

## The Power of Things (Lecture Series, Heidelberg)

Philipp Sack

Heidelberg 2009/2010

The Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" at the University of Heidelberg presents:

The Power of Things and the Flow of Cultural Transformations  
Lecture Series 2009 / 2010,

Thursday 6:15 pm to 8 pm

Karl Jaspers Centre, Voßstraße 2, Building 4400, 69115 Heidelberg,  
Conference Room 212

Coordinator: Lieselotte E. Saurma

The lecture series aims at describing the role of things, artefacts, luxurious objects, and ideas in cultural processes. Material artefacts such as monuments, paintings, manuscripts, carpets, vessels etc. are signs of cultural self-definition even if they are integrated from far away. Thus culture is in a permanent process of becoming "colonized" by objects getting so familiar, that they are embedded in the social and economic context as "natural" indigenous things, specific signs of this culture. Normally, these processes were not guided consciously, it is rather a question of cultural achievements, started by networks such as courts, monasteries, legations and organisations, transferred from single groups or even individuals in the language of their own contexts, increasing the own cultural identity. Such forms of transgression demand an inappreciable process of adaptation, guided by upper classes top down, although in modern societies, a development bottom up is possible, too. Therefore, this effort of integration assumes a translation in inner cultural self-understanding, an adaptation of knowledge and the framing of objects in their new traditional context.

Things and Culture

15.10.2009 NICHOLAS THOMAS (CAMBRIDGE): Maori Carving and Colonial History.  
A supplement to Tene Waitere's Travels

29.10.2009 MARINA WARNER (LONDON): Riding the Carpet: Talismans and Toys in  
the 1001 Nights

## Nearer East

05.11.2009 MICHAEL STOLZ (BERNE): Oriental 'spolia' in Wolfram's Parzival' and its manuscript tradition

26.11.2009 LISA MONNAS (LONDON): Flight of the phoenix. The impact of Mongol silks in Europe (13th-14th centuries)

03.12.2009 LARRY SILVER (PENNSYLVANIA): India Ink. Imagery of the Subcontinent in Sixteenth-Century Europe

10.12.2009 THOMAS LEISTEN (PRINCETON): Adaptation, interpretation and misunderstanding: The after-life and disappearance of pictorial programmes of Classical Antiquity during the early Islamic period

## East Asia and the West

07.01.2010 TOSHIO WATANABE (LONDON): Modern Japanese Garden in a Transnational context

14.01.2010 DAVID J. ROXBURGH (HARVARD): Ghiyath al-Din Naqqash's Report on the Embassy to Khanbaligh. Artistic Exchange Between the Timurid and Ming dynasties

21.01.2010 CHARLES BURNETT (LONDON): Musical Instruments as conveyors of meaning from one culture to another

28.01.2010 TIMON SCREECH (LONDON): Export items of the English East India Company in the early 17th century

For more details please contact:

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### Reference:

ANN: The Power of Things (Lecture Series, Heidelberg). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 6, 2009 (accessed Jul 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/31936>>.