

ICOHTEC

NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter of the International Committee for the History of Technology ICOHTEC

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Editorial

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This issue of the Newsletter gives a short portrait of Donna J. Drucker, who was awarded with ICOHTEC's Maurice Daumas Price. Our treasurer, Yoel Bergmann contributed a reminder for payment of ICOHTEC's annual fees.

A conference report is dedicated to the militarization of the outer space since the late 1950.

Best wishes
Stefan Poser

Contents

I. ICOHTEC	p. 2
II. Conference Reports	p. 3
III. Conference Announcements	p. 7
IV. Miscellaneous	p. 15
V. Recently Published Books	p. 16
VI. Join ICOHTEC	p. 16

I. ICOHTEC

I.1 Maurice Daumas Prize 2014

Donna J. Drucker, Darmstadt Technical University, was awarded with ICOHTEC's Maurice Daumas Price for her paper *Keying Desire: Alfred Kinsey's Use of Punched-Card Machines for Sex Research*, published in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 22 (January 2013), pp. 105-25.

The article focuses on the routine and repetitive aspects of Kinsey's sex research and their outcomes: first, the machines and punched cards themselves, second, the process of transferring sex history interview data to punched cards, as well as the organizing, sorting, and utilization of the data collated in the cards, and third, receptions of his work in academe and beyond. Kinsey's use of punched-card machines thus became another focal point in the multiple and complex public discourses surrounding sexuality in the immediate postwar period. In particular, the machine-processed data that Kinsey put forth increased knowledge of homosexuality and of diverse sexualities generally, and those data were instrumental in developing gay and lesbian rights movements.

Donna J. Drucker is a guest professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany. She received her two master degrees and PhD from Indiana University. She is the author of two books: *The Machines of Sex Research: Technology and the Politics of Identity, 1945-1985* (Springer, 2014) and *The Classification of Sex: Alfred Kinsey and the Organization of Knowledge* (Pittsburgh, 2014). She is now at work on two new projects: one on no hormonal contraception and another on the history of pedestrian zones.

ICOHTEC awards the Maurice Daumas Price for outstanding articles in the history of technology since 2010. The price is sponsored by the Université de technologie de Belfort-Montbéliard.

I.2 Reminder to Pay for 2014

Dear Members,

Many registered members have already paid their fees for 2014 and some did not find yet the opportunity to do so. At the beginning of this month we have sent letters to registered members who have not paid for 2014 (or 2013+2014) .Quite a few have responded and we thank them for that.

For those who have not paid and wish to remain members, please make an effort to pay during the next few weeks and no later than December 2014.

There are three options for payment, bank transfer or PayPal or cheques. Please see details in the Membership Renewal Form at the end of this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Yoel Bergman, Treasurer

II. Conference Reports

Embattled Heavens: The Militarization of Space in Science, Fiction, and Politics

Conference at Berlin Free University in April 2014

Tom Reichard, Freie Universität Berlin, tom.reichard@fu-berlin.de

The dawn of the Space Age was marked by a military operation. On October 3, 1942, an A4 rocket, later known as the V-2, launched from the Peenemünde Army Research Center in Northern Germany, reached an altitude of 84.5km and thus became the first man-made object to breach what was regarded as the boundary of outer space. From its inception, spaceflight was closely interconnected with rocketry; a feature which subsequently became known as the dual-use character of space technology. Yet the coalescence of space exploration and the military was not merely limited to factual spaceflight. It also applied to scientific research and unrealized ventures into outer space, as well as to fictional works about cosmic battles and alien encounters. Locating the confrontational side of astroculture therefore raises fundamental questions about the characteristics of the Space Age: How did violence and conflict relate to the opposite trend of envisioning space as a place of world peace and transcendence? Was the exceptional relevance of space a mere consequence of a fundamental political and cultural shift towards the Cold War since the mid-twentieth century? Or did outer space as such also react to basic political, social and cultural developments in an age of nuclear threat and increased yearning for security?

Covering the period from the 1940s to the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the conference “Embattled Heavens: The Militarization of Space in Science, Fiction, and Politics,” organized by the Emmy Noether Research Group “The Future in the Stars: European Astroculture and Extraterrestrial Life in the Twentieth Century” of Freie Universität Berlin, set out to address these questions. As ALEXANDER C.T. GEPPERT, DANIEL BRANDAU and TILMANN SIEBENEICHNER (Berlin) explained in their introduction, the symposium set out to investigate the “dark side of global astroculture,” thus aiming to realign perspectives on the Cold War and the Space Age. In doing so, the conveners chose an interdisciplinary approach, which would render possible the investigation of the temporal and spatial location of the military in the history of outer space in three closely intertwined fields of study: science, fiction and politics.

The political dimension of the militarization of space featured prominently over the course of the three-day discussions, for which ALEX ROLAND (Durham, NC) sketched the historical timeframe. Reflecting upon the absence of any kind of weaponization of space since World War II, Roland concluded that space politics had been the continuation of the Cold War by other means. Large-scale military space projects, such as Ronald Reagan's well-known Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) from the early 1980s, were eventually suspended, because the spatial expansion of the Cold War consensus into outer space established a stable state of affairs, which in turn ensured that human conflict in the low Earth orbit has remained nonviolent up to the present day.

Although the twentieth century produced no weaponization of space, there is a strong case for a general militarization. CHRISTOPHER GAINOR (Sidney, BC) emphasized the military side to the history of rocketry in the US. The development of the carrier rocket Atlas, later the workhorse of the space

program, was the consequence of a shift in the US nuclear strategy, following the so-called thermonuclear breakthrough of 1952, making nuclear warheads fit into intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Likewise, the Soviet R-7 and the European Ariane can be regarded as the offspring of national nuclear defense programs. This military legacy was far from being exceptional, as REGINA PELDSZUS (Darmstadt) showed with regard to the evolution of civilian mission control centers in the US, Europe and the USSR. While remaining architectural heirs to classic war rooms, the civilian mission control center was gradually detached from its dual-use feature. Early on, Peldszus argued, the iconic command rooms took on the role of public relation tools to promote the ever-more-expensive space programs.

The 1970s saw another attempt to militarize outer space, this time on the part of the Soviet Union. CATHLEEN LEWIS (Washington, DC) analyzed the reframing of the USSR's space program after the lost moon race that became manifest in the launch of three Soviet military space stations (the Almaz series). For a short time, Russian cosmonauts were turned into representatives of both mankind and warfare, while the US had already canceled their Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL) in 1969 and proceeded exclusively with unmanned spying activities by satellites. Yet the intersection between the military and the civilian did not draw to a close with the end of the Cold War, as PAUL E. CERUZZI (Washington, DC) showed. The Global Positioning System (GPS) started off as an exclusively military program, but underwent a rapid commercialization in the wake of the First Gulf War in the early 1990s. Less than a decade later, the Kosovo War revealed Europe's dependence on the American GPS, and in turn caused the launch of the EU-run high-precision positioning system Galileo, which is not expected to achieve full operational capability before 2019.

Alongside profound industrial and technological implications of space politics, science – the conference's second focus – played an important role in the formation of a global astroculture in the post-war era. JORDAN BIMM (Toronto) argued that Hubertus Strughold's (1898–1986) invention of so-called Mars Jars in the 1950s was greatly influenced by the military field of space medicine, hence suggesting that we rethink the historical legacy of astrobiology, commonly regarded as a mere civilian study of the possibilities of the existence of extraterrestrial life. That military purposes remained important for the scientific appropriation of space in the decades to follow, was made clear by ANTHONY W. ENNS (Halifax, NS), who investigated a CIA-run intelligence program utilizing parapsychology and psychic experiments in support of spy satellites from the 1970s to the early 1990s.

Just as much attention was directed at military projects that remained (almost) pure fantasy, such as scientific undertakings for ionospheric modification between the 1950s and 1990s, examined by DIETHARD SAWICKI (Paderborn). Various ventures including plans to heat up the weather and to control global radio communication gave rise to conspiracy theories regarding classified politico-military projects which have proven powerful up to today. Another popular project contained the set-up of large space mirrors to destroy enemy cities by highly bundled sun beams. Originally a science fiction idea, ISABELL SCHRICKEL (Lüneburg) explained, the sun gun underwent a transformation towards climate alteration as global warming gained more importance in the public debate.

Following these large-scale technoscientific projects, military threat scenarios and corresponding security measures occupied a special position in the conference design. DIERK SPREEN (Lüneburg)

aimed at making sense of today's satellite colonization of the low Earth orbit by combining Carl Schmitt's "spatial revolution" and Niklas Luhmann's "world society." PATRYK WASIAK (Wrocław), by contrast, stressed the aesthetic relevance of scientific illustrations of Anti Satellite Weaponry (ASAT). However, angst was not only caused by human warfare brought to the skies, but also by invasion scenarios of alien powers coming from the depths of the universe. In this respect, DANILO FLORES (Berlin) and GREG EGHIGIAN (University Park, PA) addressed a hitherto often neglected subject of historical research: the so-called flying saucer phenomenon. Whereas Flores took a closer look at alien infiltration in space movies since the 1950s, Eghigian proposed to read American and German UFO sightings in the first two decades after World War II as a transatlantic information transfer which would best be located in the historical and local contexts of their occurrence.

The last of the conference's three foci, the fictional dimension of the militarization of outer space, was introduced by MICHAEL SHEEHAN's (Swansea) feature presentation. Taking up Robert Kagan's famous aperçu, Sheehan claimed that in terms of science fiction, Americans were from Mars, while Europeans came from Venus. Parallel to the political evolution of spaceflight, in the US the genre dwelled on the military and violence in space, while European science fiction from France, Spain, Germany and Great Britain rather focused on the peaceful use of outer space. Providing a first example in support of Sheehan's reading of the transatlantic disparities, Robert Heinlein's 1959 novel "Starship Troopers" served as a prominent case study. SIMON SPIEGEL (Zurich) and PHILIPP THEISOHN (Zurich) both considered "Starship Troopers" to be defined primarily by its military plot. With all its utopian features, Spiegel made a case for the novel's characterization as "anti-utopian utopia," because of its pragmatism regarding the deficient reality, which the crew had to come to terms with. Theisohn, on the other hand, analyzed the military clothing of the spaceship's staff, interpreting the combat suit as the "body politic of the Space Age," which would render outer space a place of distinct non-civilian imprint.

OLIVER DUNNET (Belfast) similarly focused on the body in space: that of Ransom, the protagonist of C. S. Lewis' so-called Space Trilogy (1938–45). Unlike in "Starship Troopers," Lewis' depiction of Ransom's sensitive body carried a warning about the moral threat of space travel, Dunnet argued. Opposed to this pessimistic view of outer space, the notion of a universal struggle for evolutionary fitness has been interrogated through the human body's potential capabilities to survive in harsh and alien environments. As PATRICK KILIAN (Zurich) demonstrated, this problem became obvious pre-eminently in the context of the Cyborg.

Stressing the visual side of the genre, JÖRG HARTMANN (Karlsruhe) reported on his archival findings regarding the rare German film "Weltraumschiff I startet" (1938), which was exceptionally accurate in its depiction of state-of-the-art rocketry at the time. MATTHIAS HURST (Berlin), by contrast, laid emphasis on the specific political and cultural background of "Raumpatrouille Orion" (1966), one of the most successful German TV series of all time. According to Hurst, Orion should be read as a classical manifestation of post-war Befindlichkeit (sensitivity) in West Germany. Probing another type of visual culture, namely satirical cartoons published in East and West German magazines, COLLEEN ANDERSON (Cambridge, MA) showed that space in West and East German caricatures only became heavily militarized with the SDI program, having been hitherto the stage for a replication of the terrestrial conflict between the US and the USSR. Shifting the gaze towards arcade and computer games, PAWEŁ FRELIK (Lublin) addressed the specific characteristics of the hands-on experience of virtual worlds. Right from the first computer game ever from 1962, concisely named "Spacewar!,"

Frelik argued that outer space provided an exceptional setting for science fiction as a technoscientific genre to redirect the focus away from the everyday threats of the Nuclear Age.

Ultimately, what does this history of the dark side of astroculture tell us about the twentieth century's salient occupation with outer space? A concluding panel discussion between three experts – DAVID EDGERTON (London), BERND GREINER (Hamburg) and MICHAEL J. NEUFELD (Washington, DC) – set out to reconfigure common narratives in modern space history. One of the key questions concerned the way that the imagination of outer space and spaceflight has contributed to the history of the military and vice versa. In this respect, Michael Neufeld challenged Alex Roland who had earlier expressed skepticism about the extent to which science fiction influenced space policy in the course of the twentieth century. Yet, with regard to its weaponization, Neufeld emphasized that the imaginative powers of science fiction have long outstripped those of “real” spaceflight.

Bernd Greiner, on the other hand, stressed the importance of the Cold War for the coming of the Space Age. In a “culture of fear” with its peculiar notion of preparedness and the continued national struggle for social prestige and global credibility, outer space provided an “exit option” of boundless expanse. Lastly, by referring to the notion of a “liberal militarism,” David Edgerton argued that the military had not been only a secondary condition, but the driving force from the very outset of spaceflight activities and continued as such, although in transformed shape.

In sum, space with its peculiar characteristics provided a place for the spatial expansion of human conflict and, at the same time, affected the way conflicts on Earth were conceived. After two disastrous world wars and in the ensuing formation of a global age, the infinity of outer space equally provided the background for scenarios of sustained and perpetuated conflict as well as a basic quest for transcendence. In times of nuclear bombs and the worldwide divide between two rival camps, fears of destruction as well as visions of security were shared on a global scale. Having undergone several transformations the militarization of outer space in science, fiction and politics proved crucial throughout the twentieth century and made possible the onset of an age in which getting lost became increasingly difficult and avoiding surveillance almost impossible. With the ever-growing impact of commercial space technologies and satellites on the everyday life of millions of people around the globe, an end to the military dimension of outer space is not in sight.

Organiser: Alexander C.T. Geppert / Daniel Brandau / Tilmann Siebeneichner, Emmy Noether Research Group “The Future in the Stars: European Astroculture and Extraterrestrial Life in the Twentieth Century,” Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin

The report was published first in H-Soz-u-Kult, 08 August 2014, <<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=5496>>

III. Conference Announcements

10 – 11 October 2014

Gender in der Medizin-, Wissenschafts- und Technikgeschichte. Erster Workshop in der Reihe Junge Perspektiven der DGGMNT, in Kooperation mit der Bergischen Universität Wuppertal / Gender Research in the History of Medicine, Science and Technology. First Workshop for Young Scholars of the German Society for the History of Medicine, Science and Technology, DGGMNT

Wuppertal University, Germany

Organiser: Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Geschichte der Medizin, Naturwissenschaft und Technik e.V. (DGGMNT) und Bergische Universität Wuppertal

Please contact Heike Weber, Wuppertal University, hweber@uni-wuppertal.de

13 October 2014

„Krieg der Gelehrten“ und die Welt der Akademien 1914-1924. Ein gemeinsames Symposium der Académie des sciences und der Leopoldina / „War of Scientists and Scholars“ in the world of Academies 1914 – 1924. A joined symposium of the Académie des sciences and the Leopoldina Akademie Leopoldina, Halle, Germany

Please find the program on

<http://www.leopoldina.org/de/veranstaltungen/veranstaltung/event/2247/>

Please contact Rainer Godel, Leopoldina, Projektleiter Studienzentrum, rainer.godel@leopoldina.org

30 October – 1 November 2014

Amsterdam as an educator – or: The Rhine as the historic “axis of capitalism”. 5th Transnational Rhine Conference

Akademie der Wissenschaften, Mainz

Please find the program on <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/termine/id=25930>

For more information please contact Ben Wubs, wubs@eshcc.eur.nl, or Ralf Banken, Ralf.Banken@t-online.de

6 – 7 November 2014

Blick zurück nach vorn – Architektur und Stadtplanung in der DDR. 5. Tagung des Arbeitskreises Kunst in der DDR / Looking Backward and Forward – Architecture and City Planning in the German Democratic Republic. 5th conference of the working group on the arts in GDR
Berlin Technical University

Please find the program on: <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/termine/id=25933>

Please contact Petra Geral, geral@irs-net.de

6 – 9 November 2014

Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of Technology, SHOT
Dearborn, Michigan

The preliminary program is available on: <http://www.historyoftechnology.org/>

12 – 13 November 2014

Erster Nachwuchsworkshop des Arbeitskreises Kritische Unternehmens- und Industriegeschichte / First Workshop for Young Scholars of the Working Group on Critical History of Companies and Industry

Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv (WWA), Dortmund

Please visit <http://www.kritische-unternehmensgeschichte.de/>

Please contact Dr. Stefanie van de Kerkhof (stefanie@vandekerkhof.de)
Rabea Limbach, r.limbach@gmx.de, and Benjamin W. Schulze, Benjamin.Schulze@wiwi.uni-goettingen.de

28 – 29 November 2014

Beyond Modernity. Transepochal perspectives on spaces, actors and structures
Basel Graduate School of History; Institute for European Global Studies

Please find the program on <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/termine/id=25937>

11 – 12 December 2014

Publikum, durch das Kino betrachtet / The Audience of Cinemas
Heidelberg University
CFP – Deadline **1 November 2014**

The conference investigates the early development of films, cinemas, and their audience in France and Germany.

Please visit <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/termine/id=25944>

Please contact Gabriele Moser, Institut für Geschichte und Ethik der Medizin, Universität Heidelberg, g.moser@umtal.de and Joël Danet, Université de Strasbourg, danet@unistra.fr

3 – 6 January 2015

Kazakhstan's Environmental Challenges in a Eurasian and Global Perspective

Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan

CFP – Deadline **31 October 2014**

David Moon, York University, and Beatrice Penati, Nazarbayev University, are seeking applications from Early-Career Scholars in the UK and Kazakhstan to participate in a workshop, funded by the British Council Researcher Links scheme, on Kazakhstan's Environmental Challenges in a Eurasian and Global Perspective. The workshop will take place at Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan. The call is open to scholars who were awarded their Ph.D.s in the last 10 years and who are based at institutions of higher education or research in the UK or Kazakhstan

Please find the cfp on: <http://eseh.org/workshop-kazakhstans-environmental-challenges/>

19 – 20 February 2015

Lebenszyklen der Technik /Life Cycles of Technology. Technikgeschichtliche Jahrestagung des Vereins deutscher Ingenieure, VDI / Annual Conference on History of Technology of the German Association of Engineers, VDI

Deutsches Bergbaumuseum, Bochum

CFP – Deadline **30 November 2014**

Please visit <https://www.vdi.de/bildung/>

Please contact Lars Bluma, Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum, lars.bluma@bergbaumuseum.de

18 – 20 March 2015

Science Shaping the World of Tomorrow. Scientific Imagination and Development of Society

University of Antwerp, Belgium

CFP – Deadline **31 October 2014**

On 18-20 March 2015 UCSIA organizes an international academic workshop on [Science Shaping the World of Tomorrow. Scientific Imagination and Development of Society](#) at the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

We understand imagination in relation to the scientific context as the art to creatively design, produce, discuss and envisage societal alternatives for the future. In that sense it opens a window on the future and constitutes a source for societal development. Placed within a broader context, imagination processes play a role in the development of sciences and in the construction of societies, as well as in the interaction between sciences and societies, the former stimulating the further development of the latter, and the latter providing an environment in which the former thrives. Sciences and societies shape and further one another's imagination processes.

The study of the creative and productive use of imagination at the intersection of science and society in view of building and shaping the future constitutes the main purpose of this workshop. This reflection will be stimulated by focusing on four subthemes:

1. Imagination at work in the sciences
2. Sciences as part of the imaginary of societies
3. Imaginaries of the future shaping contemporary reality
4. Politics of imagination

Confirmed keynotes:

- Peter Galison, Pellegrino University Professor of the History of Science and of Physics, Harvard University (USA)
- Matthias Gross, Professor of Environmental Sociology, University of Jena (Germany) / Head of the Department of Urban and Environmental Sociology, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ, Leipzig (Germany)
- Sheila Jasanoff, Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Harvard Kennedy School (USA)
- Tom Moylan, Glucksman Professor Emeritus in the School of Languages, Literature, Culture and an Adjunct Professor, SAUL - School of Architecture of the University of Limerick, UK
- Helga Nowotny, Professor emerita of Social Studies of Science, ETH Zürich (Switzerland) / founding member of the European Research Council

The workshop consists of a two-day international meeting with specialized lectures and presentations and debates by invited senior and junior scholars. It provides a forum of exchange of research from different disciplines such as philosophy, history, literature and the arts, sociology, economics, physics, science and technology studies, political sciences, policy studies, ...

Researchers, doctoral students and other experts are welcome to submit their application until 31 October 2014. Candidates should send in the completed application form, accompanied by an academic curriculum vitae and an outline of the proposed paper. The selection of participants will be communicated by the end of mid-December 2014 at the latest.

The selected participant will present her/his paper in a panel session (20 minutes in English) and will afterwards send in an article to be considered for publication (which will be submitted to careful selection). The aim of the organizer is to publish a selection of articles presented at the workshop.

The organizer takes on charge all costs pertaining to participation and stay in Antwerp of all selected participants, while travel arrangements and costs are incumbent on participants themselves.

Full details on www.ucsia.org.

23 – 25 April 2015

The Pleasures of Backwardness: Consumer Desire and Modernity in Eastern Europe

University of California, Berkeley

CFP – Deadline **31 October 2014**

Consumption has recently emerged as a prism through which to view the cultural and social history of Eastern Europe from an exciting new angle. Especially in the study of life under state socialism, the emphasis on consumer practices has led scholars to rethink familiar themes such as human agency and personal autonomy, the grey zone between official and unofficial cultures and the relationship between Western capitalist modernity and the “shortage economies” of the East. Light has also been shed on the many forms of consumption—smoking, drinking, tourism, music, sport and much else—that reflect and drive political change in the region. Whether scrutinizing TV viewing in Czechoslovakia or the enjoyment of tobacco in Bulgaria, hitchhiking through Poland or Budapest nightlife, scholars present consumption as an expression of everyday agency and the creative potential of ordinary people.

This conference will bring together junior and senior scholars to examine the place of consumption, entertainment and leisure in Eastern Europe and to explore the implications of the latest consumer studies for the region’s wider history. Not only in state socialism did consumption lend flexibility and creativity to a system commonly thought of as stagnant and stultified. In what ways can the consumer perspective change our understanding of development, politics and power in the region over the centuries? How does a focus on the lives of consumers illuminate Eastern engagement with the West over the long term, not just during the cold war? Does attention to the rise of consumption in the East problematize Western narratives of consumerism and modernization? Were consumer cultures of the East mere imitations of a more developed West, or were there pleasures of backwardness peculiar to the region?

Ten participants and a number of senior scholars will be invited to discuss new research and provide expert feedback. Although proposals for single-country projects are welcome, we are especially eager to receive proposals that involve comparison, whose scope transcends national borders, and papers that situate Eastern Europe into a larger European or global context. Those interested in participating should send a short CV and a brief summary (250-500 words) of their papers to event organizer Michael Dean (PhD in History, UC Berkeley) at michaelwdean@gmail.com by October 31, 2014. Invitations will be issued in mid November. While lodging and a portion of travel will be

covered by the event's organizers, participants should try, wherever possible, to obtain funding from their home university.

Please contact Michael Dean, Department of History, University of California, Berkeley,
michaelwdean@gmail.com

20 – 21 March 2015

Second Annual Conference of the Construction History Society, CHS to be read at its second yearly Cambridge

CFP – Deadline extended to **15 October 2014**

The Construction History Society is delighted to announce the Second Annual Construction History Conference will be held on Friday 20th March 2015, combined with an International Colloquium on Saturday 21 March 2015. Both events will be held in collaboration with the University of Cambridge Department of Architecture at Queens' College, Cambridge. The conference on 20 March will bring together speakers from across the world to discuss the history of construction. Papers are welcome on any aspect of the history of construction from across the globe.

The proceedings of this conference will be published as a book to accompany the conference. The International Colloquium on the afternoon of Saturday 21st March 2015 will bring speakers together to discuss what construction is, how it is developing in Europe and where it might go in the future.

All are welcome to submit papers. Abstracts should be submitted by 15 October 2014. Completed papers will be due in January 2015

Please find the whole call for papers on: <http://www.constructionhistory.co.uk/>

28 – 31 May 2015

Manufacturing Landscapes: Nature and Technology in Environmental History An international conference

Renmin University of China, Beijing

CFP – Deadline **1 January 2015**

Nuclear power plants, bullet trains, factory farms, and ancient rice paddies are all forms of landscapes transformed by technology. They express a relationship between humans and the natural world. Like all technologies, they have been shaped by their environmental conditions and in turn have reshaped the earth into new environments. Lewis Mumford, in *Technics and Civilization*, distinguished between “eotechnics,” “paleotechnics,” and “neo-technics,” each representing a set of ideas, values, and material ways of relating to nature. Such broad changes over time and yet also very local landscapes of nature-technology will be foci of our conference. Our scope is interdisciplinary and ranges widely over time and space, from the preindustrial era to the modern age when the whole earth is sometimes described as a human artifact.

We seek papers on such topics as the transformation of native plants into medicines, animals into “organic machines,” and genes into GMOs; the impact of water or electric power production on

natural systems; mining as an intervention in nature, the perception of nature through the changing lens of astronomy, technology and innovation; and the ecology of industrialization. We are interested in such issues as the meaning of the “Anthropocene” and its cultural implications, western vs. nonwestern views of the line separating nature from technology, theories of hybridity and techno-imperialism, and concepts of envirotech histories.

This conference is open to all ranks and all scholars, from graduate students to senior professors. Participants will be selected competitively. Those interested in attending should send a written proposal of one page in length (or about 300 words) and include a title and a one- or two-page CV. *The deadline for consideration is 1 January 2015.* Successful proposals will be announced around 1 February, and complete drafts of papers (minimum of 5,000 words in English or the equivalent in Chinese characters) will be required by 1 May. All papers will be circulated to the participants in advance and will not be orally presented in full during the conference.

Travel expenses for scholars living outside of China will be paid by the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society. Scholars living within China should depend on their own universities for covering travel expenses. For all participants, hotel expenses for three nights will be covered by Renmin University of China.

- The distinguished historian Edmund Russell of the United States will be our keynote speaker. Among his works are *War and Nature; Evolutionary History*; “The Nature of Power: Synthesizing the History of Technology and Environmental History;” and “Can Organisms Be Technology?” The last day of the conference will be devoted to a field trip that will explore the interaction of technology and nature in the Beijing area.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Center for Ecological History, Renmin University of China, and Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Munich

Please send proposals in Chinese or English to all of the conference organizers:

Mingfang Xia, xiamingfang2@vip.sina.com

Helmuth Trischler, h.trischler@deutsches-museum.de

Donald Worster, dworster@ku.edu

4 – 6 June 2015

Ethics of Storytelling: Historical Imagination in Contemporary Literature, Media and Visual Arts

University of Turku

CFP – Deadline **15 November 2014**

What strategies do contemporary arts (such as literature, film, visual, media and performative arts) employ to narrate experiences that resist telling and imagining, such as experiences of traumatic histories and limit events? What ethical issues do their processes of storytelling involve?

The international conference Ethics of Storytelling: Historical Imagination in Contemporary Literature, Media and Visual Arts invites scholars to address the ethical dimension of storytelling and its intertwinement with the historicity of experience. It investigates how different modalities of

storytelling enable diverse ways of coming to terms with traumatic historical experiences, including war and political conflicts, and the intersecting histories of violence linked to colonialism and migration. The conference explores ethics of storytelling particularly in relation to the ways in which the contemporary arts work with historical imagination and the realm of the possible, from the perspective of subjects of experience and of cultural processes of meaning-formation.

While much of poststructuralist and postmodern theorization endorsed an aesthetics of the ineffable which regarded narrative as a violent form of appropriation, the recent years have seen a surge of interest in the ethical potential of storytelling. For example, the work of thinkers like Jan and Aleida Assmann, Paul Ricoeur and Dominick LaCapra has shown the relevance of narrative for cultural memory and for working through cultural trauma; Adriana Cavarero has explored the desire for one's story in relation to an ontology of relationality and vulnerability; and the recent work of Michael Rothberg and Max Silverman foregrounds the multidirectional and palimpsestic character of memory: the ways in which fictional narratives produce new insights by bringing together different times and places into new constellations of similarities and differences.

In relation to these recent debates, the conference endeavours to shift the emphasis of the discussion on the ethics of representation to the ethics of storytelling as a form of imagination. How do different artistic practices of storytelling contribute to cultural memory by creating new constellations of the past, present and future? What ethical potential does storytelling have as a process of imagining the past that opens up new possibilities of experience, action and thought? We invite scholars across disciplines and cultural contexts into a conversation that highlights the potential of storytelling to unsettle dominant historical narratives by mobilizing the imagination of alternative realities, possibilities, courses of action and orientations towards the future. The conversation takes place in the increasingly global context of artistic production and reception, where the relationship between subjects of experience, cultural memory and ethics of storytelling is evermore timely.

Proposals for individual papers or panels

Please provide the title and the abstract (max. 300 words) of the paper you are proposing; your name, institutional affiliation, and email address; and a brief statement (max. 100 words) about your work and your publications. If you are proposing a panel, also include a brief statement of the panel's objectives.

Please send the proposals (PDF or Word) to the conference secretary, Dr. Kaisa Kaakinen, ethicsofstorytelling@gmail.com, by 15 November 2014.

Organizers

The conference is organized by the research project "Ethics of Storytelling and the Experience of History in Contemporary Arts" (Emil Aaltonen Foundation, 2013–15, Project Leader: Prof. Hanna Meretoja), ethicsofstorytelling.wordpress.com/ in collaboration with:

- Comparative Literature, University of Turku
- Cultural History, University of Turku
- Media Studies, University of Turku

- School of History, Culture and Arts Studies, University of Turku
- Narrare: Centre for Interdisciplinary Narrative Studies, University of Tampere

The event is the 3rd Rethinking Arts Studies Conference (University of Turku).

Please contact the conference secretary, Dr. Kaisa Kaakinen, ethicsofstorytelling@gmail.com

30 July to 1 August 2015

Ecology and the Economy in Modern Industrial Societies – On the History of a Relationship

University of Freiburg, Germany

CFP – Deadline **31 October 2014**

The Department of History at the University of Freiburg, Germany, is organising a workshop on the history of the problematic relationship between economy and ecology. The workshop, titled *Ecology and the Economy in Modern Industrial Societies – On the History of a Relationship* and convened by Martin Bemmann, Ella Müller, and Simone Müller-Pohl, will take place in Freiburg from 30 July to 1 August 2015.

Submissions will be accepted until 31 October 2014. Please send an abstract of 500 – 750 words, as well as a short bio to: [oeboek \[at\] geschichte.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:oeboek@geschichte.uni-freiburg.de)

A full call for papers with further details, in both English and German, is available on:

<http://eseh.org/cfp-ecology-and-the-economy-in-modern-industrial-societies/>

Please contact the organizers by [oeboek \[at\] geschichte.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:oeboek@geschichte.uni-freiburg.de)

IV. Miscellaneous

El hilo de Betancourt / Betancourt's thread, a Play at Theatre in Madrid

The history of an engineer of Enlightenment will become the subject of a play: *El hilo de Betancourt* will be staged at the School of Civil Engineering, Madrid, on Saturday 4 October. The piece will present an entertaining overview of life of Agustín de Betancourt y Molina (1758-1824), a distinguished Enlightenment engineer, an exceptional nomad, a practising inventor, and designer, rocked by Enlightenment ideas, the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution and Enlightened Despotism. Betancourt had to ultimately seek exile (1808) in Czar Alexander I's Russia.

V. Recently Published Book

Sikora, Miroslav: Die Waffenschmiede des "Dritten Reiches". Die deutsche Rüstungsindustrie in Oberschlesien während des Zweiten Weltkrieges. = Bochumer Studien zur Technik- und Umweltgeschichte, ed. by Helmut Maier, 3. Klartext Verlag, Essen 2014.

Translation of:

Sikora, Miroslav: Kuznia broni III Rzeszy. Niemiecki przemysł zbrojeniowy na Górnym Śląsku podczas II wojny światowej. Verlag: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej und Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego. "Societas Vistulana", Katowice-Kraków 2007.

Upper Silesia was one of the most important industrial regions of Germany and Poland. After the beginning of the World War II and the invasion of Poland the region was integrated in the German arms industry and the economy of war. Miroslav Sikora investigated this development. His book, which was published in Polish language in 2007, is now available in a German translation.

VI. Join ICOHTEC

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