Looking Forward: “Asia in Love”

In 2014-15, BUCSA’s theme is “Asia in Love.”

Presentations by scholars, writers, and artists, documentary and film screenings, collaborations with other BU and Boston-area centers, musical and cultural events, and more, form our year-long thread, illuminating the multifaceted aspects of this important topic. Please check our Upcoming Events section to follow our “ASIA IN LOVE” activities, as well as many other events on Asia!

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Message from the Director of BU’s Center for the Study of Asia,
Eugenio Menegon

Since Fall 2013, much has happened at BUCSA! The biggest event for us was the founding of the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies in July 2014, thanks to a generous gift from long-time benefactor to Boston University Frederick Pardee. After the selection of Professor Adil Najam as the School’s Founding Dean, BUCSA has worked within Pardee’s Division of Regional Studies, comprising all area studies institutes, centers, and programs (Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, Middle East/North Africa, Muslim Societies and Civilizations, as well as the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs), to coordinate a common strategic future for our interdisciplinary units at Pardee, while keeping our distinct identities, and serving our diverse membership across fields.

Another milestone was the complete redesigning of our Asian Studies Interdisciplinary Major, now fully within BUCSA, and directed by Academic Coordinator Professor Min Ye (Pardee School); the new major includes a larger than ever offering of courses on East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia across the humanities and social sciences, and features a special Asian Studies mini-seminar to create a sense of community among new majors.

Explore these pages to see how lucky we are to have such wonderful teachers and scholars at BU, with accomplishments ranging from the award of prestigious fellowships to recent publications. We also welcome three new faculty members on board: check their bios! With BUCSA’s support, our students have continued to be engaged in Asian Studies, especially through the activities of ASIABU (featured in this newsletter) and the participation of our graduate students in the BU-


This newsletter offers highlights of some of the activities we organized in the past year, and shows once again the vibrancy of our Asian Studies community, its interaction with several BU Schools and Centers, and beyond the university. We concluded the series of initiatives on “Asia and the City” (our 2013-14 theme) with the major conference “The Future is Now: Urban Asia in the 21st Century,” co-organized with the Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer Range Future and the BU Initiative on Cities in October 2014. In the Fall, we also organized a symposium on recent elections in Taiwan, and a reflection on the 1989 Tian’anmen Student Movement as part of International Education Week. Our new theme is “Asia in Love”: several talks, a visit to the Museum of Fine Arts to explore love in South Asia, and a film festival co-sponsored by BUCSA and the BU Center for the Humanities in February 2015, pepper the year, and give us occasions to reflect on what is beautiful, sometimes sad, but always important in life.

We invite you to join us for our upcoming Spring 2015 events. Please sign up for our Weekly Newsletter to stay updated on our activities, and learn more at our website about who we are and what we do!

Cheers!

Eugenio Menegon
Associate Professor of Chinese History and Director, BUCSA
MILESTONES 2013-2014

Foundation of the new Pardee School of Global Studies

The Center for the Study of Asia is proud to be a part of BU’s newest school, the Pardee School of Global Studies. The Pardee School consists of two divisions: International Studies and Regional studies, combining under one roof the university’s International Relations program and various area studies programs and centers.

Named for its largest benefactor, the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies will be housed within the College of Arts & Sciences and will bring together faculty from across the University to support uniquely interdisciplinary research aimed at the great challenge of advancing global human progress and educating the next generation of leaders who will address these issues. Improving the human condition around the globe is at the core of the school’s mission.

Approval of New Asian Studies Interdisciplinary Major

BU Center for the Humanities Grant

BUCSA was awarded a BU Center for the Humanities Grant for the BU Asia Film Week in Spring 2015, “Asia: Love and Other Obsessions.” The Asia Film Week, coordinated by Prof. Cathy Yeh (MLCL) and Kate Li (BUCSA Graduate Assistant), will bring outstanding Asian films to the BU community.

Library Grants

- **Electronic Resources Grant from the Korea Foundation**, application by Steve Smith, Head of Collection Development at Mugar Library and Professor Yoon Sun Yang (MLCL)
- On-going **Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Grant** in library acquisition at the International Center for East Asian Archeology and Cultural History

Recent and Upcoming Faculty Fellowships

- **Marie Abe** (Ethnomusicology, Japan): Wellesley Newhouse Center for the Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship, 2013-14
- **Keith Vincent** (MLCL, Japanese): Toyota Visiting Professorship at the University of Michigan, 2013-14
- **Wiebke Denecke** (MLCL, Chinese and Japanese): Mellon Foundation New Directions Fellowship, 2015-17
- **Min Ye** (Pardee School, China & India): Public Intellectual Program Fellow, National Committee on U.S-China Relations, 2014-2016

For more information, please see [www.bu.edu/asian/academics/undergraduate/major](http://www.bu.edu/asian/academics/undergraduate/major)
The book compares the dynamics between the younger literacy cultures of Japan and Rome and the literatures of their venerable predecessors, China and Greece. How were writers of the younger cultures of Rome and Japan affected by the presence of an older “reference culture,” whose sophistication they admired, even as they anxiously strove to assert their own distinctive identity? How did they tackle the challenge of adopting the reference culture’s literary genres, rhetorical refinement, and conceptual vocabulary for writing texts in different languages and within distinct political and cultural contexts?

Classical World Literatures captures the striking similarities between the ways early Japanese authors wrote their own literature through and against the literary precedents of China, and the ways Latin writers engaged and contested Greek precedents. But it also brings to light suggestive divergences that are rooted in geopolitical, linguistic, sociohistorical, and aesthetic differences between early Japanese and Roman literary cultures. Proposing a methodology of “deep comparison” for the cross-cultural comparison of premodern literary cultures and calling for an expansion of world literature debates into the ancient and medieval worlds, Classical World Literatures is both a theoretical intervention and an invitation to read and re-read four major literary traditions in an innovative and illuminating light.

Gina Cogan (Religion) publishes The Princess Nun: Bunchi, Buddhist Reform, and Gender in Early Edo Japan.

The Princess Nun tells the story of Bunchi (1619–1697), daughter of Emperor Go-Mizunoo and founder of Enshōji. Bunchi advocated strict adherence to monastic precepts while devoting herself to the posthumous welfare of her family. As the first full-length biographical study of a premodern Japanese nun, this book incorporates issues of gender and social status into its discussion of Bunchi’s ascetic practice and religious reforms to rewrite the history of Buddhist reform and Tokugawa religion.

Gina Cogan’s approach moves beyond the dichotomy of oppression and liberation that dogs the study of non-Western and premodern women to show how Bunchi’s aristocratic status enabled her to carry out reforms despite her gender, while simultaneously acknowledging how that same status contributed to their conservative nature. Through its illumination of the relationship between the court and the shogunate and its analysis of the practice of courtly Buddhism from a female perspective, this study brings historical depth and fresh theoretical insight into the role of gender and class in early Edo Buddhism.

Manjari Chatterjee Miller (Pardee School) publishes Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China.

Wronged by Empire argues that the bitter history of colonialism affects the foreign policy behavior of India and China even today. It breaks new ground by blending this historical phenomenon, colonialism, with mixed methods—including archival research, newspaper data mining, and a new statistical method of content analysis—to explain the foreign policy choices of India and China: two countries that are continuously discussed but very rarely rigorously compared.

More broadly, she argues that the transformative historical experience of a large category of actors—ex-colonies, who have previously been neglected in the study of international relations—can be used as a method to categorize states in the international system. In the process Miller offers a more inclusive way to analyze states than do traditional theories of international relations.
Faculty Publications


**Gina Cogan** (Religion), *The Princess Nun: Bunchi, Buddhist Reform, and Gender in Early Edo Japan*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014


**Min Ye** (Pardee School), *Diasporas and Foreign Direct Investment in China and India*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014


**Anna Zielinska-Elliott** (MLCL), *Beszarany Tsukuru Tazaki i lata jego pielgrzymstwa* (Polish translation of Murakami Haruki’s, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*), Warsaw: Muza, 2013.


Welcome New Faculty!

Charles Chang

Prior to coming to BU’s Department of Linguistics, Dr. Chang held appointments at the University of Maryland, Rice University, and SOAS, University of London, where he taught courses in general linguistics and worked on a series of independent and collaborative research projects on cross-linguistic speech perception, language identification, language documentation, language learning aptitude (especially Korean and Chinese), and instructed foreign language learning.

Prof. Chang’s research interests are in phonetics, phonology, language acquisition, and language attrition. Specific areas of focus include the early stages of second language phonological acquisition; interactions between the native and target languages in the bilingual mind; bases of cross-linguistic phonological similarity; language transfer; heritage language phonology; and contact-induced sound change. His work has appeared in journals such as *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, and *Journal of Phonetics*.

Dr. Mattison is an anthropologist and biologist with interests in evolution, behavioral ecology, kinship, reproduction, demography, social inequality, and quantitative and mixed methods. She has joint appointments in the BU Department of Biology and the Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies Program.

Her first stream of research involves work with the Mosuo of Southwest China on issues related to economic development spurred by a thriving tourism.

Her second stream makes use of historical data from the Japanese period in Taiwan to explore relationships between gender, adoption, and mortality.

Finally, her third stream of research explores variation in breastfeeding practices and their consequences across the globe and their relationship to putative social and economic determinants.

She is a Contributing Editor and a member of the Board of the Evolutionary Anthropology Society of the American Anthropological Association.

Jungsoo Kim

Dr. Jungsoo Kim teaches Korean language courses in the BU Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Literature, which she joined in Fall 2014. She holds a doctorate in the Comparative Literature from Indiana University, Bloomington. She wrote her dissertation on the problem of identity and visuality in modern drama, and briefly taught at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, South Korea.

Jungsoo first began teaching Korean in 1996, and before coming to BU, she has taught at New York University and Indiana University, Bloomington. She is interested in translating scholarly works as well as literary works from Korean into English, and is always looking for texts originally published in Korean that will be useful for English-speaking scholars.

Jungsoo is very happy to join BU’s vibrant community, and looks forward to contributing to the continued growth of the Korean program at BU.
Event Highlights of 2013-2014: Asia and the City

The Future is Now: Urban Asia in the 21st Century

On October 8th, 2014, the Frederick S. Pardee Center hosted a one-day conference, “The Future is Now: Urban Asia in the 21st Century,” consisting of three panels: The Idea of the City: The Asian Challenge; The Politics of the City; and The City and Its Environment. BUCSA was one of the co-organizers, together with the BU Initiative on Cities.

The overarching theme of each panel was the impact urbanization has and will have in Asian cities. The panelists noted that cities in Asia are not blank slates—they aren’t being built from scratch—but are urban landscapes being built on top of existing ones. Several speakers said that these “new” cities must be shaped not only by the large infrastructure that defines cities, but by paying attention to and meeting human needs, especially the needs of poor people. During the course of the day, they discussed specific examples in cities ranging from Singapore, Shanghai, and Beijing to Jarkarta, Phnom Penh, Kolkata, and Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Event Series: Taiwan Urbanism and Architecture

As part of our yearly theme “Asia and the City,” BUCSA hosted two Taiwan Forum Lectures in Fall 2013 about Asian urbanism and architecture, sponsored by the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office (TECO, Boston).

The first lecture, “Urban Regeneration of Taipei City for Sustainable Development”, took place on October 7, 2013. Speaker professor Chien-yuan Lin provided an overview of the city development of Taipei, and introduced recent efforts in urban regeneration for sustainability.

Architect Been Wang, principal at Architectural Resources Cambridge (ARC) offered the second lecture, “Building on Karma: The NMR Meditation Center (Thai Temple in Raynham) and Global Asian Architecture,” on October 21, 2013. He described the construction of the largest Thai Temple outside of Thailand, near Boston, and how a Taiwanese architect got that important commission.

China and the City

BUCSA co-hosted with the BU Chinese Students and Scholars Association a public event on “China and the City” on November 23, 2013. This workshop discussed the challenges and opportunities of urbanism in China, and gathered around forty BU faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and BUCSA visiting scholars.

In order to make the event both intellectually stimulating and accessible to the general public, the program included a story telling section in addition to the academic panel. The workshop, therefore, merged the public and private narratives and provided a fuller, experiential picture of cities in transition in China, with six Chinese students sharing their experiences from their hometowns.
Event Highlights: BUCSA Conferences

Leisure Project’s BU-Heidelberg Final Conference

A contingent of six Boston University faculty travelled on January 10-11, 2014 to Heidelberg (Germany) to participate in the third and final conference of the Leisure Project, a multi-year research collaborative between Asian Studies faculty at BU and the University of Heidelberg. Professors Sarah Frederick and Catherine Yeh (BU Modern Languages and Comparative Literatures), Christopher Lehrich (BU Religion), Eugenio Menegon (BU History), Nancy Smith-Hefner and Robert Weller (BU Anthropology) presented on various facets of leisure and social change in China, Indonesia, and Japan between the early modern and contemporary periods. Entitled “Leisure and Social Change: The Dynamics of the Transcultural Flow of Concepts, Institutions and Practices of Leisure across Asia,” this meeting brought together some of the participants to earlier conferences and new speakers. This conclusive gathering in Germany was coordinated and logistically supported by Professor Rudolf Wagner and his team at the Institute of Chinese Studies and Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” in Heidelberg, and generously funded by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange.

Boston University in Belgium: A Workshop on Chinese-Western Cultural Relations in the Early Modern Era

A workshop jointly organized by Boston University and the University of Leuven on the history of Chinese-European relations was held on May 26-27, 2014 in the historic university town of Leuven (Louvain), in Flanders, Belgium.

The workshop was coordinated by Professor Eugenio Menegon (Department of History, and Director of the BU center for the Study of Asia, Boston University) and Professor Nicolas Standaert (Department of Chinese Studies, University of Leuven, Belgium).

Supported by funding from the College of Arts and Sciences at BU, and the Department of Chinese Studies at KU Leuven, this gathering of scholars focused on the topic of “materiality” in the cultural exchange between China and Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. Junior and senior scholars from Belgium, Switzerland, France, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States presented their ongoing research on the circulation of books and scientific instruments, the financial system sustaining that circulation, and the use of gifts, luxury objects, art, and technical skills in diplomacy and Christian proselytization.

This workshop built on recent scholarship and other workshops and conferences on the presence and role of Europeans (especially Catholic missionaries) at the imperial court and in the provinces in Ming-Qing China. It aimed to explore methodological issues and empirical case-studies that might help us re-focus some of our predominant concerns about texts and intellectual exchanges towards the material and sociological underpinnings of text production and circulation of knowledge.

Daoism: Tradition and Transition

For the last ten years, the series of international conferences on Daoist Studies has been instrumental in enhancing the study, application, and awareness of Daoism throughout the world. The only major Daoist conference series, it follows a tradition that began in Boston (2003) and continued through Mt. Qingcheng (2004), Fraueninsel in Bavaria (2006), Hong Kong (2007), Mt. Wudang (2009), Los Angeles (2010), Mt. Nanyue (2011), and Ammersee Lake near Munich (2012). In honor of its great success and as a tribute to Boston University for the initial conference, the 9th International Conference on Daoist Studies took place once again at Boston University on May 29-June 1, 2014.

This year’s conference theme was “Daoism: Tradition and Transition.” The focus was on Daoist thought, history, and practice—with particular attention to the impact Daoism has exercised in Chinese history and the contemporary world. Panel topics included Daodejing, Zhuangzi, Huainanzi, Comparative Philosophy, Daoist Ritual, Daoist Ethics, and more. The main faculty organizers of the conference, co-sponsored by BUCSA and the Department of Religion, were Thomas Michael (Religion) and John Berthrong (Theology).
Writing Between Languages and Cultures with Yoko Tawada

On April 15, 2013 BUCSA co-sponsored a reading and conversation with the internationally renowned writer Yoko Tawada. Tawada was born in Tokyo in 1960 and moved to Hamburg when she was twenty-two, where she received a PhD in German literature, and then to Berlin in 2006. She writes in both Japanese and German and has published several books—stories, novels, poems, plays, essays—in both languages. She has received numerous awards for her writing including the Akutagawa Prize, the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize (a German award recognizing foreign writers for their contributions to German culture), the Tanizaki Prize, the Goethe Medal (an official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany), and the prestigious Yomiurui Prize for Literature. New Directions has published her story collections Where Europe Begins (with a Preface by Wim Wenders) and Facing the Bridge, and her novel of Catherine Deneuve obsession, The Naked Eye, and a stand alone edition of her famous story, The Bridegroom Was a Dog. Jointly sponsored by the BU Centers for the Study of Europe and Asia, the Japan Society Boston in cooperation with the Goethe Institut Boston and the literary journal AGNI, the well-attended event was moderated by Anna Zielinska-Elliott and Peter Schwartz (MLCL; pictured).

Spotlight on:
The Japanese Story at Boston University

If you walk through the backcourt of the George Sherman Union on any given Friday, you’re likely to encounter a sizable group of Japanese and American students talking in both Japanese and English. These meetings are the weekly Language Exchange Lunches between CAS and CELOP (Center for English Language and Orientations Program) students, which allow participants to practice their language skills with native speakers outside the classroom, in a more casual and direct manner.

Mariko Itoh Henstock, Senior Lecturer in Japanese, and Felix Poon, Academic Program Coordinator at CELOP, started the Japanese and English Language Exchange Lunches to bring together students from BU and prestigious Japanese universities such as Waseda, Ritsumeikan, and Hosei. They afford American students a more direct experience of Japanese culture than they are likely to encounter through more traditional means of language study in a classroom setting.

Winners Announced!
Two BU Students Win Japanese Consulate Speech Contest in Spring 2014

Anne Yeung (MLCL) won first prize in the New England Japanese Consulate Speech contest. The title of her speech was Thoughtfulness (of Japanese people).

Amber Seitz (MLCL) won a third place in the same contest, as well as a BU Center for the Humanities Award. The title of her speech was Enka (Japanese traditional songs).

Congratulations to our winners!
Event Highlights: China and Taiwan

Boston University Asian Alumni Meeting in Beijing

Tian’anmen Square, 25 Years Later

With more than 300 attendees, BU Momentum was the largest gathering of alumni outside of the U.S. in Boston University history! The weekend-long event combined BU’s 5th Asian Alumni Festival and 5th Asian Business Forum into one amazing opportunity to network, reconnect with classmates, and celebrate the energy and trajectory of Boston University.

The event not only celebrated the influence of BU alumni in Asia, it also highlighted the amazing work of our alumni leaders—namely Weiqiang Han (GRS’89, GMS’89) and Hugo Shong (pictured) (COM’87, GRS’92)—in China. Shong, who heads IDG Capital Partners, took the opportunity to challenge the alumni and to match alumni donations made to the Campaign for Boston University. Thanks to generous donations from BU alumni and friends in the greater China area, Hugo Shong will donate $1 million to BU. The resulting awards will be given to students with financial need from greater China.

Symposium: Taiwan’s Election, Cross-Strait Relations, and Taiwan’s Role in East Asia

After years of tension and uncertainty in the Taiwan Strait area, cross-Strait relations have been remarkably stable in recent years. But the politics of both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan are always changing, and it is uncertain if this stability will hold.

The November 29, 2014 elections were discussed in a two-day event (December 1-2, 2014) at Boston University and Harvard. “Taiwan’s Election, Cross-Strait Relations, and Taiwan’s Role in East Asia” drew a capacity crowd to the Boston University Castle, as guest lecturers attempted to parse the shifting political landscape of Taiwan and what it means for its relations with its nearest neighbor, China.

The event was coordinated by Professor Joseph Fewsmith (Pardee School) and organized by BUCSA, the Pardee School of Global Studies, and Harvard University Taiwan Studies Workshop, with support from the ROC Ministry of Education, and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston.

On November 14, 2014 Boston University commemorated the 25th anniversary of Tian’anmen Square with a discussion organized by BUCSA. Speakers included Professor Robert Weller (BU Anthropology), Professor Joseph Fewsmith (Pardee School), and Professor Rowena He (Harvard Dept. of Government), who spoke about both their research and personal experiences with those Tian’anmen impacted. Rowena He spent eight years working on her book, Tiananmen Exiles: Voices of the Struggle for Democracy in China, telling the stories of those whose voices were silenced after the massacre. The event was part of the Boston University International Education Week and was sponsored by Santander Universities and BU Global Programs.
On December 4 and 5, 2014 two dozen scholars from the US, Europe, Taiwan, and Vietnam convened at the East Asian Languages and Civilizations Department at Harvard to discuss their drafts for the *Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature 1000 BCE-900 CE* commissioned by Oxford University Press. The Handbook is co-edited by Wiebke Denecke (BU, Modern Languages and Comparative Literatures), Wai-yee Li (Harvard University), and Xiaofei Tian (Harvard University) and will compress essential knowledge of two thousand years of Chinese literary history between its book covers when published, as is currently planned, in 2016. Though envisioned as a reference tool in Chinese studies, it also aims to attract students and scholars in other classical literatures around the globe, such as the Ancient Mediterranean, the Near East, or India, as well as people studying the neighboring literatures of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. During the two-day long discussions about the field, which were filled with both enthusiasm and anxiety over this daunting task, the contributors to the handbook agreed that as (Western) “Classics” and “Medieval Studies” are going more global, Chinese literature scholars certainly want to engage their fellow philologists in a more well-founded dialogue.

The workshop was supported by the Boston University Center for the Study of Asia, as well as the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation, the Harvard Asia Center, the Harvard Yenching Institute, and the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University.

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Spotlight on Research: Wiebke Denecke Connects East Asian Classical Literatures

Wiebke Denecke, Associate Professor of Chinese, Japanese and Comparative Literature in the Modern Languages and Literatures Department, has won the first “New Directions Fellowship” from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation ever awarded to a BU faculty member. Denecke will use it over the next couple of years to expand her expertise in Classical Chinese and Classical Japanese Literatures into Korean Language and Literature.

Classical Chinese was the shared language of government, Buddhism, scholarship, and high literature for almost two millennia. In the early twentieth century, the Japanese, Koreans, and Vietnamese abandoned Classical Chinese, promoting their vernacular tongues as their nations’ official languages. One result of this was that the region lost a common literary heritage. Rediscovering Classical Chinese, Denecke argues, might help East Asia heal the war wounds of the recent past. With her Mellon fellowship, Denecke, who has researched Chinese and Japanese literature and history for two decades, will address one missing link in the story of China’s influence on Japanese culture: Korea.

“Especially in the early period, most of Chinese knowledge and products came to Japan through Korea,” Denecke told BU Today. “In the late seventh century, the Korean peninsula, formerly divided into three Kingdoms, was unified under the state of Silla and the entire elite of the defeated state of Paekche fled to Japan,” she says. “Most of the composers of the earliest national chronicles and of poetry, and the professors at the newly founded State Academy in the Japanese capital were of Korean descent.”

The fellowship will allow Denecke to pick up Korean, through intensive tutoring and courses in Seoul, and to dive into premodern Korean literary studies. Two book projects are planned: one on the early history of Japanese poetry, as seen through Chinese and Korean eyes; and an illustrated anthology of poems written by Chinese, Japanese, and Korean envoys.
Spotlight on:
Student Groups: Asian Studies Initiative at Boston University (ASIABU) Highlights, AY 2013-2014

2014 Asian Cultural Fair

Modeling after last year’s Asian Food Festival, the Asian Cultural Fair incorporated educational and cultural activities in addition to free Asian food from five regions. The activities highlights included getting your own Henna tattoo, Taiwanese tea tasting, Chinese mahjong, bubble tea raffle, Kazakhstan trivial game, etc.

Chinese Tea Ceremony

On November 7, 2013 ASIABU hosted the Chinese Tea Ceremony led by two BU students, Winnie Ko and Yi-An Chen (President of ASIABU). The event welcomed 22 guests and e-board members in total, served two kinds of Chinese tea and performed the traditional ceremony with authentic teaware.

Boston Chinatown Tour

On April 12, 2014 ASIABU hosted a tour of Boston Chinatown, guided by Professor Wing-Kai To, from Bridgewater State College. The tour brought the participants back in time to learn how urban renewal affected Chinatown in the 1960’s and residents’ efforts in revitalizing the once vibrant community. The tour aimed to give its participants a better understanding on the history of Chinese immigration to the Boston area.

Introducing ASIABU’s Board for 2014-2015

President:
Yi-An Chen
Co-VP:
Mei-Hua Li
Song Han Nguyen
PR:
Ragini Jha
Treasurer:
Naveed Ghani
Secretary:
Samantha Catalfamo
Cultural Ambassadors:
Sam Huang
Lin Yu Song
Bernice Liang
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Spotlight on: Selected Graduate Student Research

Huwy-min Lucia Liu, Ph.D, Anthropology
Liu’s dissertation (Death Ritual in Socialist Shanghai) explains why and how urban Shanghaiese are primarily commemorated in death as model socialist citizens despite the rise of individualism, the resurgence of religion, and current government opposition to socialist civil funerals since market reforms initiated in 1978. She shows that the dead were envisioned as undifferentiated socialist subject-citizens directly tied to the party-state in socialist funerals under high socialism.

She argues that when death became a profit-making business, the government lost its moral capacity to dominate the subject formation of the dead. What Shanghai people do today is to conceptualize the dead first as socialist citizens and second as religious and relational persons. Overall, her research is focused at the intersection of interests in urban Chinese modernities, China’s partial experiments at privatization of state industries, and the formation, enactment, and contestation of different ideas of citizen and selfhood in Shanghai’s modernist funeral rituals.

Kaoru (Kay) Ueda, Ph.D, Archaeology
Ueda has undertaken archaeological research at the Dutch East India Company (VOC) trading center at the port of Banten, Java, Indonesia, which dates from the 17th to early 19th century. In collaboration with the National Research Center for the Development of Archaeology in Indonesia and Singapore’s Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, this project has excavated at the indigenous palace and Dutch fort sites located in the former Sultanate of Banten.

The archaeological research at Banten is providing an important new tool with which to evaluate Indonesian-European cultural interactions in this early phase of global trade. As part of her ceramic studies to better understand Southeast Asia’s regional trade networks, Ueda is also conducting petrographic studies on archaeological samples of earthenware from various locations in South and Southeast Asia, including Thailand and Singapore.

Taiyi Sun, Ph.D candidate, Political Science
Taiyi’s dissertation, Disasters, Civil Society and their Consequences, studies the development of public sphere and the accumulation of social capital after major disasters such as an earthquake. Taiyi just recently returned from fieldwork in Sichuan, China, interviewing government officials, observing social organizations and surveying local residents. Taiyi has previously written on international political economy (“China’s Pegged Exchange Rate and its Political Economy,” Journal of International Service) and environmental politics (hydro-politics), and was also on the editing team of the recently published book Philanthropy and Health in China by Indiana University Press to celebrate China Medical Board’s 100-year centennial. Taiyi is currently a co-organizer of the BU-Harvard-MIT Chinese Politics Research Workshop.