

17th ACAS

Annual Conference
on Asian Studies

Interpretation
and Misinterpretation

November 24–25, 2023



Conference Guide



Department
of Asian Studies

Faculty of Arts
Palacký University Olomouc

WELCOME TO ACAS 2023



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the *17th Annual Conference on Asian Studies (ACAS)* with the general theme of “Interpretation and Misinterpretation”.

Following two pandemic years, which forced the conference into the online domain, we were delighted to organize the conference in a hybrid mode last year. The experience taught us that hybrid events are more open and inclusive than physical events. Therefore, we decided to organize the conference as a hybrid event this year as well.

We are excited to meet some of you in person in the historical town of Olomouc, which has been the seat of Palacký University for four and a half centuries. Most of you will, however, be joining us online from all over the globe. While we will certainly miss the opportunity to talk to you informally during coffee breaks, over lunch, or in the evenings in cosy restaurants and cafés around the town, we are looking forward to discussing your own as well as other participants’ research with you during the formal sessions. No matter whether you are participating on-site or online, please remember that we also have a private group on Facebook which you can use to network and socialize.

The conference consists of 35 sessions, which will be held in the building of the Faculty of Arts at tř. Svobody 26 in Olomouc and livestreamed via Zoom. You can easily access the livestreams of individual sessions from the online conference program or via our conference website. The sessions cover a great variety of topics, geographical areas, as well as scholarly disciplines, ranging from arts, literature, and linguistics to anthropology, history, and political sciences. Do not hesitate to invite your friends, colleagues, and students to participate in the conference online as audience members!

Thank you for taking part in ACAS 2023. We sincerely hope you will enjoy the program, find the discussions inspiring, make new friends and fond memories. We also hope to see you at the conference 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 of Palacký University Olomouc. The first conference of the series took place in 2006. The conference was originally called *Annual Conference on Cultural and Social Anthropology of East Asia*, but it changed its name in 2016 in order to become more inclusive as for both the regions in Asia that it concerns and scholarly disciplines to which its attendees subscribe.

Palacký University Olomouc is a university with 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.

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





The **Department of Asian Studies** at Palacký University Olomouc was established in 1993. It specializes in the area studies of Asia. Its teaching and research activities focus on languages, cultures, and societies of China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. It offers degree courses on undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate level and ranks among the biggest departments at the Faculty of Arts with currently about 700 students enrolled in its study programs. While it represents one of the younger departments at Palacký University Olomouc, interest in Asia at the university dates back to its founding by the Jesuit order in the 16th century, as Jesuits recruited the brightest people for missionary work in Asia and the New World.



Organizing Team

Halina Zawiszová (chair)

Jana Buzková

Petr Janda

Martin Lavička

Olga Luňáčková

Assisted by student assistants and colleagues from the department.

Scientific Committee

- Björn Alpermann
- Ivona Barešová
- Martin Blahota
- Renata Czekalska
- Blanka Ferklová
- Yuan Gao
- Alfred Gerstl
- Kamila Hladíková
- Jiri Holba
- Jan Hornat
- Martin Hribek
- Joerg Henning Huesemann
- Monika Hálová
- Lisa Indraccolo
- Petr Janda
- Martina Jemelkova
- Liang-Ting Juan
- Markéta Koklářová
- Michal Kolmaš
- Iuliia Koreshkova
- František Kratochvíl
- Filip Kraus
- Jiří Krejčík
- Zuzana Kubovčáková
- Martin Lavička
- Lukáš Laš
- Petra Lee
- Marta Lopatková
- Nicholas Loubere
- Sylva Martinásková
- Jiří Matela
- Marek Mikeš
- Petra Maveekumbura Karlová
- Mukaidaisi Muhetaer
- Stanislav Myšička
- Barbora Nováková
- Jakub Otčenášek
- Radek Pazderka
- Zdeňka Peichl-Kyselová
- Martin Petlach
- Dominik Proch
- Pavel Přikryl
- Magdaléna Rychetská
- Kateřina Šamajová
- Andreas Schirmer
- Eric Schluessel
- Klára Schwarzová
- Jana Sedláčková
- Ahmed Sharif
- Joanna Ut-Seong Sio
- Tereza Slaměníková
- Zdeněk Štipl
- Giorgio Strafella
- Zuzana Stuchlíková
- Vít Ulman
- Veronika Vaseková
- Zuzana Veselá
- Michaela Zahradníková
- Halina Zawiszová

VENUE

The conference is organized as a **hybrid event**, taking place both in Olomouc, Czech Republic, and online via Zoom (which you can download at: <https://zoom.us>).

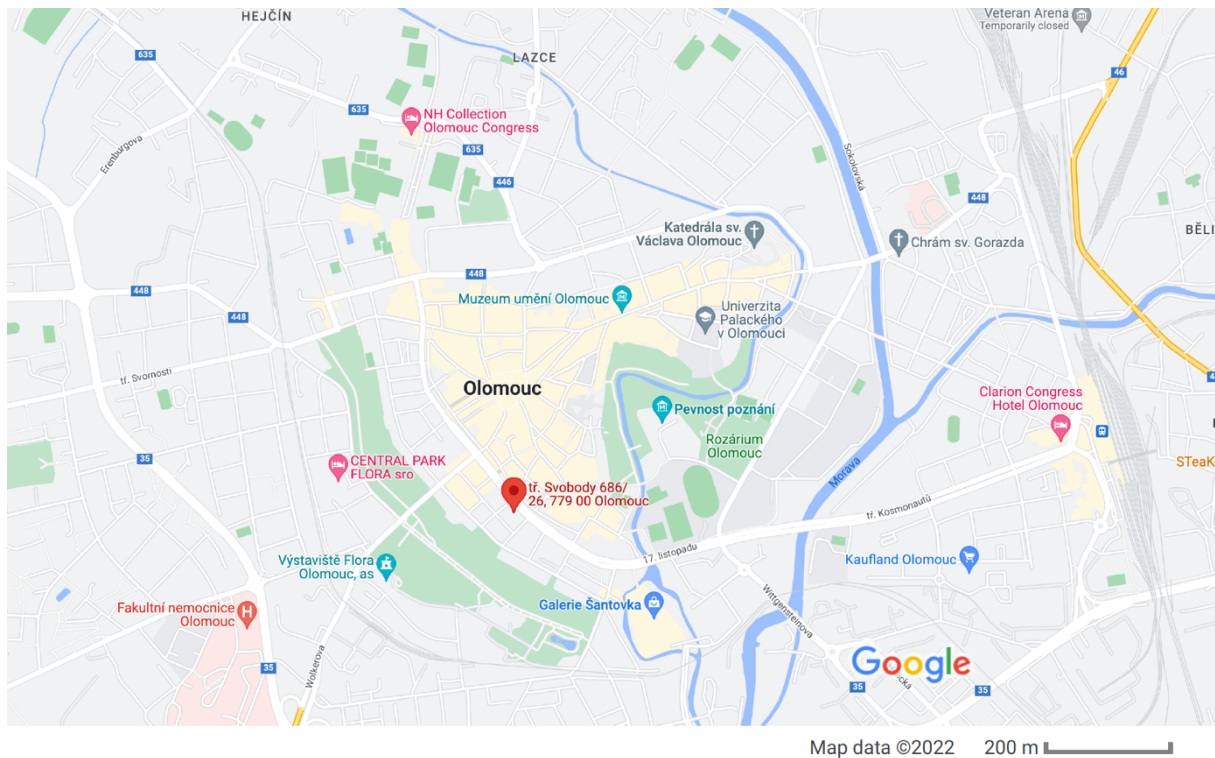
Olomouc is the historical capital of Moravia and the administrative center of the Olomouc Region. It is often considered one of the hidden jewels of Europe. It is a beautiful city with magical atmosphere, plentiful greenery, and the second largest concentration of well-preserved historical monuments in the Czech Republic. With its population of about 100,000 inhabitants, it ranks as the sixth largest in the country. It is widely known as a student city due to its high proportion of students in relation to the local population.

Join us for a short **guided city tour** on Friday (24 November) from 5PM. If interested, let us know at the Registration Desk and meet us in front of Room G | 2.40 before 5PM. The tour will end on the Upper Square (Horní náměstí) where you can enjoy the Christmas market.

For promotional materials about Olomouc, see: <https://tourism.olomouc.eu/en/>.



The conference takes place on the university grounds at **třída Svobody 26, 779 00 Olomouc** (Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/Bq3QTB4Grjm4wLt98>).



The building is located within walking distance from the historic center as well as many hotels, cafés, and restaurants. The closest tram/bus stop is called **Tržnice**. Please see the conference website (http://acas.upol.cz/practical_info/transport/) for further details regarding travel to as well as within Olomouc.



ROOMS AND LINKS

The conference schedule is available at: <https://easychair.org/smart-program/ACAS2023/> as well as via our conference website at: www.acas.upol.cz.

The program will take place in the following rooms and at the following Zoom meeting links.

- **Room A** (Welcoming Remarks, Sessions 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A)
 - 2.56
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/95127605829>
- **Room B** (Sessions 1B, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7B)
 - 2.43
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/99903932863>
- **Room C** (Sessions 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C)
 - 2.44
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/99845608827>
- **Room D** (Sessions 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D)
 - 2.64
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/97781575366>
- **Room E** (Sessions 1E, 2E, 3E, 4E, 5E, 6E, 7E)
 - 2.65
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/91525860214>
- **Room F** (Sessions 6A, 7A)
 - 1.69
 - <https://cesnet.zoom.us/j/95127605829>
- **Room G** (Registration, Coffee Breaks, Lunch Breaks)
 - 2.40
- **Room H** (Coffee Breaks, Lunch Breaks)
 - 2.42

Please come to the physical room or online meeting **at least 10 minutes prior** to the time when your session (not your paper) is scheduled to start. Please remember that all times provided in the program are in the event time zone, which means in **Central European Time (CET)**.

We have created a private **group on Facebook** for the participants in the conference. You can join the group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1048028866329012>.

AUDIENCE

The conference is open to the public. Invite your friends, colleagues, and students to the conference to participate as online audience members! They can simply join the livestreams directly from the online program at: <https://easychair.org/smart-program/ACAS2023/>.

We would also appreciate, however, if people wishing to join the conference as audience members filled in a very short registration form to help us better understand our audience and to let us send them a reminder one day prior to the conference. The registration form is available at: <https://shorturl.at/emuZ1>.



PROGRAM

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

Friday 24 November

Registration starts

8:30 | Room G | 2.40

Welcoming remarks

9:00 | Room A | 2.56

Halina Zawiszová, František Kratochvíl

Session 1A: Texts and Their Interpretation

9:30–11:30 | Room A | 2.56 | Chair: Martin Lavička

9:30–10:00 | **Sarka Horsakova**

The Complexity of Textual Research: A Case Study of Guo Pu and Hao Yixing's Commentaries on Shanhaijing (on-site)

10:00–10:30 | **Yu Liu**

Perceiving and Enlightenment: An Interpretation of the Chapter "Zunshouzhang" from Shitao's Art Theoretical Treatise "Huayulu" (on-site)

10:30–11:00 | **Wai Tsui**

A Discussion of Problems in Interpreting Ci 詞 Poetry in the Qing Era (online)

11:00–11:30 | **Polina Lukicheva**

Evidential learning without objects? Revisiting the Epistemological Perspectives of Wang Fuzhi and Fang Yizhi (on-site)

Session 1B: Gender and Feminism

9:30–11:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: František Kratochvíl

9:30–10:00 | **Ilya Belyakov**

South Korea's gender conflict and its impact on the 2022 Presidential elections (on-site)

10:00–10:30 | **Katarzyna Szpargala**

Representation of Feminism in South Korean Popular Culture (online)

10:30–11:00 | **Ivona Barešová, Klára Machů, Martin Šturdík**

Contemporary Japanese Gender-Neutral Names from the Perspective of Their Bearers (on-site)

11:00–11:30 | Zishu Chen

Rehabilitating femininity: Discourse struggles and linguistic reclamation of stigmatised feminine internet slang (online)

Session 1C: Transfer of Knowledge

9:30–11:30 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Kateřina Šamajová

9:30–10:00 | Sanjiao Tang

A Primary Source Based Study on the Relationship between China's Reviving Nationalism and Mao-era Young People's War-Preparing Experiences (online)

10:00–10:30 | Yang Li

To what extent does the evolution of civil service recruitment requirements in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs represent a change in China's foreign policy after 2019? (online)

10:30–11:00 | Mei Liu

The dissemination of the 64-hexagram diagram of Yijing in Europe and the world map "Kunyu wanguo quantu" in China in the 17th century (on-site)

11:00–11:30 | Kateřina Šamajová, Renata Westlake, Ondřej Kučera, Lukáš Kučera

Misinterpretation of Evidence on the Origin of Cultural Plants: the Case of Brassica rapa in China (on-site)

Session 1D: Literacy and Literariness in Korea (organized panel)

9:30–11:30 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Jae Won Chung

9:30–10:00 | Susan Hwang

Literary Praxis Against Identity Politics: Paik Nak-chung's Reading of D.H. Lawrence in 1980s' South Korea (online)

10:00–10:30 | Jae Won Chung

Recursivity as Sociogenetic Elaboration: Hermeneutics of Repetition in Hwang Jung-eun's Novels of Neoliberal Ennui (on-site)

10:30–11:00 | Benoit Berthelier

Generative Writing Degree Zero: Exploring Differences in Literary Values between North and South Korea through Large Language Models (on-site)

11:00–11:30 | Haerin Shin

Elastic Literacy and Compression Culture: Meaning Making in the Wake of chatGPT (online)

Session 1E: Japanese Literature

9:30–11:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Vít Ulman

9:30–10:00 | Vít Ulman

Interpreting Ichijō Kaneyoshi's Shōdanchiyō (on-site)

10:00–10:30 | Saida Khalmirzaeva

Regional Tales in the Mōsōbiwa Tradition of Kyushu - Facts and Fiction in Kikuchi Kuzure and Miyako Gassen Chikushi Kudari (on-site)

10:30–11:00 | Miyabi Goto

A Map of Misreading from Fin-de-Siècle Japan: Ōgai and "Literature" (online)

11:00–11:30 | Jon Morris

Interpreting the Sokushinbutsu in Rumiko Takahashi's Inuyasha (online)

Lunch break

11:30–13:00 | Room G, Room H | 2.40, 2.42

Session 2A: China and the Media

13:00–14:30 | Room A | 2.56 | Chair: Runya Qiaoan

13:00–13:30 | Keyu Chen

Rivalry on Human Rights: How do the U.S. and China Portray Each Other in Annual Human Rights Reports? (on-site)

13:30–14:00 | Renata Westlake

Interpretation and Misinterpretation: A Comparative Analysis of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics' Framing in Chinese and Czech Online News Outlets (on-site)

CANCELLED | 14:00–14:30 | Yaroslav Akimov

Interpreting Media Guidelines: Unraveling the Linguistic Aspects of Censorship in Mainland China (on-site)

Session 2B: Art and Its Interpretation

13:00–14:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Giorgio Strafella

13:00–13:30 | Giorgio Strafella

New Art for the People: the "Sociological Turn" in Contemporary Chinese Art as a Threefold Interpretative Milestone (on-site)

13:30–14:00 | Klaudia Ďurajková

Contemporary Blue-green landscape painting: Various modes of reinterpretation (on-site)

14:00–14:30 | Martyna Lesniewska

Diasporic artisans in 17th Century Japan: Exploring the stylistic impacts of mainland Asian metalsmiths on Japanese arms and armor (online)

Session 2C: Churches and Missionaries

13:00–14:30 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Ondřej Kučera

13:00–13:30 | Helena Motoh

Skulls and idols: Interpretations of the Asian religions in the Early 20th Century Missionary collections in Slovenia (online)

13:30–14:00 | Karol Starowicz

"Far away from home". Selected aspects of the activities of the Polish Mission to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission on the Korean Peninsula from 1953 to 1990 (on-site)

14:00–14:30 | Le Van Tuyen

The pros and cons of the legal status of Vietnamese Protestant churches (on-site)

Session 2D: Language and Society

13:00–14:30 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Jana Švábová

13:00–13:30 | Petr Janda

Aboriginal Languages in Taiwan – victims of modernization? (on-site)

13:30–14:00 | Sabrina Ardizzoni

Inference and inter-cultural awareness in Italian-Chinese healthcare interpreting (on-site)

14:00–14:30 | Alaa Elewa

Publications of the North Korea's Foreign Language Press in Arabic in the 1980s (online)

Session 2E: Linguistics

13:00–14:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Vít Ulman

13:00–13:30 | Halina Zawiszová

When personal pronouns behave like interactional particles in Japanese conversational interaction (on-site)

13:30–14:00 | Kamila Liedermannová, Joanna Ut-Seong Sio, Karolína Balajková, Gyu-Ho Shin

Tokenization and part-of-speech tagging in written Cantonese data (on-site)

14:00–14:30 | Natalya Terekhova

The Part of the Axiosphere of Ancient Chinese Dictionary "Shuo wen jie zi": A Matter of Hermeneutic Semiotics (online)

Coffee break

14:30–15:00 | Room G, Room H | 2.40, 2.42

Session 3A: Japanese Cultural Texts (organized panel)

15:00–16:30 | Room A | 2.56 | Chair: Takayuki Yokota-Murakami

15:00–15:30 | Takayuki Yokota-Murakami

Music as an Instance of Postcoloniality: Rethinking the Relationship between Music and Literature as a Point of Resistance (on-site)

15:30–16:00 | Noriko Hiraishi

The Lineage of the "Little Japanese Woman": Do Stereotype Parodies Resonate with Audiences? (on-site)

16:00–16:30 | Raj Lakhi Sen

Laughter as Collective Mis/interpretation: Ariyoshi Sawako's Furu Amerika ni Sode wa Nurasaji in Kabuki Format (online)

Session 3B: Interpreting the Past

15:00–16:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Vít Ulman

15:00–15:30 | Vadim Akulenko

Discourse on the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng in North Korea (online)

15:30–16:00 | Stephanie Benzaquen-Gautier

Interpreting the Khmer Republic (1970-1975): A question of sources and archives? (online)

16:00–16:30 | Mauro Elli, Rita Paolini

Interpretation vs. Misinterpretation of History: The Evolution of the Idea of India in K.M. Panikkar (online)

Session 3C: Society and Politics

15:00–16:30 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Alfred Gerstl

15:00–15:30 | Igor Pruša

Scandal Made in Japan: An Anthropological Interpretation (on-site)

15:30–16:00 | Xue Bai

Consumer motivations for boycotting national brands: A case study of the "wild consumption" of ERKE products in China (online)

16:00–16:30 | Mario Malo

Interpretation and Misinterpretation: The Assimilation and Erroneous Approaches of the Concept of Civil Society in Japan (online)

Session 3D: Digital Humanities (organized panel)

15:00–16:30 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Maria Grajdian

15:00–15:30 | Raluca Nicolae

Conversational Narration in Japanese Cell Phone Novels (online)

15:30–16:00 | Maria Grajdian

Enhanced Humanness, Artificial Intelligence and Sensitive Cyborgs in "Ghost in the Shell" (online)

16:00–16:30 | Xinyi Zhao

Artificial Stroke and Real Outrage: A Study into User Responses to AI-Generated Art on NetEase Lofter (online)

Session 3E: Education and Values

15:00–16:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Petr Janda

15:00–15:30 | Nagisa Moritoki Škof

A study of the changes regarding 'understanding' in Japanese language education policy (on-site)

15:30–16:00 | Ting Ting Chang, W. Emily Chow, Yavor Kostadinov

Stakeholders' perspectives on international large-scale assessments: interpreting high-school teachers' perspectives on PISA in Taiwan (online)

16:00–16:30 | Petra Doma, Ferenc Takó

Changing Roles on Different Stages (on-site)

Guided city walk

17:00 | Meet the group at Room G | 2.40 | Guide: Jana Švábová

Saturday 25 November

Session 4A: Buddhism

8:30–10:30 | Room A | 2.56 | Chair: Petra Maveekumbura Karlová

8:30–9:00 | Petra Maveekumbura Karlová

Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lankan karate practitioners' life: Interpretations and practice of Buddhist virtues (on-site)

9:00–9:30 | Ondřej Pazdírek

Alexandre de Rhodes and his (mis)interpretation of the origin of Buddhism (on-site)

9:30–10:00 | Małgorzata Sobczyk

Reception of Ketsubon-kyō (Bloody Pond Sutra) in Japanese Zen Sōtō School: Insights from a Newly Discovered Manuscript (online)

10:00–10:30 | Joanna Gruszewska

Modern western reinterpretations of early Buddhist female literary characters (on-site)

Session 4B: Narratives and Discourses

8:30–10:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Michaela Zahradníková

8:30–9:00 | Jacek Skup

Ours is the Past. The Indus Valley Civilization in South Asian nationalist discourses (on-site)

9:00–9:30 | Olha Morgunyk

Locating the victim: Coverage of Russia's War Against Ukraine in Indian Printed Media (online)

09:30–10:00 | Sudha Rawat

Shame, Honour and Gender: Tamil women in the Tamil Refugee Camps (online)

CANCELLED | 10:00–10:30 | Sonali Sharma

Telling A Leftist Story: Narratives of Communist Women from Bombay (online)

Session 4C: Vietnamese Diaspora and Migration (organized panel)

8:30–10:00 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Filip Kraus

8:30–9:00 | Mai Thi Thu Krausová

The State, Family, and Money: Sources of Migrants' Precarity in Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic (on-site)

9:00–9:30 | Duong Nguyen Jirásková

Mental Health in Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic (online)

9:30–10:00 | Filip Kraus

Going Out: Vietnamese Diasporic Subjectivity and Inter-Generational Conflicts over Romantic Partnership of the Second Generation in Vietnamese Diaspora in the Czech Republic (on-site)

Session 4D: Literature and Environment

8:30–10:00 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Giorgio Strafella

8:30–9:00 | Eugenia Tizzano

The 'Species Horizon' in Mo Yan and Yan Lianke. An Ecocritical Reinterpretation (online)

9:00–9:30 | Paul Woods

Soviet Environmental Exploitation in the Works of Two Central Asian Authors (online)

9:30–10:00 | Sahin Shah

Looking at the East through the Chinese lens: A Multidisciplinary Study of Ma Huan's The Overall Survey of the Ocean (online)

Session 4E: Misinterpretation in Poetry (organized panel)

8:30–10:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Silvia Schiavi

8:30–9:00 | Silvia Schiavi

Interpretation and Misinterpretation of Poetic Theories: Ji Xian's Horizontal Transplantation as Case Study (online)

9:00–9:30 | Rosa Lombardi

Text, Context, Voice, Interpretation and Re-Creation: The Poetry of Chen Li (online)

9:30–10:00 | Martina Renata Prosperi

Italian Poetry in Taiwan: Interpretations and Misinterpretations within a Selection of the Translated and Circulated Works (online)

10:00–10:30 | Luca Stirpe

The Unbearable Lightness of Punning: Deeds and Misdeeds in Translating Chinese Poetry (online)

Coffee break

10:30–11:00 | Room G, Room H | 2.40, 2.42

Session 5A: Marginalized Voices

11:00–12:30 | Room A | 2.56 | Chair: Michaela Zahradnikova

11:00–11:30 | Stevie Poppe

Transnational Grassroots Activism and Historical Revisionism: a Comprehensive Examination of the 'End Comfort Women Fraud' demonstration in Berlin (online)

11:30–12:00 | Saidalavi P.C.

'We are Original Muslims': Muslim Barbers and Imagining Egalitarianism in Islam in South India (online)

CANCELLED | 12:30–11:30 | Silvia Picchiarelli

The Controversial Behaviour of the CCP Leadership Towards the Rural Masses in Post-Revolutionary China: A Reappraisal Based on Archival Documents from Jiangxi Province (online)

Session 5B: Southeast Asia

11:00–12:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Klára Schwarzová

11:00–11:30 | Ngoc Ly Nguyen

Southeast Asian middle powers' approaches to US-China strategic competition and the implications for the East Asian security order: a comparative study of Vietnam and Indonesia (online)

11:30–12:00 | Pattarat Phantprasit

"Japan is a big brother; Thailand is a little brother": Collaborations, Conflicts, Misunderstandings, and Negotiations between Thailand and Japan during the Second World War, 1941-1945 (online)

12:00–12:30 | Le Hoangan Julien

Debating the interpretation of April 30th among the young Vietnamese Diaspora (on-site)

Session 5C: Rites and Artifacts

11:00–12:00 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Radek Pazderka

11:00–11:30 | Annegret Bergmann

Mysterious marks on tea ceremony utensils of the Momoyama period (on-site)

11:30–12:00 | Marianna Lázár

Examining clay figurines of keyhole-shaped tombs in Korea's South Cholla region (online)

Session 5D: Old Siam (organized panel)

11:00–12:30 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Jan Dressler

11:00–11:30 | Sven Trakulhun

Embassies, ritual and cross-cultural encounters between Siam and Europe
(c. 1600–1688) (online)

11:30–12:00 | Thissana Weerakietsoontorn

The Interpretation of Christian Cosmology in Siamese Language: The Case Study of
Louis Laneau's Literary Works (online)

12:00–12:30 | Jan Dressler

On the Perception of the Vedas and Various Indic Arts in Premodern Siam (online)

Session 5E: Contemporary Literature and Musical Theater

11:00–12:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Giorgio Strafella

11:00–11:30 | Martina Nedialkova

Female Homosocial Bonds in Wang Anyi's novella "Brothers" (online)

11:30–12:00 | Paula Teodorescu

Exploring the Interplay of AI and Human Creativity in Chinese Literature:
Interpretations, Misinterpretations, and Reinterpretations (online)

12:00–12:30 | Maria Grajdian

"To Love or Not To Love": The Romeo and Juliet Franchise and Its Global Ramifications
(online)

Lunch break

12:30–14:00 | Room G, Room H | 2.40, 2.42

Session 6A: Literary Landscapes

14:00–15:30 | Room F | 1.69 | Chair: Kamila Hladíková

14:00–14:30 | Kamila Hladíková

Baima Nazhen: Translating Tibetan women's experience into Sinophone literature
(on-site)

14:30–15:00 | Simona Gallo

Creating and interpreting polyphonic landscapes: Translingual Sinophone paradigms in
Taiwanese contemporary fiction (online)

15:00–15:30 | Jaroslav Kušnír

Place, Transnation and the Construction of Cultural Identity in Merlinda Bobis' White
Turtle and The Long Siesta as a Language Primer (online)

Session 6B: Chinese Paintings and Photographs (organized panel)

14:00–15:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Helena Heroldová

14:00–14:30 | Lucie Olivová

The meaning and interpretation of clothing in ancestral portraits (on-site)

14:30–15:00 | Helena Heroldová

The authority of the imperial official: dragon robes, portraits and photopictures in the Náprstek Museum (on-site)

15:00–15:30 | Petra Polláková

Women's Clothing and the theme of 'Beautiful Women' in Chinese Figure Painting (on-site)

Session 6C: Japanese Thought

14:00–15:00 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Radek Pazderka

14:00–14:30 | David Labus

Benefits and pitfalls of interpreting the other, re-interpreting the self (online)

14:30–15:00 | Nathan Hopson

Brain Bread or Brain Dead?: “Rice Makes You Stupid” and the Curious Case of Nutrition as Stigmatized Knowledge in Postwar Japan (on-site)

Session 6D: “Telling China’s Story Well”

14:00–15:30 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Petr Janda

14:00–14:30 | Pei Zhong

Female Comrades, Come Together to Build Socialism: Whether and How Understandings of Socialism Entwined with Understandings of Gender Topics in China (online)

14:30–15:00 | Natalia Riva

Shaping Chinese culture: Yue Fei’s story of inspiration (online)

15:00–15:30 | Zofia Jakubów-Roślan

Another Reading of the People’s Republic of China’s History: Fang Fang’s The Scenery (online)

Session 6E: Europe-Asia Relations and the Indo-Pacific (1/2) (organized panel)

14:00–15:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Kristina Kironaka

14:00–14:30 | Richard Turcsányi, Daniel Kalish

Why Singaporeans choose the US over China: An analysis of public opinion polling (on-site)

14:30–15:00 | Tanguy Struye de Swielande

Middle Powers in the Indo-Pacific: stakeholders of stability? (online)

15:00–15:30 | Federica Cidale

Interpreting and misinterpreting cybertechnologies as a security threat – Japan's view on China (on-site)

Coffee break

15:30–16:00 | Room G, Room H | 2.40, 2.42

Session 7A: Indian Cinema and Literature

16:00–17:30 | Room F | 1.69 | Chair: Ondřej Kučera

16:00–16:30 | Manvi Singh

Breaking Stereotypes on Screen: Subverting Caste Narratives in Contemporary Hindi Cinema (on-site)

16:30–17:00 | Haritha Ramachandran

Cinema and the "Regional" in 'Home Cinemas' of Kerala (on-site)

17:00–17:30 | Donel Varghese

Writing in the late eighteenth-century Kerala: the case of Varthamanappusthakam (1785) (online)

Session 7B: Japanese Culture

16:00–17:30 | Room B | 2.43 | Chair: Halina Zawiszová

16:00–16:30 | Adéla Tůmová

Kuniyoshi and the heroes of Suikoden (on-site)

16:30–17:00 | Jessica Marie Uldry

A nikuhitsu-ga by Gion Seitoku conserved in the public collections of Chile (online)

17:00–17:30 | Marcelina de Zoete-Leśniczak

Yūrakuzo kodomo no hi 有楽座子供の日 and its role in creating the playground for childlike children in Taishō era (online)

Session 7C: Sinophone Literature

16:00–17:30 | Room C | 2.44 | Chair: Kamila Hladíková

16:00–16:30 | Xingwen Zhao

Blocking the View: Treacherous Mountains and Rivers in Meng Jiao and Li He's Poems (online)

16:30–17:00 | Yicheng Chen

The Forgotten Chinese Elegy in Nanyang: A Comparative study on the Writing of Nanyang of Wang Anyi and Ng Kim Chew (online)

17:00–17:30 | Massimiliano Canale

The Outcast Hero: Alternative Representations of Liu Yong in Yuan-Ming Drama and Fiction (online)

Session 7D: Interpretation of Law

16:00–17:00 | Room D | 2.64 | Chair: Petr Janda

16:00–16:30 | Lara Colangelo

The Image and Perception of Roman Law in Late-Qing and Early Republican China
(online)

16:30–17:00 | Dániel Hornos

Interpretation of Edo period law in the Meiji era (online)

Session 7E: Europe-Asia Relations and the Indo-Pacific (2/2) (organized panel)

16:00–17:30 | Room E | 2.65 | Chair: Friso Stevens

16:00–16:30 | Friso Stevens

Beijing eyes Brussels: Chinese perceptions of the European tilt to the Indo-Pacific
(on-site)

16:30–17:00 | Alfred Gerstl

The role of the EU and ASEAN in managing the dispute in the South China Sea (on-site)

17:00–17:30 | Sebestyén Hompot

The CCP's "elite capture" and China's soft power in Hungary (on-site)

ABSTRACTS



The abstracts are ordered by sessions from Session 1A to Session 7E. The texts of the abstracts as well as the names and affiliations are as submitted by the authors themselves.

Session 1A: Texts and Their Interpretation



The Complexity of Textual Research: A Case Study of Guo Pu and Hao Yixing's Commentaries on Shanhaijing

Sarka Horsakova (Palacký University Olomouc)

The ancient Chinese text Shanhaijing has ignited extensive scholarly debate for over 2000 years due to its intricate blending of fiction and reality across domains such as mythology, geography, culture, and the natural world. Two particularly influential commentators, Guo Pu and Hao Yixing, put forth seminal perspectives on comprehending this enigmatic text through their foundational scholarly work. These early scholars provided earliest and systematic commentaries on the Shanhaijing before modern times. Their pioneering commentaries offer historical insight into how Chinese scholars studied and interpreted their own classical texts. However, while serving as a basis for interpretation, their commentaries also catalysed contentious debates and even critiques regarding potential misconceptions or misinterpretations.

This presentation provides an analysis focused exclusively on key examples from the Shanjing text itself, as examined in the commentaries of Guo Pu and Hao Yixing. This is done to demonstrate the inherent challenges and intricacies involved in accurately analysing and deciphering the multifaceted Shanhaijing. Their unique lenses reflect the historical and philosophical influences of their eras, further illuminating the complexity of ancient Chinese worldviews encoded within this text. Despite major advances in research approaches and techniques over the millennia, comprehensively and definitively understanding Shanjing and Haijing still confounds scholars today. A multifaceted, interdisciplinary approach examining facets like language, history, culture, geography and mythology is required to elucidate this nuanced work.

By centering examination on the pivotal early work of Guo Pu and Hao Yixing, this presentation aims to highlight the significant challenges that have long pervaded attempts to decipher Shanhaijing. Examples from their commentaries focused on the Shanjing text will reveal how interpretations have shifted across history based on scholars' perspectives. This underscores the necessity of an integrated scholarly approach to properly comprehend this text and ancient Chinese representations within it.

Perceiving and Enlightenment: An Interpretation of the Chapter “Zunshouzhang” from Shitao’s Art Theoretical Treatise “Huayulu”

Yu Liu (Freie Universität Berlin)

The art theoretical treatise “Huayulu 画语录” or “Enlightening Remarks on Painting” by the painter Shitao 石涛 (1642–1707) from the Qing Dynasty (1636–1912) is one of the most important theoretical works in the history of Chinese art theory and aesthetics. As one of the most complicated chapters, the fourth chapter, “Zunshouzhang 尊受章”, or “Valuing Perception”, has remained controversial in its interpretation.

The complexity of this chapter lies first in the fact that, despite its relatively short extent — a mere 162 Chinese characters — it covers and integrates a series of core concepts and important theories from Buddhism, Daoism, and the “Yijing 易经” or “Book of Changes”. Therefore, diverse understandings of these concepts and theories will lead to different interpretations of the chapter itself and even of Shitao's thoughts on painting. Thus, while this chapter poses difficulties and challenges for modern interpretations, it also offers great interpretive space and potential. The chapter is mainly concerned with the question of the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity, i.e., how artists deal with the external world. It also introduces an essential concept, shou 受 (perceive/perception), which plays a significant role in Shitao's theory of art. For this reason, most modern interpretations of the chapter focus only on the interpretation of this concept, breaking the original order of the sentences without considering the logical structure of the whole text. However, this actually leads to some confusion or even misunderstanding in comprehension of the concept itself. In addition, there are difficulties related to punctuation and paragraphing of the chapter. Because in accordance with the ancient Chinese writing tradition, there is neither punctuation nor paragraphing in the original writing. Therefore, in this chapter, punctuation and especially paragraphing are also worth discussing because they are important for the logical arrangement of the text and the interpretation of some core concepts. However, this problem has not been carefully studied in previous research.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to examine the fourth chapter in its entirety, whereby the focus will not be limited to the interpretation of the term shou exclusively. A possible paragraphing will also be proposed to clarify the logical arrangement of the chapter. Based on this, the concept shou and other core terms and formulations will then be reinterpreted by retracing their origins in Buddhism, Daoism, and in the “Book of Changes”, as well as in light of various modern readings. Finally, a translation of the author's own will be presented.

A Discussion of Problems in Interpreting Ci 詞 Poetry in the Qing Era

Wai Tsui (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

In the Song dynasty, ci poetry has formed a unique tradition in form, styles, subject matter, and language. While it is generally assumed that ci, written and performed during banquets and gatherings, are not interpreted as related to the author's personal events or political views, not all works can be read in such a straight forward way. When reviewing the Song ci poems, Qing dynasty critics have encountered difficulties in interpretation, especially of the works of Jiang Kui 姜夔, Wu Wenying 吳文英 and some other Southern Song ci poets. The difficulties in interpretation these works have led to extensive discussions of how ci poems can be and should be read (differently from its shi counterpart). Some even question the need of interpretation, proposing that it might be more appropriate not trying deduce any concrete meaning from ci. These critics argue that the uniqueness of ci lies squarely in its nature of being "uninterpretable". The article aims at surveying the problems being explored and discussed by the Qing critics in their reading of Song ci poems. By evaluating issues in the interpretation of ci, it is hoped to shed light on the characteristics of this genre and the development of its criticism in the pre-modern period.

Evidential learning without objects?

Revisiting the Epistemological Perspectives of Wang Fuzhi and Fang Yizhi

Polina Lukicheva (University of Zurich)

This paper aims to challenge conventional scholarly views regarding the philosophical orientations of prominent 17th-century Chinese philosophers, Wang Fuzhi (1619–1692) and Fang Yizhi (1611–1671). It seeks to refute the prevailing notion that these philosophers were materialists and argues that labeling their intellectual framework as materialism is a misinterpretation. Instead, this paper demonstrates that their rejection of substance ontology and emphasis on processual-functional systematicity represent a consistent intellectual project that transcends the idealistic-materialistic divide. By reconceptualizing the universe as a totality of processes and functions, these philosophers advocated for existential, metaphysical, and spatiotemporal orders fundamentally distinct from those based on substances and material objects. In this processual perspective, the parameters associated with substantial permanence dissolve, as they are viewed as phases or derivatives of processes rather than independent realities. Notably, these scholars made systematic efforts to eliminate substance-oriented concepts and tendencies in concept formation and usage, thereby avoiding the categorical separation of “material”. Significantly, these endeavors extended beyond abstract concepts like the Dao or Heaven and encompassed the interpretation of individual things in terms of functions. According to these philosophers, both “real” objects and substance-related conceptual abstractions originate from the human cognitive and perceptual faculties, emphasizing their constructive nature rather than reflecting the functioning of the world.

The findings presented in this paper prompt a substantial reassessment of prevailing research perspectives on the intellectual history of the transition from the Ming to the Qing Dynasty. They challenge existing narratives of evidential learning (kaozhengxue) and the general epistemological orientation as an exploration of material phenomena in the external world. By shedding new light on the intellectual landscape of these Chinese scholars, this paper contributes to a more nuanced understanding of their philosophical positions and fosters broader discussions on the complex interplay between metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology in Chinese intellectual history.

Session 1B: Gender and Feminism

South Korea's gender conflict and its impact on the 2022 Presidential elections

Ilya Belyakov (The University of Suwon)

Gender conflict has been a growing issue in South Korea in recent years, and it played a significant role in the 2022 presidential election. The two main candidates, Yoon Suk-yeol and Lee Jae-myung, both made appeals to young male voters who felt that women were getting preferential treatment in society. This led to a surge in anti-feminist sentiment, and arguably helped Yoon to win the election.

There are a number of factors that have contributed to the rise of gender conflict in South Korea in recent years. One is the country's rapidly changing demographics. The population is aging, and the birth rate is declining. This has led to increased competition for jobs and resources, and some young men feel that they are being left behind. Another factor is the country's history of patriarchy. South Korea is a Confucian society, and traditional Confucian values place a high value on male authority. This has led to a culture in which women are often seen as inferior to men. The rise of social media has also played a role in the spread of anti-feminist sentiment. Online platforms have made it easier for people to share and spread hateful messages, and this has contributed to the polarization of gender relations in South Korea. The 2022 presidential election was a watershed moment in South Korea's gender conflict. The election of Yoon Suk-yeol, who has made anti-feminism a central part of his platform, has given a boost to the anti-feminist movement. During the election campaign, we saw this gender conflict reaching its peak, which, among other things, can be observed in electoral language. Derogatory and offensive names and terms such as “이대남” (“Men in their 20s”), “이 짝남” (“Men who vote for the number two candidate (Conservative Yoon Suk-yeol) during the presidential election”), “개딸” (“Daughters of the revolution”), and others were created and profoundly used not only by specific online platforms and communities but also by the regular mass media outlets.

In this paper, we look into this phenomenon in more detail and try to understand how exactly the gender conflict helped the conservative candidate win the election.

Representation of Feminism in South Korean Popular Culture

Katarzyna Szpargala (National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University)

South Korea experienced rapid economic and technological development, making the country one of the most technologically developed countries in a short time. However, some argue that this has not been accompanied by similarly rapid development in gender equality as historical discourse promoted the masculinity ethos, which reinforced patriarchal traditions (Moon, 2002; Palley, 1990; Smiatacz, 2019).

Nonetheless, in recent years, the feminist movement and demands for gender equality have been growing in significance. The terms feminism and feminist might still have pejorative connotations and feminists are often portrayed as man-haters and extremists, but numerous South Korean women and men have started to redefine feminism and challenge the stigmatization of being a feminist. Feminism also gets more representation in popular culture. Depending on the artists, writers, directors, and most importantly general population feminism and its postulates can be interpreted positively or negatively.

Thus, this paper focuses on the interpretation and discussion surrounding the representation of feminism in modern popular South Korean culture by analyzing mostly the movies, which were named feminist movies, and the general discussion and interpretation of those artistic pieces.

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Contemporary Japanese Gender-Neutral Names from the Perspective of Their Bearers

Ivona Barešová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Klára Machů (Palacký University Olomouc)

Martin Šturdík (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper presents the findings of qualitative research, which is part of a larger project investigating a recent phenomenon of non-gender-specific names in Japan, its particular manifestations, and also its social implications. Japanese names of the last several decades display a much greater variety of sound and structure patterns than earlier in the twentieth century (e.g., Makino 2012, Ogihara 2015) and increasingly lack gender-distinctive features (e.g., Satō, 2007, Barešová 2020). While the majority of Japanese names are gender-specific, recent baby name rankings (e.g., Meiji Yasuda) indicate a growing popularity of names that are given to children of both sexes. One of the objectives of our project and the goal of this present study is to gain insight into how such names are actually perceived by their bearers, what experience they have with their own name, and how this experience has shaped their perception of and identification with their name. We used a method of thematic analysis of interviews, which we conducted with 35 university students aged 18–26, who had a name given to both males and females. The preliminary findings available at the time of submitting this proposal suggest that the perception of one's name and its interpretation as gender-specific or gender-neutral is strongly influenced by one's personal experience with the name. Many of the interviewees described a similar development: from not particularly liking or even disliking one's own name in childhood for not being enough feminine/masculine to appreciating it later for the very same reason and for being different and special. Those who had ever thought of having a different name stated reasons related to issues other than gender. Finally, despite accepting and being fond of one's own gender-neutral name, the participants did not necessarily consider this type of name a good option for their future child.

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Rehabilitating femininity: Discourse struggles and linguistic reclamation of stigmatised feminine internet slang

Zishu Chen (Centre for Women's Studies, University of York)

The paper presents a discourse struggle carried out on social media to refashion stigmatised feminine terms and devalued femininity. While digital space is regarded as an asylum and a platform for marginalised groups including women to express themselves, it, at the same time, provides a fertile environment for the rampancy of femmephobia and misogyny which manifest in the form of discourses (Wang & Driscoll, 2018; Yang, 2009; Hsieh and Wu, 2011). Numerous internet slang carrying discrimination, hatred, and misunderstanding toward women and femininity is created and explosively spread through networks and even beyond cyberspace. To confront these slang terms, a linguistic strategy – reclamation – is employed, aiming to subvert the derogatory connotations of these terms and, more importantly, retrieve the ownership and power of defining, interpreting, and representing women and femininity. In addition to feminists, there is another noteworthy group – young female fans of popular subcultures who also actively participate in this discourse struggles action. In my PhD project, I explore this group of people's engagement with Chinese gender issues and feminism on social media, Weibo, in particular their discourse engagements in challenging the conventional and patriarchal gender norms and order obscured behind the Chinese language by wordplay. And in this paper, by illustrating two terms, “sissy boy” (in Chinese, 娘炮 niang pao), I demonstrate and analyse how female fan informants appropriate the reclamation strategy to re-interpret the pejorative label through different paths and then digest, internalise, and transform them to generic and even positive ones.

Session 1C: Transfer of Knowledge

A Primary Source Based Study on the Relationship between China's Reviving Nationalism and Mao-era Young People's War-Preparing Experiences

Sanjiao Tang (Independent Researcher)

Today's China is witnessing a trend in young people's military training. On Douyin (Chinese version of Tiktok), China's prevalent platform for short videos creation and sharing, by May 2023, more than 1,000 videos had been uploaded and well-received in the last 12 months with the keywords like “students' military training (xuesheng junxun)”. This result does not include another almost 300 titled “kindergarten military training (youeryuan junxun)”. Most trainees in these videos, from college students to kindergarten children, indulged in youngsters' burning passion and self-delusion that they were glorious soldiers fighting for the nation.

Paralleling youngsters' fervor of military training, there is the revival of militarism-based nationalism among not only today's youth but also China's older generations, those born in the 1950s, for example. It is undoubtedly triggered by the latest tensions between China and the West, especially the U.S. Furthermore, the transgenerational resonance reminds the need of reexamining the legacies of Mao Zedong's campaign of mass mobilization and militarization, which kept shaping Mao-era people's lives under the Cold War context.

As an early-career researcher focusing on the history of Communist China and its legacies living in China today, I am interested in exploring the correlations between Mao-era young people's mobilized and militarized experiences and today's reviving nationalism that is closely associated with militarism. The result of the study can help understand the current international tensions between China and the West, which are tightened as the CCP's recent challenges to the international order and security.

By the early 1960s, despite the famine causing tens of millions of deaths in the countryside, the whole nation was celebrating that China's militia had maintained a scale of over two hundred million. This number almost overlapped the totality of Chinese youngsters during those years. From the grassroots and personal perspectives, it is of great interest to identify if the war-preparing experiences characterized the generational youthful lives in Mao's China and if good memories related to them keep alive and vitalize the nationalist trend in today's China.

While the reexamination, especially the work based on the bottom-up angle, has yet to be conducted by Chinese or international researchers, my study relies on large numbers of primary and old sources which have been collected from China and have not been explored by researchers. They include archives, gazetteers, old newspapers and magazines, internal brochures, documents, study materials, and conference records, and personal diaries, work notes, letters, and interviews with local dwellers.

The result of this study will not only add to the existing scholarship focusing on modern and contemporary China. Paying strong attention to the revival of nationalism in this country, which has been weaponized by the CCP to solve its crisis in legitimacy, the research can also assist observers and policy-makers dealing with issues of security in Asia and worldwide.

To what extent does the evolution of civil service recruitment requirements in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs represent a change in China's foreign policy after 2019?

Yang Li (Ghent University)

Since assuming power in 2012, Xi Jinping has ushered in a progressively aggressive diplomatic approach for China, which some scholars have dubbed the “new assertive diplomacy”. Under Xi's leadership, the Chinese Communist Party has amalgamated the concept of the “Chinese Dream” with the aspiration for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. This vision, rooted in the nationalist sentiment of the “century of humiliation”, has placed national security concerns at the core of China's diplomatic policies. Notably, since 2019, there have been discernible changes in the recruitment process for civil servants in the Chinese Foreign Ministry. A significant development is an increasing reliance on individuals with backgrounds in public security disciplines, including public security, investigation, and foreign-related policing, who now constitute a valuable source of expertise for cadre recruitment. These specialized police majors are typically offered by institutions like the Chinese People's Public Security University and the Chinese Criminal Police Academy, which are dedicated to training China's people's police force. Additionally, the recruitment of Chinese nationals who have studied abroad has become subject to various restrictions. For instance, the state must publicly sponsor prospective candidates to pursue overseas education. At the same time, those who self-finance their studies are ineligible to apply for party cadres' positions.

Through archival analysis and interviews, this study explores the evolving requirements for civil service recruitment in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs after 2019. It aims to shed light on the shifting priorities of China's foreign policy and further examine how the “overall international security concept” proposed by the Chinese government since 2012 has been put into practice within the realm of foreign affairs. Adopting a microscopic perspective on civil service recruitment in China, this research seeks to deepen China watchers' understanding of Chinese foreign policy and enhance transparency within the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

The dissemination of the 64-hexagram diagram of Yijing in Europe and the world map “Kunyu wanguo quantu” in China in the 17th century

Mei Liu (University of Cologne)

The dissemination of the 64-hexagram diagram of Yijing (Book of Changes) in Europe and the world map “Kunyu wanguo quantu” (“Map of the countless countries of the world”) in China during the 17th century had a significant impact on knowledge transmission and cultural exchange in the world history.

The 64-hexagram diagram of Yijing found its way to Europe through the efforts of European missionaries and scholars since the 17th century. An exemplary case illustrating the influence of the 64-hexagram diagram on European intellectual thought is that of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1649–1716). Leibniz drew inspiration from the profound wisdom contained within the diagram, particularly in relation to the binary system. The engagement with this ancient Chinese diagram transcended cultural boundaries, fostering a deeper appreciation for Chinese philosophy and thought.

Meanwhile, in China, a remarkable cartographic achievement emerged at the beginning of the 17th century known as the “Kunyu wanguo quantu” by Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and Chinese cartographers. This map provided a comprehensive depiction of Chinese territory and showcased other countries and regions worldwide. This map significantly contributed to the expansion of geographical knowledge in China, promoting cultural exchange and shaping Chinese perceptions of the world.

The paper highlights the interconnectedness of knowledge transmission during the 17th century, emphasizing how these cultural artifacts fostered cross-cultural dialogue and the exchange of ideas between East and West. The dissemination of these artifacts enriched intellectual landscapes and promoted a more interconnected and worldview. By shedding light on the impact of interpretation and misinterpretation of these artifacts, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how cultural exchange shape world history. It underscores the significance of such exchanges in shaping intellectual thought and promoting a more interconnected and culturally diverse global community. Ultimately, the dissemination of the 64-hexagram diagram and the “Kunyu wanguo quantu” map played significant roles in the transmission of knowledge and the promotion of cultural exchange, leaving a lasting impact on the intellectual and cultural landscape of the 17th century and beyond.

Misinterpretation of Evidence on the Origin of Cultural Plants: The Case of *Brassica rapa* in China

Kateřina Šamajová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Renata Westlake (Palacký University Olomouc)

Ondřej Kučera (Palacký University Olomouc)

Lukáš Kučera (Palacký University Olomouc)

Abstract The present study utilises a multidisciplinary approach towards revealing new insights into the study of *Brassica rapa*'s domestication history in China. A critical analysis of the current state-of-the-art research reveals a considerable distortion of data stemming from misinterpreted excavation reports of various archaeological sights discovered in China at the beginning of the first half of the twentieth century. The network of sources is untangled and brought to light while considering secondary linguistic evidence concerning the terminologies for the cultivated varieties of *Brassica rapa*s utilised in the Chinese written histories. An in-depth study of phonetic reconstructions of the earliest attestations of terms connected with varieties of *Brassica rapa* (var. *rapa*, *chinensis* and *pekinensis*) reveals a potential link with non-Sinitic languages. A meta-analysis of contemporary assemblages of floral macro remains in mainland China conducted within this study does not support verifiable evidence of *Brassica rapa* varieties' cultivation in the Neolithic times.

Session 1D: Literacy and Literariness in Korea (organized panel)

Parameters of Literacy and Literariness in Modern Korea: Hermeneutics as Textual Technics

This panel investigates literacy and literariness as broadly constituted by reading, writing, criticism, and machine-mediated analysis while moving between national borders, linguistic/generic modes, and the human and the non-human. Hwang shows how a renowned South Korean critic's unorthodox interpretation of D.H. Lawrence's survey of American literature in the 1980s allowed him to advocate for anti-American resistance while critiquing the literature of *minjung*. Chung explores the aesthetics of recursivity in fabulist postmillennial novels that interpret writing as a form of sociogenetic elaboration overturning the economic reduction of life by neoliberalism. Berthelie compares North and South Korean literary language by leveraging the Large Language Models' tendency to prefer low perplexity to measure deviations from the generic. Shin develops the idea of elasticity to show how the operations of ChatGPT uncannily mirror the ways humans have already been interpreting and performing in a culture of hyperconnectivity. Taken together, we understand these hermeneutics as relational forms of thinking and embodying language through interpretation and misinterpretation — a textual technics of becoming — while navigating between creation and criticism, fabulism and verisimilitude, the generic and the uncommon, and canon and popular culture.

Literary Praxis Against Identity Politics: Paik Nak-chung's Reading of D.H. Lawrence in 1980s' South Korea

Susan Hwang (University of California, Santa Barbara)

In 1982 Paik Nak-chung published “The American Dream and the Burden of American Literature”, in which the literary critic performs a close reading of D.H. Lawrence's *Studies of Classic American Literature* (1923). Drawing out key moments from Lawrence's analyses of American literature from the earliest writings up to the late nineteenth-century poetry, Paik traces a lineage of what he diagnoses as America's long-entrenched imperialist impulses that came to dominate the world stage in the twentieth century. Discussing Paik's reading of Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* in the context of intensifying anti-Americanism in 1980s' South Korea, this paper examines how Paik utilized specific strategies as a reader to simultaneously advocate South Korea's resistance to American neoimperialism and criticize the growing prominence of identity-based politics in *minjung* [the (oppressed) people] discourse. This instance of literary criticism via literary criticism in Paik's work invites us to explore how the practice of multilayered, cross-cultural readings can animate the indeterminacy of the literary over-prescribed modes of interpretation.

Recursivity as Sociogenetic Elaboration: Hermeneutics of Repetition in Hwang Jung-eun's Novels of Neoliberal Ennui

Jae Won Chung (Rutgers University – New Brunswick)

Like many South Korean authors of the postmillennial generation, Hwang Jung-eun often blurs the boundary between fabulism and realism. But when compared to contemporaries like Pyun Hye-young, Yun I-hyeong, and Han Yujoo, Hwang's relentless serenity stands out. While not entirely free of postmodern contrivances, her narratives are not heavily plotted, sensorially burdensome, or formally overwrought. The dominant mood of her fiction is a kind of enchanted ennui. This paper focuses on the recursivity of her quiet style, where words, names, questions, or statements are repeated with small variations. Drawing from Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's reformulation of debt as "a means of socialization" or an opportunity for "elaboration", I interpret Hwang's style of recursivity as bearing sociogenetic significance. Specifically, I argue that its reiterative quality has reparative effects (Eve Sedgwick). First, it reimagines the temporality of becoming as a process not held captive by trauma or bound by progressive time. Second, it locates sociogenetic elaboration outside of the normative relations of economic exchange or the patriarchal family.

Generative Writing Degree Zero: Exploring Differences in Literary Values between North and South Korea through Large Language Models

Benoit Berthelier (The University of Sydney)

This paper looks at the use of large language models (LLMs) as tools of literary analysis, focusing on the connections between LLM evaluation mechanisms and practices of literary creation. A fundamental, yet often overlooked aspect of LLM-driven text generation, is its reliance on a selection process that sifts through and identifies the most probable combinations of lexemes from a multitude of potential outcomes. This process is evaluated by measuring the model's predictive uncertainty, usually via a metric known as perplexity. With their design focused on minimizing perplexity, LLMs tend to generate text that leans towards the common and generic, echoing Barthes' concept of "writing degree zero" as "a neutral and inert state of form". This research employs LLMs to illuminate this degree zero and to quantify deviations from it across different writing genres in North and South Korea. Such an approach offers a comparative perspective on the relationships of contemporary North and South Korean literatures to convention, tropes, and signifiers of literariness, offering a nuanced lens through which creative practices in these two distinct literary cultures can be viewed and understood.

Elastic Literacy and Compression Culture: Meaning Making in the Wake of chatGPT

Haerin Shin (Korea University)

The release of chatGPT brought forth a seismic shift in the mediasphere and human culture (or rather, what we have long believed to be the defining faculties of humanity and its culture) at large. While such developments may seem sudden, however, I claim that they are demonstrative of a cumulatively built practice that has been the driving principle behind the electronically networked media ecology, pointing to a surprising development that showcases the elasticity of human literacy. Aside from the fact that the fundamental mechanism behind chatGPT is little more than “applied statistics” (Ted Chiang), its workings serve as an uncanny mirror dynamic of the manner in which we humans have come to interpret, perform, and inhabit reading and writing through key interfaces of the contemporary mediascape across social media, streaming platforms, and search engines. Focusing on the idea of “elasticity” as a double entendre to illuminate both the hermeneutic and performative implications of nonhuman literacy in the wake of chat GPT, this essay explores the mechanism of meaning-making through six keywords that map out the praxis of contemporary media: prompts, distraction, short form, speed, information overload, and compression.

Session 1E: Japanese Literature



Interpreting Ichijō Kaneyoshi's Shōdanchiyō

Vít Ulman (Palacký University Olomouc)

Ichijō Kaneyoshi (June 7, 1402 – April 30, 1481) was a Japanese court noble who lived during the Ōnin war period, a member of the large Fujiwara clan, he even served as the kampaku regent. However, perhaps even more importantly, he was known as a great scholar. He has written many treatises on classical works of literature such as *Genji Monogatari*, but also works of a more political nature such as his *Shōdanchiyō*. *Shōdanchiyō* is a rather short text but filled with interesting topics including the role of women in politics. Without context it can be difficult to interpret, but using detailed knowledge of the period and his own life, it becomes a surprisingly personal account, and a unique opportunity to look into the mind of noble losing the status his family has been accustomed for centuries. This paper will elucidate these fascinating details, and it will focus on the issues of class, political power and gender, drawing not only on the text itself, but also on the ample sources of the period, predominantly on various diaries and commentaries both in Japanese and Chinese.

Regional Tales in the Mōsōbiwa Tradition of Kyushu: Facts and Fiction in Kikuchi Kuzure and Miyako Gassen Chikushi Kudari

Saida Khalmirzaeva (Okayama University)

In Japan, periods of political turmoil and incidents of significant importance were often followed by the literary production of tales. Such tales based on or at least reflecting actual historical realities were created and performed for various reasons: to amuse the audiences, educate or inform people about recent events, or, in some cases, appease the spirits of those who suffered or died as a result of such events. A body of literature, the so-called *chinkon no bungaku*, was purportedly produced for the latter purpose and included such a prominent work of Japanese literature as the Tale of the Heike. Around the end of the 16th century, most biwa hōshi who previously performed such tales and rituals found new sources to support their living, such as massage and acupuncture. Some of them gave up the biwa for shamisen or koto instruments. After the Edo period, it was only in Kyushu that the biwa continued to be a part of the folk tradition, and the biwa hōshi maintained both their function as entertainers and their role in the religious practices of the rural community. The repertory of the biwa hōshi of Kyushu includes several tales related to historical events and occurrences of Kyushu. Such tales as Kikuchi Kuzure, Miyako Gassen Chikushi Kudari, Shimabara Junrei, Tenryūgawa, and Yanagawa Sōdō are included in this category. In this paper, I will attempt to determine the actual historical facts and fictional elements depicted in these tales, focusing on two tales, Kikuchi Kuzure and Miyako Gassen Chikushi Kudari, based on the comparative analysis of the narrative material and historical sources. Secondly, I will discuss the role and function of the above-mentioned tales in the history and culture of the local community.

A Map of Misreading from Fin-de-Siècle Japan: Ōgai and “Literature”

Miyabi Goto (University of Kentucky)

In the beginning of 1889, one Japanese medical doctor wrote a “prescription”. It was, however, not to prescribe drugs but to explain how to write a novel. Addressing writers and writers-to-be in fin-de-siècle Japan, the doctor first contradicted Émile Zola’s theory (“The Experimental Novel”, 1880) and argued that “nature qua fact” acquired through “scientific” methodologies of “observation and experimentation” should not constitute the novel itself. The prescription was entitled “Shōsetsuron” (“The Theory of the Novel”), prepared by “Medical Doctor, Mori Rintarō”, who is now best remembered as fiction writer “Mori Ōgai”. Ōgai resubmitted his prescription for the novel a few months later when he, again self-identified as a medical doctor, challenged a contemporary intellectual Iwamoto Yoshiharu’s opinion essay entitled “Bungaku to shizen” (“Literature and Nature”). Framed anew as a theory of the constitutive quality of aesthetic literature, Ōgai’s writing combatively negated Iwamoto’s view—the inevitable correlation between “literature” and “nature”—and invited an immediate response from Iwamoto. The exchange between Iwamoto and Ōgai unfolded oddly, involving various disconnects on the contextual, semantic, and stylistic levels. Ōgai read Iwamoto’s key term, “nature” (shizen), in a way that was violently divergent from Iwamoto’s usage. Moreover, Ōgai continued to dismiss Iwamoto’s explanation of the term. As such, even as the dispute revolved around “nature”, Ōgai’s “nature” had little to do with Iwamoto’s. I consider Ōgai’s handling of Iwamoto’s “nature” to be an instance of deliberate misreading, one that reminds us of Harold Bloom’s note on creative misreading (*A Map of Misreading*, 1975). I contend that through his misreading of Iwamoto, Ōgai creatively mapped out the stakes of his own discourse: the necessity of restructuring the order of knowledge, dividing “science” from “aesthetics” in particular, in the context of late nineteenth-century Japan.

Interpreting the Sokushinbutsu in Rumiko Takahashi's Inuyasha

Jon Morris (Daito Bunka University)

Rumiko Takahashi's *Inuyasha* manga maintained a high degree of popularity throughout its initial run in Shogakukan's manga magazine *Weekly Shōnen Sunday* from November 1996 to June 2008 and were later brought out in book format and as an anime series. The story begins with Kagome Higurashi, a fifteen-year-old middle school girl from modern day Tokyo, being transported to Japan's "Warring States Period" (1467–1615) after falling into a well in her family shrine. In this semi-familiar "other world" she encounters the half-dog demon, half-human Inuyasha and embarks on a series of adventures in which the award-winning Takahashi blends dark and serious themes with the lighter hearted material typical of her previous work. The proposed presentation analyzes the character Hakushin Sokushinbutsu, who appears from Vol.26 Ch.10 Sokushinbutsu to Vol.28 Ch.4 *Seiki no Shōmetsu* ("Sanctuary's End") in the manga and episodes 113–114 and 118–120 of the anime series. He is an ambiguous character who first enters the storyline as a threat to the heroes, but later sees the light and helps them. Hakushin is of great interest as one of a limited number of fictional representations of the sokushinbutsu mummified "buddhas in this very body" of Japan's Tohoku region, closely associated with Mt. Yudono. After fading from view somewhat due to legal, cultural and institutional changes in the late 19th century, the sokushinbutsu were "rediscovered" by journalists and scholars of various disciplines in the mid 20th century. The presentation of such remarkable and mysterious cultural phenomena as sokushinbutsu in the positive and largely secular frameworks offered by modern academia was part of a long process of re-envisioning the Tohoku region as an essential part of the Japanese state, as opposed to a benighted and impoverished hinterland, or even "internal foreign land", as has been suggested in Nathan Hopson's research ("Ennobling Japan's Savage Northeast", Harvard University Asia Center, 2017). Their post-war reception and subsequent fictional representation were also influenced by the "occult boom" which occurred from the 1960s onward. Exploring the interpretations found in Japanese and English medium fandom and drawing comparisons with other fictionalized sokushinbutsu in Japanese subculture, this presentation provides analysis of Hakushin in the context of Japan's own "internal foreign land" and familiar but mysterious past of the Warring States Period.

Session 2A: China and the Media



Rivalry on Human Rights: How do the U.S. and China Portray Each Other in Annual Human Rights Reports?

Keyu Chen (Georgia State University)

The human rights issue has escalated into one of the most contentious disputes in US-China relations. Every year, both countries issue “Human Rights Reports” to showcase the other's perceived poor human rights records. Previous studies of China's human rights record either criticize that nation's practices through a universalist lens or explains away China's human rights abuses using a cultural relativist approach. Other scholars highlight how China handles international pressure on its human rights abuses but pays less attention to how China rhetorically reacts to global criticism. It extends the discussion around human rights from human rights practices to the discursive competition around human rights, putting it in the ongoing China-U.S. geopolitical rivalry. Through thematic, cluster, and linguistic analysis of the U.S.' “2021 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)” of China's “The Report on Human Rights Violations in the United States in 2021”, this study uncovers divergent strategies in which both powers delegitimize the rival political institution for domestic and international audiences. This study shows that human rights matter not only in practical terms but also in discursive and rhetorical terms. Meanwhile, it suggests that human rights matter not only in the domestic realm of authoritarian regimes but in the global context amid the heightened competition between democracies and autocracies.

Interpretation and Misinterpretation: A Comparative Analysis of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics' Framing in Chinese and Czech Online News Outlets

Renata Westlake (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper presents a comparative analysis of the interpretation and misinterpretation of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics in Chinese and Czech online news outlets. Focusing on framing techniques employed by two heavily state-controlled Chinese language online news websites (Xinhua News and China Daily) and two popular Czech online news providers (Seznam Zprávy and Novinky), the analysis examines how these outlets framed the Olympic Games and how potential misinterpretations may have influenced public perception.

As one of the communication tools, framing shapes how audiences understand, and view presented events. Media outlets have the ability to influence their interpretation by offering a view through a certain lens (framing) selecting specific aspects of news to highlight, using particular language and narratives, and presenting information to support certain viewpoints. However, misinterpretations can occur when framing distorts or misrepresents the underlying reality.

A corpus of 58 Czech and 421 Chinese news articles and opinion pieces was analysed, covering the period from 1.–20. 1. 2022, which included one month leading up to the Games. The results show contrasting interpretations and misinterpretations in framing the Beijing Winter Olympics. The Chinese news outlets heavily emphasized positive aspects of the Games, showcasing infrastructure development and portraying it as a globally embraced event. In contrast, the Czech news outlets adopted a more critical perspective, highlighting environmental impact, political influence, and human rights issues.

The findings of this study highlight the power of framing in shaping public perception and emphasize the importance of critical analysis of media narratives. By comparing the framing techniques used by Chinese and Czech news outlets, this research contributes to a better understanding of how interpretation and misinterpretation may influence the image and reception of major international events. Furthermore, the results also highlight the need for media literacy and critical thinking to navigate the complex media landscape and provide a more nuanced comprehension of international events.

Interpreting Media Guidelines: Unraveling the Linguistic Aspects of Censorship in Mainland China

Yaroslav Akimov (Freie Universität Berlin)

This paper presents an in-depth investigation into the domain of “sensitive words” (敏感词) and forbidden discourse, as documented in the “List of Forbidden and Use-With-Caution Words in Xinhua News Agency's News Reports” in its three versions from 2015, 2016, and 2019. These guidelines offer valuable insights into the mechanisms by which censorship is enforced in (online) Chinese media (Han, 2018; Roberts, 2018; Taylor, 2022). They encompass “recommendations” ranging from restrictions on hate speech targeting vulnerable groups to combating misinformation and curbing false advertising practices.

Methodologically, the research employs Discourse Analysis, a framework that explores how language reflects social processes and examines the relationship between language and power. This approach has proven effective in scrutinizing the linguistic dimensions of Chinese censorship, as demonstrated by Vuori and Paltemaa (2019).

Examining the implementation of censorship reveals certain societal trends that the Chinese government seeks to suppress (e.g., “star chasing” 追星 for idolizing celebrities). Furthermore, the study explores the sensitization of media representations of authorities at different levels. Censorship measures extend to combating class inequality, labeling individuals based on social status or place of birth. The guidelines prohibit the use of obscenities as well as the use of cryptic language to evade obscenities. The pursuit of objectivity in news reports through the use of connotation-free (“neutral”) expressions, as well as restrictions on discourse pertaining to ethnic minorities, religions, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan further demonstrate the wide-ranging impact of censorship.

It is crucial to acknowledge that even seemingly innocuous stylistic recommendations often conceal underlying political agendas that are not readily apparent. Through a meticulous analysis of these linguistic aspects, this study endeavors to shed light on the intricate nature of media and cyber censorship in Mainland China, and its far-reaching implications for the realms of freedom of expression and public discourse.

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Session 2B: Art and Its Interpretation

New Art for the People: the “Sociological Turn” in Contemporary Chinese Art as a Threefold Interpretative Milestone

Giorgio Strafella (Palacký University Olomouc)

This paper analyses a debate that animated Sinophone critical art circles during the early 2000s and revolved around a periodizing phrase advanced by its initiators, i.e., the “sociological turn” (shehuixue zhuanxiang). In one of the essays that sparked this debate, art historian Sun Zhenhua (2003) argued that from the late 1970s Chinese art had discarded the (politically) “instrumental” approach of the socialist era in the name of an “aesthetic” approach that emphasized art for art's sake and the artist's elite status. Sun proposed that it was time to reject such elitism and bring art closer to society – not in the name of revolution, but for the democratization of art. Indeed, Sun maintained that since the late 1990s Chinese art had been taking such “turn” by displaying a growing awareness of societal issues. Another art historian, Li Gongming, even declared that new Chinese art should find its *raison d'être* in a concern for real life in the country, particularly the suffering of its most disadvantaged citizens (Li 2003).

Through a close reading of these and other significant texts from the debate on the “sociological turn”, this study argues that it represented a threefold (re-)interpretative effort: First, as an interpretation of art from the mid-1990s and early 2000s that placed it in relation to contemporaneous currents of Chinese intellectual politics; Second, as promoting a new interpretation of the idea of socially-engaged art in contrast to both Mao's politicization of art and its rejection in the post-Mao years; And finally, as implicitly countering Western (mis-)interpretations of post-Mao Chinese art that centered perceived critiques of the party-state and its ideology – by valorizing, instead, art that addressed China's socio-economic issues. As a result, this paper sheds light on an important, yet overlooked moment in the contemporary history of Sinophone art criticism.

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Contemporary Blue-green landscape painting: Various modes of reinterpretation

Klaudia Ďurajková (Palacký University Olomouc)

In the realm of Chinese painting, the past has always served as a great source of artistic inspiration. The concept of imitating the preceding authors' masterpieces, and the manners that draw inspiration from history, are equally relevant in modern and contemporary Chinese art. This renewed interest in tradition is frequently accompanied by the reevaluation of historical aesthetic concepts and the attempt to redefine them in accordance with contemporaneity, resulting in changes in stylistic features and interpretation of traditional art forms. Such revitalization of archaic styles and motifs also applies to the blue-green landscape painting, a significant but long-time disregarded manner of landscape depiction. This study aims to analyze contemporary approaches towards the blue-green landscape painting and its artistic manifestation. The objective is to compare the techniques, methods and philosophical context typical for historical blue-green landscape paintings, with those of contemporary artists, determine how is this archaizing style represented in contemporary Chinese art, and clarify whether and to what extent contemporary authors modify visual aspects as well as the meaning of the blue-green manner.

Diasporic artisans in 17th Century Japan: Exploring the stylistic impacts of mainland Asian metalsmiths on Japanese arms and armor

Martyna Lesniewska (Freie Universität Berlin)

This paper deals with the diasporic activities of mainland Asian metalsmiths who migrated or were forcibly brought from Ming Chinese or Joseon Korean territories to Japan during the 16th and 17th centuries. Focusing on their lives as craftspeople, this study examines the intersection of cultural identity, craftsmanship, and diaspora, shedding light on the vibrant cultural landscape of Japanese arts and crafts during the formative stage of the Tokugawa shogunate.

The 17th century witnessed a political and economic transformative era in Japan characterized by the policy of national isolation (sakoku 鎖国), the continued urbanization and the controlled trade and import of foreign goods. Against these difficulties, Korean descendants and Chinese immigrants successfully established themselves in the arts and crafts market producing armors and sword fittings for the warrior elite. With their unconventional designs, motifs and forms the foreign artisans were able to cultivate a dedicated clientele.

Moreover, this research examines the cultural exchanges and impacts that occurred between these craftspeople and their Japanese counterparts. It analyzes the synthesis of mainland Asian techniques, designs, and aesthetics with Japanese metalwork practices. Utilizing historical records and materials, as well as examples of armors and sword fittings, this study reconstructs the narratives of these artisans, highlighting their contributions to Japanese artistic traditions.

By examining the diasporic lives of mainland Asian metalsmiths in 17th century Japan, this paper enhances our understanding of the experiences of artisans in a multicultural context. Their stories testify to their resilience, adaptability, and creativity as they transcended borders, crossed cultural boundaries, and left an enduring legacy in the heritage of Japanese arms and armor.

Session 2C: Churches and Missionaries



Skulls and Idols: Interpretations of the Asian Religions in the Early 20th Century Missionary Collections in Slovenia

Helena Motoh (Science and Research Centre Koper)

In the first half of the 20th century, missionary collecting practices became an important part of the missionary project of the Catholic Church, with missionary exhibitions and missionary museums becoming a new way of representing and interpreting the missionary work as well as the non-European societies and cultures. Missionary exhibitions and museums were established followed the example of the 1925 Vatican Missionary Exhibition, and the missionaries-collectors also became significant providers of objects for the secular museum institutions. Non-European and non-Catholic religions became a central theme in these displays, with implicit and explicit (mis) interpretations provided in the accompanying text and labelling, in taxonomy, in structure of the display and – first and foremost – in the choice of the objects themselves. Paper analyses how Asian religions were interpreted via all these means in the missionary collections, exhibitions, and museums of the early 20th century Slovenia. By analysing several most prominent examples – Franciscan missionary Peter Turk's collection of »Chinese idols« (1910s) in Slovenian Ethnographic Museum, pre-WWII Ljubljana trade fair missionary exhibitions (1930s), and the Ljubljana Museum of the Jesuit Bengal mission (1930s), the paper aims to recognize the interpretation strategies and methods of the missionary collections, while also trying to identify the references that the missionary collectors and exhibitors possibly drew their interpretations from. It seeks to distinguish between different levels of the interpretations of Asian religions, textual, visual, taxonomical, structural etc. to see which different interpretations were at play at each of these cases and how they intertwined and/or collided. To reconstruct the representations and interpretations, the paper uses the existing collections (when still preserved), scarce visual archive (photographs, drawings), and missionary and secular publications of that time.

“Far away from home”. Selected aspects of the activities of the Polish Mission to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission on the Korean Peninsula from 1953 to 1990

Karol Starowicz (Adam Mickiewicz University / Institute of National Remembrance)

The primary purpose of the Korean War Armistice was to end the armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula and establish a truce until a final peace settlement is reached. In order to achieve this, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission was set up to supervise and inspect places where violations of the Armistice Agreement were suspected. The NNSC was made up of representatives of four neutral countries, two designated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Korean People's Army and the commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers (Poland and Czechoslovakia) and two designated by the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Forces (Switzerland and Sweden). During the Cold War, the members of the Polish Mission to the NNSC analyzed the facts, compiled reports and reacted immediately to any signals indicating a possible threat to the truce. The preserved reports and notes show us the clash of two “different worlds”, where representatives of Western culture (Poles, Czechs, among others) had to cooperate with people of a different culture. As a result of the activities, the members of the Polish Mission operating on the Korean Peninsula established contacts with the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They also constituted a communication channel for development of future relations with the Republic of Korea. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the commission's role was reduced to an absolute minimum. Despite this, Poland still remains an active member of this body. Currently, the NNSC already includes representatives from three countries: Poland, Sweden, Switzerland. After the division of Czechoslovakia into two separate states, the Czech Mission withdrew. Even after the collapse of the USSR and the transformations on the Korean Peninsula, the main task of the NNSC remains unchanged — supervising the ceasefire between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

How was the cooperation between members of the Polish and Czechoslovak Missions? How the NNSC was perceived by Koreans in the past and how their approach to the commission has changed until now? How did the members of the Polish Mission perceive Korea and its problems? What information does the IPN Archives hide about the Commission's activities? During the presentation, the author will provide answers to the above-mentioned questions and present unpublished materials from the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw.

The pros and cons of the legal status of Vietnamese Protestant churches

Le Van Tuyen (Palacký University Olomouc)

In Vietnam, religious groups must be registered with the government in order to operate legally. Until 2020, while nine Protestant groups were officially recognized by the Vietnamese government, and some groups are underway applying for legal status (semi-legal status), numerous groups, known as house churches, operated underground. Interestingly, our fieldwork data suggests that house churches thrived in the context of religious restriction, but they tended to be undeveloped when the Vietnamese state relaxed religious policies. The article aims to highlight the pros and cons of the legal status of Vietnamese Protestant churches. Based on in-depth interviews, we try to answer questions of how and why legal status is important to the growth of Protestant churches. We argue that although the legal status is important to Vietnamese Protestant churches, it is not a vital issue for the growth of these churches. Protestant churches have flexible strategies based on considering the pros and cons of the legal status to obtain their purpose.

Session 2D: Language and Society

Aboriginal Languages in Taiwan – Victims of Modernization?

Petr Janda (Palacký University Olomouc)

Aboriginal languages in Taiwan saw inclusion in school curriculum in current millennium, which was a marked change compared to the decades of their political and social marginalization in the second half of the 20th century. While in the 1970s students were punished and belittled for using their mother tongue at school, in current schooling system mastering of the very same language provides benefits in terms of advancing to the next school level. Author conducted interviews in Taitung County in Taiwan on the role of aboriginal languages in current, predominantly Han society in Taiwan. While there seems to be desire both by the authorities and by members of aboriginal communities to keep aboriginal languages alive, there is also remarkable skepticism among the latter regarding achievability of this goal. Current paper argues that the exclusion of aboriginal languages from public as well private sphere was a process related to modernization of aboriginal communities and their inclusion in the larger modernization project driven primarily by the Han in Taiwan, or what Chang (2010) describes as “broad civilizational transformation”, which included fundamental and rapid changes of various aspects of national, communal and individual life.

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Inference and inter-cultural awareness in Italian-Chinese healthcare interpreting

Sabrina Ardizzoni (University of Bologna)

Taking into account Wadensjö's theory of "interpretation as interaction", my idea is to demonstrate that the inferential ability and the inter-cultural awareness of a human professional interpreter is the kingpin of healthcare interpreting. The aim of the contribution is to bring out the translation problems on which doctor-patient communication either reaches an impasse, or gives rise to misunderstandings, of both communicative and technical order, from a lexical, pragmatic or cultural point of view. Among Chinese-Italian community interpreting practices, those in the medical fields are the most common in Italy. Hospitals often resort to the use of a language mediator for communication with patients and families from China. In the absence of a professionally run language mediation service, the person who acts as an informal interpreter is often an acquaintance or a relative of the patient. In these cases we speak of natural translators (Harris, Sherwood 1978), or familial interpreters (Valdés 2003). This form of language brokering (Tse 1995) often involves children, who, more often than not, are unable to handle the complexity not only of the language, but also specific to this communicative setting. More often, Machine Translation (MT) tools such as Google Translate (studied by Turner et al., 2019) or other Chinese apps are used. As demonstrated in other language pairs, none of these MT tools have reached a sufficient accuracy in healthcare interpreting. Khoong et al. (2019 "cautiously support" the use of MT tools in clinical practices, while other studies, such as Downie and Dickson (2019) tend to discourage it quite strongly. Here I will examine some cases of interpretation and misinterpretation drawn from in-person and MT mediation services in some Italian healthcare centers.

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Publications of the North Korea's Foreign Language Press in Arabic in the 1980s

Alaa Elewa (Ain Shams University)

The relations between Egypt and North Korea, in terms of military exchanges, were very active since the 1960s. In contrast, this period did not witness a lot of cultural exchanges between the two countries. While we find that cultural activity was active during a very short period later during the 1980s. In this research, I intend to discuss aspects of what we can call cultural activity, and what it represents mainly focusing on North Korean Publications in Arabic. This research will focus on most is a rare collection of books that North Korea translated into Arabic at the beginning of the 1980s that was published in Egypt. It seems that North Korea, at that time, followed the method of China in publishing what promoted its regime in other languages, and Egypt was among them. It is known that the China Foreign Language Press played an important role in disseminating cultural, historical, political, and other information about China abroad. North Korea used the same method by establishing the Foreign Language Press — the same name used in China — to publish books about it in foreign languages abroad. The share of the Arabic language was within the range of ten books, including “A Great Teacher for Journalists”, which is a translation of a group of articles published in the Rodong newspaper, and “A Song of Reverence for the Great Love of Kim Jong Il and the People”, which is a translation of a book with the same title by the Japanese journalist Nada Takashi. These books are not a kind of cultural export, but they are one of the few attempts North Korea has made to define itself and promote its regime to the Egyptians.

Through this short research paper, I intend to present those publications and their content in a simplified manner, in an attempt to understand what North Korea intended to export through it, and what might be the reasons for its failure as well later on, due to the disappearance of this type of promotion abroad.

Session 2E: Linguistics

When personal pronouns behave like interactional particles in Japanese conversational interaction

Halina Zawiszová (Palacký University Olomouc)

Japanese is traditionally regarded as a predicate-final language, however, in actual conversational interactions, various patterns of turn-constructional unit continuation are common (Couper-Kuhlen and Ono 2007). In this paper, I focus on utterance constructions that involve the so-called personal pronouns expressing first- and second-person subjects produced in the post-predicate position within a single intonation contour as the predicate which precedes them.

These utterance constructions are clearly planned as non-predicate-final from the start and the personal pronouns appear to serve affective rather than referential or discourse-pragmatic function. In other words, what these prosodically integrated first- and second-person pronouns produced in the post-predicate position recurrently do is contribute to the construction of affective stance displays, that is, the speakers' displays of emotions, feelings, moods, and attitudes.

Consequently, both in their function and position, they strongly resemble elements that are generally classified as interactional (or 'sentence final') particles. In fact, according to Fujiwara's (1986) large-scale study of Japanese dialects, the diachronic development of first- and second-person pronouns into interactional particles seems quite common. When we pay close attention to actual conversational interactions, we further notice that in addition to the personal pronouns that I discuss in this paper, there are various other linguistic elements that also appear to be presently undergoing the process of recategorization into the utterance-final interactional particles.

The paper draws on interactional linguistics and is based on the analysis of my own collection of recordings of spontaneous face-to-face conversational interactions between Japanese young adult friends, telephone conversations from the TalkBank Japanese CallFriend Corpus, and excerpts of written conversational interactions from social media.

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Tokenization and part-of-speech tagging in written Cantonese data

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Introduction Cantonese is a low resource language with limited annotated data (Lau et al., 2022). Most of the existing corpora research in Cantonese deals with spoken language data (Lee, 2011; Luke & Wong, 2015; Wong, 2006). There is a lack of written Cantonese data, as well as lack of suitable POS (part-of-speech) schemes. Existing Cantonese POS-schemes include Luke & Wong (2015) and Wong (2006). Due to a lack of training data, even the tools created specifically for Cantonese do not work properly. In this paper, we compare two POS-tagging tools, Universal Dependencies (De Marneffe et al., 2021; Petrov et al., 2011) and HKCanCor (Luke & Wong, 2015), and discuss their problems, including incorrect tokenization and part-of-speech tagging, or lack of certain part-of-speech categories.

Methodology Universal Dependencies has 17 POS-categories and HKCanCor (Hong Kong Cantonese Corpus) has 46 POS-categories. Both tools are incorporated in PyCantonese, an open-source Python library for Cantonese linguistics trained on Cantonese corpus data (Lee et al., 2022), likely the most advanced tool for Cantonese corpus linguistics and natural language processing. These tools were tested on a sample of 10 stories (3840 Chinese characters) by Hambaanglaang (Lau & et. al., 2023), an open source with a CC-BY licence.

Results In terms of tokenization, one notable issue is the inaccurate distinction of boundaries between different items; for instance, HKCanCor tokenizer tends to create nonsensical three- or four-character tokens, while UD tokenizer does not segment transitive verbs onto verb + object, e.g., 剪頭髮 *zin2 tau4 faat3* “have a haircut” is tokenized and tagged as one verb. In general, HKCanCor tokenizer tends to segment bigger units (2069 tokens) compared to Universal Dependencies tokenizer (2954 tokens). Another problem arises from the lack of certain functional categories in the Universal Dependencies tagset, e.g., classifier, sentence-final particle. Such items are usually incorrectly tagged as a noun or a verb. Both tools often fail to tokenize and tag Cantonese-specific items, e.g., sentence-final particles and classifiers. Our study aims to address these challenges.

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The Part of the Axiosphere of Ancient Chinese Dictionary “Shuo wen jie zi”: A Matter of Hermeneutic Semiotics

Natalya Terekhova (Irkutsk State University)

The theoretical and practical study of the ancient Chinese dictionary “Shuo wen” has allowed us to reveal the following points:

Chinese hieroglyphic units formed a writing system for which the function of translating/transmitting ideas, meanings, or concepts through visual-graphic elements prevails over the function of conveying a single meaning or reading.

The ancient Chinese dictionary “Shuo wen” is the constitutive source and stage in the development of the national linguo-semiotics of Chinese writing.

Interpretation of a hieroglyph in “Shuo wen” is disclosed first of all through its graphic sense-making form, graphic components and the system of grapho-logical, ideo-graphic relations with other signs, subordinated to Chinese philosophical-cultural matrices/ideas. Besides that, the signs of the dictionary are interpreted through the prism of ethico-political problems, predominantly in a practical-pragmatic way as a means of conveying the prescription for action necessary in moral-political practice.

Macro-structure of the dictionary “Shuo wen” (chapter division (juan 卷), the sequence of signs and their classification according to bushou 部首 rubrics) represents a certain coherent, integral, complex system, revealing the meaning of relations in Chinese culture and the model of universe (correlations of spatial, temporal characteristics, properties of things, people, various entities, etc.)

In this article within the framework of the general philosophic theory of axiosphere, axiologically oriented linguistic areas — ethnolinguistics, critical analysis of discourse, cognitive linguistics (theory of concepts, their prototypical characteristics, categorization) on one hand, and the aspects of linguistic-semiotics (F. de Saussure, Ch. S. Peirce, Ch. W. Morris, Fr. L. G. Frege, L. Tr. Hjelmslev) on the other hand — the ideo-grapho-logical dictionary “Shuo wen” is considered as a source containing the basic value characteristics of the world of the ancient Chinese people of the Han era. The characteristics of Chinese hermeneutic semiotics are studied on the example of the second chapter juan: the structural relationships of the whole set of key and derivative signs are systematically described on the grapho-logical level, connotative continuum of metaphysical, philosophical, cultural, social-political, natural phenomena and their corresponding value meanings is revealed on the ideo-graphic level. As a result, the features of the Chinese hieroglyphic sign as an axiologema (axiological meanings within the sign), which is disclosed in its moduses: as logo-episteme (the element of knowledge within the sign), culturema (cultural phenomenon within the sign), behaviorema (behavioral unit within the sign), ideologema (social-political element within the sign), are demonstrated.

Session 3A: Japanese Cultural Texts (organized panel)

The Pitfalls of Universalism: Japanese Cultural Texts Interpreted and Misinterpreted Under the Western Eye

Any cultural text is destined to be brought out of the milieu of its origin to be received by the alien recipients. Naturally, it is highly prone to misinterpretation as the receiver may very well lack the knowledge of linguistic/cultural paradigm that the text has sprung from. The Japanese cultural texts which have been quite favorably received by foreign readers have also been interpreted and badly misinterpreted. While this is a common reality of any socio-cultural encounter, the problem arises when the interpretation is done on the basis of (false) universalism which domesticates the alien cultural phenomena as expressions of the universal, thus common, human sentiments and cultural practice. Such universalism is a gesture to contain the other to one's own familiar paradigm. This panel attempts to explore the function of universalist conceptions that has standardized misinterpretation as (true) interpretation in a few cases of the kind in the history of the dissemination of Japanese cultural texts in the West.

Music as an Instance of Postcoloniality: Rethinking the Relationship between Music and Literature as a Point of Resistance

Takayuki Yokota-Murakami (Osaka University)

Yokota-Murakami Takayuki in his “Music as an Instance of Postcoloniality: Rethinking the Relationship between Music and Literature as a Point of Resistance” challenges the universalist notion that music is a common language by exploring the case of Lev Tolstoy's reception of Japanese “songs”. The journalist Tokutomi Soho visited Yasnaya Polyana in 1896 and sang “songs.” Tolstoy relates this incident in his treatise of art and insists that he was moved as he could understand the profound grief expressed in the songs without any knowledge of Japanese language. According to Tokutomi's travelogue, however, the Tolstoys, including the writer himself, could not refrain from chuckling at the songs that sounded exotic and weird. In fact, it is open to question whether it was singing or the recitation of poems that Tokutomi performed. And the verses were neither grievous or hilarious, but solemn as they were about Japan's victory at war. Tolstoy's universalist incorrect interpretation clearly reveals the pitfall of Orientalistic assimilation of alien paradigms.

The Lineage of the “Little Japanese Woman”: Do Stereotype Parodies Resonate with Audiences?

Noriko Hiraishi (Tsukuba University)

Hiraishi Noriko' paper “The Lineage of the ‘Little Japanese Woman’: Do Stereotype Parodies Resonate with Audiences?” discuss the changing images of Japanese women over the century and across various media. Rina Sawayama's “STFU!” (2019) is a song that tackles the theme of microaggressions and its music video sheds light on the stereotypes faced by Asian women, drawing from Sawayama's personal experiences. In the video, her date tells her, “I'm currently writing like a fan-fiction piece. But from the perspective of a little Japanese woman. It's kind of a new-age *Memoirs of a Geisha*, which is kinda cool, but with more action. I mean, I'm obviously indebted culturally to *Kill Bill*, number one.” It is, she argues, well-known that the origins of the stereotypes surrounding Japanese women, as perceived by white men, can be traced back to Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* (1888) and John Luther Long's *Madame Butterfly* (1898). These works gained an air of authenticity due to the authors' personal experiences. Long's work was adapted into the opera *Madama Butterfly* by Puccini in 1904, which continues to enjoy immense popularity and is performed worldwide every year.

The focus of the paper is to address the situation where these images that spread as stereotypes not only of Japanese women but also of Asian women, although parodied since the 1970s, have not always conveyed their irony effectively. Through the analysis of works such as Brian Ferry's “Tokyo Joe” released in 1977, the collaboration between Iggy Pop and David Bowie in “China Girl” in the same year, Bowie's music video for the song in 1983, and David Henry Hwang's play *M. Butterfly* published in 1988, the paper will examine the structure and functioning of the parody of Japanese (Asian) female stereotypes, shedding light on its mechanisms.

Laughter as Collective Mis/interpretation: Ariyoshi Sawako's Furu Amerika ni Sode wa Nurasaji in Kabuki Format

Raj Lakhi Sen (Aoyamagakuin University)

The misinterpretation not solely originates in the Orientalistic gaze of the West, but possibly within the Japanese horizon of interpretation, which is the topic for Raj Lakhi Sen's paper "Laughter as Collective Mis/interpretation: Ariyoshi Sawako's Furu Amerika ni Sode wa Nurasaji in Kabuki Format" reveal the misinterpretation within Japan and within one medium of theater. Ariyoshi Sawako's *Furu Amerika* (1970) is a well known script set in Yokohama pleasure quarters in the bakumatsu period. It tells the story of a historical Geisha figure "Kiyu" who was in love with a young aspiring doctor/interpreter and committed suicide in her resistance against providing service to a foreigner. However, her act of suicide was mis/interpreted as a political development which resulted in marginalizing her "voice". The character "Kiyu" is a dream character which many leading actors of Japan have wanted to play including the legendary Kabuki's Onnagata performer Bando Tamasaburo. This paper will conduct a comparative examination of the performance of Tamasaburo with other actors while presenting an argument on how the audience's laughter was neither inspired by the collective consciousness nor was the part of the process of self-awareness, as also argued by Andre Bazin, instead, the audience's laughter was self-imposed and misinterpreted from the Tamasaburo's Form Kata and illuminated as a meta-narrative, and it limits the access to the construction of the "truth" for contemporary audience. With these four papers covering a diverse range of media and a wide span of time the panel attempts to explore the history/specificity/significance of interpretation and misinterpretation of modern Japanese cultural texts.

Session 3B: Interpreting the Past

Discourse on the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng in North Korea

Vadim Akulenko (Chung-Ang University)

The question of the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng, the putative capital of the Old Chosŏn state, is still debatable and has not yet found its unambiguous solution. The paper analyzes the gradual transformation of the discourse on the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng in North Korean Academia. In order to carry out this study I analyzed three types of sources: 1) historiographical sources of scientific history, 2) official publications of national history, 3) dictionaries and other reference literature, 4) works of North Korea's leaders Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il.

Through my analysis, I identified four main stages in the transformation of the discourse on the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng as following: In the first stage, during the 1950s, North Korean scientists freely debated Wanggŏm-sŏng's location, leading to the establishment of two dominant theories: the Liaohe River Valley location theory and the Taedong River Valley location theory. Scholars leaned towards either theory based on their preference for chronicle or archaeological evidence. The 1960s witnessed the most diverse range of viewpoints regarding the location of Wanggŏm-sŏng. The so-called archaeological perspective persisted and evolved, proposing that Wanggŏm-sŏng was located in the present-day P'yŏngyang. Another group works suggests the existence of the different centers of the Old Chosŏn chronologically and the transition from one to another through the time. Liaohe river valley location theory evolved in to directions: the Liaoyang location theory and the Lower Reaches of the Liaohe River location theory. The latter, developed by Lee Ji-rin, became dominant in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1993, following the discovery of Tangun's tomb, P'yŏngyang was proclaimed the only true capital of Old Chosŏn. This proclamation generated a contradiction between the ideological impossibility of a Chinese conquest of P'yŏngyang area that time and written evidence suggesting that Wanggŏm-sŏng was conquered. Therefore, contemporary North Korean scientific studies bifurcate the concept of Wanggŏm-sŏng into a secondary capital (Liaodong Peninsula) and a main capital (P'yŏngyang area).

Interpreting the Khmer Republic (1970–1975): A question of sources and archives?

Stephanie Benzaquen-Gautier (University of Nottingham)

It was a coup. No, it was not. It was a civil war. No, it was not. Depending on the interlocutor, interpretations of the deposition of Cambodia's head of state Norodom Sihanouk in March 1970 and the ensuing conflict (which ended with the Khmer Rouge takeover of Phnom Penh in April 1975) vary greatly. If there is a period in Cambodian recent history which has been overlooked and disparaged, it is undeniably the republican one. At best, the Khmer Republic is considered as an interregnum between the “Golden Age” of the Sangkum (post-independence) era and the Democratic Kampuchea terror. Its harsher critics see it as an illegitimate and from the start doomed-to-failure American puppet which brought about Cambodia's collapse.

My current research project seeks to challenge these longstanding views and to produce a critical historiography of the republican period. The presentation will discuss a key interpretive tool – sources and archives – with a focus on the 18 March “coup” and changes in the republican perception of the enemy (Vietnamese or Khmer? external or internal?). The materials produced by and about the Khmer Republic are limited and scattered. Moreover, American intelligence records, easily accessible for many of them, have often been favoured as historiographic resource. Using materials collected during fieldwork, I will try to bring to the fore other archives, including the materials of local and regional state and non-state actors. I will also go beyond textual archives and integrate visual and material sources. Last but not least, I will explore the idea of “archiving” the undocumented through stories and recollections. So doing, I hope to contribute to a rethink of that period at the intersection of the Global Vietnam War, the “indigenization” of the Cold War, and a *longue durée* perspective on Southeast Asia's decolonisation.

Interpretation vs. Misinterpretation of History: The Evolution of the Idea of India in K.M. Panikkar

Mauro Elli (State University of Milan)

Rita Paolini (Politecnico di Milano)

The contribution investigates aspects in the career of Kavalam Madhava Panikkar, a renowned Indian historian, statesman and diplomat, throughout the transition from the British Empire to the Nehruvian era. We intend to show 1) that the elaboration of the idea of India was a most important common thread and 2) that the idea of India was subject to an evolution closely connected to Panikkar's own experience in politics and diplomacy. Panikkar investigated the issue of India's supposed political immaturity in 1917 with a series of articles titled "The Illusions of Anglo-India". He denied that India was a mere geographical expression inhabited by conflict-fraught societies without a common rationale. This orientalist view was the product of an incapacity of considering diversity as a fertile. The early emphasis on diversity as a constituent element of "Indian-ness" was subject to a shift once independence had been achieved. In *A Survey of Indian History*, Panikkar's adhesion to the theory of "unity in diversity" tended to skew towards the first of the two elements. India was still described as a nation characterised by a peculiar mixture of elements of variety and cohesion, but the fundamental continuity in its history was now the continuity of Hindu civilisation itself. Panikkar further developed the focus on the category of "civilization" in his most famous book, *Asia and Western Dominance*. Here, he investigated unitarily the problem of contact between Asia and Europe, emphasizing Asia's sense of unity and the existence of a common history of Asian nations. India and China were the protagonists of this history, but in different ways. The gradual process of reform and adaptation, as had happened in India in contrast to the Maoist revolution, was certainly, for Panikkar, the best solution, even if it had not been possible everywhere.

Session 3C: Society and Politics

Scandal Made in Japan: An Anthropological Interpretation

Igor Pruša (AMBIS University Prague, Metropolitan University Prague)

In the past, research on scandals was conducted from various academic perspectives. The fields of study worth mentioning are sociology, history, rhetorical linguistics, comparative law, political science and media studies. In my talk, I aim to take a novel, anthropological approach by connecting the theory of performance and ritual to a broader conception of scandal.

Anthropological interpretation is used here as a means of understanding patterns of behavior and sociocultural norms/values tied to media scandals in Japan. By analyzing these patterns, I illuminate the ritualized means of public apology and the cultural realities of public shaming in Japan. This is important because most scandal denouements in Japan do not get by without a punitive ritual of emotional confession, temporary exclusion, and eventual reintegration. This practice, as I will argue, can be paralleled to the punitive ritual of Japanese “civil religion” (*shimin shūkyō*) which teaches about the act of becoming impure (*kegare*) and the necessity of the sacred (*hare*) to purify itself (*misogi*) from the pollution.

My focus will be on the main transgressor and his/her public performance, i.e., a complex series of words and actions that produce a valuable result in scandal. I will illustrate how the sociocultural act of confession, apology and exclusion is turned into an orchestrated pseudo-event with a high degree of ritualization. By doing so, I hope to offer an opportunity to see how scandals play out in a liberal democratic system that differs in many respects from the United States and Europe.

Consumer motivations for boycotting national brands: A case study of the “wild consumption” of ERKE products in China

Xue Bai (Lancaster University)

Most research on political consumerism is limited to boycotts (avoid buying products for political or ethical reasons) and unequally distributed in North American and European countries (Wicks et al., 2014; Neilson, 2010; Baek, 2010; Copeland, 2013; Katz, 2019). Very limited research sketches the boycott phenomenon in Asian countries. Grounded in political consumerism and consumer nationalism literature, this paper aims to explore what motivates people to boycott national products in China. Specifically, I selected the “wild consumption” of sportswear brand ERKE case and conducted 15 semi-structured interviews to investigate individuals' motivations of purchasing national products. The qualitative findings present that Chinese consumer boycotts of national products are driven by three types of factors: political values (patriotism, ethnocentrism, political trust and political efficacy), ethical values (altruism, general trust, and social justice), and instrumental considerations (product quality, perceived costs and benefits, susceptibility to normative influence, and clout-chasing). While political and/or ethical values can drive people to boycott national brands, instrumental considerations play a significant role in mediating consumers' purchasing decision of national products. Overall, this study advances the understanding of political consumerism in the Chinese context. It also provides an insight into a new theoretical framework of studying motivations for consumer boycotts of national products.

Interpretation and Misinterpretation: The Assimilation and Erroneous Approaches of the Concept of Civil Society in Japan

Mario Malo (Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Zaragoza,
Open University of Catalunya)

This presentation aims to explore the assimilation and inherent misunderstandings associated with the usage of the concept of “civil society” in the Japanese context. Originating from Western thought, the term “civil society” has been adopted as an analytical tool in a variety of international contexts, including Japan. However, its transposition and adaptation to the Japanese environment have led to misinterpretations and conceptual errors.

Firstly, the talk will unravel the evolution of the construct of “civil society” in Japan, its assimilation, and subsequent iterations. Cultural, social, and political factors that have guided this assimilation and have shaped the local conceptualization of the notion will be analyzed.

Secondly, erroneous interpretations and malpractices in the application of the concept of “civil society” within the Japanese context will be explored. It will be posited that these errors mainly stem from attempts to directly apply Western theories and concepts to a culturally different context, without duly taking into account Japan's unique cultural differences and singularities.

Finally, this presentation will reflect on the repercussions of these misunderstandings and suggests ways to optimize the application of the concept of “civil society” in Japan and in other non-Western contexts.

Hence, the goal of this presentation is to challenge and expand current conceptions of “civil society” in Japan, promoting greater adaptability and cultural sensitivity in the implementation of analytical constructs in diverse cultural contexts.

Session 3D: Digital Humanities (organized panel)

Digital Humanities in Asia: A Phenomenological Approach

This panel aims at highlighting the practical dimensions of digitalization in Asia by observing three socio-cultural phenomena: the employment of artificial intelligence in assessing readers' preferences and changing relationships to literature (Raluca Nicolae), the users' rejection of artificial intelligence on creative platforms (Zhao Xinyi) and the tension between what artificial intelligence and the enhancement of the human organism as body and mind was imagined to be in works of visual arts and the development towards current events (Maria Grajdian). The three presenters confront theoretical ideas with real-life phenomena and construct their discourses as architectures grounded in quotidian experiences, compassionately avoiding the traps of academic absolutism: the habit of vicariously extracting facts originating in the everyday texture and emptying them of their existential vitality so that they fit the abstract purpose of yet another ingenious but sadly useless theory.

Conversational Narration in Japanese Cell Phone Novels

Raluca Nicolae (Bucharest University)

The cell phone novel (*keitai shōsetsu*) is a twenty-first-century genre that emerged at the crossroads with mobile technology, digital competence, youth culture, young females' tastes, and the (re)discovery of self. It can easily be characterized by the slogan *itsudemo, dokodemo, daredemo kakeru* [whenever, wherever, whoever can write it] (Nanasawa, 2007). The novel is written chapter by chapter either on a computer or cell phone and posted afterwards on specialized sites or sent in small chunks to the subscribers by email. The cell phone novel is, thus, a cross-breed between literature and technology and features elements that can be traced back to youth culture. This presentation attempts not only to provide some insights into the advent of *keitai shōsetsu* in Japan, but also to identify some idiosyncratic elements that migrated from other types of discourses (email writing, *wakamono kotoba*, female language), into the cell phone novel. The language employed in cell phone novels is generally characterized by colloquialism which operates at phonetic, morphological, syntactical, and lexical levels and is frequently embellished with emojis. This new *kawaii* genre created by young female authors and targeted towards female teenagers has become a trademark of *shōjo*'s world as well as a pop-culture ingredient, saturating multi-media, and consumer goods and services.

Enhanced Humanness, Artificial Intelligence and Sensitive Cyborgs in “Ghost in the Shell”

Maria Grajdian (Hiroshima University)

This presentation approaches phenomenologically the Ghost in the Shell franchise from the perspective of the annihilation of identity as soul/body dichotomy and its (re-)unification as a harmonious entity. The particular focus lies on the animation movie Ghost in the Shell from 1995 directed by Oshii Mamoru (born 1951) and the live-action movie released by DreamWorks in 2017 with Scarlet Johansson in the lead-role. The goal of the presentation is to observe critically the concept of “identity” as displayed in the Ghost in the Shell franchise, the re-formulation of the Western notion in the original Japanese script as well as its re-semanticization in the Hollywood production. At the core of the analytical pursuit, Ludwig Wittgenstein's “language game” turns into “identity game”, a playful dynamization of an initially static vision of identity, enhanced by cross-cultural references and late-modern epistemological uncertainties. What had started as a cyberpunk seinen manga (cartoons for young male readers in Japan) in 1989, written and illustrated by Masamune Shirow (born as Ôta Masanori in 1961), developed gradually into typical anime franchise (anime being defined in its narrow understanding as a subcategory of Japanese animation with specific features such as “fan service”, heavy technological insinuations, a blending of temporal dimensions, ambivalent sexualization of the female body and questionable references to masculinity, individual empowerment and national supremacy, stretching historically from late-1970s until mid-1990s): the eponymous cult-movie from 1995 was followed in 2004 by Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence, augmented in 2002 and 2020 by the TV animation series Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex respectively Ghost in the Shell: SAC 2045 and the OVA (original video animation) product Ghost in the Shell: Arise/Alternative Architecture/The New Movie in 2015 with the simultaneous development by the video games industry since 1997.

Artificial Stroke and Real Outrage: A Study into User Responses to AI-Generated Art on NetEase Lofter

Xinyi Zhao (Hiroshima University)

This research analyzed the controversies surrounding AI-generated art on NetEase Lofter, a Chinese media-sharing platform that triggered a furor with its new AI drawing feature. It delved into the root causes of user repulsion through an examination of AI drawing mechanisms and participatory observation within the Lofter community. This study highlighted two key points of contention: allegations of plagiarism, rooted in suspicions of unauthorized use of user-uploaded artworks for AI training, and questions regarding the artistic validity of AI-generated art. Within the context of a capitalist market, this resistance was less an opposition to the new technology and more an apprehension of its potential exploitation by tech corporations. Lofter, initially viewed as a creative haven for promoting original content and hobby-sharing, was perceived to have breached its commitment to creativity and trust. The study underscored the inseparable link between ethical data collection, transparency, and a fair AI monetization strategy. Furthermore, it posited that the future of AI in art involved unique stylistic explorations based on its inherent mechanisms, presenting both challenges and opportunities that could contribute to the broader acceptance and growth of AI art.

Session 3E: Education and Values

A study of the changes regarding “understanding” in Japanese language education policy

Nagisa Moritoki Škof (University of Ljubljana)

This research aims to clarify the diachronic transfer of perspective on Japanese language education in Japan by comparing the Kokusai Bunka Jigyo Pamphlet 24th Edition “The Japanese Language Growing in the World” (Second Division, Cultural Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and “the Japanese Language Teaching Promotion Act” (hereafter referred to as the “Promotion Act”) promulgated by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2019.

This presentation deals with the qualitative analysis of the use of the words “rikai” (understanding) in the two texts. It found that in “The Japanese Language Growing in the World”, the objects of understanding are “Japanese culture” and “Japanese spirit”, both of which are strongly regarded as inherently Japanese, and that it is used with the causative form “to make someone understand”. In the Promotion Act, on the other hand, the word “rikai” (understanding) characteristically occurs together with the word “kanshin” (interest). Moreover, the objects of “rikai” and “kanshin” can be either “Japan” or “Japanese language education”, which are not presented as superior. The subjects of “rikai” and “kanshin” in the case of the object “Japan” were “foreign countries” and “foreigners”, while in the case of the object “Japanese language education” the subjects ranged from “foreigners” to “Japanese citizens” and “guardians of foreigners”. Since the end of the 20th century, the immigration of foreigners, including foreign workers and their families, has been a matter of national policy in Japan. The Japanese Language Education Promotion Act is an ideological law (Maruyama 2020), but we can see that Japan's current perspective is not to promote Japanese language education to show Japan's superiority over other countries, as was the case before WW II, but it is based on the thought that people's understanding of and interest in Japanese language education are crucial to creating an environment in which foreign people and the Japanese nation can have a social life in Japan, i.e. a convivial society.

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Stakeholders' perspectives on international large-scale assessments: interpreting high-school teachers' perspectives on PISA in Taiwan

Ting Ting Chang (Ming Chuan University)

W. Emily Chow (Ming Chuan University)

Yavor Kostadinov (Ming Chuan University)

Taiwan's participation in international large-scale assessments (ILSAs) has increased since 1999. In 2006 Taiwan was participated in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) for the first time. According to the results of International Student Assessment (PISA) from 2006 to 2018, the Taiwanese students scored higher than the OECD average in math, science and reading. The Taiwanese students perform particularly well in math. Since 2006 Taiwan has always been ranked in top five in math for PISA. Moreover, the performance gap related to socioeconomic status was similar to the average across the OECD countries. In terms of gender equity, the results show that the Taiwanese girls and boys performed similarly in math and science. Taiwan's persistent, relatively high performance with socioeconomic and gender equity has been covered widely in the local media. However, despite the wide publicity, there is scant research on how students, parents, educators, policymakers and the media perceive.

To address the literature gap, this paper explores the Taiwanese high school teachers' perspective on PISA. The research conducts online focused groups interviews with the high school teachers in Taiwan. Four rounds of the focused group interviews have been done from April to May 2023. Several findings can be drawn from the analysis of the interviews. First, most teachers are aware of what PISA is. The information on PISA is mainly from the media reports and the teachers' workshops and conferences. Only two teachers were not familiar with PISA and googled what PISA was prior to our interviews. Second, the majority of the interviewees agreed that participation in PISA is positive to the development of Taiwanese education. And most teachers considered the participation in international large-scale assessment as a good training to enhance students' global competitiveness. Third, although the majority of the interviewees considered the participation in PISA is positive, almost all of them complained about the impacts of PISA on the design of the exam questions in Taiwan. The main complain lies in the gap of traditional teaching method and the new literacy exam questions based upon PISA. Fourth, the Chinese students performed better than the Taiwanese students in PISA in the past years. Regarding this result, the majority assumed that it is unnecessary to compare the students' competitiveness cross the Taiwan Strait as most Chinese students are pushed to attain high level of academic achievement.

These preliminary findings, on the one hand, indicate the significant progress of Taiwan's integration into the global educational standard; on the other, some contradictions occurred between the tradition and current integration.

Changing Roles on Different Stages

Petra Doma (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

Ferenc Takó (Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE))

Besides the numerous organisational, political and economic changes Japan went through during the Meiji period (1868–1912), the country also “imported” new models of worldview and new ethical norms from the West. In the case of superficial changes this process of importing various elements of Western thought and taste was indeed very successful. The internalisation of these newly learned schemes took much longer however. This was true in various fields of Japanese culture and caused diverse tensions that, noticed or unnoticed, persisted long after the Meiji period. In our presentation by applying an interdisciplinary framework we are going to examine one of the most important examples of such tensions, i.e., the antinomy between the traditional Japanese family model rooted in Confucian filiality and the individualistic ethical norms based on Western social traditions. We will examine this problem from two different aspects in the Meiji and the Taishō (1912–1926) periods: on the one hand, in the context of the ethical arguments of Nishida Kitarō's 西田幾多郎 period work, *An Inquiry into the Good* (Zen no kenkyū 善の研究, 1911), and on the other hand, the censure and prohibition of Hermann Sudermann's drama *Heimat* in 1913. Nishida's work is a treatise linking and contrasting Asian and Western philosophical traditions, reflecting on the conflict of values emerging between them. A historical example of such a conflict of values is the prohibition of a European play in Japan due to its final scene which contradicted traditional Japanese ethical norms.

Our research is carried out in the fields of comparative history of philosophy and theatre reception history, and will consider both the socio-ethical changes in the background of the transformation of the Japanese concept of the family, as well as the tensions caused by the transition of societal ideals, gender roles, and women's rights.

Session 4A: Buddhism

Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lankan karate practitioners' life: Interpretations and practice of Buddhist virtues

Petra Maveekumbura Karlová (Palacký University Olomouc)

There is on-going discussion whether Buddhism and Oriental martial arts are related. Older studies (Nitobe, Deshimaru, Hegel, Donhue, Krug etc.) argue the existence of connection between the two, while newer studies (Benesh, Benett) denies it. The relationship of the Buddhism and Oriental martial arts has been recently explained by Mann and Eisenberg, the former one is scholar in religious studies, the latter one is former bodyguard, who practice both Oriental martial art and Zen Buddhism. However, all these previous studies focus on Mahayana Buddhism, especially Zen Buddhism.

Moreover, Mann and Eisenberg are not Buddhist by birth and were not raised in Buddhist society. Therefore, this research will concentrate on the case of karate practitioners in Sri Lanka, where Theravada Buddhism is still alive. There are many studies on Theravada Buddhism, especially its doctrine, but only little studies (Naidu, Wickremaratne) described Buddhist beliefs and practice of laymen in their daily life in Sri Lanka. On this background, this research will shed light on how Sri Lankan Buddhist karate practitioners interpret and practice Theravada Buddhism in their karate life. It will focus on three main virtues in Theravada Buddhism: dana (generosity), sila (morality, especially Pansil – Five precepts) and bhavana (meditation).

The research method is qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews of Sri Lankan Buddhist karate instructors and participant observation of their practice of Buddhism in their karate life and daily life.

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Alexandre de Rhodes and his (mis)interpretation of the origin of Buddhism

Ondřej Pazdírek (Masaryk University, Palacký University Olomouc)

The Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes (1593–1660) was a key figure of the early modern Catholic missions in what is now Vietnam; in addition to his missionary work, he also made a systematic effort to familiarize European readers with his missionary activities and their Vietnamese setting through his extensive literary output. His work *Relazione de' felici successi della santa fede* (Rome, 1650) contains a remarkable account of the origin of Buddhism and its spread to China (and from there to what is now Vietnam); in keeping with the religious exclusivism of Christianity in this era, Buddhism is described in highly denigratory terms and its birth and expansion are attributed to the work of demons. In this paper, I will attempt to analyze this account of the foundation of Buddhism as an example of how early modern Catholics interpreted Buddhism and reflected on it, as well as show the sources and context of de Rhodes' narrative.

Reception of Ketsubon-kyō (Bloody Pond Sutra) in Japanese Zen Sōtō School: Insights from a Newly Discovered Manuscript

Małgorzata Sobczyk (Nicolaus Copernicus University)

This paper provides new insights into the reception of Ketsubon-kyō (Bloody Pond Sutra) within the Zen Sōtō tradition, focusing on a recently obtained anonymous manuscript titled Ketsubon-kyō innen (Circumstances Surrounding the Emergence of Bloody Pond Sutra). Building upon pre-existing research (Nakano Yūshin, Nakano Jūsai, Nagahisa Gakusui), that confirms strong associations between the Bloody Pond Sutra and Buddhist ceremonies of bestowing precepts (jukai-e), I argue that the manuscript contains a draft of a sermon delivered (or meant to be delivered) in two sessions to attendants of such a ceremony held at an unidentified temple – suggested by certain details to be located in Kyoto or its vicinity. Written by a person, who identifies himself merely as a temple servant (jisha biku), it offers a unique synthesis of materials addressing women's impurity caused by blood and their potential for salvation. It primarily combines two texts with diverse origins: Ketsubon-kyō wage (Japanese Exposition of Bloody Pond Sutra), a 1713–year lengthy commentary by Shōyo Ganteki from the Pure Land sect (Jōdoshū), and Ketsubon-kyō engi (An Account of the Origin of Bloody Pond Sutra) popularized in the late eighteenth century through woodblock-printed booklets by Shōsen-ji (previously known as Hosshō-ji), a prominent center of the Ketsubon-kyō cult within the Zen Sōtō School. Both of them offer crucial points of reference for establishing details regarding the composition of the manuscript. The former demonstrates a common understanding of the role of the Bloody Pond Sutra, transcending sectarian differences to the extent of reusing exegetical materials from the Pure Land sect in Zen preaching. The latter provides grounds to establish the upper limit of its compilation in the second half of the eighteenth century. With this analysis, the paper sheds light on the reception and interpretation of Ketsubon-kyō within the Zen Sōtō School, contributing to a broader understanding of the interplay between different Buddhist traditions and the evolution of religious texts.

Modern western reinterpretations of early Buddhist female literary characters

Joanna Gruszevska (Jagiellonian University)

This paper looks at how the female literary characters from early Buddhist literature are reinterpreted by modern Western authors. Paper takes into consideration the literary characters of Buddhist nuns appearing in the *Therīgāthā* - ancient Indian collection of Buddhist poems ascribed to the early Buddhist nuns, being the part of the oldest Buddhist canon. The *Therīgāthā*, being the most well-known early Buddhist text concerning women had been studied by various scholars and had been translated to several Western languages. In recent years, some western authors also used it as an inspiration. This paper will focus on two such attempts: a book of poems by Matty Weingast (*The First Free Women: Original Poems Inspired by the Early Buddhist Nuns*, Shambala 2021) and a recent novel of Vanessa R. Sasson (*The Gathering: A Story of the First Buddhist Women*, Equinox 2023). I hope to give some insights about the approaches of afore mentioned authors to the ancient Indian Buddhist material and their attempts to make it approachable to modern readers. Lastly, I will reflect on the controversy over Weingast's book and criticism and even accusations of misinterpretation it received from Buddhist communities.

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Session 4B: Narratives and Discourses



Ours is the Past.

The Indus Valley Civilization in South Asian nationalist discourses

Jacek Skup (Jagiellonian University)

In 1924 British archaeologist John Marshall published an article in which he informed the public on his work in Mohenjo Daro which revealed an advanced urban settlement now considered to be one of the centres of the Indus Valley Civilization. Since then, the identity of the builders of Mohenjo Daro, Harappa and other settlements in the Indus Valley has become a topic of debates not only among scholars of various disciplines, but also political ideologists and activists representing different communities and political visions. Deriving the ancestry from Indus Valley Civilization became a way of establishing for the groups as the oldest and most ancient, thus having more legitimization for their projects concerning national identity.

The aim of the paper is to analyse the role of the Indus Valley civilization in selected nationalist discourses. The paper argues, that the interpretations of the past of the Indus Valley are treated as political myths concerning the beginnings or the “Golden Age”, typical to nationalist narratives and discourses. The paper will take into account Indian and Hindu nationalisms (both secular and religious), regional ethnic nationalisms (Sindhi, Dravidian) and the Pakistani approach to the Indus Valley Civilization. By providing the analysis of their discourses, the paper will attempt to determine the role of the Indus Valley Civilization in their respective political narratives.

**Locating the victim:
Coverage of Russia's War Against Ukraine in Indian Printed Media**

Olha Morgunyk (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv)

Russia's war against Ukraine has been extensively covered in the media. The war itself included battle of narratives and propaganda which can be traced in the media all over the world. India is not an exception. Since the start of full-scale invasion, the war has got a vast coverage in Indian online and printed media, also on TV. As printed media remains the most credible source of information in India, this paper offers an analysis of the main narratives on the war in Ukraine in the four biggest English language printed newspapers in India over the period of almost two years: half a year before the full-scale invasion and till June 2023. This allows to see how the media vision of the Indian positioning concerning the war has been changing throughout the period of full-scale war, starting from the NATO vs. Russia narrative, and bringing more to the narrative of the future of Indian multipolarity. Many publications also stressed India's self-vision as a global player and a mediator in the conflict. Over the period of research there is visible tendency of changing the narrational location of Ukraine as from the indefinite geographical territory that has "pro-Russia and pro-Ukrainian people" to the free-standing actor, but in the cooperation with NATO and the EU. The notion of Indian strategic neutrality preserves all over the period, however with the voices that New Delhi "cannot sit on a fence". A qualitative content analysis reveals that commentators in Indian media has mainly focused on Indian interests, consequences and possible gains and losses that this conflict may cause to their country than by the global consequences or the suffering of Ukrainian people.

Telling A Leftist Story: Narratives of Communist Women from Bombay

Sonali Sharma (Independent Researcher)

This paper examines how communist women represent themselves in their personal narratives to address the misinterpretation of their lived experiences both political and personal in the contemporary public domain, in the context of anti-colonial struggles amongst the working class of Bombay, India. Women who associated themselves with the new kind of political ideology which emerged with the popularisation of Marxist writings and ideas of revolution emanating from the Russian revolution, especially among the youth in the early twentieth century found themselves caught in a quagmire of challenges with communist politics being considered disruptive not only by the colonial state but by mainstream nationalism led by the Indian National Congress. These women found themselves outside the purview of the popular construct of “nationalism” and notions of “womanhood” simultaneously struggling with new political concepts, process of building an organisation and treading an alternative path to Independence of India

The constant web of conflict had ramifications both personal and political which these women have underscored to inspire informed interpretations of their contributions to women’s political development and history. Therefore, I will focus on the autobiographies of Ushatai Dange (*But Who Listens?*, 2003) and Parvatibai Bhor (*The Truth About a Fighter*, 1977) supplemented by other kinds of narratives to address the above mentioned concerns.

Shame, Honour and Gender: Tamil women in the Tamil Refugee Camps

Sudha Rawat (Jawaharlala Nehru University)

This paper aims to bring forth the gendered experiences of Tamil women focusing on the implication of sociocultural norms related to notions of shame and honour. The paper includes the personal stories of Sri Lankan Tamil women, who are living as refugee persons in the Devakottai camp. The camp is located in the district of Sivaganga in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. In the camp, a clear gender division exists, as certain expectations and pressures are placed upon women to conform based on social norms and code of conduct. However, women of the camp enjoy a relatively satisfactory position in comparison to women in other societies of South Asia, as they participate in earning for the household and decision-making for the family. Despite posing a liberal outlook, maintaining a physical separation between public and private space is viewed as an important step in ensuring the conservation and stability of traditional cultural values by male members of the camp. Women are generally subjected to very strict shame-honour norms and scrutiny, and any deviation from it attracts social, cultural, and moral consequences. These cultural notions are often reinforced with greater emphasis, especially on young girls who attain puberty. Regulating their sexuality, mobility, and gendered relationship to safeguard their “purity” is extremely common among the Tamil families here. As women’s bodies, ideologically, heralded as repositories of honour and status of their families, thus any act by women beyond the traditional patriarchal role is considered equivalent or any harm to their bodies is regarded as bringing shame or disrespect to the family or community. Thus, a male member of the camps puts patriarchal surveillance on women’s behaviour which is reinforced by systematic and often quite severe control of women’s social and especially sexual behaviour including their mobility and access to certain spaces. These strict rules constrict women’s behaviour and make them perform according to the demands and wishes of the family and community members. For understanding the gendered experiences of Tamil women, the paper is using the qualitative methods of ethnography and case study. For conducting interviews the paper is using a method of semi-structured interview but is also relying on informal conversational interviews with no predetermined questions in order to remain open and adaptable to the needs and priorities of interviewees.

Session 4C: Vietnamese Diaspora and Migration (organized panel)

Networking in Vietnamese Diaspora and Migration

The panel is looking at the Vietnamese internal and external migration and, through the proposed presentations, it will show that the migrants face various forms of migrants precarity, how they resist precarity, and what are the consequences of the resistance/facing precarity. The panel will show that by transplanting the socio-economic model from Vietnam to the host society, the first generation of Vietnamese extends various migrant precarity to the second-generation Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic. Here, the migrant precarity produces a higher degree of psychological burden leading to more frequent development of mental illnesses within the diaspora, compared to the society-at-large. Then, the panel will show that also in internal Vietnamese economic migration, the migrants face similar problems and precarity. To resist those problems, they create various social and religious networks. Finally, the panel will show how the migrant precarity faced by the first-generation migrants leads to inter-generational conflicts that are depicted by a comparative study of how the heterosexual and homosexual members of the 1.5 and second-generation Vietnamese negotiate over their romantic/marital partners from the non-co-ethnic cultural environment.

The State, Family, and Money: Sources of Migrants' Precarity in Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic

Mai Thi Thu Krausová (Palacký University Olomouc)

The presentation shows how precarity is produced and reproduced by Vietnamese migration to the Czech Republic. The presentation argues that in Vietnam, the migrants do not benefit from the state welfare system. Instead, they create a complicated family system of negotiated reciprocity, providing them with a basic degree of socio-economic security. The migrants transplant this mentality to the Czech Republic, where the migrants rely on their traditional social family/kin network, providing them with a certain degree of socio-economic security. But, due to various factors, the system is too expensive that it only reproduces the migrant's precarity that is passed to the next diasporic generations.

Mental Health in Vietnamese Diaspora Living in the Czech Republic

Duong Nguyen Jirásková (Palacký University Olomouc)

Existing research shows that the diasporic life leads to a higher frequency of mental illnesses among those in the diaspora living in other countries. This presentation will show how the situation in the Czech Republic and analyze the attitudes of diaspora people to mental health, prevention of mental illness, and its treatment. The presentation shows that diasporic members consider wearing a mental disorder as a stigma. To avoid diasporic stigmatization, first-generation migrants usually do not look for medical treatment if they face a mental disorder. The situation is much better in the second generation, which already do not face a language barrier and does not consider diasporic stigmatization as an important factor in their decision-making about medical treatment. Those people usually visit doctors and openly speak about their mental problems.

Going Out: Vietnamese Diasporic Subjectivity and Inter-Generational Conflicts over Romantic Partnership of the Second Generation in Vietnamese Diaspora in the Czech Republic

Filip Kraus (Palacký University Olomouc)

The article compares two sets of inter-generational conflicts, those over inter-ethnic and same-sex romantic relationships of the second-generation Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic. The research reveals that the first-generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic display strong homophobic tendencies and believe that homosexuality is a spreadable sickness, curse, or bad karma and shame of the parents/family. But, collected data show that the conflicts over interethnic relationships between the parents and their LGBT+ children are less intensive. In the end, LGBT+ children enjoy more freedom in terms of inter-ethnic romantic relationships. The article argues that allowing the inter-ethnic same-sexual relationship of their children is a part of parents' strategy how to keep the family reputation intact. More importantly, same-sex children usually use a complicated strategy to prove to be good children, which usually leads to slow acceptance of the same-sex inter-generational relationships of the children by the parents. On the other, heterosexual children are considered a part of the migrant system resisting various precarity. As such, it is essential to keep them within the parents' socio-cultural environment, which can be disturbed by a non-co-ethnic and non-co-cultural romantic/marital partner.

Session 4D: Literature and Environment



The “Species Horizon” in Mo Yan and Yan Lianke. An Ecocritical Reinterpretation.

Eugenia Tizzano (Roma Tre University)

Although not originally created to spread awareness about and convey a sense of urgency towards the current environmental crisis, the novel *Red Sorghum* (1987) by Mo Yan (1955–) and the novella *The Years, Months, Days* (1997) by Yan Lianke (1958–) stimulate one to deeply reconsider the modern conception of the relationship between man and nature, which is at the very basis of the crisis. The hybrid identities of the two authors, both urban intellectuals of rural origins, has allowed them to recover an ancient vision in which a mysterious and powerful nature inexorably acts upon small individual or collective human events. This broad gaze on men – which never forgets the “species horizon” (Benedetti, 2021), i.e. the vast background in which human events unfold – ultimately restores a tragic and epic sense of their lives. Recent contributions in the Western ecocritical debate have identified the epic and mythic dimension recovery – in which the art of the written word is never detached from the art of thinking – as a device that gives life “to a powerful word, capable of enchanting” and eventually redesigning the world due to its awakening and mobilizing force (Benedetti, 2021). This paper proposes a preliminary analysis of recurring themes and rhetorical devices through which the two authors systematically reintegrate the “species horizon” into the daily lives of their characters, thus making small human events even more worth the storytelling experience. Considered from this peculiar perspective, Mo Yan’s and Yan Lianke’s works deserve to be placed alongside those of great writers, from Dostoevskij to Achebe and Powers, who have never forgotten to outline diverse human stories within a broader horizon in which men are simply terrestrials among terrestrials.

Soviet Environmental Exploitation in the Works of Two Central Asian Authors

Paul Woods (Asia Graduate School of Theology – Alliance)

This paper looks at environmental themes in novels by the Kyrgyz author Chinggis Aitmatov and the Uzbek writer Hamid Ismailov, both set in Soviet Kazakhstan. Central Asian countries share cultural and religious heritage, as well as experiences during and after the Soviet period. The novelists came from different Soviet republics, but writing in different periods under different regimes, address issues of environment and ethnicity in similar ways. In Aitmatov's *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years* (1980), Soviet space research bases are out of bounds to local people, who are denied access to their own sacred territory. Aitmatov borrows the Kyrgyz concept of *mankurtisation* to critique the subalternisation of Central Asians in their own land. Ismailov's *The Dead Lake* (2014) tells the story of a Kazakh boy physically and emotionally damaged after entering a Soviet nuclear testing zone. The boy's background and suffering are both linked to a local man who serves the Soviet regime as a scientist and ideological supporter. The authors' positioning of Moscow as the metropole and use of traditional Central Asia legend and imagery in their critiques of Soviet environmental and ethnic modernism and neo-colonial practices reveal a sense of helplessness and anxiety in the face of forces beyond the control of local people. The culture, beliefs, and identity of Central Asian people are strongly connected with their land and environment. I examine the linked motifs of Soviet environmental exploitation and denial of agency to local people from a post-colonial angle which uses place to interrogate Soviet othering of nature and human beings. Although the stories relate to Soviet Central Asia, the events in them and their effects on local people will resonate with any culture or society similarly threatened and disenfranchised by powerful external entities.

**Looking at the East through the Chinese lens:
A Multidisciplinary Study of Ma Huan's The Overall Survey of the Ocean**

Sahin Shah (University of Delhi)

This paper explores the travels of Ma Huan, a Muslim sailor and translator who accompanied Chinese Admiral Zheng He on his voyages to the Indian Ocean in the early 15th C. After travelling to littoral states such as Java, Malacca, Ceylon, Calicut and Aden, he wrote down his observations and experiences in a book named *The Overall Survey of the Ocean* (1433). This travelogue is important to us for various reasons. Firstly, it allows us to see how the Chinese approached their neighbouring countries through the sea-route. Secondly, the exhaustive detail provides us a glimpse of the custom and the people of South-East and South Asia of the 15th Century such as wives taking foreign men with the consent and blessings of their respective husbands. It elicits curiosity in him but unlike Ibn Battuta or Marco Polo, he doesn't rush to establish a sense of cultural superiority. Thirdly, his eagerness takes him beyond the port cities where he engages with village elders and records the local myths, legends and folktales. He also vividly describes the local flora and fauna for his readers back home. Most importantly, in this text we see the East through the lens of a Chinese translator in which the travel is taking place from East to West rather than the other way around. To critically analyse his text, I aim to take a multidisciplinary approach involving literature, history, cultural studies and anthropology. Furthermore, I compare Ma Huan's travels with the works of Ibn Battuta and Nicolo Di Conti to understand the cultural and political climate of the 15th C Indian Oceanic region. My intention is to bring Ma Huan from periphery to the center and place him at par with his popular counterparts.

Session 4E: Misinterpretation in Poetry (organized panel)

Translative Affinities.

Misinterpretation in Poetry: Theories, Texts and Translation Practise

When it comes to poetry, misinterpretation is a fairly common hazard. The multiplicity of meanings semantically and phonologically conveyed by words, verses and poems through silent readings or oral performances allows several interpretations, which may lead to the distortion of the original texts or, on the contrary, to new understandings able to disclose the full potential of poetry and reveal other perspectives. Through case studies of misinterpretation, re-creation, and mediation in the field of poetic theories, text interpretation and translation, the panel intends to explore the creative potential of misinterpretation and its repercussions in poetry.

Interpretation and Misinterpretation of Poetic Theories: Ji Xian's Horizontal Transplantation as Case Study

Silvia Schiavi (Roma Tre University)

Ji Xian 紀弦 (1913–2013), a Mainland Chinese poet who moved to Taiwan in the late 1940s, is known to be the pioneer of Taiwanese poetic modernism. Nevertheless, Ji Xian's poetic theory and stance on modernism were often misinterpreted by his contemporaries, such as the Blue Star poetry society's leading authors Qin Zihao 覃子豪 (1912–1963) and Yu Guangzhong 余光中 (1928–2017), who initially failed to understand Ji's modernist project. The famous Horizontal Transplantation (Heng de yizhi 橫的移植) tenet on the introduction of 20th century Western poetry is undoubtedly his most misinterpreted proposal, as the poet was harshly criticized for promoting a complete Westernization of Chinese poetry and for the removal of any element of Chineseness from local poems. This contribution aims to explore the interpretations and misinterpretations of Ji's modernist stance by his contemporaries. Specifically, it will examine the Poetic Debate on Modernism that arose in 1957 and the renowned Horizontal Transplantation theory to define what Ji Xian truly envisioned for the future of poetry in Taiwan and shed light on the existence of different viewpoints on modernism in the 1950s.

Text, Context, Voice, Interpretation and Re-Creation: The Poetry of Chen Li

Rosa Lombardi (Roma Tre University)

I will present some poems by the contemporary Taiwanese poet Chen Li 陳黎 (b. 1954), known not only in Taiwan and China for his experiments in visual sound poetry. These texts allow the reader-listener a multiplicity of interpretations, forcing him to go beyond the purely semantic reading mode and focus on the poem's sonority. I will illustrate the main ways of experimenting with the sounds offered by Chen Li's texts, with particular attention to those that have undergone a multimedia re-mediation or recreation, and which draw attention to the centrality of the voice and its power. Because, as Zumthor (1983) states, "A message is not reduced to its manifest content, but entails a latent one, consisting in the medium that transmits it", and the voice can go beyond the word. This is the case with Chen Li's poetic experiments, whose intention is not only to communicate sense but also to attract the reader-listener to the illocutionary power of the voice in a game indifferent to the production of meaning, to drive him to hear the sounds of a language, rich in homophones, with new ears.

Italian Poetry in Taiwan: Interpretations and Misinterpretations within a Selection of the Translated and Circulated Works

Martina Renata Prosperi (Independent Scholar)

Although Italy is renowned in Taiwan for its refined cultural production, it is not uncommon for this knowledge to remain limited to a classic, past time-bounded and often stereotyped canon. This limit is particularly evident in the field of poetry. Generally speaking, as far as Italian poetry in Chinese translation is concerned, only Dante's masterpiece *The Divine Comedy* finds wide circulation in Taiwan. Other poets translated and published (in monographs, but more often in mixed anthologies) are either very prestigious names, as in the case of Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837), Cesare Pavese (1908–1950) and Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888–1970), or winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature, such as Giosuè Carducci (1835–1907), Grazia Deledda (1871–1936), Salvatore Quasimodo (1901–1968) and Eugenio Montale (1896–1981). But how are these poets translated and how are they presented to Taiwanese readers? If the selection criterion is mere fame, and the poetic production of the respective authors is read and translated independently of its original production context, then which interpretative practices and which possible misunderstandings come into play? By analysing a selection of significant case studies, this contribution is intended as a preliminary investigation into the translation practices of Italian poetry in Taiwan, reflecting on the more or less faithful and more or less effective solutions found by Taiwanese translators, as well as on their respective motivations and effects.

The Unbearable Lightness of Punning: Deeds and Misdeeds in Translating Chinese Poetry

Luca Stirpe (“G. d’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara)

The fact that metaphors are not solely rhetorical or literary, but primarily a cognitive phenomenon that structures language, understanding, and even our own thoughts and actions as “metaphorizing animals” (Johnson, 1995), has been extensively demonstrated in the pioneering study by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Poetry, as a form of language and literary expression, is the privileged realm for metaphor. Consequently, the translators are constantly exposed to metaphors, and their work is therefore constantly at risk of distortion and misinterpretation. In some cases, puns can combine with metaphors, pushing translation and linguistic/cultural mediation to the boundaries of untranslatability. My contribution aims to analyze the interaction of metaphor and wordplay in selected songs from *Midnight Songs* (Ziyege 子夜歌), a collection of forty-two anonymous pentasyllabic quatrains written by, or for, female singers, believed to have originated in the 4th and 5th centuries AD. Specifically, I will present some instances of challenging interpretation, others of “extreme mediation”, and still others where mediation seems impossible. It is precisely in these latter cases that the translator, instead of admitting defeat, may discover a “thirdness” (van Crevel and Klein, 2019) which could open up new perspectives and solutions to poetry translation.

Session 5A: Marginalized Voices



The Controversial Behaviour of the CCP Leadership Towards the Rural Masses in Post-Revolutionary China: A Reappraisal Based on Archival Documents from Jiangxi Province

Silvia Picchiarelli (Independent Researcher)

The process of transition to socialism in early 1950s China ushered in a new era in the relationship between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the rural masses. The agricultural policies introduced at this stage paradoxically harmed those poor and middle peasants who had allied with the CCP during the communist revolution and land reform, causing waves of resentment in the villages. Considered by the central authorities as an expression of the “non-antagonistic contradictions” (feiduikangxing maodun) persisting in rural society, peasant aversion should have been countered through non-violent methods of “persuasion and education” (shuofu jiaoyu). Contrary to what is generally claimed, however, this praxis was not always respected. My analysis of some public security bureau documents stored in Jiangxi province local archives has evidenced that many ordinary villagers were often arrested and interned in the reform through labour camps (laogaiying) even for minor offences. They thus suffered similar treatment to the rich peasants, former landowners and the other so-called “counter-revolutionaries” (fangeming fenzi). These findings therefore shed new light on the relationship between the CCP and the rural masses in the early years of the communist regime, showing that even before the 1957–58 anti-rightist purges the State did not hesitate to severely punish individuals from “good” classes also for trivial crimes. They also provide valuable details on the still little-known prison labour system in post-liberation China.

Transnational Grassroots Activism and Historical Revisionism: A Comprehensive Examination of the “End Comfort Women Fraud” demonstration in Berlin

Stevie Poppe (KU Leuven)

This paper examines the motivations, strategies, and implications of the “End Comfort Women Fraud” (ECWF) movement, a South Korean civic group that staged a four-day demonstration in the summer of 2022 protesting the permanent installation of a “Statue of Peace” commemorating the contested history of what are euphemistically called “comfort women”—in the public sphere of Moabit-Berlin, Germany. Comprised of activists with ties to conservative groups in South Korea and Japan, the ECWF movement has gained minor attention for its historical revisionist discourse and transnational activism. Through an interdisciplinary, mixed-methods approach combining participatory observation and content analysis of online media, this study investigates the value and reception of the ECWF movement among the Japanese online participatory audience.

The findings reveal that the ECWF movement strategically employed the comfort women issue to advance broader political agendas and mobilize support. Moreover, social media platforms played a crucial role in disseminating their messages and mobilizing financial contributions, particularly from a predominantly Japanese audience. Finally, this paper explores the intricate connections between the ECWF movement, other conservative organizations, historical revisionism, and the transnational circulation of their narratives.

While ostensibly focused on contested history, the primary aim of the ECWF movement is to signal activity and solidarity to (a predominantly Japanese) online audience, rather than engaging in dialogue with German and South Korean counter-protestors or unrelated bystanders. By analyzing the discourse surrounding the protests from the Japanese recipient side, this study delves into understanding the perceived significance and reception of the ECWF movement among the Japanese online participatory audience, shedding light on the broader transnational dynamics at play.

Overall, by unpacking the motivations, strategies, and cross-cultural reception of the ECWF movement, this research contributes to our understanding of historical revisionism, transnational activism, and the interplay between socio-political civic movements, public discourse, and online audiences.

**“We are Original Muslims”:
Muslim Barbers and Imagining Egalitarianism in Islam in South India**

Saidalavi P.C. (Shiv Nadar University)

This paper looks at how a socio-economically disadvantaged group of Muslim barbers in south India interpret various verses in the Quran to shore up their challenge against unequal social relations. Both barber men and women have historically been engaged in Malabar on the south-west coast of India in providing barbering services such as shaving, cutting nails, trimming beard and circumcision and midwifery to other Muslims. They often received rewards for these services in kind rather than in cash. Owing to their occupation, barbers were seen as different and low in status. Not only that other Muslims did not engage in marital relations with barbers, they also did not usually allow barbers to have commensal relations. Since such hereditary occupations and unequal relationships have largely been colored in the whole Indian subcontinent by caste, Muslim barbers have to often distinguish and legitimize their work not as “caste-occupation” but an Islamic one. To assert that, Muslim barbers resort to a moral imperative in Islam to have a barber in the community to keep the comportment of a Muslim. In addition, they claim that their ancestor did not convert from a Hindu caste to take up the barbering job but was an original Arab Muslim who volunteered for the job. Muslim barbers also challenge any characterization of their work as “caste” by asserting that Islam is an egalitarian religion. I argue that Muslim barbers construct egalitarian vision of Islam by interpreting myths, various verses in the Quran and contesting any misinterpretation of their occupation. I suggest that categories of interpretation/misinterpretation are key to the construction of group identities and imagining newer forms of sociality.

Session 5B: Southeast Asia

Southeast Asian middle powers' approaches to US-China strategic competition and the implications for the East Asian security order: A comparative study of Vietnam and Indonesia

Ngoc Ly Nguyen (International Christian University)

This paper examines factors driving Indonesia's and Vietnam's approaches to the US-China strategic competition and implications to the East Asian security framework. The two countries are studied due to their significance in the region. Indonesia is known as a de facto leader of ASEAN due to its overwhelming population, territory, and historical claims. Meanwhile, Vietnam's long coastline faces the South China Sea, a "strategic flashpoint" in the US-China strategic competition. The geopolitical significance, coupled with Hanoi's ceaseless struggle against China's influence, makes it a critical player in the regional security architecture. In this paper, the author posits Indonesia's and Vietnam's foreign policies under a combination of hedging theory and middle-power diplomacy. She contends that the hedging theory clarifies nuances between middle powers' perspectives on powerhouses' statecraft in their race for influence. At the same time, middle-power diplomacy yields an illuminating insight into how they respond to the great-power rivalry dynamics and contribute to regional security and stability. Therefore, by adopting both hedging and middle-power diplomacy theories, this paper is expected to comprehensively analyze Hanoi's and Jakarta's foreign policies vis-à-vis the US-China competition. Despite both highlighting strategic autonomy in their doctrines, Indonesia's and Vietnam's hedging strategies and middle-power diplomacy differ in practice. The author argues that how they hedge against the US-China competition and practice middle-power diplomacy is decided by their distinctive historical contexts, strategic environments, and resource availability.

**“Japan is a big brother; Thailand is a little brother”:
Collaborations, Conflicts, Misunderstandings, and Negotiations
between Thailand and Japan during the Second World War, 1941–1945**

Pattarat Phantprasit (Science Technology and Innovation Policy Institute)

This paper depicts collaborations, conflicts, misunderstandings, and negotiations between Japan and Thailand during the Second World War (1941–1945). It shifts from a broad picture of research on Japan's and Thailand's big-scale policies to a more detailed look at what happened in real situations by investigating the recorded experiences of Thai officials and Thai people who interacted with Japanese government and officials. This paper contends that it is necessary to comprehend a period in which two disparate countries needed to compromise and tolerate each other as they were united by a common goal: war. It is also necessary to understand more on civilians' perceptions and emotions during a time of war as they were the ones most affected by state decisions to form alliances.

Widely known that Thailand declared an official alliance with Japan in 1941, this relation was unique from those of other then-colonised Southeast Asian countries occupied by Japan. However, while Japanese troops were stationed in Thailand, language barriers and cultural differences led to conflicts between Thais, Thai officials, and Japanese officials, which sometimes resulted in hostile situations. These were worrisome for the two governments as they might affect the relationship. In terms of states' perceptions, Japan positioned itself as the “big brother,” while Thailand was regarded as the “little brother.” Thus, Japan claimed a leading role in the direction of military, economic, and civilian policies in Thailand. The Thai government, on the other hand, sought to reaffirm its sovereignty and independence in state operations. Historical details illustrate struggles and compromising of the two countries in maintaining their relationship during the war, and how the alliance affected Thai civilians.

The argument of this paper was based on employing a historical approach and analysing Thai documents in Thailand's National Archives, which included state documents, official reports, court cases, and newspapers.

Debating the interpretation of April 30th among the young Vietnamese Diaspora

Le Hoangan Julien (Bourgogne Franche-Comté)

April 30th, 1975 holds significance for the Vietnamese Government as a day of unification and reconciliation between the previously divided North and South regions of the country. However, within the refugee diaspora, this date represents the commencement of the boatpeople exodus, known as Black April, which is still commemorated and remembered. A notable opposition persists between the Communist Party and the Anticommunist refugees. Nevertheless, a closer examination of the discourses emerging from younger generations, encompassing perspectives from within and outside Vietnam, reveals a more complex discourse. Through an extensive study consisting of sixty interviews and content analysis of Facebook discussions, totaling over 3000 messages contributed by a thousand individuals, it becomes evident how descendants who did not directly experience the aforementioned event and era still connect with its memory and construct more nuanced narratives about the past.

Our research discerned several key interpretive discourses regarding the past, each with varying implications for present-day reconciliation. Firstly, these debates challenge the influence of ideologies from both sides on collective memory. Secondly, participants exhibit critical perspectives towards discourses rooted in trauma, nostalgia, or anger. The psychological dimensions of memory contribute to potential misinterpretations of the past. While the younger generation seeks objectivity, they also strive to remain loyal to their families' experiences. Lastly, the perspectives individuals defend are deeply intertwined with their values, revealing conflicts that oppose past and future, as well as unity of the people and particular identities.

In summary, the discussions surrounding April 30th illuminate the dynamics of memory transmission among different generations of Vietnamese diasporas, including young Vietnamese individuals. Furthermore, these debates raise important questions about the influence of memory on interpretations of the past and its lasting effects.

Session 5C: Rites and Artifacts

Mysterious marks on tea ceremony utensils of the Momoyama period

Annegret Bergmann (Freie Universität Berlin)

Japanese tea ceramics show marks carved into the bottom of the vessels before firing them. This paper deals with the different interpretations of these oven marks (kama jirushi) and how they help to show the impact of military leader and tea master Furuta Oribe (1544–1615) on the aesthetics, production, and distribution of tea utensils during the Momoyama period (1673–1615). The interpretations and misinterpretations of oven marks will be traced and the broad production of tea utensils ranging from Mino kilns in today's Aichi prefecture to Karatsu and Takatori kilns in Kyushu in southern Japan and even in South Korea according to the aesthetics of Oribe are explained. The second half of the 16th century was not only characterized by military conflicts between local military leaders fighting for hegemonial power in Japan but also extensive contact and exchange with foreign cultures. This triggered an aesthetic revolution in the tea ceremony (chanoyu). Regarding tea utensils extraordinary designs and shapes (ifū itai) were celebrated, and bold and willfully irregular ceramics were appreciated by Furuta Oribe and his circles. Shino, Seto and Kiseto, Karatsu, Iga, Bizen and Oribe ware as well as some Korean tea bowls not only share Oribe's favored aesthetics (Oribe gonomi) of bold and distorted shapes, innovated glazes, and unconventional design, some of them also share the same carved marks on their bottoms. These marks were attributed to certain potters as a kind of signature or have been regarded as special marks by certain merchants who ordered the vessels in order to distinguish their ware. There are also marks connected to special potters. It is said that following the example of the military leader Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) who singled out six potters from the old ceramic production center of Seto to promote production there, Oribe also appointed ten potters from the Mino region and six potters from Kyoto for particular patronage. Their existence was contested in recent scholarship; however, some names can be detected in historical documents and their marks on Oribe ware that first appeared in Mino the 16th century and was mass produced until the second decade of the 17th century. Furthermore, oven marks provide evidence for the involvement of Kyoto tea ware merchants in the production of Oribe gonomi tea ware. In addition, they provide evidence for the existence of certain potters who were touring all over Japan to guide the production of such tea ware. Even though not all oven marks are fully interpreted yet, it can be stated that they elucidate the highly professional production and distribution of vessels sharing the innovative aesthetics of the tea master Furuta Oribe during the period of the end of the 16th to the early 17th century.

Examining clay figurines of keyhole-shaped tombs in Korea's South Chōlla region

Marianna Lázár (Károli Gáspár University)

There have been long-standing debates on the nature of early “Korean–Japanese” relations. One issue involves topics such as the interpretation of keyhole-shaped tombs in Korea's South Chōlla region, or the influence and limitations of geonationalist frameworks and historical records when interpreting the relations between Korea and Japan. (Lee 2019) In recent years, a consensus were made among scholars that there was a wide trading and maritime network between the Yōngsan River basin in present-day South Chōlla province (South Korea) and the Ariake Sea coastline (Kyūshū, Japan) presumably with a transnational community.

According to archaeological evidence such as the recognizable change in burial styles, Paekche kingdom expanded into the southwestern Korean peninsula between the late fifth century and early sixth century. (Tanaka 2008, Takata 2019) During this time, keyhole-shaped tombs - that have been considered a characteristic unique to Japan during the Kofun period (between the third and sixth century) – were built in the Yōngsan River basin area. (Lee 2014)

In this paper, based on archaeological data and prior research, I will focus on the characteristics of one of the external tomb features, the terracotta clay figures 埴輪 (normally found on the Japanese archipelago), comparing them with Japanese Kinki region-style ritual pottery from the same time period, examine the change in their stlye and manufacturing techniques, while (re)considering the cultural-historical reasons behind this process.

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Session 5D: Old Siam (organized panel)

Old Siam: Carrefour of Civilizations

Situated at the crossroads between the Indian Ocean, the Malay archipelago, and the South China Sea, the Kingdom of Siam (present-day Thailand) served, for most of its history, as an important entrepôt for the exchange of goods and ideas. Despite centuries of uninterrupted statehood, only a limited number of indigenous sources is available for the reconstruction of the Siamese kingdom's premodern history. Changes in mentality and identity as well as shifts in etiquette, thought and worldview, remain particularly elusive. Subliminal, seemingly self-evident or otherwise not noteworthy views, attitudes and (mis)conceptions often rise to the level of consciousness and enter the historical record, only in contexts of – occasionally confrontational – encounters with foreign practices and ideas. Therefore, this panel seeks to harness the potential for enhancing scholarly insight into the historical experience of the Siamese people by examining the written artifacts left behind by interactions between merchants, missionaries, diplomats, and local political and cultural elites.

Embassies, ritual and cross-cultural encounters between Siam and Europe (c. 1600–1688)

Sven Trakulhun (University of Hamburg)

The presentation examines diplomatic contacts between Europe and the kingdom of Ayutthaya in the seventeenth century. During the century, economic, political and religious interactions between the two regions have increased remarkably. Before the rise of European imperialism in the nineteenth century, however, Europeans in Southeast Asia were not in a position to act as conquerors, but largely depended on political negotiation and the goodwill of Asian kings and courts. At the same time, trade relations within Southeast Asia intensified to a previously unknown extent and made diplomacy an important tool for political and economic intercourse between the kingdoms and principalities in the region. Diplomatic missions were crucial instruments for regulating Europe-Asia relations and are therefore at the center of my presentation. Embassies and royal audiences provided opportunities for kings, courtiers and companies to negotiate political hierarchies, economic interests and cultural conflicts in public, representing competing political claims expressed in symbolic gestures and languages. My talk aims at describing the complex diplomatic interactions between Europe and Siam and seeks to capture some of their essential characteristics. First, it considers the ideological foundations of European-Asian diplomacy by tracing the different political cosmologies and concepts of world order involved in diplomatic negotiations.

Secondly, it offers a comparative perspective on the different visual languages, rituals, state ceremonies and other ways of symbolic communication that informed political intercourse between Southeast Asia and Europe. Thirdly, the project will deal with cultural intermediaries, their personal networks and modes of perception of other cultures.

The Interpretation of Christian Cosmology in Siamese Language: The Case Study of Louis Laneau's Literary Works

Thissana Weerakietsoontorn (Ramkhamhaeng University)

After the arrival of the first groups of members of Missions Étrangères de Paris (MEP) comprising Pierre Lambert de la Motte, Jacques de Bourges, and François Deydier in 1662 in Siam, the wave of French priests appears continuously in this land until nowadays for catholicizing non-believers. Among these missionaries was Louis Laneau, who arrived in Siam in 1662 before becoming the first vicar apostolic of Siam and the titular bishop of Métellopolis until he died in 1696. Throughout his first years in Ayutthaya, he spent time at an unknown temple to learn to speak Siamese and study the Pâli language. Consequently, Bishop Laneau composed a dictionary, a handbook of Siamese grammar, and many versions of the catechism and translated the New Testament into the Siamese language. These literary works were used to introduce Christian doctrines to the local society. Moreover, Bishop Laneau borrowed technical terms used by the Siamese Buddhists to familiarize the Siamese people with the divergent concept of Catholicism. Amongst these countless borrowed words, *savan*, *narok badan*, and three vocabularies meaning the celestial being – *thevada*, *ruppaphrom*, and *aruppaphrom* were used for interpreting, respectively, the paradise, hell, limbo, angel, archangel, and seraphim in Catholic books. Although, the conventional use of terms borrowed from the technical vocabulary of Buddhism to express concepts led to ambiguities, misunderstandings even misinterpretations, given that the foundations of the two religious doctrines are without analogies. Additionally, it led to the nourishing high-level intellectual debate between the Siamese religious and ruling elites and the French fathers, which did not go without provoking a hostile reaction. Then, after the early twenty century, using some of these words was abolished and replaced by another neutral-meaning word.

On the Perception of the Vedas and Various Indic Arts in Premodern Siam

Jan Dressler (University of Hamburg)

Since the colonial era and under ever-evolving political and scientific paradigms, the exchange of people, goods and ideas along the maritime trade routes that once connected the Indian subcontinent with Southeast Asia has been the object of scholarly research. Monumental architecture dedicated to Indic gods and numerous Sanskrit inscriptions found all over Southeast Asia, bear witness to the profound influence Brahmins, as custodians of the Vedas, exerted as intermediaries between these regions. Despite the ascent of Theravada Buddhism to dominance across the Southeast Asian mainland, including Siam (present-day Thailand), during the first half of the second millennium, minuscule communities of Brahmins continued to thrive in close proximity to political elites amongst Buddhist majority societies. In this paper, an attempt shall be made to reconstruct the understanding of and attitude towards the various branches of traditional Indic knowledge (philosophy, arts, and sciences) prevalent in premodern Siamese society (17th–19th c.). What did representatives of the educated classes know about the content of the Vedas and what were indigenous perspectives on the purpose and importance of these texts? To what extent did the population of premodern Siam partake of and interact with the intellectual traditions of the Indian subcontinent? In order to create a comprehensive survey of the historical Siamese experience in relation to the dissemination of traditional Indic knowledge and its adaptation to the local intellectual milieu, written sources from a variety of literary genres will be analyzed. These include, among others, didactic treatises, religious texts, poetry, as well as the earliest anthropological interviews conducted in Siam.

Session 5E: Contemporary Literature and Musical Theater



Female Homosocial Bonds in Wang Anyi's novella "Brothers"

Martina Nedialkova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

The 1980s were the beginning of a new and extremely prolific era in female fiction writing in continental China. The "thaw" in the field of cultural expression, which came with the start of postmaoism, allowed for the gradual development of new and increasingly bolder forms of literary expression. Wang Anyi, who experienced both the darkest episodes of Maoism and the cultural shift of the 80s and 90s, grew to become one of China's most formidable and widely recognized contemporary fiction writers. Her 1989 novella "Brothers" bears the mark of the author's earlier work in that it focuses on the characters' psychological landscape, as opposed to painting a wider societal picture. In a broader sense it can be said to occupy a transitory space in Chinese literature where the topics of love and female intimacy started to reappear on the creative scene, whilst also displaying a type of tameness, a fear of breaking completely free from traditional family conventions. This article will attempt to elucidate these themes through the lens of studies on female homosocial relations, in combination with studies on love (i.e. according to the Ancient Greeks) and sexuality. Its primary aim is to examine the particular brand of female intimacy, explored in the novella, and the ways it was impacted by the sign of the times, as well as to offer an interpretation as to why the love between the characters was, in the end, doomed to fail before it even came to full bloom.

Exploring the Interplay of AI and Human Creativity in Chinese Literature: Interpretations, Misinterpretations, and Reinterpretations

Paula Teodorescu (University of Bucharest)

Creativity, a concept that has been shaped in diverse ways throughout history, gains even more intrigue with the emergence of a complex and controversial element like AI. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the divergent perspectives on technology that may pose threats to human employment and positions, even in domains previously considered solely within the realm of human capabilities, such as literature, it is valuable to immerse ourselves in the poetry created by groundbreaking AI poets like Xiao Bing and delve into projects like Co-creation 共生纪 (2020), where esteemed SF human writers like Chen Qiufan actively engaged in collaborative endeavors with an AI writer. Creativity now takes on the form of either a novel tool generated through computational processes and databases, as exemplified by the work of Xiao Bing, or a collaborative, integrative, and innovative act, driven by Posthumanist vision, that encompasses the collective efforts of both humans and non-human entities, as demonstrated in the Co-creation project. Writing with or alongside an AI can result in peculiar, inappropriate, or even nonsensical expressions, yet these misinterpretations of the language bear creative effects, as evidenced by the writers involved in the Co-creation project. Moreover, this phenomenon highlights the potential for reinterpretation and the fresh perspectives that AI brings to the creative process and to the very notion of creativity itself.

**“To Love or Not To Love”:
The Romeo and Juliet Franchise and Its Global Ramifications**

Maria Grajdian (Hiroshima University)

This presentation approaches phenomenologically the Romeo and Juliet thematic complex and observes it in cross-cultural perspective: while William Shakespeare’s original play, published in 1597, has been adapted countless times for a great variety of genres, predominantly in Western contexts, the goal of the forthcoming analysis is to critically underpin the transformation of the Romeo and Juliet significance beyond Western set-ups, e.g., in Takarazuka Revue’s eponymous performances since 2010. Based on Gérard Presgurvic’s highly successful *Roméo et Juliette: de la Haine à l’Amour* (2001), Takarazuka Revue’s versions display paradoxical concatenations, both textually and contextually, underscoring conservative messages of masculinity and nation on the background of meta-narrative, subliminal associations of power, enlightenment and love.

This presentation observes critically the transformation of the Romeo and Juliet significance beyond Western adaptation into its Japanese contextualization. Taking as an example Takarazuka Revue’s eponymous performances (2010 star troupe, 2011 snow troupe, 2012 moon troupe, 2013 star troupe, 2021 star troupe) based on Gérard Presgurvic’s *Roméo et Juliette: de la Haine à l’Amour*, world-premiered on 19 January 2001 at Paris’ Palais des Congrès, this paper observes the paradoxical ramifications of the original French musical, both textually and contextually. While Presgurvic’s production has had an immense success worldwide, with the inherent dramaturgical modifications, the current analysis showcases the conservative atmosphere of Takarazuka Revue’s version, backed by the meta-narrative, subliminal association of star troupe with strong, charismatic otokoyaku (男役, literally: ‘man-role’, female impersonators of male roles in Takarazuka Revue) and with overwhelmingly powerful messages to be conveyed to (predominantly) female (predominantly) Japanese audiences. In doing so, Takarazuka Revue’s (predominantly male) administrators distance themselves from the prevailing interpretation of Romeo and Juliet as a tragic love-story and re-imagine it as a site of female identity projection and fulfilment, transcending the conceptualization of “love” as yearning and desire into a vision of “love” as responsibility, self-awareness and existential coolness – lavishly encapsulated in the synthetic character of Romeo.

Session 6A: Literary Landscapes

Baima Nazhen:

Translating Tibetan women's experience into Sinophone literature

Kamila Hladíková (Palacký University Olomouc)

Pema Lhadzé (padma lha mdzes, Chin. Paima Nazhen) is a female Sinophone Tibetan writer. After briefly introducing the evolution of Sinophone Tibetan female writing, I will present an analysis of the author's novel *Resurrected Dolma* (Fuhuo de Dumu 复活的度母, 2006), focusing on the question of "translating" Tibetan culture and historical experience of Tibetan women into Chinese-language and Chinese ideological framework through fiction writing. Semantic shifts which naturally occur in every process of translating between languages and cultures are in Sino-Tibetan context entangled in complex power dynamics and ideological discourses, serving the author as a cover enabling her to discuss politically sensitive issues related to recent Tibetan history. The novel examines Tibetan female subjectivities within the frame of official discourses promoted in the PRC, such as "liberation of Tibetan serfs" and emancipation of Tibetan women after this liberation. This framework allowed the writer to record Tibetan historical experience through the point of view of two generations of female descendants of an aristocratic family, juxtaposing the mother's tragic fate, determined by the circumstances of the "liberation of serfs" and its aftermath, with her daughter's psychological torment, interpreted in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist faith as karma. In her novel, Pema Lhadzé combined a rational, "scientific" perspective based in Marxism and Mao Zedong's ideology, with Tibetan perspective influenced by Buddhist philosophy in an attempt to mediate subjective experience of her protagonist. The triple marginalization of her mother, as a Tibetan, a woman, and a "bad class element" in politically turbulent times, left a deep imprint in her daughter's psyche, implanting the seeds of hereditary trauma for next generations.

Creating and interpreting polyphonic landscapes: Translingual Sinophone paradigms in Taiwanese contemporary fiction

Simona Gallo (University of Milan)

How can Taiwanese literature mirror the “carnavalesque vertigo” (Gaffric 2019, 73) of the island’s sociolinguistic complexity? What kind of strategies might help decode and recode its multilingual landscape? Among the contemporary writers who create and (re)interpret a mixture of languages, Wu Ming-yi 吳明益 (b. Taoyuan, 1971), who dwells between Hokkien and Mandarin, stands out as a synecdoche of the translingual Sinophone paradigm. His novel *Fuyan ren* 複眼人 (2011, *The man with compound eyes*), described as “an environmental fable blending fantasy with realism” (Lin 2019, 14), transcends individual diglossia with a performance of a broader linguistic heterogeneity. Via his creative approach to multilingualism, Wu gives shape to a hybrid and multi-layered heteroglossic landscape, where real and fictional indigenous traditions from the Sinophone-Austronesian world access and enrich the Chinese sphere, generating a translingual-transcultural dialogue through and beyond translation. This paper intends to explore several theoretical and practical aspects of linguistic hybridization and translation in the orbit of Wu Ming-Yi’s novel. To tackle the intersemiotic issue of the novel’s polyglossic and polyphonic interactions, I will describe the various linguistic constructions of the author’s “imaginary of languages” (Glissant, 2010). The subjects of my investigation will be Wu’s translational practices of code-mixing and code-switching, displayed and developed throughout his literary language as well as by his personal self-translating narrative.

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Place, Transnation and the Construction of Cultural Identity in Merlinda Bobis' *White Turtle* and *The Long Siesta as a Language Primer*

Jaroslav Kušnír (University of Prešov, Slovakia)

Merlinda Bobis is a contemporary Philippina Australian author born in Philippines who currently lives in Australia. She has been awarded several prestigious literary awards and her collection of stories, *White Turtle*, won the Steele Rudd Award for the Best Collection of Australian Short Stories in 2000 and the 2000 Philippine National Book Award. Both in this collection, but also in her other novels and stories she writes both about the complicated nature of Philippino history and about the immigrant's experience trying to cope with cultural belonging in a new country. These themes appear in her stories *White Turtle* and *The Long Siesta as Language Primer* from the above collection. In addition to this, in these stories she uses Philippino expressions and words to point out cultural hybridity of her characters in a multicultural setting. This paper will analyze Bobis' depiction of hybrid cultural identity of her characters as well as the role of place (Philippines and Australia) in a construction of a problematic nature of cultural identity of her characters which is close to Bill Ashcroft's concept of transnation. In addition, this paper will also point out the role Philippino culture in a formation of transnation/al nature of Bobis' characters.

Session 6B: Chinese Paintings and Photographs (organized panel)

Limits of Interpretation:

Clothing on Chinese Paintings and Historical Photographs

This panel deals with the way of depiction of historical clothing in Chinese traditional paintings and historical photographs which date from the 19th century and from the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries, respectively. Given the fact that clothing usually defines an individual's position in a structured society, the panelists eventually entreat whether clothing in traditional painting can be perceived as real, or exaggerated; whether portraits depict the clothing of the period faithfully. Drawing on the vast collection at Náprstek museum, Prague, the panelists studied a number of paintings of both living and deceased persons (so-called ancestral portraits), juxtaposing them with extant Chinese clothing from the same collection, e.g., the dragon robes with rank insignia, also depicted in many portraits of the Qing dynasty scholar-officials. Historical photographs of high-ranking Manchu families, taken by Enrique Stanko Vráz in Beijing in Spring 1901, were examined, too. Although the photographs would appear to realistically capture the period clothing, its array and the historical context (the Boxer Uprising) must be considered. An interesting, albeit in many ways complicated and ambiguous visual source for the study of Chinese historical clothing, and clothing accessories, is the figurative genre of “paintings of gentlewomen” or “paintings of beautiful women”. In general, these works depict a figure of an anonymous palace beauty, but more broadly they also include scenes with the characters of famous and talented women from Chinese history and literature. This characterization also underlies the tradition of depicting women's clothing within this painting genre, which is often subject to considerable idealization and iconographic conventions. The depicted clothing mostly does not correspond to the contemporary fashion or the national composition of the society, but it does reflect some fundamental cultural and socio-political themes of the time.

The meaning and interpretation of clothing in ancestral portraits

Lucie Olivová (Retired)

In traditional Chinese painting, the portrait genre was chiefly represented by portraits of deceased ancestors. They were considered a craft, not an art, and served a ritual function during ancestor cult ceremonies. The portraits depicted a figure sitting rigidly on a ceremonial seat. Related studies tend to focus on the face of the sitter, however, the clothing is no less, if not more important. In Qing dynasty, men were portrayed in dragon robes or court dress, Han women were dressed in red wedding robes. The opulence of the garment and jewelry is

possibly exaggerated, in order to stress the sitter's social significance. In contrast to the portraits of ancestors, the portraits of living persons depict the sitter in informal clothing, often in a natural pose.

**The authority of the imperial official:
dragon robes, portraits and photopictures in the Náprstek Museum**

Helena Heroldová (Náprstek Museum)

This paper deals with depiction of Chinese dragon robes in late Qing paintings and photographs. The dragon robe, along with other insignia of social status represented the clothing of imperial officials. The Náprstek Museum houses several dozen dragon robes and other insignia of authority such as rank badges and court beads. Dragon robes are depicted on portraits and photographs. The presented paper compares historical photographs and clothing with portraits of officials to study pictorial representation of clothing. Considering the social position of the imperial officialdom, the question is whether the pictorial representation involved an intentional or unintentional distortion of reality when depicting the official's authority.

Women's Clothing and the theme of “Beautiful Women” in Chinese Figure Painting

Petra Polláková (Západočeská univerzita)

An interesting, if in many ways complicated and ambiguous, visual source for the study of Chinese historical clothing and clothing accessories is the figurative genre of “paintings of gentlewomen” or “paintings of beautiful women”. In general, these works depict a figure of an anonymous palace beauty, but more broadly they also include scenes with the characters of famous and talented women from Chinese history and literature. This characterization also underlies the tradition of depicting women's clothing within this painting genre, which is often subject to considerable idealization and iconographic conventions. The depicted clothing mostly does not correspond to the fashion of the time or the national composition of the society, but it does reflect some fundamental cultural and socio-political themes of the time.

Session 6C: Japanese Thought



Benefits and pitfalls of interpreting the other, re-interpreting the self

David Labus (Charles University)

In the bakumatsu period, Japanese rulers, intellectuals and the society as a whole were once again facing a rising wave of intense contact with different and possibly hostile culture(s). Interpretation of this challenge became a necessity of the day. Samurai intellectuals took a variety of stances to the imminent threat, from simply xenophobic to open-minded ones that tried to include the “other” into the “self”. But what was the “self”? What was the essence of the most open-minded and far-sighted attitudes? Where were the limits of such inclusiveness and what price did the advocates of opening up the country sometimes have to pay? What was the impact on the “self”, on their own, presumably universal values? I shall explore these questions through the personal letters and official petitions of several bakumatsu intellectuals in the 1850s and 1860s. I will try to demonstrate how surprisingly quickly and easily the originally xenophobic and supposedly ideological attitudes were eroded and gave way to basically pragmatic attitudes that not only divided the political scene but contributed massively to changes in political structures and ties.

Brain Bread or Brain Dead?: “Rice Makes You Stupid” and the Curious Case of Nutrition as Stigmatized Knowledge in Postwar Japan

Nathan Hopson (University of Bergen)

“Rice makes you stupid.” This was the mic drop takeaway from the 1950s’ work of neuroscientist Hayashi Takashi. It was also a misinterpretation of the data. A misinterpretation that has subsequently been misinterpreted. My presentation will trace entangled popular and professional discourses of nutrition in postwar Japan, beginning in the broader 1950s’ context in which Hayashi worked and ending with contemporary online conspiracy theories about the role of mainstream, institutional nutrition science and shadowy American and Japanese political forces in undermining Japanese national health by discrediting the embodied wisdom and value of “the traditional Japanese diet.” The 1950s, when intellectuals such as Hayashi struggled to understand Japan’s military defeat and envision a way to rebuild and reclaim a place in the world, set the parameters for discourses of food and nutrition for the following decades. However, as Japan’s socioeconomic and geopolitical situation changed in subsequent decades, the assumptions of these years came under suspicion from conspiracy theorists who saw men like Hayashi as pawns of American political and economic interests dedicated to keeping Japan an emasculated junior partner in the Western Cold War bloc. I argue that the emergence of nationalist, xenophobic, neo-culturalist conspiracy theories about diet and nutrition in Japan are inseparable from a series of misinterpretations of scientific data and policy decisions. While internally diverse, these conspiracy theories center on a notional “traditional Japanese diet” as what Michael Barkun (2003) dubbed “stigmatized knowledge,” i.e., ideas whose rejection or suppression by “authorities” becomes proof of their validity for believers (‘truthers’). Additionally, I tentatively tie the development of this belief framework to the rise of “spiritual” and nationalist discourses on the one hand and the social internet’s promotion of self-referential and unfalsifiable discourse in communities of stigmatized knowledge.

Session 6D: “Telling China’s Story Well”



Female Comrades, Come Together to Build Socialism: Whether and How Understandings of Socialism Entwined with Understandings of Gender Topics in China

Pei Zhong (South China Normal University)

Feminism-related and gender-related thoughts or opinions have been emerging in China for a long time, yet we still know little about the intersection between feminist thoughts and official (and prevailing) political ideologies in China. Using textual evidence from Zhihu and WeChat Official Accounts and applying critical discourse analysis, this paper asks 1) whether there is an intersection between people’s perceptions and understandings of socialism or Marxism and their understandings of gender-related or feminism-related topics 2) if so, what are the specific manifestations of this intersection and 3) what insights into the dynamics and challenges faced by feminism in China today can we gain from this intersection. I identified four ways understandings of socialism or Marxism entwined with understandings of gender-related or feminism-related topics: 1) arguing that gender issues are essentially class issues and the problems brought by the hostility between men and women are just an attempt by capitalists and capitalism to create a false consciousness and cover up the class issues 2) exalting the achievements of women in Mao’s era who participated in both the family chores and collective labour, while 3) disparaging contemporary Chinese women as being brainwashed by hedonism and consumerism in terms of aesthetics, daily cultural consumption and intimate relationships and finally 4) maintaining a controversial views on homosexuality and other gender identities, with a minority reckoning that homosexuality and other gender identities are acceptable, and others believing that homosexuality and other gender identities are against socialism in that they can be an erosion of socialist culture and ideological beliefs and be related to foreign hostile forces. The paper further illustrates that through the lens of examining prevailing political ideology in China, we can better understand the various kinds of and sometimes contested feminist thoughts in China, as well as the challenges and dilemmas these feminists face.

Shaping Chinese culture: Yue Fei's story of inspiration

Natalia Riva (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

The slogan “telling Chinese stories well, spreading the Chinese voice well, and explaining Chinese characteristics well” marks the determination of Xi Jinping’s administration to increase China’s soft power and international discourse power by shaping the image of the PRC as a civilized power with a rich history, ethnic unity, and harmonious cultural diversity (Renmin Ribao 2014). Traditional culture – China’s deepest source of cultural soft power (Renmin Ribao 2016) – is an essential component of Xi’s concept of “China’s story” (Xu Shanna 2020). Xi himself has been described as a master narrator of tales of heroism and patriotism, often recounting in his speeches the stories of Yue Fei or other heroes of the Chinese revolution from which he draws inspiration (People’s Daily Commentary Department 2020). Song dynasty General Yue Fei 岳飞 (1103–1142), who fought the invading Jurchen in the 12th century, is a long-established legend in Chinese tradition. Throughout history, his image has been shaped by strategic narratives leveraging different aspects of his legacy: loyalty, ethnic nationalism, patriotism, hero of the people (see Matten 2011; Carter 2021; Du Yue 2023). This paper focuses on the latest cultural depiction of Yue Fei’s story and its aftermath, Zhang Yimou’s 2023 historical comedy thriller *Full River Red* (满江红). It offers a critical analysis of the movie’s storytelling of a well-known historical event and the representation of the characters involved, looking specifically at narrative and lexical strategies employed in the creative rewriting of China’s cultural tradition. References to Chinese scholarly analyses in specialized magazines will help to reflect on whether and to what extent the movie functions as a place of (re)interpretation of China’s ancient history aimed at serving the present construction of the PRC’s national identity.

Another Reading of the People's Republic of China's History: Fang Fang's *The Scenery*

Zofia Jakubów-Roślan (University of Warsaw)

Fang Fang has recently attracted international attention after the publication of her *Wuhan Diary* (武汉日记). However, she has been an established writer in China for almost forty years, and some of her earlier works also merit careful reading and study. This paper examines her take on the PRC's history in *The Scenery* (风景, alternatively translated as *Children of the Bitter River*), a novella written in 1987, at the time when Fang Fang was a representative writer of new realism (新写实). In the late 1980s, recent history, especially the excesses of the Maoist period, featured strongly in the prose of the avant-garde (先锋), who contested realism in search for a new, experimental language to express their almost inexpressible traumas. While the avant-garde occupied the central position in the Chinese literary space, another manner of interpreting the latest history and the present social situation in China appeared with the concurrent trend of new realism. Its authors tend to be overlooked by researchers of contemporary Chinese literature as the style of their prose seems understated when read against formal experimentation of their contemporaries. Authors like Fang Fang, Chi Li and Liu Zhenyun attempted to recover and remodel realism, which was considered as discredited and useless by the avant-gardists, to describe recent events in China in an unvarnished, painfully incisive manner. In *The Scenery*, Fang Fang paints a bleak picture of the PRC's history, employing the narrative voice of a deceased child of an impoverished Wuhan family. It can be claimed that Fang Fang, alongside other new realist writers, has paved the way for the kind of sober, penetrating prose that is now dominant among younger generations of Chinese authors.

Session 6E: Europe-Asia Relations and the Indo-Pacific (1/2)

(organized panel)

Europe-Asia relations and regional stakeholders' policies amid Sino-US "extreme competition" in the Indo-Pacific (1/2)

The economic and geostrategic competition between China and the United States has strong implications for the strategies and policies of the Indo-Pacific nations, but also the European Union's (EU) relations with the region. Moreover, since Xi Jinping became President, China's relations with most Western, but also many Indo-Pacific nations deteriorated. Dialogue and cooperation in many policy areas are stalled, increasing the risk of costly misinterpretation, which could ultimately lead to military conflict. This panel will explore the policies of great, middle, and small powers in the Indo-Pacific from the perspectives of Area Studies, International Relations, and Comparative Politics. Europe's tilt to the Indo-Pacific, exemplified by the EU's support for buttressing the rules-based order in the South China Sea and its closer cooperation with ASEAN states, as well as China's perception of European strategic intentions will be examined. A specific case study illustrating the complexity of Europe-China ties deals with China's relations with Beijing-friendly Hungary. In order to strengthen their strategic autonomy, most small ASEAN members, including Singapore, follow a hedging strategy. Their aim is to avoid becoming too dependent on either China or the US. Middle powers such as Australia, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea have bigger strategic leeway. By cooperating with each other, they can establish communities of practice and contribute to maintaining the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. All in all, this panel, consisting of two sessions, will provide new insights into the emerging policies in the Indo-Pacific. In part, it will build on the preliminary results of the EU-funded Twinning project "The EU in the volatile Indo-Pacific region" (EUVIP).

Why Singaporeans choose the US over China: An analysis of public opinion polling

Richard Turcsányi (Palacký University Olomouc)

Daniel Kalish (William & Mary College)

It has been accepted as a common knowledge, that ASEAN and its members do not wish to choose between China and the US. However, the growing potential of an open conflict between the two great powers raises the question of which one would various ASEAN members choose if indeed forced to align with one. The case of Singapore is specific for

various reasons, and it merits a closer look also due to its regional and global importance. Singapore, too, has chosen to hedge, continuing cordial relations between both great powers – including preserving vivid economic exchange with China, while developing security partnership with the US. Moreover, as a majority Chinese society – sometimes even referred to as the “third China” – there have long been discussion about what preferences the Singaporean public holds. Acknowledging this context, this presentation contributes first of all to our empirical knowledge and understanding of Singaporean international attitudes by sharing results of a new and unique poll conducted between April and June 2022. Specifically, we analyze not only the general favorability towards China and the US, respectively, but we also consult additional variables on public preference to align in foreign policy with either China or the US. As a result, we find that although Singaporean citizens have only slightly more favorable views of the US than China, when forced to choose, they overwhelmingly prefer to align with the United States over China. We then move on to analyze driving forces of the general favorability and alignment preferences.

Middle Powers in the Indo-Pacific: stakeholders of stability?

Tanguy Struye de Swielande (Université Catholique de Louvain)

This presentation examines the potential of middle powers' cooperation to establish communities of practice to reinforce their ability to influence world affairs. Illustrating the argument with three case studies – Australia, Indonesia and South Korea – we assert that middle powers play key roles in structuring the world order. We test the following hypotheses: (i) middle powers do not look, nor do they need to look to great powers for leadership, and can influence events by forging new regional relationships; (ii) when leadership topples or tensions emerge between great powers, with a potential or nascent leadership vacuum, the initiative to guarantee the status quo (i.e., a liberal order) can be provided by middle powers. While rooted in IR theories, the research mostly builds upon the framework of communities of practice and management theories, linking them to highlight the importance of existing interactions, the opportunity for and advantage of greater cooperation and its potential systemic impact.

Interpreting and misinterpreting cybertechnologies as a security threat – Japan's view on China

Federica Cidale (Palacký University Olomouc)

Cyber technologies, the internet and social media are ever pervasive in our lives. They provide plenty of beneficial developments, such as a more connected society and freely accessible knowledge, but they are also increasingly spreading false information. Moreover, countries are enhancing their cyber security measures; they began to include cyberspace in national defence policies and as a new domain in military operations. These developments are especially true in regions where geopolitical tensions are already high like East Asia. According to reports published by Japan's National Institute for Defence Studies on China's security, Japan perceives China's military rise and cyber capabilities as a threat. From 2009 onwards more cyber-attacks targeted Japan and most of them could be traced back to China and North Korea. Consequently, the fast improvement of its neighbours' cyber capabilities prompted Japan to invest more resources into its own, too. The spread of misinformation online is increasing the perception of threats and the fast advancement of cyber technologies is exacerbating the security dilemma. This can be interpreted as an increased chance of conflict. Due to strained diplomatic relationships, historical issues, and previous cyber-attacks, Japan and China need to be cautious to avoid escalating regional geopolitical tensions by misinterpreting one other's intentions. In this presentation, I utilize the securitization theory which combines neorealism and constructivism. A neorealist approach allows me to start from a fixed assumption that the international system is inherently anarchic and a constructivist approach allows me to analyse the internet's potential for shaping identities and perceptions. Content and discourse analysis of policies, speeches and social media posts are the preferred methodology.

Session 7A: Indian Cinema and Literature

Breaking Stereotypes on Screen: Subverting Caste Narratives in Contemporary Hindi Cinema

Manvi Singh (Sri Venkateswara College, University of Delhi)

The paper provides a critical analysis of the representation of Dalit individuals in Hindi cinema, with a particular emphasis on the depiction of their identities, experiences, and societal concerns. Dalits, being a marginalized community in Indian society, have frequently been subjected to stereotypical and constrained depictions in mainstream cinema. The objective of this study is to examine and assess the depictions of Dalit characters in contemporary Hindi cinema, with a focus on the perpetuation of stereotypes as well as the emergence of more authentic and nuanced representations.

This study employs a multidisciplinary approach that integrates film analysis, sociocultural theories, and qualitative research methods to investigate a group of Hindi films that showcase Dalit characters. The films under scrutiny include “Aarakshan” (2011), “Masaan” (2015), “Dhadak” (2018), “Article 15” (2019), “Serious Men” (2020), and “Geeli Puchhi” from “Ajeeb Daastaan” (2021). This study analyzes the manner in which these depictions are narratively portrayed, the evolution of the characters, and the use of visual symbolism. The study endeavors to offer a comprehensive comprehension of the representations of Dalit characters by analyzing the social, cultural, and historical contexts that envelop these films.

The results indicate a variety of depictions, ranging from those that perpetuate caste-based hierarchies through regressive and stereotypical portrayals to those that challenge societal norms and promote empowerment through progressive representations. The article emphasizes the necessity of incorporating genuine and varied portrayals that encompass the intricacies of Dalit existence, their challenges, ambitions, and successes.

The objective of this analysis is to make a contribution to the ongoing discourse on representation and social justice in Hindi cinema. The research aims to promote the production of accurate and respectful portrayals of Dalit characters in films by advocating for a more sensitive and inclusive approach among filmmakers. The ultimate goal is to cultivate empathy, understanding, and social change through these portrayals.

Cinema and the “Regional” in “Home Cinemas” of Kerala

Haritha Ramachandran (University of Hyderabad, India)

This paper attempts to explore the new interpretations in the language of cinema that emerge from the interplay between cinema and other forms of media, such as television, digital technology, and new media in India. Cinema in India in the twenty-first century is shaped by the neo-liberal context, which composes of transnational financial flows and the pervasiveness of digital technology.

The advent of digital technology and the prevalence of the internet in the aftermath of economic liberalization of the Indian economy has opened up new avenues for the production, circulation, and consumption of cinema. Prevalence of television, the emergence of media formats such as VHS tapes, DVDs, and CDs, and the spread of parallel pirate economy have facilitated the expansion of film production from metropolitan centres to provincial locations in the early 2000s in India. It has led to new cultures of film production and consumption, in different parts of India, mobilising marginal cultures, centring provincial localities and small towns and using local dialects. These audio-visual productions, featuring non-professional actors, affordable technology, and limited budgets, thrive at the fringes of multiple categories such as traditional oral forms, regional films, narrative cinema, music videos, and new media practices. They offer new modalities for the interpretation and reinterpretation of the medium of cinema.

This paper focuses on the home cinema movement which was started in the locality of Malabar – the northern part of the south-Indian state of Kerala – in the early 2000s. Home cinema, also known as home video or tele-cinema, is the local production of amateur films in DVD format using low-quality technology. Like other local film cultures in India, the rise of home cinema in Kerala is a consequence of digital production and consumption driven by the twenty-first century's digital revolution. Home cinema predominantly showcases feature-length films set in the Muslim environs of Malabar, employing the regional dialect. It aimed to introduce cinema to a segment of the Muslim community in Malabar that initially considered it contrary to Islamic principles. The paper reads home cinema as a category that offer a language of cinema that can explore beyond the contested categorisations of national/regional cinema in India and make possible new definitions and interpretations of both cinema in India and the category of regional cinema.

Writing in the late eighteenth-century Kerala: the case of Varthamanappusthakam (1785)

Donel Varghese (Indian Institute of Technology Bombay)

This paper close reads a late eighteenth-century travel account in Malayalam from Kerala, South India. This account titled *Varthamanappusthakam* (1785) foregrounds the struggles of the indigenous Malankara church under the Catholic European missionaries. The text provides a fascinating account of the travel undertaken by the representatives of the local church to Europe where the traveling party meets with the Pope in the hope of resolving the issues between the local church and their missionary superiors. The pre-print manuscript offers a glimpse into how the indigenous community attempts to carve out an interpretation of the world while fighting misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the local indigenous Christian tradition, culture, and faith as “unchristian” by the missionaries.

The paper looks at how “writing” becomes central to this struggle of the local Malankara church. It shows how writing emerges as an important part of the community. As the text demonstrates, writing and written texts commanded considerable respect among the members of the church, even when large parts of the population were illiterate. The paper suggests a link between writing and local collectives called church assemblies. The interpretive moves evident in the text *Varthamanappusthakam* appear to be connected to these semi-independent and representative body of the members of the local church. The paper explores these interconnections between writing and community especially before the socialisation of print and allied technologies through *Varthamanappusthakam*. It particularly focuses on the use of first-person plural “we” narrator instead of a first-person single narrator in the text as it addresses the members of the local church. It further explores presentation of writing as a communal act instead of an individual work.

Session 7B: Japanese Culture

Kuniyoshi and the heroes of Suikoden

Adéla Tůmová (Náprstkovo muzeum asijských, afrických a amerických kultur)

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798–1861) was one of the significant ukiyo-e artists, best known for his musha-e woodblock prints depicting the warriors. Kuniyoshi's prints were unusual not only in the theme but also in foreign-inspired motifs and unprecedented dynamics. The beginning of the Kuniyoshi popularity, and also the popularity of the warrior prints, a formerly marginalized genre among Japanese prints, are associated with the depiction of heroes of the Suikoden, a Chinese novel popularized in Japan at the beginning of the 19th century through the illustrated books e-hon. The popularity of Suikoden prints, and also the impact of the Tenpo reforms, which banned more popular prints of beauties (bijin-ga) or kabuki actors (yakusha-e), made others ukiyo-e artists design warrior prints of their own. The paper will deal with Kuniyoshi's Suikoden-inspired prints which are part of the collection of the Náprstek Museum, and the story of Suikoden as the primary source for their creation.

A nikuhitsu-ga by Gion Seitoku conserved in the public collections of Chile

Jessica Marie Uldry (Independent Researcher)

This research considers an unattributed work of art and aims to enhance the existing documentation by defining a point of origin as specific as possible, by attributing a particular hand, place, and time of origin. Described as an oriental painting representing a Japanese woman, the work belongs to the collections of the Museum of Decorative Arts of Santiago de Chile and has not been exhibited since its entry into the institution. The attribution process of this work of art will rely upon stylistic criteria of the composition, along with material elements, condition, and other clues tracing back its provenance. Employing technical art history, comparative methodology based on morphological criteria, and documentary evidence, it is our objective to obtain a high degree of certainty about its author. That will also allow to deepen the understanding of its iconographic content, as well as delving deeper into its provenance. By undertaking this research, we seek to contribute towards the visibility and appreciation of an Asian artifact conserved within Chilean public collections. Furthermore, its attribution would reveal an additional original painting of the artist, thus broaden our understanding of his/her body of work and enriching our knowledge thereof.

Yūakuza kodomo no hi 有楽座子供の日 and its role in creating the playground for childlike children in Taishō era

Marcelina de Zoete-Leśniczak (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun)

In the modernizing Japan of the late 19th century, the education of the youngest citizens was the main goal. Moreover, under the influence of massively incoming Western writing in Japan in the field of not only literature, but also education etc., the child became an important and active participant in Japanese society. The term kodomo no hakken 子供の発見, popular among educators at the time, meant discovering a child, recognizing its importance and role in the society, recognizing its needs, and then providing them. The child was a recipient and a participant of the generally understood culture, including children's theater created under the influence of the shingekiundō 新劇運動 reforms initiated in Japan in the 1890s. Moreover, during "The Taisho Era Democracy" period, children's culture developed in various fields. Also, the aforementioned children's theatre faced considerable changes and transformations. As the theatre for children was inseparable in the process of making a new child's world, shaping a young citizen's idea of childhood and the daily life, yet shaping the childlike child 子供らしい子供, the authors (as well as translators of Western plays), producers of performances for children, had to respond to the changing trends and provide children (and the main educators - mothers) with a good piece of culturally valuable entertainment. The paper will present and analyse Yūakuza kodomo no hi 有楽座子供の日 - performances for children founded in 1909 and continued for 12 years (till 1920) and its essential role in shaping childlike children, as well as briefly introduce the program of the performances and its producers. It will also focus on tracing how the content of the performance corresponded with the Taishō Democracy's cultural policies in the field of children's cultural education.

Session 7C: Sinophone Literature



Blocking the View: Treacherous Mountains and Rivers in Meng Jiao and Li He's Poems

Xingwen Zhao (Arizona State University)

The harmony between human and nature has been long recognized as a key feature and ideal state in most classical Chinese poems about nature. However, Mid-Tang poets begin to notice, chant, and represent the dangerous and even evil aspect of the seemingly beautiful nature, delineating nature as a challenge to human, especially when it comes to human vision. Among them, Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751–814) and Li He 李賀 (790–816) are two typical representatives and contributors of unmasking the treacherous nature. This paper analyzes how and why the two poets represent the threatening mountains and rivers, two major components of nature, in their poems. By decoding their intentions and manners of writing regarding the two elements, the paper suggests that these mountains and rivers block the poets' view when they are looking for ways to physical destinations, exploring the nature of deceptive things or people, and pursuing eternity. In these poems about nature, Meng and Li break down the tradition of decorum and balance in Chinese literary tradition and provide readers and later writers with an alternative passage to approach and reexamine the implications of nature in medieval China.

The Forgotten Chinese Elegy in Nanyang: A Comparative Study on the Writing of Nanyang of Wang Anyi and Ng Kim Chew

Yicheng Chen (Freie University Berlin)

This paper examines the works of Chinese writer Wang Anyi and Malaysian Chinese writer Ng Kim Chew, with a focus on constructing and deconstructing the historical, social, and political components related to the concept of Nanyang. By analyzing their writings, this study aims to establish key comparable connections between the two authors. Wang Anyi, an influential female writer in contemporary China, experienced a unique upbringing as the daughter of a Singaporean Chinese returnee who grew up in the People's Republic. Due to this background, Wang lacks a traditional ancestral home (Laojia) in China. In her work, "Sadness for the Pacific," she creatively addresses this absence and transforms it into a global expression of her melancholic subjectivity. By revisiting her family history, Wang highlights the forgotten narratives hidden beneath the glossy modernity of Singapore. In contrast, Ng Kim Chew was born and raised in Malaysia but later moved to Taiwan for higher education and eventually obtained naturalized citizenship. For Ng, Nanyang represents the focal point of his writing, forming a literary entity that exists on the periphery of China and is complicated by the notion of the nation-state. Although Nanyang and China share the same "nation," they belong to different "states." By comparing the writings of these two authors, this paper aims to stimulate critical discussions surrounding the historically informed political conceptualization of the relationship between the nation building of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of China (ROC), and Nanyang. Through a perspective of literature, this analysis reveals the dynamic power struggles of centre and periphery within the Greater China region. The study focuses on three major themes: the struggle for nationalist identity among Nanyang Chinese, the colonial experiences of the Nanyang Chinese and their involvement in the Malay communist movement, and finally, the politically embodied linguistic differences between the literary Chinese languages employed by the two writers. These themes provide insights into the complex and nuanced interplay of politics and literature in the Chinese language, shedding light on the historical trajectories of Nanyang and its relationship with China.

The Outcast Hero: Alternative Representations of Liu Yong in Yuan-Ming Drama and Fiction

Massimiliano Canale (University of Naples “L'Orientale”)

This paper aims to analyze the many alternative representations of the Northern Song (960-1127) lyricist Liu Yong 柳永 (987–1053) in drama and fiction produced until the seventeenth century. Widely known as a hero of the pleasure quarters, Liu Yong was often criticized by other members of the literati precisely for his excessive, openly stated proximity to courtesans. The scarcity of contemporary sources on his life and the popularity of his song lyrics (ci 詞) among the common people contributed to building Liu's myth as a poetic genius and an ideal lover but, at the same time, a dissolute libertine and a traitor to orthodox elite values. Based on the Song (960–1279) sources available on the author, including comments by critics and anecdotes, these conflicting interpretations of the figure of Liu Yong migrated into Yuan (1279-1368) and Ming (1368–1644) drama and fiction. I will focus on two Northern plays (zaju 雜劇) and two vernacular short stories (huaben 話本) to show how Liu's representations have evolved from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. I will explore Liu's disparate characterizations as a talented poet, an intermittently successful official, an empathic romantic hero and, on the other hand, a drunken idiot, a good-for-nothing funded by courtesans or a cynical sexual manipulator and speculate on the reasons that may have led to these contradictory narratives.

Session 7D: Interpretation of Law

The Image and Perception of Roman Law in Late-Qing and Early Republican China

Lara Colangelo (“G. d’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara)

The diffusion of Western legal knowledge in China is a fundamental component of the cultural exchange that has taken place between East and West. The reception of the Romanist legal tradition in China began approximately in the second half of the 19th century and, to some extent, is still ongoing. This paper aims at shedding some light on the initial phase of this complex process which, despite the existence of a few valuable studies (e.g.: Schipani 2005; Xu 2002; Wang 2002), appears, in several respects, still little known. More specifically, this paper investigates the image of Roman law emerging from late-Qing and early Republican sources. In this sense, an attempt will be made to highlight how the Civil law system is perceived and “interpreted” (or ‘misinterpreted’) by the Chinese intellectuals who first mentioned it in their writings and by some of the main exponents of the first generation of Chinese Romanists who were authors of the earliest manuals of Roman law written in Chinese.

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Interpretation of Edo period law in the Meiji era

Dániel Hornos (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

The Edo period was in many ways a defining period in Japanese history. In these two and a half centuries without war, Japan's society and economy were able to develop in peace, and so was its legal system. In the medieval period, with the rise to power of the samurai social class, the samurai legal system (bukeho) developed and survived into the Sengoku period. This legal system was further developed in the Edo period, giving rise to the law of the bakufu (bakufuho) and the law of domains (hanpo). As far as criminal law was concerned, there were many types of brutal punishment in the period to deter society from committing crimes. In my research, I am focusing on the translation and philological analysis of the most important legal texts of the Edo period bakufuho, which have not yet been published in foreign languages. However, this time I would like to present an interesting approach: how did the Meiji people interpret Edo period law, especially criminal law? Through the translation and analysis of source texts, I will shed light on the most important features of Edo period criminal law, and then I will show how the Meiji people related to the punishments of the preceding period by analysing a work published in the Meiji period. This work is called Tokugawa bakufu keiji zufu ('Illustrated Catalogue of the Criminal Law of the Tokugawa Shogunate'), which was written at the beginning of the Meiji period with the aim of comparing the criminal law of the two periods in order to highlight the modern features of the Meiji period in comparison with the Edo period, which was considered brutal and barbaric.

Session 7E: Europe-Asia Relations and the Indo-Pacific (2/2)

(organized panel)

Europe-Asia relations and regional stakeholders' policies amid Sino-US "extreme competition" in the Indo-Pacific (2/2)

The economic and geostrategic competition between China and the United States has strong implications for the strategies and policies of the Indo-Pacific nations, but also the European Union's (EU) relations with the region. Moreover, since Xi Jinping became President, China's relations with most Western, but also many Indo-Pacific nations deteriorated. Dialogue and cooperation in many policy areas are stalled, increasing the risk of costly misinterpretation, which could ultimately lead to military conflict. This panel will explore the policies of great, middle, and small powers in the Indo-Pacific from the perspectives of Area Studies, International Relations, and Comparative Politics. Europe's tilt to the Indo-Pacific, exemplified by the EU's support for buttressing the rules-based order in the South China Sea and its closer cooperation with ASEAN states, as well as China's perception of European strategic intentions will be examined. A specific case study illustrating the complexity of Europe-China ties deals with China's relations with Beijing-friendly Hungary. In order to strengthen their strategic autonomy, most small ASEAN members, including Singapore, follow a hedging strategy. Their aim is to avoid becoming too dependent on either China or the US. Middle powers such as Australia, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea have bigger strategic leeway. By cooperating with each other, they can establish communities of practice and contribute to maintaining the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. All in all, this panel, consisting of two sessions, will provide new insights into the emerging policies in the Indo-Pacific. In part, it will build on the preliminary results of the EU-funded Twinning project "The EU in the volatile Indo-Pacific region" (EUVIP).

Beijing eyes Brussels: Chinese perceptions of the European tilt to the Indo-Pacific

Friso Stevens (University of Helsinki)

More than a decade after US President Obama announced his signature "pivot to Asia" policy, Europe, too, set its sights on what is now termed the Indo-Pacific. As the center of economic gravity shifts to the region, and amid intensifying China-US great power competition, the key European powers, namely France, the UK, and Germany, the EU itself, and even a small country like the Netherlands, have all published policy papers on the Indo-Pacific. What is more, they have deployed naval forces to the region to signal the importance they attach to

an open, secure, and multilateral Indo-Pacific. Yet to what extent has Europe's stated benign signal of buttressing the existing rules-based order been interpreted accordingly? This presentation answers this question by analyzing scholarly and policy discourses in Mandarin at key Chinese institutions from 2018 to 2021.

The role of the EU and ASEAN in managing the dispute in the South China Sea

Alfred Gerstl (Palacký University Olomouc)

Both ASEAN and the EU regard themselves as major contributors to the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. Due to its strong multilateral credentials, the EU is viewed very positively in Southeast Asia. However, while the EU is in Asia and the Indo-Pacific a strong economic actor, it lacks credible military power projection capabilities. This lack of hard power is especially visible in the South China Sea, a globally vital sealine of communication. In 2016, an arbitral tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration rejected China's extensive claims, illustrated in the nine-dash line. China, however, does not accept this ruling. This presentation will analyze the EU's views and policies on the South China Sea, highlighting that it became since the presentation of the new China strategy in 2019 more critical of China and more supportive of ASEAN. Though, it will be argued that the EU's main contribution to upholding international law and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea will in the immediate future be limited to diplomatic support for ASEAN and capacity-building of the Southeast Asian littoral states. This support, albeit limited, is crucial for ASEAN to advance the aim of upholding international law and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.

The CCP's "elite capture" and China's soft power in Hungary

Sebestyén Hompot (Universität Wien)

In the past years, Hungary has often garnered attention for the notably pro-People's Republic of China (PRC) attitudes of its leadership. Meanwhile, recent surveys show that Hungary's population, in general, is not characterized by a significantly more pro-PRC attitude than the population of most other EU states. At the same time, such surveys also indicate a divergence between opinions among government and opposition sympathizers, indicating that pro-PRC attitudes are more common among sympathizers of the Orbán regime. To better understand the possible reasons behind these tendencies, this presentation analyzes the output of Hungarian government-backed think tanks and PRC-supported cultural institutions in Hungary in order to uncover China's soft power influence in the country. This presentation argues that a foreign "elite capture" is underway in Hungary, in this context referring to the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) attempts in persuading foreign elites of aligning with its political and economic interests. This, in turn, is also facilitated by the Orbán regime's vision of what can be identified as an emerging "post-Western" global order, challenging the prominence of Western values and institutions. The Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) is especially frequently emphasized in this context by both government-backed think tanks and PRC-backed cultural institutions in Hungary. Beyond the promotion of BRI as a basis of friendly relations and win-win economic cooperation, it gains a new role in re-imagining Eurasian interconnectivity and hence underpinning the government's "Eastern Opening" policy.

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