

Who we are

Founded at TORCH, The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities, and led by a team of early career scholars in History, Musicology and Social Anthropology, CPAGH is an interdisciplinary network that fosters new collaborative thinking about colonial ports and global history. By engendering a shared forum that transcends different concepts and methodologies, CPAGH aims to facilitate innovative exchanges across disciplinary fields and 'ways of knowing', advocating for global history both as an intersectional practice and as a situated practice, attuned to the nuances of local voices and perspectives.

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MYRIAD MATERIALITIES: TOWARDS A NEW GLOBAL WRITING OF COLONIAL PORTS AND PORT CITIES

A Zoom conference hosted by the Colonial Ports and Global History (CPAGH) Network

Funded and supported by TORCH, The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities

In partnership with the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Supported by the DFG, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

2 July 2021 (Virtual World Café)

8 and 9 July 2021 (Keynote, Panels, Commissioned Sound Work & Artist Talkback)

Keynote: Kristin Mann (Emory University, US)

Commissioned Sound Artist: Linda O Keeffe (University of Edinburgh, UK)

Conference website and forum:

<https://cpaghnetwork.wixsite.com/cpaghconf2021>



THE OXFORD RESEARCH CENTRE IN THE HUMANITIES



Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Preußischer Kulturbesitz



**Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft**

German Research Foundation

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Colonial Ports and Global History (CPAGH) Network welcomes you to its interdisciplinary online conference, Myriad Materialities.

This conference draws attention to the materialities ‘beyond the marine’ of colonial ports and port cities, with a view to re/assessing colonial contact and its longer-term impact, and the concomitant circulation of goods and ideas across the centuries and continents. Situating these peopled encounters and penetrating their initial interface will shed new light on conceptions of materiality and their mutability, notably the conditions by which the negotiation of identities and inscription of subjectivities are imbricated with different ecologies and infrastructures.

Our conference thus moves toward a new global writing of colonial ports and port cities, exploring their myriad materialities through three intersecting perspectives. First is the perspective of gender. We invite participants to reflect on socially constructed underpinnings of masculinity and femininity, their constant state of flux and the creation of contested liminal spaces beyond binary frameworks. How can these nuances offer new readings of gender through the material cultures of food, entertainment and education, for example?

Second is the perspective of race. Our conference will examine how colonial ports and port cities functioned as key sites not only of problematic racial hierarchies, but also of global interactions and the resistance and destabilisation of those hierarchies. We invite critical engagement with notions of whiteness and their

perpetuated discourses, also highlighting the role, contributions and knowledge of non-white actors and agents.

Third is the perspective of class. This sees a renewed attention to issues of social inequality and the wider systemic questions of institutionalisation and Eurocentrism, whilst weaving a more intricate understanding of colonial presences and social structures. In what ways and to what extent can there be more equitable ways of engaging with unheard communities? We envisage socially-minded critiques and/or frameworks with which to explore related concerns, notably distributive justice, archives from below and their potentiality for articulating indigenous and other neglected voices.

To this end, we invite researchers and practitioners to bring hitherto discrete methods and practices into closer interdisciplinary dialogue. At a deeper level, we hope to foster a deeper understanding of colonial ports and port cities as spaces defined and redefined by their myriad materialities.

Our keynote speaker will be Kristin Mann, a Professor *Emerita* at Emory University, whose rich expertise and interests extend from eighteenth through twentieth-century African history, to slavery and emancipation, to Atlantic history and the African diaspora. Prof. Mann will speak on 'Subaltern Perspectives on Circulation, Encounter, and the Mutable Materialities of Gender, Race, and Class in a 19th-Century Atlantic Port: A View from Lagos'.

We are also excited to have commissioned a new sound work, written in response to the conference theme of materialities from

sound artist Linda O Keeffe, Head of Art at the University of Edinburgh. This new work will have its premiere at the conference. Dr. O Keeffe will then be joined by CPAGH co-lead Min-Erh Wang for a live talkback exploring the work as well as her thoughts on creative practices and social advocacies in the age of COVID-19.

WHAT'S THE VIRTUAL WORLD CAFÉ?

Think of the Virtual World Café as an ice breaker! There will be three interactive breakout sessions, each lasting 20 minutes and hosted by a CPAGH co-lead, exploring the themes of materiality and commodities/consumption, materiality and place, and materiality and provenance. The conference participants will be organised into three groups on the day and will rotate through these 20-minute breakouts, before reconvening for a general discussion aimed at articulating some common topics that may intersect with their current work, and sharing some initial thoughts and reflections in advance of the paper sessions to be held the following week.

WEB FORUM

Feel free to post any ideas relating to your work and the conference on our community web forum! Logging in the forum is quick and easy. You can sign up in the first instance through your Facebook account, Google account, or an existing email address.

<https://cpaghnetwork.wixsite.com/cpaghconf2021/forum>

PROGRAMME (ALL TIMES BST)

2 July 2021 (Friday)

12:20–12:30 Welcome remarks

Yvonne Liao (CPAGH/University of Oxford)

12:30–13:45 Virtual World Café

Breakout 1

Materiality and Commodities/Consumption: Rethinking Colonial Ports Through Luxury Goods and Everyday Items

Hosts: Hatice Yildiz (CPAGH/University of Edinburgh, UK) and Ayse Polat (University of Cambridge, UK)

Moderator: Min-Erh Wang (CPAGH/University of Oxford, UK)

Session Blurb:

How did the production and consumption of commodities shape global connections through colonial ports?

This session will explore the ways in which the production and consumption of materials including textiles, sugar, tea, coffee, spices, oil, and silver shaped (and continues to shape) connections and power relations built within and through global ports.

Breakout 2

Materiality and Place

Host: Olivia Durand (CPAGH/University of Oxford, UK)

Moderator: Helena F. S. Lopes (CPAGH/University of Bristol, UK)

Session Blurb:

What can the interior urban landscape reveal about colonial port dynamics and exchanges taking place beyond the marine? Most studies of the legacies of colonialism have focused on port cities. However, the global connections fostered by imperialism did not stop at maritime borders and infiltrated the interior of most territories. Taking the example of Oxford – city and university – as a nexus of knowledge and empire, this session will survey the ways in which the materiality of the urban landscape reveals stories of expansionism, displacement, and networks that reach well beyond the marine.

Breakout 3

Materiality and Provenance

Host: Julia Binter (CPAGH/Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz)

Moderator: Katharina Oke (CPAGH/University of Graz, Austria)

Session Blurb:

When do port cities become colonial, and what material traces of this shift in power and hierarchies can we find in the museum?

Many colonial port cities grew out of, or violently replaced, existing hubs of translocal trade. Objects which can be found in museums today materialise this shift in power and hierarchies. This session will trace the routes of objects from colonial port cities to ‘Cities of Empire’ like Berlin, and also explore how provenance research and its focus on materiality can provide new insights into the agency with which various social actors shaped emerging colonial port cities.

13:45–14:00 Break

14:00–15:00 General Discussion

Moderators: Yvonne Liao, Helena F. S. Lopes, Katharina Oke, Min-Erh Wang

8 July 2021 (Thursday)

12:20–12:30 Welcome remarks

Yvonne Liao (CPAGH/University of Oxford)

Alexis von Poser (Deputy Director, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin)

12:30–14:15 Panel

Reframing Class in Colonial Ports and Port Cities

Chair: Olivia Durand (CPAGH/University of Oxford, UK)

Discussant: Radha Kapuria (Social and Cultural History, University of Sheffield, UK)

Malleable ¿Spaniards?: Cultural Mimicry, Andean Objects, and the Destabilization of Ethno-Racial Hierarchies in the Colonial Port City of Lima, Peru

Ryan Bean (History and Latin American Studies, DePauw University, US)

Cast in Stone: The Construction of Hamburg's Free Port and the *Speicherstadt* as a Global Urban Bourgeois Space

Lasse Heerten (Transnational and Global History, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany)

'To Try my Luck and Commence Merchant': Slave Trade, Free Trade, and Emancipation in Eighteenth-Century Caribbean Free Ports

Grant Kleiser (History, Columbia University, US)

14:15–14:45 Break

14:45–16:30 Panel

Deconstructing Race in Colonial Ports and Port Cities

Chair: Helena F. S. Lopes (CPAGH/University of Bristol, UK)

Discussant: Saima Nasar (Social and Cultural History, University of Bristol, UK)

Learning (a) Trade: Jewish Education in Indian Ocean Ports

Shaul Marmari (Jewish History, Universität Leipzig, Germany)

Eugenic Exports: Performing the Racialised Archive of Colonial Swakopmund

Juliana M. Pistorius (Musicology, University of Huddersfield, UK)

The Racial Periphery of Colonial Cartagena de las Indias, 16th to 17th Centuries

Florian Wieser (Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum Ingolstadt, Germany)

16:30–17:00 Break

17:00–18:00 Keynote: Kristin Mann (History, Emory University, US)

Subaltern Perspectives on Circulation, Encounter, and the Mutable Materialities of Gender, Race, and Class in a 19th-Century Atlantic Port: A View from Lagos

Chair: Katharina Oke (CPAGH/ Universität Graz, Austria)

18:00–18:05 Closing remarks

Katharina Oke (CPAGH/University of Graz, Austria)

9 July 2021 (Friday)

12:15–12:20 Welcome remarks

Yvonne Liao (CPAGH/University of Oxford)

12:20–14:05 Panel

(Un)Gendering Colonial Ports and Port Cities

Chair: Hatice Yildiz (CPAGH/University of Edinburgh, UK)

Discussant: Su Lin Lewis (Urban History and Gender History,
University of Bristol, UK)

**Women's Aesthetics as a Crucial Means for the Production of
Translocality on the East African Swahili Coast**

Paola Ivanov (Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Germany)

**Architecture and Gender in Portuguese Atlantic Island Cities: A
Window into Women Place and Space**

Antonieta Reis Leite (Architectural History, University of Coimbra,
Portugal)

**The Divided House in Harbour Cities on the Straits of Malacca:
Gendered Spaces in Transcultural Urban Contexts**

Mai Lin Tjoa-Bonatz (Art History, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin)

14:05–14:30 Break

14:30–15:30 Commissioned Sound Work – Premiere
As Gaeilge Time and Space

Artist Talkback

Host: Min-Erh Wang (CPAGH/University of Oxford, UK)
In conversation with **Linda O Keeffe (Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, UK)**

15:30–16:00 Break

16:00–17:15 Panel
(Re)Writing and (Re)Translating the Materialities of Colonial Ports and Port Cities

Chair: Julia Binter (CPAGH/Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz)
Discussant: Dorothy Armstrong (Ashmolean Museum, UK)

‘New’ Narratives of Colonial Port Histories connected to Hamburg
Jasmin Alley (Deutsches Hafenumuseum Hamburg, Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg, Germany)

Culinary Connections: Towards an Anthropology of Port City Cuisine

Mareike Pampus (Social Anthropology, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)

17:15–17:30 Closing remarks
CPAGH Team

PAPER ABSTRACTS

Malleable ¿Spaniards?: Cultural Mimicry, Andean Objects, and the Destabilization of Ethno-Racial Hierarchies in the Colonial Port City of Lima, Peru

Ryan Bean (History and Latin American Studies, DePauw University, US)

Previous historiography on the colonial port city and viceregal capital of Lima has argued that ‘subalterns’ from Indians to Africans to castas (i.e. mixed-race individuals)—were drawn to Spanish baroque objects and rituals and, therefore, mimicked baroque cultural practices (albeit oftentimes imperfectly). In this way, urban dwellers became increasingly incorporated into a colonial world where Spaniards and baroque culture were ascendant. Indeed, contrary to the indigenous interior of Peru, Lima is most often thought of as a ‘bastion of loyalty’ and of Spanishness. In contrast, using seventeenth century Inquisition records, this paper argues that a wide swath of Spaniards mimicked Andean/indigenous cultural practices and mixed them with Mediterranean folk practices and baroque religiosity. In doing so, Spaniards became highly dependent on a mix of sacred and mundane objects from the Andean and baroque worlds for their material, ritualistic, and emotional needs. They routinely chewed coca leaves to divine, rubbed their bodies with guinea pigs, engaged in mountain worship, all the while calling on demons and using rosaries and playing cards. Engaging with this mixture of objects and in these cultural practices had profound consequences for Spanish cultural and political hegemony in the

capital, consequences that call into question the ascendancy of the baroque and, by extension, Spanishness itself. As I argue, the identities of a large portion of ¿Spanish? limeños were more multifaceted, kaleidoscopic, and composite than elite conceptions of Spanishness. Because of this, many oscillated toward and away from Spanishness throughout their lives based on circumstances that were both relational and situational, thereby making their ties to Spanishness ambivalent. Since ethno-racial identities in the Hispanic world were rooted more in cultural practices and less in skin color, I argue that such widespread Spanish participation in indigenous mimicry and in cultural practices that were commonly defined in opposition to Spanishness destabilized ethno-racial hierarchies upon which Spanish colonialism was based. In other words, Spaniards who often acted like Indians by using native objects contributed to the blurring of boundaries between themselves and other groups, thereby producing ethno-racial ambiguity. Because Lima was a colonial port city, its unique milieu—a social scene that brought together a rich array of peoples, cultures, and objects—made possible such ambivalence and ambiguity that effectively decentered whiteness/Spanishness in the most important city in colonial South America.

Cast in Stone: The Construction of Hamburg's Free Port and the *Speicherstadt* as a Global Urban Bourgeois Space

Lasse Heerten (Transnational and Global History, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany)

When contemporaries started discussing the project of the construction of the free port that was to open in Hamburg in 1888,

they immediately called the planned warehouse district within the free port 'Speicherstadt' ('warehouse city'). As an exclusively commercial space, this 'city' was rather peculiar. Entire neighborhoods were demolished, and roughly 20,000 residents removed for the construction of this city without inhabitants. So far, scholars have not pondered the question why contemporaries designated the warehouse district a 'city'. This paper responds to this question, arguing that this designation was part of an effort to politically and materially construct the free port as a global urban bourgeois space. The expansion of the port was a project propelled by Hamburg's bourgeois merchant elite. Yet this exact process also threatened to redefine the city permanently: port expansion required a massive workforce that, at a time when increasing political participation for the (male) masses was on the political horizon, was anticipated to turn the erstwhile 'merchant republic' into a working-class city. The paper closely analyzes the opening ceremony of the free port, when the newly coronated Kaiser Wilhelm II came to Hamburg for the laying of the keystone of the *Brooksbrücke*, the bridge leading into the *Speicherstadt*. As the paper shows, the political construction of the free port was defined by references to Hamburg's urban past in a ceremony that strongly echoed early modern political rituals and an architecture that was designed to replace the razed city walls that had formerly defined urban space. With its neo-gothic red brick architecture referencing Hamburg's Hanseatic past, the *Speicherstadt* was a material monument to the political project of the continued hegemony of the merchant caste in Hamburg's city politics. Ultimately, the paper uses this case to challenge the notion of 'urbanization'. Through its emphasis on industrialization as the process that created 'modern' cities, the concept tends to eclipse how much older ideas of cities

as spaces of privilege still defined late nineteenth-century understandings of urbanity, at least among the bourgeois merchant elite in a port city like Hamburg.

‘To Try my Luck and Commence Merchant’: Slave Trade, Free Trade, and Emancipation in Eighteenth-Century Caribbean Free Ports

Grant Kleiser (History, Columbia University, US)

In the spring of 1766, the British Parliament broke with a century of previous commercial strategy and passed the first Free Port Act. This legislation stipulated that British merchants could exchange certain, regulated goods with foreign merchants in six British colonial ports in the West Indies (four in Jamaica and two in Dominica) after paying various duties. The reform negated the longstanding Navigation Acts’ requirements that all trade to and from the colonies be conducted only on British vessels and that foreign ships could not enter colonial harbors.¹ One of the primary “commodities” sold to foreign merchants in these British free ports were enslaved Africans. According to the transatlantic slave trade database, the number of African captives imported into the island of Dominica jumped from 1,258 between 1761 and 1765 to 17,353

¹ See Frances Armytage, *The Free Port System in the British West Indies; A Study in Commercial Policy, 1766-1822* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1953), 36-40, 2. However, friendly foreign ships could enter British colonial harbors in times of emergency.

² See <http://www.slavevoyages.org>; P.J. Marshall, *Edmund Burke and the British Empire in the West Indies: Wealth, Power, and Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

between 1766 and 1770.² Edmund Burke lauded that “The African Trade was preserved and extended” through the Free Port Act.³ This phenomenon has inspired recent historians to highlight the paradox of an act intended to buttress both free trade and the African slave trade.⁴ This paper first builds off this assessment, highlighting that Caribbean free ports buttressed racial hierarchies and enslaved labor. Yet, unlike most previous scholarship, my work *also* underscores how enslaved people who entered and engaged with free ports combated this racially-based labor regime and altered their legal class status. First, in such commercially vibrant Caribbean free ports, enslaved men and women, particularly sailors, found heightened opportunities to trade various goods and turn a profit with which they could purchase their freedom. Second, the increased presence of foreign ships which were now legally allowed to enter these ports could foster better possibilities for maritime marronage. That is, enslaved Africans in free ports could stow away on board a ship bound for any number of imperial realms, making it virtually impossible for their enslavers to locate and return them. On occasion then, enslaved people took advantage of free-port commerce to free *themselves*.

³ See Edmund Burke, *Short Accounts of a Late Short Administration* (1766), in *The Works and Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (London: F & J. Rivington, 1852), 3: 2.

⁴ See especially Gregory O’Malley, *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); as well as Ernesto Bassi, *An Aqueous Territory: Sailor Geographies and New Granada’s Transimperial Greater Caribbean* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Marshall, *Edmund Burke*.

Learning (a) Trade: Jewish Education in Indian Ocean Ports

Shaul Marmari (Jewish History, Universität Leipzig, Germany)

In 1868, the young Shaul Abdallah Yosef (1849–1906) left his hometown Baghdad and sailed across the Indian Ocean. His aim was to enter the Sassoon Benevolent Institution in Bombay, a charity school for Jewish children founded by the Baghdad-born trade magnate David Sassoon (1792–1864). There, Abdallah Yosef could pick up the traditional education of his homeland, studying bible in Hebrew and Arabic, but also learn English, geography and mathematics. Perhaps it was this liberal curriculum that later inspired him to delve into the research of medieval poetry. Yet Abdallah Yosef was never able to commit to scholarly life: upon graduation from school he was immediately hired by the Sassoon family company, in the service of which he was sent to China. He spent the rest of his life as a merchant and a broker, his scholarly works discovered and published only after his death.

Abdallah Yosef's fate was shared by many Jewish men who had migrated from the Middle East to the rising ports of the Indian Ocean during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Besides Sassoon's Benevolent Institution in Bombay (est. ca. 1856), affluent Jewish merchants also founded new schools in Calcutta (1880) and Aden (1915), where traditional religious studies were combined with a modernized curriculum in line with the colonial educational standards. Yet these studies, I would argue, assumed a much more profane meaning than the colonial ideals of disseminating enlightenment and civilization: they were meant to transform Middle Eastern immigrants into modern commercial employees.

Through their education at the Indian Ocean's major entrepôts, young Baghdadi, Persian and Yemeni Jews were integrated into the commercial system of the co-called Empire of Raj.

My proposed presentation seeks to situate Jewish education in Bombay, Calcutta and Aden within the port city's environment. First it would demonstrate the hybridity of the colonial port, where different types of knowledge were combined and where modernity was interpreted and appropriated by non-Europeans for their own material gains. Secondly, it would argue that the highly commercialized context of the port and its entrepreneurial culture shaped an education oriented foremostly towards trade and business, thereby paving a very specific path for its graduates. And finally, by following the trajectories of several such graduates overseas, it would demonstrate how knowledge acquired in one port could facilitate mobility to other ports, from Shanghai in the east to Port Said in the west.

Eugenic Exports: Performing the Racialised Archive of Colonial Swakopmund

Juliana M. Pistorius (Musicology, University of Huddersfield, UK)

Between 1862 and 1915, Swakopmund was the main port of entry and exit for colonists settling in German South West Africa (today Namibia). Small, isolated, and overshadowed by the thriving British port of Walvis Bay, Swakopmund remained no more than a minor participant in the turn-of-the-century maritime transmission of goods, bodies, and cultures. Nonetheless, the city's transnational impact exceeds its relative insignificance: as the coastal base for

the German genocide of the Herero and Nama people, Swakopmund became a central site in the development and circulation of the racial ideologies that would later become eugenics. In this paper, I turn to the visible and invisible archives of Swakopmund's maritime past to trace the residues that tie this ossified city to its racialised afterlife. Arguing for a re-temporalisation of the defunct port, I propose a form of historical encounter that understands the port city first and foremost as theatre: a place whose dynamic significations are realised most effectively in performance.

The Racial Periphery of Colonial Cartagena de las Indias, 16th to 17th Centuries

Florian Wieser (Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum Ingolstadt, Germany)

As the most important gate to Spain's South American possessions, the city of Cartagena de Indias in modern-day Colombia was one of the archetypal Early Modern colonial ports. It was, like many port cities, strongly racially and ethnically mixed, bringing together white landowners, *mestizo* workers, free and enslaved Africans, Sephardic refugees, and indigenous peoples both pacified and not. This paper discusses two intertwined historical strands that arise from Cartagena's role within the Spanish imperial system in the late 16th and throughout the 17th century: the effect this role had on the various racial groups living in and around Cartagena, and the effect these complex race relations had on the functioning of Cartagena as a colonial city and port. To achieve this, it investigates both the city of Cartagena and the province of same name that it

was capital of, bringing their different racial situations together as complementary pieces of the same whole, tracing their productive and destructive dynamics. It considers Cartagena (a) centre of the world, with everything else, including the Spanish motherland, as its periphery. Thus, it relates the race relations within Cartagena to the city and province's global operations, making an inroad for a theory that upends standard ideas of centre and periphery and that intertwines the global and local at the point of race.

Women's Aesthetics as a Crucial Means for the Production of Translocality on the East African Swahili Coast

Paola Ivanov (Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Germany)

Architecture and Gender in Portuguese Atlantic Island Cities: A Window into Women Place and Space

Antonieta Reis Leite (Architectural History, University of Coimbra, Portugal)

This paper intends to examine how society and women themselves featured their space(s) and place(s) in the Portuguese Atlantic world during the colonisation period. Namely on the islands settled by Portugal since the sixteenth century (Madeira and Azores archipelagos), how did women forge structures for sustaining challenges to local inequities and injustices against the backdrop of a colonial framework shaped by Iberian/Portuguese laws and customs? What are the material expressions of those challenges in island port cities? How did women manage to place their homes in this environment? What can we find in the building spaces that can

inform us about women's living places? In order to answer these and other possible questions, data will be collected from photo archives, from building plans and from historical documents. Chronicles and traveller accounts also contribute to clarifying the picture of women and place in Portuguese islander society and port cities. Much remains to be done to incorporate women's experiences and gender as a category of analysis in Portuguese Atlantic history, namely on space and place building. The histories of women and their homes in the Portuguese islands, albeit fragmented and incomplete, reveal the complexities of family, social and cultural identity in the Atlantic World territories, as well as the material and morphologic expressions of architecture and cities, from homes to convents to the ways they were designed (not) to interact with public spaces.

The Divided House in Harbour Cities on the Straits of Malacca: Gendered Spaces in Transcultural Urban Contexts

Mai Lin Tjoa-Bonatz (Art History, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin)

The interest in gender-related analysis of urban space has increased over the past few decades in Southeast Asia. However, not much scholarly attention has been paid to the gendered demarcations of domestic housing in colonial cities within the literature. I will therefore examine the concept of gendered domestic space in urban architecture during the first quarter of the 20th century in harbour cities of the British Straits Settlements: Penang/Malaysia, and Singapore. Reviewing how urban habitations were divided is of specific interest in the historical context of the colonial society, where the

built environment was shaped by interactions between colonial institutions and different Asian communities. Gendered uses of space in the house were not only caused by the traditional family values of the local communities, but also influenced by colonial policies and building regulations. The gendered notions of space also responded to the economic and social changes of the urbanization phase since the late nineteenth century.

Building upon my previous research (Tjoa-Bonatz 1997, 2003, 2018), I will further the study of shophouses and villas by analysing visual and written sources from Penang and Singapore in order to identify female work spaces which were exclusively or, at least, distinctively meant for women. My primary source material also includes self-portrayal or interviews of Asian women, which describe their domestic life and working life colonial-time harbour cities. I argue that I will integrate the historical approach to domestic architecture in colonial societies and the feminist social science approach to domestic space into a more multi-disciplinary dialogue within a broader discourse of historical, cultural and sociological studies.

Following Victorian models in Britain, Western architects injected notions of female domesticity into the designs of the houses that they were called to build. Gendered spaces are first documented in public buildings and in bungalows in the late nineteenth century in Singapore (Lee Kip Lin 2015). In the 1920s, also in shophouses built for the Asian middle-classes spaces for female activities which are exclusively or, at least, distinctively meant for women are identified (Fig. 1). During that time, the rise of female immigration allowed more stable family structures. Speculative housing contributed to

the rise of smaller-sized dwellings for nuclear families in which the working space was separated from the living space. The shophouse, which was formerly the urban prototype of a mixed-use townhouse, transformed into a rowhouse – a type of dwelling inspired by western models, which became typical for suburban living areas of growing cities. The house became a private and secure retreat for family life. The spatial distinction of the wage-earning father and the home-based mother with her children reinforced such social distinctions within the domestic realm.

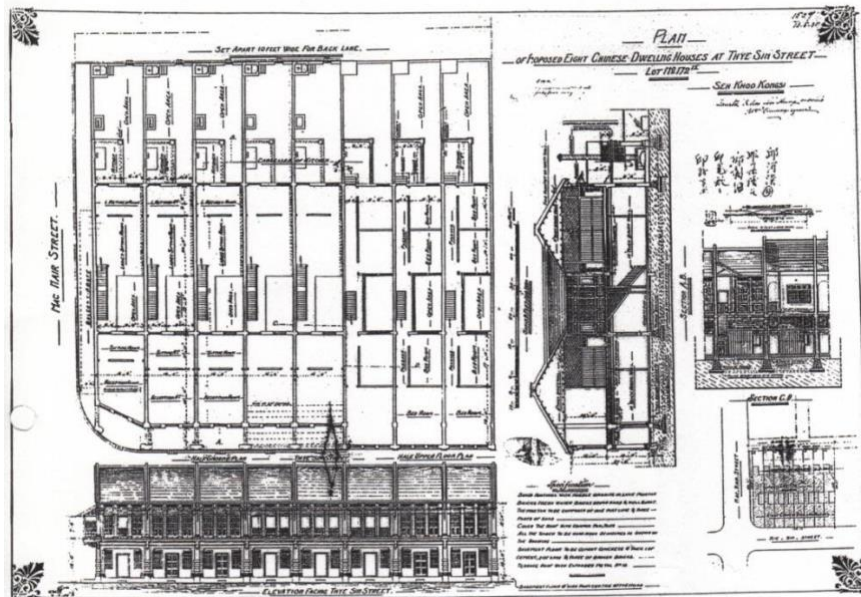


Fig. 1: The building plan of 1920 shows eight Chinese shophouses drawn by the British architect D. Nathaniel. A living and a reception hall of women is outlined marked by the red circle.

'New' Narratives of Colonial Port Histories connected to Hamburg

Jasmin Alley (Deutsches Hafenumuseum Hamburg, Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg, Germany)

In Hamburg a new museum is underway. The German Port Museum will focus on ports – and their worldwide connections. Port history is very much embedded in narratives of modernity that entail technological progress, aligned with European universalism and superiority. Ports can only exist in webs of other ports and are above all places and spaces of entangled histories that are very much shaped by colonialism.

In my curatorial work I find and shape narratives that tell stories about ports and ships from other parts of the world, and emphasise people's navigation and sailing skills 'in service' for (mostly) Europeans. But most importantly, I look for stories from people themselves, to represent their perspectives and voices in the museum.

I am currently researching the Krumen people who worked in support of international trade from at least the 16th century until the 20th. The Krumen worked off the coast of West Africa, for mostly British and German ships (the latter for the Woermann Line from Hamburg). Ships stayed a couple of miles away from the West African shoreline due to a dangerous surf. Therefore, loading and off-loading were organized by Krumen, who were indispensable during the transatlantic slave trade and later for all kind of trades. Extensive literature exists but only from the European perspective. What is missing is an understanding from the Krumen perspective

of their loading skills and the boats that they used, even though their surf boats were the blueprints for Docks in Hamburg to build similar but bigger surf boats that for instance Woermann took to the coast in West Africa. The question for my curatorial work is how one or more Krumen perspectives can find representation in a German Port Museum without strengthening dominant narratives.

Culinary Connections: Towards an Anthropology of Port City Cuisine

Mareike Pampus (Social Anthropology, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)

Historians and anthropologists have used various frameworks to analyse connectivities, mobilities, and cultural exchange in the Indian Ocean World. Port cities as frames of reference hereby help to construct an alternative analytical framework to studies that employ nation-state based models. Simultaneously, scholars from both disciplines have probed how food can be used as an object of inquiry to interrogate connections beyond the category of the local and challenge nation-based arguments. However, these two bodies of literature have rarely spoken to one another.

This paper will analyse food in the context of the Indian Ocean World, illuminating how the movements of plants, people, material culture, and knowledge helped to shape unique culinary cultures and practices across different cities in the Indian Ocean littoral. Furthermore, it adds to 'colonial food studies', which have focused mostly on the nineteenth century category of nation-state. Using the port city of Penang (Malaysia) as an example, this paper on the

contrary considers how food exchange and the travelling of practices, techniques, and recipes in the Indian Ocean World transcend the nation state. Simultaneously, it centres Asian cooks and chefs of various ethnic backgrounds as actors of culinary change and exchange in the context of European colonial rule. Examining ethnographic fieldwork data on learning how to smell, taste, and cook Penang dishes, results in an in-depth analysis of the port city's culinary connections. Enriched by approaches of connected histories in past and present, this paper consequently offers alternative and complementary narratives and histories to this exchange by giving voice to otherwise often neglected actors, such as ethnic minorities, women, and domestic workers.

KEYNOTE

Subaltern Perspectives on Circulation, Encounter, and the Mutable Materialities of Gender, Race, and Class in a 19th-Century Atlantic Port: A View from Lagos

Kristin Mann (History, Emory University, US)

This keynote address will reflect on the West African port of Lagos's transformation as a site of the circulation of people, commodities, and culture during the long nineteenth century. The analysis will root the settlement's origins and growth in ecology and geography and stress the centrality of its interactions with peoples of the African hinterland and littoral, while focusing primarily on changes that followed from its rapid growth as a center of the slave trade to Brazil and Cuba in the age of abolition. The slave trade at Lagos ended even more abruptly than it began, and its demise coincided with the imposition of British colonial rule and development of a lucrative new commerce with Europe in vegetable oils that were essential to the rapid industrialization and urbanization then occurring there. The address will probe transformations in the encounters between Africans of different kinds and the Americans and Europeans who arrived from across the sea during a century when the commodity passing through the port changed from enslaved men, women, and children to an inanimate vegetable product. It will interrogate the changing meanings and materialities of race, gender, and class across these periods from the subaltern perspectives of enslaved and freed Africans who lived through

them and themselves circulated across and in some cases around the Atlantic.

Kristin Mann is a Professor *Emerita* at Emory University. An historian of Africa and the Black Atlantic world, her research interests include the birth and transformation of Lagos (Nigeria) as an Atlantic port; slavery, the slave trade, abolition, and emancipation; West African commercial and agricultural transformations in the age of European empire; gender, household, labor, and domesticity; and the making of the African diaspora. She is currently completing a book *Transatlantic Lives: Slavery and Freedom in West Africa and Brazil* that pioneers a new approach to the recovery of enslaved Africans' transatlantic biographies. It probes how in the nineteenth century groups of Yoruba-speakers were able to free themselves, return to Lagos and other towns on the West African coast, reconnect with kin and country folk, and create new homelands. Previous publications include books and articles on Lagos, law and colonialism in Africa, the African diaspora, and slavery and the slave trade in the Atlantic world.

COMMISSIONED SOUND WORK

As Gaeilge Time and Space

Linda O Keeffe (Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, UK)

This work examines the way in which a language or sound evolves, becomes transmuted, muted or disappears as it moves beyond the centre, or source of its origin as a result of colonial transformations and post-colonial forgetting.

Growing up in Ireland I resisted having to learn Irish in school, I didn't understand the point, no one I knew spoke Irish, the common tongue was English, and there was nowhere in the world where having this language would benefit me. I felt a similar antipathy towards Irish music, it felt commodified, created for tourism, a specialised sound for a particular audience. Nothing to do with me. However, when I visited the Gaeltacht regions in Ireland, or heard spoken Irish in a bar, I felt a pull, an envy, an anguish, a loss at not being able to speak or understand my own language. I have felt, in recent years, as an economic migrant, the same experience towards the sound of my culture, from music to poetry, to prose. In researching for this commission, I have explored the history of my language and culture as it has spread from the centre, moving across borders as we left for work, for safety, for independence. When we think of things transported across water, across land, brought to different countries, we focus on things, objects and goods, but there are other kinds of materialities, which move from port to port. Language and sound

are a part of these myriad materials that when forced to move, either evolve or merge with other cultures, or over time and across space, disappear.

I would like to thank those who have supported the development of this art work: William Howard, Lecteur de Gaélique from the Université de Bretagne Occidentale, who has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the history and evolution of the Irish Language; Dr. Clare Downham and Dr. Eoghan Ahern from the University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies, for facilitating in the translation of text from English to Irish; and the composer and performer Tony Doyle for performing the sounds and music for this piece. I also want to thank those who have contributed their voices across time and space, to this work.

Linda O Keeffe is a sound artist based in Edinburgh, Scotland, and is head of the School of Art at the University of Edinburgh. She is founder of the [Women in Sound Women on Sound \(WISWOS\) organisation](#) and Editor-in-Chief for the [Interference Journal](#). Dr. O Keeffe's practice is informed by a holistic engagement with, and analysis of, social, ecological and historical soundscapes. Her practice approaches an examination of sustainability, technology and community through a stratification model, focusing on listening as a methodology, and as a means of activating communities. Her works have been performed, broadcast and exhibited in East Asia, the USA, Brazil, Canada and Europe. Her installation Hybrid Soundscapes I-IV, commissioned by the New Art Exchange in Nottingham and curated by Christine Eyene toured the UK from 2017 to 2020. In 2018 O Keeffe was awarded the Arts Council of England international travel award to undertake a large

collaborative research project in Brazil examining gender, technology and the soundscape. During this time, she released two albums with a number of Brazilian female performance artists, and co-published the paper, 'Applying Feminist Methodologies in the Sonic Arts: Sound Walking as a Process'. In January 2021, she was awarded the Sustaining Creative Development award from Creative Scotland for the project 'Evolving Ourselves with Unnatural Selection'. www.lindaokeeffe.com