

Hanna Holborn Gray Undergraduate Research Program

2016 Fellows

Claire Benham-Chandler, 2017

Linguistics

Morphosyntax of the Bangla Affix -ʈa

Abstract: The presentation provides a morphosyntactic description of the Bangla suffix -ʈa. Three major uses of -ʈa in the Bangla language are identified. Each of them is given a description which includes the nature of the construction, the distribution of the construction, and its general meaning or meanings. In counting, -ʈa takes the place often taken by classifiers in Chinese languages, but dependant on the numeral for its form rather than the noun, as in æk-ʈa mach 'one fish'. In the more general language, -ʈa carries definiteness and singularity, and is closely associated with the plural -gulo, filling in very similar slots to -gulo except where a semantic mismatch of plurality would occur. This -ʈa also has an alternate form -ʈi, which is associated with the honorific pronouns and verb forms of Bangla, but is very limited in occurrence. Finally, it occurs obligatorily as a marker of subject in comparative adjective constructions and locative constructions. Further routes of research are outlined at the end of the presentation.

Emily Drummond, 2017

Linguistics

Moraic Gemminates in Nukuoro

My research will take place in Pohnpei, Micronesia, where I will meet with native speaker consultants to continue research and documentation on the Nukuoro language, which I began in June 2015 at the NSF REU Linguistics Field School. For four weeks, I will elicit words and sentences in Nukuoro and document Nukuoro legends and ethnographic items. When I return to the United States, I will spend the remaining four weeks of my fellowship cataloguing, processing, and analyzing the data. I plan to use this data to write a grammatical analysis of the Nukuoro language, add as many new entries as possible to an existing online dictionary, and upload videos of Nukuoro folk tales to a platform accessible by the Nukuoro community.

Nina Fichera, 2017

Political Science

Japanese Homosexuality in Transition: from Tokugawa to Meiji

A study in shifting perceptions and presentations of homosexuality from Tokugawa to Meiji-era Japan. Modern popular ideas surrounding LGBT in Japan see the culture there as conservative and uncondusive to that kind of sexual freedom. However, Japan has a long history of

normalized bisexuality and homosexuality in many prominent historical figures. Much of this culture however, is believed to have stopped during the Meiji Reforms. My research will look into the relation of Meiji reforms in the changes of public perception and acceptance of homosexuality, first in looking at its status in the prior Tokugawa era, and then directly contrasted with its status in the Meiji era following the end of isolationism, political reform and Western religious and economic influence.

Hannah Henderson-Charnow, 2017

History

In Full Sun: The British Empire, its Naturalists, and the Contradictions of Marianne North

The Kew Gardens in London, England was the heart of a massive botanical knowledge network in late 19th century that spanned the British Empire. The rush for horticultural knowledge and the calculated movement of hybridized cash crops by the botanical gardens within the British Empire was a critical tool of imperial expansion, colonial status, and the mass dissemination of 'Britishness' and its opposite 'Otherness'. In my paper, I will look at a particular locus within this network: the botanical illustrator and celebrated woman traveler Marianne North. North's letters and travelogue expose a particular intersection of nationality, race, consumption, gender, power, and environment science. North demonstrated the ways in which femininity, whiteness, nationality, and knowledge were representational frames that when combined in the Victorian period and across the British Empire located a particular kind of subjectivity.

Lucia Herrmann, 2017

English

Trova: Cubanidad and the Poetic Chronicler

Music is a means of recording history and has the capacity to reflect various relationships in a country: that between the state and its citizens, the country and foreign counterparts, musicians/artists and the general public, and amongst the citizens themselves. In the Cuban context, artistic cultural spheres are spaces of permeable interaction between the state and social body. How does the musical form of la nueva trova and its contemporary legacy support Cuban identity in and as culture? How does the public respond to criticisms of their government couched in poetic allegory? How can this form of music develop intra and international communities? From understanding a deep love for Cuba and in particular the city of Havana to the darkest sense of disappointment that one could feel for your patria, trova songs encounter a broad spectrum of political and personal feeling. This project attempted to scratch the surface of the well.

Xiaomeng Hu, 2017

Sociology

The Involvement of ENGOs in Chinese Environmental Public-Interest Lawsuits

Becoming effective on 1 January 2015, the amended Chinese Environmental Protection Law clarified that environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) satisfying two conditions can file environmental public interest lawsuits. This amendment acknowledged the eligibility of over seven-hundred but only nine organizations actually participated in the legal proceeding in 2015. The proportion of organizations drew my initial attention to the latest development of Chinese environmental public-interest lawsuits and I wanted to examine the changing role of ENGOs and their levels of involvement in this legal proceeding. During the ten-week fieldwork in Beijing, China, I was able to reach out to seven ENGOs working in the field of environmental public-interest lawsuits and conducted nine formal interviews with their staff members. Informal conversations with other ENGO workers after the gathering were also helpful and informative. At the end, five major difficulties were summarized and the tension between the fighter ENGOs and the bystander ENGOs were elaborated in this study. I concluded that both the lack of explanatory details in the new environmental law and the incapability of collecting legal evidence for environmental damage greatly prevented ENGOs from working in public-interest lawsuits. Since ENGOs did not have legal rights to explain the words in the amended Law, oversee the ministry of environmental protection, and allocate the compensation fee, their effort into the environmental public interest lawsuits was still restricted by the court, the ministry of environmental protection, and the People's Procuratorates.

Mowa Li, 2017

Cities

Understanding Conflicts on Religious Sites in Changing Neighborhoods: A comparative study of Hong Kong and Philadelphia's Ecologies of Sacred Spaces

In historic religious sites located within changing neighborhoods fabrics, temporal divergences characterize different urban actors' sense of space/time and thus creates crisis when authorities try to enforce their sense of time within the sacred space. Under Lefebvre's theoretical background depicting cities as polychromic spaces with dynamic rhythms, the thesis provides a new perspective in understanding the conflict emerged surrounding the transforming religious spaces, and studies how the ecologies of religious sites respond to the changing neighborhood landscapes. The thesis utilizes ethnographical case studies in Hong Kong and Philadelphia's temple and churches to demonstrate the conflicts emerged among parishioners, religious institutions, preservation activists, and government authorities, whose different space-time perceptions reflects the essence of sacred spaces as temporal landscapes.

Tram Nguyen, 2017

Comparative Literature

Shaun Tan and Beyond the Picture Books: A Study of Surrealism and Surrealist Impulses in Australian Art

My summer research focuses on the inextricably constructed dialogue between words and images in the postmodern picture books of Shaun Tan, an internationally acclaimed Australian comic artist. While these books all explore the particular poignancy of displaced things/ people as well as feelings of alienation and self-estrangement in the context of the Australian landscape, each adopts a substantially different approach to telling a visual narrative. In my proposed research, I hope to address the following questions: How does Shaun Tan use the visual complexity of the picture book form in his works to meditate upon interior states of melancholy, depression and disconnection? How does his visual language, which engages postmodern discourse and historical and artistic references, address complex social and political themes (such as Australia's problematic history of colonial invasion, racial discrimination against immigrants and Aboriginal people, or the loss of indigenous heritage)?

Alison Robins, 2017

English

Beatings and Blazers: A Survey of Cruelty in New England Boarding School Literature

Taught as emblematic of the American adolescent experience, New England boarding school novels offer adolescents (including those not of elite class) but a glimpse into an ultra-privileged sphere without reciprocity. Through looking at a survey of these novels written post-World War II and primary documents from elite schools themselves, we come to see cruelty as a unifying factor in the rearing, stabilization, and perpetuation of an American aristocracy within the total institution. As a pedagogical tool in American public schools, New England boarding school novels instill a feeling of class stratification as they force voyeurism of the aristocratic class onto the proletariat with little to no hope to rise to the noble class of economic and political power.

Kristal Sotomayor, 2017

Comparative Literature

Translation of Chifa in El Barrio Chino in Lima, Peru

Over 150 years ago, Chinese immigrants started coming to Peru as contract workers to replace emancipated African slaves. Although Peru is home to the largest ethnically Chinese community in all of Latin America, little research has been conducted on Chinese influence in Peru. The importance of the Chinese diaspora in Peru is exemplified through a dish of chifa, or Chinese Peruvian cuisine, a staple in Peruvian national gastronomy. Through applying translation and post-colonial theory to the cultural interactions in a plate of chifa, ie. examining the historical influence of Chinese immigration and chifa cuisine's influence on Peruvian Spanish, chifa cuisine can be viewed as a medium that incorporates both Peruvian and Chinese cultures to

create a third regional cuisine, a hybrid sub-section of both cultures. In addition, as part of my research in El barrio Chino, or Chinatown, in Lima, Peru, I filmed interviews with chifa chefs and restaurant owners to document their oral history about the influence of chifa on the formation of Chinese-Peruvian identity.

Sydney Stotter, 2017

Russian

Women and the War Myth: Representations in Soviet WWII Cinema

This research examines the narrative of the “Great Patriotic War” and how it informs the depiction of women on Soviet film screens. This examination is not a study of the accuracy of how women’s experiences were represented, but how their image was appropriated in service of larger national and political purposes. Beginning with films produced during the war period and continuing through postwar retrospectives of the 1950s and beyond, this research surveys the canon and seeks to articulate a universal visual and narrative significance for women in the genre, one that situates itself within the larger context of Russian culture and history, as well as historical myth. Although female characters of the war genre appear in the diegesis as superficially active participants, the underlying pattern of the representation of women that emerges is as a passive tool in the reassertion of the traditions of Russian culture.

Juelun Wei, 2017

Cities

Uses and Meanings of Domestic Spaces in Shenzhen

What are the available housing types in Shenzhen? How do people use and perceive their living spaces in different housing types? How do internal migrants settle their new lives in a modern city? Using semi-structured interviews with local residents of Shenzhen and observation in their dwellings this summer, this research studies forms and variations of different domestic spaces in Shenzhen, as well as home-making practices by people in different social and economic status. Class culture difference is reflected by rituals and activities conducted in each domestic space; furthermore, under a completely modern setting, the sense of placelessness is having constraint on people’s perception and rituals, since the repetitive pattern of layout of each housing unit allows limited variation and creativity for people to attach their own meanings in their living spaces.