

THE IRON SKELETON AND THE IMPERIAL SKIN: MATERIALITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MODERNITY IN COLONIAL HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE



The Clyde Terrace Market under construction in 1870". (Collection of the National Archives, CO1069/484)

- Date:** 10 October 2023 (Tuesday)
- Time:** 7:00pm - 8:30pm
- Speaker:** Dr. Ian Tan
PhD in Architecture at the University of Hong Kong
- Venue:** By online media - ZOOM
- CPD Points:** 1.5 CPD credit hours
- Language:** English
- Fee:** Free admission for all. Please visit the HKICON website for registration:
<https://member.hkicon.org/events/20231010/>

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About the CPD Talk:

This presentation sums up Ian's five-year research on the history of iron architecture in colonial-era Hong Kong and Singapore. It aims to not only understand the material's circulation between Britain and these two imperial outposts and its effects on local building practices and culture, but the extent to which it catalysed broader movements of physical objects, building expertise, and architectural practices around the imperial British sphere between the late 19th through the early 20th centuries.

His research explores how iron served as a key material component in structures beyond those typically considered as constitutive of the built environment, including quotidian infrastructure such as lighthouses, quarantine stations, godowns for storage, markets, as well as religious and cultural edifices such as churches and printing houses. These iron structures, as Ian's study argues, emerged as a crucial mediator between different constituencies of colonial societies, such as between native merchants and colonial administrators, foreign missionaries, and their local congregations, as well as Western-trained building professionals and Asian craftsmen, among other relationships.

About the Speaker:

Ian Tan recently completed his PhD in Architecture at the University of Hong Kong. He previously worked at One Bite Design Studio, an architecture-based design company that bridges the gap between place and people through placemaking, community engagement, and design research. He holds professional membership in architectural and heritage organisations such as SIA, ULI, IHBC, ICOMOS, and ICOM. He is currently apprenticing as a welder.
