Project Abstracts for PhD Student Recruitment AY2025/26

Department of Religion and Philosophy

Project title	The Theology and Social Role of Christian Organizations in Supporting Older Adults in Hong Kong whose Adult Children Migrated through the BN(O) Visa Scheme)	
Research Clusters	☐ Creative Media/Practice ☐ Health and Drug Discovery ☐ Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in X √ **Humanities and Cultures**	
Keywords	*Hong Kong Studies, Sociology of Religion, Practical Theology, Ethnography, Gerontology*	
Project abstract	The aim of this project is to determine how Protestant Christian social services and churches can facilitate the flourishing of older adults in midst of the trauma they face in the migration of their adult children and grandchildren to Britain through the British National (Overseas) visa scheme. Capturing the experiences and struggles of their left-behind elderly parents, as well as how Christian organisations can support them through this phase, will facilitate future policy making, such as how to care for and provide support to older adults who live by themselves in Hong Kong. This project will inform policymakers on how these organisations can contribute to reducing such societal costs.	***Dr CHU Ann Gillian*** *Email address:* *gillianchu@hkbu.edu.hk* *Learn more:* *http://gillianchu.com*

Project title	Interrogating Democratic Technologies	
Research Clusters	☐ Creative Media/Practice ☐ Health and Drug Discovery √ **Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in X** √ **Humanities and Cultures**	
Keywords	*Critical Theory of Technology, Andrew Feenberg, Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Lacan, Democratic Technology*	
Project abstract	I am examining Andrew Feenberg's notion of "democratic technology" through theoretical and practical studies, i.e., following a model of praxis. To begin with, I trace the Feenberg's assumptions through the work of Herbert Marcuse, especially how Marcuse's thought in Eros and Civilization may differ with a Lacanian framework. I am also bringing philosophers to Hong Kong to provide insights on democratic technology. On the practical side, I examine the extent to which democratic technology is enacted in the following cases: the crowd-sourced Fairphone, Hong Kong sex workers' use of CCTV to protect themselves, and environmental activists' engagement with AI firms.	***Dr CHECKETTS Levi Mahonri*** *Email address:* *checketts@hkbu.edu.hk* *Learn more:* *https://levichecketts.academia.edu/*

Project title	Transnational History and Chinese Christianities

Research Clusters	☐ Creative Media/Practice ☐ Health and Drug Discovery ☐ Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in X √ **Humanities and Cultures**	
Keywords	*Chinese Christianities, Transnationalism, Chinese Diaspora, Identity Construction, Religion and Society*	
Project abstract	Protestant Christianity, for China, is a religion from outside. But, the relationship between Protestantism and Chinese people is not only in one-way direction. Because Chinese Christians are all over the world, they make Chinese Christianity a transnational phenomenon. The complex relational matrix makes Chinese Christian churches a multifarious nexus of relationship in transnational religious and socio-cultural exchanges. The present research aims at investigating the characteristics of transnational exchanges of Chinese Christians and their socio-cultural impacts through transnational history of organizations and actors.

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Project title	Prenatal Ontology: A 4-Dimensionalist Approach to the Metaphysics of Pregnancy	
Research Clusters	☐ Creative Media/Practice ☐ Health and Drug Discovery ☐ Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in X √ **Humanities and Cultures**

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| **Keywords** | *Person, personal identity, metaphysics of pregnancy, prenatal ontology, epistemic justice* | |
| **Project abstract** | Explorations on the ontology of human development and emerging personhood are remarkedly underdeveloped. This groundbreaking project fills the niche by investigating what it is to be and to become:
(1)　　What is the ontological status of a developing fetus – a potential/actual person, an organ, an organism?
(2)　　What is the ontological status of a pregnant woman? Is she herself? What autonomy and rights (epistemic and otherwise) should she claim for her body?
(3)　　Does the mother 'contain' a fetus like housing a tenant? Or is the fetus literally part of the mother? If so, what kind of parthood is involved? | |

Project title	Diverse Intelligences: Minds, Meanings, and Machines
Research Clusters	☐ Creative Media/Practice ☐ Health and Drug Discovery ☐ Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence in X √ **Humanities and Cultures**
Keywords	*Philosophy, Natural Intelligence, Artificial Intelligence, Life, Mind*
Project abstract	The project is a transdisciplinary ethical and theoretical study of artificial vs. human intelligence. What is the difference, if any, between human and artificial minds? New competencies from hybrid forms of life and technologies emerge daily, blurring the line between manifestations of intelligence observed in familiar human contexts vs. those happening in other-machine, unusual, and imaginative contexts. In this project, we explore the full range of meanings of novel and emerging competencies and defects at they appear in unusual problem-solving contexts ranging from minimal minds/brains to the quantum and cosmic scales of the universe.

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