

CATS/HCTS @ ICAS 11  
ENGAGING TRANSLATIONS AND CIRCULATIONS ACROSS ASIA AND EUROPE  
LEIDEN , THE NETHERLANDS  
16-19 JULY 2019

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How can we trace the circulation and translation of texts, images, sounds, and objects across national and regional boundaries, and how can we make sense of the involved agents' actions and itineraries, without adhering to methodological nationalism or disciplinary reifications of essences? ICAS 2019 offers an ideal platform to discuss the conceptual and methodological challenges arising from such questions for critical Asia Studies.

To advance these discussions, scholars working at or affiliated with Heidelberg's Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS) are convening a series of hands-on workshops on four consecutive days. The workshops are designed for junior scholars studying processes of circulation and translation within and between Asia and Europe who may benefit from discussing the concepts and methods they deploy with other researchers but potentially also with artists, curators, collectors, filmmakers, novelists or bloggers who share their interests. The format is interactive rather than presentation-based. Framed by brief introductions by the conveners, each of the four thematic sessions will be built around a selection of primary materials/data proposed by the participants that lend themselves to multiscale and pluridisciplinary explorations. Participants will be asked to prepare five-minute input statements on the conceptual and methodological issues raised by their own sources and comment on the projects of one of their peers. Each of the 3-4 pairs of statements will be followed by open discussion. Materials plus secondary readings will be pre-circulated. Applicants are encouraged to participate in more than one workshop to enhance resonances between the fora.

To apply, please submit an abstract of no more than 600 words outlining the relevance of your materials to your own research projects and the workshop themes together with a sample of primary materials and suggested secondary readings **by 1 March 2019** to Ms Mhairi Montgomery at [mhairi.montgomery@asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:mhairi.montgomery@asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de).

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WORKSHOPS

***DAY 1. SITES OF KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE***

**JOACHIM KURTZ (HCTS, INTELLECTUAL HISTORY) & DHARU RAINA (JNU, HISTORY OF SCIENCE)**

Recent studies have shown that space and place matter in the history of knowledge. Far from being neutral containers, spatial settings mold the social interactions through which knowledge is generated and exchanged. This workshop asks how we can best come to terms with spatial dimensions of knowledge-making. By testing conceptual tools offered by various

disciplines, we aim to refine the language we use to probe the conditions under which situated productions of knowledge take place. We invite contributions that focus on specific sites implicated in circulations of knowledge within and between Asia and Europe since the early modern period.

***DAY 2. TRANSLATION ACROSS THE BUDDHIST WORLD***

**MICHAEL RADICH (HCTS, BUDDHIST STUDIES) & JONATHAN SILK (BUDDHIST STUDIES, LEIDEN)**

What were the nature and consequences of translation across Buddhist sub-traditions? We might pursue this overarching question in many directions. For example: How did translation

strategies differ for various source and target languages, genres, media (including oral vs. written), historical context, personalities, etc.? How did translation interact with Buddhist

“philosophy of language”, or notions of truth? What is the place of translation error in the history of Buddhist texts and systems? What was not or could not be translated, and why

not? How did the “untranslated” nonetheless change meaning in new contexts? Is Buddhism translation “all the way down”?

*DAY 3/4. CHRONOTYPES AND CHRONOLOGICS:*

*TRANSCULTURAL TRAVELS AND TRANSLATIONS OF PERIODIZATION SCHEMES*

**BARBARA MITTLER (HCTS, CHINESE & TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES) & THOMAS MAISSEN (EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY, DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES INSTITUT PARIS)**

What does it mean to think about Renaissance, Enlightenment, the Middle Ages, or the Baroque etc. in a global context? This workshop will suggest to read-in-conjunction certain objects/texts/images/musics that stand for a certain “epoch” or period in a particular cultural/local context, and deliberate the use of these circulating terms as chronotypes.

Our section intends to raise awareness of and uncover some of the dynamics behind particular uses of periodization schemes, as structures and concepts for ordering the past. Uncovering some of the predispositions and biases that these schemes carry with them, even in translation, we will discuss the specific chronologies behind them.

*DAY 3/4. MARITIME CIRCULATIONS*

**NIKOLAS JASPERT (HCTS, MEDIEVAL HISTORY, MEDITERRANEAN SEA) & HARALD FUESS (CULTURAL ECONOMIC HISTORY, HCTS)**

Maritime connectivity is often conceived as a network of many shipping routes, each linking two harbours. But in reality, these networks were generally not bipolar but circular: Before the invention of the steamship, maritime navigation was hardly practiced as a simple return journey between two harbours, but rather as a circuit. This was due to winds and currents or to nautical reasons, but also had to do with the laws of offer and demand: triangular trade typically exported commodities to places where they were needed without necessarily importing goods from the same place; rather, chains of circulation were

established in order to rectify trade imbalances and draw profit from regional demand. This specific practice is not only relevant for economic history, but necessarily also had consequences in the fields of culture and politics etc. Focusing it from a transcultural perspective is a promising undertaking. In this workshop, we would therefore like to study and compare the significance of nautical circulation for maritime societies, past and present. The seas to be studied range from Eastern Asia over the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Seas to the Mediterranean.