

19TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON ASIAN STUDIES

TRUTHS, TENSIONS, TECHNOLOGIES



Department
of Asian Studies

Faculty of Arts
Palacký University Olomouc



CONFERENCE GUIDE

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WELCOME TO ACAS 2025

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the **19th Annual Conference on Asian Studies (ACAS)**, organized by the Department of Asian Studies at Palacký University Olomouc. The theme of this year's edition is **"Truths, Tensions, Technologies"**. The conference thus explores various questions related to truths, tensions, and technologies, as they are reflected in cultures, societies, languages, and histories of Asia, through various theoretical, methodological, and (inter)disciplinary approaches.

It consists of 31 sessions and a keynote lecture. The organized panels and individual papers scheduled to be presented at these sessions address a wide variety of issues, ranging from colonial regimes, political crises, the Anthropocene, and surveillance, to cultural clashes, artistic representation, and foreign language teaching. Seven of the sessions are dedicated to presentations by graduate and doctoral students. Papers in these sessions are characterized by high topical diversity, as they do not need to deal with issues related to the conference theme.

The conference takes place in the Faculty of Arts building at tř. Svobody 26, Olomouc, where the Department of Asian Studies is located. Sessions (with the exception of Sessions 2D, 3D, and 7D) will be livestreamed via Zoom, allowing the audience to access the conference for free from anywhere in the world. Please do not hesitate to invite your colleagues, students, and friends to join us. All they need to do is register using the form available on the conference website (or p. 10 in this guide).

There are over 100 active participants taking part in the conference this year. While several speakers will join us remotely, the majority will be present on site. We hope that the conference will serve not only as an occasion to present one's research and learn about others', but also as a time filled with fruitful exchange, critical engagement, and serendipitous encounters for scholars and students from all corners of the Asian Studies field and beyond. If you wish to explore the city while you are here, consider joining us for a free guided walking tour of Olomouc on Friday evening.

We look forward to thoughtful discussions and appreciate your participation. We also hope to see you at ACAS again next year!

The Organizers

ORGANIZER

The **Annual Conference on Asian Studies** (ACAS) is organized by the Department of Asian Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc. The first conference in this series took place in 2006. Originally called the Annual Conference on Cultural and Social Anthropology of East Asia, it changed its name in 2016 to reflect its broadening span in terms of both regions and disciplines.

We issue the Call for Papers every year in spring, while the conference takes place in November. Each year we dedicate the conference to a different general theme.

Annual Conference on Asian Studies: www.acas.upol.cz

Department of Asian Studies: www.kas.upol.cz/en

Palacký University Olomouc: www.upol.cz/en

Instagram/Facebook: @kasffup | Katedra asijských studií FF UP

Palacký University Olomouc is a university with a long-standing tradition. Founded in 1573, it is the oldest university in Moravia and the second-oldest university in the Czech Republic. Nowadays, it is a modern higher education and research facility with about 23,000 students enrolled at its eight faculties. It offers a wide range of study programs as well as copious scientific and other academic and community engagement activities.





The **Department of Asian Studies** at Palacký University Olomouc, established in 1993, specializes in the area studies of Asia. Its teaching and research activities focus on the languages, cultures, and societies of China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. The Department offers undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate degree programs, and it is one of the largest departments in the Faculty of Arts, with approximately 500 students currently enrolled. While it remains one of the youngest departments at Palacký University, interest in Asia at the university dates back to its founding by the Jesuit order in the 16th century, when Jesuits recruited talented individuals for missionary work in Asia and the New World.



Organizing Team of the 19th ACAS

Halina Zawiszová (chair)
Monika Arnez
Valentina Gamberi
Petr Janda
Martin Lavička
Vít Ulman

Assisted by student assistants and colleagues from the department.

Scientific Committee

Monika Arnez
Youngran Bastanova Kwak
Martin Blahota
Renata Czekalska
Valentina Gamberi
Yuan Gao
Alfred Gerstl
Jan Hornát
Julie Yu-Wen Chen
Lisa Indraccolo
Martina Jemelková
Marketa Koklarova
Michal Kolmas
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Filip Kraus
Jiří Krejčík

Ondřej Kučera
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Petra Lee
Stanislav Myšíčka
Jakub Otčenášek
Martin Petlach
Dominik Proch
Klara Schwarzova
Joanna Ut Seong Sio
Tereza Slamenikova
Giorgio Strafella
Kateřina Šamajová
Jana Švábová
Richard Turcsanyi
Vít Ulman
Lenka Vyletalova
Halina Zawiszová

VENUE

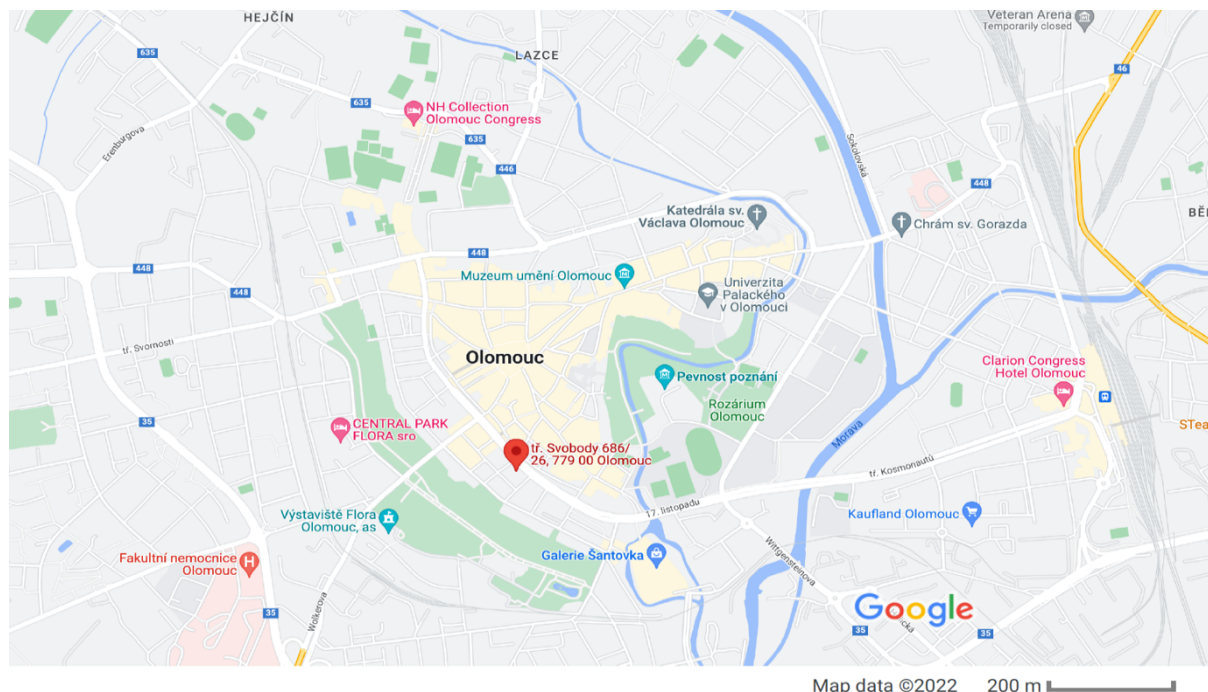
The conference takes place in **Olomouc**, Czech Republic.

Olomouc is the historical capital of Moravia and the administrative center of the Olomouc Region, often considered one of Europe's hidden gems. Known for its magical atmosphere and abundant greenery, the city boasts the second-largest concentration of well-preserved historical monuments in the Czech Republic. With a population of about 100,000, it is the country's sixth-largest city. Olomouc is also widely known as a student city due to its high proportion of students relative to the local population. For more information, see: <https://tourism.olomouc.eu/en/>.

You can join us for a **guided walking tour of Olomouc** on **Friday 21 November**. If you are interested, please let us know at the Registration Desk and meet us in front of Room 2.40 at 5:15 PM. Together, we will admire the Baroque elegance of the Lower Square, with its vibrant facades and stunning fountains; the majestic Church of Saint Michael, with its grand dome; Jesuit College, with its beautiful courtyard; the unique Olomouc Astronomical Clock, a captivating landmark; and much more. Each stop offers a glimpse into the city's rich architectural heritage and timeless beauty. The tour will end at the Upper Square, where you can enjoy the Christmas market.



The conference takes place on the university grounds at **tr. Svobody 26, 779 00 Olomouc** (Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/Bq3QTB4Grjm4wLt98>). After you enter the building, take the stairs to the **2nd floor**. If you require accessible access, please contact us at acas@upol.cz.



The conference venue is located within walking distance from the historic center of the city, with its many cafes, restaurants, hotels, and monuments. The nearest tram and bus stops are **Tržnice** and **Okresní soud**. You can find more on travel to as well as within Olomouc on our website (http://acas.upol.cz/practical_info/transport/).



ROOMS

All rooms are located on the **2nd floor**. The room numbers are listed in the program (https://kas.upol.cz/files/users/123/ACAS_PROGRAM_2025.pdf) and correspond to the session numbers (i.e., session 1A takes place in Room A, etc.).

Room A: 2.56

Room B: 2.43

Room C: 2.44

Room D: 2.64

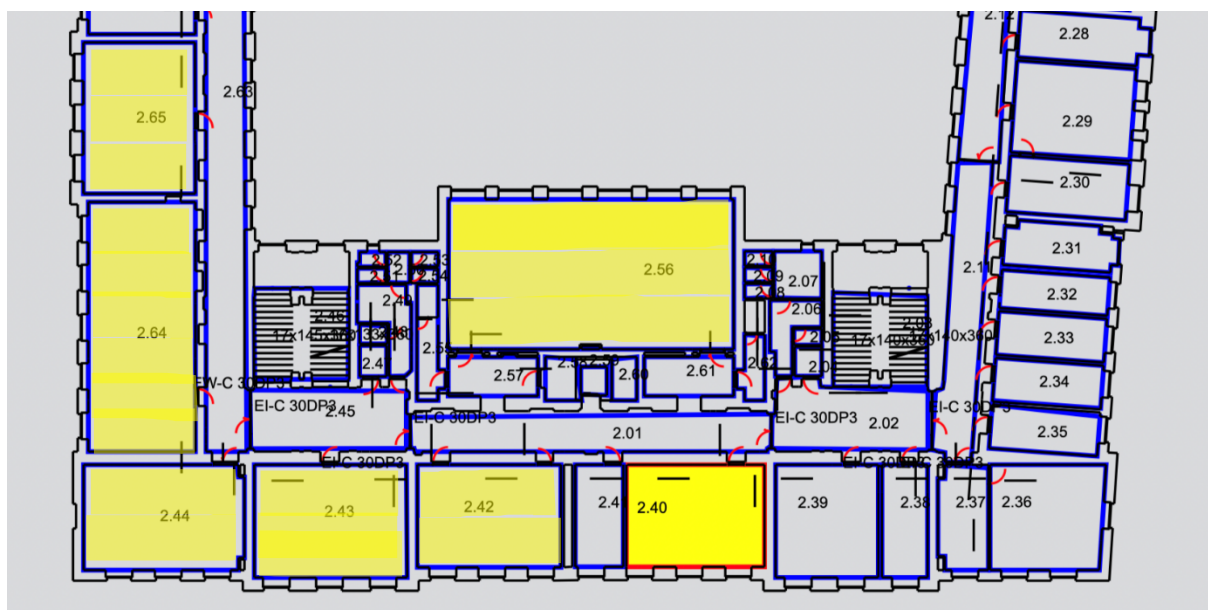
Room E: 2.65

The **Registration Desk** and **Book Table** will be located outside Room 2.40.

The **refreshments** will be served in **Room 2.40**, but please use also **Room 2.42** as well as any of the available conference rooms to enjoy your snack and lunch time.

WiFi is available via Eduroam network as well as a university guest account.

Online presenters have received **links to the Zoom livestreams** via e-mail.



PRESENTING

There is 30 minutes scheduled for each paper. This should ideally include **20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for Q&A and discussion.**

Onsite presenters

Please **come to the room about 10 minutes prior** to the time when the session you are a part of is scheduled to start to **upload your presentation onto the computer** in the room and check that everything works. There will be a Student Assistant present to help you. Please note that because of technical reasons we do not allow speakers to connect their own notebooks to the system.

Online presenters

To ensure that everything goes smoothly, **we require all online presenters to pre-record their talk** (e.g., using a Zoom meeting) **and send us the video by Nov. 19.**

Please **join the livestream of the Room in which your talk is scheduled about 10 minutes prior** to the time when the session you are a part of is to start to test your microphone, camera, and the recorded talk together with the technical support who will be present in the room.

During the session, you can first say hi and give a short introduction to your talk, then the technical support in the room will play the pre-recorded talk, which should be up to 20 minutes long. After the talk, there should be about 10 minutes left for the Q&A and discussion.

AUDIENCE

Anyone can join the conference as an **online audience member**. Invite your friends, colleagues, and students to participate! The conference will be streamed in full via Zoom.

The links to the livestreams will only be shared with those who register. The **registration form** is available here: <https://forms.gle/a1QxMZns22NxPBub6>. It will close on 19 November. Please remember that the times provided in the program are **in CET** (Central European Time, Prague, UTC +1).



PROGRAM

The times are in the event time zone, i.e., in **Central European Time (CET)**.

Registration Opens

08:30 | Room 2.40

Welcoming Remarks

09:00–09:15 | Room A | 2.56

Halina Zawiszová, František Kratochvíl

Keynote Speech

09:15–10:15 | Room A | 2.56

Monika Arnez: *Making Truths: How Technologies Shape What We Believe*

Break

10:15–10:30

Session 1A Contested Truths in Colonial Regimes and Discourses

10:30–12:30 | Room A | 2.56

- *Truths about 'opening' Asia*, Ferenc Takó (Eötvös Loránd University)
- *Competing Truths and Colonial Technologies: Economic Knowledge, Governance, and Social Memory in Japanese-Occupied Manchuria*, Yue Cui (University of Leeds)
- *Colonial Student Writers on the Tram: Korean Women's Engagement with Seoul's Public Transportation, 1935–1939*, Nathan Tillman (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)
- *The Conquest of Samarkand by the Russian Empire in 1868: colonial and indigenous discourses*, Azim Malikov (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 1B Political Tensions in Asia

10:30–12:00 | Room B | 2.43

- *Towards a Neo-New Order? Reassessing Embedded Authoritarian Legacies in Indonesia's Democratic Regression*, Tomáš Petrů (Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences)
- *Political Scandal in Japan*, Igor Prusa (Ambis University Prague)
- *All in the Family: Political Dynasties and The Failed Fantasies of Electoral Democracy in the Philippines*, Raimondo Neironi (Università di Cagliari)

Session 1C Truths and Tensions in Japanese History

10:30–12:30 | Room C | 2.44

- *Historical Truth and Diplomatic Fiction: Rethinking Hostage Exchange, Marriage Alliances, and Tributes in ancient Japan-Korea Relations*, Marianna Lázár (Károli Gáspár University)
- *Tensions under the surface: 14th century Japan in the Kūgenikkushū diary*, Vít Ulman (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Tension and Dialectic Displacement in Japanese Historical Narrative: Reconsidering Kiso Yoshinakaron in a Framework of Universalization*, Damaso Ferreira Posse (University of Tsukuba)
- *Tensions among Japanese Mathematicians of the Edo Period*, Tomáš Vitvar (Charles University)

Session 1D Teaching and Learning Languages

10:30–12:00 | Room D | 2.64

- *Tensions of Desire, Anxiety, and Identity in Japanese Language Education*, Giordano Stocchi (Università di Napoli "L'Orientale")
- *The Roles of Audiobook Co-Production as a Tool for Japanese and Thai Students Learning and Cultural Exchange*, Oradol Kaewprasert (University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce); Sunisa Wittayapanyanon Saito (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies); Anencha Klinkesorn (University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce)
- *A Study on Interpersonal Communication between Czechs and Taiwanese in the Context of Second Language Teaching*, Michaela Zahradníková, Yixuan Jandová Chen (Palacký University Olomouc) (Alternative Format)

Session 1E Student Session: Politics and International Relations

10:30–12:30 | Room E | 2.65

- *Adults in the Loop: The Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian War on Diplomatic Relations Between the EU and Indonesia*, David Broul, Antonín Nenutil (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Digital Populism in Taiwan: Nature, Causes, and Media Strategies – A Comparative Study of Han Kuo-yu and Ko Wen-je*, Chenxi Shen (City University of Hong Kong)
- *Ideational Challenges to the US-Led Order: The Case of China's Soft Power in Pakistan*, Shirin Naseer (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Decoding China's Reactions to Contemporary Nuclear Tensions*, Shoval Ben Yair (Reichman University)

Lunch Break

12:00–13:30 | Rooms 2.40, 2.42

Session 2A Truths, Tensions, and Technologies in Medical Anthropology

13:30–15:00 | Room A | 2.56

- *Diasporic Dissonance: Chinese Women Navigating Culture, Labor, and Belonging*, Helen Hess (University of Zurich)

- *Between Systems: Navigating Healthcare as a Russian Migrant in China*, Ekaterina Ryzhova, Natalia Ryzhova (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Use of Natural Psychoactive Substances in East and Southeast Asia*, Kateřina Šamajová, Natálie Kubičínová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 2B Studies in Language

13:30–15:00 | Room B | 2.43

- *Menu Mysteries: Navigating the Tension Between Language and Culture in Gastronomy*, Isaac Yue (University of Hong Kong)
- *Translation of Chinese and Latvian Classics with the help of AI Tools*, Agita Baltgalve (University of Latvia)
- *Creating Romance or Conflict? Reactions to Hybridized Honorifics in Korean*, Youngran Bastanova Kwak (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 2C The Truths and Tensions Produced by Vietnamese Migration Industry (Part 1) (Organized Panel)

13:30–15:00 | Room C | 2.44

- *From Debt-Financed Migration to the Quest for a 'Good Life on Credit': The Interplay of Debt and Migration in Vietnam*, Nicolas Lainez (French Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
- *Someone else's dreams before yours: discourse about financing labour migration on social media in Vietnam*, Le Phuong Linh (Fulbright University Vietnam)
- *Gendered tensions and technologies in the nail salon: male Vietnamese manicurists in the UK*, Seb Rumsby (University of Birmingham)

Session 2D Czech Association of Contemporary Asian Studies Meeting (1)

13:00–15:50 | Room D | 2.64

- 13:00–13:05 | *Welcome speech*, Martina Varkočková (Metropolitan University Prague), Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)
- 13:05–13:50 | *Book promotion: Ukrajina mimo Západ [Ukraine outside the West]*, Slavomír Horák (Charles University), Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)
- 14:00–14:50 | *Book promotion: Encyclopedia Tyrannica [A Research Guide to Authoritarianism]*, Jeroen Van den Bosh (Adam Mickiewicz University), Slavomír Horák (Charles University), Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)
- 15:00–15:50 | CACAS Assembly

Session 2E Student Session: Linguistics (1)

13:30–15:00 | Room E | 2.65

- *Reduplication in Singlish*, Valerie Madeova; Joanna Sio (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Beauty of Language in Four Characters: Study of Chengyu in Literary Translations into Spanish*, Jiayue Lyu (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona)

- *The process and challenges of translating Korean webtoons into Czech*, Eliška Karbanová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Coffee Break

15:00–15:30 | Rooms 2.40, 2.42

Session 3A Ethnographies of Truths, Tensions, and Technologies

15:30–17:00 | Room A | 2.56

- *Views from above; views from below – The emotional politics of non-military drone practices, two cases from Malaysia and Thailand*, Monika Arnez (Palacký University Olomouc), Irene Stengs (VU Amsterdam)
- *Plastic waste, digital media, and the pandemic: Shifting worlds and values of the circular economy in Indonesia*, Lukas Fort (University of Copenhagen)
- *Performing the Anthropocene: Perspectives from China and Taiwan*, Maciej Szatkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University)

Session 3C The Truths and Tensions Produced by Vietnamese Migration Industry (Part 2) (Organized Panel)

15:30–17:00 | Room C | 2.44

- *Becoming 'Proper Vietnamese': Language and Cultural Socialization of Young Vietnamese Children in the Czech Republic*, Mai Thi Thu (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *The influence of third parties on partner choice of second generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic*, Pham Thu Huong (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Vietnamese Society and its Diaspora: The Interplay between the Sociocultural Normative Discourses in Vietnam and Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic*, Filip Kraus (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 3D Czech Association of Contemporary Asian Studies Meeting (2)

16:00–17:00 | Room D | 2.64

- *Session on publishing*, Richard Turcsanyi (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 3E Student Session: Linguistics (2)

15:30–17:00 | Room E | 2.65

- *The categorization(s) of Vietnamese spelling variations in computer-mediated communication*, Marcin Nowacki (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan)
- *Unlocking Korean Through Hanja*, Kristina Folvarcna (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Lists and Co-speech Gesture in Japanese*, Sofie Ljuboňka (Charles University)

Free Walking City Tour

17:15–18:15 | Guide: Jana Švábová

- Register at the Registration Desk

Saturday 22 November

Session 4A Economic and Political Strategies

9:00–10:30 | Room A | 2.56

- *Bridging the Research Divide: Platform Economy and the Future of Work Policy in Asia's Middle Income Countries*, Viddy Ranawijaya (University of Erfurt)
- *The Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem in China. Policies, Actors, and Applications to Strategic Sectors*, Marco Bonaglia (Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa)
- *Tensions and Potentials of Regional Environmental Collaboration Manifestations in East Asia*, Aysun Uyar Makibayashi (Doshisha University)

Session 4B Truths and Social Tensions in South Asia

8:30–10:30 | Room B | 2.43

- *Counting Backwards? Caste Census, OBC Politics, and the Struggle for Representation in North India*, Jiří Krejčík (Metropolitan University Prague)
- *Soft Tongues, Strong Words: Gendered and Classed Truths in the Urdu-Hindi Divide in Medieval North India*, Astik Mukherjee (Presidency University)
- *Dependency on Native Brokers in Migration from the Indian Subcontinent from Colonial Times to the Present: The Case of Dālāl(s) in Bangladesh*, Zbynek Mucha (Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences)
- *Sacred Truths and Social Tensions: Spirituality, Gender Performance, and the Politics of Hijra Identity in Pakistan*, Hyder Ali (Supreme Court of Pakistan)

Session 4C Truths and Tensions in Japanese Arts and Media

8:30–10:30 | Room C | 2.44

- *Hidden in Plain Sight: Utagawa Kuniyoshi and the Visual Politics of Late Edo Japan*, Adéla Tůmová (Národní muzeum)
- *Navigating Cultural Tensions: Zainichi Korean Portrayals in Late 20th Century Japanese Film*, Eugenio De Angelis (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)
- *Invisible Violence and Remembered Bodies: Reiko Shimizu's The Top Secret and Yasuo Kazuki's Siberia Series*, Mami Fujiwara (Yamaguchi University)
- *Human Participation in Digital Justice System: Exploring the Concept of "Human in the Loop" in Psycho Pass (2013)*, Phuong Pham (Independent Scholar)

Session 4D Gender, Identity, and the Corporeal in Asia (Book Launch and Roundtable)

8:30–10:00 | Room D | 2.64

- *Embodied Entanglements: Gender, Identity, and the Corporeal in Asia* (Olomouc Asian Studies, Vol. 3), Halina Zawiszová, Giorgio Strafella,

Martin Lavička (Palacký University Olomouc); participating authors: Keiko Aiba, Roberto Riccardo Alvau, Liudmila Bredikhina, Marianna Lázár, Daniela Licandro, Novidayanti, Verita Sriratana, Giorgio Strafella, Christine Vial Kayser, Fengyuan Zhen (Alternative Format)

Session 4E Student Session: Space, Time, and Societies

8:30–10:30 | Room E | 2.65

- *Electrifying Inequality: Power, Progress, and Privilege in Travancore through the Lens of Oridathu*, Grace Johns (Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit)
- *A Legacy of Isolation – Quantifying Socio-Economic Disparities between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Areas of Taiwan*, Petra Nepozitkova (National Chengchi University)
- *Historical Narratives and Digital Media in Shaping Chinese Tourism at Lake Baikal*, Iuliia Koreshkova (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Looking for God: The Journey of Becoming a New Person through Faith in God in Contemporary Hanoi*, Tuyen Van Le (Palacký University Olomouc)

Coffee Break

10:30–11:00 | Rooms 2.40, 2.42

Session 5A Geopolitics

11:00–13:00 | Room A | 2.56

- *Resistance, Resonance, and Reciprocity: A Trilateral Agency Framework*, James Iocovozzi (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *U.S. Coast Guard Diplomacy and Vietnam–U.S. Maritime Security Cooperation in Addressing Sea Level Rise and Ocean Current Shifts: A Climate Geopolitics Perspective*, Van Sang Nguyen (The University of Danang)
- *Hedging in Southeast Asia: Central and Eastern Europe's Role in Mitigating Regional Tensions*, Alfred Gerstl (Central European Institute of Asian Studies)
- *Green Belt and Road Initiative in Central Asia: the scrutiny and policy implications*, Elzbieta Pron (University of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of Political Science)

Session 5B Forms of Surveillance and Restraints in Asia

11:00–13:00 | Room B | 2.43

- *The Daily Burden and the securitization of migration: Lived Experiences of Rohingyas in South Asia*, Monika Verma (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Governing Through Grids and Mobile Apps: Digital Platforms and the Management of Interethnic Relations in Xinjiang*, Alessia Orazzo (Xi'an Jiaotong - Liverpool University)
- *Harmony or Dystopia? Realities on the ground in XUAR, methodology, epistemology and ethics*, Rune Steenberg (Palacký University Olomouc)

- *Anti-communism, anti-intellectualism and censorship practices in claims on North Korean human rights: Tracing general patterns through one recent example*, Martin Weiser (Free University Berlin)

Session 5C Re-discovery of Japan in East Central Europe after 1945 (Organized Panel)

11:00–13:00 | Room C | 2.44

- *Perceptions of Japan through literary translations: “progressive” society?*, Mária Ildikó Farkas (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)
- *A “kabuki play” as a tool of implicit criticism in Communist Hungary*, Petra Doma (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)
- *Introducing Japanese martial arts: philosophy in question*, Angelika Pataki-Tóth (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)
- *The effects of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics on the perceptions of Japan*, Noémi Szabó (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)

Session 5E Student Session: Linguistics (3)

11:00–12:30 | Room E | 2.65

- *Japanese psychomimes and their phonological characteristics*, Klára Březinová (Charles University)
- *How Southeast Asian Languages Challenge Metaphor Theories: A Case Study of Muna in Indonesia*, Rahmatan Idul (Leiden University); Marian Klamer (Leiden University); Aletta Dorst (Leiden University)
- *Lexical and Semantic Analysis of feitian (飛天): A Cross-Study of Buddhist Scriptures and Daoist Texts*, Wen Xueyu (Ghent University)

Lunch Break

13:00–14:00 | Rooms 2.40, 2.42

Session 6A Truths, Tensions, and Small-State Agency: Central Europe’s Engagement with Taiwan (Organized Panel)

14:00–15:30 | Room A | 2.56

- *Discreet Diplomacy: Slovakia’s Quiet Pivot Toward Taiwan in the 2020s*, Kristína Kironská (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Contesting Truths, Managing Tensions: Lessons from the Czech Senate’s Taiwan Mission*, Renata Westlake (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Taiwan and the Czech Republic’s Relationship Through the Lense of Its Soft Power Processes*, Klára Schwarzová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 6B Storytelling Technologies: Changing Landscapes and Mythologies in Southeast Asia (Organized Panel)

14:00–15:30 | Room B | 2.43

- *How to (Re)Build a Palace: Storytelling, Architecture and Monarchy in Jogja, 2025*, Jan Mrázek (National University of Singapore)

- *The River Tells a Different Story: Nrima (Acceptance) as Soft Resistance in Yogyakarta*, Preciosa De Joya (Singapore University of Social Sciences)
- *Kensiu Cultural Storytelling amid Environmental Destructions*, Said Effendy Bin Said Iziddin (University of Cambridge)

Session 6C Multilayered Vernacularization of Civil Society, Democracy, and Nationalism in Vietnam (Organized Panel)

14:00–15:30 | Room C | 2.44

- *The Transplant and Localization of Civil Society as a Political Concept in Vietnam*, Thiem Bui (Malmö University, Stockholm Center for Global Asia)
- *Toward a Vietnamese Conception of Democracy*, Hong Do (Central European University)
- *The Power of Staying Put: Khmer Krom Epistemologies and the Politics of Rootedness in South Vietnam*, An Nguyen (University of Vienna, Ghent University)

Session 6E Student Session: Rebellion, Perseverance, and Dissent

14:00–15:30 | Room E | 2.65

- *Widowhood and Sectarian Power in the White Lotus Rebellion*, Pavel Brada (Charles University)
- *Contemporary Lengger Mask Dance and Its Perseverance in the Wonosobo Context*, Musokhib Musokhib (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *National Truths and Political Tensions: A Comparative Study of Dissent in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan (1985–1992)*, Jan Brzobohatý (Palacký University Olomouc)

Coffee Break

15:30–16:00 | Rooms 2.40, 2.42

Session 7A Asia Seen from Europe

16:00–17:30 | Room A | 2.56

- *Pockets of positive attitudes towards China within the EU: The cases of Czechia, Latvia, and Greece*, Richard Turcsanyi (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Preliminary Study on the Portrayal of the Belt and Road Initiative in Slovak Periodicals*, Maria Istvanova (Slovak Academy of Sciences)
- *Cross-Cultural Human Capital Management: A Study of Polish-Japanese Enterprises and Central European Economic Power*, Olga Barbasiewicz (SWPS University)

Session 7B Poetry as Social Technology in Medieval East Asia (Organized Panel)

16:00–17:30 | Room B | 2.43

- *Framing the Feminine Poetic Persona: 'Truth' by Editorial Technologies and the Imperial Anthologies' Representations of Saikū no Nyōgo*, Samantha Audoly (University of Bologna)

- *Romance or Politics? Tensions Between Alternative Views of Life in Liu Yong's Erotic Song Lyrics*, Massimiliano Canale (University of Naples "L'Orientale")
- *Historical Truths, Narrative Tensions: Reframing Poetry as Social Technology at the Koryŏ Court*, Dario Minguzzi (Sapienza University of Rome)

Session 7D Using VR in Teaching Chinese Classics (Workshop)

16:00–17:30 | Room D | 2.64

- *Using Collaborative Virtual Reality in Chinese Language Teaching*, Wei-lun Lu (Masaryk University) (Alternative Format)

Session 7E Student Session: Arts and Media

16:00–17:30 | Room E | 2.65

- *From Assemblage to Archive: Posthuman Embodiment in the Work of Jeong Geumhyung*, Veronika Veselková (Palacký University Olomouc)
- *Cultural Tension: Japanese Architecture in Europe*, David Vaculík (Brno University of Technology)
- *Violence in South Korean High Schools: Representations in TV-Dramas*, Eva Svobodova (Palacký University Olomouc)

ABSTRACTS

Abstracts are ordered by sessions, from Session 1A to Session 7E. The texts as well as names and affiliations are reproduced here exactly as they were submitted by the authors.

Keynote Speech

Making Truths: How Technologies Shape What We Believe

Monika Arnez (Palacký University Olomouc)

With the advent of generative AI that enables deceased heroes to appear as if they are speaking, it is becoming increasingly complex to distinguish facts from 'post-truth,' where emotions play a greater role in shaping public opinion than facts. In this keynote address, I start with the assumption that truths are constructed and do not necessarily correspond to objective facts. Technologies play an important role as mediators by reducing complex realities to simple, emotionally constructed narratives and amplifying them. However, not all of them receive the same attention; some are highlighted while others are neglected. I will examine this construction of truths using various cases from across Asia. Why are some truths considered more trustworthy than others? Inspired by ontological anthropology, this paper addresses the question of whose ontologies count in tensions over raw material extraction and renewable energy, particularly in the context of nickel mining.

Session 1A: Contested Truths in Colonial Regimes and Discourses

Truths about 'opening' Asia

Ferenc Takó (Eötvös Loránd University)

European thinkers of the 19th century like J.S. Mill (1806–1873) or Karl Marx (1818–1883) who witnessed the British colonisation of India and the Opium Wars were of the opinion that Europeans were fulfilling a 'civilising' mission by 'opening' Asian societies. At the same time, Asian thinkers of the era, including Japanese thinkers such as Aizawa Seishisai 会沢正志斎 (1782–1863) or Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835–1901) saw a threat to Japan in the same occurrences and tried to protect Japan from Western attacks.

A closer examination reveals, however, that Japanese thinkers had diverse viewpoints when they argued against 'opening' the country (see Wakabayashi 1992). Fukuzawa, for example, warned most vehemently about the threat posed by colonisation while remaining an emblematic advocate of 'enlightenment' by Western thought (see *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 2008). Similarly, Western intellectuals' interpretations of the actions of Britain in China were much less one-sided. Marx, for instance, stressed the 'tragic' character of ruining ancient social structures ('History of the Opium Trade', MEW vol. 15: 16).

In my presentation I will use the British colonisation of India and the Opium Wars as an example for analysis via comparative reception history. This method allows different thinkers whose thought developed isolated from one another to be examined in a comparative way based on a certain teaching or a common series of events on which they all reflected. Applying this approach I will examine the differences and similarities between 19th century Japanese and European thinkers' understanding of a people being 'barbarian' or 'civilized', and a country being 'closed' or 'open'. I will argue that although these terms were used on both the Western and the Asian 'sides' of colonial attitudes towards the East, their meaning and 'truth' remains highly context-dependent, this 'context' being much more complex than what can be expressed by the 'East–West' dichotomy.

Competing Truths and Colonial Technologies: Economic knowledge, Governance, and Social Memory in Japanese-Occupied Manchuria

Yue Cui (University of Leeds)

This paper explores how competing knowledge production, transnational governance technologies, and fragmented social memories shaped Japanese imperial rule in Manchuria between 1931 and 1945. By integrating macro-level economic data with micro-social perspectives, the study highlights how colonial authorities constructed and contested "truths" about Manchuria's economy, legitimised their governance, and ultimately exposed the contradictions at the heart of the imperial project.

Before the formal establishment of Manchuria, Japanese imperial surveys and Chinese Republican economic investigations produced conflicting knowledge regimes that sought to define Manchuria's economic realities and justify divergent political claims. These competing "truths" reflected not only the struggle for territorial control but also the strategic deployment of knowledge as a technology of governance.

Following the creation of Manchuria, the Japanese administration deployed governance technologies such as statistics, land surveys, regulation, and resource management to centralise control and promote an image of modern economic development. In practice, however, these tools exposed the limits of imperial authority, deepened inequality, and disrupted local communities.

Drawing on post-establishment oral histories from Taiwanese migrants to Manchuria, this paper foregrounds the dissonance between official narratives and lived experience. These testimonies reveal how colonial economic policies and governance technologies were experienced, negotiated, and remembered by ordinary people, producing fragmented social memories that contest state-produced "truths." By tracing the interplay between knowledge production, governance technologies, and social memory, this study demonstrates how economic governance in colonial Asia was not a linear process of control but a contested, fractured project marked by contradictions and competing claims to authority.

Colonial Student Writers on the Tram: Korean Women's Engagement with Seoul's Public Transportation, 1935–1939

Nathan Tillman (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Scholars of colonial Korea have identified the important role of public transportation in shaping Koreans' daily lives, including restricting them from job and food access relative to Seoul's Japanese populations. But for relatively privileged Koreans, public transportation including trams and trains opened up new opportunities for travel, entertainment, and social interaction. This presentation focuses on one such relatively privileged community—students at Ewha College, Korea's first Western-style institution of higher learning for women. I use Korean- and English-language student publications from the 1930s to investigate how and why Ewha students used public transportation compared to walking, whether they perceived their privilege relative to many Koreans of the time, and the literary meanings they ascribed to their experiences on trams, trains, and walks. I find that Ewha students in the second half of the 1930s frequently wrote about their experiences both walking and riding public transportation to move to and from their suburban school campus. I find that students' essays frequently meditated on their privilege relative to many Koreans they encountered, but authors also often reported enjoyable and exciting experiences thanks to the city's expanding tram and train networks. This interdisciplinary presentation combines literary and historical analysis to produce a nuanced narrative of the experiences and feelings of a community of young women in the late colonial period. By examining transportation technologies in a colonial context, therefore, this paper offers insight into another aspect of how one local community engaged with global systems.

The Conquest of Samarkand by the Russian Empire in 1868: colonial and indigenous discourses

Azim Malikov (Palacký University Olomouc)

The Russian Empire's conquest of Central Asia occurred over a long period from 1853 to 1884. The territorial expansion of the Russian Empire was justified by imperial ideology, which promoted the idea that Russia had a civilizing mission to the peoples on the outskirts of the empire. Some Russian officers cited the confrontation between the Russian and British empires in Asia as one of the primary reasons for the conquest of Central Asia. Local Central Asian intellectuals, however, perceived the Russian conquest differently. The Russian conquest of Samarkand, the former capital of the Empire of Timur (1336–1405), had important political and symbolic significance. For the Russian authorities, capturing the city was a triumph; for the Muslims of the region, it was a significant trauma. Unlike previous historians' studies (T.Saidkulov, H.Ziyoev, A.Morrison), the author used unpublished and lesser-known archival documents from Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation. These documents helped analyze various discourses on the Russian conquest of the region in a new way. An analysis of unpublished memoirs of Russian officers shows that there were contradictory views of individual military men on the process of conquering Central Asia. The conquest of Samarkand involved discussions about several issues, including the legitimization of Bukhara emir power, the legitimization of Russian imperial power in the region, and relations between Muslim and non-Muslim populations. This paper analyzes various interpretations of the event by Russian authors and Muslim intellectuals. These interpretations demonstrate how the same historical event can be viewed through different prisms, such as the perspectives of colonial times and indigenous peoples.

Session 1B: Political Tensions in Asia

Towards a Neo-New Order? Reassessing Embedded Authoritarian Legacies in Indonesia's Democratic Regression

Tomáš Petrů (Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences)

Indonesia's democratic trajectory since the fall of the New Order regime in 1998 has been profoundly shaped by its authoritarian legacy. While it is widely acknowledged that Suharto's rule (1966–1998) left an enduring imprint on Indonesia's political landscape, recent democratic backsliding necessitates a more nuanced analysis of the forces at play. The deepening illiberal tendencies during Joko Widodo's second term, marked by the Omnibus Law, the revised Criminal Code, and the electoral victory of former New Order general Prabowo Subianto in 2024, raise questions about the nature and persistence of authoritarian structures in Indonesia's governance.

This paper argues that Indonesia's democratic regression is not solely a product of residual authoritarianism but a confluence of historical, structural, and ideological factors. First, the New Order's ideological framework was not merely authoritarian but exhibited an entrenched neo-fascist nature, rooted in an anti-liberal ethos (Iqbal 1981). Second, the transition of 1998–1999, while introducing significant political reforms, remained an "elitist transition" (Mas'ood 2008). Third, Indonesia's brief parliamentary democracy (1950–1957) was an aberration rather than a defining feature of its political history. The subsequent reversion to centralized, authoritarian rule under Guided Democracy and the New Order reflects a historically ingrained pattern of governance reliant on power consolidation, coercion, and patronage (Benda 1964, Taylor 2003).

Widodo's co-optation of Prabowo Subianto, appointing him as Minister of Defense in 2019 and later endorsing his presidency, aligns with the ancient Javanese political tradition of coopting rivals rather than confronting them directly (Moertono 1968, Petrů 2020). This historical continuity underscores the structural impediments to a fully democratic state in Indonesia, where authoritarian legacies persist as fundamental elements of the political order.

Political Scandal in Japan

Igor Prusa (Ambis University Prague)

The political funding scandal of 2023–2024, during which multiple members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) received undeclared funds from their factions, has renewed scholarly and public attention to the issues of scandals and corruption in Japan. However, the broader consequences of this and similar scandals for Japanese politics remain ambiguous. Whereas some scholars (e.g., Carlson and Reed 2018) argue that scandals have a transformative force—with post-scandal reforms effectively reducing corruption—the perspectives of other scholars (West 2006; Prusa 2024a) suggest that scandals are better characterized as spectacular media rituals that exert little long-term impact on the processes shaping social and political life.

In this presentation, I first review the details of the LDP slush fund scandal and situate it within its historical context. Further, I look at the main actors' performances during the scandal. I focus closely on two competing blocs. On one side are the lawmakers, their secretaries, political factions, and mainstream media outlets that work to shield the status quo. On the other side are whistleblowers, prosecutors, civic groups, and non-mainstream media that seek to challenge it. Regarding the Japanese mediascape, I distinguish between the conservative "inside media" (dailies, TV, news agencies) that tend to downplay scandals, and the more liberal "outside media" (weeklies, political press, foreign media) that usually trigger scandals. Finally, I offer two perspectives on the consequences of the slush fund scandal: an optimistic perspective that the scandal will engender positive change, and a pessimistic view that its transformative impact will be limited.

All in the Family: Political Dynasties and The Failed Fantasies of Electoral Democracy in the Philippines

Raimondo Neironi (Università di Cagliari)

The ascendancy of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos in the 2022 presidential elections has come back in vogue the perennial issue of political dynasties in the Philippines. They are not only an historical phenomenon that traces back to the Spanish colonial rule and survives through three colonial regimes and five experiences of Filipino republics; it is also a structural system of power concentration impeding the development of a real democratic participation at local and national level. The article examines the nature of political families from an historical perspective and unpacks the terminology employed so far in the academic literature to refer to the monopoly of power in the Philippines. Further, it seeks to shed light on constitutional changes adopted after Ferdinand E.E. Marcos was ousted in 1986, in a bid to dismantle the political clans. The paper argues that, while restoring democracy one year after, “de-Marcosification” reinstalled political dynasties of the pre-authoritarian era, assuring them the abiding practices to hold sway over politics, economy and society. They have cheated the rules codified in the Constitution and exploited old mechanisms that continue to curtail opportunities for making headway in Philippine democracy.

Session 1C: Truths and Tensions in Japanese History

Historical Truth and Diplomatic Fiction: Rethinking Hostage Exchange, Marriage Alliances, and Tributes in ancient Japan-Korea Relations

Marianna Lázár (Károli Gáspár University)

This paper attempts to reevaluate the diplomatic relations between Wa (Japan) and the Korean kingdoms prior to the 7th century by relativizing the conventional narratives constructed primarily through historical sources such as the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Samguk Sagi*.

Drawing on recent studies on kingship and diplomacy in this region, this paper reexamines the meanings ascribed to the exchange of people and goods. In recent scholarship, the notion of the "Japanese Government Office in Mimana/Imna" (任那日本府) as an administrative base in the southern Korean Peninsula, as conceptualized in the *Nihon Shoki*, has been rejected. Nevertheless, regarding its historical reality, a relatively influential view positions it as involving temporary envoys or military-diplomatic missions dispatched from Wa, while acknowledging the agency of the polities in Gaya. However, a wide range of interpretations exist, and no definitive consensus has been established. Even within such debates, forms of exchange closely linked to the actual conditions of the "Japanese Government Office in Mimana/Imna"—such as hostages (人質), intermarriage (婚姻), and tribute (進調)—have conventionally been emphasized primarily as indicators of Japan's diplomatic superiority. They have not necessarily been sufficiently examined as key elements deepening inter-polity relations between sovereign authorities. This paper sets out to address these issues and seeks to clarify the complexities of these diplomatic interactions through an examination of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese historical records.

**Tensions under the surface:
14th century Japan in the Kūgenikkushū diary**

Vít Ulman (Palacký University Olomouc)

In this paper, I will analyze the contents of the 14th-century diary Kūge nichiyō kufū ryakushū (usually shortened to Kūgenikkushū) and explore the intricacies of medieval Japan's society. Kūgenikkushū is the extant part of an originally much longer diary written by the Japanese Zen monk Gidō Shūshin (1325-1388). Apart from being an important abbot in the system of the officially sanctioned Gozan monasteries, Gidō Shūshin was a poet, writer, teacher, and diplomat. He had deep connections not only with other preeminent Zen figures of his time but also with the ruling Ashikaga family. In 1359 he was invited to Kamakura by the first Kamakura kubō Ashikaga Motouji, and he stayed there till 1380. Later, he developed a close relationship with the young shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. Gidō's diary provides glimpses into the world of 14th-century Japan's elites, not only the Ashikaga family itself, but also local clans Sasaki, Noda, and Uesugi. Despite Gidō's preoccupation with religion and art, particularly poetry, the power struggles of the time occasionally emerge from its pages – both from his stay in Kamakura shining light on the political events of Eastern Japan, and later from his life in the capital, Kyoto. This makes Kūgenikkushū a valuable resource for understanding multiple aspects of the period.

Tension and Dialectic Displacement in Japanese Historical Narrative: Reconsidering Kiso Yoshinakaron in a Framework of Universalization

Damaso Ferreiro Posse (University of Tsukuba)

Beginning in the Meiji era, when Japan ended its prolonged period of official isolation and opened itself to the outside world, the country saw the influx not only of contemporary Western culture but also of the classical tradition rooted in Greco-Roman antiquity. This new contact produced an unprecedented phenomenon of cultural tension and displacement: the Japanese literary and intellectual canon—comprising both indigenous works and the classical Chinese tradition, which for centuries had served as a model of stylistic and formal perfection—began to be challenged and gradually displaced by a new cultural paradigm based on radically foreign coordinates. This transformation, in turn, triggered a series of identity, political, and epistemological conflicts.

This presentation will analyze a paradigmatic case of this process of cultural substitution: Kiso Yoshinakaron, a narrative essay written by a young Akutagawa Ryūnosuke in his third year of secondary school, which centers on the figure of General Yoshinaka during the Heian period. The text offers a compelling example of how Japanese history is reread and reinterpreted through a hybrid lens in which Chinese and European cultural traditions coexist, confront one another, and at times complement each other within the framework of Japanese historical-literary discourse.

The analysis will focus in particular on the role played by references to Chinese and European civilizations in shaping the text, as well as on the mechanisms by which Japanese identity is conceptualized through foreign paradigms. Finally, the essay will be situated within a broader theoretical framework by relating its interpretation to the process of fragmentation and universalization of the West—and, by extension, of China—as referential categories, as theorized by Salvatore Settis in *The Future of the "Classical"*.

Tensions among Japanese Mathematicians of the Edo Period

Tomáš Vitvar (Charles University)

Much like political history, the history of wasan — traditional Japanese mathematics of the Edo period (1603–1868) — has often been shaped by narratives of success. Historians in this field typically focus on the achievements of mathematicians, on the key discoveries that led to future advancements of the field, and they tend to ignore the everyday reality mathematicians faced.

My research focuses on this blind spot in the history of wasan and seeks to unravel the complicated sociological circumstances Japanese mathematicians lived in. It places particular emphasis on the tensions and conflicts within the community. This community was fragmented into individual schools, each fiercely guarding its secrets. The result was that each mathematical publication was carefully thought out and only a bare minimum of information was revealed. Many publications also contained contentious passages filled with criticism, accusations and other signs of rivalry.

Drawing on primary sources, this study analyses the extent of these tensions and situates selected disputes within their historical context. It explores the consequences of such conditions and compares the environment of Japanese mathematics with the contemporary situation in Europe.

Session 1D: Teaching and Learning Languages

Tensions of Desire, Anxiety, and Identity in Japanese Language Education

Giordano Stocchi (Università di Napoli "L'Orientale")

This paper examines how native-speakerism shapes Japanese language classrooms by establishing powerful “truths” about linguistic legitimacy and authority. Defined as the ideology that positions native speakers as the ideal teachers and models of language (Holliday, 2017), native-speakerism often frames native-like fluency as the ultimate goal of the learning process. This ideal produces “tensions” in learners, torn between the aspiration to sound “authentically Japanese” and the anxiety of never fully belonging. Within this landscape, the non-native teacher often plays a bridging role, one that students themselves frequently recognize as necessary. Positioned outside idealized models of nativeness, the teacher becomes a companion in a shared journey where languages and cultures meet, rather than a gatekeeper of unattainable standards. Drawing on qualitative data from students in an Italian university course, the study shows how native-speaker norms are frequently internalized and reproduced. Some express feelings of inadequacy or frustration; others attempt to resist conformity and assert translingual identities. Although the translinguaging framework, understood as the flexible use of one's full linguistic repertoire across perceived language boundaries (García & Li, 2014), is often promoted as a way to embrace diversity, many students do not experience it as empowering in the foreign language classroom. The presence of their L1 in class can instead reinforce a sense of distance from the target language, intensifying emotional and ideological tensions. These findings invite a rethinking of Japanese language education through pedagogies that reduce anxiety, affirm learners' identities, and challenge the exclusionary effects of native-speakerism.

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The Roles of Audiobook Co-Production as a Tool for Japanese and Thai Students Learning and Cultural Exchange

Oradol Kaewprasert (University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce)

Sunisa Wittayapanyanon Saito (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Anencha Klinkesorn (University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce)

This study examines the roles of collaborative audiobook production as a medium for cultural exchange and language learning between Thai and Japanese university students, conducted under the project Looking at Japan from a Different Perspective to Love the Country Even More (違った側面で日本を見るともっと日本を好きになる / มองญี่ปุ่นมุมกลับให้รักกว่าเดิม). The initiative, a partnership between Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) and the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC), funded by the Japan Foundation, Bangkok, aimed to promote mutual understanding and introduce Japanese culture to visually impaired individuals in Thailand. Through a mixed-methods approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative data from 19 student participants and feedback from 5 visually impaired audiobook users, this study assesses the impact of co-production on cross-cultural learning, linguistic development, and accessibility. Results reveal significant educational benefits in cultural awareness, linguistic skills, and collaboration, alongside suggestions for refining future collaborative projects. This work contributes to the discourse on inclusive media production as a tool for cultural and educational exchange, emphasizing the importance of structured communication and culturally responsive content. Its mixed-methods framework offers an integrated view of educational attainment and access to the media.

A Study on Interpersonal Communication between Czechs and Taiwanese in the Context of Second Language Teaching

Michaela Zahradníková, Yixuan Jandová Che
(Palacký University Olomouc)

(Alternative Format)

The book presentation introduces a forthcoming publication "A Study on Interpersonal Communication between Czechs and Taiwanese in the Context of Second Language Teaching" (expected to be published in 12/2025) developed through a collaborative Taiwan–Czech project called "The Dynamics of East–West Civilizational Interactions: Conflict or Fusion?" Designed as both a research-informed guide and practical manual, the book aims to support pre-service Chinese language teachers and exchange students preparing for cultural immersion and teaching assignments in the Czech Republic.

The presentation responds to the ACAS 2025 theme by addressing the challenges and opportunities encountered in cross-cultural teaching contexts. It combines practical information on living, studying, and teaching in the Czech Republic with reflective chapters on linguistic and cultural differences. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as Schwartz's value theory and Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the book helps readers better understand intercultural expectations and communication patterns.

This 20 minute presentation will introduce the book's background, structure, and purpose. It will highlight how the book integrates practical guidance with cultural reflection to help future Chinese language educators navigate and bridge differences between Eastern and Western educational contexts.

The presentation will invite attendees to consider and discuss how localized, experience-based resources can foster intercultural empathy and pedagogical adaptability.

Session 1E: Politics and International Relations (Student Session)

Adults in the Loop: The Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian War on Diplomatic Relations Between the EU and Indonesia

David Broul, Antonín Nenutil (Palacký University Olomouc)

In recent years, the relationship between the European Union (EU) and Indonesia has been significantly and adversely shaped by disputes over trade commodities, which have unfolded against the backdrop of negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). However, Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 has heightened the EU's need to diversify its strategic resources and partners. As part of its de-risking strategy, the EU has focused on strengthening diplomatic ties far beyond its traditional geopolitical sphere, including the Indo-Pacific region. This unique study applies selected text-as-data content analysis methods to statements made by the European Commission, the primary actor in negotiating trade agreements with third countries, directed at Indonesia. Utilizing related press releases, statements, and speeches from the first von der Leyen Commission (2019–2024) and the analytical software MAXQDA, this research examines whether and how significantly the Commission's stance toward Indonesia evolved as a result of Russia's aggression. The paper argues that following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Commission reassessed its existing disputes with Indonesia. Subsequently, the rhetoric of its senior representatives became less critical of the Southeast Asian nation, reflecting a growing awareness of the importance of diversifying strategic partnerships. Such a conclusion would undoubtedly testify to the diplomatic acumen of the EU's senior officials. However, it would also represent a significant relativization of the EU's efforts to assert its interests in trade agreement negotiations, potentially carrying adverse implications for the Union's future external relations.

Digital Populism in Taiwan: Nature, Causes, and Media Strategies – A Comparative Study of Han Kuo-yu and Ko Wen-je

Chenxi Shen (City University of Hong Kong)

This study examines the rise of digital populism in Taiwan through a comparative analysis of Han Kuo-yu and Ko Wen-je—second-place candidate in the 2020 and third-place in the 2024 presidential elections, respectively. Both exhibit distinct populist traits and actively leverage social media to cultivate loyal online followings. The paper argues that Taiwanese populism is not solely a product of top-down elite strategy or bottom-up grassroots discontent. Rather, it arises from the interaction between deep-rooted structural divisions, evolving identity politics, and the transformative dynamics of digital media.

The analysis draws on key populism theories: Mudde's "people versus elite" binary, Laclau's discursive construction of "the people," and Moffitt's mediatized political style. It identifies three structural conditions behind digital populism's ascent: intensifying national identity polarisation (Chu & Chang, 2017); the post-2014 consolidation of a Taiwanese identity (Fell, 2018); and growing disillusionment with the entrenched DPP-KMT partisan divide (Batto, 2019).

Using a mixed-methods computational approach—combining BERTopic modelling, TF-IDF analysis, and LIWC-based emotion metrics—the study analyses Facebook content and public engagement to show how Han and Ko mobilised support through emotional appeals, direct communication, and strategic reinterpretations of "Taiwan First" sentiments.

This study contributes to understanding how digital populism functions in non-Western democracies, and how social media reconfigures political communication—particularly in Taiwan, where democracy exists under geopolitical pressure.

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Ideational Challenges to the US-Led Order: The Case of China's Soft Power in Pakistan

Shirin Naseer (Palacký University Olomouc)

China's rise is a major force driving systemic changes in the international order, which has been characterised by the dominance of the United States since the end of the Cold War. While much scholarly attention has focused on China's material sources of power – primarily its economic and military capabilities – the ideational domain should be recognised as at least as important an arena of US-China rivalry. China has invested considerable effort in winning 'hearts and minds' across the globe, aiming to influence countries' political choices, shape international perceptions, and assert greater influence over local, regional, and global narratives about itself. Although the effects of these efforts vary, several countries in the Global South have come to see China as a valid, desirable partner and even increasingly as a preferred alternative to the US and the West. This article presents an in-depth case study of Pakistan, a country that consistently expresses the warmest sentiments toward China globally, often favoring it over the United States and its Western allies. This study draws on a representative online public opinion survey of 1,200 respondents conducted in 2022. Survey insights are complemented by a qualitative media analysis and 38 interviews with key officials and members of the public, conducted during fieldwork in Pakistan from 2022 to 2025. This article argues that positive views of China in Pakistan transcend pragmatic considerations such as economic incentives and military-strategic alignment against India, and that China is now widely seen as both an appealing model and a broadly attractive country across most sections of Pakistani society. These findings hold important implications for the future of the US-China rivalry, which continues to play a defining role in the evolution of the international order.

Decoding China's Reactions to Contemporary Nuclear Tensions

Shoval Ben Yair (Reichman University)

Recent years have seen a growing number of geopolitical rivalries escalating into armed conflicts, both in Asia and Europe. Some of these conflicts have a major nuclear component, with at least one nuclear-armed actor. These geopolitical developments, alongside the introduction of emerging technologies, raise concerns that the global abstinence from nuclear use is no longer guaranteed (Talmadge, 2023). As a rising global power, China plays an increasing role in shaping narratives and influencing international crises, holding the power to either reduce or increase tensions (Cheng, 2020; Friedberg, 2018; Li, 2016). Yet, literature still offers limited analysis of China's perspective and foreign behavior in nuclear contexts.

This research explores how nuclear tensions can be reduced by examining how and why China reacts to nuclear crises in which it is not directly involved. To explore these questions, this research systematically compares three contemporary cases: China's reactions to Pakistan's nuclear threats during the 2019 and 2025 Indo-Pakistani crises, and to Russia's nuclear threats during the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war. Drawing on discourse analysis of official Chinese statements made in press briefings, diplomatic meetings, and official social media, as well as leaked information to Western press, this research finds significant variation in China's reactions.

The research argues that these differences reflect China's careful balancing act between two considerations: its core interests (Zeng et al., 2015; Zhou, 2019) and its distinct nuclear thought, which is informed by China's strategic culture (Betts, 2010; Cheng, 2020; Johnston, 1998). By systematically analyzing and comparing the case studies, the research contributes to our understanding of China's narratives and behaviors during nuclear crises. This understanding has implications for future crisis diplomacy and efforts to manage or reduce tensions.

Session 2A: Truths, Tensions, and Technologies in Medical Anthropology

Diasporic Dissonance: Chinese Women Navigating Culture, Labor, and Belonging

Helen Hess (University of Zurich)

Despite the growing presence of Chinese migrants in Switzerland, the migration experiences of Chinese individuals in the country have received limited scholarly attention. This paper explores the life stories of diasporic Chinese women in Switzerland who work as practitioners and entrepreneurs in the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) sector. Their narratives provide insight into how economic agency and cultural practices emerge at the intersection of labor, gender, and transnational mobility. As part of a broader research project on diasporic Chinese women in Switzerland, this study draws on ethnographic fieldwork—including participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Focusing on personal narratives, the paper examines how these women negotiate socio-cultural tensions and moments of dissonance within the host society.

The stories not only shed light on the complexities of such negotiations but also offer alternative perspectives that challenge dominant narratives. In the context of contemporary Europe—where concerns about Chinese state influence are gaining prominence and Sinophobic sentiment is on the rise—this paper examines how diasporic Chinese women navigate shifting economic opportunities through informal local and transnational networks and engage with contested cultural meanings within an increasingly polarized global landscape.

Between Systems: Navigating Healthcare as a Russian Migrant in China

Ekaterina Ryzhova, Natalia Ryzhova (Palacký University Olomouc)

The discussion around the 'patient choice' versus 'good care' takes on a particular shape in the context of migration, where both options are often more limited than for citizens of the host country. In Russia, decades of neoliberal healthcare reforms have promoted the practice of 'patient/consumer choice'. However, in practice, this choice frequently amounts to self-treatment, especially in contexts of limited access or low trust in public healthcare institutions.

Upon crossing borders, Russian migrants encounter new healthcare systems where their agency as patients is further constrained. At present, China remains one of the few relatively accessible destinations for emigration among Russian citizens. The legal and regulatory environment in which they find themselves is highly fragmented and includes a wide range of formal and informal employment arrangements - from official labor contracts to undocumented or temporary work. These variations significantly affect access to health insurance and eligibility for state-sanctioned medical care.

The availability of healthcare for different categories of Russian migrants in China remains a contested issue, shaped by numerous factors such as legal status and language proficiency. These conditions drastically reduce the possibility of exercising 'patient choice' and encourage the adoption of alternative strategies for accessing care. These strategies include self-medication, seeking advice through informal networks, and turning to online medical platforms, including those that connect users to doctors in Russia.

In our paper, we examine the forms of 'patient choice' available to Russian migrants in China, the extent to which these are shaped by access to insurance and formal employment, and the prevalence of alternative practices: from self-treatment to the use of digital health services. Our analysis is based on a series of in-depth interviews conducted with Russian migrants living in China.

Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Use of Natural Psychoactive Substances in East and Southeast Asia

Kateřina Šamajová, Natálie Kubičinová (Palacký University Olomouc)

In modern Western society, psychoactive substances are a major source of tension, primarily because of their potential dangers and negative effects on both mental and physical health. Nevertheless, many indigenous cultures around the world benefit from the regular use of such substances, experiencing either stimulation or relaxation. One such region is East and Southeast Asia, where a variety of natural psychoactive substances exist and are traditionally used not only for ritual purposes but also for medicinal and social functions. As the world becomes more globalised, most of these traditional substances have made their way to other parts of the globe, creating new research topics for scientists regarding their safety and use among local populations. Confrontations with these imported substances, often accompanied by a loss of essential indigenous knowledge about their proper use, frequently lead to strict judgments, regulations, and criticism.

This presentation aims to explore traditional knowledge and provide an understanding of the often-missing context behind the use of psychoactive substances in certain cultures. A critical comparison of the current legal framework pertaining to the use of indigenous psychoactive drugs will seek to critically reevaluate the culturally dependent attitudes towards these substances. This effort, however, does not seek to encourage individuals to use these substances nor to excuse those who abuse them. The merit of this research lies in its heavy emphasis on experimental investigation of an often-taboo phenomenon, foregrounding the pragmatic facet of the indigenous use of these plants through a series of experiments which may shed light on the effects on human health while providing insight into safe utilisation of these herbal drugs.

Session 2B: Studies in Language

Menu Mysteries: Navigating the Tension Between Language and Culture in Gastronomy

Isaac Yue (University of Hong Kong)

Navigating a restaurant menu in a foreign city can be an unexpectedly frustrated experience, especially when linguistic barriers obscure the truth of what is being offered. Nowhere is this tension more palpable than when confronting English translations of Chinese menus—famous for their confounding and sometimes comical renditions. Some of the more common mistranslations have acquired such a reputation (thanks largely to the convenience of the internet) that many have begun to consider them as an essential part of the nation's "linguistic landscape." A notable example occurred when, ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the city's Municipal Office for Foreign Affairs announced a translation manual for popular dishes. This prompted an online movement to encourage visitors to travel to China ahead of the Olympics, in order to experience such infamous menu items as "Chicken Without Sex" before improved translations might erase these linguistic oddities.

This paper examines the persistent tension between cultural specificity and translatability in the context of gastronomic language. I intend to explore how distinct cultural frameworks underpin Chinese and English food terminologies, and how gastronomy forms a unique and challenging genre within corpus linguistics. By focusing on these elements, I aim to shed light on the deeper cultural truths embedded in culinary language and to highlight the limitations and complexities faced by translators operating at the intersection of food and language.

Translation of Chinese and Latvian Classics with the help of AI Tools

Agita Baltgalve (University of Latvia)

This paper explores the author's personal experience using AI tools (e.g., Tilde, MST, and Youtube voice transcription, ChatGPT, DeepSeek) for translating and analyzing poetic expressions, folksongs, and philosophical concepts between Chinese and Latvian. Examples are drawn from two ongoing projects. The first, Filial Piety (xiao) in Latvian Folksongs, attempts to render traditional Latvian folksongs (often considered untranslatable) into Classical Chinese using the five- and seven-syllable forms of Tang poetry. The second involves AI-assisted translation and commentary on The Book of Changes (Yijing) in Latvian.

Beyond technical issues, the paper deals with hermeneutic and semantic questions (e.g., How do technologies reveal certain truths while obscuring others?) The author, a native Latvian speaker with a specialization in Classical Chinese language and literature, grounds on bilingual fluency to cross-verify results. Translating ancient texts with complex grammar, layered meanings, and culturally bound vocabulary remains a challenge for AI. Outcomes vary depending on factors such as text length, task clarity, tool choice, and processing speed. Additional difficulties include the limited digital presence of Latvian language, the uniqueness of Chinese Characters, and fundamental grammatical and conceptual differences between both languages.

Creating Romance or Conflict? Reactions to Hybridized Honorifics in Korean

Youngran Bastanova Kwak (Palacký University Olomouc)

The Korean language is well-known for its complex honorific system. While this system is being simplified in practice, it has also led to another variant commonly termed "banjondae." This practice involves mixing honorific and casual speech in various ways, including alternating between honorific and casual speech styles, using honorific markers in casual speech, and employing terms of address that do not match the politeness level of the speech style. To better understand these hybridized forms of speech, this study examines instances of their use and reactions to them, as covered in the content of Korean online news articles from June 2023 to May 2024. A case-based analysis of these reactions suggests four specific patterns: (1) charm or intimacy, (2) discomfort, (3) respect, and (4) humor. Feelings of charm and intimacy often appeared in romantic contexts, including star-fan relationships. Respect and discomfort reflected power and solidarity relations across various contexts. Humor often involved specific linguistic choices associated with certain social stereotypes. This analysis highlights the varied reaction patterns, revealing diverse public attitudes toward the use of hybridized honorifics.

Session 2C: The Truths and Tensions Produced by Vietnamese Migration Industry (Part 1) (Organized Panel)

Vietnamese migration can be traced back to colonial times, but its major waves occurred as a result of escalating tensions, initially triggered by the Cold War during the late 1970s and subsequently by Vietnam's economic transformation. Today, the majority of Vietnamese migrants are economic migrants — either migrant workers or small-scale entrepreneurs — whose mobility is driven by the strains of Vietnam's underperforming economy.

Motivated by the vision of a better life abroad, many migrants pay exorbitant brokerage fees to secure opportunities to work and live overseas. Coming largely from Vietnam's poorer regions, they often borrow heavily to finance these fees. Furthermore, as Vietnamese migrants tend to move with entire families, this process generates cycles of large debts that may burden them for decades, sometimes for life.

Consequently, migrants face classic forms of precarity: they work long hours to repay debts, leaving little time to learn the host country's language or support their children's education. While their families may achieve greater material security and improved living standards, their children often grow up cared for by local nannies and educated in host-country schools — experiences that may alienate them from their parents' socio-cultural diasporic world.

Parents deploy various strategies to re-socialize their children into the diasporic community's cultural milieu, often invoking more traditional values and norms than are now common in contemporary Vietnam. These dynamics generate tensions not only between parents and children, but also between the diaspora and Vietnamese society more broadly.

This panel seeks to explore the truth and tensions that emerge from the interplay of migrants' aspirations for a better life, life within debt-driven economies, migrant precarity, contrasting socio-cultural standards between the host and home societies, and the resulting intergenerational conflicts.

From Debt-Financed Migration to the Quest for a 'Good Life on Credit': The Interplay of Debt and Migration in Vietnam

Nicolas Lainez (French Research Institute for Sustainable Development)

This presentation will outline a work-in-progress project that investigates the quest for a 'good life on credit' amid the consumer credit boom in Vietnam. This concept highlights the increasing influence of both formal and informal debt as a driving force behind migration from Vietnam to Europe and other regions. It also acts as a funding mechanism for both regular and irregular migration to Europe, facilitating the acquisition of material indicators associated with the 'good life' (Nguyen, Wilcox, and Lin 2024). This notion represents a collective aspiration for improved living standards, material comfort, security, consumption, and upward mobility, all of which contribute to well-being and respectability. However, the pursuit of the good life on credit is fraught with risks, struggles, and conflicting values, significantly shaped by evolving credit markets and debt practices.

The presentation will detail two components of the project. The first aims to deepen our understanding of migration from Vietnam to Europe through qualitative research conducted in migration-sending provinces (Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Nam) and six European receiving countries (France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland). The second objective is to raise awareness in Vietnam about the risks associated with international migration in pursuit of a 'good life' through multimodal interventions including documentary films, a digital campaign, an education program, participative photography and comic, and a resource-based website.

Someone else's dreams before yours: discourse about financing labour migration on social media in Vietnam

Le Phuong Linh (Fulbright University Vietnam)

Vietnam supports labour migration through low-interest loan schemes, aiming to boost remittance flows and contribute to national development. Yet, information about these official financial programs remains poorly communicated to prospective migrants. As a result, many turn to social media platforms, especially TikTok and YouTube, to learn how to fund their journeys abroad. These platforms, while accessible, are filled with content that often carries the agendas of its creators, shaping how migration, debt, and success are imagined and portrayed.

This research investigates how labour migration financing is discussed on Vietnamese social media, particularly focusing on how the 'good life' is constructed and how credit risks are framed. Drawing on agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), the aspirations-capabilities framework (de Haas, 2021), and the notion of the 'good life' in late socialism (Nguyen et al., 2024), the study uses qualitative thematic analysis to examine 100 short-form videos (50 each from TikTok and YouTube).

Key findings reveal two dominant types of content creators: brokerage companies and successfully migrated individuals acting as informal intermediaries. Both groups actively construct and promote an agenda where the 'good life' is attainable, even 'on credit,' by strategically showcasing success stories while downplaying credit risks. This curated reality fosters 'digital precarity,' forcing aspirant migrants to navigate a myriad of complex yet persuasive narratives. Ultimately, their pursuit of a better life is shaped by a mix of national development policies, familial pressures, and the commercially driven narratives circulating on social media. This research illuminates the nature of online migration discourse in the Vietnamese social media landscape and the hurdles that aspirant migrants must face when navigate the online space filled with convincing yet partial information, often to the benefit of the content creators themselves.

Gendered tensions and technologies in the nail salon: male Vietnamese manicurists in the UK

Seb Rumsby (University of Birmingham)

The majority of recent Vietnamese migrants to the UK are male, and the majority of them end up working in the rapidly expanding nail salon sector – a traditionally feminised space. Customers and onlookers alike are surprised at the apparent ease by which Vietnamese men have adapted to this new work, raising questions about how malleable Vietnamese masculinities might be. This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork in a Vietnamese nail salon in the UK, applying the concept of 'masculine compromise' to understand marginalised migrants' working, lifestyle decisions and shifting perceptions of gender roles. It will be argued that the masculinisation of the nail salon combines with communications technologies to transform relationships with clients and expectations of 'emotional labour', as male workers are more connected with their families back home than the people whose nails they are painting.

Session 2D: Czech Association of Contemporary Asian Studies (CACAS) Meeting (1)

13:00–13:05

Welcome speech

Martina Varkočková (Metropolitan University Prague)
Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)

13:05–13:50

Book promotion: Ukrajina mimo Západ [Ukraine outside the West]

Slavomír Horák (Charles University)
Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)

13:50–14:00

Break

14:00–14:50

Book promotion: Encyclopedia Tyrannica [A Research Guide to Authoritarianism]

Jeroen Van den Bosh (Adam Mickiewicz University)
Slavomír Horák (Charles University)
Lukáš Laš (University of Ostrava)

14:50–15:00

Break

15:00–15:50

CACAS Assembly

Session 2E: Linguistics (1) (Student Session)

Reduplication in Singlish

Valerie Madeova, Joanna Sio (Palacký University Olomouc)

Singapore has two distinct yet co-existing language varieties of English: Standard Singapore English (SSE) and Colloquial Singapore English (CSE, aka Singlish). Due to the language contact situation (with Chinese, Malay, and Tamil), Singlish has developed features that diverge from standard English norms (Ningsih et al. 2023: 73). This paper focuses on reduplication in Singlish. Our data came from the Corpus of Singapore English Messages (CoSEM) (Gonzales et al. 2023) and the data were analysed using the Sketch Engine (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/>). We identified 230 tokens of reduplication patterns.

Singlish has been reported to use reduplication patterns not found in Standard English (e.g., verbal reduplication, nominal reduplication, and the reduplication of nominal modifiers) (Wong 2004, Ziomek 2020). In our corpus analysis, we found the aforementioned types as well as additional patterns of reduplications unique to Singlish. In this paper, we compared such patterns to the contact languages and proposed the source language of borrowings.

- (a) Adjective reduplication to indicate vividness:
 - (1) and they all small small skinny skinny
- (b) Reduplication of nouns to indicate plurality:
 - (2) Got a lot of age age age inside genesis
- (c) Verbal reduplication to indicate extended or repeated actions:
 - (3) Apparently she was crying crying crying
- (d) Verbal reduplication to indicate 'tentative' action ('do a little bit'):
 - (4) I reaching soon haha I'll just walk walk arnd then
- (e) Nominal reduplication of kinship terms for intimacy:
 - (5) brother brother ???
- (f) Reduplication of the verb 'die' to indicate 'extreme':
 - (6)...if you die die want it u will know what you have to do to get it

Beauty of Language in Four Characters: Study of Chengyu in Literary Translations into Spanish

Jiayue Lyu (Universidad Aut3noma de Barcelona)

This thesis examines the translation of Chinese chengyu into Spanish in literary contexts, focusing on linguistic and cultural aspects. The study consists of two parts: an analysis of chengyu's structure, cultural connotations, and rhetorical effects, followed by a case study of their translation in modern Chinese literature.

The introduction explores chengyu's origins, structural typology, and literary functions, including metrics and semantics. The case study selects Spanish translations of Chinese works, notably *The Besieged Fortress* by Qian Zhongshu (translated by Taciaa Fisac), due to its abundant chengyu usage. A corpus-based quantitative analysis identifies common translation techniques and their justification.

A key focus is the relationship between chengyu's formal structure—particularly its four-character symmetry and rhythm—and translators' decisions to preserve or adapt these features. Figurative and historical chengyu are analyzed to determine whether their semantic layers are retained or transformed in Spanish.

Methodologically, this study employs quantitative corpus analysis to identify recurring translation patterns and proposes a functional classification of strategies. The findings contribute to both theoretical knowledge and practical applications in literary translation, particularly for Chinese-Spanish language pairs. By systematizing expert translators' techniques, this research serves as a valuable resource for translation students and scholars working with culturally embedded expressions.

The process and challenges of translating Korean webtoons into Czech

Eliška Karbanová (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper will be exploring the process and challenges of translating Korean webtoons into Czech, a slowly growing yet still underrepresented area of literary and cultural exchange.

Despite the global popularity of Korean webtoons and the increasing interest in them among Czech readers, only a limited number of these works have been translated into Czech so far. The primary obstacle lies not in the lack of audience demand, but rather in the shortage of skilled translators proficient in both Korean and Czech willing to take on the challenge of translating Korean webtoons, as well as the shortage of suitable resources for such translators.

This paper aims to serve as a practical resource for future translators by identifying and addressing key translation challenges, particularly the complex task of translating Korean onomatopoeia and mimetics into Czech. These linguistic features, which are integral to the nature of webtoons, often lack direct equivalents in Czech, making their translation a creative and interpretive challenge. By highlighting these issues, the paper seeks to encourage further efforts, such as the creation of a Korean-Czech onomatopoeia dictionary, which, next to other tools available today (such as internet Korean-English dictionaries, AI translator apps and other AI tools), should prove to be a reliable and helpful source for future translators in this field.

Session 3A: Ethnographies of Truths, Tensions, and Technologies

Views from above; views from below – The emotional politics of non-military drone practices, two cases from Malaysia and Thailand

Monika Arnez (Palacký University Olomouc)

Irene Stengs (VU Amsterdam)

This paper connects with the conference's theme 'truths, tensions and technology' by exploring two case-studies on the use of non-military camera-equipped drones in Malaysia and Thailand. Introducing the notion of 'drone practices', we aim to flesh out how these practices are immersed in and shaped by emotions. As argued by Walter Benjamin (1939) and others, aesthetics are an inherent dimension of emotion politics, and key to their persuasive power. Placing embodied experiences and socio-political imaginaries centre stage, our research contributes to the analysis of drone-human interactions at large. We ask: how are emotional politics of engagement generated by the 'flight-ways' of drones (Fish and Richardson 2021)? What truths are created in the selective recording from a bird's-eye perspective, as contrasted to a 'worm's eye view' (Ellis 2017)?

Our analysis is grounded in two ethnographic case-studies, the first addressing the contestations around an artificial islands project at the coastline of Western Malaysia. The case shows how drone practices are implicated in two contesting grand narratives about the future: development versus conservation; the second case focuses on the pivotal work of drone practices in the making, dispersion, and circulation of nationalist and religious rituals, specifically mourning rituals performed in the wake of the death of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Thailand's former king, in 2016.

References:

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- Ellis, Patrick (2017). *Aeroscopes: Spectacles of the Bird's-Eye View*. UC Berkeley Peer Reviewed Dissertation, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7689h81b>.
- Fish, Adam and Michael Richardson (2021). "Drone Power: Conservation, Humanitarianism, Policing and War." *Theory, Culture & Society* 39 (3): 3-26.

Plastic waste, digital media, and the pandemic: Shifting worlds and values of the circular economy in Indonesia

Lukas Fort (University of Copenhagen)

Indonesia is frequently cited as one of the world's largest contributors to marine plastic pollution (Jambeck et al. 2015). Yet this crisis is not unique to Indonesia. Plastic pollution is a global issue, recently exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Rivas et al. 2022). While the pandemic intensified plastic use, it also reshaped sustainability debates and catalyzed new forms of grassroots environmental engagement, especially through digital media. Despite this, little research has examined how the pandemic, plastic waste, and digital platforms intersected – particularly in Indonesia, which has one of the largest and fastest-growing internet user bases globally (Kemp 2025). Addressing this gap, this paper asks: What new forms of grassroots activism and waste-reduction efforts emerged during the pandemic or were directly driven by it? How did digital media contribute to the expansion of these grassroots movements tackling plastic waste? And to what extent do these initiatives and trends continue to shape waste-related practices, values and relationships within Indonesia's circular economy frameworks today?

Drawing on ethnographic data from Java, Bali, and Lombok, the paper focuses on three strategies for addressing plastic waste: improving the collection and separation of recyclables; removing plastic waste from the environment; and transforming waste into products with market value. While these approaches predate the pandemic, I argue they were reshaped and accelerated by it through digital mediations, further shaping the competing worlds and values of Indonesia's evolving circular economy. This shift reveals tensions between spectacle and sustainability, inclusion and exclusion, and circular economy policies and longstanding informal waste practices. While often framed as a win-win solution, the circular economy is shown to be contested and plural – entangled with uneven access to digital tools, persistent moral economies, and competing visions of sustainability.

Performing the Anthropocene: Perspectives from China and Taiwan

Maciej Szatkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University)

Despite China's immense impact on global climate processes, the attitudes of Chinese artists toward environmental issues remain strikingly under-researched. While global academia has developed robust discourses on literature and society in the Anthropocene, performance art is still largely overlooked in this context. This presentation explores how selected artists from China and Taiwan—such as Jiangguo Xiongdi, Zhang Huan, Yang Zhichao, Zheng Bo, Wang Wen-chih, Chou Shu-yi, and Su Hsin-tien—respond artistically to environmental degradation, species extinction, and pollution through performative and bioart practices. In China, such artistic expressions have often been perceived by authorities as acts of political dissent and censored accordingly. Outside of China, they are frequently interpreted primarily through the lens of socio-political resistance, with little attention paid to their aesthetic or philosophical dimensions. This includes Taoist and Buddhist notions of nature or Legalist views subordinating nature to human will. Starting in the 1990s, Chinese performers began to critically engage with the accelerating ecological crisis, yet scholarly analyses rarely consider the cultural specificity of their work. Taiwanese artists, while operating in a different political environment, also produce ecologically engaged performances that remain underrepresented in the global discourse. By shifting the focus toward the artistic and culturally embedded aspects of these performances, this presentation aims to expand the understanding of how the Anthropocene is being performed and imagined in Sinophone contexts.

Session 3C: The Truths and Tensions Produced by Vietnamese Migration Industry (Part 2) (Organized Panel)

Becoming 'Proper Vietnamese': Language and Cultural Socialization of Young Vietnamese Children in the Czech Republic

Mai Thi Thu (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper explores how younger generations of Vietnamese parents in the Czech Republic are intentionally fostering bilingualism in their children, learning from the challenges faced by earlier migrants whose children were often labeled “banana children” and struggled with language loss. These parents prioritize Vietnamese language acquisition at home, hoping to raise children who are both “proper Vietnamese” and well-integrated into Czech society. However, this approach has unintended consequences. Many Vietnamese preschoolers enter Czech primary schools with limited Czech proficiency, which hampers their ability to communicate with teachers and adapt to school life.

Drawing from ongoing ethnographic fieldwork, including observations of eight children from four Vietnamese families in Olomouc, this paper examines family language policies and the cultural and emotional socialization of these children. It argues that today's immigrant parents rely on tight-knit social networks—extended family and close friends—for caregiving and language transmission, ensuring that their children grow up in a Vietnamese-speaking environment both in the Czech Republic and through regular visits to Vietnam. While this helps preserve the Vietnamese language and identity, it also delays Czech language acquisition, complicating the children's integration into the educational system. This creates challenges not only for the children but also for Czech educators and school psychologists. And, despite their efforts, these parents—many of whom face financial and emotional stress—are still perceived by the host society as neglectful.

The influence of third parties on partner choice of second generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic

Pham Thu Huong (Palacký University Olomouc)

Second generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic (CR) are in dating and family formation stages. Their partner choice is not only an emotional decision but also a logic decision that are influenced by several factors, especially the role of third parties. Based on 28 in-depth interviews with second generation Vietnamese in Prague and Brno, this paper uncovers the role of parents, family members, friends and local ethnic community members on the partner choice of second generation Vietnamese Czechs. The results show that Vietnamese parents have lost much their power to affect their children's partner choice. The involvement of parents in partner choice of second generation are also different between men and women. Vietnamese parents tend to involve in the partner choice of their sons rather than their daughters. The differences of parental influence also depend on some parents' characteristics such as parents' social integration and education. Siblings and cousins seem to act as role models rather than influencers in the partner choice of second generation Vietnamese. In addition, having the large pool of Vietnamese friends has greatly influence the choice of Vietnamese partners. In contrast, second generation Vietnamese who have mixed friendship network may increase their likelihood of becoming involved in an interethnic partnership. Although community members in the CR do not directly influence the relationships of second generation, second generation Vietnamese could face a type of strain and tension in their relationship due to questioning looks and gossip among community members.

Vietnamese Society and its Diaspora: The Interplay between the Sociocultural Normative Discourses in Vietnam and Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic

Filip Kraus (Palacký University Olomouc)

Existing literature shows that, to cope with migrants' precarity, Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic often employ their children in transnational family businesses. To keep these transnational systems functioning, parents frequently re-socialize their children into the diasporic socio-cultural environment, using various techniques such as shaming, economic pressure, and physical punishment. As an ideological basis for this re-socialization, parents often draw on socio-cultural norms that are more traditional than those prevalent in contemporary Vietnam. These norms emphasize collective and family-oriented values, encouraging young people to obey parents and extended kin, work in family businesses, marry co-ethnic partners, and provide material or emotional support to relatives back in Vietnam.

However, growing up in the host society, young people often internalize Czech socio-cultural values and develop life strategies that differ markedly from those of their parents. As a result, the differing socializations of young Vietnamese-Czechs within distinct socio-cultural contexts generate tensions within the diaspora itself. At the same time, because parents instill norms considered more conservative than those dominant in Vietnam today, these practices also create tensions between the diaspora and mainstream Vietnamese society.

This paper examines the differences among three normative socio-cultural discourses: those of the Czech Republic, contemporary Vietnam, and the Vietnamese diaspora. By analyzing these contrasting frameworks, it seeks to shed light on the complexities of acculturation in culturally divergent societies and the tensions that this process produces.

Session 3D: Czech Association of Contemporary Asian Studies (CACAS) Meeting (2)

16:00–17:00

Session on publishing

Richard Turcsanyi (Palacký University Olomouc)

Session 3E: Linguistics (2) (Student Session)

The categorization(s) of Vietnamese spelling variations in computer-mediated communication

Marcin Nowacki (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan)

The present use of Vietnamese in computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been fraught with spelling variations in social media, as its users started to employ non-standard spelling by typing the words with omissions, reductions, prolongations and other kinds of alterations. This study of Vietnamese re-spellings (a term coined by Shortis (2009) for spelling variations in CMC) explores the still insufficiently studied area of spelling changes in Vietnamese used in social media, with its aim to discuss and establish a proper categorization of the given phenomenon.

The author discusses various categorizations of spelling variations in social media in general and in Vietnamese in particular, based on the classifications proposed by, inter alia, Võ (2019) and Bùi (2020). Moreover, the author tests these classifications by applying them to the dataset of collected Instagram Stories in late 2023.

The preliminary results show that Bùi's (2020) classification is the most accurate and relevant to the Vietnamese language and (with minor adjustments) could serve as the overall categorization of spelling variations in Vietnamese both in CMC and other registers.

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Unlocking Korean Through Hanja

Kristina Folvarcna (Palacký University Olomouc)

While modern Korean is written in Hangul, the role of Hanja (Chinese characters) remains a significant and often overlooked aspect of Korean language acquisition, especially for non-native learners. In Korean linguistics, it is often regarded as a challenge due to its complexity and the additional memorisation required. However, Hanja plays a crucial role in understanding Sino-Korean vocabulary, which comprises a great portion of the Korean lexicon, as well as in accessing deeper layers of cultural and literary context. This study reconsiders the pedagogical potential of Hanja, especially for Czech-speaking learners whose linguistic background may present both specific challenges and unique advantages when learning Hanja.

This paper explores how Hanja might be more effectively integrated into Korean language education for Czech learners, with attention to vocabulary development, cultural understanding, and learner motivation. Based on a survey conducted among Czech university students of Korean, the study analyses perceptions of Hanja, learning difficulties, and suggestions for improvement. These findings serve as a basis for reflecting on how future learning materials, mainly textbooks, could be designed to meet the specific needs of Czech-speaking students.

Lists and Co-speech Gesture in Japanese

Sofie Ljuboňka (Charles University)

Is there a link between the way people gesture and the ideas they are trying to convey? The present research explores this question through looking at the relationship between types of parallel-marking particles and forms of co-speech gesture in Japanese. The quantitative analysis of annotation data based on videos from NINJAL's multimodal corpus CEJC revealed that while the hypothesized correlation between bounded gesture and complete lists didn't prove to be true, specific gestures might correlate with specific parallel-marking particles.

Session 4A: Economic and Political Strategies

Bridging the Research Divide: Platform Economy and the Future of Work Policy in Asia's Middle Income Countries

Viddy Ranawijaya (University of Erfurt)

The rapid advances of technology in digitalisation and artificial intelligence profoundly affect how people work and engage in business worldwide. This development includes integrating digital technology into work and entrepreneurship through gig/platform work, e-commerce, and online freelancing. While the development has generated jobs, it has also raised concerns about social security and welfare due to the ambiguous nature of the employment relationships. Governments worldwide try to make sense of this future of work (FoW) and design labour and social policies to cope with those challenges. Yet, technology seems to outpace governments and scientists alike. While OECD countries have been extensively studied, research on middle-income countries (MICs)-equally impacted by platform economy shifts-remains limited. This study examines the state of knowledge on Asia's MICs, focusing on platform economy/work (incl. gig work, e-commerce, and online freelancing) and related policies. Asia is chosen due to its relevance given the region's leadership in global tech industries-from India & China's tech industry advancement to Indonesia and the Philippines' vast internet user base. Additionally, region-specific nuances, such as the prevalence of informal economies further underscore the need for contextualized analysis. Through a systematic literature review of scholarly works sourced from the Web of Science and other databases, this study analyses prevailing sentiments, key policy themes, and critical distinctions between the discourse in Asian MICs and mainstream research from OECD nations. Finally, this paper aims to identify research gaps on the FoW and the platform economy, proposing key agendas to advance scholarly understanding in the field.

The Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem in China. Policies, Actors, and Applications to Strategic Sectors

Marco Bonaglia (Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa)

This paper analyzes the development of the artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem in China, focusing on strategic policies, key actors, and applications in industrial sectors.

In a constantly evolving context, China aims to become a global leader in AI by investing heavily in digital infrastructure, big data, renewable energy, and talent development. The paper highlights how the "New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan" (2017) and other national and local initiatives have laid out a roadmap for technological leadership, culminating in the ambitious AI+ Initiative (2024–2025).

China's ecosystem is characterized by multi-level coordination, with over 6,000 local policies referencing AI and a regulatory framework promoting ethical and safe use of the technology. Both state and private enterprises—ranging from national AI champions like Baidu, Tencent, and Huawei to emerging "AI Tigers" such as Zhipu AI and Moonshot AI—play a critical role in driving innovation, often stemming from university incubators like Tsinghua University.

AI is already widely applied across key sectors including smart manufacturing, healthcare, autonomous transport, retail, and public services. Initiatives like Alibaba's City Brain and Tsinghua's virtual hospital illustrate China's advanced and widespread use of AI to support urban efficiency and public health.

Despite significant achievements, China still faces challenges related to regulation, data access, energy sustainability, and talent retention. The Chinese case offers a compelling strategic model for other countries and positions itself as a global innovation laboratory. The international competition between AI models—particularly the Chinese and American paradigms—opens up new scenarios, suggesting that AI will be one of the main arenas of geopolitical and technological rivalry in the near future.

Our research will focus on challenges brought by these new techs and implications to society in China.

Tensions and Potentials of Regional Environmental Collaboration Manifestations in East Asia

Aysun Uyar Makibayashi (Doshisha University)

Regional cooperation takes different forms, processes, and outcomes, depending on the nature, dynamics, and issues, as well as the potential of each region. Existing regional collaboration platforms, regional organizations, and political dialogues have been working to find sustainable and interdisciplinary solutions to the rising impacts of the environmental crisis. Environmental issues have also prompted neighboring countries to establish new mechanisms to address the growing environmental tensions in their own regions.

Japan, South Korea, and China have always struggled to form a formal and norm-binding regional mechanism due to historical, cultural, and political tensions within the region. Those lingering issues also contribute to a deeper understanding of regional readings and political cultures, paving the way for more collaboration on urgent environmental and sustainability issues.

This paper examines the recent manifestations of regional environmental collaboration among these East Asian countries. The first part focuses on the East Asian definition of regional cooperation by examining the geopolitical tensions, cultural clashes, and differing interpretations that have emerged throughout the experiences of East Asian regionalization. The second part focuses on the development and relatively successful phase of regional environmental collaboration, with recent practices. The last part examines the potential for further regionalization of environmental collaboration in East Asia by focusing on the recent experience of digitalization in regional communication and diplomacy during and after the 2019 coronavirus pandemic. While examining digitalization, the paper also analyzes the recent attempts at tripartite regional environmental initiatives. The paper concludes that digitalization and environmentally driven diplomatic communication would further galvanize mutual understanding among neighbors and foster further institutional regionalization in East Asia.

Session 4B: Truths and Social Tensions in South Asia

Counting Backwards? Caste Census, OBC Politics, and the Struggle for Representation in North India

Jiří Krejčík (Metropolitan University Prague)

The renewed momentum around caste enumeration – sparked by the 2023 Bihar caste survey and followed by the BJP-led Union government's recent announcement of a national-level caste census – has brought the politics of counting to the forefront of democratic contestation in India. While the caste survey in Bihar revealed that OBCs and EBCs form over 63% of the state's population, the national announcement marks a strategic shift by a party that had long resisted such exercises. This pivot underscores the growing centrality of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in North Indian electoral politics, not only as a demographic bloc but as a site of ideological and representational struggle.

This paper examines the contradictory logics at play in the current caste census debate: on one hand, the enumeration is framed as a truth-seeking instrument of social justice; on the other, it raises unresolved questions about how backwardness is defined, quantified, and politically mobilised. These tensions reflect deeper anxieties about state technologies of classification, the politics of recognition, and the risk of reifying caste identities. As parties recalibrate their strategies – whether through the language of *hissedari* (fair share) or the promise of proportional representation – the post-Mandal grammar of politics is being rewritten.

Focusing on recent electoral shifts in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and situating them within broader national developments, this paper argues that caste has re-entered the political mainstream, shaping the terrain where identities, truths, technologies, and power intersect in contemporary India.

Soft Tongues, Strong Words: Gendered and Classed Truths in the Urdu-Hindi Divide in Medieval North India

Astik Mukherjee (Presidency University)

Some languages are not merely spoken — they are worn like clothes, judged like gestures, and policed like borders. In the multilingual worlds of late medieval and early colonial North India, Urdu emerged as a symbol of masculine refinement, elite education, and cultural prestige. Hindi, by contrast, was feminized, associated with domesticity, ease, and the untrained tongues of women and the working poor. This paper traces how Urdu and Hindi were gendered and classed not just by their scripts or vocabularies, but by who was imagined to speak them. Women's speech, often mixing idioms and registers, was deemed “soft,” sentimental, or even vulgar, while Persian-trained male elites guarded Urdu's authority through exclusionary norms. Drawing on literary histories and sociolinguistic shifts, this study examines how linguistic hierarchies were formed around ideas of propriety, class mobility, and gendered intelligence. These truths: of who speaks ‘well’ and who speaks ‘wrong’, reveal enduring tensions between accessibility and elitism, femininity and formality. In mapping how the Urdu-Hindi divide became a mirror for social anxieties, the paper argues that language itself was a battlefield where classed and gendered truths were forged, contested, and preserved.

It further explores how these linguistic perceptions shaped pedagogical access, domestic identity, and the cultural legitimacy of speech in both elite and everyday contexts.

Dependency on Native Brokers in Migration from the Indian Subcontinent from Colonial Times to the Present: The Case of Dālāl(s) in Bangladesh

Zbynek Mucha (Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences)

This paper interrogates the persistent figure of the native migration broker, locally known as dālāl, in the facilitation of labour and asylum-related migration from Bangladesh. From the colonial period to the present day, informal brokers have remained central to cross-border mobility from the Indian Subcontinent. Yet, despite their enduring importance, these actors are often framed as inherently exploitative in public discussion, with little attention paid to the structural conditions that shape their roles.

Drawing on ethnographic, multi-sited research conducted in Bangladesh, Poland, and the Czech Republic between 2018 and 2024, and on an analysis of legal frameworks in colonial India and contemporary Bangladesh, the paper offers an alternative reading of migration brokerage. It argues that contemporary governance approaches towards brokers, both in Asia and Europe, are rooted in colonial-era institutions and laws, which sought to control mobility while relying on native intermediaries.

The paper explores how these colonial continuities intersect with more recent developments, including the partial digitalisation of migration management in Bangladesh and the increasing outsourcing of migration control to non-state actors. Together, these forces generate complex tensions: they produce high migration costs, deepen asymmetrical dependencies between migrants and brokers, and contribute to forms of irregularity and vulnerability within migration trajectories.

By revisiting the history of the native brokers and situating them in relation to current migration governance technologies, the paper contributes to a more nuanced understanding of brokerage. It highlights how brokers occupy a space of both necessity and contestation, and how dependency on them is shaped by institutional mistrust, restrictive policy regimes, and state technological failures.

Sacred Truths and Social Tensions: Spirituality, Gender Performance, and the Politics of Hijra Identity in Pakistan

Hyder Ali (Supreme Court of Pakistan)

This paper examines the sacred truths surrounding the construction and performance of Hijra identity in Pakistan and the societal tensions it evokes in contemporary Muslim contexts. It explores how Hijras, a gender-diverse community historically revered for their spiritual powers in South Asia, legitimize their performance of feminine gender through narratives of divine will and sacred myths. Drawing on qualitative research including biographical interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations, the paper argues that Hijra identity is both imposed and self-affirmed: while society prescribes a feminized role to gender-variant children, the community's spiritual narratives—such as those of Mai Nandi—provide an alternative truth that elevates their existence as sacred and divinely ordained.

These truths, however, clash with dominant Islamic interpretations, where gender and spiritual legitimacy are tied to biological sex. This tension becomes evident in the way Hijras negotiate their gender performance between public rituals and private religious practices, often adopting masculine appearances for prayer while embracing femininity in spiritual and social spaces. The paper also critiques contemporary religious fatwas on transgender rights in Pakistan, highlighting how they reproduce binary understandings of sex and obscure the lived realities of Hijras.

By interrogating the interplay of spirituality, gender, and religion, this study contributes to broader debates about how multiple truths are produced, contested, and embodied in South Asian Muslim societies. It argues that Hijras' spiritual self-conception challenges normative binaries of gender and offers insights into how marginalized communities reclaim agency in the face of societal and theological constraints.

Session 4C: Truths and Tensions in Japanese Arts and Media

Hidden in Plain Sight: Utagawa Kuniyoshi and the Visual Politics of Late Edo Japan

Adéla Tůmová (Národní muzeum)

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) is widely recognized for his dynamic woodblock prints of warriors (*musha-e*), but his work also includes a number of historical triptychs that reveal nuanced strategies of visual storytelling under the censorship of the late Edo period. Restrictions on the depiction of historical figures and politically sensitive events continued to shape artistic production well into the 1840s, encouraging artists to adopt ambiguous or symbolic approaches to avoid official sanction.

This paper examines how Kuniyoshi engaged with these limitations by employing coded references, allegorical framing, and the manipulation of image-text relationships. Among other examples, one triptych presents the well-known figures of Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi under altered names, yet their identities remain unmistakable through the inclusion of clan emblems. Another print, ostensibly portraying the legendary Empress Jingū's campaign against Korea, omits names entirely; in fact, it appears to reference Hideyoshi's 16th-century invasion of Korea—a subject politically sensitive in Tokugawa Japan.

Through an analysis of these and other prints, this paper investigates how Kuniyoshi navigated the constraints of censorship while constructing images that offered layered historical commentary. His work reveals the tensions between official narratives and popular memory, and demonstrates how the technologies of woodblock printing allowed for the circulation of alternative or suppressed truths within a tightly controlled visual culture.

Navigating Cultural Tensions: Zainichi Korean Portrayals in Late 20th Century Japanese Film

Eugenio De Angelis (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Post-WWII, Japan's relationship with the Koreans has been fraught with tensions, extending beyond the normalization of diplomatic ties in 1965 with the South. While colonial-era traumas and the "comfort women" issue have generated widely diverging narratives and suppressed truths up to these days, the internal "problem" of Zainichi Koreans (long-term residents in Japan) has emerged as particularly contentious. In line with the reinforcing *nihonjinron* after WWII and its stress on a homogeneous society, the Zainichi, Japan's largest ethnic minority, faced decades of neglect and discrimination.

Until the 1990s, films addressing Zainichi largely mirrored this trend, with rare exceptions. Furthermore, after WWII, cinema played a significant role in cementing stereotypical images of Zainichi as second-class citizens. These stereotypes depicted them as impoverished and uneducated, stemming from exclusion from skilled labor and the Japanese education system. This exclusion, in turn, fueled a second stereotype: a propensity for criminality, amplified by sensationalized media and law enforcement portrayals of crime.

This presentation analyzes three films — *Empire of Kids*, *For Kayako*, and *All Under the Moon* – that challenge and critically engage with these stereotypes in the 1980s and 1990s. This period marked a new wave of migration to Japan from Southeast Asia on one hand, and increasing legal and media recognition of the Zainichi minority on the other. I will explore how these contemporary processes further problematized the existing narratives, and how these films offered alternative "truths" about the Zainichi experience. By giving voice to Zainichi characters in diverse ways, these movies sought to progressively bridge the historical divide between "Class A" Japanese citizens and "Class B" Koreans, highlighting socio-cultural tensions and advocating for a multicultural, or at least non-homogeneous, Japan.

Invisible Violence and Remembered Bodies: Reiko Shimizu's The Top Secret and Yasuo Kazuki's Siberia Series

Mami Fujiwara (Yamaguchi University)

This presentation examines how visual media engage with the memory of state violence as it is inscribed on the human body. Focusing on Reiko Shimizu's science fiction manga *The Top Secret* and Yasuo Kazuki's oil painting series *Siberia*, I explore how each work visualizes "invisible violence" and reveals the structural tension between personal memory and state power.

The Top Secret imagines a technology that scans the brains of the deceased to retrieve their final visual memories. One episode addresses the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing site, where radiation trauma is unknowingly transmitted through food. This revelation illustrates how state-led nuclear policies infiltrate everyday life, creating ethical and political tension. The episode underscores how bodily memory becomes both a record of and a vector for violence, raising questions about privacy, consent, and the ethics of visual access to memory.

Kazuki's *Siberia Series* is rooted in his experience as a Japanese POW detained in Soviet Siberia after World War II. His paintings, abstract yet emotionally charged, convey physical and psychological suffering under extreme conditions. Through silence, voids, and minimalism, Kazuki captures trauma that resists direct representation, engaging with the limits of what can be shown and remembered.

The presentation focuses on three points: 1. The visualization and ethical issues of "unspoken violence" (irradiation, internment); 2. The fragmentation and reconstruction of the body in visual form; 3. The structural tension between state narratives and individual memory.

By placing Shimizu's pop-cultural medium alongside Kazuki's restrained artistic expression, this paper offers a comparative reading of how invisible violence is visualized from postwar to contemporary contexts, and how the body serves as a site of memory, resistance, and ethical reflection.

Human Participation in Digital Justice System: Exploring the Concept of “Human in the Loop” in Psycho Pass (2013)

Phuong Pham (Independent Scholar)

Science fiction has been posing more and more questions about the future of human-machine interactions when society becomes increasingly reliant on technologies. One of the most recent discussions concerns the use of machine judgment in justice and law enforcement, as artificial systems, unlike humans, are presumed to err less due to biases. The Japanese animation series *Psycho Pass* (2013, directed by Naoyoshi Shiotani and Katsuyuki Motohiro) portrays a dystopian society where human citizens now rely on the omnipresent Sybil System to deduce potential criminals from biometrics regulation and promptly execute suspects before crimes occur. Though seemingly excluding human perspectives in law enforcement, the state's Public Security still employs human officers to tackle unexpected real-life complications, as the system might fail to deliver absolute justice due to inexplicable glitches in data processing. Thus, a better understanding of human-machine interactions and co-jurisdictions is vital to overcome this dystopian binary scenario and construct a more collaborative future in technology-driven law enforcement. Building on the rich scholarship *Psycho Pass* enjoys on social justice, this research analyzes the Sibyl System and its applications in human lives via the lens critical posthumanism (specifically the feedback loop theory) by N. Katherine Hayles. In essence, the false utopia of *Psycho Pass* stems from a complete omission of human perspectives and irresponsible over-reliance on AI judgments. Only from regular feedback from humans could AI systems evolve positively instead of perpetuating dystopian scenarios already so ubiquitous. Ultimately, this research calls for a thorough examination of the science fiction genre as data for future analyses of AI impacts on society, a prospective methodology to connect the humanities and informatics in response to the ongoing rise of technology.

Session 4D: Gender, Identity, and the Corporeal in Asia (Book Launch and Roundtable)

Embodied Entanglements: Gender, Identity, and the Corporeal in Asia (Olomouc Asian Studies, Vol. 3)

editors:

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(Alternative Format)

Ideas on the (human) body, gender, and identity lie at the core of many socio-political issues and cultural trends in Asia today, while also inspiring innovative research on artistic expression from Asia's past. By focusing on socio-political as well as cultural issues from diverse geographical and historical contexts, this book highlights complex links and interactions that bind these three interpretative axes. How do bodies become conduits for the expression and negotiation of gender and other identities? What do the lived experiences of women and LGBTQ+ people in Asia reveal about biopolitics, normative expectations, and value systems in different societies? How does art reflect the representation and fashioning of gendered bodies and ambiguous identities? Cutting across the quotidian and the avant-garde, activism and art, violence and pleasure, as well as the intimate and the political, this book sheds new light on Asian cultures and societies, spanning India, Indonesia, Japan, mainland China, Taiwan, and Thailand, affirming thus the region's significance in broader debates on biopolitics, gender, and human dignity.

Open Access:

https://doivup.upol.cz/artkey/doi-990007-0100_Embodied_Entanglements.php

Session 4E: Space, Time, and Societies (Student Session)

Electrifying Inequality: Power, Progress, and Privilege in Travancore through the Lens of Oridathu

Grace Johns (Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit)

The Malayalam film *Oridathu*, released in 1986, shows how a small village in Kerala reacts to the coming of electricity. A local Brahmin landlord brings this change. In one scene, a letter is read out in the village saying electricity might soon arrive. Shekaran, a villager, responds with a mix of wonder and hope. He says, "Technological progress has reached this small village. Good tomorrows to come. Spinning machines with a reel, mechanised mortar and pestle... Who said what a great word Human is!" This line shows how people often greet new technology with dreams and high hopes. But when these changes arrive, they also bring problems. Not everyone gets the same benefits. Who gets access often depends on where they live, who they are, and what power they hold.

This paper uses the film along with historical and empirical sources to study the arrival of electricity in Travancore, a princely state in the southern part of present-day Kerala. Electricity came as part of early twentieth century efforts to modernize. However, it is necessary to ask whether this technological transition was truly inclusive. Did electrification benefit all communities equally, irrespective of caste or class? The deeply embedded spatial and social hierarchies within Travancore significantly shaped patterns of access to electricity. Electrification was not merely a technical process; it was a socio-political event that reflected and reconfigured existing power structures. The pre-existing inequalities between caste groups, rural and urban regions, and varying levels of social and political power were not eliminated by the introduction of electricity. Rather, the process of electrification often served to restructure and reinforce these divisions.

A Legacy of Isolation – Quantifying Socio-Economic Disparities between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Areas of Taiwan

Petra Nepozitkova (National Chengchi University)

In Taiwan, Indigenous Areas are regions with a degree of autonomy designated for indigenous people, predominantly located on the less-developed eastern side of the island. Indigenous Areas are often affected by natural disasters, which calls not only for mapping local social, economic and demographic disparities, but also for surveying the differences between Indigenous Areas and the rest of Taiwan. Despite numerous case studies on vulnerabilities and economic disparities of indigenous villages, there is a need for a systematic mapping and quantification. Thus, this study examines the spatial and statistical differences in socio-economic disparities which also doubles as vulnerability indicators between Indigenous and non-Indigenous village-level census areas, the highest available administrative resolution. It analyses key indicators such as the percentage of children, the percentage of vulnerable ages, educational attainment, illiteracy, and poverty. GIS Systems and statistical analysis will be employed to identify disparities and their spatial clustering patterns, colocation, critical for reducing tensions between areas as well as for the future sustainable development. This research aims to answer two research questions: Are there statistically significant differences in socio-economic vulnerability indicators between Indigenous Areas and non-indigenous areas in Taiwan? How are these vulnerability indicators spatially clustered? Findings will offer practical insights into the spatial distribution of socio-economic disparities and regional differences, which will serve as an important tool for policymakers and local stakeholders for drafting future development strategies, as well as for the first responders to adjust the evacuation and emergency plans.

Historical Narratives and Digital Media in Shaping Chinese Tourism at Lake Baikal

Iuliia Koreshkova (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper examines how historical narratives about Lake Baikal, particularly the widely held notion among Chinese tourists that the lake was once part of ancient Chinese territory and referred to as the "Northern Sea," are actively mobilized to attract and shape Chinese tourism in the Irkutsk region. This interpretation of the past functions as a form of "historical truth" within Chinese cultural discourse and is extensively promoted not only through tourist brochures but also via popular Chinese social media platforms such as WeChat, Xiaohongshu, and Douyin. These digital spaces play a vital role in disseminating and reinforcing nostalgic and culturally resonant images of Baikal, influencing tourist expectations and experiences.

Concurrently, the paper investigates the growth of a Chinese-led informal economy within the local tourism sector. Chinese migrants and entrepreneurs have established businesses in hotels, restaurants, transportation, and excursions, creating a semi-closed economic ecosystem often referred to as a "Chinese bubble." This economic presence, intertwined with cultural narratives and media representations, has generated tensions between local Siberian residents, Chinese business organizers, and the influx of Chinese tourists, raising questions about cultural coexistence and territorial perceptions.

By examining these overlapping social, economic, and cultural dynamics, the study offers insight into how historical "truths" are employed not only as marketing tools but also highlights the complex role of digital media in shaping these narratives and their material consequences. The research contributes to broader discussions on cross-cultural interactions, tourism-driven economic transformation, and the contestation of space in regions marked by historical and geopolitical sensitivities.

Looking for God: The Journey of Becoming a New Person through Faith in God in Contemporary Hanoi

Tuyen Van Le (Palacký University Olomouc)

This study is my PhD project, which explores the process of conversion to Protestant Christianity in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. The central question is how the process of conversion occurs in Hanoi, which is divided into three sub-questions as follows: What factors influence individuals' decisions to convert to Protestantism, and what motivations underlie their choice of religious affiliation with Protestant churches? What roles do Vietnamese Protestant churches play in the conversion process? What are the religious conversion experiences, explicitly focusing on the changes that occur in individuals' lives following their conversion to Protestantism? To answer these questions, data were collected through unstructured and semi-structured interviews with fifty research participants, pastors, and Christians, and participant observation conducted at four Protestant groups in Hanoi. My central argument is that conversion to Protestant Christianity is both the active choice of converts and a product of evangelization provided by Protestant churches.

First and foremost, I provide insights into the reasons and motivation for conversion to Protestantism, in which the context of immigration created a space for religious activities and the possibility of conversion to the Protestant faith. I shed light on the concepts of religious capital and social networks, which can provide a helpful framework for understanding the process through which individuals convert to Protestantism. I also examine the life problems that new converts have experienced as push factors that led them away from their old faith and toward Christianity. Second, I argue that the active role of Protestant churches is a pull factor in the conversion process. Finally, I examine how new converts construct or reconstruct their lives after conversion.

Session 5A: Geopolitics

Resistance, Resonance, and Reciprocity: A Trilateral Agency Framework

James Locovozzi (Palacký University Olomouc)

In Asia's contemporary geopolitical landscape, structurally similar states exhibit strikingly different responses to great power competition between the US and China. This paper introduces a novel trilateral agency framework that explains these variations by revealing how domestic dynamics shape international behavior in ways traditional IR theories cannot capture.

The framework reconceptualizes state agency across three interconnected dimensions. Identity-based agency filters external influence through deep-seated cultural foundations, showing how ethnicity, religion, historical experiences, and collective memory produce distinct interpretive lenses. Stakeholder agency translates these identity-based orientations into political outcomes through the actions of domestic actors who may amplify, negotiate, or resist prevailing sentiments. Strategic agency involves tactical adaptation within these domestic constraints to secure state-level advantages while maintaining autonomy.

Together, these dimensions form a triangular dynamic where each element both influences and is shaped by the others. This approach sheds light on persistent puzzles in Asian international relations: Why do ASEAN states respond so differently to the Belt and Road Initiative despite comparable economic needs? How do divergent historical narratives influence contemporary alignments with China and the United States? Why do some democracies engage closely with China while others remain wary?

By exploring the interplay among identity, stakeholders, and strategic calculation, this framework addresses the complexities of competing social and political narratives in the region. It illustrates how historical legacies, cultural worldviews, and emerging technological dependencies jointly shape state behavior, offering a nuanced lens for analyzing Asia's evolving role in a multipolar global order.

U.S. Coast Guard Diplomacy and Vietnam–U.S. Maritime Security Cooperation in Addressing Sea Level Rise and Ocean Current Shifts: A Climate Geopolitics Perspective

Van Sang Nguyen (The University of Danang)

The accelerating impacts of climate change—particularly sea level rise and shifting ocean currents—are reshaping maritime security landscapes and the geopolitical dynamics of the East Sea. In response, the United States has increasingly integrated climate resilience into its Coast Guard diplomacy, positioning it as a strategic tool to enhance bilateral cooperation with Vietnam. This study adopts a climate geopolitics framework to examine how U.S. Coast Guard diplomacy from 2015 to 2025 has supported Vietnam's capacity to safeguard maritime security amid climate-induced challenges. Using policy analysis and document synthesis methods, the research identifies three key areas of cooperation: (1) maritime–climate surveillance technology sharing, including oceanographic data, satellite imagery, and early-warning systems; (2) development of climate-resilient port and coastal infrastructure, enabling operational continuity in high-risk zones; and (3) joint responses to non-traditional security threats, such as disaster prevention, humanitarian assistance, and search-and-rescue missions. The findings reveal that U.S. Coast Guard diplomacy has acted not only as a mechanism for security capacity-building but also as a platform for integrating climate adaptation into Vietnam's maritime governance. The study recommends strengthening strategic dialogues, establishing a bilateral Climate–Ocean Research Center, and embedding climate risk assessments into Vietnam's maritime spatial planning. By linking maritime security with environmental resilience, this research contributes to the emerging scholarship on climate geopolitics, demonstrating how Coast Guard diplomacy can serve as a dual-function instrument—simultaneously advancing geopolitical objectives and enhancing climate security in contested maritime regions.

Hedging in Southeast Asia: Central and Eastern Europe's Role in Mitigating Regional Tensions

Alfred Gerstl (Central European Institute of Asian Studies)

The geopolitical tensions in Southeast Asia have risen in recent years, with the South China Sea serving as the primary flashpoint. To mitigate these tensions and shield themselves from the risks stemming from the policies of China and the United States more broadly, most Southeast Asian nations – particularly the Philippines and Vietnam – employ a hedging strategy. To avoid becoming dependent on either the U.S. or China, a hedger must promote additional partnerships with small and middle powers. Thus, in principle, European nations, including Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, are highly welcome partners.

This presentation will show that the five Central and Eastern European countries can make small but significant contributions to easing security and economic tensions. To this end, their bilateral relations with the Philippines and Vietnam in the areas of politics and diplomacy, economics, and security will be analyzed from 2015 to 2025.

Theoretically and methodologically, this presentation utilizes an updated hedging concept originally developed by Kuik (2016). Based on Neorealism and Constructivism, it enables the analysis of both foreign policy behavior and bilateral relations.

The Philippines and Vietnam were selected because they are important claimants in the South China Sea. Moreover, the Central European countries have deepened their relations with both countries, not least due to growing labor migration.

The main findings will be, on the one hand, a so far lacking detailed comparative assessment of the relations between Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia with the Philippines and Vietnam. Second, it will show whether and how the Central European countries have contributed to mitigating tensions in the South China Sea and to strengthening the rules-based regional order.

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Green Belt and Road Initiative in Central Asia: the scrutiny and policy implications

Elzbieta Pron

(University of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of Political Science)

In 2023, at the Third BRI Forum, China issued a new BRI strategy, turning to "small yet smart", more technology-oriented and innovative projects as the new face of Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative. Green BRI, a policy framework for cooperation in sustainable and renewable energy, has been a staple in this new BRI.

This research examines how China has engaged in clean energy cooperation via the Green BRI in Central Asia. It first looks at the Green BRI agenda towards the region, secondly – it discusses why (and how) green energy has become the centrepiece of Sino-Central Asian cooperation along the BRI framework, and finally – what policy implications for China and individual Central Asian partner states it bears.

This research argues that Green BRI has primarily served as an "umbrella" term for several bilateral or trilateral projects between China and Central Asia, whereas the genuine Green BRI projects are very limited in number and financing. The region has strived for innovative technologies and distancing itself (politically and technologically) from Russia, therefore China's commitment to cooperation on clean energy is very much in line with local strategies. This research also reveals that although Green BRI is limited as a policy framework, it is valued and received positively in Central Asia, and thus will remain a guiding framework for Sino-Central Asian cooperation.

Session 5B: Forms of Surveillance and Restraints in Asia

The Daily Burden and the securitization of migration: Lived Experiences of Rohingyas in South Asia

Monika Verma (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper examines how the securitization of migration profoundly impacts the everyday lives of Rohingya refugees in South Asia. Drawing on securitization theory and empirical evidence, this study analyzes how security-dominated approaches to refugee management transform daily experiences through movement restrictions, surveillance systems, and social marginalization. The research demonstrates that securitization manifests in routine, everyday practices that systematically undermine dignity, autonomy, and well-being. By analyzing lived experiences across multiple dimensions—physical mobility, economic activity, social relations, and psychological impact—this paper reveals how securitization creates layered forms of everyday precarity that compound the trauma of displacement. The findings contribute to understanding how security frameworks that may appear abstract in policy discussions materialize as concrete, daily hardships for already vulnerable populations.

Governing Through Grids and Mobile Apps: Digital Platforms and the Management of Interethnic Relations in Xinjiang

Alessia Orazzo (Xi'an Jiaotong - Liverpool University)

In contemporary People's Republic of China (PRC), the state's embrace of AI, big data, and digital governance reflects a vision of techno-modernity rooted in centralized control. Our research focus is the investigation of how interethnic relations are being reshaped by the use of technology for governance and surveillance purposes in Xinjiang, being the region a hyper-digitized frontier of these developments. Our focus is in how digital technologies are integrated into traditional governance structures. While the Chinese Party-State is pursuing a dual objective across the whole country - enhancing the quality of life through efficient public service delivery and reinforcing political stability through pervasive surveillance - these goals assume a more intensified, racialized, and intrusive form in XUAR. By analysing the technological development together with the grid-management system, this research adds to existing literature by moving beyond a fragmented analysis of individual surveillance tools and instead foregrounding their integration within a broader governance apparatus. The emphasis on local adaptations illustrates how digital governance is both centrally directed and locally operationalized, particularly in ethnically diverse and politically sensitive regions like Xinjiang.

Drawing on official documents, legal frameworks, investigative reports, and digital ethnographic data, this study presents new evidence of how an emerging model of inter-ethnic relations is being developed in Xinjiang, through the implementation of a "techno-panopticon governance," or "techno-authoritarianism," where advanced algorithmic technologies, such as biometric databases, and smart-governance platforms, are merging with traditional mechanisms like the grid-management system to exert comprehensive control over residents. The result is a redefinition of Han-Uyghur relations through predictive policing, algorithmic profiling, and the normalization of digitally mediated state power.

Harmony or Dystopia? Realities on the ground in XUAR, methodology, epistemology and ethics

Rune Steenberg (Palacký University Olomouc)

What is actually happening inside Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region today and how do we know? After the mass incarceration campaigns and so called re-education camps, things changed again in 2021. Also the public discourse quieted down, but didn't become less polarised. Uyghur organisations have fought to have the atrocities recognised as a genocide, Western governments condemn rights violations and forced labour in the region, while the Chinese authorities have invested heavily into an image campaign known as "Telling the Xinjiang Story Well." This paper asks how we can learn about the current situation in the region in the most methodologically sound and ethical way given the severe restrictions on research in the area and the responsibility to protect the people with and about whom we work.

Anti-communism, anti-intellectualism and censorship practices in claims on North Korean human rights: Tracing general patterns through one recent example

Martin Weiser (Free University Berlin)

The politicization of North Korean Studies and the continued disregard of relevant North Korean information has been criticized for decades. Naturally, these two problems are most salient in North Korea's human rights discourse. Allegations of severe human rights violations and those who voice them usually align with important policy goals of the USA and South Korean conservatives; individual claims by North Korean refugees are frequently preferred over a wider appreciation of the available evidence.

Utilizing the claim that North Korea executes watchers of foreign videos which became dominant over the last decade, this presentation traces general patterns in the discourse and the different anti-intellectual and censorship practices that led to two strictly divided camps on the issue that are especially visible in South Korea. While one camp emphasizes human rights violations based on defector testimonies and explicitly or implicitly demands regime change, the second camp supports ending sanctions and ending the Korean War to allow economic development, claiming this would improve the human rights situation.

In particular, the absence of a technological academic infrastructure in North Korean studies from search engines to databases to general digitization facilitates even today the insulation of these camps and thereby allows the mutual disregard of criticism, new evidence and conclusions without further consequences.

South Korea's National Security Law does not just ban access to most North Korean websites and their archives, but compliance also extends to search engines like Naver refusing to include this content in their search results, while non-state sanctioned efforts to facilitate access to North Korean materials are actively curtailed. Thereby the discourse on North Korean human rights reflects the larger problems of North Korean studies, its polarization, disregard of evidence due to censorship and anti-intellectualism.

Session 5C: Re-discovery of Japan in East Central Europe after 1945 (Organized Panel)

The research of global images of Japan and its transformation through different time periods with significant changes in the international political situation and in Japan has significant results in the last decades, but individual and national studies about the perceptions of the “new Japan” in the region of East Central Europe, the countries under Soviet occupation after 1945 have just been started to be collected and compared regionally. The panel tries to contribute to this transnational research with some of the results of an ongoing Hungarian research project.

After World War II, Japan and East-Central Europe became part of the sphere of influence of the USA and the Soviet Union respectively, which defined the relations (or the lack of relations) between them as they got to the opposite sides of the newly formed bipolar world order. As all the political and cultural contacts established before and during the war were lost and even banned, Japan became again a far and unknown territory for the people of East-Central Europe. The panel aims to present the process of how Japan, the Japanese culture and people were re-discovered during the political, social and cultural context of the period from the late 1950s until the late 1970s in Hungary, and what images were connected to Japan during this re-discovery through political pamphlets, newspaper articles, travelogues, and through translations of Japanese literature. Examining the process of creating images of Japan, the tension between the expectations of the communist state ideology and the effects of the global artistic and cultural trends can be seen with various results, while the efforts to balance these different influences are also noticeable, especially during the changing global situation („detente”) and the emerging global status of Japan in the 1960s.

Perceptions of Japan through literary translations: "progressive" society?

Mária Ildikó Farkas

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)

The paper aims to examine the perceptions of Japan after WWII through the Hungarian translations of Japanese literature and literary reviews by Hungarian critics and writers. These were some of the few available images of Japan and Japanese culture for the public in a period when no direct relation existed between the two countries, and the information about Japan was strictly limited. We can detect the tensions and struggles of translators and literary critics to navigate through the expectations and rules of the communist state ideology and the effects of the „Western” cultural trends in the process of introducing contemporary and classical Japanese literature to the audience.

A “kabuki play” as a tool of implicit criticism in Communist Hungary

Petra Doma

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)

After WWII, Hungarian theatrical life was dominated by strict state control until the 1960s when modern Western plays became allowed to be staged. While no Japanese theatre groups visited Hungary during this period, two Japanese classics were staged by two Hungarian directors. The first of these was *Chūshingura* directed in *kabuki* style by Károly Kazimir in 1972 in Körszínház (Round Theatre). In my presentation, I will introduce Kazimir's direction, arguing that the production differed from the socialist-realist acting style of the period, becoming able to include an implicit criticism against the regime, reflecting the internal tensions of the cracking system.

Introducing Japanese martial arts: philosophy in question

Angelika Pataki-Tóth

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)

Japanese martial arts were some of the major sources of popularizing Japanese culture in Hungary after WWII. The paper intends to show the process of introducing Japanese martial arts in Hungary, with a special attention to the tensions or contradictions concerning the ideological aspects of the philosophy of the martial arts and the official Communist ideology in the perceptions connected to Japanese culture.

The effects of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics on the perceptions of Japan

Noémi Szabó

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary)

The 1964 Tokyo Olympics can be regarded as a turning point in the global perception of post-war Japan. The spectacular presentation and proof of the emerging economic power of Japan and the picture of a fast developing modern country had its effects in Hungary, too. The newspaper articles about Japan partly followed the global trend, and partly tried to form an own opinion about Japan for the first time after WWII in Hungary. The paper tries to present the various pictures of Japan published in the largest and most important „official” daily newspaper of the period, providing an insight into the process of creating images.

Session 5E: Linguistics (3) (Student Session)

Japanese psychomimes and their phonological characteristics

Klára Březinová (Charles University)

This paper discusses Japanese psychomimes, introduces their prototypical features and categorizes them according to Japanese linguists. The aim of this paper is to describe the relationship between the phonological aspect of psychomimes and their emotional chargedness and intensity. A qualitative questionnaire survey was carried out for this purpose where 6 native Japanese speakers were approached to rate 60 most frequently used psychomimes on two emotional axes according to psychologist James Russell. This sample of 60 words was created by averaging the usage rate according to 3 different sources. The words thus rated have been formally analyzed and a correlation matrix was subsequently constructed for all four of their initial syllables. The result is that the relationship between distinctive features and emotional chargedness and arousal was not clear-cut, and the correlation was not demonstrated except in rare cases.

How Southeast Asian Languages Challenge Metaphor Theories: A Case Study of Muna in Indonesia

Rahmatan Idul, Marian Klamer, Aletta Dorst
(Leiden University)

Metaphor is not merely a decorative tool for language; it reflects how humans perceive the world and conceptualize experiences. Much research on metaphor has been based on English and Indo-European languages, which has shaped dominant theories of how metaphors function. However, the cultural and structural diversity of Southeast Asian languages presents challenges to these approaches and exposes the limits of existing assumptions.

This paper focuses on the Muna language of Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia, and in particular on *Palenda*, a distinctive figurative way of speaking used in both artistic and everyday life. *Palenda* is not a single metaphor but a culturally grounded style of expression found in oral tradition, traditional council of elders, traditional wedding processes, ritual exchanges, and daily conversation. It conveys meaning through layered imagery, narrative patterns, and shared cultural knowledge. Three main challenges stand out: (1) metaphors rooted in culturally specific imagery; (2) metaphors embedded in morphological structures; and (3) extended allegories, where figurative meaning unfolds across entire performances or dialogues rather than within isolated phrases.

It argues that existing theories are insufficient and need adaptations that are morphologically sensitive, genre-aware, and culturally grounded. Such revisions not only address current theoretical gaps but also contribute to a more inclusive understanding of metaphor that redefines how we understand the relationship between language, human thought, and culture.

Lexical and Semantic Analysis of feitian (飛天): A Cross-Study of Buddhist Scriptures and Daoist Texts

Wen Xueyu (Ghent University)

Flying devas/deities (generally subsumed under the term fēitiān 飛天 in Chinese sources) have played a vital role in Buddhist texts and iconographic representations. In Chinese grottoes, they were frequently depicted surrounding buddhas, on the ceilings, and in shrines. Typically wearing fluttering robes and holding musical instruments, interacting in various ways with the main icon and with each other. These flying devas have so far received somewhat less scholarly attention in terms of terminological studies and have mainly been dealt with from the perspective of iconography and art history.

This paper examines the lexical and semantic evolution of the term fēitiān 飛天 in Chinese translations of Indic Buddhist scriptures and Daoist classics from the Eastern Jin to the Tang dynasties. The analysis reveals that fēitiān 飛天 appears with notably low frequency in both canonical and non-canonical Buddhist texts, especially when compared with its more frequent occurrence or related imagery in Daoist sources of the same period. By tracing its transformation from a verb phrase meaning "to fly to the heavens" into a fixed nominal expression referring to celestial beings associated with music, offerings, and sacred space, this study highlights how fēitiān 飛天 acquired increasingly symbolic and ritual significance in Buddhist contexts. Meanwhile, Daoist texts developed parallel visions of transcendence through motifs such as "ascension" and "immortal flight," reflecting shared cosmological aspirations despite distinct doctrinal frameworks.

Session 6A: Truths, Tensions, and Small-State Agency: Central Europe's Engagement with Taiwan (Organized Panel)

This panel explores how Czechia and Slovakia, two small Central-European democracies, navigate competing narratives and rising geopolitical tension over Taiwan. Drawing on three case studies, we show how each state deploys soft power, parliamentary diplomacy, and pragmatic cooperation to pursue its interests while reshaping Asia-Europe discourse.

Paper 1 analyses Slovakia's deliberately low-key engagement with Taipei. It identifies a practicality-based strategy: pursue a positive economic and tech agenda, delegate China-critical rhetoric to parliament, and use selective symbolism to limit risk—offering a blueprint for small states seeking Taiwan ties without Beijing's ire.

Paper 2 zooms in on Czech Senate President Miloš Vystrčil's 2020 delegation to Taipei—an unprecedented act of norm entrepreneurship that publicly clashed with President Miloš Zeman's pro-Beijing stance. Combining frame analysis of political discourse with EU-level tracing, it shows how a single symbolic visit amplified democratic-values rhetoric at home and modestly raised Taiwan's salience in Brussels debates.

Paper 3 maps Taiwan's soft-power outreach in Czechia. Desk research and interviews reveal a tight circle of like-minded Czech elites who both project and absorb Taipei's messaging, creating an echo chamber that reaches policy circles more than the wider public.

Together, the papers illuminate how small European states leverage soft-power networks, parliamentary diplomacy, and pragmatic ambiguity to reshape the regional conversation on China and Taiwan. They engage ACAS 2025 theme by interrogating truths (competing narratives about cross-Strait relations), tensions (between domestic actors, China, and the EU), and—implicitly—technologies of influence, from digital public diplomacy to media framing. The panel's comparative lens offers fresh insight into the possibilities and limits of small-state agency amid Asia's evolving geopolitical landscape.

Discreet Diplomacy: Slovakia's Quiet Pivot Toward Taiwan in the 2020s

Kristína Kironská (Palacký University Olomouc)

Against a backdrop of accelerating geopolitical tensions across the Taiwan Strait, in the early 2020s, Slovakia has quietly cultivated one of the region's warmest working relationships with Taipei—without provoking a diplomatic clash with Beijing. This paper situates Slovakia within the small group of Central and Eastern European “vanguard” states that intensified contact with Taiwan, yet it highlights Bratislava's distinctive, practicality-based pathway.

The paper traces three interlocking practices that together form Slovakia's engagement model. First, cabinet ministries promote a “positive agenda” focused on trade, research and development, and digital-economy cooperation—advancing technologies of mutual benefit while studiously avoiding China-related framing. Second, sharper democracy and human-rights critiques of the PRC are shifted to the Parliament, allowing ministers a degree of plausible deniability and dispersing potential backlash. Third, Bratislava sprinkles in minor symbolic gestures (e.g. co-launching a commemorative China-CEE envelope) to signal measured autonomy without headline-grabbing provocation. This calibrated approach delivers tangible upsides: a lower risk of PRC retaliation, steady progress in selected agendas, and minimal domestic polarisation. Yet it comes with trade-offs. Taiwan's profile in Slovak public opinion remains modest, and the strategy's reliance on low-visibility diplomacy leaves it vulnerable to electoral turnover in both Taipei and Bratislava.

By unpacking how Slovakia balances truths about democratic solidarity with the tensions of great-power rivalry—and by showing how policy entrepreneurs leverage elite forums, parliamentary debate, and niche tech projects to thread that needle—the paper offers a transferable frame for small-state agency in an era of fragmented social narratives and post-truth geopolitics. Anticipating the post-2024 political landscape, the study concludes that Slovakia's “quiet-pragmatic” template may slow but is unlikely to vanish, providing a cautionary benchmark for other states that seek deeper Taiwan ties without courting overt confrontation.

Contesting Truths, Managing Tensions: Lessons from the Czech Senate's Taiwan Mission

Renata Westlake (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper analyses how a single, highly symbolic act by a small EU member state reverberated across domestic and European debates on China. In August 2020, Czech Senate President Miloš Vystrčil led an unprecedented parliamentary delegation to Taiwan, openly defying President Miloš Zeman's long-standing pro-Beijing stance. Using this episode as a focused case study within a broader dissertation on Czech presidential discourse about China, I ask: *How did Zeman and Vystrčil compete to set the media agenda on China–Taiwan relations? Which frames dominated, and with what resonance? Did the Czech initiative travel beyond Prague to shape discussion at the EU level?*

Methodologically, I combine qualitative frame analysis with quantitative content coding of 2020 statements, interviews, and speeches by both politicians, complemented by a corpus of Czech media articles. Media tone, volume, and framing are triangulated with a qualitative assessment of alignment. To trace European diffusion, I examine European Parliament debates, committee reports, and major EU-wide media for explicit references to the Czech case.

Findings show two starkly opposed frames: Zeman depicted the trip as an economically reckless provocation, whereas Vystrčil foregrounded sovereignty, democratic values, and continuity with the late Jaroslav Kubera's unrealised mission. Czech media largely amplified Vystrčil's narrative, especially in quality dailies, while tabloids accentuated elite conflict. In Brussels, the visit became a touchstone in EU-Taiwan deliberations, cited in plenary speeches and policy drafts, thereby modestly elevating Taiwan's salience without precipitating immediate policy change.

The episode illustrates how a small state can act as a norm entrepreneur through symbolic parliamentary diplomacy and media leverage, Czechia nudged a sensitive issue higher on the European agenda despite its limited material power. The study contributes to debates on small-state agency, parliamentary diplomacy, and the interplay between domestic contestation and multilevel agenda setting.

Taiwan and the Czech Republic's Relationship Through the Lense of Its Soft Power Processes

Klára Schwarzová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Over the past five years Taiwan has broadened its footprint in the Czech Republic—even in the absence of formal diplomatic ties—by deploying a carefully calibrated mix of cultural, economic, and digital soft-power tools. This Ph.D. project investigates the mechanisms, motivations, and reach of that campaign. Desk research, backed by semi-structured interviews with the main actors, analysis of policy papers, parliamentary minutes, media stories, and social-media outreach, reveals a compact, like-minded circle of Czech politicians, entrepreneurs, and opinion-makers who serve as key conduits for Taipei's messaging.

The initial desk research suggests that Taiwan has created a portfolio of Czech targets that can be easily reached due to their like-mindedness that allow Taipei to bypass traditional diplomatic channels. However, the same actors repeatedly occupy centre stage at forums and press events, suggesting a closed feedback loop in which influence circulates among familiar faces while only partially filtering into the broader public sphere. As the lines blur between those projecting influence and those receiving it, the project asks: How sustainable is a strategy that relies on a limited elite network? Which narratives about Taiwan gain traction beyond Prague's political salons, and which stall?

By mapping connections, tracing message diffusion, and gauging public visibility, this research disentangles the architecture of Taiwan's Czech outreach. Preliminary findings highlight both the agility and the limits of small-state soft power: targeted, tech-driven diplomacy can quickly generate goodwill and collaborative ventures, but its impact remains vulnerable to domestic electoral turnover and shifting media cycles. The analysis contributes to wider debates on how public-diplomacy, elite gatekeepers, and contested narratives interact to shape contemporary transnational relationships.

Session 6B: Storytelling Technologies: Changing Landscapes and Mythologies in Southeast Asia (Organized Panel)

The panel presentations reflect on Southeast Asian landscapes, natural and urban, that are imbued – through storytelling, rituals, architecture, and otherwise – with spiritual and political significance and power. We focus particularly on the affinity and interaction between the present-day “development” of landscape and concurrent developments in storytelling; on how changing landscapes and mythologies reflect or inspire each other. We are interested in how old and new narratives or forms of storytelling are employed and reinvented to cope with, justify, or undermine the “development” of landscape. This often includes the destruction or radical transformation of the natural environment and the lives of humans and (other) animals. Storytelling – from everchanging traditional forms to street art and the social media – can be seen as a “technology” that is like, and works in tandem with, other technologies, from bulldozers and monumental architecture to urban gardening in poor neighbourhoods. Our case studies show how the tensions between different narratives and their “truths” (as construed in the call for papers) relate to (or are part of) the transformation of natural/human lifeworld, with all their tensions, violence and destruction. The presentations are based on recent research in Indonesia (in the Jogja sultanate, where the power of the monarchy is reasserted by rebuilding/reinventing the city as a UNESCO World Heritage site) and Malaysia (among the indigenous, originally forest-dwelling Kensiu, where storytellers are compelled to narrate new, fragmented narratives that echo the destruction of nature). At these sites, in these landscapes, the researchers, with their baggage of “truths” and technologies, find themselves captivated by and engaged in, even complicit in, the storytelling that relates to the lived environment. The panel thus also shows how, as one inhabits a landscape, one is faced with, and adds one’s story to, a tense multiplicity of “truths.”

How to (Re)Build a Palace: Storytelling, Architecture and Monarchy in Jogja, 2025

Jan Mrázek (National University of Singapore)

The Indonesian city of Jogja has been undergoing aggressive “revitalisation” and “rebuilding.” Javanese mystical stories and cosmologies, local history, and new narratives of “(world) heritage” and “development” have been inventively recomposed to justify the urban transformation, which includes the “cleaning” of iconic areas, “rebuilding” of “original” walls, removal of people, and the annihilation of whole neighbourhoods. The narrative-mystical-architectural megaproject reasserts the centrality of the Sultan’s palace and his power. Other stories are told to undermine it.

In Jogja, I was preparing to perform the traditional *wayang* (puppet theater) story *Babad Alas Mertani*, “The Clearing of the Mertani Forest.” The frightening forest, cleared by the royal Pandhawa brothers, turns out to be a spirit palace. It becomes the new abode of the Pandawas. The narrative resonates with Javanese histories (*babad*) of civilisation, where the founding of a kingdom begins with the clearing (*babad*) of a forest. As I was adapting the story for my performance, my thinking was shaped by listening to diverse narratives about the ongoing urban transformation in Jogja. In my retelling of the *wayang* story, the clearing of the forest and the establishment of the Pandhawas’ palace came to resonate with the “rebuilding” of Jogja. The animals’ perspectives were foregrounded, I, the puppeteer/scholar, was killed by the ghost of a boar, who felt that it is the puppeteer with his wayangly storytelling and scholarship – “truths” (as per the call for papers) – that are part of the technology of political power.

Performing *wayang* in Jogja, I intervened in the flow of storytelling there. It was a methodological move, away from being a detached observer, and toward an experiential, participatory knowledge of storytelling and the city. My conference presentation/narrative is thus a story of many intertwined stories, in which I, as the scholar/puppeteer, am both the storyteller and a character.

The River Tells a Different Story: Nrima (Acceptance) as Soft Resistance in Yogyakarta

Preciosa De Joya (Singapore University of Social Sciences)

In the name of a Philosophical Cosmological Axis tracing a spiritual connection between the sacred mountain Merapi, Kraton, and the South Seas, an *imaginary* line (*garis imajiner*) is radically gentrifying the city of Yogyakarta. Designated by UNESCO as Intangible World Heritage, this line is being given a physical form through urban interventions that erect walls and re-draw borders that marginalize, evict, and displace local communities. There is anger and sarcasm on social media and occasional protests along Malioboro's shopping street, but many locals—even those whose families have lived for generations on Sultan (-owned) Grounds—adhere to the popular dictum, *nrima ing pandum* (accept what is given). This submission to one's fate is consistent with the widely recognized Javanese cultural tendency to value social harmony and avoid overt conflict, but also manifests their fear of *kuwalat*, a curse believed to befall those who challenge the Sultan's rule.

In exploring the city and listening to people's stories, however, I discover voices and gestures—technologies of storytelling practices and infrastructural projects—that softly push back against this dehumanizing urban transformation. Residents living along the banks of the Code and Opak rivers and beyond are re-imagining the axis not as a straight line but as a network of meandering tributaries. Through cleansing rituals and artistic interventions, they remind people that rivers, too, and their lives as precarious urban dwellers, carry meaning, memories, and spiritual force.

Drawing on ethnographic encounters, my presentation explores practices of storytelling and artistic interventions, and how the river and its flows inform these counter narratives, in both content and form. I argue that what emerges from the fluidity of these practices is a re-definition of *nrima*—not as capitulation, nor as protest marked by anger or the urgency of a demand, but as art critic Manshur Zikri says, as celebrating the present through thinking, remembering *lirih lenteng* (softly lying down).

Kensiu Cultural Storytelling amid Environmental Destructions

Said Effendy Bin Said Iziddin (University of Cambridge)

The resettlement village of Kampung Orang Asli Lubuk Legong has been home to a group of Malaysian Indigenous people (Orang Asli) of the Kensiu ethnicity since the 1970s. It sits on the fringes of the Ulu Muda Forest Complex, which was traditionally home to the Kensiu people before "development" intervened. Today, the Ulu Muda forest they once knew has been fragmented by logging activity. In light of this reality, cultural storytellers (*bejorbang*) now tell different tales to the young—tales inspired by, and deeply shaped by, the "disturbed" landscapes that surround them.

Before social media became the normalized form of entertainment, listening to stories from the *bejorbang* was what kept the Kensiu people awake well into the night. A *bejorbang* would share mystical narratives of the community, both to appease cosmic spirits and to educate the young on important community values. These stories often drew upon the surrounding landscapes (i.e., hills, rivers, etc.) as starting points for recounting mytho-historical tales. Today, as these landscapes are rapidly destroyed, the "truth" of these myths is challenged by the absence of tangible, evidence-bearing places. Community stories are still shared but, as I would argue, like the fragmented forest patches, these stories too echo environmental destruction.

On most days, to safeguard the community from untamed spirits (*sarok*), the *bejorbang* will abruptly end his story when he senses the dissatisfaction of elder spirits. *Bejorbang* stories now also serve as warnings (*pantok*) to young Kensiu about the *sarok* of these "disturbed" landscapes—and perhaps, even to lead people away from the forests.

My conference presentation is a recounting of my ethnographic encounters listening to Kensiu cultural storytelling, and an exploration of how this storytelling "technology" now faces tensions with older Kensiu stories and spectres—tensions that manifest through the environmental destruction surrounding this resettlement village.

Session 6C: Multilayered Vernacularization of Civil Society, Democracy, and Nationalism in Vietnam (Organized Panel)

This panel explores the vernacularization of democracy, civil society, and nationalism in Vietnam, examining how these global concepts are reinterpreted and reshaped within local cultural, historical, and political contexts. In Vietnam, where a single-party state governs amidst rapid socioeconomic transformation, these concepts are not merely adopted but actively reconfigured through vernacular practices, discourses, and institutions. The panel investigates how Vietnamese actors—state, intellectuals, activists, and citizens—negotiate these ideas, blending global norms with indigenous values and local ideas.

The first paper traces how civil society as one of the most sensitive political concepts in contemporary Vietnam has been vernacularized over the period of Doi Moi, which opened the country to global influences while maintaining strict state control. The second paper analyzes the adaptation of democratic ideals by placing Hồ Chí Minh's political thought in dialogue with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theories of the social contract, general will, and inequality and argues that Ho Chi Minh political thought embodies a process of political education aimed at genuine empowerment. The third paper critically questions methodological nationalism in the Vietnamese context which is rooted in the country's socialist framework, anti-colonial history, and ongoing nation-building efforts, prioritizing the nation-state as the primary lens for understanding social processes. The panel illuminates the dynamic interplay between global concepts and local realities. By focusing on Vietnam, it contributes to broader discussions on how non-Western societies adapt and transform universalist ideologies. The panel underscores the agency of Vietnamese actors in crafting unique political imaginaries, offering insights into the complexities of globalization and cultural specificity in shaping modern political thought.

The Transplant and Localization of Civil Society as a Political Concept in Vietnam

Thiem Bui (Malmö University, Stockholm Center for Global Asia)

This paper examines the transplantation and localization of the concept of civil society in Vietnam, a single-party socialist state where global political ideas are reshaped by local historical, cultural, and political contexts. Civil society, often associated with Western liberal frameworks of autonomous civic engagement, has been introduced to Vietnam through global discourses on development, human rights, and governance. However, its adoption is not a straightforward transfer but a complex process of reinterpretation, shaped by Vietnam's Confucian traditions, socialist ideology, and post-colonial nation-building.

The paper traces how civil society has been vernacularized in Vietnam since the Đổi Mới reforms of 1986, which opened the country to global influences while maintaining strict state control. The emergence of non-governmental organizations, community-based groups, and online activism as nascent forms of civil society, often operating within state-sanctioned boundaries has to navigate a delicate balance, adapting global norms of civic participation to align with local values of communal solidarity, moral duty, and loyalty to the nation. The state, in turn, reinterprets civil society as a tool for "socialist-oriented" development, co-opting or regulating civic spaces to ensure alignment with national priorities. It argues that Vietnam's civil society is not a mere transplant but a localized construct, blending global ideals with indigenous practices and state oversight. This study contributes to broader discussions on the vernacularization of political concepts in non-Western contexts, emphasizing the agency of Vietnamese actors in redefining civil society within the constraints of a socialist political system.

Toward a Vietnamese Conception of Democracy

Hong Do (Central European University)

This paper explores the foundations of a Vietnamese conception of democracy by placing Hồ Chí Minh's political thought in dialogue with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theories of the social contract, general will, and inequality. While Rousseau is a key figure in Western democratic theory, Hồ represents a postcolonial, revolutionary voice that reimagines democracy through Vietnam's historical experiences of anti-colonial struggle and socialist transformation. Rousseau's democratic vision centers on collective self-rule, rooted in a social contract that overcomes inequality born from private property and social hierarchy. His idea of democracy demands active civic participation and a shared commitment to the general will. Hồ Chí Minh, though not a systematic theorist, articulated a democratic vision grounded in anti-imperialism, national self-determination, and mass mobilization. His conception of democracy emphasized social equality, popular participation, and unity between the Communist Party and the people, rather than formal electoral procedures. While echoing Rousseau's emphasis on collective autonomy, Hồ's ideas are firmly embedded in Vietnam's material and historical context, particularly colonial domination and class exploitation.

This paper argues that Hồ's thought represents a distinct, non-Western democratic tradition that diverges from Rousseau's abstract universalism by grounding legitimacy in revolutionary solidarity and national liberation. While some critics view Hồ's model as paternalistic, this paper contends it embodies a process of political education aimed at genuine empowerment. By comparing Rousseau and Hồ, the paper highlights an alternative democratic imagination that challenges liberal imperialism and expands the global discourse on democracy through a focus on historical experience and social justice.

The Power of Staying Put: Khmer Krom Epistemologies and the Politics of Rootedness in South Vietnam

An Nguyen (University of Vienna, Ghent University)

This paper examines the politics of immobility as resistance among the Khmer Krom, an ethnic Khmer minority indigenous to Vietnam's Mekong Delta. Dominant Vietnamese nationalist historiography portrays the Mekong Delta as an "always-already Vietnamese" space, erasing Khmer Krom autochthony through narratives of socialist developmentalism, state-led collectivization, and internal migration designed to "settle" and integrate peripheral regions. Against this, the Khmer Krom assert a transborder identity that defies fixed territorial boundaries and resists being folded into a homogenized national identity.

By focusing on "staying put" as both an epistemological and political refusal, this paper challenges dominant interpretations that equate immobility with passivity or backwardness. Drawing on primary sources from the Khmer Krom Community Archive and an oral history interview with a Khmer Krom artist, the study reframes "staying put" as a form of sedentary resistance and decolonial praxis. It situates the Khmer Krom's everyday acts of cultural persistence as subtle yet powerful acts of defiance to dominant temporalities and spatial regimes, resisting through "weapons of the weak" rather than overt confrontation or mobility through James C. Scott's concept of infrapolitics and Johannes Fabian's critique of the denial of coevalness. Thus, spatial rootedness in the postcolonial Southeast Asian context emerges as a place-based epistemology resisting the erasure, displacement, and absorption imposed by the state's homogenizing forces, calling for a rethinking of global history beyond mobility bias and methodological nationalism.

Session 6E: Rebellion, Perseverance, and Dissent (Student Session)

Widowhood and Sectarian Power in the White Lotus Rebellion

Pavel Brada (Charles University)

This study examines the role of widowhood in the White Lotus Rebellion (1796–1804). It argues that widowhood functioned as a structurally and symbolically significant status through which women accessed sectarian power, legitimacy, and visibility. Widows were positioned at the intersection between kinship and sectarian relations, enabling them to serve as anchors within the rebel households. The study builds on primary source evidence showing that women were active and important participants in the White Lotus Rebellion. The sectarian hierarchy, emphasising time spent in the sect rather than age and gender, offered social mobility for many women. Thus, while the Qing ideology idealized the chaste widow as a paragon of moral virtue, the sectarian world of the White Lotus offered widows alternative paths to authority, especially in the moments of succession or crisis.

The analysis suggests recurring patterns – widows tend to appear in greater volumes in the sources, often inheriting leadership roles, mobilizing family networks, or invoking grief as a justification for rebellion. These patterns will be demonstrated on several reconstructed cases of female rebels. By emphasizing widowhood as a politically charged status, this study aims to contribute to the study of gender, kinship, and sectarianism in the mid-Qing period, and to offer new insight into how women navigated and reshaped the moral and political order of their time.

Contemporary Lengger Mask Dance and Its Perseverance in the Wonosobo Context

Musokhib Musokhib (Palacký University Olomouc)

Lengger Mask Dance is a dance performed in pairs between the lengger (female dancer) and the pengibing (male mask dancer) from Wonosobo, Central Java. This dance remains popular to this day, as a medium of social practices in society or as entertainment. The masks are considered sacred as a medium for the spirit of danyang (village guardians) to possess the dancers, manifesting as dancers falling into trance during the performance. The history of the lengger mask dance can be traced to the early 20th century but the dance was temporarily forbidden in 1960 as it was associated with communism, and five years after the communist purge of 1965 the New Order government started reconstructing it.

Informed by gender theory and interpretations of the 1965 events against the backdrop of gender dynamics, specifically cross-gender dance (Sunardi 2009) and perceived immorality and cruelty of communist women (Wieringa 2000), this contribution addresses the research question of how interpretations of the dance today in different contemporary lengger mask dance groups in Wonosobo have been impacted by these developments.

This paper presents preliminary results from my field research in Wonosobo, drawing on my engagement with the dancers and on conversations and interviews with group members and different stakeholders, exploring how this dance survived after the 1965 period, and how this dance is still attractive to the younger generation.

National Truths and Political Tensions: A Comparative Study of Dissent in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan (1985–1992)

Jan Brzobohatý (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper compares the development of dissent movements in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan from the beginning of Gorbachev's perestroika to the immediate post-Soviet transition. It explores how dissident actors constructed competing "truths" about national identity, legitimacy, and historical justice, and how these discourses shaped both internal dynamics within each movement and broader societal tensions.

Drawing on primary and secondary sources, the analysis identifies key ideological and organizational differences across the three countries. In Georgia and Azerbaijan, dissident movements were shaped by charismatic leaders—Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Abulfaz Elchibey—whose rise to power revealed tensions between initial democratic ideals and subsequent political authoritarianism. In contrast, Armenian dissent was more fragmented and centered around multiple actors and groups, such as the Karabakh Committee, allowing it to avoid excessive personalization of power and maintain influence beyond the transition.

The paper further investigates nationalist rhetoric and its role in the exclusion or inclusion of minority dissidents, particularly in Georgia and Armenia, where ethnic tensions escalated into violent conflict. The relationship between dissent and religious institutions is also discussed, ranging from strategic cooperation (Armenia, Georgia) to secular distance (Azerbaijan).

By examining how different dissident movements constructed national "truths" and navigated post-Soviet political realities, this paper contributes to understanding how political legitimacy, memory, and identity were contested and redefined in the South Caucasus. The findings suggest that the perceived authenticity of nationalist truths often served as a tool of mobilization, but also as a source of internal fragmentation and regional instability.

Session 7A: Asia Seen from Europe

Pockets of positive attitudes towards China within the EU: The cases of Czechia, Latvia, and Greece

Richard Turcsanyi (Palacký University Olomouc)

The approach of the EU towards China has undergone significant shifts in recent years, with EU policymakers now increasingly recognizing China as primarily a strategic rival. This perception is mirrored in predominantly negative public opinion of China across the EU. However, not everyone within the EU sees China negatively. Czechia is an example of a country where China is a politicized issue and various sections of society differ greatly in their views. Indeed, especially people with anti-systemic political preferences tend to have more positive views of China. In Latvia, there are large differences along the linguistic line, with Russian speakers being substantially more positive. Yet even Latvian speakers often see China as an economic opportunity - an image that had largely disappeared in much of the EU. Finally, Greece has more positive views of China overall than almost any other EU member. Interestingly, the views of China are quite homogeneous among various social and political groups in Greece. The paper will examine these three case studies that appear to defy the trend of Sino-skepticism in the EU. The cases were selected based on a detailed analysis of public opinion surveys conducted between 2020-2025 in 16 EU countries. The authors further explore these cases through interviews and examination of primary and secondary sources. Overall, the paper demonstrates that there are still sections of societies within the EU that diverge in some aspects from the overall negative attitudes towards China due to a complex interplay of domestic factors and contextual conditions. Our findings suggest a framework that can be applied to other EU members and can be used by both scholars and policymakers when addressing China's narrative and ideational challenges to the EU.

Preliminary Study on the Portrayal of the Belt and Road Initiative in Slovak Periodicals

Maria Istvanova (Slovak Academy of Sciences)

Since its launch in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has served as a platform for fostering cooperation between China and countries along the historical Silk Road and beyond, promoting new trade routes and mutual economic growth. The increasing engagement between China and several European countries has drawn significant attention from both international and national media. Slovakia, one of the first countries to sign a memorandum of understanding with China in 2015, saw its leading digital periodicals begin to cover the BRI and its associated activities.

This paper examines the portrayal of the BRI in three major Slovak periodicals—Pravda, SME, and Denník N—to assess how the initiative was presented to the general public in Slovakia. Using a pilot dataset of articles published from 2013 to 2018, the study presents preliminary findings and tests methods for analysing media representation of the BRI in the early stages of its implementation. The study has three main objectives: to analyse the frequency of BRI-related articles from 2013 to 2018, to assess their distribution across the selected periodicals, and to identify the key themes and topics associated with the BRI in Slovak media discourse.

Cross-Cultural Human Capital Management: A Study of Polish-Japanese Enterprises and Central European Economic Power

Olga Barbasiewicz (SWPS University)

This paper examines the complexities of human capital management within Polish-Japanese enterprises, a critical area given Central Europe's burgeoning economic influence and the imperative for deeper Japanese engagement with the region. The analysis delves into the multifaceted challenges arising from economic disparities between established and emerging markets, which significantly impact investment strategies and talent retention.

A core focus is placed on dissecting communication challenges that frequently emerge in cross-cultural business environments, highlighting how differing linguistic nuances and communication styles can impede effective collaboration and managerial practices. Furthermore, the study explores the implications of diverse perspectives on organizational structures and decision-making, emphasizing the need to reconcile varied approaches to work ethic, hierarchy, and innovation.

Finally, the paper addresses the inherent cultural clashes that can manifest in daily operations, from negotiation tactics to employee motivation, and their profound impact on human resource strategies. By shedding light on these interwoven dynamics, this research aims to provide valuable insights for fostering more effective and harmonious Polish and Central European-Japanese business partnerships, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of global economic integration.

Session 7B: Poetry as Social Technology in Medieval East Asia (Organized Panel)

Across the medieval centuries, poetic composition emerged throughout the Sinitic ecumene not merely as a refined art form but as a crucial medium for performing elite power and shaping social identities. Far from being a purely aesthetic pursuit, poetry became a privileged site for literary figures and institutions to shape and contest the political, moral, and gendered order of their times. This panel examines poetry as a form of social technology across different polities and textual communities in post-Tang East Asia, foregrounding how poetic production and circulation encoded socio-political legitimacy, gendered subjectivities, and alternate visions of life. How did poetic discourse reflect and reshape conceptions of gender, status, and moral values? In what ways did poetry support or subvert ideological hierarchies? Can editorial and performative practices around poetry be understood as technologies of power and identity?

In the first paper, Samantha Audoly explores the evolving poetic persona of the Ise Grand Shrine Priestess, Princess Kishi (929-985), as reshaped through successive imperial anthologies of vernacular poetry, revealing shifts in gendered authority under male editorial control in late Heian Japan. In the second paper, Massimiliano Canale examines the ci song lyrics of Liu Yong (ca. 987-1053), analyzing how his erotic verses articulated a competing vision of "social truth" in tension with Northern Song Confucian orthodoxy. In the third paper, Dario Minguzzi investigates anecdotal accounts surrounding a poem by early Koryŏ scholar Ch'oe Yak (fl. early 12th century), tracing how poetic expertise functioned as a means of negotiating historical memory and elite identity. Together, these papers propose a reframing of poetry's constitutive role as an active technology for negotiating cultural and sociopolitical tensions, and through which truth itself was imagined and contested in the literary sphere of premodern East Asia.

Framing the Feminine Poetic Persona: 'Truth' by Editorial Technologies and the Imperial Anthologies' Representations of Saikū no Nyōgo

Samantha Audoly (University of Bologna)

Saikū no Nyōgo (929–985), also known as Princess Kishi, served as Imperial Priestess of Ise and later became an imperial consort. One of the Thirty-Six Poetry Immortals, her poems were frequently included in the imperial anthologies compiled by her contemporaries, from the *Shūi Wakashū* (*Collection of Gleanings*, 1005) onward. Her cultural significance is also attested by the widespread modern scholarly view that she was the historical model for Rokujō in the *Genji monogatari* (ca. 1008). Most of her poems included in these anthologies center on love; however, I deem it significant that in the *Shūi Wakashū* only a minority of hers are love poems, whereas in the latest anthologies all included poems focus on love.

This paper examines both Saikū no Nyōgo's poems as a form of social technology shaping her poetic persona, and the editorial strategies behind their selection in the *Shūi Wakashū*, *Goshūi Wakashū* (*Later Collection of Gleanings*, 1086), *Shinkokin Wakashū* (*New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, 1205), *Shokugosen Wakashū* (*Later Collection Continued*, 1251), and *Shokukokin Wakashū* (*Collection of Ancient and Modern Times Continued*, 1265). Drawing on theories of performativity (Butler), gendered-canon construction (Yoda), transformative reception (Hellekson, Busse) and post-structuralist perspectives (Kristeva, Barthes), I argue that while her own poetic persona reflects and sponsors a conception of love and femininity arguably shaped by her service as Ise Imperial Priestess, the male compilers of the anthologies (such as Emperor Kazan, 968-1008, Fujiwara no Michitoshi, 1047-1099, Fujiwara no Teika, 1162-1241, and Fujiwara no Tameie, 1198-1275) mediated her poetic identity to encode a gendered view of femininity, reflecting the ideological devaluation of femininity from the late Heian (794-1185) through the Kamakura period (1185–1333).

Romance or Politics? Tensions Between Alternative Views of Life in Liu Yong's Erotic Song Lyrics

Massimiliano Canale (University of Naples "L'Orientale")

The practice of the song lyric (*ci* 詞) by the scholar-officials of the Northern Song (960-1127) often involved a potential conflict between the erotic nature of a poetic genre based on interactions between authors and courtesans, and, on the other hand, the authors' need to preserve their reputation as upright Confucians and statesmen. These tensions are particularly evident in the songbook of Liu Yong 柳永 (987?-1053?), who, unlike most other elite lyricists at the time, explicitly contrasted the lifestyle of the official with that of the libertine, lamenting the difficulty of reconciling the two and even postulating a preference for the latter. This paper aims to explore Liu's use of erotic lyrics as a tool, or immaterial "technology," intended to assert a vision of life—a "truth"—alternative to the orthodox one shared by the Confucian elite. Within this alternative vision, the private pursuit of pleasure is elevated above the fulfillment of the official's public duties, vividly illustrating the conflict between the two identities assumed by the poetic self—that of the Confucian scholar-official and that of the libertine. I will also investigate how Liu Yong uses song lyrics to question some fundamental values connected to the scholar-official's career, instead prioritizing the joys of the entertainment milieu. To a certain extent, the poet thus seems to implicitly suggest a redefinition of the social hierarchy, granting new dignity to certain classes traditionally considered inferior in the Confucian system, particularly courtesans, while simultaneously downgrading the political establishment. It is no coincidence that the representation of courtesans in Liu's songbook is enriched with a personal dimension and psychological depth largely absent until then in the literati song lyrics—or that traditional criticism has often accused Liu of being a scholar-official who betrayed his own class.

Historical Truths, Narrative Tensions: Reframing Poetry as Social Technology at the Koryŏ Court

Dario Minguzzi (Sapienza University of Rome)

Ch'oe Yak (fl. early 12th cent.), a member of an established scholarly clan, passed the civil service examination and pursued a rewarding career under King Yejong (r. 1105–1122) at the Koryŏ court on the Korean peninsula. Curiously, unlike most early Koryŏ elites, his extant biography is strikingly terse on his official training and career, serving instead as a discursive space for negotiating his identity through Confucian erudition and poetic expertise. This paper examines the textual traces of Ch'oe Yak's account across annals, biographies, literary anthologies, and anecdotal narratives spanning from King Yejong's reign to the period of military leadership in the early 13th century and situates them within the broader "poetic legitimacy" of the Ch'oe clan, arguing that these narratives were carefully shaped to present poetry as a legitimate form of elite expertise at a time when court-centered Sinitic verse was reaching its cultural apex. Thus, by identifying editorial interventions on Yak's story and tracing how Yak's sole surviving poem was reconfigured over time, this paper highlights the strategies through which Sinitic poetry came to serve not just as a prestige form of cultural capital, but also as a flexible social technology that could be mobilized to reshape historical truth and reinforce cultural socio-political prestige in the early to mid-Koryŏ period.

Session 7D: Using VR in Teaching Chinese Classics (Workshop)

Using Collaborative Virtual Reality in Chinese Language Teaching

Wei-lun Lu (Masaryk University)

(Alternative Format)

The VR workshop guides the participants through using immersive virtual reality in Meta Quest 3, based on the software of eDIVE+, which is an open-source platform developed by the iVR team at Masaryk University.

The main part of the workshop will be based on a sample lesson plan developed by the team, followed a feedback session on how iVR can be applied to Chinese teaching.

The first 10 minutes will be a short introduction, followed by 40 minutes of tryout, and a 10-minute feedback session at the end, where the participants and the team brainstorm together how iVR can be used in Chinese teaching.

The workshop will be conducted mainly in English.

Session 7E: Arts and Media (Student Session)

From Assemblage to Archive: Posthuman Embodiment in the Work of Jeong Geumhyung

Veronika Veselková (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper explores the shift from machinic assemblage to corporeal minimalism in Jeong Geumhyung's recent performance *Find, Select, Copy and Paste* (2020), arguing that it marks a critical re-embodiment within posthuman performance. Known for her intricate, often eroticized interactions with robotic puppets and mechanical objects, Jeong's earlier works blur the boundaries between animate and inanimate, challenging notions of agency and control through human–nonhuman entanglements. In contrast, *Find, Select, Copy and Paste* removes all technological elements. Performing naked and alone, Jeong recycles choreographic material originally developed in dialogue with machines—now redirecting those gestures onto her own body. By eliminating the non-human, she paradoxically intensifies posthuman questions: Can posthumanism exist without technological mediation? What remains of the posthuman subject when only flesh is left? Drawing on Rosi Braidotti's concept of the "posthuman body as a site of becoming" (Braidotti, 2013), the performance presents a case of repositioning embodiment not as a retreat from the posthuman, but as its distilled form. Similarly, N. Katherine Hayles' notion of "embodiment as context-dependent and emergent" (Hayles, 1999) helps frame Jeong's work as a live inquiry into whether the posthuman must always include the machinic—or whether the body alone can enact its principles. In staging a choreography of absent objects, Jeong activates a haunting presence of former assemblages, revealing the body not as pre-technological, but as archive, interface, and posthuman material.

Cultural Tension: Japanese Architecture in Europe

David Vaculík (Brno University of Technology)

Japanese architecture has long engaged in a dialogue with Western architectural traditions, particularly through its presence in Europe. This research examines how Japanese architects have adapted their philosophical and compositional principles in European contexts. While numerous studies explore Western influences on Japanese architecture, less attention has been given to the reverse — how Japan has shaped the European architectural environment. By analyzing temporary pavilions at world expositions and permanent cultural institutions, this study seeks to uncover patterns of adaptation, reinterpretation, and cross-cultural exchange. A key aspect of the study is the shared typology, which, through variations across different historical periods, provides a broad sample for comparative analysis. The central question is: How do Japanese architects integrate and reinterpret their architectural traditions when designing in Europe, and what does this reveal about intercultural architectural exchange? The study employs comparative analysis, focusing on selected case studies: world exposition pavilions and permanent cultural institutions. These buildings are examined through three key lenses: architectural elements, spatial composition, and cultural context. Temporary pavilions at world expositions often reflect the latest technological innovations and represent the cultural zeitgeist of their time. In contrast, long-term cultural institutions systematically embody the past, present, and future culture of their country throughout their existence. This research contributes to the broader understanding of the tension of Japanese European architectural interactions, offering new insights into how cultural identity is expressed through architecture. Ultimately, these findings provide a framework for understanding contemporary architectural practices in an increasingly globalized world, where cultural exchange continues to shape architectural innovation.

Violence in South Korean High Schools: Representations in TV-Dramas

Eva Svobodova (Palacký University Olomouc)

This project focuses on school violence in South Korean television dramas and its depiction in the context of societal and culturally specific aspects. It provides both a historical and systematic overview of violence committed by high school students in South Korea, examining how it is influenced by intense competitiveness and the societal emphasis on status. Despite the South Korean government's efforts to combat bullying and violence in schools, this issue persists and continues to draw attention not only from domestic but also international media.

This project aims to explore the issue of high school violence in detail and analyze its portrayal in television dramas. It will focus on the series "The Glory" (Netflix, 2023) and its recurring themes. The project primarily draws on recently published academic articles and reports from reputable South Korean and international media sources. The motivation behind this project is to contribute to a better understanding of the culturally specific aspects of school violence in South Korea and shed light on how this issue is reflected in popular culture. It will also include a presentation summarizing the key findings and a visual overview of the main themes.

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