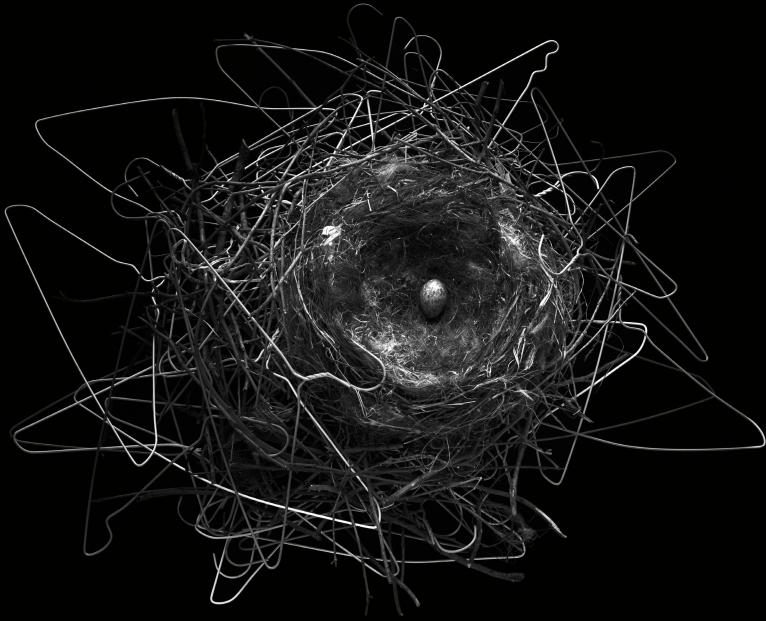




**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

University Research Priority Program (URPP) Asia and Europe

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Human : Non-Human

Bodies, Things, and Matter across Asia and Europe

**International Conference
University of Zurich, October 6–8, 2016**

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Outline

Distinctions between bodies and things, humans and non-humans organize cultural self-perceptions as well as social and economic practices in Asia and Europe in the past and present. They form the basis of and justification for power relationships, for privileging some bodies over others, and for subjecting, using and consuming bodies and matter classified as “things” or “non-human.” Recent bio-technological developments allow, at a very material level, the crossing of boundaries between bodies that used to be thought of as “generically” or “naturally” different. Concurrently, attempts to create artificial, intelligent bodies have raised a debate about global bioethics or “transhumanism” as a new referential framework of discourse. Ideas of life and vividness (bios) are re-assessed, and the arbitrariness of the norms and values implied in these notions emerges as a persistent feature in their practical application. At the same time, concerns about the continuing destruction of natural resources and the environment and the growing impact of climate change have resulted in conceptualizing the present age as the “anthropocene”. Environmental movements resist these developments and often draw on criticism of Western modernity and neo-liberalism. Forms of protest and criticism include also the implementation of protected zones and laws in which the status of non-humans is changed in order to allow their protection. New theoretical positions are sought for, such as, “planetary” or “holistic” thinking, or object-oriented philosophies. In so doing, academics and intellectuals turn to “traditional” concepts and practices in Asian and European societies as possible resources for redefining relationships between bodies and things, humans and non-humans, sentient and insentient beings. These concerns are also shared by artists and authors who endeavour to spell out blueprints for less violent planetary co-existence, or more radically, non-violent planetary conviviality. While doing this, they explore new artistic, often intermedial, forms of articulation in order to highlight the presence or absence of non-humans, of matter and landscapes.

The conference aims at exploring this constellation and the challenges posed by the current reconfigurations of relationships and boundaries between human and non-human, things and bodies across Asia and Europe.

Program

Day 1: Thursday, October 6, 2016

14:30–15:00 Bettina Dennerlein, Angelika Malinar, Andrea Riemenschneider
Welcome and Introduction:
Human : Non-Human – Bodies, Things, and Matter across Asia and Europe

Session 1: Conceptualizing Bodies, Things, and Matter

15:00–15:45 Angelika Malinar (University of Zurich, presently Research Fellow at Max-Weber-Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt)
Notions of ‘Productive Matter’ and the Classification of Beings in Indian Philosophy

15:45–16:15 Coffee Break

16:15–17:00 Julia Shaw (University College London)
Archaeologies of Human: Non-Human Entanglements in Ancient India: Early Buddhist Attitudes towards ‘Nature’ and Land-Use

17:00–17:45 Urs Gösken (University of Bern)
Negotiating Human/Non-Human as a Question of Meaning in 20th Century Iranian Authenticity Discourse

18:15–19:30 Public Keynote Speech: Bonnie Mann (University of Oregon)
The Human against Life: Gender and Shame in American Politics and Culture

19:45 Conference Dinner (by invitation)

Day 2: Friday, October 7, 2016

09:30–10:15 Dorothea Lüddeckens (University of Zurich)

'Bodies', 'Things' and 'Matter' in Healing Systems between Asia and Europe

Session 2: Ruling Bodies, Legal Matters

10:15–11:00 Melike Şahinol (Orient-Institute Istanbul)

Body@Human_Medicine@Society: A Comparison between Germany and Turkey

11:00–11:30 Coffee Break

11:30–12:15 Andrea Büchler (University of Zurich)

To Be or to Have? On the Rights to Own and Use (One's) Body Parts

12:30–14:00 Lunch (by invitation)

14:00–14:45 Marcia Inhorn (Yale University)

Global Gametes and Reproductive Outlaws: European-Emirati Exchanges in IVF Reprotravel

14:45–15:30 Bettina Dennerlein (University of Zurich)

Normative Bodies and Bodies of Norms in Modern Islamic Legal Discourse

15:30–16:00 Coffee Break

Session 3: Aesthetics and the Politics of Matter

16:00–16:45 **Andrea Riemenschitter (University of Zurich, presently Senior Fellow at IFK Vienna – International Research Center for Cultural Studies, University of Art and Design Linz)**

The Clandestine Agency of Matter: Black Pancakes, Mussels from Brussels, and Other Enlightening Encounters

6 **16:45–17:30** **Jay Johnston (University of Sydney)**

Cultivating Subtle Matter: The Aesthetics and Ethics of Esoteric Ecologies

17:30–18:15 **Meng Yue (University of Toronto)**

Losing the Land Knowingly? Noticing the Global Journeys of Two Classics of Ecofarming

19:30 **Conference Dinner (by invitation)**

Day 3: Saturday, October 8, 2016

Session 4: Querying the “Non / Human”

9:30–10:15 Pheng Cheah (University of California, Berkeley)

Worlding Literature: Living-With Tiger Spirits

10:15–11:00 Annu Jalais (National University of Singapore)

Worlding the Cow and the Tiger in the South Asian Anthropocene

11:00–11:30 Coffee Break

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11:30–12:15 Wolfgang Behr (University of Zurich)

Speaking Beasts and Beastly Tongues: On Some Boundaries of ‘Human Language’ in Early and Medieval China

12:15–13:00 Concluding Discussion

13:00 Lunch (by invitation)

General Information

Location	University of Zurich Rooms RAA G-15 (October 6) and RAA G-01 (October 7–8) Rämistrasse 59 CH-8001 Zurich
Convenors	Prof. Dr. Bettina Dennerlein Prof. Dr. Angelika Malinar Prof. Dr. Andrea Riemenschnitter
Contact	Dr. Elisa Ganser elisa.ganser@uzh.ch
Registration	Registration required by September 28, 2016: sofia.bollo@uzh.ch
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