Mumbai.

The model of chawl redevelopment is used to address questions surrounding contemporary urban renewal. Focusing on attempts to redevelop Mumbai's central middle-class neighbourhoods, popularly known as Girgaum, into a modern downtown of a global metropolis, the author sheds light on the impact this development model has on the everyday lives of people inhabiting transformed urban environments. He examines, from an ethnographic perspective, apparently contradictory intentions of planners, investors, residents, activists and politicians. A combination of detailed and vivid ethnographic accounts and incisive theoretical arguments, the book shows that the highly contested and controversial approach of chawl redevelopment serves as an example of the manifold ideological tendencies in India today, and how they combine, clash and continuously shape each other in surprising and unpredictable ways.
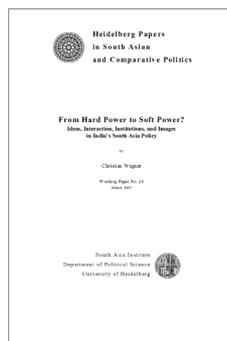
Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics
University Library of Heidelberg
Februrary 2020

In February 2020, the Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics (HPSACP) had been relaunched.

This occasional paper series is hosted by the Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg. The series draws on the ongoing research projects at the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg, seminars by visiting scholars and the wide scholarly network engaging with South Asia.

The e-papers are available online and can be downloaded at no cost for the user.

The inaugural paper of the new series is by Prof. Pranab Bardhan on "Governance Issues in Economic Development: A China-India Comparative Perspective", based on the first CATS lecture.
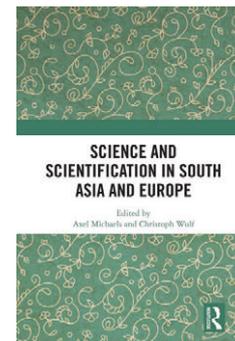
Axel Michaels
(with Christoph Wulf) (eds.)
Science and Scientification in South Asia and Europe. London and New York
Routledge, 2020, 292 pg.

This volume critically examines the adoption, adaptation and transformation of the concept of science and scientific methods in South Asia and Europe. Contributors are Jan E.M. Houben, Daniel Münster, Dhruv Raina, Anand Mishra, William Sax, V. Sujatha, Susan Visvanathan and others.
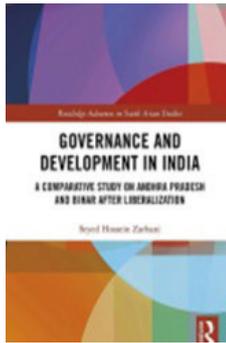
Dr. Seyed Hossein Zarhani (ed.)
Governance and Development in India – A Comparative Study on Andhra Pradesh and Bihar after Liberalization
London, New York, Routledge, 2020, 250 pg.

The paperback edition of Dr. Zarhani's book is now available. The first edition was published in 2018. Dr. Zarhani compares two Indian sub-national states, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, and explores the black box of the multi-layered state of India.
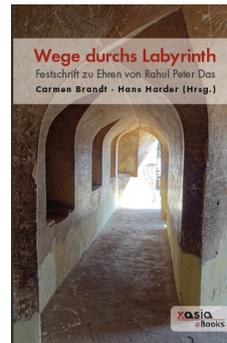
Carmen Brandt and Hans Harder (eds.)
Wege durchs Labyrinth: Festschrift zu Ehren von Rahul Peter Das
CrossAsia-eBooks
2020, 517 pg.
doi.org/10.11588/xabooks.642

Wege durchs Labyrinth contains contributions in German and English by colleagues, students and companions of Professor Das. The essays collected here reflect different thematic focuses, which Professor Das has worked on in his extensive scholarly oeuvre. These include Sanskrit studies, historical linguistics, text editions in New Indo-Aryan languages, sociolinguistics, history of religion in South Asia, Bengali and Hindi literature, disciplinary history of Indology/South Asian studies, and Tamil studies. Some of the contributions are directly linked to Rahul Peter Das' work or specific writings, while the rest of the essays reflect his various research interests and different methodological approaches.

Contributors to this publication are Carmen Brandt, Renata Czekalska, Ines Fornell, Eli Franco, Ratul Ghosh, Olav Hackstein, Hans Harder, Martin Kämpchen, Klaus Karttunen, Makoto Kitada, Frank J. Korom, Agnieszka Kuczkiewicz-Fras, Halina Marlewicz, Ulrike Niklas, Tatiana Oranskaia, Felix Otter, Adapa Satyanarayana, Britta Schulze-Thulin, Sabine Franziska Strich, Heinz Werner Wessler and Benjamin Zachariah.

Research Articles

Axel Michaels
"'At the point of confluence of sociology and Indology': Louis Dumont's postulate reconsidered",
lead article in **Contributions to Indian Sociology** 54, 3 (2020): 357–387 (with comments by Arjun Appadurai, Johannes Bronkhorst, Veena Das, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Jonathan Parry, Thomas Trautmann, Ananya Vajpeyi and a Postscript by A. Michaels).

Axel Michaels
"South Asia and South East Asia",
in: Hans Joachim Gehrke (ed.), **Making Civilizations. The World before 600**, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020, pp. 867-1023. This article appeared in the first volume of the five-volumed **History of the World**, ed. by Akira Iriye and Jürgen Osterhammel (German ed. 2017, Italian transl. 2019).

A Three Week Intensive Course on Lived Sanskrit Cultures in Varanasi (Feb.–Mar. 2020)

by **Anand Mishra,**
Research Assistant

The department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology) together with the Chair of Indology, Würzburg University organized a three-week intensive course on Lived Sanskrit Cultures in Varanasi from 17th February till 6th March 2020. This is the third year in continuation that this course took place, this time with the added support by the DAAD under its program „A New Passage to India".

Three main areas of lived cultures related to Sanskrit were taken up: (i) how Sanskrit is learned and taught in contemporary institutions, especially the Veda schools in Varanasi (ii) the manner in which it forms and informs the performance of life-cycle rituals, e.g. the initiation ceremony of a young student, and (iii) how the cultural practices and sacred spaces associated with pilgrimages or religious processions relate with Sanskrit textual narratives.

A group of 10 students from different universities in Germany and India, worked out the above topics with a view to gain competency in practice-oriented methods of cultural and religious studies. Faculty members from Heidelberg, Würzburg, Banaras Hindu University, IIT-BHU and several individual experts participated in the course. The Alice Boner Institute, Varanasi provided the venue for regular classes, presentations and discussions.

During the course students had the opportunity to visit several educational institutions for the study of Sanskrit and especially the Vedas follow the Pañcakrośī pilgrimage route circumambulating the sacred space of Varanasi and explore the goddess temples and the cult of goddess in Varanasi. Apart from a crash course in the traditional Indian calendrical system, every evening practicing an hour of spoken Sanskrit helped in experiencing the language in an active manner.

A number of important aspects like the question of caste and gender in the study of the Vedas (e.g. teaching of the Vedas in Pāṇini Kanyā Mahāvidyālaya to girls irrespective of their caste), economic factors (poor financial background of Veda students, financial aid by the government etc.) surfaced during the course as also some of the contentious issues, like resentment and agitations by a group of Sanskrit students on the appointment of Dr. Firoz Khan as Sanskrit teacher because of his religion, or displacement of residents of the old city and the issue of protecting the cultural heritage due to the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor Project.
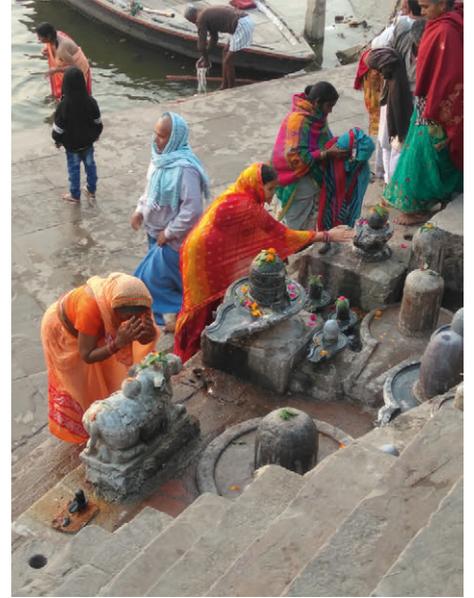
Pilgrims on the banks of river Ganges, Varanasi (Photo: Ute Hüsken)

Students of Brahmā Veda Vidyālaya, Varanasi (Photo: Ute Hüsken)

Lecture Series at the Department of Political Science

Professor Pranab Bardhan, University of California, Berkeley, delivered the first CATS lecture on "Governance Issues in Economic Development: A China-India Comparative Perspective" on 3rd May 2019 at CATS, Heidelberg University. Prof. Rahul Mukherji presided over the talk and Prof. Dr. Aurel Croissant gave the opening remarks. Prof. Bardhan compared governance issues in India and China, focusing on the internal organization of the government – state bureaucracy, corruption, and decentralized structures and processes.

Prof. Rahul Mukherji & Prof. Pranab Bardhan

Pranab Bardhan is Professor of the Graduate School at the Department of Economics, University of California, Berkeley. He holds a PhD degree from Cambridge University and had previously been on the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Indian Statistical Institute and the Delhi School of Economics.

Following the first CATS lecture, the Department of Political Science has continued its lecture series on Governance and Politics in South Asia & Global India with guest speakers such as Amir Bazaz, Dr. M.N. Roy & Dr. Debasri Mukherjee, Prof. Sumit Ganguly, Prof. Harshana Rambukwella, Dr. Sidharthan Maunaguru, Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse, Prof. Pralay Kanungo, Kanchana Ruwanpura, Prof. Ali Riaz and Dr. Suresh C. Chalise.

Ronja Gottschling at Conflict Barometer
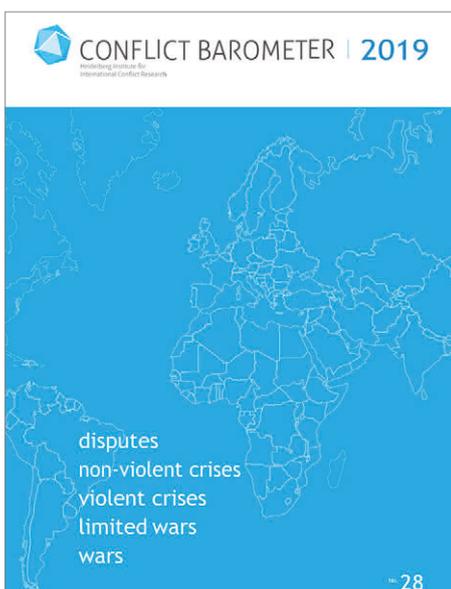
Conflict Barometer 2019

by **Ronja Gottschling**,
PhD Student, Political Science

Ronja Gottschling, PhD student at the Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute, has been working towards the publication of the Conflict Barometer 2019 at the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK - www.hiik.de) as Co-Editor-in-Chief, member of the board of directors and head of data management. The Conflict Barometer classifies annually political conflict dynamics worldwide according to a uniform methodological approach. It is used by governmental and non-governmental organizations around the world.

In 2019, HIIK observed a total of 358 conflicts worldwide, of which 196 were fought violently, while 162 conflicts were on a non-violent level. 15 conflicts were fought on a war level in the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Maghreb and the Americas. In Asia, the conflict between India and Pakistan, the secessionist conflict in Papua, Indonesia, the conflict between the Arakan Army and the government in Myanmar and Islamic militant conflicts in the Philippines were most violent in 2019.

The Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies comprises five professorships for Global Art History (with a focus on South Asia and the Middle East), Buddhist Studies (with a focus on South- and East Asia, including Tibet), Visual and Media Anthropology (with a focus on South Asia), Cultural Economic History (with a focus on Japan) and Intellectual History (with a focus on China). Two Associated professorships are located in the Centre for East Asian Studies and in the History Department.

Heidelberg Transcultu

Centre for ral Studies

Highlights from the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies

by **Harald Fuess**
Acting Director

The last academic year was a turbulent year for the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS). After more than a decade of funding by the German excel-lence initiative, the "Cluster Asia and Europe in a Global Context" officially ended on October 30, 2019, with a one-day conference. As the now independent successor institution to the Cluster, the HCTS, which had become a central institute of the university already in 2013, will continue to explore transcultural processes from multiple perspectives. It will maintain the Graduate Program in Transcultural Studies (GPTS) for doctoral students and a Master's Program in Transcultural Studies (MATS), both taught in English. The online Journal of Transcultural Studies and our open access book series as well as a digital humanities unit (HRA) are part of the HCTS, which is one of the four pillars of the Centre for Transcultural and Asian Studies (CATS). Two events determined our activities at the HCTS in its first year of financial independence.

First, Heidelberg University and its former excellence clusters and graduate schools had to undergo yet another external evaluation of their work to secure long-term sustainable funding to maintain its current level of activities. This research assessment exercise mandated by the state of Baden-Württemberg took place in July 2020 in the hall of the New Aula at Heidelberg University. A team of 15 HCTS-members were quizzed on past achievements and plans for the future. The official evaluation results, including their finan-cial implications, are not available at the time of writing, but we hope that something tangible will materialize from this process. While probably nobody was looking forward to another external evaluation, the process did foster discussions and reflections about our aims and goals and will serve as a useful stepping-stone for the future. Regardless of the official outcome of this evaluation, we felt that we were able to work effectively as a team and we hope to take this positive team spirit forward into future projects.

Second, just like the rest of the world, the advent of the coronavirus overshadowed our professional and personal lives at the HCTS. During the spring of 2020 fears of the spread of disease and official regulations resulted in a new world order of social distancing practices. Many of us abroad, whether overseas on fieldwork or those being at Heidelberg away from their home communities, had to face tough decisions on whether to repatriate in an age of the sudden resurgence of the nationstate. Uncertainty compounded these problems, es-pecially for students who also lost sources of income or job oppor-tunities due to the partial collapse of the economy. Our internation-al exchange programs in Europe, the United States of America and Asia were affected. Most students returned to their home institutions or hometowns while universities all over the world started online teach-ing of various kinds. At the HCTS, too, we learned about synchronous and asynchronous ways of communication with students and staff. Most of us coped rather well. The overwhelming response to an in-

Prof. Dr. Harald Fuess
joined Heidelberg University in 2009 as Professor for Cultural Economic History and Japanese Studies. He currently serves as speaker of CATS, HCTS and the HGGS. His research focuses on economic exchanges between East Asia and Europe, with an emphasis on the history of urban daily life as well as epidemics, trade, and travel.

vitation to a real meeting of 25 CATS professors showed also that we had begun to miss each other's actual company. By October 2020, international exchange is slowly re-suming and ten MATS students on DAAD scholarships to Kyoto University, which is our joint degree transcultural studies partner, are fi-nally eligible for long-awaited entry visa to Japan.

The HCTS continues to be active and productive. Barbara Mittler and Monica Juneja both obtained Opus Magnum Fellowships from the Volkswagen Foundation. Christiane Brosius received several major grants by the British Arcadia Foundation and the DAAD for research projects with a regional focus on South Asia. Michael Radich has begun a three-year project on Chinese Buddhist texts funded by the DFG. Joachim Kurtz has published a substantial volume from his research project on "Powerful Arguments", Nikolas Jaspert was elected speaker of the Field of Focus "Cultural Dynamics in Globalized worlds" and, last but not least, Cambridge University Press published a volume on the Meiji Restoration edited by Harald Fuess.

RESEARCH NEWS

New Project on the Anthropology of Inscriptions in the Kathmandu Valley

by **Simon Cubelic**
Postdoctoral Fellow

Christiane Brosius and Astrid Zotter have received seed funding for a new project on the "Anthropology of Inscriptions: Memory and Cultural Heritage in the Public Sphere" within the frame of the Flagship Initiative "Transforming Cultural Heritage". The project will be joined by Simon Cubelic. Up to the present, inscriptions are omnipresent in Nepal's religious and public life. Written artefacts in Sanskrit, Newari and Nepali recording donations or the establishment of trusts are found on temples, wells and resthouses. Due to the rapid urbanization, infrastructure development or natural disasters, many inscriptions are highly endangered. Nowadays, (inter-)national institutions sponsoring the preservation of heritage sites add to Nepal's epigraphical tradition by installing commemorative plaques. The project aims at investigating the crucial role inscriptions, graffiti or other publicly displayed media of written communication have played for the construction of spaces, identities, collective memory and value in the Kathmandu Valley. Inscriptions from the 15th century to the present will be documented, edited and published in digital form in close collaboration with the Nepal Heritage Documentation Project (NHDP), the Research Unit "Documents on the History of Religion and Law of Premodern Nepal" at the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences (HAdW) and the University Library Heidelberg. Textual data will be enriched by meta- and normdata and linked with digitally available ethnographic material, monument documentations or archival sources. By drawing on methods from Visual Anthropology and Philology, the inscriptions will be studied from an interdisciplinary and transtemporal perspective: as images and texts; as sediments of past meaning and sites of contemporary struggles; as historical objects and as literate practices through which ritual and festive activities are connected to heritage scapes. Thereby the project hopes to contribute to a better understanding of the linkage between tangible and intangible heritage, and also to interrogate the concept of cultural heritage by

Simon Cubelic
is Research Fellow at the Research Unit 'Documents on the History of Religion and Law of Premoderrn Nepal' of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

opening it up for local notions from the past and the present. It is aimed at building further bridges between the Fields of Focus 3 and 4, by means of exchange with colleagues from Political Sciences, History, Geography, Economy, and Archaeology. This collaboration will also enrich a workshop on the Anthropology of Inscriptions in the summer term of 2021.

left:
Part of an inscription at the Keśavanārāyaṇa Coka of Patan palace (VS 1911 = 1854 AD).

right:
Inscription by Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the Cyasil Mandapin Bhaktapur, Nepal (1992).
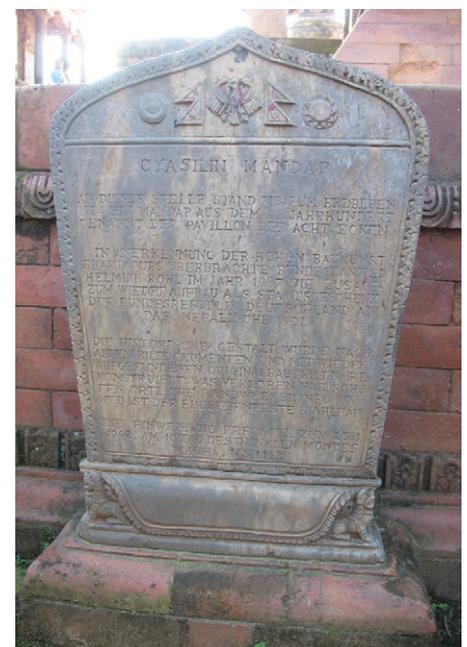
DFG Project 'Archives of the Earth: Fossils, Science and Historical Imaginaries in Twentieth-Century India'

by **Dr. Amelia Bonea**
Research Fellow

Dr. Amelia Bonea, Research Fellow at HCTS, was recently awarded a DFG Individual Research Grant for her project 'Archives of the Earth: Fossils, Science and Historical Imaginaries in Twentieth-Century India.' Exploring plant and animal fossils as objects of scientific investigation and historical imagination, the project documents in particular the local and global contexts that framed efforts to collect, exchange, study and preserve these 'records' of the past and the wide range of individual and institutional actors, material objects and ideas involved therein. The aim of the project is to write a history of the global entanglements of 'fossil science' in colonial and post-colonial India that furthers our knowledge of the history of natural resources exploitation, climate change research and women in science. The study of fossils also enables us to understand how they were used to generate knowledge about the deep past of the natural world and its relation with the human past. In this connection, Amelia will work with Indian artists to create a digital teaching tool that documents processes of knowledge making in Earth Sciences and the history of science, hoping to raise awareness about the intersections of science and politics and the neglected state of natural history heritage in contemporary India.
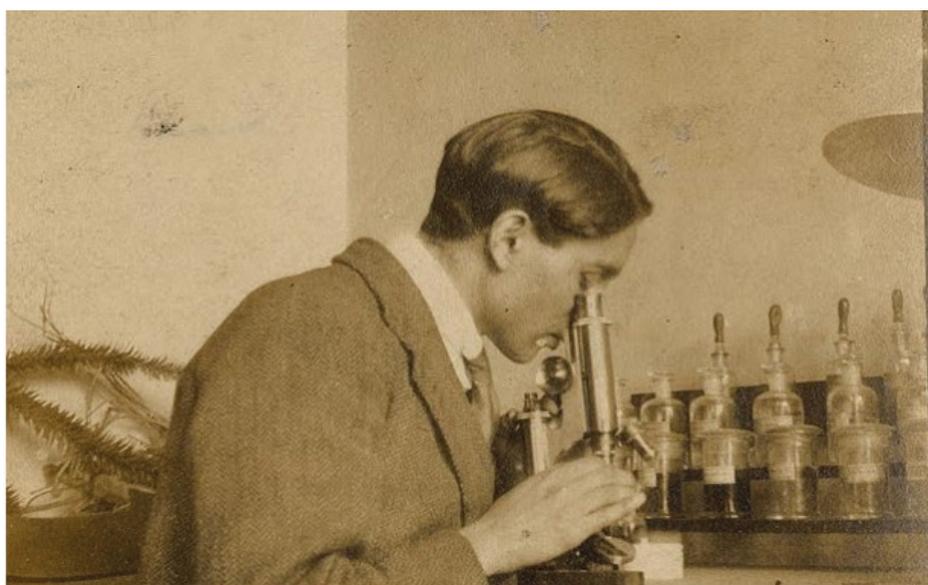
Top: Palaeobotanist Birbal Sahni at the Botany School, University of Cambridge, c.1910s.
Bottom: Geologist Mulk Raj Sahni on his first assignment after joining GSI, Shan States, early 1930s.
Photo credit: Prof Ashok Sahni

DFG Grant Extension for a Project on Buddhism, Medicine, and Gender in 10th–16th Century Japan

by **Dr. Anna Andreeva**
Research Fellow

The project Buddhism, Medicine, and Gender in 10th-16th century Japan: toward a transcultural history of women's health in premodern East Asia funded by the German Research Council (DFG) investigates the impact of Buddhist concepts, theories, and practices on the formation of knowledge about women's bodies and women's health in medieval Japan. The project's aim is, for the first time, to write a cultural history of childbirth as seen through the Buddhist manuscripts from Japanese temple archives, which cast new light on the histories of knowledge, medicine, and gender. The project analyses the primary historical materials that were previously not considered significant by historians of East Asia who so far tended to privilege

Chinese medical sources. The project rectifies this problem by considering Japanese hand-written manuscripts and handbooks on women's health against the background of transcultural flows of Buddhist and medical knowledge from India, China, and Korea that brought with them Buddhist scriptures and medical texts as well as ritual technologies focusing on risk control, divination, longevity, and talisman-writing. It is proposed that these flows shaped the spheres of medico-religious knowledge about women's bodies in medieval Japan. This project thus clarifies how heterogeneous types of knowledge with regard to healing, materia medica, calculation of risks, and ritual technologies focusing on the reproductive health of women were adopted and further developed by Japanese Buddhist scholar-monks, and how such Buddhist expertise

was used in the historical, political, and economic settings of pre-1600 Japan. A particularly important objective of this project is to find, transcribe, transliterate, and historically contextualize the medieval manuscripts preserved in Buddhist temples of esoteric persuasion, particularly those specializing in Shingon, Tendai, and Zen teachings, and to cast light on their historic position vis-a-vis classic Indian Abhidharmic and Yogācāra teachings as those were understood in premodern East Asia, primarily through Chinese Buddhist translations. More broadly, the project brings to the fore the multiple strategies of forecasting and risk management developed by the Buddhist monks, physicians, and diviners for the benefit of noble women from the imperial court, elite warrior and shogunal families, and later, non-elite women. As a result, this project elucidates the complex historical, religious, and cultural factors that defined the concepts of womanhood in medieval Japan.

The primary investigator, Dr. Anna Andreeva, is currently working on her second book and further publications resulting from the project's findings.

Two women and a child.(anonymous copy of a woodblock-print). Paper, ink. No date. Private collection

Dr. Anna Andreeva,
Primary Investigator of the DFG project Medicine, and Gender in 10th–16th Century Japan: toward a Transcultural History of Women's Health in Premodern East Asia

Studying Urban Transformation and Placemaking in India, Nepal and Germany: new DAAD Exchange Programme

by **Christiane Brosius**
Professor for Visual and Media Anthropology

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in its program line "Subject-Related Partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education in Developing Countries" granted Prof. Christiane Brosius four years of funding for the implementation of an exchange programme on the topic of "Urban transformation and placemaking: Fostering Learning from South Asia and Germany." The teaching initiative, in partnership with universities in Delhi and Kathmandu, will contribute to the MA Transcultural Studies and the new MA Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection at Heidelberg University.

In Heidelberg, the project will be located at CATS and will run within the "Shaping Asia" networking initiative that has been co-founded by Prof. Christiane Brosius and Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (Bielefeld).

The teaching initiative involves a partnership between Heidelberg University, the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) in Delhi, and Kathmandu University (KU). The partnership will jointly explore how institutions of higher education can respond to significant urban transformations in Germany and South Asia, and what can be learned from these substantial changes. The focus will be on "placemaking," that is, how people shape their urban habitats and everyday worlds in cities. Within this framework, the project will pay particular attention to urban responses to natural disasters, such as earthquakes and disruptions due to climate change, as well as man-made crises, engendered by migration, conflicts over heritage management, or ethno-cultural diversity. Each partner will contribute a particular disciplinary expertise: Heidelberg University will focus on participatory studies of everyday life and on endangered heritage. The Delhi School of Planning and Architecture will target urban design and mapping methods for people-oriented 'open cities,' and questions of ownership of and belonging to the city. Kathmandu University will contribute to the field of cultural heritage, community and memory as resources for urban sustainability, and to the training of art practice and curation as a socially responsible practice.

The inter- and transdisciplinary project aims at jointly developing a model of new and interrelated curricula, located beyond national and disciplinary boundaries. The use of collaborative methods of mapping, art production, and curation, as well as ethnographic field-based inquiry, will constitute the basic approach. An open-access archive, the Digital Archive for Comparative Urbanism (DACU), will be implemented for research-based learning. The objective of the partnership will be to train young generations of students to shape socially responsible and sustainable career paths focusing on the challenges of the "Urban Age." The programme will be open to all students in the MA Transcultural Studies, as well as students from other Master Curricula at CATS and from the new MA Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection at Heidelberg University. The first excursion will take place in Kathmandu (2021).

Urban landscape in Delhi | © Christiane Brosius 2011
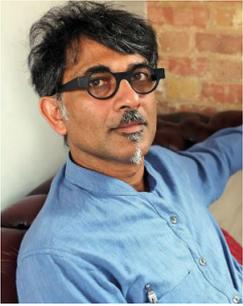
Prem Poddar

The HCTS is proud to host Prem Poddar, professor in Cultural Encounters at Roskilde University (Denmark) and senior fellow at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Berlin, as a guest fellow from July to December 2020. He collaborates with Prof. Joachim Kurtz (HCTS chair of intellectual history) on a project about the geopolitical history of the Himalayan border town of Kalimpong. His study tentatively titled `Chinese in India: A Reading of Foreigner Registration Files 1940s-1960s' focuses on the mandatory registration of Chinese nationals prescribed by the British-Indian government at the beginning of the Second World War. Through an examination of archival files from the Kalimpong Foreigner Registration Office and its Calcutta counterpart, Poddar intends to delineate how the category of the `Chinese national' was construed over the span of 20 years, first by the British-Indian colonial state and then by the postcolonial Indian authorities. The results of his research will constitute the material for a chapter within the frame of a larger research project on the cultural politics of the Himalayas.

Fabienne Wallenwein

In August 2020, Fabienne Wallenwein (Institute of Chinese Studies) joined the HCTS and started a new project together with Prof. Dr. Diamantis Panagiotopoulos and Dr. Carsten Wergin on heritage landscapes, funded by Heidelberg University's Flagship Initiative 'Transforming Cultural Heritage'. The project titled 'Materiality, Narration, Lived Experience: Overcoming Epistemic Inequalities in Non-Urban Landscapes' investigates the construction and transmission of cultural heritage in a Cretan and a Chinese cultural landscape. Proceeding from the hypotheses that a cultural landscape's interpretation strongly depends on social power structures and scientific expert evaluations, the project aims at an integration of local/indigenous knowledge into the determination of a landscape's cultural significance in order to develop a more balanced interpretation.

Fabienne Wallenwein studied East Asian Studies, Chinese Studies and Economics at Heidelberg University and Beijing Foreign Studies University. Her dissertation project "Tackling Urban Monotony. Cultural Heritage Conservation in China's Historically and Culturally Famous Cities" dealt with the conservation and revitalization of three Chinese residential areas and was supported by a young talent program of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Her research interests are cultural heritage, economic development, housing and urbanization.

Thomas Stock

From April 2020 to September 2021, the HCTS hosts Dr. Thomas Stock, intellectual historian of Korea in the Cold War and postdoctoral fellow at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In his current project, Stock who is collaborating with Prof Harald Fuess (HCTS-chair of cultural economic history) examines the evolution of North Korean ideology in relation to larger global intellectual trends. Stock's present investigation focuses on the developments occurred within North Korean ideology during the 1980s, such as the revival of Marxism-Leninism in the official discourse, the North Korean regime's reaction to intellectual trends under Gorbachev, and the use of "peace" as a propagandistic tool. His research shows that these transformations stemmed from concrete, empirically verifiable responses to global Marxist-Leninist debates that took place at specific points in time across the globe, rather than being a by-product of Confucianism, colonial legacies, or – as the North Korean propaganda claims – Kim Il Sung's guerrilla struggle. Drawing upon archival material from Eastern Europe, especially East Germany, as well as North Korean party publications, Stock's mapping of Pyongyang's involvement in transnational intellectual debates allows him to re-frame North Korean ideology as a product of global Marxism-Leninism.

Publications

Christiane Brosius;
Roberta Mandoki (eds.)
**Caring for Old Age:
Perspectives from South Asia**
Heidelberg Studies on Transcultur-
ality, Vol. 8, Heidelberg 2020

Many societies are experiencing
growing longevity and popula-
tion ageing simultaneously with
increasing urbanization and mo-
bilities. Such fundamental demo-
graphic and structural shifts have
been reflected in a multitude of
narratives and strategies how to
"age well." This volume explores the
transcultural dimensions of ageing
and care through close-up ethno-
graphic and literary case studies
in South Asia, as well as a Europe-
an case study from a South Asian
researcher's view. By critically en-
gaging with Eurocentric aspects in
ageing studies, the contributions
of this volume highlight how per-
spectives from the Global South
shed light on transcultural entan-
glements and connectivities of ex-
periences of care and ageing.
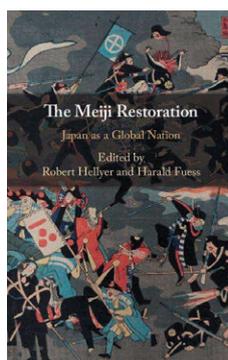
Robert Hellyer; Harald Fuess (eds.)
**The Meiji Restoration:
Japans as a Global Nation**
Cambridge University Press
April 2020

In world history, the Meiji Res-
to- ration of 1868 ranks as a rev-
olu- tionary watershed, on a par
with the American and French
Revolutions. In this volume, lead-
ing historians from North America,
Europe, and Japan employ global
history in novel ways to offer fresh
eco- nomic, social, political, cultur-
al, and military perspectives on the
Meiji Restoration and the subse-
quent creation of the modern Jap-
anese nation-state. Seamlessly
mixing meta- and micro-history,
the authors examine how the Jap-
anese state and Japanese people
engaged with global trends of the
early nineteenth century. They also
explore the internal military con-
flicts that marked the 1860s and the
process of reconciliation after 1868.
They conclude with discussions of
how new political, cultural, and dip-
lomatic institutions were created
as Japan emerged as a global na-
tion, defined in multiple ways by its
place in the world.
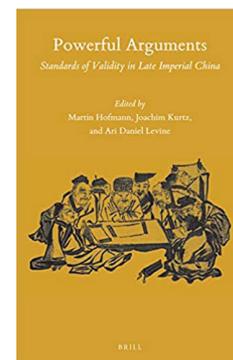
Martin Hofmann, Joachim Kurtz
and Ari Daniel Levine (eds.)
**Powerful Arguments: Standards
of Validity in Late Imperial China**
Brill, March 2020

The essays in this volume recon-
struct the standards of validity
underlying argumentative prac-
tices in a wide array of late impe-
rial Chinese discourses, from the
Song through the Qing dynasties.
The fourteen case studies analyze
concrete arguments defended or
contested in areas ranging from
historiography, philosophy, law,
and religion to natural studies, lit-
erature, and the civil examination
system. By examining uses of evi-
dence, habits of inference, and the
criteria by which some arguments
were judged to be more persuasive
than others, the contributions rec-
reate distinct cultures of reasoning.
Together, they lay the foundations
for a history of argumentative prac-
tice in one of the richest scholarly
traditions outside of Europe and
add a chapter to the as yet elusive
global history of rationality.
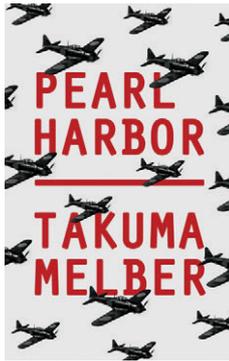
Takuma Melber
Pearl Harbor: Japan's Attack and America's Entry into World War II
Polity Press, November 2020

Hawaii, 7th December 1941, shortly before 8 in the morning: Japanese torpedo bombers launch a surprise attack on the US Pacific fleet anchored in Pearl Harbor. The devastating attack claims the lives of over 2,400 American soldiers, sinks or damages 18 ships and destroys nearly 350 aircraft. The US Congress declares war on Japan the following day.

In this vivid and lively book, Takuma Melber breathes new life into the dramatic events that unfolded before, during and after Pearl Harbor by putting the perspective of the Japanese attackers at the centre of his account. This is the dimension commonly missing in most other histories of Pearl Harbor, and it gives Melber the opportunity to provide a fuller, more definitive and authoritative account of the battle, its background and its consequences. Melber sheds new light on the long negotiations that went on between the Japanese and Americans in 1941, and the confusion and argument among the Japanese political and military elite. He shows how US intelligence and military leaders in Washington failed to interpret correctly the information they had and to draw the necessary conclusions about the Japanese war intentions in advance of the attack. His account of the battle itself is informed by the latest research and benefits from in-

cluding the planning and post-raid assessment by the Japanese commanders. His account also covers the second raid in March 1942 by two long-range seaplanes which was intended to destroy the shipyards so that ships damaged in the initial attack could not be repaired.

This balanced and thoroughly researched book deepens our understanding of the battle that precipitated America's entry into the war and it will appeal to anyone interested in World War II and military history.

Florian Freitag, Chang Liu (eds.)
Theme Parks (公园主题), special edition of Chinese Culture Forum (华夏文化论坛) vol. 22, no. 2, 2019, pp. 397-460.

The articles collected in Theme Park Studies this Chinese-language volume on Themeparks and edited by one of our PhD students in the GPTS, Chang Liu, discuss the multiple ways in which both older and more recent Chinese cultural history, folklore, and literature figure in commercial themed entertainment spaces. Through their analyses of the various sources, representational strategies, and functions of historical theming in contemporary Chinese theme parks, however, the contributors also seek to further the scholarly debate on the theme park industry in China, taking it out of the cul-de-sac of the topics of copying and glocalization. Theme park scholars publishing

in English (as well as German and French) have mostly focused on a select number of major U.S.- and Europe-based parks (particularly the Disney parks). If they have paid attention to non-Western and specifically Chinese theme parks at all, scholars publishing in English have tended to replicate well-established research patterns and perspectives. As with Tokyo Disneyland and Disneyland Paris before, for instance, the opening of Hong Kong Disneyland has elicited a number of studies of the "(g)localization" of Disney, and one may reasonably expect similar investigations of Shanghai Disneyland as well as other local branches of global chains. And as with other (Western) parks, scholars have shown a particular predilection for cultural studies approaches and topics, concentrating on ideological readings of such "cultural theme parks" as the miniature world parks or the folk villages.

Conversely, it is precisely the cultural perspective that has been comparatively neglected in discussions of Chinese theme parks by scholars writing in Chinese, with only a fraction of articles investigating the "'theme park as product', including categories of thematic identity, cultural heritage, and lifecycle" (Zhang and Shang 1). In fact, one may think of English-language and Chinese-language research as offering complementary perspectives on Chinese theme parks. Moreover, Chinese-language research discusses a much larger variety of parks in a much larger number of geographical locations, including e.g. the "Happy Valley" and "Fantawild" parks, Suzhou Amusement Land, or the Ice and Snow World in Harbin – parks and entire park chains that have hardly even been mentioned in English-language research.

# Dots and Dashes and Electric Flashes: Documentary Theatre on Technologies of Communication

This immersive workshop and performance took place in September-October 2020 and is the result of a collaboration between Dr Amelia Bonea, Research Fellow at HCTS, Anuja Ghosalkar, a documentary theatre artist based in Bangalore, and the students of Focus High School, Dar-ul-Shifa, Hyderabad. The aim of the event was to encourage students to reflect on the past and present of technologies of communication and to interrogate the myriad ways in which they shape our lives.

The workshop was conceptualized using an illustrated children's story--The Magic Mango--written by Amelia Bonea on the basis of her doctoral research at the Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context' and published in 2018 in collaboration with Pratham Books' StoryWeaver.[1] The final performance, streamed live on 17 October, is an imaginative recreation of the original plotline that uses a very novel means of communication--Zoom--to reflect on the meaning of distance, our yearning for other places and the possibility of traveling within the confines of one's home with the help of self-made maps.

The show was conceived by Anuja Ghosalkar and benefited from the design and conceptual assistance of filmmaker Aliasger Dhariwala. The organizers wish to acknowledge the generous support of Prof Sally Shuttleworth, the John Fell Fund and the European Research Council Project 'Diseases of Modern Life,' all based at the University of Oxford, as well as Sabika Javeed of Focus High School.

1 A German NGO working with refugees (http://dadd-initiative.de/) has since translated the original Mango story into Arabic (see https://www.arabicwiki.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/71.pdf)
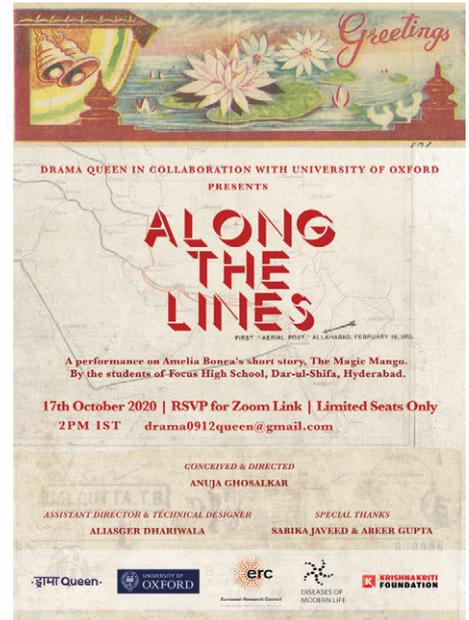
Annotated map of telecommunications (1901).
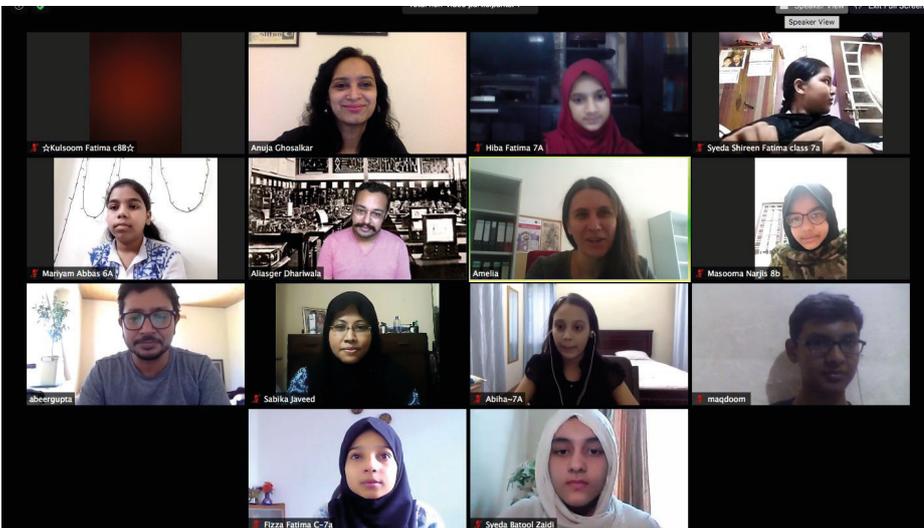
Discussing distance—Screenshot from an online rehearsal for the documentary theatre play. The students of Focus High School were joined by Amelia Bonea, Aliasger Dhariwala, Anuja Ghosalkar, Abeer Gupta and Sabika Javeed.

Master's Programme in Transcultural Studies

Heidelberg University welcomes applications for its two-year Master's Programme in Transcultural Studies, in which students from around the globe can explore the dynamics of cultural exchanges working across disciplinary and national boundaries. The emphasis lies on Asia, predominantly East and South Asia, and Europe.

The MA in Transcultural Studies is a research-oriented, interdisciplinary programme in the humanities and social sciences with a transregional focus. It offers a wide range of courses within an international research environment and is taught in English. Students are trained in transcultural theories and methods as well as in the study of cross-cultural exchanges in past and present, specifically between Asia and Europe. They specialize in one of three study foci: "Society,

Economy, and Governance;" "Visual, Media and Material Culture;" or "Knowledge, Belief, and Religion." Students will learn to critically evaluate research tools and methodologies from different disciplines in order to build a set of methods and theories framed according to their specific research question and material.

Students are encouraged to spend their third semester abroad on study exchange or conducting a research-oriented internship. They can benefit from partnerships with Tokyo University, Kyoto University, Seoul National University, and Yale University that also include funding opportunities. A study exchange to other Asian and European countries is also possible.

The MA in Transcultural Studies additionally provides an option to

earn a Joint Degree Master's Certificate with its partner Kyoto University (Graduate School of Letters) in Transcultural Studies. Students can apply for the Joint Degree version (Heidelberg/Kyoto) only after admission to and enrollment in the regular Master's in Transcultural Studies Programme at the end of the regular MA in Transcultural Studies Programme's first semester. Applicants must hold a BA or equivalent (minimum three years of study) in a discipline of the humanities or social sciences with an above-average grade. Furthermore, proficiency in English and two more languages is required.

The application deadline for international students for the winter semester 2020/21 is June 15, 2021.

> **Contact**
> *For more information about the programme, the application requirements, and process please visit*
>
> » *http://www.transcultural.uni-hd.de/*
>
> *or contact us via email to mats-office@hcts.uni-heidelberg.de*

12th generation of the GPTS

Four doctoral candidates join the three-year, structured doctoral programme "Graduate Programme for Transcultural Studies (GPTS)" offered by the HCTS.

Two of them are awarded each with an HCTS scholarship, the other two each with a scholarship provided by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) through

the Graduate School Scholarship Program (GSSP). The members of this 12th generation of the GPTS starts their studies in October 2020.

The GPTS-12-members and the working titles of their doctoral projects are:

- Tzu-Yin Chi (Chinese Buddhist Bibliography as Historiography)

- Yanling Li (In Harmony with Nature? Landscape and

Folklore Photography in Japan (1930-1970))

- Shiyi Xiang (Jade from the Frontier: The Production, Collections at the Qianlong Court and Global Commercial Networks)

- Xinyu Zheng (The Transformation of the Temporal Regime in modern China (1850s-1910s))

Winter School Global History in Delhi

From 17th to 21st February 2020, the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung, the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) and the German Historical Institute London (GHIL) jointly organized the Winter School "Global History: Challenges and opportunities" for German and Indian PhD-students in Delhi. The local representatives of the SAI Delhi Branch Office and the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung closely cooperated to realize this event. In total, 19 PhD-students from various universities in India and Germany participated in the Winter School.

The Winter School consisted of three thematic modules that addressed different areas of study, including the history of pedagogic practice, the history of peripatetic objects and the history of labor. Each of these topics was introduced by an expert and then discussed with the participants of the Winter School. While Parimala V Rao (Jawaharlal Nehru University) conducted the module on the history of pedagogic practice, Monica Juneja (HCTS) and Prabhu Mohapatra (Delhi University) took over the modules on the history of peripatetic objects and the history of labor respectively. Participants were encouraged to think about the possibilities offered by the concept of global history and the ways in which their various research topics could benefit from this particular approach. Addressing this overarching objective of the Winter School, each module featured stimulating presentations by the experts and fostered lively discussions among the participants.

Another element of the Winter School was a panel discussion about the languages of global history featuring, among other scholars, Professor Monica Juneja and Professor Joachim Kurtz of the HCTS. This panel discussion demonstrated how works that address a variety of different topics can speak to each other when looked at through the conceptual lens of global history. A guided heritage walk through the neighborhood of Mehrauli enabled the participants of the Winter School to get a first-hand experience of the living and breathing history of Delhi and its significance in the current cityspace. During the final two days of the Winter School, participants presented their own research projects, their research methodology and the ways in which they engage with global history approaches in their work. They received feedback on their projects from the experts and organizers of the Winter School and in turn provided feedback on how to improve future events.

Staircase, CATS Library, Photo: Susann Henker, 2019

Cover Image
Social distancing at Tribhuvan Airport, Kathmandu, Photo: Lena Michaels, 13.11.2020

Photos
All CATS architecture photos in this issue.
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Public Art at CATS
Friedemann von Stockhausen, *CATS/web 2018*