

THEMATIC PLENARY SESSION

Global Pandemic and Local Responses

Moderator and Invited Speaker: **YAN Hairong**

LAI Lili | Knowing Practice: Chinese Medicine Tinkering with the COVID-19

Abstract:

Because of the global hegemony of biomedicine, the Chinese medicine approach to treating Covid 19 remains poorly understood. This talk explores the unprecedentedly widespread deployment of Chinese medicine therapies in China, as part of the state-driven public health measures, as well as the emergent local responses to this epidemic through a negotiated set of power relations in a complex field of unequal social actors, where herbal remedies have become a significant component of some treatment regimens.

Biography:

LAI Lili received her PhD in Anthropology from UNC-Chapel Hill in the US. Now associate professor at the School of Health Humanities of Peking University, she has done extensive ethnographic and interdisciplinary research in North and Southwest China, both rural and urban areas, on health-related issues. As a medical anthropologist with additional expertise in the anthropology of knowledge, her research interests focus on body, everyday life, and medical practices.

Louisa SCHEIN and Silvia LINDTNER | Keywords for COVID Lives: Different National Contexts, Incommensurable Disease

Abstract:

This presentation proceeds from the premise that while SARS-CoV-2 may be treated scientifically as a single biological agent, the way the disease is lived is profoundly shaped by national and regional contexts. Policy, forms of governance, practices of sociality, health practices, medical beliefs and many other factors differentiate the what we call the “social lives” of Covid-19. Here we explore the collaborative methods of the Chinese-English Keywords Project to show how key words can serve as lenses onto the radical divergences in pandemic experiences, from fear to care to compliance.

Biographies:

Louisa Schein teaches Anthropology and Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Author of *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics* (2000), she co-edited with Tim Oakes *Translocal China* (2006) and with Purnima Mankekar *Media, Erotics and Transnational Asia* (2013). In 2016 she founded the ongoing international Chinese-English Keywords Project and in 2020-21 directed the Rutgers research collaboration: “Putting Stories to Work: Confronting the Pandemic through New Jersey Narratives.”

Silvia Lindtner (she/her) is Associate Professor at the University of Michigan in the School of Information and Director of the Center for Ethics, Society, and Computing (ESC). During the

2021-22 academic year, she is a visiting professor at New York University Shanghai, a CUSP (China-US Scholars Program) Fellow and a PIP (Public Intellectual Program) Fellow. She is the author of *Prototype Nation: China and the Contested Promise of Innovation* (Princeton University Press, 2020).

Gracia LIU-FARRER | Shifting Borders and Stratified Disadvantages: Japan's immigration and immigrants during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Abstract:

Japan is an ethno-nationalist society that has resisted immigration policy and lacks a national integration program. The COVID-19 public health crisis has forced the Japanese government to reevaluate its policy toward immigration and immigrants. While there is development toward inclusiveness, border restrictions and public policy measures enforced during the pandemic have magnified the stratification within the immigrant community and created new forms of exclusion and structural vulnerability for segments of immigrant population.

Biography:

Gracia Liu-Farrer is Professor at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, and Director of Institute of Asian Migration at Waseda University, Japan. Her research examines immigration into Japan and the global mobility of students and professional migrants. Her recent books include *Handbook of Asian Migrations* (co-edited with Brenda Yeoh, Routledge, 2018), and *Immigrant Japan: Mobility and Belonging in an Ethno-nationalist Society* (Cornell University Press, 2020).

CHEN Meei-shia | Business as usual: public health system under capitalism and the coronavirus crisis

Abstract:

The public health systems in most part of the world are designed and operated based on the logic of capitalism. Its goal is not to prevent infectious disease and promote public health but to make profit, accumulate and expand capital, and compete for and create larger markets. Even if the world is confronted with the coronavirus crisis, the capitalist logic of the systems stays intact, and as a result, the systems run business as usual. I will use the systems in the US, UK, Italy, Mainland China and Taiwan as examples to further elaborate this ironic contradiction.

Biography:

CHEN Meei-shia is distinguished professor (emeritus) and founding chair of Department of Public Health, National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. The founding president and currently the standing director of the Association for Promoting Public Health in Taiwan, and the president of the Diaoyutai Education Association. The goal of both associations is to promote social transformation in Taiwan from the aspects of public health and protecting the Diaoyutai Islands movement. Her major research interests include the political economy of health and medicine, health inequality, workers' health and safety, and the political economy of international relations. She is an academic activist and educator.