The Asian Studies Update - October 27

If you are having difficulty viewing this email properly, please click here: https://www.mailoutinteractive.com/Industry/View.aspx?id=855806&q=0&qz=fabf17

The Department of Asian Studies

Thursday, October 27, 2016

The Update

A bi-weekly roundup of news in the Department of Asian Studies
For our Students, Faculty and Staff

John Howes Lecture in Japanese Studies - Postwar Tokyo: Capital of a Ruined Empire

The Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia is pleased to invite you to our annual John Howes Lecture in Japanese Studies featuring guest speaker Dr. Seiji M. Lippit, Professor in Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles. This year's lecture, entitled Postwar Tokyo: Capital of a Ruined Empire, will discuss the remarkable efflorescence of literature and culture that emerged in Tokyo during the immediate postwar period, as intellectuals and artists, many of them returning to the city from the countryside or from overseas territories, grappled with a simultaneous sense of immense loss and hopeful visions of the future.

Lecture: Postwar Tokyo: Capital of a Ruined Empire

Thursday, November 17, 2016
5pm Reception with light refreshments
6pm Lecture
Auditorium, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall, UBC, Vancouver

This lecture is free and open to the public. Online registration is required. Space is limited.

Register now >>

https://www.mailoutinteractive.com/Industry/View.aspx?id=855806&q=0&qz=fabf17
Featured Term 2 ASIA Courses

**ASIA 310T Tibetan and Himalayan Culture**

This course aims to introduce Tibetan and Himalayan studies to students who do not have a background in the subject. The students are introduced to culture and civilization of Tibetan speaking cultural region of the Himalaya focusing on religion, arts and society. The students will read academic articles and books by way of general background and hear lectures on Tibetan history and civilization.

[Register now >>](#)

**ASIA 310A - The Rise, Fall and Revival of Buddhism in South Asia**

This course is an advanced introduction to the study of Buddhism in the Indian subcontinent. Students will explore the historical, political and cultural developments of Buddhism from its early origins among the north Indian plains more than twenty-five hundred years ago to its decline between the 12th to 15th centuries. This class will also devote significant attention to the re-discovery of Buddhism during the colonial period through textual and archaeological remains as well as the many forms that Buddhism possesses in the subcontinent today.

[Register now >>](#)

**One Asia Forum Talk Series**

Hosted by Dr. [Nam-lin Hur](mailto:), this series will feature different speakers every other week throughout Term 1.
Upcoming events:

Thursday, October 27, 2016
Alchemy at Meissen, or How China Became china (and Europe Transmuted the World)
With guest speaker Professor Ben Schmidt (University of Washington)
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Room 604, Asian Centre

Thursday, November 3, 2016
Violence and Oral Tradition in the China-Vietnam Borderlands
With guest speaker Professor Bradley Camp Davis (Eastern Connecticut State University)
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Room 604, Asian Centre

Thursday, November 10, 2016
Courts, families, and sovereigns: The Chinese empire and China's option of provincializing Korea, 1392–1902
With guest speaker Professor Yuanchong Wang (University of Delaware)
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Room 604, Asian Centre

Thursday, November 17, 2016
Tributary Twilight and the Global Modern: Lost Visions of Qing-Chos'n Relations in the Late Nineteenth Century
With guest speaker Professor Joshua Van Lieu (LaGrange College)
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Room 461, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, 1961 East Mall

The full list of One Asia Forum talks >>

In Search of the Chinese Common Reader: Usable Knowledge and Wondrous Ignorance in the Age of Global Science

A lecture by Professor Joan Judge (Department of History, York University)
Central to the political, literary, and social revolutions of the 20th century was the figure of the masses: a collective that was urgently addressed, repeatedly invoked, and broadly understood to be in need of uplift and education in the service of the "New China." What was most actively occluded in these imaginings was the actual lifeworld of those interpellated to become the "new" masses: their beliefs, texts, and modes of thinking which were systematically relegated to the dustbin of superstitious and backward "Old China."

**Friday, October 28, 2016**

2pm - 4pm
Room 604, UBC Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Graduate students interested in attending a research methodology seminar with Prof. Judge at 10am on October 28 should contact Prof. Christopher Rea at chris.rea@ubc.ca.

---

**Critical Ethnography of Decorative Rebellion: Japanese Girls Subculture in Harajuku**

With Speaker Atumi Nakao (Ph.D. student, Asian Studies)
The research examines the young female specific subculture called Decora in Harajuku by applying a critical ethnographic approach in order to retheorize the notion of resistance.

**Wednesday, November 2, 2016**
12:30pm
Room 604, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

*Part of the Centre for Japanese Research Lunchtime Lecture Series*

---

**Film Screening & Lecture: Hang in There, Kids/LOKAH LAQI**

*Hang in There, Kids!* (in Mandarin, with English subtitles) is the second feature film by **Laha Mebow**, director of the two indigenous-directed feature films to be theatre-released in Taiwan. Following the screening, **Dr. Darryl Sterk** will discuss how the film differs from *Avatar* (2009, USA) or *Atanarjuat* (2001, Canada) or other "native features" in that it concerns daily life in a high altitude indigenous village in contemporary Taiwan from the perspective of young people. Dr. Sterk’s talk will share context for how to view *Hang in There, Kids!* through Taiwanese eyes, arguing that though marketed as "heartwarming," the film manages to present a relatively accurate picture of Taiwanese indigenous social problems and the existential disappointments they produce.
Wednesday, November 2, 2016  
12:00-2:00pm First Nations Longhouse, 1985 West Mall

Graduate students interested in attending a literary translation seminar with Prof. Sterk during the week of October 31 should contact Prof. Christopher Rea at chris.rea@ubc.ca.

Colloquium on Religion, Literature and the Arts

Hosted by Dr. Anne Murphy, this colloquium will feature different speakers every other week throughout Term 1.

Upcoming events:

Thursday, November 3, 2016
Islam and Empire in India: The Padshah’s Sacred Authority and Religious Pluralism in Mughal Times
With Corinne Lefèvre, CEIAS (Le Centre d’Études de l’Inde et de l’Asie du Sud)
4pm - 6pm
Asian Centre Auditorium, 1871 West Mall, Vancouver
Saviour or Trickster God? Reexamining Ea’s Motives in Two Babylonian Myths
With Sara Milstein (Classical, Near Eastern, and Religious Studies)
12:30pm
Room 604, UBC Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Participating in other worlds: the use of Brajbhasha in premodern Sikh literature
With Julie Vig (Asian Studies)
12:30pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi, 1855 West Mall

Movie Screening: Yellowing

Hong Kong’s fraught, tense relationship with mainland China came to a head in 2014’s Umbrella Movement. Vivid, moving portraits of selected students who camped out on the streets and organized a temporary, alternative, communitarian Hong Kong animate this fly-on-the-wall documentary. Richly detailed, engrossing and dramatic, it captures the sights, sounds and
feelings of a time when tens of thousands of Hong Kong citizens—energized idealistic youth—defied their government and demanded democracy.

**Tuesday, 22 November 2016**

6:30pm  
Frederic Wood Theatre, UBC  
Length: 133 mins; Language: Catonese with English subtitles

**Free & open to the public but registration required.**

---

**Sustainable Feature:**

A brief spotlight on what is being done at UBC and Asian Studies to create a more sustainable community. This week, marine pollution will be the focus of this article, especially pollution generated by plastic waste.

The use of plastic bags and plastic-made products is contributing to the destruction of our world's marine ecosystems and causes the deaths of innocent species. At least once, we have heard of the story of sea turtles suffocating to death after mistaking a plastic bag for a jelly fish. You can make a positive difference by doing little things like always bringing a reusable bag while shopping or by avoiding plastic water bottles and containers.

The Department of Asian Studies sells our environmentally sustainable water bottles and reusable shopping bags at cost. Show off your Asian Studies pride while being environmentally conscious. Next time you are by the Asian Centre, come by our office to see our items in person.
Student Opportunities

Yokohama IUC 10-Month Program: The Inter-University Centre for Japanese Language Studies (http://www.stanford.edu/dept/IUC) is the leading institution for training graduate students in Japanese and equipping them for further research. UBC is a member of the consortium, which enables a reduced tuition and better access to funding. The deadline for the ten-month program is December 9 if you wish to be considered for a Nippon Foundation fellowship. Those interested in applying are encouraged to contact Dr. Christina Laffin at christina.laffin@ubc.ca.

The Arts Tri-Mentoring Program is now accepting applications from second-year and senior level (3rd year+) students from all majors. Deadline for applications is October 31 by 3:00pm.

Ise and Japan Study Program 2017. Fully funded study program (lectures and field trips) for researchers (graduate or post-graduate). Application deadline November 30, 2016

University of Colorado — Call for Graduate Studies Applications in Modern/Premodern Chinese and Japanese Literature/Culture. Applications are due on January 1st, 2017

MA In South Asian Studies at University of Washington, Seattle

Sessional Lecturer Position (2016W T2) - FIST 230 Intro to Asian Cinema. Deadline Nov 10, 2016

2017 Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme Recruitment. Deadline to apply Nov 18, 2016

Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme – Applications Open

B.C. Recognizes South Asian Canadian Heritage – Submissions accepted until Nov 6, 2016

Language Sciences Undergraduate Research Conference - Abstract Submissions open from Nov 1 - Dec 5, 2016

Japan Foundation Programs (2016-2017) guide and application forms available online

On-Campus Events

Thursday, October 27, 2016
Minorities and Terror Attack in Bangladesh: A Roundtable Discussion
12:00pm - 2:00pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi Building, 1855 West Mall

Thursday, October 27, 2016
Making Business More Virtuous: A Daoist Approach
12:30pm - 1:30pm
Rm 968, Henry Angus Building, 2053 Main Mall

Thursday, October 27, 2016
Senses of Space: Religious Aesthetics and Political Group-Making in Santa Elena, Yucatan - Part of the MOA Visual and material Culture Research Seminar Series
4pm - 5pm
Room 213 at the Museum of Anthropology

Friday, October 28, 2016
Walk in Canada, Talk on Japan - A Q&A Panel with Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki
11am - 12:30pm
Sage Bistro, 6331 Crescent Road

October 28 - November 5, 2016
Miss Hokusai - A Film by Keiichi Hara
Multiple times
Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour St, Vancouver

Tuesday, November 1, 2016
Why do some Authoritarian States Engage in More Aggressive Corporate Intervention than Others?
12:00pm - 1:30pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi Building, 1855 West Mall

Wednesday, November 2, 2016
6:30pm
Old Auditorium, 6344 Memorial Road

Thursday, November 3, 2016
Living Library Pilot
6:00pm - 7:30pm
UBC Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Thursday, November 3, 2016
Activism for Harmony? Immigrant Rights’ Activism and Xenophobic Activism in Japan
4:00pm - 5:30pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi Building, 1855 West Mall
November 5 - 6, 2016
Taiwanese Puppet Festival at MOA
Starts both days at 11am
Museum of Anthropology, 6393 N.W. Marine Drive

Monday, November 7, 2016
The Science of Healing: Tibetan Medicine as Local Practice, National Heritage, and Global Brand
5 pm - 7 pm
Room 120, CK Choi Building, 1855 West Mall

Wednesday, November 9, 2016
Japan’s ‘Quality Service’: Can Omotenashi be a source of Japan’s soft power?
12:30pm - 2:00pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi Building, 1855 West Mall

Thursday, November 10, 2016
Narcissus at the Fountain - Part of the MOA Visual and material Culture Research Seminar Series
4 pm - 5 pm
Room 213 at the Museum of Anthropology

Thursday, November 24, 2016
Life after Death: The Rebirth of Buddhism in Modern India - Part of the MOA Visual and material Culture Research Seminar Series
4 pm - 5 pm
Room 213 at the Museum of Anthropology

Thursday, December 1, 2016
Tenzing Rigdol: Artist’s talk on contemporary Tibetan art
5 pm - 7:30 pm
Room 102, Frederic Lasserre Building, 6333 Memorial Road

Off -Campus Events

Thursday, November 17, 2016
Okinawa: the Afterburn. John Junkerman’s Award-Winning Film
5 pm - 8 pm
Room HC 1530, Harbour Centre Campus SFU, 515 West Hastings, Vancouver

Meet our Students - Clayton Ashton, Ph.D. Student, Early Chinese history
Tell us a little about yourself, your background and how you became interested in Asian Studies?

The most common question I get when people find out what I study is a baffled: “How did you end up interested in that?” Despite being asked this all the time, I still don’t have a straightforward answer. My interest in Asian Studies was unexpected and came about slowly. I grew up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a place whose name doesn’t immediately conjure up images of Asian culture in most people’s minds. But like so many cities in Canada, it had its own small Chinatown and I spent a big chunk of my youth hanging out there. As a result, Chinese culture and language (particularly Cantonese) always felt like an important part of the cultural mosaic of my hometown. Because I knew so much less about the history of China and Chinese immigrants than I knew about the history of Europe and its immigrants to Canada, I was naturally curious to learn more. As soon as I was exposed to Chinese history during my undergraduate education, I found it such a rich and fascinating subject that I couldn’t resist wanting to know more. Some time spent travelling and living in Asia only deepened this interest.

Why did you choose the Asian Studies program at UBC? Was there an aspect of the program or location that was particularly attractive to you compared to other programs in Canada or internationally?

When I decided to study for a Master’s degree, I knew I wanted to stay in Canada. Once I had made this decision, UBC was an obvious choice. Vancouver was appealing to me because I have family here and also (I have to admit) because of the weather. But the main selling point was the impressive faculty, including some names I had heard of even before I was considering graduate school. The Asian Studies program also seemed to have the most to offer in terms of language training and resources, and I felt that this was fundamental to any meaningful study of Asia.

I couldn’t have known this at the time, but it turned out that this was a very good decision in the long-term because I’ve only seen the department become stronger in the last number of years. After completing my Master’s degree, I decided that UBC’s Asian Studies program still remained the strongest available for me, and I stayed on to study for my PhD, which is what I’m doing now.

Could you explain to a non-expert what you are researching and why it is important?

Very broadly, I study the political and intellectual history of early China. My dissertation is focused on the period of about 300 BCE. An important development in the study of this period has been the discovery of numerous archaeological texts – works written mainly on bamboo strips that were sealed away in tombs, and many of which had never been seen until their recent discovery. These texts have been revolutionizing our understanding of Chinese history.

What I’m doing in my dissertation is trying to understand what these texts can tell us about how thinkers at the time were theorizing about government and administration. This was a period of history when people were beginning to ask some fascinating and original questions about some big topics that we’re still struggling with today: how to organize a state, how to balance individual desires with collective needs, and what it means to be ethical during a period of upheaval. So-called human “civilization” is actually much younger than we tend to think of it, and learning how to live together in large numbers in cities and states has been a difficult and complicated process that we’re still trying to figure out how to do well. One of the advantages of learning about ancient history is that it lets you take a step back and see our current social and ethical challenges from a much broader perspective. Our lives today are only one small part of the much longer story of human history, and adding the voices from these lost texts of early China can only help to enrich our understanding of this story.

Read the full interview >>

Asian Studies Faculty Spotlight Interview: Ross King

A new series where we ask our instructors about their early lives, career development and proudest accomplishments. Our second interview features Dr. Ross King, Head of the Department of Asian Studies.
Can you explain to a non-expert what you research?

My training originally was in Korean language and linguistics; especially the history and structure of the Korean language. Lately I am interested in the history of reading—in East Asia more broadly, and in Korea, more specifically. I am especially interested in the technologies and texts that helped non-Chinese (like Koreans and Japanese) learn to read and write Literary Sinitic (Classical Chinese).

When and where did you start your journey in Asian Studies?

Through study of Japanese, Mandarin and Korean at university, because I was bored with the European languages (French, Russian, German and Spanish) that I had studied since age 11—I wanted something new and different. And once I started learning the languages, that inevitably led into the study of culture, history and literature. But Korean, as the most challenging and least studied of 'CJK', was always the most appealing. I can also point out that as a white-bread boy from rural Wisconsin in the American heartland, I came in for a bit of a shock when I went to boarding school at age 14 in New Hampshire. We had 'assembly' every morning in the assembly hall, where we sat in alphabetical order. I was rather mystified by my neighbours: the Kims to one side, the Lees to the other, David Moon just behind me, and David Hyun 2 rows ahead, with Jinhee Juhn right in front of me—all second-generation Koreans from all over the US.

What was the experience for you learning a second language?
I was a language freak from age 11 already, and had spent all of my teen years attending summer ‘language villages’ all summer along at Concordia Language Villages in northern Minnesota (http://www.concordialanguagevillages.org/). I had already learned quite a bit of Spanish, German and Russian in the Villages before branching out into Asian languages at university. Learning languages was the one and only thing I was good at from a young age.

**Was there a point in your journey you struggled or questioned yourself? What happened?**

Well, for a long time (all the way through university) I thought I was going to become an international lawyer (for all the wrong reasons), but after I graduated and spent a year on my own in Korea, Taiwan and Japan, I found that immersing myself in different languages and cultures was far more appealing than the prospect of lawyering. And a lot of my classmates from college who had gone to law school were jerks.

**We Welcome your Submissions**

If you have a story that you would like featured in our biweekly update please submit your story here and it could be featured in the next Update!

**Missed an Update?**

All past newsletters may be found here.