

**University of Hong Kong Summer
Institute in the Arts & Humanities**

**Symposium:
“The Appropriation of Chinese Nature
during the European Enlightenment”**



Date: 14 July 2009

**Venue: Convocation Room,
HKU Main Building, 2/F**

Supported by the Germany/Hong Kong Joint
Research Scheme of the German Academic
Exchange Service and the Research Grants Council,
Hong Kong, and by the HKU Summer Institute in the
Arts & Humanities.

Summary:

This symposium offers fresh perspectives on how Enlightenment Europe regarded Chinese nature and natural knowledge; during the Enlightenment the West did not consider itself superior to the East, but hoped instead to learn from Chinese natural knowledge. We look at some of the ways in which eighteenth-century Europe appropriated, understood, and used the natural resources and knowledge offered by China.

Programme:

10:00 am-1:00 pm: Morning session

10:00–10:15 am, Introductions: Professor Mark Elvin and Dr Alexandra Cook (HKU)

10:15-11:15 am, Session I: Chair, Dr Cook

Professor Mark Elvin
Heidelberg University:
"Reflections on Some Scientific Aspects of Our Current Understanding of Chinese History in Late Imperial Times"

11:15-11:30 am: Coffee break

11:30 am-1:00 pm, Session II: Chair, Professor Elvin

Dr Nicolas Robin
Friedrich Schiller University, Jena:
"Experiencing Chinese Nature circa 1800: the European Reception"

Andreas Christoph
Friedrich Schiller University, Jena:
"The Visual Appropriation of Chinese Geography and Cartography by the Geographical Institute of Friedrich Justin Bertuch"

1:00-2:30 pm, Lunch break

2:30-4:15 pm, Afternoon session

2:30-3:15 pm, Session III: Chair, Dr Robin

Dr Alexandra Cook
University of Hong Kong:
"Linnaeus, Chinese Flora, and 'linguistic imperialism'"

3:15-3:30 pm: Coffee break

3:30-4:15 pm, Session IV: Chair, Professor Elvin

Discussion, concluding remarks