2019 November Newsletter

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY Weatherhead East Asian Institute



The Weatherhead East Asian Institute continued its 70th anniversary programming in November with three events spanning a diverse range of topics, from the 1980s reform era in China, to new directions in Japanese studies, and climate change on the Tibetan Plateau.

On October 31 and November 1, the Institute hosted a workshop, "Neng 能 (capacity / energy) and China's Long 1980s: A Re-evaluation." Over the course of the program, speakers explored the experiences and legacies of the "long 1980s" (1978-1992), the period when China experienced its state-led turn from central planning to a market approach to economic and social governance. Literary critic and novelist, Li Tuo, kicked off the event with a keynote lecture. Li's talk drew on his personal experience as a participant in formative intellectual conversations in the 1980s, and asserted the importance of distinguishing between two distinct movements—new enlightenment and intellectual liberation—when examining the contradictions and shifts in China's reform and opening. The following day, the workshop continued with four panels bringing together an interdisciplinary group of China scholars, including anthropologists, film and literature scholars, and historians. Topics of discussion included the afterlives of mining projects, environmental politics of Chinese religiosities, shifts in Chinese thinking on instincts and evolution, discussions of films concerned with mourning the death of Zhou Enlai, representations of linkages between the brain and human potentiality, and shifting understandings of nationalism and island utopias. The workshop concluded with a lively conversation exploring the intersections of the participants' varied approaches.

Later that week, November 1-3, the Institute welcomed a group of distinguished scholars from six Japanese universities and hosted a workshop titled "New Directions in Japanese Studies." The workshop began with the screening of a monochrome documentary film from the 1950s, Tsukinowa Tomb, likely marking the first time that the film has been shown in the United States. The second day of the workshop began with a keynote lecture by WEAI Senior Research Scholar, Harry Harootunian (Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago and New York University), "Reconsidering Historical Comparability." The workshop's afternoon panel was comprised of distinguished guests from Japan who shared their perspectives on new directions in Japanese Studies. Topics included representations of Karafuto after the Russo-Japanese War, the negotiation of identities by Japanese- and Korean-Americans during the Second World War, Nakagami Kenji in contemporary Japanese literature, and the challenges of "Reconciliation Studies" in contemporary Japan. On the final day of the workshop, a panel of graduate students presented their research. Professors Narita Ryūchi (Japan Women's University), Toba Köji (Waseda University), and Jordan Sand (Georgetown University) responded to the presentations and provided the students with feedback and advice.

Finally, the Institute's Modern Tibetan Studies program (MTS) organized a panel discussion entitled "Understanding Climate Change on the Tibetan Plateau: Environmental Conservation Research and Climate Science Approaches," on November 14. Recognizing that the Tibetan Plateau is both an enormously important source of water, biodiversity, and mineral resources for the Asian continent and one of the most sensitive areas to climate change due to its high altitude, the MTS program collaborated with Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory to convene this timely discussion. The interdisciplinary event brought together social science researchers working with Tibetan pastoralist communities in China and climate scientists expert on the Himalayas and Asia to discuss their research and how interdisciplinary approaches might enrich understandings of climate change on the Tibetan Plateau and contribute to knowledge about global climate change.

For more details about these events and a complete list of past and upcoming programming please visit: http://weai.columbia.edu/.



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Weatherhead East Asian Institute

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> **Director** Eugenia Lean

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DIRECTOR PROFILE

Eugenia Lean (2014-2017, 2018-present)



Director Lean (fourth from left) with WEAI faculty and staff in Indonesia in 2016, following a panel discussion titled "Competing Visions for Southeast Asian International and Domestic Politics." WEAI members were joined by Mari Pangestu, Former Minister of Trade and Former Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Republic of Indonesia (center).



Eugenia Lean

Weatherhead East Asian Institute. She has served since 2014, taking a sabbatical during the 2017-2018 academic year before resuming her position. As an expert on modern Chinese history, Professor Lean teaches China-related courses in the history of science, technology, and industry, as well as gender and affect, consumer culture, cultural theory, and historical methods. Professor Lean joined the Columbia faculty in 2002, after teaching at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She received her PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2001 and her undergraduate degree from Stanford University.

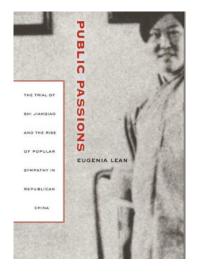
ugenia Lean is the 12th and current director of the

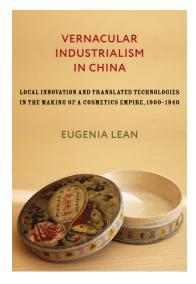
Professor Lean is the author of Public Passions: The Trial of Shi Jianqiao and the Rise of Popular Sympathy (2007), which was awarded the 2007 John K. Fairbank prize for the best book in modern East Asian history, presented by the American Historical Association. Her forthcoming book, Vernacular Industrialism in China: Local Innovation and Translated Technologies in the Making of a Cosmetics Empire, 1900-1940, will appear in 2020 from Columbia University Press and examines the manufacturing, commercial, and cultural activities of maverick industrialist Chen Diexian (1879-1940). Her current, third book project focuses on China's significant part in shaping 20th century global regimes of intellectual property rights, from trademark infringement to patenting science.

Professor Lean has received wide support for her work, including fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, Harvard University's Fairbank Center, the Institute for Advanced Studies, the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation, and a National Endowment of the Humanities grant. She was featured in "Top Young Historians," History News Network (fall 2008) and received the 2013-2014 Faculty Mentoring Award for faculty in Columbia's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. From 2015-2017 she was a Columbia University Provost Leadership Fellow.

During her directorship, Professor Lean oversaw the inauguration of the Dorothy Borg Research program at WEAI, which provides postdoctoral positions, collaborative grants, and graduate fellowships in the study of East Asia and US relations. She has led an ongoing initiative to increase the Institute's support of Southeast Asian studies at Columbia, with notable recent gains in both university and Institute commitment to Vietnamese studies. While supervising numerous doctoral students and maintaining a busy international conference schedule, Professor Lean has also worked to develop new ties and collaborations between the WEAI and other entities on campus, such as the professional schools as well as Departments and Centers throughout the Arts and Sciences. Most recently she has presided over this year's special 70th anniversary celebration of the Institute's seven decades of scholarship and leadership in East Asian studies.

In addition to her position as director of the Institute, Professor Lean is a member of the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department and Columbia's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Executive Committee, co-director of the Heyman Center Fellows Seminar, cosponsor of the Global History of Science Cluster, a member of the Steering Committee at the Center for Science and Society, and a current mentor for the Presidential Scholars in Society and Neuroscience. She is also an advisory editor of the Journal for the History of Knowledge by the Dutch Society for the History of Science.







Professor Lean addresses attendees at the Institute's 70th anniversary Lunar New Year reception.





y journey to the Oral History program and Columbia was almost accidental. I had been doing some social advocacy work in my home country, Vietnam. The organization that I founded, Human Library Vietnam, sought to bring in people of marginalized identities and engage with the public as human "books." My work there bore many resemblances to the practice of oral history, and when I found out that Columbia offers an Oral History Master's degree (OHMA) in something that resonates deeply with my work and ethics, I was immediately captivated. The program is truly unique; in fact, it is the first of its kind in the US and offers interdisciplinary education and training that will help me move forward in my career and activism. Moreover, Columbia is situated in New York, a city of wonderful people and opportunities, making it the perfect choice for me as a recent college graduate.

I have had a deep interest in Vietnamese Studies since I first came to the US as a 16-year-old. At that point, I began to develop an interest in history, but I realized that there was little to no mention of Asian history in my high school's curriculum. In college, I was a History major and East Asian Studies minor, yet I still felt like something was missing—there was only one seminar on Vietnamese history every two years, and the professor who taught that class was, in fact, an expert on Chinese history. This lack of representation and scholarly interest in Vietnam pushed me to focus on Vietnam for my graduate work in the Oral History Master's program at Columbia, from a perspective that goes beyond the Sinosphere of influence and considers a postcolonial framework. I want to contribute to the growth of Vietnamese Studies however I can, and my work at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, where I am helping to develop an oral history of the Institute, is a wonderful opportunity.

I knew about WEAI before I entered Columbia because of the Institute's incredible scholarship on East Asia and other parts of Asia, including Vietnam. My work with the Institute is part of my academic program, which allows me to bring my knowledge of oral history into practice by designing a large-scale project.

Thu Anh Le speaks with a reporter from Vietnam Television.

The Institute has introduced me to great people, including Professor Lien-Hang Nguyen, an amazing subject for my own oral history project, and opened my eyes to different ways to expand Vietnamese studies. My time at the Institute has also convinced me that WEAI deserves its own oral history. There is such a wealth of stories from everyone who has been involved with it over the years, and each personal anecdote is a part of the fascinating larger memory that should be preserved for generations to come. While the public milestones of the Institute's history are well documented, an oral history project will help fill in the gaps by preserving the unwritten, and by bringing years of individual and collaborative efforts to life.

I feel that I have a skill that is integral to both my academic work and my work here at WEAI—the ability to listen. I love to listen and believe that there is a crucial story within every single one of us.



Thu Anh Le holds a poster for a Human Library event.



Human books share their stories with groups from Human Library.

ON THIS MONTH IN 1988:

FOUNDING OF THE CENTER FOR KOREAN RESEARCH



The Center for Korean Research of the East Asian Institute, Columbia University

Organizing Activities

The Center for Korean Research was formally launched in November, 1988, with Professor Gari Ledyard as Director and Dr. Stephen Linton as Program Coordinator. Professor Ledyard has taught Korean language and history at Columbia for 25 years. Dr. Linton, long a resident of Korea and a graduate of Yonsei University, recently received his doctoral degree from Columbia University's Depart nent of Religion

The Center operates within Columbia's East Asian Institute, Prof. Gerald L. Curtis, Director, and within guidelines established by its five-member executive committee. In addition to Professors Curtis and Ledyard, the committee consists of Prof. Hugh Patrick, of the School of Business, Prof. Michael Young, of the School of Law; and Dr. Walter Slote, Senior Researcher at the East Asian Institute

The goals of the Center are to promote and develop Korean Studies at Columbia University by developing new courses on Korea, promoting research concerning Korea in all disciplines, sponsoring a regular Seminaro on Contemporary Korean Affairs, organizing other seminars and conferences, assisting Korean library development, and encouraging comparative research involving Korea within Columbia's large East Asian

The Center will initially operate with the aid of a \$500,000 gift from the Korean Committee for the Support of Korean Studies at Columbia, a group of Columbia University alumni in Korea chaired by Mr. Jun-Kyu Park, Democratic Justice Party Chairman and an alumnus of the Department of Political Science The Committee is made up of prominent businessmen and other public figures in Korea.

On January 10, Mr. Hong-Choo Hyun, Minister of Legislation of the Republic of Korea (Columbia Law alumnus) and Mr. Myoung-Soo Shin, President of the Dong Bang Corporation and Secretary-Treasure of the Support Committee (Columbia Business alumnus), visited the University and were received by President Michael I. Sovern.

The Seminar on Contemporary Korean Affairs

Columbia University for many years was the home of the Korea Seminar, a group which met monthly dur-ing the academic year to discuss various topics and themes within the field of Korean Studies. The new seminar is a continuation and expansion of the old one, with a sharper focus on contemporary Korean affairs and on economic and business activitiy

The Seminar was formally inaugurated on June 12, 1989, with a special dinner at New York's Lotos Club in honor of Dr. Hong-Koo Lee, Minister of Nationa Unification of the Republic of Korea. Minister Lee spoke on the unification policies of the Korean government and responded to questions posed by the au dience, which consisted of guests from the academic, business and professional communities.

The Seminar plans a series of six regular meetings a year, with additional special meetings as opportunities arise. The first meeting of the regular series took place on April 28, when Prof. Roy Kim, of Drexel University in Philadelphia, spoke on "Changing Relations en Moscow and Seoul.'

to Korean Film and Video Presentation Series

Preparations are now going forward for a series of Korean films to be shown at Columbia throughout the coming year. The Center will be announcing the fall program, which is being arranged by Program Coordinator Stephen Linton, as s







Korean Library Development

The Center for Korean Research will promote and encourage the development of Columbia's library resources. The C.V. Starr East Asian Library already has some 40,000 volumes of books in the Korean language, making it one of the leading collections in the United States. In addition to a well-developed collection in the fields of literature, history, and social science, the library is the home of the Hwasan Collec-tion, organized by the late Yi Song-ui, of late Choson dynasty (1392-1910) works on Korean literature history, and government institutions. The collection features a large number of the traditional movable-type editions for which Korea is famous.

An early project in this area has been to survey Columbia's library holdings in the field of Korean economy and business, both in the C.V. Starr Library and in the Business Library. The Center is undertak-ing to a strengthen these resources through the targeting of special needs and procurement through purchase gifts, and exchange

On June 15, 1989, the Center spon at the Saejip Restaurant in New York to honor Mr. Eugene Chai, who is retiring from his position as Director of the Korean Collection after 17 years with the University. He will be replaced by Ms. Amy Lee, who has long worked under Mr. Chai as well as in other divisions of the Starr Library.

Courses in Korean Studies

Columbia University has one of the oldest ongoing programs in Korean Studies, having begun instruc-tion in the Korean language in 1960, and offered courses in Korean history since 1963. Korean language courses are now offered on four levels and were attended by approximately 90 students during the past year. From time to time special courses have been ofed in other fields. In 1986-87, Professor Sung-joo Han, of Koryo University in Seoul, taught a course in Korean Politics and International Relations. In 1987-88, Professor Se-hee Yoo, of Hanyang University, offered two courses, one on Korean domestic Woo, a recent Ph.D. in Political Science at Columbia, offered a course on the politics of financial administration and economic development in the Republic of Korea.

In the coming year, the Center for Korean Research is sponsoring two special courses on Korea. The first, to be offered in the Fall within the Department of Political Science by Professor Roy Kim, visiting from Drexel University in Philadelphia, will be focused on north Korean politics and international relations. The second, a Spring offering, will be a course in the Department of Anthropology on Korean society and culture; it will be given by Dr. Laurel Kendall, Associate Curator of Asian Ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

In the future the Center plans to continue its spon





· Research Activities

As initial research activities, the Center has awarda grant allowing Dr. Stephen Linton to complete research for a book on the Korean civil religious tradition and the history of nationally supported education in morals and ethics. Dr. Linton will combine this ork with his other duties as Program Coordinator for

Dr. Han-hee Hong, a recent Ph.D. from Columbia's Anthropology Department, has been awarded a grant to continue her research on the history of land tenure relationships in the Kungsammyon area of South Cholla province.

Other proposals are in prepara-tion for separately funded research projects under the auspices of the Center. The Center is interested in receiving suggestions for serious and substantial research in Korean studies at least the control of the



Other Activities

During the Spring semester, the staff of the Center has contributed to the compilation of a report entitlon the New York State Department of Education by Dr. Robin Martin of the East Asian Institute. The report suggests ways to give Korea more visibility, and more accurate coverage, in secondary school social studies curriculums in New York State.

The Center has been the beneficiary of special Korean language software for its computers, given by Kyong Computer Systems, Inc., of Fort Lee, N.J., Mr. Il Soo Kim, President. The Center staff has been Mr. Il Soo Kim, President: The Center staft has been happy to render certain consuling services in exchange, including a system, called "Romaja Hangul," for inputing Hangul text by striking the ordinary roman letters on the keyboard. This system, now incorporated in Kyong's "PC Hangul" software (version 3.0), permits people who already know the touch system for western keyboards to input Hangul directly without learning the Korean keyboard configuration.

The Center had a number of visitors from Korea during the Spring term. In addition to Minister o

Legislation Hong-Choo Hyun, Minister of National Unification Hong-Koo Lee, and Dong Bang Corpora-tion President Myoung-Soo Shin, mentioned above the staff of the center benefitted from discussions with Dr. Yongsil Ch'oe, of the Department of Religion, Ewha University (March 13); Mrs. Kyungchun Kim, Director of the Kwangju Y.W.C.A. (April 5); Professor Mu-woong Lee of Dongguk University, and Dr. Ki-soo Han, of the Institute for Diplomatic and Security Studies, Seoul (both in April). Mr. Jong Su Kim, Director of the Center for International Studies, Pyongyang, DPRK, and three colleagues visited the Center on June 2.



With partial support from the Center, Professor Gari Ledyard was able to participate in the annual con-ference of the Association of Korean Studies in Europe, held in London, April 4 to 7. Both Prof. Ledyard and Dr. Linton participated in a symposium on the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in Washington on May 31. Prof. Ledyard also read papers at the conference on U.S.-Korea rela-tions, held at the Washington Institute, December 7-8, 1988, and at the conference on Korean art of the Eighteenth Century, sponsored by the Asia Society in New York, February 10-11, 1989.