

THE **28th** ASIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE JAPAN

日本アジア研究学会 @上智大学



July 4-5, 2026

Sophia University

For online program and access details, see: <https://ascjapan.org>

Conference language: **English**



Keynote Address

**Cultivating a Revolutionary Imagination:
Communist Women's Mobilization in
Mid-20th-Century Eastern Bengal and Assam**

Elora Shehabuddin

University of California, Berkeley

President, Association for Asian Studies (2026–27)

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Call For Papers: ASCJ 2027

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For the latest news, please visit the ASCJ website.

The Call for Papers will be open from 1 September to 31 October 2026.

<https://ascjapan.org/>

Cover art: Bangladeshi women's embroidered quilt work (*nakshi kantha*)

SCHEDULE & LOCATION

Registration <i>(start from)</i>	Sat 09:00 Sun 09:30	Building 2, 4th floor
All Sessions & Book Displays	Sat 09:45–17:00 Sun 10:00–17:15	Building 2, 4th floor <i>For detailed time blocks, see overview</i>
Keynote Address	Sat 17:15–18:00	Building 10, Auditorium
Reception	Sat 18:15–20:30	Building 2, 5th floor cafeteria

REGISTRATION

!	Walk-in registration is available on the day, but cash only . (Online registration is strongly encouraged, closes on 12 June).
!	Please return your name tag at the end of the conference.

WHAT TO BRING

<p>■ Laptop and Adapters</p> <p>Required for presentations. All rooms are equipped with a projector and HDMI cable.</p>	<p>■ Water Bottle</p> <p>Water stations are on campus. Light refreshments will be available.</p>
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NEARBY

<p>■ Lunch</p> <p>Many restaurants and convenience stores are in the immediate vicinity of campus.</p>	<p>■ Printing</p> <p>Copy machines are available at nearby convenience stores. Printing is not available at the venue.</p>
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ASCJ 2026 · Room Assignment Schedule · Sophia University, Building 2

ROOM →	2-401	2-402	2-403	2-404	2-405	2-406	2-407	2-408	2-409	2-410	2-411	2-412	2-413	2-414	2-415
Capacity →	249	60	60	60	60	60	60	80	100	102	28	20	20	161	100
▶ Saturday, July 4															
Block 1 09:45–11:15	1-B Space, Place, and the Transformation of Japanese Student Activism, 1960s–1980s	1-K Individual Session: Religious Knowledge, Networks, and Cross-Cultural Mediation in East Asia	1-A Chinese Ethics, New Media, and Diverse Living	1-D (Re)Creating Japanese Colonial Peripheries: Gender, Education, and Science Across Empire and Cold War	1-E Translating Embedded Forms: (Re)Contextualizing Poetry of Premodern Japan	1-F Underground Connections: Informal Networks as a Method for Comparative Film History in East Asia	1-G Female Authors, Translational Narratives, and Colonial Memory	1-H Displaced Subjects and Diasporic Narratives	1-I Synthetic Strategies in Indo-Pacific Security	—	—	—	LOUNGE	1-J Co-producing “Religion” and “Asia”: Practices of Place, Boundaries, and Transcendence	1-C Politics Manifested: Media, Tradition, and Interpretation in Twentieth-Century East Asia
Block 2 11:30–13:00	2-N Roundtable: International Journal Publishing in Japan	2-A Kites, Papier-mâché Tigers, and Kimono Dolls: When Childhood and Rituals Intersect With Japanese Crafts and Material Culture	2-C Hearing the Environment: Natural Soundscapes in Japanese Music and Literature	2-D Beyond Linguistic and Cultural Barriers: Language, Translation, and Interpretation	2-F Point of View: Observer, Observed, and Perspective in Japanese Poetry	2-G Feminism Across Borders: Media and Mediation in Modern East Asia	2-K Individual Session: Memory, Colonialism, and Postwar Reconciliation	2-H The Speculative Aesthetics of Global Asia	2-I International Migrations Today and Their Politicized Portraits	2-E Individual Session: Historical Memory, Identity, and Regional Politics	2-L Individual Session: The Demonic, the Sacred, and the Imagination of the Other in East Asian Buddhism	2-M Individual Session: Human Security, Migration, and Rights in Asia	LOUNGE	2-B Imagining Empire, Constructing Asia: Knowledge and Authority in Japanese Thought From Prewar to Postwar	2-J “Numb Agency” and the Legacies of Violence
13:00–13:45 LUNCH BREAK															
Block 3 13:45–15:15	3-N Roundtable: Confrontation and Cooperation in Japan-Korea Relations, 1868 to the Present	3-A Mediating Queer Asia	3-B To Voice a Text: Transnational Cultural and Political Performance in Modern East Asia	3-D Culinary Crossings: Japan’s Food and Commodities Beyond the Archipelago	3-F Minor Literature and Linguistic Negotiation in the Reimagining of Japanese Literature	3-G (MOVED TO SUNDAY 5-M) Reimagining Nô Theatre: Tradition, Modernity, and the Multiplicity of Identity	3-I Affective Democracy and Civil Society Under Strain: Comparative Insights From Asia and Europe	3-J Beyond the Sacred: The Fabric of Ritual Lives in Japan	3-L Individual Session: Media, Popular Culture, and Transnational Circulation	3-E 80 Years Later: War Memory and Visual Culture in Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong	3-H Nomizo Naoko, Kôda Aya, and Yoshiya Nobuko: Texts That Transform and Are Transformed	3-C Representations of Aging in Contemporary Asia: Transformations and Adaptations	LOUNGE	3-K Menstruation Matters in Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Representations, Governance, and Innovation in Menstrual Health	3-M Individual Session: Migration, Mobility, and Diasporic Communities
Block 4 15:30–17:00	4-N Roundtable: Postwar as Timeframe and Methodology in Japan Studies	4-A Asia-Pacific Fandom and Home	4-B A Culture Transformed, A Nation Redefined: China’s Cultural Production During and After World War II	4-C The (Un)Making of Colonial Relationality: Circulation of Culture Across Japan’s Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds	4-D Ghostly Geographies of War and Memory: Transnational Feminist Traces Across Seas, Borders, and Empires	4-E Real Virtualities in Subaltern Philippine Experience	4-F The Sojourning Self: Ambiguity, Belonging, and Transformation in Sinophone Literature	4-M Individual Session: Modernity, Nationalism, and Knowledge Production in East Asia	4-G Iconographies and Islamophobia: Visual Culture and Concerns of the Nation	4-H Japan’s Immigration Policy: Politicizing the Depoliticized	4-I Modern Burmese Buddhism in Context: Psychic Powers, Political Activism, and Heritage Diplomacy	4-L Individual Session: Literature, Identity, and Marginalized Subjectivities	LOUNGE	4-J Rethinking “Inclusion” in Contemporary Japan Through the Voices of Marginalised People	4-K Dialects Endangerment and Language Policies in Japan: From Ainu to the Ryukyus
17:15–18:00	Bldg. 10 Auditorium	Elora Shehabuddin KEYNOTE: Cultivating a Revolutionary Imagination: Communist Women’s Mobilization in Mid-20th-Century Eastern Bengal and Assam													
18:15–20:30	Bldg. 2, 5th floor Cafeteria	Reception													

Disciplines: Arts, Culture, Media | History | Literature | Politics, Economics, China | Religion Studies, Intellectual History | Social Studies

ASCJ 2026 · Room Assignment Schedule · Sophia University, Building 2

ROOM→	2-401	2-402	2-403	2-404	2-405	2-406	2-407	2-408	2-409	2-410	2-411	2-412	2-413	2-414	2-415
Capacity→	249	60	60	60	60	60	60	80	100	102	28	20	20	161	100
▶ Sunday, July 5															
Block 5 10:00–11:30	5-G Form and Formation: Reading Japanese Television as Social and Aesthetic Test Site	5-C Rethinking Youth Media in the Sinophone	5-E Under the Radar: Quiet Interventions in East Asian Painting	5-F Alternative Translation Practices Across Media and Cultures: Retranslations, Scanlations, and Simulpubs	5-L <i>Individual Session:</i> Identity, Gender, and Social Negotiation in Transnational Contexts	5-I After Growth: Community Paradigms for Japan's Demographic Transition	5-J Ethnographies of Margins and Moralities	5-K <i>Individual Session:</i> Art, Politics, and Historical Networks in Asia	5-A Demon Hunters and the Transnational Turn in Asian Popular Culture	5-B Evolving Traditions in the History of Japanese Health Care	5-M <i>(previously 3-G)</i> Reimagining Nō Theatre: Tradition, Modernity, and the Multiplicity of Identity	—	LOUNGE	5-D End of Empire Migration After the Asia-Pacific War: New Perspectives and Comparative Approaches	5-H Crisis or Continuity: Contemporary Japanese Conservatism Revisited
Block 6 11:45–13:15	6-N <i>Roundtable:</i> Listening to and Writing with Sound: Rethinking Japanese Studies Through Sonic Practices	6-B Materiality of City Landscape in Twentieth Century Korea	6-D Revisiting the Global and the Local in East Asian History: From the Western Pacific Perspectives	6-E <i>Individual Session:</i> Memory, Culture, and Future-Making	6-F Subtle Hands: Translating, Transforming, and Reframing Art and Literature Across Japanese History	6-J (Un)Becoming Asian: Reclaiming the Lives and Memories Beyond Dominant Narratives	6-M <i>Individual Session:</i> Governance, Social Order, and Everyday Life in East Asia	6-C Technologies of the Body and Its Measurement	6-A Reframing Hallyu: Transnational, Digital, and Glocal Futures of K-Culture and K-Identity	6-G Infrastructures of Modern Life: Gender, Technology, and the Spaces of Cold War Asia	6-L Masculinity and Stardom in Postwar Japanese Cinema	6-I Encoded Politics: Private and Public Emotions in Chinese Poetry, From Qin to Qing	LOUNGE	6-K The Emotional City: Memory, Sound, and Belonging in Tokyo's Liminal Spaces	6-H Reimagining Social Movement Theory Through East Asian Feminisms
13:15–14:00	Lunch Room Session with LOUISE INGHAM (Routledge) LUNCH BREAK														
Block 7 14:00–15:30	7-M <i>Roundtable:</i> Possibilities of "Queer History" in Japan	7-A Reverberations of the Lost Decade in the Style and Theory of Japanese Cinema	7-G Media, Mediation and Identity in Japanese Literature and Art, 1885–2005	7-H Tales: Chinese Narratology Across Disciplines	7-I The Historical Formation of the Notion "Not Wanting to Be a Burden" in Japan: Perspectives From Samurai Instructional Texts and Narratives of "ubasute"	7-J Gender and Social Transformation in Contemporary China: The Practices and Dilemmas of Rural Women Balancing Productive and Reproductive Labor	7-F Cold War East Eurasian Cultural Diplomacy and the Geopolitics of Literature	7-B Positioning Taiwan in the Post-War International Order: Local and Transnational Perspectives	7-C Play and Sexuality in Japanese Popular Culture	7-L Japan's Screen Encounters With the World	7-E Engendering Relevance, Moving Beyond Present State: Critical Perspectives on the Cultural Heritage of Indonesia	—	LOUNGE	7-K <i>Individual Session:</i> War, Empire, and Transnational Lives in Modern East Asia	7-D Mobilities Between Hong Kong and Southeast Asia: Networks, Regulations, and Entanglements in the Twentieth Century
Block 8 15:45–17:15	8-K <i>Individual Session:</i> Religion and Spirituality in the Making of Modern Japan	8-B The Brokered Empires: Go-Betweens and Iberian Networks in East Asia, 1500–1800	8-C Sound and Text Across Borders: The Re-Creation of East Asian Musical and Literary Traditions	8-D Shaping the Empire: Knowledge Production and Translation of Labor, Nature, and Techniques in Imperial Japan	8-F Aesthetics of Crisis: Reimagining Values Through Chinese Literature	8-I Cultural Practices and Structural Transformations in Myanmar Society: A Sociological and Anthropological Exploration	8-L <i>Individual Session:</i> Literary Tradition, Authorship, and Reception	8-E Traumatic Transgressors: Comparing Female Selfhood in Films About Wartime and Neoliberal Japan	8-G Japan-Taiwan Relations in the Changing Geopolitical Landscape of the Indo-Pacific	8-M Ghosts in the Machine: Negotiating Memory, Technology, and Identity in Japanese and South Korean Popular Culture	8-A Sounding Chineseness: Translation, Adaptation, and Hybridity Across the Sinophone World	—	LOUNGE	8-J Homelessness (Re)shaped in Contemporary Japan	8-H Plural Temporalities: Notions of Time in Thought and Practice From the Edo to the Early Meiji Period

Disciplines: Arts, Culture, Media | History | Literature | Politics, Economics, Others | Religion Studies, Intellectual History | Social Studies

Saturday, July 4

[Block 1] 09:45–11:15

Session Code: 1-A

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-001

Title: Chinese Ethics, New Media, and Diverse Living

Abstract:

Since China officially entered WTO in 2001, socialized life has fundamentally diversified along the lines of class, gender, media technology, and historical imaginary. This panel delves into the ethical implications of the diverse living experiences of contemporary China, as mediated through and further complicated by the technology-enhanced narrative, visibility, and interactivity. The papers demonstrate that the Internet as the dominant linchpin for cultural life in post-2001 China blurs the lines between the canonic and the vernacular, the mnemonic and the historical, the ethical and the economic, and the homoerotic and the heteronormative. The knowledge production through ethical imagination more often than not leads to half-knowledges of the people in relation to the technology-power nexus.

Organizer: Yipeng Shen, Trinity College (CT)

Chair: Yipeng Shen, Trinity College (CT)

Discussant: Chung-kang Kim, Hanyang University

1) Yipeng Shen, Trinity College (CT)

Ruling under the Heaven: Vernacular Industrialism in 21st-Century Chinese Internet Literature

Still prominent today is the imbalance of agency between China and the West to disseminate their respective visions of the world order. In return, the Chinese netizens take upon themselves the task of imagining alternative world orders through the crowd production of the Alt-History Fictions (hereafter AHF), a genre of Chinese Internet literature that “use[s] history as the set-up for the writers (and readers) to interrogate, re-interpret, and hypothetically change the course of history” (Rongbin Han 2025, 54–55). Political scientists frame this genre as evidence of grassroots agency in the co-production of ideological governance with the state; this approach, however, does not elucidate the full potential of the genre for the historical reflexivity and cultural imagination of a globalized China. This paper studies one representative work of this genre, *Ruling under the Heaven* (2010–2019), through the lens of the imbrications of culture, politics, and technology. Reading the novel’s vernacular industrialism as hybridizing the discursive regimes of the Confucianist Tianxia and of the socialist revolution, I argue that its effort to regenerate collective spirit demonstrates a fundamental ambiguity toward “power as invested in a person, institution, or entity” (Wendy Larson 2017, 139). Furthermore, moral realism as the main literary method of the novel reaffirms realism as a crucial apparatus to articulate mass subjectivity and identity in 21st-century China.

2) Xiaoming Luo, Shanghai University

The Nineties as the Unresolved Case: Between Social Uncertainty and Collective Memory

As globalization progresses into a new phase, it functions both as a driving force behind the construction of China’s collective memory of the 1990s and as a catalyst for narratives that seek to articulate and navigate societal uncertainties. Existing scholarship has observed that this process of social memory formation often employs suspenseful storytelling, which has been identified as a distinctive mode of representing the 1990s. However, this characterization frequently conflates the pairing of suspense narratives with collective memory, reducing it primarily to a matter of textual form without sufficiently examining the underlying uncertainties these narratives aim to address. This study explores how contemporary Chinese suspense dramas serve to anchor and transform societal anxieties concerning the unresolved uncertainties of the 1990s within the context of globalization. It analyzes how these suspense narratives function to rearticulate and embed these uncertainties, positing that such mechanisms are fundamental to the imaginative reenactment of the decade and the broader reform era. From this perspective, suspense narratives not only reshape collective memory but also establish a psychological foundation that influences contemporary perceptions of the 1990s as an era characterized by unresolved mysteries demanding investigation and reinterpretation.

3) Junpeng Liang, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen

Platformized Food Accountability in China: The Discursive Construction of Prepared Dishes Controversy

Taking the public dispute between Xibei Restaurant Group and entrepreneur-influencer Luo Yonghao as a case study, this paper examines how “prepared dishes” (*yuzhicaï*), pre-processed meals used in commercial and retail food services, are discursively constructed across Chinese digital and news media. Rather than treating this debate as a purely technical issue of food production, the paper argues that prepared dishes have become a platformized object of public accountability. Through this controversy, consumers, brands, media, experts, and regulators continuously negotiate transparency, trust, culinary authenticity, and the legitimacy of restaurant industrialization. Drawing on a three-dimensional discourse model focused on actors, frames, and justifications, this study integrates framing analysis (Fröhlich 2025) with Boltanski and Thévenot’s theory of regimes of worth (2006). The research addresses four core questions: (1) How are prepared dishes framed across platforms regarding issue content and rhetorical strategy? (2) Who are the dominant discursive actors, and how do their strategies vary by platform? (3) What regimes of justification are mobilized to legitimize or critique these dishes? (4) How do these framing patterns shift over time? Methodologically, the study conducts a cross-platform qualitative content analysis of Weibo posts, mainstream news articles, and Bilibili videos published during the controversy’s peak. Textual units are coded for actor categories, content frames (e.g., industrial progress, consumer deception, food safety anxiety, cultural threat), rhetorical frames, and justificatory logics (industrial, market, civic, domestic, environmental, and reputational). By mapping the interactions among these codes, the analysis links micro-level rhetoric and meso-level platform dynamics to macro-level struggles over food modernization in contemporary China. This paper contributes to language and food scholarship in three ways: it extends constructivist studies of food technology discourse beyond Euro-American contexts; it conceptualizes “platformized food accountability” as a distinctive mode of public contestation; and it demonstrates that the controversy over prepared dishes is not merely about consumer acceptance, but rather how transparency, risk, and moral legitimacy are linguistically negotiated in the digital public sphere.

Session Code: 1-B

Room: 2-401

Panel Code: p-041

Title: Space, Place, and the Transformation of Japanese Student Activism, 1960s–1980s

Abstract:

This panel examines the spatial, social, and institutional dimensions of Japanese student activism in the 1960s–1980s, challenging Tokyo-centric narratives by exploring regional diversity, gendered experiences, and material spaces. Moving beyond conventional chronologies, the papers demonstrate how physical spaces—autonomous dormitories, student quarters, regional protest sites—shaped activist cultures and became targets of state intervention. Chelsea Szendi Schieder examines female activists who married into rural communities at Sanrizuka and Minamata, showing how political commitments became personal and challenging “youth activism” boundaries. Andrew Hall analyzes Kyushu’s distinctive non-sectarian movement centered on anti-Vietnam War organizing, highlighting regional variations. Ryoko Kosugi traces how state policies deliberately created and then dismantled Tokyo’s Kanda-Ochanomizu student quarter, demonstrating spatial dimensions of activism’s rise and fall. The papers reveal student activism as geographically diverse, gendered, and shaped by relationships to physical and social spaces, moving beyond narratives of urban, male-dominated protests. They demonstrate how state actors responded to activism’s spatial dimensions, and how students adapted strategies across regional contexts.

Organizer: Andrew Hall, Kyushu University

Chair: William Andrews, Sophia University

Discussant: Ran Zwigenberg, Pennsylvania State University

1) Chelsea Szendi Schieder, Aoyama Gakuin University

Marrying the Movement: Student Activist “yome” at Sanrizuka and Minamata

A prominent feature of the postwar student movement in the 1950s–1970s in Japan was the phenomenon of students traveling to sites of various “struggles” to support local communities. In the mid-1950s, students mobilized to join locals in Sunagawa to protest the expansion of the US Air Force base there. In 1960, students joined striking miners and their families at the Miike Coal mines. Yet, as Matsuo Keiko, a Miike local and participant in a long-running trial against the Mitsui Coal Mines related to me, she did not trust visiting students’ long-term commitment to various local struggles. The

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“student activism” represented, to Matsuo, a temporally fleeting category of limited political import to regional struggles. This presentation considers the cases of young women activists who went to Chiba to support the Sanrizuka Struggle against the building of Narita Airport and to Kumamoto to support the cause of Minamata Disease victims and who stayed there, often marrying into local families and thus transforming their political commitments into personal commitments. Their experiences reveal the complex gendered and generational dynamics between students and locals in regional struggles, contributing to a wider perspective on gendered social movement dynamics in the 1960s and 1970s. Their decision to marry into local families and thus into the movement also complicates boundaries between outsiders and locals and extends the timeline of “youth activism” in the same time period.

2) Andrew Hall, Kyushu University

Anti-War Activism and Non-Sectarian Organizing: Kyushu University’s Student Movement in the 1960s

This paper examines two distinguishing features of Kyushu University’s 1960s student movement as part of a larger effort to describe the nature of the student movements in Japan’s regions. The two distinguishing features were the prominence of the anti-Vietnam War movement and concerns about American military bases in the region, and the lack of domination over the local student movement by any single political group or sect. The presence of an American Air Force base at a short distance from Kyushu University in Fukuoka, a naval base in nearby Sasebo, and an ammunition depot in Kita Kyushu, became focuses of activist attention through the 1960s, culminating in the creation of vibrant Fukuoka branches of the Anti-War Youth Committee and Beheiren, anti-Vietnam War organizations. These two “non-sect” organizations, both of which avoided ideological litmus tests, became central to the regions’ anti-war protests, which exploded in June 1968, when a US Air Force jet crashed into the university campus. Although several leftist political “sect” organizations also were active at Kyushu University, non-sect activist students dominated the protests, a situation which encouraged ideological diversity among the students. This paper uses documentary sources and interviews with former students and teachers to demonstrate the unique aspects of the student movement at Kyushu University and explore the connections with and differences from the student movement in Tokyo.

3) Ryoko Kosugi, Saitama University

The Formation and Dismantling of the Student Quarter and Student Activism in Mid-Twentieth-Century Tokyo

Focusing on the Kanda-Ochanomizu district in central Tokyo, this paper explores how state policies regulating university locations led to the aggregation of numerous campuses in the district by the 1950s, helped it develop into the heartland of Japanese student activism by the late 1960s, and eventually strangled that activism after the 1970s. More specifically, by analyzing data from my interviews with former student activists, geographical data on the district, and data regarding higher education policies and urban planning in the Tokyo area, this presentation examines how the concentration of campuses in the district during the 1960s gave rise to a student quarter that accommodated places for students such as cafés, lunch counters, bookstores, and dormitories. It then explores how students became politically socialized and mobilized to participate in demonstrations in those places. The paper also shows that around 1970, state policies began relocating campuses from the district to suburban Tokyo, thereby dismantling both the district’s student quarter and the student activism that had flourished there. Finally, the discussion of the impact of spatial change on student activism in Tokyo sheds new light on the relationship between the decline of student activism after the 1970s and state policies.

Session Code: 1-C

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-042

Title: Politics Manifested: Media, Tradition, and Interpretation in Twentieth-Century East Asia

Abstract:

How did the increasing complexity of politics in 20th-century East Asia manifest itself? Current scholarship has examined highly politicized media, such as propaganda posters; this interdisciplinary panel adds to the conversation by investigating how seemingly subtler media—including rumor, traditionalist painting, poetry, animation, and film—effectively conveyed layered political messages during times of turmoil. Shi analyzes how gossip about the number of concubines a public figure owned had gradually become a way to denigrate a political opponent, offering insights into previously overlooked aspects of the moral politics of Republican China. Yin’s study of the painting *Eagle* demonstrates how Gao Jianfu, an artist dedicated to revolutionizing Chinese art, chose to convey his political dissent through traditionalist art forms. Analyzing

the 1925 Soviet feature-length animated film *China in Flames*, Cooley draws our attention to the convenient absence of anti-capitalist animations in the currently accepted Western history of feature-length animated films. Together, the panel demonstrates that, compared to propagandistic media that take a more direct approach, these seemingly indirect expressions are equally, if not more, powerful in conveying messages to target audiences.

Organizer: Effie Yin, Ringling College of Art & Design

Chair: Effie Yin, Ringling College of Art & Design

Discussant: Jing Zhang, New College of Florida

1) Xia Shi, New College of Florida

When the Personal Became Political: The Moral Politics of Keeping Concubines in Republican China

Having concubines was once viewed as a status symbol for Chinese men—a vehicle for displaying wealth, prestige, and sexual prowess. However, by the Republican period (1912–1949), men with concubines were no longer viewed with overwhelming admiration and envy. Social progressives condemned men who practiced such “evil” customs as morally problematic. Meanwhile, although individual concubines could still gain social sympathy as victims of oppression, the concubine as a social category had become a relic of old society, a marker of male decadence, and a contaminating influence. This was not merely because many concubines were former courtesans/entertainers, a traditionally degraded social class, but also because the influential New Culture Movement had condemned concubinage as “the shame of the Chinese nation.” Going beyond scholarship on the legal abolition of concubinage, this paper investigates the men publicly accused of keeping concubines. It examines how gossip about the number of concubines owned by a public male figure had gradually become a way to denigrate a political opponent, delegitimize a new political category, such as the warlords, or discredit the progressive credentials of a steadfast revolutionary. In these ways, the personal became political, and the familial became national. Overall, this study offers new insights into how a stigmatized category of women contributed to important yet previously overlooked aspects of the moral politics of the new Republic.

2) Effie Yin, Ringling College of Art & Design

Negotiating between the Personal and the National: Gao Jianfu’s “Eagle” Painting and Subtle Political Dissent

Traditionalist Chinese painting encountered unprecedented challenges in the early 20th century. Among the voices of either completely abandoning or only promoting Chinese art forms and styles, Gao Jianfu, a political figure who followed Sun Yat-sen and a major artist active in Guangdong, advocated synthesizing Chinese and foreign styles to create a new national painting for the sake of saving the nation from internal and external crises. The existing scholarship on Gao Jianfu’s art focuses on the significant influence of Western art techniques through Gao’s study of *nihonga* painting in Japan. However, this paper investigates the role of traditionalist elements in Gao’s art, especially the symbiosis of painting and poetry, a key characteristic of literati painting that originated in the 11th century and was commonly practiced by scholar-officials. Through an examination of the multi-layered relationship between the two arts in Gao’s *Eagle* (1929), this paper explains Gao’s sharp turn from political engagement with an assassination group to an artistic career. Moreover, it argues that rather than conveying power and heroic nature of the subject, on the contrary, *Eagle* is a painting that subtly expresses Gao’s disappointment with the newly found Republic of China. Ironically, Gao Jianfu, an artist who was dedicated to revolutionizing Chinese art, chose to convey his political dissent through traditionalist art forms, just like the literati artists under imperial China.

3) Kevin Cooley, Ringling College of Art & Design

Cutting Out Capitalists: “China in Flames,” Cutout Animation, and Transnational Solidarity

Before it was an American fairy tale, animated feature film was a rallying cry for anti-capitalist revolution in China. The Walt Disney corporation has peddled the demonstrably false claim that its 1937 adaptation of *Snow White* was the first animated feature film. Among a dozen other animated feature films that preceded *Snow White*, one omission is much more glaring and much more politicized than the others. Twelve years before *Snow White*, a coalition of Soviet animators led by Nikolai Khodatev made the 1925 feature-length animated film *China in Flames*, a cutout animation whose bold constructivist aesthetics complemented its monstrous caricatures of the imperialist powers enforcing the “unequal treaties” upon China. My essay argues that *China in Flames* theorized animation not only as a fundamentally liberatory and anticapitalist tool but also as a rhetorically useful means of building affinity between Sun Yat-sen’s cause and the Soviet Union. It draws attention to the convenient lack of anti-capitalist animations in the currently accepted Western history of feature-length animated films and examines how the American film academy’s criteria have arbitrarily fenced out films

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which would have undoubtedly been screened as feature exhibitions in their original context. I conclude with an analysis of how *China in Flames*' call for solidarity between the working class of the global East and West might affect our understanding of contemporary transnational politics.

Session Code: 1-D

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-064

Title: (Re)Creating Japanese Colonial Peripheries: Gender, Education, and Science Across Empire and Cold War

Abstract:

This panel explores how peripheral regions and subjects were discursively constructed in the Japanese colonies, and how these representations were mobilized across the empire and into the Cold War. We focus on the discourses around indigeneity in women's magazines, multiethnicity in homeland education, and nostalgia in scientific institutions in Taiwan, Korea, and Okinawa. Merle Kartscher analyzes the portrayal of Taiwan's indigenous populations in the women's magazine *Taiwan aikoku fujin*, arguing that these articles shaped a collective image of Taiwan and its inhabitants among readers across the empire, and promoted a Taiwan-specific ideal of colonial womanhood. Ping Ting explores homeland (*kyōdo*) education and related exhibitions in 1930s colonial Taiwan and Korea, analyzing how homeland activities sought to integrate multiethnicity and imperial identities among children. Catherine Tsai examines Takaoka Daisuke's 1959 proposal to establish a tropical research center on Iriomote, highlighting the colonial legacies that shaped this postwar plan to create a "second Taiwan" for the promotion of Japanese foreign policy expansion into Southeast Asia. Across these presentations, the panel foregrounds the histories of peoples and places marginalized in both national and imperial narratives, emphasizing the importance of peripheries in the creation and recreation of Japan's colonial and postcolonial discourses.

Organizer: Merle Kartscher, Harvard University

Chair: Merle Kartscher, Harvard University

1) Merle Kartscher, Harvard University

Women on the Savage Border: Discourses of Indigeneity and Gender in the "Taiwan aikoku fujin"

Between 1895 and 1945, the Japanese colonial administration implemented social and economic policies that pushed indigenous communities off their land and led to the erosion of indigenous networks and culture and sought to suppress indigenous resistance through military force. The colonial government's intense concern with Taiwan's indigenous peoples can be found reflected in a seemingly unlikely site: the women's journal *Taiwan aikoku fujin* (Taiwan Patriotic Woman), which was published by the Japanese women's organization Aikoku Fujinkai (Patriotic Women's Association) in Taiwan between 1908 and 1916. During this time, the magazine published conspicuous amounts of content about the indigenous population, especially in relation to Japanese women settlers. This presentation will examine writing on indigeneity and gender in the *Taiwan aikoku fujin*. It will argue that the discourses brought forth in this Japanese-Chinese bilingual publication, which were meant to justify the Governor General's "Five Year Plan to Subdue the Savages" (1910–1915) towards woman readers and mobilize them to aid with the execution of this plan, served to construct a collective image of Taiwan and its indigenous inhabitants among readers across the empire. Simultaneously, these discourses also promoted an idealized version of refined Japanese womanhood for colonial settlers and ethnically Chinese women, contributing to the creation of a racialized and gendered imperial hierarchy in colonial Taiwan.

2) Ping Ting, Washington University in St. Louis

Homeland Education and the Making of Imperial Identities in 1930s Colonial Taiwan and Korea

In the 1930s, homeland education (*kyōdo kyōiku*) was incorporated into the school curricula of the Japanese Empire. This paper first presents an overview of the Japanese conception of *kyōdo* and *kyōdo* education. Subsequently, the paper examines the development of *kyōdo* education and related exhibitions in the peripheral regions of imperial Japan, including colonial Taiwan and Korea. Drawing on newspaper reports, *kyōdo* readings, and *kyōdo* exhibition materials, this paper examines how *kyōdo* activities in those regions connected each homeland to the empire and contributed to the formation of imperial identities in both similar and distinct ways. This paper argues that although *kyōdo* education in 1930s Taiwan and Korea was not administered by a single governmental authority, it shared many features and political aims both among these regions and with Japan. By engaging local populations, the *kyōdo* activities incorporated the nature, culture, history, and contemporary society of each homeland into the scope of the empire. These efforts aimed to integrate and reform the

multiethnic lives and populations, particularly children, in the empire's peripheral regions and to foster their assimilation into the Japanese nation. Thus, the concept of *kyōdo* was critical to state-building and empire-building in imperial Japan.

3) Catherine Tsai, Yale University

To Develop a Second Taiwan: Imperial Nostalgia and Cold War Development in Japan's Vision for the Iriomote Tropical Research Center, 1959–1965

In 1959, Takaoka Daisuke, director of the Nanpō Dōhō Engokai 南方同胞援護会, advocated for the establishment of a tropical research center on Iriomote. Comparing the island's climate and environment to colonial Taiwan, as well as its relative underdevelopment compared to the rest of Okinawa, Takaoka argued that Iriomote could serve as an ideal site to recreate Japan's research infrastructure and support technical assistance to Southeast Asia. Scientists affiliated with the Japanese Society for Tropical Agriculture (Nihon Nettarei Nōgyō Gakkai 日本熱帯農業学会) enthusiastically endorsed the proposal, imagining Iriomote as a "second Taiwan" where a new generation of experts could receive hands-on training in tropical agriculture. Drawing on local newspapers, Okinawan magazines, scientific surveys, and diplomatic correspondence, this paper examines the imperial logics underpinning the foreign policy vision for the proposed Iriomote tropical research center.

Session Code: 1-E

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-052

Title: Translating Embedded Forms: (Re-)Contextualizing Poetry of Premodern Japan

Abstract:

This panel brings together the insights of three scholars working in the field of premodern Japanese poetry. We will look at an example of early ninth-century Sinitic poetry (*kanshi*) composed by Emperor Saga (786–842), excerpts from several medieval anthologies of vernacular poetry (*waka*), compiled by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241), and a series of linked verses (*renga*) involving the poet Sōgi (1421–1502). All three of these presentations, while dealing with poetic productions from different periods of Japanese history, will deal with the question of contextualization, both within the premodern world, especially by means of reordering and anthologizing poems, as well as in the modern world, in virtue of our own efforts at translating and interpreting poetry. Each presenter, by sharing their own translations of selected poetry, will elucidate the ways in which various forms of recontextualization have come together to (re)shape, or to provocatively problematize, our modern interpretation of premodern poetry. How do our translations of premodern poetry contribute to an ever-changing reimagining of such poetry? How might we, as translators, better foreground the contexts of our chosen poems? How does translating a poem as an isolated object differ from translating it as part of a larger anthology or sequence of poems? In short, what is the relationship between contextualization, translation, and interpretation? These are the questions our panel will endeavor to investigate.

Organizer: Kristopher Reeves, Waseda University

Chair: Kristopher Reeves, Waseda University

Discussant: Jeffrey Knott, National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL)

1) Kristopher Reeves, Waseda University

"The Cry of Wild Geese": An Example of the Difficulties Involved in Translating Sinitic Poetry

Emperor Saga (786–842; r. 809–823) established a solid foundation for the Kyoto-based Heian court. It was Saga, moreover, who oversaw Japan's first imperially commissioned anthology of Sinitic poetry, the *Ryōun shinshū*, or *Overshooting the Clouds*, a new anthology submitted to the throne in 814. As my presentation will argue, this title most likely comes from a poem in the anthology by Saga entitled "My reply to a poem by Asano Katori, left head of the imperial gate, entitled 'Hearing the early cry of wild geese one autumn night while on duty in the palace watchman's station'" (poem no. 16). This is a war poem, having as its central image the autumnal migration of a flock of wild geese arriving in the capital at Kyoto from the northern barracks. The narrator, or persona, of this poem is presented as passing sleepless nights within the palace watchman's station, plagued by sorrows of a most intense poignancy. But what exactly is the cause of this sorrow? What keeps our man awake at night? And who precisely is this narrator? How are we to understand this poem, both in terms of content as well as sentiment? I will endeavor to show, through a consideration of some examples of war poetry produced during Tang-period China, how Saga might have expected readers to interpret his verses. I will, moreover,

introduce my own English translation of this poem and share with the audience reasons for some of my more liberal translation decisions.

2) Gabriele Kemesyte, Waseda University

Floating Meanings: Translating “waka” in Editorial Poetic Sequences

Poems in early medieval collections of Japanese classical vernacular *waka* poetry are often arranged for artistic effect, following patterns, which link otherwise separate verses into cohesive sequences, thus contextualizing poetry. This idea of deliberate poem arrangement in anthologies and other poetic endeavors, such as hundred-poem sequences (*hyakushu*), is commonly accepted among *waka* scholars both in Japan and the West, but to this day studies and translations of *waka* poetry maintain a strong tendency of focusing on singular poems and consequently overlooking the effect the sequence has on each verse. This paper focuses on translation of small-scale poetic sequences edited by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) as anthologies of exemplary poetry (*shūkasen*) and explores cases where poem placement within an editorial sequence suggests a shift away from conventional reading of a given poem. The paper examines interpretation of poetic placenames (*utamakura*) and, by comparing appearances of the same poem in different collections, demonstrates how editorial poetic sequence reshapes reading and influences foreign-language rendition of a verse. The paper argues that readings of poems in editorial poetic sequences can diverge from interpretations established in other contexts—most importantly, in imperial anthologies of *waka* (*chokusen wakashū*)—and that poems in an editorial sequence ought not to be interpreted in isolation or solely based on their earlier contextualization.

3) Emily Wan, Harvard University

Poetry Beyond Text: Linking Verses with Context in Renga Translation

How do we translate poetry whose texts are vestiges of ephemeral, embodied moments of collaborative creativity? *Renga* (linked verse), a medieval literary form in which poets gathered to orally improvise short verses in response to each other, poses this challenge. Its rule-based poetic conversations in classical literary language expand the semantic capacity and fluidity that scholars have examined in *waka*. Building on *waka* studies of occasionality, anthologization, and intertextuality, this paper considers what context means in *renga* and how to capture it as a translator. Using verses by the poet Sōgi (1421–1502), I discuss four types of context: 1) the intertextual, in which words carry overtones from the classical canon; 2) the intratextual, or how successive verses in a sequence semantically transform each other; 3) the anthology, which isolates pairs of verses, i.e., individual links; and 4) the social space, where poets’ interactions continuously shaped the transcribed words. I show how existing translations emphasize the first three types while treating the fourth as external to the poetry, skewing readers’ experience of *renga* toward the textual. I argue that the equally important social context works closely with the other types and propose methods to capture this elusive dimension in translation. This approach opens possibilities for drawing on adjacent fields like adaptation studies and creative practice to grapple with poetry that exceeds the boundaries of text.

Session Code: 1-F

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-015

Title: Underground Connections: Informal Networks as a Method for Comparative Film History in East Asia

Abstract:

While East Asian film histories have moved beyond national frameworks, scholarship has focused on official exchanges, neglecting informal networks that constituted alternative circuits of cinematic modernity operating alongside imperial structures. This panel proposes that tracing underground connections—leftist collaboration, unauthorized media translation, and diasporic activism—offers productive methods for comparative film history, revealing relations obscured by nationalist frameworks. Centering Korea, where such connections were made invisible by historical ruptures and marginalization, the panelists show how informal networks can function as entry points for rethinking the region’s cinematic history. Kiwoong Nam reconstructs Korean-Chinese leftist collaboration in 1920s–1930s Shanghai, revealing how clandestine networks produced anti-imperialist cinematic modernism. Sejung Ahn investigates how colonial Korean theater weeklies repackaged Hollywood publicity within Japanese imperial circuits as contact zones where global modernity was locally reimagined. Insil Yang examines diasporic activism surrounding *Omoni* (1978), produced by Korean democratization movements in Japan and circulated through transnational solidarity networks. Foregrounding informal

networks as object and method, the panel challenges dominant historiography, revealing how East Asian cinematic modernity emerged through circulation modes.

Organizer: Sejung Ahn, Yonsei University

Chair: Hwajin Lee, Seoul National University

Discussant: Hwajin Lee, Seoul National University

1) Kiwoong Nam, Pukyong National University

The Shanghai Connection: Transnational Networks between Colonial Korean Filmmakers and Chinese Filmmakers, 1920s–1930s

This paper investigates the Shanghai Connection—a collaborative network between colonial Korean and Chinese filmmakers active in Shanghai during the 1920s–1930s. It challenges historiography that reduces this encounter to “Keijo nostalgia” or political exile narratives, arguing instead that Shanghai functioned as a vital transnational hub of anti-imperialist modernism. The study analyzes Shanghai’s dual identity as the “Paris of the East” and a space condemned by the Japanese Empire as a “City of Crime” due to its semi-colonial status under foreign concessions. This unique environment provided material and ideological basis for shared political imagination, linking Korea’s March First Movement with China’s May Fourth Movement. Filmmakers such as Chong Kitak and Lee Gyeongson sought not mere escape from restrictive colonial Joseon film industry but intentional creative engagement with Chinese studios and leftist cineastes. These interactions produced over sixteen collaborative works, including *Patriotic Spirit* (1928) and *Yangtze River* (1931). Such projects strategically employed cinema as a medium of social critique and anti-imperialist solidarity, enabling diaspora filmmakers to assert political and artistic legitimacy within the Chinese film industry. The analysis concludes that the Shanghai Connection offers critical rethinking of nationalist frameworks in East Asian film history, illuminating an early form of inter-Asian cinematic modernism.

2) Sejung Ahn, Yonsei University

Paratexts in Transit: Repackaging Hollywood Publicity in Colonial Korean Theater Weeklies, 1920s–1930s

This paper examines locally produced theater weeklies circulating in colonial Korea during the 1920s–1930s as crucial sites of cinematic mediation. Without fan magazines or established publicity infrastructure, these weekly flyers became the primary medium through which theaters promoted films and guided audience reception. For imported American films, local exhibitors likely relied on or unofficially appropriated standardized publicity kits, including stills, synopses, and advertising copy, provided by Japanese import agencies that obtained them from Hollywood distributors. While such materials were strictly regulated by copyright and trade associations, their circulation in colonial Korea reveals a gray zone of media translation and informal reuse. Analyzing surviving theater weeklies and flyers, this paper investigates how Hollywood’s standardized publicity packages were re-edited, re-captioned, and localized to fit the colonial exhibition context. It examines how these paratexts functioned as interpretive guides, framing spectators’ encounters with foreign films and shaping the visual economy of colonial modernity. Combining paratext theory with recent work on media circulation and colonial infrastructures, this study situates Korean theater weeklies within broader transnational networks of cultural mediation, highlighting how global publicity regimes were reconfigured at the periphery, transforming copyrighted promotional images into locally meaningful cinematic texts.

3) Insil Yang, Iwate University

Democratization Movements and Korea-Japan Solidarity through 1970s Cinema

The 1978 film *Omoni*, produced in Japan by the Korean Congress for Democracy and Unification (Hanmintong) and directed by Kim Kyung-sik, exemplifies diasporic film activism during the Cold War. Hanmintong had previously produced *Accusation: Report on Zainichi Korean Political Prisoners* (1975), directed by Okamoto Toshihiko with music by Yun Yi-sang. *Omoni*, scripted by Japanese screenwriter Kataoka Kaoru, dramatized Korean suffering under military dictatorship and expressed solidarity with Korea’s democratization movement. Screened within the Zainichi Korean community under the slogan “Don’t Let My Death Be in Vain—The Life of a Mother Who Lost Her Son,” the film anchored Hanmintong’s 1978 campaign supporting Korea’s democratization. Over 700 screenings were held across Japan, supported by labor unions and civic groups. This paper examines 1970s Japan-based films supporting Korea’s democratization through three aspects: (1) production and distribution via activist networks, (2) connections to Zainichi Korean literary journals, and (3) participation of exiled Korean cultural figures like Yun Yi-sang and Chung Kyung-mo. Though made in Japan, *Omoni* was embedded in Korea’s overseas democratization movement and transnational solidarity

networks. Drawing on Japanese magazines and literary journals, the paper explores how these films forged intersections of cinema, activism, and cultural translation during the Cold War.

Session Code: 1-G

Room: 2-407

Panel Code: p-065

Title: Female Authors, Translational Narratives, and Colonial Memory

Abstract:

This panel examines how women writers and transnational narratives reshape colonial memory and cultural identity across East Asia. Through rediscovery, reinterpretation, and reimagining, the three papers explore gendered authorship, translation, and science as acts of resistance that unsettle imperial knowledge systems and reconfigure postcolonial understandings of history and cultural nationalism. The first paper investigates the rediscovery of three female cultural figures—Yeh-tao (1905–1970), Gu Yan Bi-xia (1914–2000), and Yang Chian-ho (1921–2011)—and analyzes how the retranslation and reinterpretation of their work contributed to the formation of cultural nationalism from the 1970s to 2000s. The second paper focuses on Japanese author Ueda Sayuri's *Hametsu no ō* (The King of Ruin, 2017), examining how depictions of Chinese scientists Tao Jing-Sun (1897–1952) and Zhu Kezhen (1890–1974) resist necropolitics and disrupt colonial narratives of science. The third paper analyzes Yang Shuangzi's *Taiwan Travelogue* (2020), showing how her use of multiple authorial voices complicates ideas of historical truth and authenticity. Together, these papers reveal how women's literary production engages transnational histories and mobilizes decolonizing strategies that challenge enduring imperial frameworks.

Organizer: Fang-yu Li, New College of Florida

Chair: Kazue Harada, Miami University

1) Jui-I Chen, National Taiwan Library

The Politics of Reappearance: Female Voices, Cultural Capital, and the Shifting Interpretive Frameworks in Post-1970s Taiwan

This paper examines the rediscovery and recognition of Taiwanese women's cultural legacies from the Japanese colonial era through translingual translation in Taiwan between the 1970s and 2000s. During the rise of Taiwanese cultural nationalism in the 1990s and 2000s, reinterpretations of colonial-era literature largely centered on male writers, marginalizing female textual and discursive contributions. The paper analyzes the contexts and dynamics of these women writers' reemergence, arguing that their renewed visibility is closely tied to evolving political conditions, shifts in cultural and economic capital, changing positions within Taiwan's literary field, and new interpretive frameworks following the cultural nativism movement. Using a case study approach, it examines the reappearance of Yeh-tao (1905–1970), Gu Yan Bi-xia (1914–2000), and Yang Chian-ho (1921–2011). It explores the reconstruction of Yeh-tao as an anti-colonial activist, the contested positioning of Gu Yan Bi-xia across Ko-Min literature, popular culture, and family writing, and the recognition of Yang Chian-ho as Taiwan's first female journalist and writer. These cases reveal distinct cultural translation strategies that challenge androcentric frameworks and highlight women's roles in shaping cultural discourse.

2) Kazue Harada, Miami University

Ethics of Science through Peripheral Representations in Ueda Sayuri's "Hametsu no ō"

Ueda Sayuri's (b. 1964) *Hametsu no ō* (The King of Ruin, 2017), the Naoki Prize-nominated historical novel centers on the Shanghai Natural Science Research Institute (Shanghai Shizen Kagaku Kenkyūjo, SNSRI) during 1931–1945. While the novel critiques the unethical scientific practices, such as the development of biological weapons and human experimentation conducted by the Kwangtung Army's Unit 731 through the quasi-fictional R2 vibrio bacterium (R2v), it also reveals the limitations of portraying wartime atrocities and the absence of specific historical narratives from a colonial perspective. In a brief section, the novel depicts two Chinese scientists, Tao Jing-Sun (1897–1952), who worked at SNSRI, and Zhu Kezhen (Chu Coching, 1890–1974) are represented in relation to the institute's second director, Shinjō Shinzō (1873–1938), questioning the ethics of science and the colonial politics quietly. Although the representations of two Chinese scientists are peripheral in the novel, their subtle appearance can gesture a small resistance to necropolitics (the sovereign power over life and death). In particular, while spending his formative years in Japan, Tao's characterization marked by humility, perseverance, and humor, suggests an alternative that disrupts the colonial narrative of science. This

presentation will explore how the peripheral representations of these two scientists can not only expose the limitation but also challenge the dominant narratives.

3) Fang-yu Li, New College of Florida

Performing Authorship, Claiming Authenticity: The (Mis)Translation of Culture in Yang Shuangzi's "Taiwan Travelogue"

Yang Shuangzi's novel *Taiwan Travelogue* (2020) is a historical fiction framed as a translated travelogue from the Japanese colonial era. It narrates the journey of a fictional Japanese novelist, Aoyama Chizuko, who travels through Taiwan in the 1930s and documents her experiences. The book provides a detailed portrayal of life in colonial Taiwan, exploring themes of cultural assimilation, resistance, and the quest for a Taiwanese identity under Japanese rule. What makes the novel particularly compelling is its meta-narrative structure: Yang Shuangzi adopts the voice of the fictional author, Aoyama Chizuko, and presents the story as a historical document supplemented with footnotes and scholarly commentary. This narrative strategy encourages readers to interrogate the nature of historical truth, literary authenticity, and the question of authorship. In this paper, I examine how Yang assumes multiple authorial personae to construct a polyphonic dialogue that exposes how power dynamics shape intimate relationships, and how acts of cultural (mis)translations reveal the assumptions and (mis)representations of the colonial other—even amid an earnest desire to bridge cultural divides.

Session Code: 1-H

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-114

Title: Displaced Subjects and Diasporic Narratives

Abstract:

The imperial and colonial formations in Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries led to the transnational mobility and dispersion of people. What were the racialized, classed, or gendered government policies of the time, and how did they impact displaced individuals and their descendants? By examining both colonial and postcolonial memories of Korean racial minorities in Japan, the panel will reflect on what Frantz Fanon described as the “longue durée” of colonialism and its impact on the minds of the colonized and their descendants. Our panelists will focus on the intricacies of the Korean diaspora in Japan and delve into how cultural production—in the forms of literature, visual art, and film—has served as a vital practice for interrogating issues of racial, economic, and gender subjugation while simultaneously fostering the emergence of new identities. Bringing together scholars from various disciplines, including Philosophy, Political Science, and Art History at different stages in their academic journeys, the panel will investigate the diverse experiences of Korean diasporas in various cultural contexts, collectively illuminating often-overlooked connections that enrich our understanding of this history. This discussion will highlight the resilience of these dislocated subjects as they navigate systemic discrimination as marginalized figures in their homeland while striving to forge a new political consciousness across generational gaps.

Organizer: Eunah Lee, St. Joseph's University

Chair: Eunah Lee, St. Joseph's University

Discussant: Wakagi Takahashi, Taisho University

1) Hoseok Jeong, Seigakuin University

Reading the Story of a Zainichi Korean War Veteran's Wife

In 1950, 624 Zainichi Koreans volunteered for the Korean War. 135 were killed or went missing. 242 were denied re-entry into Japan and remained in South Korea. Of these, 42 were recruited as secret agents to infiltrate Japan in an effort to deter the repatriation of Zainichi Koreans to North Korea but returned to South Korea in vain. The history of those Zainichi soldiers, a tragic chapter of modern Korean history, remained neglected for decades. However, with the recent public recognition of their long-forgotten presence, diverse and often contested media representations have emerged, exposing fractures and tensions in cultural memories. This presentation explores one of the most underrepresented perspectives concerning Zainichi Korean War veterans: the lives of their wives who remained in Japan, marked by turbulent experiences. By analyzing *Aryon Taryōng*, a short story centered on the life of a Zainichi soldier's wife, I will address three questions. First, how does the novel illuminate the “victim” dimension of the soldiers—a perspective irreducible to the dominant “war hero” narrative in official history? Second, how does the work appropriate *shinse taryōng*, a major storytelling format for

the arduous lives of Zainichi women, as mother–daughter dialogues within the story? Third, how does this literary representation of previously marginalized female experiences resist reductive narratives of trauma and reimagine the Zainichi family as a diasporic, transborder kinship network?

2) Rum Pek, Doshisha University

Representations of Nation and Ethnicity in Diasporic Art: Zainichi Korean Artists and the AREUM Exhibition

Recent scholarship on Zainichi Koreans has increasingly addressed the modes of minority expression through film, literature, and poetry, as well as the sociological dimensions of community formation and structural marginalization. However, comprehensive research on Zainichi Korean artists and their artistic practices remains markedly underdeveloped. This presentation focuses on a historical examination of Zainichi Korean artists from the perspective of the presenter, a third-generation Zainichi Korean. In particular, it scrutinizes the AREUM Exhibition held in 1999, a large-scale art event organized primarily by second-generation Zainichi Korean artists. Through this lens, the presentation explores the processes by which artistic expression, identity construction, and community formation have been enacted and transmitted across generations. Drawing upon oral histories, the study undertakes a transversal analysis of colonial experiences, Cold War memory, community-building processes, dialogues surrounding art objects, and the location of artworks and textual materials. It argues that the narratives of displacement and mobility inherent to diasporic existence articulate a yearning for peace and homeland. Ultimately, this inquiry illuminates how the political violence of national division, Cold War geopolitics, and colonialism has persistently rendered the lived histories of ordinary people invisible and posits that such artistic engagements open new trajectories for research.

3) Eunah Lee, St. Joseph's University

Decolonial Female Subjectivity in Park Soo-Nam's Filmmaking

This paper focuses on the documentary films by Park Soo-Nam, a second-generation Zainichi film director, highlighting the importance of filmmaking in discovering colonial female subjectivity. It begins by examining how three Korean-Japanese individuals are remembered through Park's camera, including Lee Jin-woo (1940–1962), Bae Bong-gi (1914–1991), and Seo Jeong-Woo (1929–2001). Utilizing Agamben's concept of "bare life," this paper reflects on the lives and deaths of stateless individuals, whose precariousness underscores the violence of a modern state. Additionally, this paper examines how their lives are remembered, often with a sense of belatedness, in Park's films. Viet Thanh Nguyen, a Vietnamese American author, notes that displaced individuals do not merely inhabit two cultures but exist in two time zones. This concept suggests that the chronology of the displaced does not progress linearly but instead moves in circles. This paper draws on this idea of "going in circles" to reflect on the narrative modes of post-generational works, emphasizing how they adopt this non-linear temporality as an active strategy to express their complex identities. Finally, the concept of "world"-traveling with loving perception, as recommended by feminist philosopher María Lugones, helps us understand Park's representation of Zainichi people and its influence on the identity formation of subsequent generations, with an emphasis on resilience rather than hostility.

4) Jinyoung Anna Jin, Stony Brook University

Global Currents of Modernism: Empire, Migration, and the Art of Lee Qoede and Kitagawa Tamiji

This paper situates the Korean painter Lee Qoede (1913–1965) and the Japanese artist Kitagawa Tamiji (1894–1989) within the broader transnational history of Asian modernism, migration, and colonial displacement. Against the backdrop of Japanese imperial expansion and shifting racial hierarchies in early twentieth-century Asia, both artists negotiated questions of national identity through their engagement with Mexican muralism—a movement grounded in social justice, communal struggle, and resistance to cultural hegemony. Kitagawa's fifteen-year experience in Mexico exposed him to an art practice that celebrated indigenous dignity and collective agency, which he brought back to Japan in the 1930s as part of a new pedagogical and aesthetic vision. Lee, studying in Tokyo during this period, encountered Kitagawa's ideas that sought to discipline colonial subjects while paradoxically opening transnational channels of exchange. By tracing this circulation of artistic ideals across Mexico, Japan, and Korea, this paper reconsiders Korean modernism as a diasporic and post-colonial formation, shaped by displacement, translation, and ideological struggle. It argues that Lee's pursuit of national art (*minjok misul*) emerged not in isolation but through global encounters that reveal the entangled geographies of empire, migration, and modernity.

Session Code: 1-I

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-083

Title: Synthetic Strategies in Indo-Pacific Security

Abstract:

This panel brings together four different papers, each considering a different strategic framework relating to security in the Indo-Pacific region. In doing so, we hope to invite attention to and generate discussion in two broad areas. The first involves the development and interaction of distinct strategic cultures in international politics, as well as the prospects and challenges which different strategies face within the international environment. The second involves the role of the researcher in analyzing and communicating on strategic models amidst an atmosphere of intensifying competition. How can researchers identify common ground, synergistic dynamics, and mechanisms for furthering international cooperation and collaboration under such circumstances? In this context, the importance of interdisciplinary thinking, alongside an active view towards what comes after scholarly analysis (e.g. the collaborative synthesis of new models to address shared challenges) are stressed.

Organizer: Garrett Mestemacher, International Christian University

Chair: Garrett Mestemacher, International Christian University

- 1) Garrett Mestemacher, International Christian University

Reexamining the Evolution of Japan's National Security Strategy and Institutional Architectures Through the Lens of Integrated Security

This presentation seeks to address persistent questions regarding the origins and character of Japan's growing profile in security and defense, which has been characterized as normalization (Oros 2008), rearmament (Smith 2019), militarization (Hughes 2022), de-centering (Midford and Vosse 2020), and a security renaissance (Oros 2017). The paper begins by introducing the 2004 Araki Report, and its proposal of an integrated security strategy based on the goals of 1) national defense and 2) improvement of the international security environment through Japan's own efforts, cooperation with the United States, and cooperation with the international community. This strategy is then considered in context of domestic constraints in military, economic, fiscal, demographic, legal, and political dimensions. Through this lens of integrated security, changes to Japan's national security strategy (coded in Lykke's typology of ends, ways, and means) and security institutions over the subsequent two decades are reexamined. In doing so, the paper contends that the Araki Report's integrated security strategy has grown far beyond the narrow defense doctrinal context it was originally proposed in, and represents a new security paradigm distinct from comprehensive or human security models. Finally, the presentation considers prospects and challenges for the continuation and expansion of integrated security vis-à-vis three key areas: international coordination, cooperation, and collaboration.

- 2) William Winberg, International Christian University

Navigating Security Uncertainty: An Examination of Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific

This presentation examines Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision as a broad expression of its grand strategy and how it has evolved since its inception and the rationale behind it. Once a loosely defined concept, FOIP has developed into a cohesive and multifaceted policy framework guiding Japan's layered regional engagement. Remarkably, it places little emphasis on hard military security, despite growing regional threats from primarily China but also North Korea, and Russia, in addition to Japan's relative decline paired with anxieties associated with the US-Japan alliance. Instead, FOIP prioritizes economic connectivity, rule-of-law promotion, and institutional cooperation. This reflects Japan's strategic focus on stability, autonomy, and resilience through partnerships and norms, rather than confrontation or power projection. The FOIP thus marks a significant transformation in Japan's post-war foreign policy, positioning it as a leading advocate for a rules-based regional order and offering an alternative model of strategic engagement amid intensifying geopolitical rivalry.

- 3) Evelyn Mestemacher, Hitotsubashi University

From Near Seas Defense to Integrated Near and Far Seas Protection

From Jiang Zemin's New Security Concept to Xi Jinping's Comprehensive National Security, China's security strategy has undergone a significant shift, changing its focus from economic development and international cooperation under the "peaceful rise" doctrine to a broad-based national security approach characterized by the "securitization of everything." In

response, China's maritime strategy has been continuously refined to achieve its national strategic objectives. This research aims to examine why China's maritime strategy has developed along the Maritime Silk Road (MSR), transitioning from a focus on Near Seas Defense to a more expansive doctrine of Far Seas Protection. It will investigate how these strategic changes collectively support the broader vision of a Two-Ocean strategy within the Indo-Pacific maritime order. Additionally, the study will explore how China's national security goals, from the Jiang Zemin era to the Xi Jinping era, have shaped and influenced its maritime strategic posture. This study examines the period from 1993 to 2024, capturing 31 years of China's maritime strategic evolution under the leadership of three successive CCP leaders: Jiang Zemin (1993–2003), Hu Jintao (2003–2013), and Xi Jinping (2013–2024). Over this period, China's national security strategy has progressively placed greater emphasis on safeguarding and advancing its maritime interests, reflecting an evolving recognition of the sea's significance to national power and security.

4) Chen Bi, International Christian University

Britain's Cyber Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies and Practices as a Middle Power

As the Indo-Pacific region gains increasing significance in the global economic, demographic, and military landscape, cybersecurity issues in the region have become increasingly prominent. Spanning the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the Indo-Pacific is a region characterized by dense critical infrastructure and high interconnectedness, facing multiple cyber threats from both state and non-state actors. Against this backdrop, relevant countries have formulated Indo-Pacific strategies and cybersecurity strategies to safeguard regional order and their own interests. Existing studies indicate that middle powers' cyber diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific has attracted scholarly attention; for instance, there is considerable research on the cyber diplomacy strategies and practices of countries such as Japan, Australia, and South Korea. However, the literature shows a relative lack of research on Britain's cyber diplomacy in the region, particularly regarding how it engages in capacity-building, trust-building, and the shaping of international norms. Therefore, this paper uses the theoretical framework of middle power cyber diplomacy to analyze how Britain implements its cyber diplomacy through confidence-building measures and capacity-building measures in the region. In addition, the paper compares Britain's cyber diplomacy policies with those of other middle powers in the Indo-Pacific, such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia, highlighting the distinctiveness of Britain's approach.

Session Code: 1-J

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-009

Title: Co-producing "Religion" and "Asia": Practices of Place, Boundaries, and Transcendence

Abstract:

How do conceptions of "religion" and "Asia" mutually produce one another's categorical boundaries? This panel examines this relationship across historical and ethnographic contexts, drawing on cases from regions commonly labeled as Asia as well as from groups and traditions whose identities and claims intentionally transcend or resist regional and religious particularisms. We foreground how concrete practices, institutions, and discourses generate and dispute our theoretical boundaries and emphasize the instability and permeability of these concepts. Our panel papers examine cases across East, West, and South Asia. Ngo illustrates through historic accounts and contemporary ethnography of Japanese Roman Catholic practices how Christianity in Japan oscillated between the poles of "Western" and "universal," constructing not only its own boundaries but also that of Japan. Chan traces how the local deification of a corpse on Matsu Island, Taiwan becomes embedded in geopolitical claims of Taiwanese sovereignty and the legacy of the Cold War. Malhotra examines the debates over world heritage and local religious identity through the global icon of the Taj Mahal. Together, these papers reflect the importance of seeing the concepts of "religion" and "Asia" as the products of practices and discourse in constant negotiation, instead of self-evident categories.

Organizer: H. Francisco Ngo, The Ohio State University

Chair: Tatsuo Murakami, Sophia University

Discussant: Hisako Omori, Akita International University

1) H. Francisco Ngo, The Ohio State University

The Place of Christianity in Japan: Negotiating Universality and Particularity Identities

Can Christianity be cleared of its Western culture, to be truly applicable to the Japanese? Although this question was unheard of when Christianity first arrived in Japan in the 17th Century, Japanese Christians from the 20th Century onward have grappled with this conundrum as they find themselves between a universal religious identity—being Christian—and a particular cultural one—being Japanese. At face value, these two identities appear non-contradictory; after all, Japanese Christians and Japanese Christian theologies do exist. Yet there remains a strong discursive tension between the two. I trace this tension in three periods: the 17th century in Catholic missions; the 20th century in Japanese Christian authors; and the 21st century in my Japanese Catholic interlocutors. Giving special attention to how and when the notions of place, boundedness, and particularity arise, I analyze how Christianity reifies and challenges its own geographic and cultural associations with the West while reifying and challenging similar ideas about Japan.

2) Chris Cristóbal Chan, Stanford University

Mazu's Transition: Cross-Border Politics and Corpse Deities in the Matsu Islands

This paper addresses the question of identity and political transition in the Taiwan Strait through the operationalization of traditional folk religious beliefs. I focus on the religious practice of corpse deification on the Matsu Islands in the Taiwan Strait and the ways in which religious narratives are coopted into politically negotiated justifications of identity. In an age of “transition,” how do aspirations for political and identity transition become intertwined and manifested in the transition of local religion and hagiographies? I tie these questions within a greater historical framework of Cold War geopolitics and the contemporary backdrop of increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait.

3) Sarthak Malhotra, University of Cambridge

Hindu and/or Muslim: Contesting the Taj and Heritage in India

The religious identity of India's national heritage sites has been a matter of public debate since the electoral victory of supremacist Hindu nationalists in the 2010s. The Taj Mahal, a longstanding icon of India's Hindu-Muslim past, is today the focus of fierce contestation as Hindu nationalists seek to redefine and reclaim this Muslim monument as the site of a lost Hindu temple. In contrast to the heirs of the secular ideal of nationhood, Hindu nationalists seek to redefine India as a Hindu nation in terms of a sacred Hindu history and geography. It is untenable for them that a site created by India's dynastic Muslims be celebrated as iconic heritage both within India and globally. Though there have long been attempts to mask the Taj's Muslim history and its still-active Muslim spiritual life, for Hindu nationalists even this official “secular” containment is insufficient. This paper explores the relationship between faith and national identity by examining the contestations of religious identity at the Taj. Though Hinduism has become central to political debates about who is and is not Indian, it is the nation's Muslim monuments like the Taj that continue to represent the Indian nation globally. These tensions reveal the ambivalence of the concept of heritage, whose globalizing tendencies are still rooted in particular nationalist imaginaries especially in Asian contexts where the boundaries between faith, politics, and historical memory are especially porous.

Session Code: 1-K

Room: 2-402

Individual Session 10: Religious Knowledge, Networks, and Cross-Cultural Mediation in East Asia

Chair: Yen-Yi Chan, Sophia University

1) (i-021) Jackson Macor, University of California, Berkeley

Jizang and his Legacy in Chinese Buddhism

Jizang (549–623) is widely known as the foremost representative of the Three Treatises School of Chinese Madhyamaka. However, this reputation is largely based upon his unique reception in Japan which was itself influenced by historical factors on the archipelago largely divorced from the situation in China. A closer look at Jizang's impact on Buddhism in China specifically paints a starkly different but no less complex picture of the prolific exegete. This paper examines Jizang's influence on Chinese Buddhism from two perspectives: his extensive work on the Lotus Sūtra, and his relationship with the early Tiantai figures of Zhiyi (538–598) and his disciple Guanding (561–632). In this paper, I aim to show that Jizang's most important contribution to Chinese Buddhism was not constituted by his work on the Three Treatises, but rather by his commentaries on the Lotus Sūtra. I also aim to critically re-evaluate the nature of the relationship between Jizang and Zhiyi by reassessing the authorship of the letters attributed to Jizang contained in the *Guoqing bailu*, a text on early Tiantai

sectarian history compiled by Guanding. Given that at least one of these letters is clearly forged or altered, we can be confident that there was a concerted effort by students of Tiantai following Guanding to erase Jizang's impact on Tiantai and his status as an expert on the Lotus Sūtra equal if not superior in mastery to Zhiyi.

2) (i-155) Jusung Lee, Yale University

Beyond Elite Reform: Devotional Buddhism and Popular Religiosity in Colonial Korea

This paper explores the role of devotional Buddhist practices in colonial Korea, challenging prevailing narratives that depict the era's Buddhism as defined chiefly by elite-led modernist reforms. Centering on the monk Kim T'aehŭp, it reexamines entrenched binaries in the historiography of Korean Buddhism: modernity versus "superstition," and elite reform versus popular religiosity. After eight years of study in Japan, Kim diverged from his contemporaries who dismissed devotional acts such as chanting Bodhisattvas' names as incompatible with modern Buddhism. Instead, he promoted Avalokiteśvara devotion, emphasizing the practical efficacy of chanting for recovery from illness and protection from misfortune. Although deeply informed by Western philosophy and modern Buddhist Studies encountered in Japan, Kim did not pursue doctrinal speculation or institutional reform upon his return. Rather, he dedicated himself to spreading Avalokiteśvara devotion as an embodied, accessible practice that reached tens of thousands of lay followers throughout and beyond colonial Korea. Far from retreating from modernity, Kim's faith-centered orientation represents an alternative Buddhist modernism—one grounded in emotion, lived experience, and attentiveness to lay religious needs. By foregrounding such devotional practices, this paper broadens our understanding of colonial Korean Buddhism as a field shaped not only by reformist elites but also by the everyday faith of ordinary practitioners.

3) (i-231) Yuen Nga Iris Li, University of Arizona

Trading Salvation: Commerce, Pilgrimage, and the Politics of Recognition in Song China

Across East Asia's maritime world, Buddhist pilgrimage and commerce often intersected, forming transregional networks that challenged state authority and redefined legitimacy. While Benjamin Elman identifies the Civil Service Examination as the primary mechanism reproducing elite hierarchies in imperial China, merchants and monks forged alternative routes to recognition outside bureaucratic structures. Building on Edwin O. Reischauer and Robert Borgen's studies of Sino-Japanese monastic travel, this paper examines the collaboration between the Japanese pilgrim Jōjin—who journeyed to China in 1072 without court sanction—and his Chinese *tongshi* (secretary) Chen Yong, as recorded in the *San Tendai Godaisan ki*. Jōjin's reliance on merchant networks for travel and support created an unexpected channel of advancement for Chen Yong, whose linguistic skill and indispensable service earned him imperial recognition from Emperor Shenzong, including an audience and official gifts. His case illustrates how alternative forms of expertise and cross-cultural mobility could briefly subvert the examination system's monopoly on elite status. By foregrounding this merchant-monk nexus, the paper situates the case of Jōjin and Chen Yong within broader patterns of maritime interaction and Buddhist exchange, arguing that such unofficial collaborations sustained religious and commercial connectivity while reshaping how legitimacy, merit, and prestige circulated across the East Asian world.

4) (p-004) Zhemeng Xu, KU Leuven

The Many Faces of the "bishou": Chinese Literati and the Collaborative Production of Christian Texts in Late Ming–Early Qing China

The arrival of European missionaries in China in 1583 initiated an era of cultural encounter characterized by translation practices leading to major changes in local intellectual and religious landscapes. Supported by China's advanced printing technology and vibrant print culture, a vast corpus of works emerged that rendered European scholarly, scientific, and religious knowledge into classical Chinese, and occasionally Manchu, from the late sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries. Rather than direct, single-author translation, this process unfolded through complex, collaborative mediation. Missionaries first mentally interpreted Latin sources into their native European languages, conveyed them orally in Chinese, and Chinese literati then wrote them down, adapting them in literary form. Examining over two hundred Chinese Christian translations, this study identifies more than fifty titles assigned to Chinese literati, grouped into five categories. While these roles can be subsumed under *bishou*, the once-prominent role in Buddhist translation, which covered a wide range of post-bilingual translation tasks in the early phase, the 16th–18th centuries saw a proliferation of diverse, sometimes genre-specific titles, especially in astronomy and calendrical works. By examining these roles, this paper reinterprets the Chinese Christian translation enterprise as a site of religious and intellectual negotiation, with non-negligible agency performed by Chinese actors.

[Block 2] 11:30–13:00

Session Code: 2-A**Room:** 2-402**Panel Code:** p-005**Title:** Kites, Papier-mâché Tigers, and Kimono Dolls: When Childhood and Rituals Intersect with Japanese Crafts and Material Culture**Abstract:**

The experience of Japanese childhood has been thoroughly documented and discussed in academic literature. The way children have been raised, dressed, fed, and socialized over the past centuries is a rich terrain, connected to issues of parenting and religious customs. In parallel, toys, which are the very objects most immediately accessible to children, have been exhibited regularly, captivating visitors with their visual and haptic qualities, while also emphasizing skillful and ingenious craftsmanship. Creating a bridge between these two perspectives, this panel considers three specific examples: kites, papier mâché tigers, and kimono paper dolls. Detailing the context in which children and sometimes parents interact with these objects, each paper will articulate how toys serve as both physical and spiritual playthings, as well as embodiments of familial and community beliefs. Through the use of concrete examples from private and museum collections, as well as field observations, this panel also aims to discuss issues of transmission, change, preservation, representation, and mediatization in Japanese material culture.

Organizer: Cecile Laly, Fukuoka Women's University**Chair:** Timon Screech, International Research Center for Japanese Studies**Discussant:** Timon Screech, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

- 1) Cecile Laly, Fukuoka Women's University

Kites & Kite-Flying at Hamamatsu: Entertainment or Ritual Performance?

Since their peak of popularity in the Edo period, kites have been used in various places in Japan as playthings for children and adults alike, as well as symbolic objects that celebrate good health, harvest, or catch. A representative case is Hamamatsu, where kites are related to both entertainment and rituals. Fierce kite battles are held on 3–5 May each year on the Nakatajima battlefield near the Enshū Sea (Pacific Ocean), and these have made the Hamamatsu Matsuri famous worldwide. Additionally, throughout April and May, each city ward hosts semi-private kite-related activities and rituals in celebration of the birth of local children. These distinctive activities are intertwined, and in fact, to the untrained eye, the difference between the kites made for battle and those made for celebration is hard to see. Only a few design details distinguish them. After carefully assessing the characteristics of both kite types, this presentation examines how and when kite-related entertainment events and kite-related rituals are actually performed. It also discusses the surprising permeability that exists between those two equally important components of the Hamamatsu Matsuri today.

- 2) Laura Ariès, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies

“Hariko no tora”: Plaything, Rituals and Transmission

Hariko no tora (papier-mâché tigers) emerged and developed during the Edo period (1603–1867), as examples of *kyōdo gangu*, or Japanese folk toys. They reveal the lasting connection between popular craftsmanship, belief systems, and social practice. The appearance of *hariko no tora* matches many characteristics expected in a toy; they come in bright colors, with a bobbing head, or are mounted on wheels. Yet they also fulfill a protective and ritualistic function. For instance, in Kagawa Prefecture, *hariko no tora* are traditionally given as a gift to wish for the healthy growth of a baby boy. They also appear among decorations used during festivals dedicated to children, namely *Tango no sekku* in May, and *Hassaku* in August. The papier-mâché tiger's presence and significance can be paralleled with equivalents distributed along with medicine at the Sukunahikona Shrine during the 1822 cholera epidemic in Osaka, to ward off the illness. Nowadays, these papier-mâché tigers are recognized as a traditional craft at the prefectural level (*Kagawa-ken dentōteki kōgeihin*), and workshops in Kagawa continue to produce them actively. Based on fieldwork and interviews conducted with local artisans, this study highlights the enduring continuity of beliefs and practices that have been inherited from the Edo period.

3) Lucile Druet, Kansai Gaidai University

Cut, Paste, Create: Playing with “kisekae-e” Paper Dolls and their Kimono

Since the early Edo period, the kimono has been understood as a decorative surface, with deep connections to Japanese life. In particular, its motifs reflect a taste for a specific season, poem, novel, or auspicious symbol. Seen in its entirety, the kimono is a form of dress that signals the wearer’s identity, while maintaining a high level of interchangeability. This pivotal aspect in the kimono design and practice is evident in *kisekae-e* paper dolls. Using techniques that stem from popular Edo-Period prints, *kisekae-e* plates display an array of figures that children can cut, arrange, and paste. A large majority of them include different outfits and silhouettes, giving dolls dressed formally or casually, creating cute couples or lavish stand-alone figures. Employing plates from private, library, and museum collections, this presentation aims to contour the *kisekae-e* iconography to visualize the change in kimono culture over the past two centuries, and to interrogate its impact on children’s manners and performative presence in society. It starts with examples that show kabuki-like figures and anthropomorphized animals (cats, birds), infusing humor and fantasy. It finishes in the late 20th century, with demure young girls, princesses shaped by good manners, or ideal brides emulating the now-retired Empress Emerita Michiko. Ultimately, this presentation also argues that paper dolls are objects that help comprehend the intersection between visual and material culture.

Session Code: 2-B

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-016

Title: Imagining Empire, Constructing Asia: Knowledge and Authority in Japanese Thought from Prewar to Postwar

Abstract:

This panel explores the intellectual currents that shaped Japan’s imperial and post-imperial engagement with Asia, tracing the evolution of knowledge production and governance, discussing how Japan’s imperial imagination was shaped. Each presentation examines how Japanese intellectuals from different backgrounds engaged with the idea of empire and the governance of “other” Asian societies, offering insights into the continuities and transformations in their intellectual frameworks. The first contribution examines Utsunomiya Tarō and his vision for Korean colonial governance after the 1919 March First Movement, revealing how his interpretation of early Pan-Asianist thought shaped Japan’s post-1919 assimilation policies. The second presentation turns to Yamaguchi Jūji, who provided an opportunity to understand the contradictory ideology of “ethnic harmony” and technological optimism. Focusing on the Japanese social sciences in the early 20th century, the third contribution analyzes how scholars sought to adapt Western frameworks to Asian societies, constructing a distinctly Japanese imperial epistemology. The final presentation traces the intellectual genealogy of Yanaihara Tadao and Ishibashi Tanzan, showing how their critiques of the empire informed their postwar engagement with development aid, underscoring the connections between colonial governance and postwar liberal thought.

Organizer: Juljan Biontino, Chiba University

Chair: Torsten Weber, Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien Tokyo

Discussant: Torsten Weber, Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien Tokyo

1) Juljan Biontino, Chiba University

General Utsunomiya Tarō (1861–1922) as a Military Intellectual

This talk examines Utsunomiya Tarō’s (1861–1922) thoughts in the aftermath of the March First Movement of 1919 in Korea and tries to give an insight into his perceptions regarding Korea and its role as a Japanese colony. Utsunomiya was General-in-Command of the Japanese troops in Korea from 1918 to 1921. Utsunomiya saw the movement as assemblies of the “blind masses” that were following only a few leaders. Thus, in subduing the movement, he aimed to limit the use of violence but nevertheless brutalization escalated, as can be seen in the Cheamni Massacre of 15 April 1919. Utsunomiya, hailing from Saga Prefecture, always fought for recognition within the dominating Chōshū faction. Working against Yamagata Aritomo, he tried to establish his own faction and wrote several articles and memoranda about his views on Korea, the Koreans, and how Japanese assimilation policy should progress. Introducing and analyzing these materials, it will be shown that his ideas were examples of early Pan-Asianist thinking that were dismissed during his time albeit shaping conceptions in the so-called cultural policy in Korea after 1919. These ideas became crucial in the war years, when a total approach to assimilation was deemed necessary by the authorities.

2) Ulrich Flick, Tohoku Gakuin University

The Colony as Utopia: An Analysis of Yamaguchi Jūji's Essay "30nen-go no Man-Mō" of 1927

The ideology of “ethnic harmony” played a pivotal role in the response of the Japanese population in Manchuria to the crisis following the coming to power of Zhang Xueliang in 1928. It was later integrated in the conception of the puppet state of Manchukuo as state doctrine. An exceptionally early example of its ideas is given by Yamaguchi Jūji. He played an integral role in the Manshū Seinen Renmei (Manchurian Young Men’s League) and has to be considered an important protagonist of the ideology of “ethnic harmony.” His essay *30nen-go no Man-Mō* of 1927 displays a highly multifaceted content. Besides approaching contemporary realities of Manchuria and Japan as well as criticism of Japanese politics, elements of technological-economic as well as social-political utopianism on a local, a regional, or a global level form important parts, the utopia conceived by Yamaguchi, however, not being without contradictions. Autobiographical texts from the postwar period lead to the conclusion that experiences in colonial Korea and Manchuria were an important factor for his designs, however especially its contradictions reveal its formation within the conflicting fields of Japanese imperialism and nationalism, Yamaguchi’s understanding of history as well as of China, opposition to Japanese colonial policies, and socialist thought, in the meantime granting insights into living circumstances of the colonial environment.

3) Yufei Zhou, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

The Science of Oriental Society: Japanese Social Sciences and the Making of Knowledge on Asian Societies in the Prewar and Wartime Periods

In the first half of the twentieth century, Japan’s expansion of colonies and occupied territories across Asia drove a growing intellectual concern with understanding and governing these diverse regions. Alongside this imperial expansion, the social sciences worldwide underwent rapid institutional growth and theoretical transformation. Within Japan’s imperial context these institutions conducted empirical investigations, becoming arenas for theoretical reflection on the applicability of Western social science frameworks to non-Western contexts. Against this background, Japanese social scientists increasingly grappled with a fundamental question: how could theories developed from Western historical experience be adapted to explain Asian societies, and ultimately, how could a distinctive social science for non-Western societies be constructed? This presentation explores how Japanese scholars sought to interpret “Oriental” societies through the three interrelated frameworks of economic developmentalism, social transformation theory and political structuralism. By analyzing these theoretical approaches, the presentation reveals how Japan’s social science discourse on Asia took shape—an intellectual formation that not only reflected imperial ambitions but also continued to shape Japan’s perception of Asia in the postwar era.

4) Dolf Neuhaus, Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien Tokyo

The Essence of Japanese Development Aid? Genealogies of Liberal Thought from Empire to Postwar

This presentation analyzes the relationship between Japanese liberal intellectuals and Asia from prewar through early postwar. In particular, it explores how the ideas of Yanaihara Tadao and Ishibashi Tanzan, whose ideas have been cited by contemporary commentators as representing the very “essence” (*shisō no shinzui*) of modern Japanese development aid, were translated from prewar conceptions like “little Japanism” (*shō-Nihonshugi*) into the postwar period. Both men engaged with colonial actors during the prewar and wartime periods while simultaneously critiquing Japanese imperialism. Their ideas evolved significantly into the postwar period, raising questions about whether their influence on development thinking was direct or selectively appropriated. After the war, Ishibashi served as Finance Minister from 1946 to 1947 and later, from late 1956 to early 1957, as Prime Minister of Japan, giving him brief policy influence. Subsequently, he continued his engagement with the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union, maintaining dialogue across Cold War divides as a public advocate for Asian engagement. Yanaihara was appointed President of the University of Tokyo in 1951, from which he shaped elite thinking on Japan’s postwar role. Drawing on their collected works and other materials, continuities and ruptures in Japan’s postwar development thinking are identified and examined, outlining how these intellectuals engaged with Western institutions and Cold War constraints.

Session Code: 2-C

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-056

Title: Hearing the Environment: Natural Soundscapes in Japanese Music and Literature

Abstract:

This panel explores how, in Japan, sound mediates relationships between humans and the nonhuman—whether through the cries of animals and insects or even the sound of sand. These papers examine sounds of nature in traditional and modern Japanese music and writing, highlighting the connections between their representations and shedding light on modes of listening and expression. The juxtaposition of these three papers illuminates the intersections of soundscapes, emotion, and human interaction with the natural world, calling into question the boundaries between human and nonhuman. Paper One, *The Song of Love: Music and Nature as Tools of Courtship in Tale of Genji* examines the “musical courtship” trope in *Tale of Genji*, arguing that music and nature are intertwined with romantic liaisons throughout the *monogatari*. Paper Two, *Listening for Geological Life* examines how Miwa Shigeo’s use of auditory perception in his writing gave voice to *nakisuna* (musical sand), allowing the latent political subjectivity of the sand to become tangible and audible to the public and therefore become a useful tool in environmental activism. Paper Three, *Every Living Creature Sings its Song* focuses on the aural nature of *waka*, arguing that the genre incorporates the cries of animals and insects to blur the boundaries between human song and the voices of nature. Together these papers illuminate how nonhuman sounds are not merely imitated but serve as tools for expression, communication, and connection.

Organizer: Katherine Whatley, Stanford University

Chair: Gerald Groemer, Hosei University

- 1) Christopher Ellars, Independent Scholar

The Song of Love: Music and Nature as Tools of Courtship in “Tale of Genji”

Throughout *Tale of Genji* there are detailed descriptions of music and musical instruments being performed by many characters in breathtakingly beautiful natural settings, and the beauty of both music and nature is cited in several poems and conversations shared between lovers, friends, and family members alike. Not only are the act of music and the elements of nature used as catalysts of social interaction—indeed, Murasaki Shikibu seems to weave aesthetics of music and nature throughout her opus through the use of poetic tropes in an effort to intensify the relationships between her characters, and further progress the overall plot. The specific trope this paper identifies is “musical courtship,” in which two characters fall madly in love with each other through the intermingling of musical and natural forces. Through her use of “musical courtship” as a trope, Murasaki Shikibu is able to convey to the reader important information about the characters involved, the situation they are in, and even their ultimate fate. This paper analyses three instances of “musical courtship,” and how the romantic liaisons of each instance are expanded upon through the combined aesthetic expressions of music and nature.

- 2) Yamada Keisuke, University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies

Listening for Geological Life: Musical Sand and Miwa Shigeo’s Sonic Environmentalism

This paper considers how attentive listening can cultivate an ethical and reciprocal relationship between humans and geological matter. It specifically focuses on the case of individuals listening to *nakisuna* (musical sand) in contemporary Japan. Although the sound of *nakisuna* is created as people walk on the sand, its continued existence is threatened by coastal destruction and contamination. This paper analyzes *Nakisuna gensō* (The Illusion of Musical Sand, 1982) by Japanese scientist Miwa Shigeo, who devoted his life to protecting *nakisuna* from industrial development. Examining Miwa’s work through vital materialist perspectives, particularly those of Jane Bennett and Bruno Latour, reveals how he blurred normative boundaries between life and nonlife, and between society and nature. Miwa’s sonic environmentalism used auditory means to recognize the musical sand’s inherent vitality and political capacity. By combining acoustical science with animistic thinking, his work made the latent political subjectivity of the sand tangible and audible to a public that was unprepared for less direct environmental appeals. This paper argues that Miwa’s use of auditory perception gave voice to the musical sand, acting as its spokesperson in the politics of nature. His tactic of victimization effectively addressed a key weakness of the early Japanese antinuclear power movement, which historian Simon Avenell has described as “reactive, victim-centered.”

3) Katherine Whatley, Stanford University

Every Living Creature Sings its Song: Nature Sounds and Human Emotion in Early “waka” Poetry

This paper explores the parallels that Heian era *waka* makes between animal and insect sounds and poetry. Focusing on *Kokin wakashū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems), I argue that the aural nature of *waka*, which was often performed aloud, combines with depictions of animal cries to create a soundscape where human poetry and animal voices are juxtaposed and considered in connection with each other. In the preface to *Kokin wakashū*, Ki no Tsurayuki expounds on the connection between poetry, humans and nature: “Hearing the cries of the warbler among the blossoms or the calls of the frog that lives in the waters, how can we doubt that every living creature sings its song?” Playing on the ambiguity of the word *uta* (song or poem) in Japanese, Tsurayuki draws a parallel between poetry of humans, and the song of animals, expressing the aural quality of *waka* often overlooked. The paper also juxtaposes *waka* and *imayō* popular songs in *Ryōjin hishō* (Songs to Make the Dust Dance on the Rafters), such as “Under the young brambles, the weasel plays the flute, the monkey dances, the grasshopper drums to keep time.” This song about animals making music, illuminates the sonic and emotional connection between words, people, and the natural world. This paper shows that in premodern Japan, written and sung words were closely intertwined—and so were the sounds of humans and animals. At the heart of the deeply aural quality of premodern Japanese poetry lies the sound of nature itself.

Session Code: 2-D

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-048

Title: Beyond Linguistic and Cultural Barriers: Language, Translation, and Interpretation

Abstract:

Diplomacy is only possible by transcending the barriers of language and culture. These barriers became especially significant as diplomatic contacts between Western powers and East Asian countries—China, Japan, and Korea—intensified from the mid-nineteenth century onward, when treaty relations were negotiated and concluded. The intercultural exchanges that followed could only be conducted through translation and interpretation across fundamentally different linguistic and cultural systems. This panel examines this linguistic and cultural dimension of Western–Eastern interactions from the late early modern into the modern period. By bringing together case studies from different times and places, it highlights not only the misunderstandings and frictions that frequently arose in the process of negotiation, but also the efforts and practices that emerged in attempts to bridge divides. In doing so, the panel seeks to shed new light on the central but often overlooked role of translation and interpretation in the making of modern international relations.

Organizer: Gong Zhang, China-Korea-Japan Research Center, School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences

Chair: Mariko Fukuoka, National Museum of Japanese History

Discussant: Isami Sawai, Institute of Science Tokyo, Institute for Liberal Arts/Department of Social and Human Sciences, School of Environment and Society

1) Mariko Fukuoka, National Museum of Japanese History

From Chinese to Dutch: The Rise and Transformation of the Diplomatic Lingua Franca in Late Tokugawa Japan, 1853–1868

This paper examines the role of translation in Japan’s diplomacy at the time of its opening to the West. When Commodore Perry’s expedition arrived, neither side had interpreters with sufficient command of English or Japanese, and communication relied on Chinese and Dutch. Perry brought translators of both languages, while the Japanese depended on Confucian scholars of classical Chinese and on Dutch interpreters who had mediated Japan’s limited early modern contacts at Deshima. This dual and indirect translation caused confusion and errors. The Treaty of Kanagawa (1854) was concluded in four versions—Chinese, Dutch, English, and Japanese—without clarity as to which was authoritative. Discrepancies soon created problems when Townsend Harris arrived in 1856. Learning from this failure, the shogunate set aside Chinese in favor of Dutch as the principal diplomatic medium with Western powers. This shift required Western diplomats to find interpreters able to render their languages into Dutch. Some, such as the French, employed missionaries who had learned spoken Japanese in the Ryukyu Kingdom. Dutch nevertheless remained the dominant vehicle of communication, though it gradually lost centrality by the Meiji Restoration (1868). By tracing the rise and decline of Dutch as a diplomatic lingua franca in late Tokugawa Japan, this paper highlights the precarious and contingent nature of linguistic mediation in Japan’s early encounters with the West.

2) Gong Zhang, CCJ-EHESS

Chinese lettrés at the Service of French Diplomats in the 19th Century: Translation Practices and Transnational Networks

This paper examines the practical dimension of diplomatic translation in the French legation and consulates in China in the late 19th century. This presentation brings to light a group of lesser-known actors, the Chinese *lettrés* (or “Chinese writers” in the British legation). These individuals served French diplomats, consuls, military officers, or sinologists as assistant translators, relying on their literary knowledge and mastery of classical Chinese. This talk is organized around three themes: working methods in diplomatic translation; the social background and working conditions of the *lettrés*; and their ties with foreign communities, Chinese authorities, and the local gentry. The study approaches translation and Franco-Chinese diplomatic exchanges through the lens of “transnational networks.” It shows how frontiers blurred in practice, as collaboration with the *lettrés* proved essential, some maintaining close links with the Chinese civil service. It also reflects on the origins of “bipartite” national narratives and the invisibilization of these figures by French interpreter-sinologists. Many *lettrés* were recruited on recommendations from Chinese authorities, and some later joined the civil service. Several held the official status as *shengyuan* or Eight Banner members, and some enjoyed considerable wealth. Case studies highlight the complex power dynamics between intermediaries, Qing authorities, and foreigners.

3) Jungki Cho, Université Paris Cité, China-Korea-Japan Research Center (UMR 8173, CCJ)

The Triangular Network of Cultural Mediation in Franco-Korean Relations at the Turn of the 20th Century

This paper examines the understudied triangular relationship between Maurice Courant, Mgr. Gustave Mutel, and Yi Inyŏng as a case study of cultural brokerage facilitating knowledge transfer in Franco-Korean diplomatic contexts. While French diplomat-sinologue Courant possessed classical Chinese competency, his lack of Korean and brief residence in Korea created dependencies on intermediaries who possessed the sustained linguistic and cultural expertise necessary for his collecting and research activities that continued after his diplomatic reassignment. Through analysis of various sources, this study reconstructs how their collaborative work enabled Courant’s *Bibliographie coréenne* (1894–1901). Mutel, the Vicar Apostolic of Seoul who spent over four decades in Korea, acted as cultural interpreter, providing vernacular Korean knowledge and contextual understanding for Courant’s civilizational studies. Yi Inyŏng, likely trained within missionary circles, served as the crucial mediating figure, translating and interpreting Korean language and cultural contexts. This triangular network demonstrates how cultural mediation operated across multiple registers—linguistic, institutional, and epistemological—to sustain transnational knowledge creation about Korea and shaped how Korean materials were framed for European scholarly consumption, thereby establishing foundational frameworks for the subsequent development of Korean studies in France.

Session Code: 2-E

Room: 2-410

Individual Session 8: Historical Memory, Identity, and Regional Politics

Chair: Klaus Wilhelm Nettmann, Sophia University

1) (i-004) Chenyang Sun, Free University of Berlin

The Legacy of Japanese Imperialism: Historical and Spatial Effects of Korean Migration on Postwar Japanese Politics

This study examines the political consequences of Korean migration to Japan from 1958 to 2015. Rooted in the legacy of Japanese colonial rule over Korea (1910–1945), it analyzes how migration shaped the Zainichi Korean community, whose uncertain legal status and limited occupational opportunities structured their integration and political engagement. The research addresses four questions: To what extent does the Korean-origin population influence political development and party competition? How do pre-1945 regional origins of Korean migrants shape postwar electoral outcomes and party support? What are the differences between the impact of South Korean-origin and North Korean-origin communities? How does the influence of provincial origins vary with local industrial structures, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and public-sector employment? Using a newly compiled panel dataset combining electoral results, demographic statistics, and immigration registries from the National Diet Library, the study applies a fixed effects model to evaluate correlations between migrants’ birthplace conditions, occupational stratification, and electoral outcomes across Japan’s 47 prefectures. Findings show that birthplaces are closely associated with occupational patterns, which correspond to systematic variations

in turnout and party support. The study contributes to understanding how historical migration legacies continue to shape electoral competition in contemporary Japan.

2) (i-359) Shahana Thankachan, Universidad de Navarra

Measuring Normalization: A Multidimensional Approach to Japan's Arms Export Policy

The existing scholarship on Japan's process of security normalization often treats it as a binary—either normalized or not—and focuses mainly on policy change. This paper proposes a multidimensional model to study how security normalization unfolds and is contested, advancing a four-dimensional framework to capture its non-linear and complex character. The policy dimension reflects the formal shifts in strategic documents and legislation; the discursive dimension evaluates how new and controversial policies are framed and legitimized in official rhetoric; the institutional dimension deals with bureaucratic and structural adaptation; and the behavioral dimension assesses Japan's security practices and implementation outcomes. The paper uses the case study of Japan's arms export policy from 2014 to 2025 as the empirical basis for this. It introduces a scoring system to quantify the relative degree of normalization across different dimensions. While there is considerable scholarship that conceptualizes normalization as a process rather than as a final state, reconceptualizing normalization as multidimensional also adds a new analytical layer to it. This study attempts to offer both a nuanced understanding of Japan's security posture and also a conceptual tool that could be replicable for studying normalization processes in other states, combating the tension between normative legacies and strategic adaptation.

3) (i-473) Cristina Vicente Ruiz, Ramon Llull University

The Future of Proactive Pacifism: Japan's Nuclear Policy Between Extended Deterrence and Normative Leadership

Japan's identity as the only state to have suffered atomic bombings amplifies its moral voice on nuclear disarmament, yet its current strategy lies between extended deterrence, great-power rivalry, and normative change. Since 2024, Japan has expanded disarmament diplomacy through the Hiroshima Action Plan and the International Group of Eminent Persons while deepening coordination with the European Union on non-proliferation and export controls. At the same time, it declined to observe the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in March 2025, citing the need to preserve credible U.S. nuclear deterrence, a decision that sharpened domestic and regional debate ahead of the 2026 NPT Review Conference. This paper examines how Japan is recalibrating its policy of proactive pacifism amid great-power rivalry and regional nuclear build-ups. It focuses on two issues: the concrete instruments Japan is prioritizing for NPT 2026, such as risk reduction, export-control intensification, and capacity-building for vulnerable regions; and the impact of its non-attendance at TPNW 2025 on its disarmament credibility among domestic actors and international partners. The paper argues that Japan's "proactive pacifism" approach reflects a shift from moral advocacy to strategic balancing, within a world where nuclear restraint and deterrence coexist under renewed geopolitical pressure.

4) (i-477) Si-seong Lee, Pusan National University

Unequal Remembrances: The Institutional Politics of Postmemory in Contemporary Korea

This study investigates the uneven dynamics of postmemory surrounding major instances of state violence in modern Korean history—the Jeju 4·3 Uprising, the Yeosu-Suncheon Incident, civilian massacres during the Korean War, and the May 18 Gwangju Democratization Movement. While these events share a common history of state-inflicted violence and prolonged silence, their transgenerational memory transmission reveals striking disparities. The May 18 Movement has inspired extensive cultural representation, whereas the Yeosu-Suncheon Incident and wartime massacres remain marginalized in collective memory. Rather than attributing this disparity to public interest alone, this study argues that institutional and legal frameworks—and the circulation of official memory—have decisively shaped postmemory formation. These are conceptualized as “conditions of postmemory production.” Analyzing truth commission reports, commemorative projects, memorial institutions, and cultural texts, the study examines how institutionalized and unofficial memories interact to mediate postmemory reproduction. It contends that postmemory should be understood not as generational affect but as a discursive and institutional construct produced through specific memorialization mechanisms. By foregrounding these conditions, the study reveals how Korea's politics of remembrance have been unevenly structured and how such asymmetries continue shaping future generations' inheritance of the nation's traumatic past.

Session Code: 2-F

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-060

Title: Point of View: Observer, Observed, and Perspective in Japanese Poetry

Abstract:

Although “point of view” is often evoked in film-critical discourse and the discourse of fiction, it is not yet a term widely applied to poetry. This panel seeks to map out a variety of interdisciplinary approaches—cross-cultural, philosophical, environmental—that focus on poems as sites of observation. Loren Waller traces the subtle shifts in perspective as tropes of flowers and birds migrate from the Chinese poetic tradition into the poetics of *Kaifūsō* and *Man'yōshū* in ancient Japan. Nina Farizova turns to *Man'yōshū* as well, exploring a grammatical phenomenon of *miyu*, which deals in phenomenology of “visibility” as something that is inherently objective and subjective at the same time. Mateja Matic continues the comparative theme, introduced by Waller, and takes up the trope of cherry blossoms as transplanted from Japan into the imagination of the 20th-century Serbian poet Miloš Crnjanski. In contrast to the *miyu* poems discussed in Farizova’s paper, seemingly written *en plein air*, Crnjanski’s poems, Matic argues, perform abstract observations divorced from immediately visible reality. Madoka Fujimoto introduces an ecological perspective through the poems of Kazue Shinkawa (1929–2024), in which the point of view descends into the soil toward the roots of plants, thus entangling human and non-human worlds. From the panel papers, “point of view” emerges as a fruitful critical lens for poetry from Japan and beyond.

Organizer: Loren Waller, Surugadai University

Chair: Nina Farizova, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Discussant: Małgorzata Citko-DuPlantis, University of Tennessee

1) Loren Waller, Surugadai University

Reversing the Gaze: Hybrid Spaces and Perspectives in Early Sino-Japanese Poetry

When Japanese poets first began composing poetry about plum blossoms in the early 8th century, they were importing both a species and a trope. Japanese poets planted plums in their gardens and composed poems about them in both Chinese and Japanese, borrowing from the Chinese aesthetic of landscape poetry. Such a layering of contexts produced many points of view intersecting within the space of a single poem. When an *uguisu* (bush warbler) flies up to a flower, there are gazes pointing in multiple directions, particularly when bird and flower are personified. A garden can signify a hybrid of culture and nature, Chinese and Japanese spaces, and the poet’s relationship with a crafted landscape mediated through a poem is likewise fluid. Japanese poets in the *Kaifūsō* and *Man'yōshū* introduced the plum to their poetic repertoire as a novel way to signify spring, along with older Japanese tropes such as the cry of the *uguisu* and the arrival of spring mist (*kasumi*). However, since the Sinitic graph representing an *uguisu* in Japan also represented an oriole in China, the reader’s point of view greatly changes the interpretation of the poem. Moreover, *uguisu* also referred to the warbling white-eye (*mejiro*), since the *uguisu* was usually in the bushes, hidden from view. By focusing on the hybrid signification of the plum, this paper argues that the shifting point of view of this representative trope was a crucial factor contributing to rhetorical and aesthetic poetics in early Japan.

2) Nina Farizova, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Subjective Affirmation of Objective Reality: “Miyu” as an Auxiliary Verb in “Man'yōshū”

There is a small but significant number of poems in *Man'yōshū*—the oldest extant anthology of Japanese poetry, compiled in the 8th century—in which *miyu* (“to be visible”) serves as a kind of auxiliary verb that accompanies another verb or an adjective. While *miyu* in the role of the predicate, with an object expressed by a noun, is common both in the ancient *Man'yōshū* poetry and in the later periods, this auxiliary *miyu* only appears in *Man'yōshū*. This rare grammar construction is hard to directly translate into English; perhaps it amounts to something like “this thing happening is visible (to me).” In this paper, I will closely read several examples of poems that include the auxiliary *miyu* while posing broader literary-philosophical questions about the phenomenology implicit in them. I argue that, by describing the processes of the external world through this construction, the poets achieve both a vivid sense of objective reality that inspires the poem and affirm their own subjectivity as observers. I use Itō Susumu’s work on *miyu* in *Man'yōshū* and Alva Noë’s work on the philosophy of seeing.

3) Mateja Matic, University of Belgrade

The Imagined Cherry Blossom: Miloš Crnjanski's Engagement with a Japanese Poetic Motif

Serbian poet Miloš Crnjanski (1893–1977) is renowned for his sustained engagement with classical Japanese poetry, evident both in his translation work (*Poetry of Old Japan*, 1928) and in his original verse. The cherry blossom motif, frequently appearing in his poetry, has generally been interpreted within the traditional Japanese framework of impermanence and death. While this interpretation remains valid as a broader context, Crnjanski's use of the motif extends beyond it and reveals a polyvalent network of meanings. This paper outlines the various connotations the cherry blossom acquires in Crnjanski's work and identifies specific Japanese poems that likely inspired him. It further examines the most significant transformation the motif undergoes: in Crnjanski's poetry, the cherry blossoms are never observed directly but are only imagined. Since Crnjanski never visited Japan, this act of "imaginary *hanami*" is carried over from his translation practice to poetic creation, rendering the cherry blossoms more of an abstraction than a physical reality. Ultimately, Crnjanski's poetry stands as an instance of literary exchange that involves enrichment and transformation, rather than just imitation or cultural borrowing.

4) Madoka Fujimoto, Aoyama Gakuin University

Thinking from Underground: The Botanical Perspective in Kazue Shinkawa's Poetry

This paper explores how the image of the root forms the core of Kazue Shinkawa's (1929–2024) poetic vision of plants and how her consciousness of the underground shapes the way her poems express life and the world. The most essential part of a plant lies in its roots, which also serves as a key metaphor for rethinking literature and discovering a deeper point of view. Shinkawa perceives plants as the most intimate form of living existence and regards herself as part of that same continuum. Through the gathering and interrelation of all living beings, she envisions a vast world of interconnectedness. A central aspect of this worldview can be described as the underground perspective. Beneath the surface, boundaries between beings dissolve, suggesting a borderless worldview. From this study, it can be concluded that Shinkawa's botanical perspective, grounded in her awareness of the underground, offers valuable insight into imagining a world without boundaries. Through her poetry, we are invited to reconsider the relationship between nature and humanity beyond those boundaries.

Session Code: 2-G

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-101

Title: Feminism Across Borders: Media and Mediation in Modern East Asia

Abstract:

This panel examines how feminist aesthetics in modern East Asia are mediated, translated, and represented across transnational circuits of art and film. Each paper engages a distinct cultural medium to ask how women's voices persist or transform across geography, history, language, ideology, and genre. Together, the panel traces a shared tension between feminist articulation and its containment within national and capitalist frameworks. Dain Lee analyzes the politics of transnational friendship between Kate Millett and Yoko Ono in 1960s Japan, tracing how feminist consciousness generated Fluxus's intermedial practices through intimate collaboration. Yerang Park further examines the political implications of Fluxus score-based practices, focusing on Yoko Ono's scores and performance works in the 1960s that actively engage with gender norms and sexual politics (re)formed by the ways the written instructions mediate the actions. Lastly, Alina Hassan reads the Korean film *Spirits' Homecoming* (2016), directed by Cho Jung-rae, through Jacques Derrida's hauntology to reveal how the ghosts of comfort women mediate colonial trauma through national purification. By situating these case studies within a shared inquiry, the panel claims that portrayals of feminism in East Asian performance, installation, film, and screen practices are not through direct assertion but through circulation, translation, and affective residue. This places feminist expression within East Asia's evolving modern societies spanning six decades of artistic and cinematic production from Cold War cosmopolitanism to the international art movement focusing on alternative forms of art production and distribution. Ultimately, the panel highlights mediation as a creative and political act that operates through cultural media, presenting how women's narratives are continually reimagined and negotiated with its forms and limits.

Organizer: Dain Lee, The University of Tokyo

Chair: Dain Lee, The University of Tokyo

1) Dain Lee, The University of Tokyo

A Dream You Dream Together is Reality: Fluxus, Feminism, and Friendship Between Kate Millett and Yoko Ono in Japan

This study investigates the politics of friendship between the two women artists, Kate Millett and Yoko Ono. Both figures were affiliated with Fluxus, a transnational neo-avant-garde collective in which Japan emerged as a key locus during the 1960s. Meeting first in Tokyo—Millett, newly arrived from New York (1961–63), and Ono, returning from the same city (1962–64)—the two artists developed a personal and artistic solidarity through their shared mentor, exhibitions at the Minami Gallery, and interactions with Fluxus colleagues. Despite their mutual influence and Fluxus’s reputation for its partnerships among friends, scholarship on female members’ relational and collective practices has been minimal due to its primary focus on George Maciunas, the self-proclaimed leader of the group, and other male artists within his close orbit across Germany and the U.S. This study addresses this gap, highlighting how Millett and Ono’s friendship in Japan played a pivotal role in shaping their feminist consciousness in Fluxus’s intermedia practices. To analyze their friendship constructed in a close artistic dialogue, it integrates Marsha Meskimmon’s concept of transnational feminism, Leela Gandhi’s affective, anti-colonial definition of friendship, and Jacques Derrida’s politics of friendship as a critique of institutional violence. Within these frameworks, the study examines their autobiographies, interviews, and personal accounts in Japan and compares their artworks to reveal shared representations of domestic labor, motherhood, and sexual violence. Ultimately, it contributes to reclaiming the overlooked networks of Fluxus women artists across borders and the historiography of feminist art within the context of the Japanese neo-avant-garde.

2) Alina Hassan, Independent Scholar

The Haunting of a Nation: “Spirits’ Homecoming” (2016)

This paper interprets *Spirits’ Homecoming* (2016) through Jacques Derrida’s hauntology, reading the film as a postcolonial negotiation with unresolved violence and spectral nationhood. The comfort women’s return as ghosts—mediated through the ritual of the gut—converts historical trauma into an aesthetic of purification. The film draws on shamanic imagery to reclaim their voices, yet its visual grammar reaffirms nationalist and patriarchal desires for purity. In this way, *Spirits’ Homecoming* enacts what Derrida calls the paradox of the specter: the ghost’s presence both unsettles and preserves the order it haunts. Through postcolonial theory, I argue that its haunting reconfigures colonial violence as a purifying act of national redemption rather than decolonial critique. Recurring ritual motifs perform a cinematic exorcism that “cleanses” history but leaves its structures intact. I further examine the film’s transnational reception to explore how its haunting travels across cultural and ideological boundaries. In South Korea, the film has been read as a work of collective healing that transforms historical grief into a symbolic reclamation of sovereignty. Internationally, the universal dimension of women’s trauma is emphasized, absorbing the comfort women issue into global victimhood. By tracing these divergences, this study shows how *Spirits’ Homecoming*’s haunting operates as an allegory of a nation striving for purity.

3) Yerang Park, The University of British Columbia

Portable Objects in Circulation: Fluxus Historiography and the Construction of the Geographical Center

In the late 1950s and 1960s, Fluxus artists actively produced objects of textual instructions called “event scores” as they experimented with art actions and events. Event scores consist of short and simple instructions for certain actions that can be performed without professionalized training, and they are printed or handwritten on white paper sheets that can be easily reproduced and disseminated. I ask: what could be the political potential of such score-based practices, in particular when the score prompts the precarious play of gender dynamics that may vary by geographical relocations in its enactment? For instance, Yoko Ono’s event score, *Wearing-Out Machine* (1964), instructs: “Ask a man to wear out various things before you use them. Such as: Women, Clothes, Books [. . .].” How does it complicate the existing historical narrative of event scores that conditioned score-based practices within the legacy of the readymade and as prototypes of Conceptual Art (Robinson 2009; Kotz 2010; Harren 2020)? Furthermore, this art historical narrative, centering around George Brecht’s scores, an American artist, tends to nominate specific venues more than the others, neglecting why certain places are considered as the birthplaces of the model works and others are functioning more as the examples marking the group’s internationalism. As a response, this paper examines Yoko Ono’s score-based practices in Japan and New York in juxtaposition with her installation work *Sky Machine* (1961/1966), which presented the vendor disseminating a stack of handwritten cards to visitors in the exhibition space.

Session Code: 2-H

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-117

Title: The Speculative Aesthetics of Global Asia

Abstract:

This panel reimagines the conceptual and aesthetic frameworks that structure Global Asia as a formation that aspires to bring together Asian and Asian American studies. By asking how Cold War epistemologies continue to underwrite transnational turns and diasporic formations, the panel interrogates who and what count as “Asia” within Global Asia. The panel proposes “speculation” as a method for rethinking transnationalism to ask what new imaginaries emerge when we read Global Asia beyond the boundaries of liberalism, realism, and the nation-state. The first paper analyzes Ocean Vuong’s *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous* to consider speculation as a critical practice that unsettles the testimonial and realist imperatives often demanded of Southeast Asian refugee narratives in order to apprehend the absences, hauntings, and unknowabilities that mark the afterlives of war. The second presentation reconceptualizes the Korean diaspora through illiberal horizons of Choi Jin-young’s *To the Warm Horizon*, challenging liberal Cold War paradigms that have shaped knowledge production around migration and diaspora. The third talk, concentrated on Chang-rae Lee’s *On Such a Full Sea* (2014), continues this focus on migration and diaspora via speculative fiction (as utopic/dystopic genre) and speculative method (via China’s economic present and U.S. financial futures).

Organizer: Christine Kim, University of British Columbia

Chair: Christine Kim, University of British Columbia

Discussant: Gökbörü Sarp Tanyildiz, Brock University

1) Vinh Nguyen, University of Waterloo

Speculative Refugee Work in Ocean Vuong’s “On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous”

This talk explores the use of speculation in refugee writing within the context of Southeast Asian diasporas. I trace the strands of speculative thought in the formation of critical refugee studies and show how speculation makes legible the imperial ghosts that haunt global Asia. I am interested in how refugee narratives engage with unknowns and absences, impossible realities or unverifiable truths, how they deal with loss without reverting to more conventional frameworks such as trauma, mourning, or memory. Through a reading of Ocean Vuong’s novel *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, I discuss how speculation breaks away from, or at least challenges, the usual demands of testimony, truth-telling, and realism that circumscribe refugee cultural and literary expression. In doing so, I push back against the imperative that Asian migratory subjects become “memory subjects” in a transnational, global order. I consider “speculative work” against “memory work,” which has significantly shaped migration, refugee, and war studies, and Asian American studies. I suggest that speculation does not simply pick up where memory reaches its limits, but that speculation is a fundamentally necessary practice within the afterlives of war and the conditions of displacement, shaping how we might conceive of “Asia” globally.

2) Christine Kim, University of British Columbia

Illiberal Horizons for Korean Diasporas: Reading for Decolonial Style in Choi Jin-Young’s “To the Warm Horizon”

Popular and scholarly narratives of the global Korean diaspora most often focus on the consequences of the Korean War and the experiences of Korean Americans. These narratives tend to center liberalism as both the driver of migration towards the US and the dominant political culture of Korean American communities, in turn upholding lingering Cold War ideas about a Korea split at the 38th parallel between liberalism and illiberalism. This paper takes a different entry point into conversations by situating Korean diasporas within illiberal horizons. In doing so, it asks how such a shift might change the aesthetic and political terms through which we conceptualize the migratory lifeworlds of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and map global Asia. Given that much of the knowledge produced about the Korean diaspora has been shaped within Cold War frames, the intertwining of ideological assumptions and disciplinary practices has limited our collective vision as contemporary scholars working in Asian and Asian American studies. To work through the problem of how to read global migrations in the shadow of the long Cold War, I examine Choi Jin-Young’s *To the Warm Horizon*, a speculative novel in which groups of Koreans flee to Russia to escape a global virus. I argue that Choi’s imagining of Russia as a utopic destination for its characters’ journeys maps contra a liberal global order, and opens up ways of engaging with global Asia outside of liberalism.

3) Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, University of Texas at Austin

Localized Dystopias and Globalized Utopias: Speculative Method and Conjectural Mapping in Chang-Rae Lee's "On Such a Full Sea"

In a 2014 interview with C.E. Lukather of *The Writing Disorder*, Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award-winning author Chang-rae Lee summarized the transnational genesis of his fifth novel, *On Such a Full Sea*. He envisioned a “social realist novel” about “contemporary China . . . its economic power in the world, its ascendancy” that would include “an American component, though not much of one.” The Korean American writer further asserted his original narrative intent involved focusing on the “factory workers and factory towns where they make everything we use in this country [the United States].” Notwithstanding project enthusiasm and extensive in-country research, Lee struggled to complete “a socialist realist novel” about present-day China. Lee overcame his writer’s block after a train ride from New York to Washington, D.C., where he observed the neglected buildings and rundown neighborhoods outside Baltimore; such devastated landscapes functioned as both site and inspiration for *On Such a Full Sea*. As Lee subsequently clarified, the question that ultimately animated the 2014 novel was a “what if” involving ecological disaster, global migration, post-apocalyptic resettlement, and a new world order that eschewed U.S. supremacy in favor of Chinese hegemony. It is *On Such a Full Sea*’s shift from imagined “social realist novel” to published speculative fiction, from presentist preoccupations about China’s economic predominance to less hopeful projections involving U.S. futures, and from nationally-limited citizens to globally-refracted subjects that serves as a primary foundation for this presentation, which adds “speculatively” to Kuan-Hsing Chen’s contention that the urgent work of decolonization and deimperialization involves an inter-referential critique that privileges “Asia as method.”

Session Code: 2-I

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-071

Title: International Migrations Today and Their Politicized Portraits

Abstract:

Japan has recently become inundated with foreigner-related discussions to the point of hypersensitivity. While the notorious TITP’s eventual replacement by Employment for Skill Development (ESD) has received little attention, the “JICA Africa Hometown” exchange initiative was forced to withdraw after firestorms erupted from social media posts to local government phone calls. This panel aims to shed light on the circumstances of international migrants who are connected with their home and host societies, and to further uncover the substantive issues behind the clamor in the discourse. Qin cuts through scalar and national boundaries to describe the Chinese returnees with ties to Japan and non-coethnic transnational networks in Shanghai that, with prefecture government encouragement, foster cross-border connectivity beyond state-led diplomatic and economic relations. Muranaka’s analysis situates the complex transnational trajectories of Vietnamese IT professionals in Japan in the context of remote work and further explores the seemingly controversial direction of their embedding practice: forward in their business practices but backward in their non-professional lives. Vogt concludes with an in-depth analysis of the rapid politicization of migration issues in Japan’s political discourse. By highlighting a wide range of parties’ framings of migration and unraveling its causes and consequences, her research deepens understanding of the populist mechanism.

Organizer: Sian Qin, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU Munich)

Chair: Yunchen Tian, Kyoto University

Discussant: Yunchen Tian, Kyoto University

1) Sian Qin, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU Munich)

Below the Radar: How Japan Alumni Contribute to Japan/China Relations

Japan’s revitalization strategy through activating international human resources is twofold. To stimulate innovation in tech-intensive industries and address personnel shortages in labor-intensive industries, foreign talent and related issues to attract and retain them in Japan dominate public and political discourse. Foreign returnees, despite being a part of Japan-facilitated “brain circulation” in Asia and serving as the supportive backbone of Japanese businesses’ expansion into Asian markets, remain relatively understudied. The latter group comprises the so-called “Japan alumni” (*kikoku ryūgakusei*), including but not limited to former international students and participants in exchange programs. Once they return home, these “Japan alumni” and their interactions with Japan fade from our view. This paper aims to address this research gap by elaborating

on the activities and role of one “Japan alumnus” in a Prefectural Club’s (*kenjinkai*) Shanghai branch. Through secondary literature analysis, participatory observation, and oral interviews, this paper demonstrates how “Japan alumni” are deeply engaged in the border-crossing strategies and practices led by subnational governments and play roles in transnational networks often defined by coethnicity. It thus explores a new understanding of the organization and membership of transnational networks in migration studies and provides insight into the operationalization of diplomatic practice by subnational governments.

2) Aimi Muranaka, Waseda University

Work at Home? Transnational (Dis)embedding Practices among Vietnamese IT Professionals in Japan

Foreign IT workers are globally demanded human resources, and they are often perceived to be easily mobile due to their seemingly “portable” IT skills to other countries’ labor markets. These IT professionals attract strong government interest, including a restrictive immigration regime in Asia like Japan. These IT professionals are sometimes expected to exercise their home-country specific “skills” in a host society, while continuously implementing remote work, instead of being transnationally mobile. Drawing on the framework of “differentiated embedding” (Ryan 2017), the study investigates the complex transnational trajectories of Vietnamese IT professionals in Japan. Based on qualitative interviews with over 40 Vietnamese IT professionals working in Japan, the findings of this paper are as follows. Vietnamese IT professionals are strongly expected to be assimilated in Japanese working culture, after which they often choose to change jobs and work for a Vietnamese firm in Tokyo. Given the nature of work style in the IT industry, most of the interviewees continue to work partially or fully remotely. They gradually become embedded in their co-ethnic business practices while living in the host society. However, in non-professional life, they are continuously disembedded from the host society. Focusing on the professional, social and family lives of Vietnamese IT professionals, the study argues that they switch between embedding and disembedding processes.

3) Gabriele Vogt, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU Munich)

The Politicization of Migration Issues in Electoral Campaigning in Japan

As a result of policy reforms initiated during the administration of Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, a substantial acceleration and diversification of Japan’s migrant population, which now stands at 3.7 million persons, is under way in post-Covid Japan. The political discourse, however, for many years has disregarded this trend. This changed with the July 2025 Upper House election, when a politicization of migration issues was driven by far-right populist party Sanseitō. Other parties, even the ruling Liberal Democratic Party of Japan followed suit, and, consequently, migration issues for the first time made it onto the list of topics named by voters as decisive for their electoral choice. This stood in stark contrast to the campaign that parties ran only nine months earlier, i. e., ahead of the October 2024 Lower House election. In this presentation I trace the speedy emergence of this politicization through a multi-perspective approach that highlights political parties’ framings of migration as relevant to economic and national security of Japan, and human security of the migrant population. Based on a qualitative analysis of party manifestos, media reports, and expert interviews, I detangle the reasons and consequences of the rapid politicization of migration issues in Japanese politics. This study contributes to our understanding of the mechanisms behind the populist anti-foreigner framing that potentially evokes social and political schism in democracies across the globe.

Session Code: 2-J

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-046

Title: “Numb Agency” and the Legacies of Violence

Abstract:

This panel interrogates the concept of “numb agency”—the illusion of choice produced when structural violence, historical trauma, and entrenched power relations foreclose meaningful self-determination. Across three case studies examining how social structures have been shaped by intersecting forces—Japanese imperialism, patriarchal systems influenced by both Confucian and Western traditions, and transnational ideologies—we explore how bodies become sites where past violence is inscribed into present-day practices, creating “grey zones” where agency appears to exist but remains fundamentally constrained by routinized harm. Agnese Dionisio examines sexual slavery under Japanese imperialism, revealing how patriarchal, classed, and racialized systems created conditions where women perceived their exploitation as ordinary or

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even “chosen.” Mateus Oliveira discusses how the past and present of Ryukyuan (Okinawans) are marked by the ambivalence of the exercise of self-determination and the intersectional forces that drive them to mimic Japan. Misha Cade explores how hegemonic cultural norms such as *wa* (harmony) disrupt the sexual consent negotiation practices of Japanese youth, leading to the routinization of undesired but consented sex. Together, these papers illuminate how historical violence becomes embedded in institutional, cultural, and interpersonal practices, perpetuating marginalization across generations through the reproduction of constrained choice.

Organizer: Agnese Dionisio, Sophia University, ICC

Chair: Agnese Dionisio, Sophia University, ICC

Discussant: Tamy Gushiken, Kanda University of International Studies

1) Agnese Dionisio, Sophia University, ICC

The Ordinary Face of Violence: Sexual Slavery under Japanese Imperialism

This paper examines the sexual violence and sexual slavery committed under Japanese imperialism, focusing on how institutions, power structures, and social norms shaped victimization across different contexts. Rather than constructing a hierarchy of victimhood, I take a comparative approach to explore how layers including gender, class, ethnicity, nationality, or age, intersect to produce different forms of exploitation. Similar institutional logics shaped not only the forms of violence endured but also how victimization was categorized and understood. Central to this analysis is the tension between perceived and constrained agency. Testimonies of Japanese women in “comfort stations” often describe their entry as a decision they made when approached by the military or other intermediaries. This illusion of agency, however, was produced by socialization within patriarchal, classed, and Confucian-inflected norms that had already placed them in vulnerable positions, conditioning them to view such exploitation as expected, even ordinary. I conceptualize this dynamic as a form of “numb agency,” wherein women’s sense of choice was foreclosed in advance by routinized violence and institutional control. By interrogating these “grey zones” of agency, this paper reflects on how past events continue to reverberate today: practices of routinized violence and consent under constraint still shape global patterns of gendered harm, often blurring the lines between choice and coercion.

2) Mateus Oliveira, The University of Tokyo

The Fourth Wave of Global Social Movements and Indigenous Agency in the Ryukyus

This paper examines the nuances of self-determination that Ryukyuan experienced during Japan’s colonization. It also explores how contemporary social movements help overcome a sense of numbed agency among Ryukyuan today. The former Ryukyu Kingdom, historically linked to Japan and China through trade and cultural exchange, was annexed by Japan, becoming Okinawa Prefecture, and later a U.S. military outpost. In the process of cultural assimilation, the Ryukyuan’s position as cultured diplomats was instrumentalized to undermine their people’s agency. This transculturation led some Ryukyuan political elites to mimic themselves to the colonizer. The assimilation process, which included reducing female political power, a ban on indigenous spiritual practices, and language erasure, aimed to homogenize Ryukyuan and create war subjects. A project that connected to the Battle of Okinawa, which resulted in the death of one-third of the population. In this entanglement, Ryukyuan indigenous lands were confiscated under Japanese ordinances and turned over to the USA. The American army occupation brought new forms of violence against Ryukyuan but also sparked new waves of political action connected to decoloniality. Today, we observe the beginnings of a modest yet significant process of decolonial reconciliation between the Ryukyus and Japan.

3) Misha Cade, The University of Tokyo

Going through the Motions: Japanese Youth’s Sexual Consent Negotiations

This presentation discusses the limitations of applying an affirmative consent framework to Japan in the wake of the 2023 penal code amendment that institutionalized sexual consent. Legal provisions have yet to specifically define this concept of *dōi* (consent), which risks implementing an approach that relies on Western moral philosophies such as Kantianism and liberalism. In Japan where social norms such as *wa* (harmony) dictate interpersonal relations, individual agency becomes overpowered by group interests; as such, the “yes means yes” approach to sexual consent that assumes a fully autonomous and self-deterministic subject would be undermined by the social pressure to conform, “numbing” the agency of the individual. As such, this research will then investigate the existing sexual consent negotiation process of Japanese youth to examine how their perceived agency is constrained by social structures that limit their decision-making process. To approach this sensitive and personal topic, this study adopts a gamified approach to the standard semi-structured interview;

a dating simulator was developed as a list of sub-questions for participants to impersonally discuss their ideal consent communication through fictional scenarios. Their responses were carried over into a 45-minute interview to share their experiences with undesired, but consented, sex. This presentation advocates for a version of consent that adapts with the social norms of Japanese culture.

Session Code: 2-K

Room: 2-407

Individual Session 4: Memory, Colonialism, and Postwar Reconciliation

Chair: Ma Christina Cañones, Ateneo de Zamboanga University

1) (i-109) Emily Cole, University of Texas, Tyler

Mapping Statelessness Through Memory and Space in Postwar Texas Internment Camps

In the years following the conclusion of World War Two, hundreds of Latin American Japanese existed in legal limbo: Latin American states had banned their return, while the United States branded them “illegal aliens” after confiscating their documents. Rendered stateless, the internees could not leave without an American sponsor willing to provide work and housing. This paper intervenes in scholarship that has overwhelmingly focused on Japanese American internment by examining the understudied postwar period in which Latin American Japanese experienced prolonged liminality—caught indefinitely between physical borders they could not cross and legal boundaries of nations that refused to claim them. Drawing on oral testimonies and memoirs, this study examines how Japanese Latin American internees negotiated statelessness and resettlement through spatial and narrative strategies. It analyzes three interconnected dimensions: the carceral geography of camps like Crystal City where families remained confined years after the war; the precarious spaces of “freedom” like Seabrook Farms where stateless individuals navigated exploitative labor arrangements; and the narrative spaces constructed through testimony where survivors transformed displacement into belonging. By foregrounding these spatial dimensions, this study shows how storytelling became an act of reclamation—transforming spaces of confinement into sites of continuity, identity, and survival.

2) (i-171) Hao Wen Cheng, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

Crossing Divided Histories: “The Crossing” (2014/15) and the Limits of Reconciliation Across the Taiwan Strait

How can the seemingly competing memories of Japanese colonialism, World War II, and the Chinese Civil War be reconciled in present-day East Asia? *The Crossing* (dir. John Woo), a movie released in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China in 2014/2015, attempts to do so by evoking the forgotten memories about the 1949 sinking of the steamer Taiping—an event long forgotten in postwar historical memories across the Taiwan Strait. This paper argues that *The Crossing* offers a rare cinematic attempt to stitch together disparate memories—of collaboration under Japanese rule, the experiences of Taiwanese Servicemen in the Japanese armed forces, the fractured identities shaped by colonialism and decolonization, and the violent divide between Chinese and Taiwanese resulting from the Chinese Civil War. While the film sought reconciliation through its portrayal of wartime suffering and individual displacement, it ultimately failed to resonate with audiences in China and Taiwan. Drawing on the film, its literary and documentary antecedents, and online discourse and contemporary criticism, this paper explores the reasons for the film’s failure. It contends that *The Crossing* failed not because of cinematic shortcomings, but mainly because it presented a multifaceted interpretation of history that challenged both the dominant narratives of China and Taiwan. In so doing, the film exposed the limits of memory politics and the difficulties of narrating a shared yet contested past in post-Cold War East Asia.

3) (i-182) Tsui Shuen (Chris) Lau, University of Tübingen

Invoking Love for Homeland: The Past, Nostalgia, and Progress in Colonial Taiwan (1930–1945)

This paper examines how the past was deployed in two colonial visions of “homeland” (*kyōdo*) constructed in Taiwan. The first focuses on the Japanese colonial authorities’ efforts to instill a sense of love for the homeland and its past among the colonized. A key example is the ten-day “Taiwan Culture 300-Year Commemoration” event organized by the colonial government in 1930, a rare official occasion featuring the island’s history and culture. The discourse highlighted the progress achieved through Japanese intervention. The second vision explores the perspective of settler and ethnographer Ikeda Toshio (1916–1981) and the magazine *Minzoku Taiwan* (Taiwan Folklore, 1941–1945), which he co-founded. The paper argues that these colonial narratives emerged within a growing emphasis on the concept of “homeland,” which had

been central to the Japanese imagination of nationhood since the Meiji period. Both the state and leading intellectuals linked love for one's homeland to love for the nation. This framework was soon extended to the colonies. However, why, and how did the colonizers utilize history for their empire-building? After all, invoking pride in Taiwan's past risked amplifying local identities. A comparison of the two colonial narratives reveals how the past was deployed to establish discursive power, justify Japan's "civilizing" mission, and construct a sense of cultural intimacy between Japanese and Taiwanese.

4) (i-384) Patrick Vierthaler, Kyoto University

Transitional Justice and Political Polarization in Post-Authoritarian South Korea: The Collaborator Issue and Mass Media Reporting, 1990s–2000s

The establishment of the state-sponsored Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea (TRCK) to shed light on past state-led human rights violations and massacres marked the culmination of a long, bottom-up process of historical fact-finding and transitional justice. At the same time, the TRCK's establishment invigorated a fierce backlash from the ruling elite, which evolved into South Korea's "history wars" over how to evaluate and commemorate the country's history of colonialization, civil war, and autocracy. A key issue in these efforts to "settle past affairs" is that of former pro-Japanese collaborators and their role in the South Korean elite after liberation from colonial rule. Since the 1970s, dissident activists and intellectuals have led fact-finding efforts on the issue. The early 1990s following democratization marked a period in which the collaborator issue became fiercely debated in society. To this day, the stance on collaborators sharply divides conservatives and progressives. While previous studies have analyzed the issue mostly in the long term or through the lens of cultural studies, the present study sets out to shed light on the role of mass media and politics in spreading narratives concerning the collaborator issue in the 1990s–2000s. Through analyzing the debates and developments over state-led fact-finding after democratization, I shed light on how the collaborator issue has deepened rifts between South Korea's two major socio-political camps.

Session Code: 2-L

Room: 2-411

Individual Session 11: The Demonic, the Sacred, and the Imagination of the Other in East Asian Buddhism

Chair: Julie N. Davis, University of Pennsylvania

1) (i-032) Samantha Mosher, University of Arizona

Rending Flesh, Purging Karma: Redemption Through the Wrath of Oni in the "Hell Scrolls"

This paper examines the *Hell Scrolls* and the roles of *oni* in Buddhist Hell. The *Hell Scrolls* are a series of Japanese paintings from the Heian period that portray graphic depictions of the afterlife as envisioned within Buddhist cosmology as well as the fearsome creatures that oversee the torments of the denizens of Hell, *oni*. Often observed as embodiments of fear and punishment, a closer examination reveals that *oni* play a complex role that intertwines with the concept of redemption in Buddhism. While perhaps appearing purely punitive, the wrath of *oni* in the *Hell Scrolls* serves a dual purpose, both as executors of divine, karmic justice and as facilitators of moral purification, rebirth, and eventual enlightenment. Developing upon Michael Foster's, Noriko Reider's, Chihiro Saka's, Miriam Chusid's, and Komatsu Kazuhiko's theories involving *oni* and/or Buddhist Hell imagery in Japan, I investigate the historical and cultural context of *oni* in Japan. I advocate that the reparations *oni* inflict in Hell are not purely punitive but are for the betterment of those entrusted to their iron grip. This examination into the dual roles of *oni* in the *Hell Scrolls* enriches our understanding of Japanese religious and cultural traditions and contributes to broader discussions in religious studies, art history, philosophy, and cultural studies.

2) (i-353) Frida Feng, University of Alberta

Foxes and Femininity: Courtesans, Sentiments, and a Transgression that Lingers

The fox in Japan's religious context has long been closely associated with women in various ways. The fox's gender, and the gender of its transmigrations, is often portrayed as female in Buddhist *setsuwa* literature and folklore. Women were also believed to be more susceptible to fox spirit possession. But why women? What attributes contributed to this specific association, and how did it make the motif of fox women an appealing subject for Buddhist evangelists? This presentation offers a possible explanation for the historical association between fox spirits and women. Examining Buddhist tales and

folklore, I identify shared traits and patterns linking the two during the Heian and Kamakura periods. I argue that a shared fluidity in both foxy spirits and women, particularly those depicted as engaging in sexual relationships with noble men, enabled them to transgress religious, spatial, political, and spiritual boundaries. Buddhist evangelists meticulously exploited such fluidity. The motif of fox women, intertwining sexuality, the sacred, and the profane in medieval Japan, along with the female body's particular association with blood, made them an ideal subject for Buddhist adaptation. By incorporating the symbolic significance of the fox and marginalized women into their teachings, Buddhist evangelists skillfully integrated Buddhism into Japan's indigenous belief system, expanding its reach across communal and spiritual boundaries.

3) (i-523) Xiaowen Zhou, McMaster University

The Demons Within: Reinterpreting the Fifteen Demon-Deities in Late Ming Jiangnan

This paper investigates how Confucian literati reframed Buddhist demonology surrounding the *Dhāraṇī Sūtra for Protecting Children* during the 16th–17th centuries, transforming the cult of Fifteen Demon-Deities (Bāla-grahā) from a ritual centered on supplication to one emphasizing internal moral cultivation. Scholarship on the Bāla-grahās, a group of goddesses who inflict diseases on children but can also be converted to child-protectors, has largely focused on their early transmission across Central and East Asia before the 9th century. However, little attention has been given to the “revival” of the cult among late Ming Jiangnan intellectuals and how they were reimagined, negotiated, and moralized through Neo-Confucian and Chan Buddhist thoughts on the mind (*xin*) and self-cultivation. My research fills the gap by analyzing two key texts by a monk and a scholar-official from the late 16th century. These texts reveal a dramatic shift in elite hermeneutics on the spirits: they were no longer external supernatural threats requiring ritual propitiation, but manifestations and symbols of internal moral failings. I term the shift as “Neo-Demonology,” indicating the way of internalizing Buddhist cosmology within moral interpretation and a commitment to inner cultivation and purification. This case illuminates how local intellectual contexts reshaped religious traditions, showing the porous boundaries between Confucian and Buddhist discourse in late imperial China.

Session Code: 2-M

Room: 2-412

Individual Session 9: Human Security, Migration, and Rights in Asia

Chair: Ilju Kim, Sophia University

1) (i-165) I Younan An (University of Toronto) & Jae Hyun Park (Sogang University)

Who Cares Better for Whom? Examining Attitudes Toward Redistribution in Southeast Asia

Does an individual's perceived social status influence their support for greater government intervention to reduce wealth inequality? We find that the perceived social status of an individual is conditionally correlated with the likelihood of supporting the government's role in reducing the differences between those with high and low income—only when they assess the future social status of their children to be equal or higher than their own. Support for the government's role in reducing inequality decreases substantially when individuals expect a greater drop in their child's social status in the future. We hypothesize that this result is largely driven by the individuals' desire to safeguard their generational social status and their anxiety over socio-economic instability that may erode their families' social status. Thus, redistributive policies must navigate between the need to narrow the inequality gap to enhance the standard of living for all and the social and economically destabilizing effects of redistributive policies that might instigate resistance from domestic social elites. We draw evidence from conducting a cross-sectional data analysis using the Asian Barometer Survey. The findings of this paper fill a critical knowledge gap in understanding how individuals' characteristics may drive their attitudes on redistribution and welfare in Southeast Asia.

2) (i-469) Mi Moe Thuzar, Societas Research Institute, Hashimoto Foundation

Building Resilience through Mobility: Youth Migration, Socio-Economic Experiences, and Settlement Aspirations of Myanmar Migrants in Japan after the 2021 Military Coup

The 2021 military coup in Myanmar has intensified youth migration, with international movement being seen by many as a key survival, opportunity, and security strategy. While Thailand and Malaysia remain the largest destinations for Myanmar migrants, Japan has become a prominent choice due to safer migration channels and comparatively higher wages

and job stability. Based on original data collected between June 2024 and May 2025, this study examines both the determinants of youth migration intention from Myanmar and the socio-economic realities and settlement intentions of Myanmar migrants in Japan. Findings highlight that economic uncertainty, limited employment opportunities, and political instability are significant determinants of migration intention of Myanmar youth. In Japan, while wage expectations are generally fulfilled, there are still problems with employment security, career advancement, social integration, inflationary pressures, and tax burdens. Beyond economic factors, social integration, policy trust, and stable employment have significant impacts on settlement intention. The in-depth interviews also provide insights into migrants' daily socio-economic lives and how they manage to survive life in Japan. The research provides empirical findings from both origin and destination contexts, demonstrating how youth mobility is both a crisis coping mechanism and a resilience source in Japan's economic transitions.

3) **(i-493)** Gerald John Cabanilla Guillermo, University of the Philippines

Envisioning a Rights-First ASEAN: Navigating Human Rights Commitments, Institutional Gaps, and Regional Realities

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has achieved remarkable economic integration yet continues to lag in human rights protection. This chapter examines ASEAN's evolving human rights architecture through the lens of international regime theory. It evaluates ASEAN's regime across five key elements: normative clarity, binding rules, institutional independence, procedural access, and enforcement. Comparative analysis with other regional human rights systems reveals persistent deficits, ambiguous norms, non-binding instruments, weak institutional autonomy, limited civil society engagement, and the absence of enforcement mechanisms. These gaps, rooted in ASEAN's principles of consensus and non-interference, hinder its evolution from a declaratory or promotional regime toward one capable of genuine implementation and accountability. Drawing on empirical studies and regional experiences, the chapter proposes reforms to strengthen ASEAN's rights framework, including clarifying normative commitments, enhancing institutional mandates, expanding procedural access for victims, and introducing optional complaint or peer review mechanisms. It argues that ASEAN's legitimacy and regional resilience depend on embedding human rights at the core of its integration agenda. Transforming symbolic commitments into enforceable guarantees is essential for ASEAN to build a truly people-centered community that balances sovereignty with accountability and the protection of human dignity.

Session Code: 2-N

Room: 2-401

Roundtable 1: International Journal Publishing in Japan

Panelists:

- Matthew D. McMullen, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (Organizer)
- Edward Boyle, International Research Center for Japanese Studies
- Ellen Van Goethem, Kyushu University
- Tristan R. Grunow, Nagoya University
- Sebastian Maslow, The University of Tokyo

This roundtable brings together the editors of major journals in the field of Asian Studies based in Japan to discuss the state and challenges of international journal publishing. These journals represent diverse academic fields in the humanities and social sciences and, thus, cover the disciplines constituting the ASCJ. Each editor will consider how their journal contributes to maintaining high standards of scholarship and offer ideas for improving the quality of research publications. Of the numerous challenges facing the humanities and social sciences today, the one that perhaps directly impacts all of us is the demand to publish, especially in internationally recognized and ranked journals. By providing information about their respective journals, their peer-review process, and their guidelines on submitting manuscripts, the roundtable offers a forum for editors of top journals in the field to share what they are looking for from potential contributors. Attendees will receive insights into what editors are looking to achieve as they seek to carry out their editorial missions. Our goal is to encourage scholars based in Japan and East Asia to publish with international journals. The roundtable also serves as an excellent opportunity for potential authors to get to know the journals and their editors, and to ask any questions they may have about the publishing process.

[Block 3] 13:45–15:15

Session Code: 3-A

Room: 2-402

Panel Code: p-006

Title: Mediating Queer Asia

Abstract:

This panel examines the creative means through which East Asian queer imaginaries destabilize the bifurcations of local/global and queer/normative. The constituting papers collectively explore queerness mediated in film, television, dance, and urban spaces, as well as the transnational circuits traced by queerness in mobility across South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and beyond. In its movement across and interaction with stubborn boundaries, queerness collects fragments of meaning, often collagic, against the architectonic nature of the normative. This panel elaborates on said fluid and fragmentary queer representations that strategically diverge from neoliberal postmodernism to work with and even exceed the symbolic, often using tactics like shorthand iconography, camp production, or even censorship towards more powerful ends. The result of such strategies is a complex landscape of queer subjectivities that will, at times, seek to restitch the paradox it poses against postcolonial nationalism and global capitalism and, at others, revel in that very contradiction. As a whole, this panel imagines alternative methodologies for subject-making that position the queer and the postcolonial in dyadic—rather than dualistic—relation. Asia and the queer then go beyond simplistic oppositional relations to their corresponding antitheses, becoming, in tandem, a communal site for liberatory practice.

Organizer: Raymond Kyooyung Ra, University of Southern California

Chair: Raymond Kyooyung Ra, University of Southern California

Discussant: Ungsan Kim, University of Washington

1) Raymond Kyooyung Ra, University of Southern California

Inconspicuously Fabulous: Representation of Queerness in Absence, a Dialogue with Lip J on Street Woman Fighter

Using oral histories, archival material, and media analysis, this presentation reconstructs the transpacific movement of the queer dance subculture “waacking” into South Korea between the 1970s and contemporary times. I observe a triangulating circuit amongst the U.S., Japan, and South Korea through which the queer dance was inconspicuously transferred in the context of post-WWII geopolitics and media infrastructures. I theorize the “epithytism” of transnational queer culture that is contiguous with histories of imperialism, a reiteration of the more familiar “rhizomatic” crossings proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Framing queerness as vine-like growth that is not parasitic but finds space throughout a structure, obtains water from vapors in the air and nutrients from debris, the epiphyte as a theoretical model speaks on the beauty of queer survival in unanticipated spaces and times. Further, through ethnographic dialogue with Lip J, a South Korean dancer who has achieved celebrity status since her appearance on Mnet’s Street Woman Fighter, I theorize on the censorship and strategic absence of queerness in media narratives that, ironically, facilitated bolder visual representations of queerness on the program. The ethnographic fieldwork will be supplemented by media analysis of performances on SWF that heavily featured queer imageries such as drag, dramatic poses inspired by actresses of Classical Hollywood cinema, disco movements of Soul Train, and more.

2) Caitlyn Chung, University of Southern California

Cinema of Shadows: Korean Cinematic Origins and Queer Transnational Circuits as Depicted in “Phantom” (2023)

In this project, I examine the film *Phantom* as an engagement with (South) Korea’s colonial film origins and its presentation of cinematic transnationalism. Much like how the unearthing of seemingly propagandic colonial-era films in the last decades caused a collapse of the nationalist myth of a tidy binary between that of resistor and collaborator, *Phantom* serves as a powerful critique to the supposed “unity” or “purity” of the origins of Korean cinema in its acknowledgement of the pervasive paranoia of ethnic and colonial transgressions through two popular and (in)famous cinematic figures: Marlene Dietrich and Dracula. Prominently displayed throughout both the filmic narrative and *mise-en-scène*, the imagery of these two transgressive and queer icons functions on both micro- and macro-levels of rebellion. By playing on what Nayoung Aimee Kwon calls a “series of recognition and misrecognition,” the generic conventions of *Phantom* (a spy thriller and

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whodunit mystery) imbue the colonial Korean landscape with the queer, transgressive, and gothic visual cultures of classic Hollywood and European mythos. This in turn allows Phantom to envision two important facets in relation to global circuits and Korean cinematic origins: that one, queer and colonial liberation has, and will continue to, work hand-in-hand; and two, the influence of transnational imagery in determining the ways liberation ideologies and activities took place in and outside the Korean peninsula.

3) Kyle Nowak, New York University

National Imaginaries and the Postcolonial Queer: Gay Space-Making in Tokyo, Seoul, and Taipei

Postwar urban policy of “democratic” East Asia capitals (Seoul, Taipei, and Tokyo) sought the rapid implementation of industrial infrastructure to meet the demands of both the nationalistic and corporate interests of occupational rule. Amongst the chaos of architectural demand, the liminality of *pojangmacha*, Taipei New Park, and *yokochō* respectively arose to temper the almost instantaneous shift in urban topography. The idiosyncratic nature of these communal spaces created fertile ground on which the queer to appropriate and flourish. Exploring the mitigation of both a queer and postcolonial identity in three East Asian cities, this paper hopes to understand the process through which queerness utilizes categories of nation, culture, and nostalgia to suture an otherwise fractured subjectivity. Spatial historiographies, in tandem with media portrayals and ethnographic accounts, reveal the process through which cultural aesthetics serve local queer identity to specify difference from an otherwise amorphous global or Western queer. By utilizing a perceived nationally associated architecture, the East Asian queer can perform an identity local to its geography. This organic form of spatial construction perhaps counters the contemporary neoliberal homogeneity of the global queer, and more generally, the entrepreneurial city. Space making of a community does not require an architect, but a communal understanding of spatial iconography and a willingness to play with it.

Session Code: 3-B

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-053

Title: To Voice a Text: Transnational Cultural and Political Performance in Modern East Asia

Abstract:

How did people communicate ideas across multiple languages, educational backgrounds, and socio-cultural contexts? This panel discusses some instances of transnational and transcultural communication in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century between people from Japan, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Russia. Panelists analyze literary and cultural production in East Asia to show the interactions between both written and oral forms of “text,” as well as their translation and adaptation. Translation in this case is not just between different spoken languages, but between Sinitic and vernacular forms, the written word and the vocal performances, and speaking and singing. Each presenter focuses on different aspects of this question to paint a picture of the varied, persistent transnational flow of ideas to and fro throughout Modern East Asia. They demonstrate that whilst it may be true that English was becoming the lingua franca of international relations, transnational and transcultural cooperation and interaction was carried out through a multiplicity of forms which engendered different modes of interaction. Papers in this panel cover the adaptation of Katiusha’s songs from Tolstoy in China, the oral performance of Literary Sinitic in Japanese colonial Taiwan, and the interplay between written and performed text among revolutionaries in Japan.

Organizer: Joel Littler, The University of Tokyo

Chair: Joel Littler, The University of Tokyo

Discussant: Chiara Comastri, Waseda University

1) Xiaolu Ma, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Voicing A Girl from Russia: Katiusha’s Songs as Chinese “Songs of the Time”

Katiusha, as a literary trope originating from Tolstoy’s *Resurrection*, has journeyed from Russia to Europe and East Asia. At each juncture, Katiusha was transformed and often domesticated to meet specific cultural and temporal expectations. Her metamorphoses were not only reflected in audiovisual media like cinema, but also embodied in musical expressions. The enduring presence of Katiusha throughout the first half of the twentieth century in Chinese theater and cinema attests to the thematic allure this Russian figure held over the Chinese imagination. By tracing the diverse acoustic manifestations of Katiusha’s songs from Shanghai to Hong Kong, this article explores how they embraced different topical themes during

a tumultuous era. Serving the basis for theme songs in romance movies, national defense dramas, and opera films, the versatility of Katusha's songs highlights the multifaceted nature of musical performances in a transcultural context.

2) Fang-Ru Lin, Academia Sinica

Resonance beyond Language: Literary Sinitic and the Writerly Voice

Unlike Barthes and Derrida's discussions of *écriture* as a writerly practice in itself, Literary Sinitic and its derivatives in East Asia reveal the cross-media dynamics of *écriture*: how literary rhythmic patterns infiltrate and shape the sonic medium, rendering oral performance itself a form of writerly performance. This speaks not only to the logic of *écriture*, but to the politics of how written forms discipline and enable vocal expression across linguistic communities. The nineteenth-century Japanese Sinologist Rai San'yō articulated this logic with striking clarity. For Rai, the sonic dimension renders linguistic differentiation negligible; what matters is Literary Sinitic's musicality as a shared performative grammar. This tolerance of inscrutability—the capacity for resonance without comprehension—became foundational to transnational cultural imaginaries in East Asia. In colonial Taiwan, theater observers frequently discussed traditional opera in terms that echo Rai's formulation: dissociating emotional engagement from dialogue comprehension. Particularly Taiwanese local literati insisted on downplaying the masses' linguistic barriers to the performance. What emerges, then, is a tension between a transnational imaginary built on the writerly residue of Literary Sinitic embedded in oral performance and the material realities of linguistic exclusion.

3) Joel Littler, The University of Tokyo

How Do Revolutionaries Talk?: Political Writing and Popular Entertainment as Sites of Intellectual Dialogue

At the turn of the twentieth century in Japan, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Filipino and many other revolutionary activists gathered in Tokyo. This paper discusses the strategies they used exchanging ideas and making themselves understood. This included speaking face-to-face, but also “brush talk” in Literary Sinitic, written translations, preparing written texts in advance of meetings, journals and newspaper articles, books, as well as oral performances such as *naniwabushi*. Chinese, Russian, and English were the main languages being translated into Japanese, but publications like *Revolutionary Review* (*Kakumei hyōron*) were also a nexus for translating things from Japanese to Russian (in Volya) and Chinese (in Min Pao). As such, there was a transnational flow of ideas circulating around and through Japanese, with many origins and destinations. By examining sources left by various activists and intellectuals, this paper looks at how the same ideas were expressed differently in different languages, modes of articulation, and cultural contexts.

Session Code: 3-C

Room: 2-412

Panel Code: p-050

Title: Representations of Aging in Contemporary Asia: Transformations and Adaptations

Abstract:

As Asian societies confront unprecedented demographic aging and depopulation, cultural representations and lived experiences of older adults reveal transformations in intergenerational relations, social structures, and individual agency. Through cultural studies, gerontology, and demography, we explore the portrayal, experience, and adaptation of aging across diverse Asian contexts. Moriguchi and Kennedy use *yōkai* to study the traditional process of aging, while Fondevilla uses anime to provide a contrasting lens, imagining technological solutions to aging anxieties in Japan. Finally, Matanle uses demographic analysis, positioning Japan and Thailand as “Depopulation Vanguard Countries” (DVC) by offering methodological frameworks for understanding the socio-environmental consequences of sustained population decline. Together, these studies illuminate the conflict between traditional and modern views of aging, the influence of representation on social reactions, and the various adaptations emerging in Asian societies to help us better understand how to address the significant issues of this era's demographic shift.

Organizer: Herb L. Fondevilla, Rikkyo University

Chair: Herb L. Fondevilla, Rikkyo University

Discussant: Naomi Furnish Yamada, Rikkyo University

- 1) Olivia Kennedy & Minoru Moriguchi, Nagahama Institute of Bioscience and Technology

Aging in Yōkai Folklore

A recurring theme in Japanese manga and anime is *yōkai*, or monsters, goblins, spirits, supernatural beings, or other mysterious phenomena (Foster 2014, 145). Folklore surrounding aging *yōkai* reflects cultural awareness of liminality and transformation beyond usefulness. Many take human, animal, or object forms, embodying both fear and reverence toward aging. While figures like Tōfukozō and Zashiki-warashi appear youthful, most human-like *yōkai* are elderly. The mountain-dwelling Yamauba, alternately portrayed as a devouring hag or uncanny hermit, reveals anxieties over aging and social isolation. Similarly, Azukiarai—an old man who chants while washing beans by rivers—symbolizes danger and the supernatural. These depictions contrast with Japanese social values that prize respect for elders and intergenerational harmony. Accordingly, other *yōkai* portray aging as empowerment. Yamajijii, an old spirit who protects hunters, and Yaobikuni, an 800-year-old nun offering wisdom from immortality, suggest longevity as a source of insight and power. Transformation also applies to animals and objects. The two-tailed cat Nekomata gains vengeful strength through mistreatment, while tools and household items become *tsukumogami* after long use or neglect. In an age of extended lifespans and limited resources, *yōkai* folklore invites reflection on aging, usefulness, and transformation across human, animal, and material worlds.

- 2) Herb L. Fondevilla, Rikkyo University

Aging, Technology, and Transformation in Anime

As of September 2024, the population of persons older than 65 has soared to 29.3 percent of its population, a record high even for Japan (Chiba, 2024). Following this trend, a small number of anime with protagonists over the age of 30 have gained popularity, possibly reflecting Japan’s concerns about its aging population, the proportion of older people in the workforce, and the percentages of working individuals of all ages. More intriguing is the portrayal of older characters and their integration with technology and change as they embrace their new roles in life and hybrid identities as mechanized human beings and/or alien, monstrous living forms. This presentation focuses on *Imuyashiki: Last Hero*, an anime that depicts a 58-year-old man adjusting to his body and identity while dealing with the reality of disease and aging in a society that celebrates youth, stamina, and strength. Suddenly endowed with a mechanical physique after being hit by an asteroid, the main character undergoes a physical transformation that gives him near-godlike powers. This anime exposes the inherent human need for relevance and acceptance, as well as the ramifications of technology on the limits of the human body.

- 3) Peter Matanle, Shanghai University

A Research Agenda for Global Population Decline: Identifying “Depopulation Vanguard Countries” for East and Southeast Asia

For the first time in history, stable and affluent societies worldwide are having fewer children than needed to sustain their populations, leading to demographic aging and, increasingly, depopulation. By 2050, the UN projects that over 80 countries—mostly in Europe and Asia—will face continuous population decline, with growing effects in other regions as well. Yet, the broader social, economic, and environmental consequences of this global transformation remain poorly understood. Japan, the first country in Asia to experience depopulation (since 2008), offers a crucial model for examining these outcomes. Other East Asian nations, including China and South Korea, are following similar trajectories. With comparable geographies and developmental patterns, Japan can be seen as a “Depopulation Vanguard Country” (DVC)—a forerunner whose experience provides insight into regional futures. This framework may also apply elsewhere, such as Thailand in Southeast Asia, where early signs of depopulation suggest similar regional relevance. Focusing on East and Southeast Asia, this talk proposes a global theory and methodology for identifying DVCs and uses Japan and Thailand as case studies. It concludes by outlining a research agenda for assessing the social and environmental risks, challenges, and opportunities emerging as nations enter an era of sustained population decline.

Session Code: 3-D

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-037

Title: Culinary Crossings: Japan's Food and Commodities Beyond the Archipelago

Abstract:

This panel brings together scholars who study food and commodities of Japan and seeks to trace the transnational histories that bind plantations, bases, and restaurants to cups and plates. We begin with colonial Taiwan's coffee farms: Zoe Ding demonstrates how capitalist ventures in Taiwan's coffee sector from the 1930s brewed a rhetoric of imperial self-sufficiency to secure state backing for capital, labor, and land acquisition. Next, we sit down to the "Western cuisine" in colonial Harbin, a cosmopolitan hub in Manchuria shaped by competing Russian and Japanese imperial infrastructures. Xiuyu Li reveals how the colonial-era, multiethnic fantasy of extravagant dining endured into socialist China, informing visions of affluence materialized in diplomatic banquets. We then walk to postwar Okinawa's A&W, the first American fast-food chain in Japan. Edmund Kennedy charts postwar nutritional scarcity, the arrival of American fast-food chains, and the emergence of hybrid dishes like taco rice to show how Okinawan foodways under occupation both reflected and contested the U.S. military presence. Finally, we visit Okinawan-owned restaurants in Hawai'i. Aya Shirayama depicts how the trajectories of these restaurants have been shaped by enclave economies, transnational linkages, and evolving perceptions of Okinawan identity. Together, these projects illuminate the circuits of production and circulation behind every sip and bite—along with the sorrows and pleasures that accompany them.

Organizer: Zoe Ding, University of Chicago

Chair: Mariko Iijima, Sophia University

Discussant: Mariko Iijima, Sophia University

1) Zoe Ding, University of Chicago

Savoring the Empire: Shibata Bunji's Coffee Enterprise in Colonial Taiwan and Beyond

Coffee cultivation in Taiwan began in the early 1880s as Han Chinese tea merchants sought to diversify their livelihoods, though some efforts were thwarted by fires set by Indigenous communities amid land disputes. Under Japanese colonial rule, the early 1930s saw Taiwan's coffee-growing landscape shift from small-scale plots in Japanese agricultural stations and settler villages to large plantations established by Japanese entrepreneurs. Using archives in Taiwan and Japan, this study examines how such capitalist ventures mobilized the rhetoric of imperial self-sufficiency to secure loans and state backing, and how their acquisition of labor and land both rested upon and entrenched the colonial structures. Focusing on Shibata Bunji's Kimura Coffee Company and its plantations in colonial Taiwan, the study traces how its labor arrangements inherited the demographic and power configurations forged through Han settlement and the coopting of indigenous peoples during Qing expansionism. Reading against the racialized language that cast the Indigenous laborers as inefficient and in need of supervision, I seek to recover their flame—the very fire they set to the coffee trees grown by Han merchants—and to probe the (im)possibility of such recovery when the embers flicker only in the silence of colonial archives. Beyond Taiwan, I also examine Shibata's ever-expanding coffee enterprise across Asia, showing how his commercial network advanced in lockstep with Japan's imperial expansion.

2) Xiuyu Li, University of Chicago

Cuisine and the Politics of Taste in Harbin

In the early twentieth century, Harbin emerged as a cosmopolitan borderland contested by competing imperial projects. As the Japanese and Russian Empires expanded their railway networks, Kitaiskaia Street became the heart of a vibrant international community of diplomats, merchants, tourists, and military officials, who could dine at one of the 27 western-style restaurants on the street by 1937. This paper examines the so-called "Western cuisine" (*xican*) in colonial Harbin. While previous studies have suggested the inaccessibility of European food to most of the city residents, especially under the wartime rationing, this study emphasizes the multi-ethnic and cross-cultural experience of making and consuming western cuisine. By focusing on restaurant histories, this paper shows how restaurant managers catered to the needs of customers with different nationalities and social standings. Drawing on Russian and Chinese cookbooks, I am inspired by Eric Rath's concept of food as fantasy and argue that representations of Russian-influenced extravagant cuisine in Harbin persisted into the socialist period. The representations of refined nutritious *xican*—complete with meticulous tableware arrangement and formal service—shaped people's imagination of affluent life in the Marxist utopia and at diplomatic

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banquets in socialist China. In this way, the politicized “Western cuisine” was further entangled with Harbin’s layered history of imperialism, colonialism, and nationalism.

3) Aya Shirayama, University of Hawai‘i, Manoa

Building Community through Food: The History of Okinawan-Owned Restaurants in Hawai‘i

This presentation traces the historical development of Okinawan immigrant-owned restaurants in Hawai‘i from the early twentieth century to the present. During the *Issei* (first-generation) era in the early 1900s, the restaurant business provided an alternative to plantation labor and became an essential means of economic survival. Okinawan immigrants in Hawai‘i built communities by relying on fellow Okinawans already engaged in the food service industry, supporting one another through financial aid and job referrals. These networks enabled Okinawan-owned restaurants to open one after another, with their number exceeding 300 from the mid-twentieth century to today. Drawing on interviews with restaurant owners and oral histories, this presentation examines how changing historical circumstances in Hawai‘i, Okinawa, and Japan have shaped the development of these restaurants. In the prewar years, Okinawan food was rarely served in Okinawan-owned restaurants, as the older generation preferred to eat it at home, and it was unfamiliar to local customers. However, following the Okinawan cultural boom in Japan in the 2000s, several Okinawan restaurants opened in Hawai‘i, attracting Japanese visitors seeking Okinawan cuisine. The trajectory of Okinawan-owned restaurants in Hawai‘i thus illuminates how ethnic enclave economies, transnational linkages, and changing perceptions of Okinawan identity have influenced the foodscape of Okinawan cuisine in Hawai‘i.

Session Code: 3-E

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-075

Title: 80 Years Later: War Memory and Visual Culture in Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong

Abstract:

The memory of Japan’s wartime aggression and occupation continues to shape the cultural and mnemonic landscape of East Asia today. This panel explores how war and its aftermath have been remembered, contested, and reimagined through visual and cinematic media in Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. Examining how artists, filmmakers, and institutions frame the past, the panel highlights enduring tensions between remembrance and erasure, justice and denial, national identity and transnational memory. Edward Vickers situates Hong Kong’s evolving museum and exhibition culture within the politics of “national security education” and the “mainlandization” of public history. Hyunseon Lee examines how South Korean cinema engages—often unevenly—with the intertwined legacies of colonialism and war, while Ivo Plšek traces shifts in cinematic representations of war criminals and war trials in Japanese films over the past seven decades, revealing a gradual movement toward more simplified and nationalistic modes of remembrance. Together, these papers illuminate how the region’s societies continue to confront, reinterpret, and struggle with the unresolved legacies of the pre-1945 past.

Organizer: Ivo Plšek, Uppsala University

Chair: Ivo Plšek, Uppsala University

Discussant: Sven Saaler, Sophia University

1) Edward Vickers, Kyushu University

Securitizing Memory in Hong Kong: Public History and the 80th Anniversary of World War II

Much has changed in Hong Kong—and China as a whole—since the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II in 2015. This paper explores how the 80th anniversary was publicly commemorated in 2025, focusing primarily on museums and exhibitions. Comparisons are drawn both with earlier public narratives of war and occupation in Hong Kong, and with the role of stories of the Patriotic War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in patriotic education on the Chinese mainland. Recent changes in Hong Kong are explained with reference to the local ramping up of “National Education” and “National Security Education” since 2020. It is argued that, whereas previously memories of the war and occupation tended to be rather marginalized in local museums and textbooks (for reasons that will be discussed), the post-2020 intensification of Hong Kong’s “mainlandization” has meant growing convergence of the narratives deployed to reinforce consciousness of a monolithic, homogenizing “Chineseness.”

2) Hyunseon Lee, SOAS, University of London

Negotiating Postwar Memory in South Korean Cinema: Korean and Asia-Pacific Wars

Over seven decades after the Asia-Pacific War (1937–1945), its memory and the trauma of its victims remain deeply contested across Northeast Asia. While Japanese cinema has often portrayed the war as a distant national tragedy, recent works such as Miki Dezaki’s *Shusenjo* (2018) confront the unresolved moral and political legacies of wartime violence, including the “comfort women” issue and the resurgence of right-wing nationalism. In contrast, South Korean cinema has long centered on the Korean War (1950–1953), with blockbusters such as Kang Je-kyu’s *Taegukgi: The Brotherhood of War* (2004) achieving major domestic and international success. Yet films engaging with the Asia-Pacific War and Japan’s colonial past—most notably Kang’s *My Way* (2014)—have struggled commercially. This disparity raises questions about why the colonial period and the Asia-Pacific War have remained less compelling to Korean audiences and filmmakers. This presentation examines these discrepancies by comparing *Taegukgi* and *My Way*, exploring how Kang’s representations of war negotiate themes of nationalism, reconciliation, and postcolonial identity. By situating these films within broader debates on postwar remembrance in Japan, Korea, and the wider Northeast Asian region, the paper argues that Kang’s cinematic imagination reveals the uneven ways in which South Korean cinema confronts the intertwined legacies of colonialism, war, and historical responsibility.

3) Ivo Plšek, Uppsala University

Screening Justice: Representations of War Criminals and War Trials in Japanese Postwar Cinema

This study traces how Japanese cinema has represented war crimes and war criminals from the early 1950s to the present, examining 27 works—including feature films, television dramas, and documentaries—that directly engage with questions of war criminality and postwar justice. Adopting a longitudinal approach, it maps how portrayals of Class A and B/C war criminals and the tribunals that judged them have evolved over seven decades, and how these depictions intersect with Japan’s shifting narratives of postwar memory. Rather than concentrating on individual films or isolated decades, the analysis identifies enduring thematic patterns and silences: the near-exclusive spatial framing of stories within Japan (typically Tokyo or Yokohama); the absence of colonial subjects such as Korean and Taiwanese B/C-class war criminals; the recurring emphasis on personal innocence and tragic circumstance; and the long disappearance of the topic from mainstream cinema during the mid-postwar decades. From the 1990s onward, war-criminal themes reemerged in historical dramas but became less reflective—shifting from realism toward melodramatic and nationalistic framings that displaced moral responsibility onto the United States or abstract notions of “war itself.” By tracing these evolving cinematic tropes, the study illuminates how Japanese cinema has negotiated questions of guilt, justice, and humanity, and how postwar film has mirrored the nation’s struggle to reconcile remembrance with denial.

Session Code: 3-F

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-033

Title: Minor Literature and Linguistic Negotiation in the Reimagining of Japanese Literature

Abstract:

This panel explores Japanese literature through the lens of minor literature, foregrounding the friction between linguistic marginality, colonial hierarchies, and aesthetic creation. The papers ask how language becomes a space of resistance and reinvention within Japanese colonial and postcolonial society. Joshua Solomon examines Japanese-language texts from Manchuria, reading their shifting registers and local inflections as negotiations with colonial hierarchies and linguistic power. Eunae Kim analyzes the Okinawan theater group Sōzō, whose multilingual performances in Japanese and Uchina-guchi turn the stage into a site of resistance and postcolonial expression, as minor literature becomes spoken and embodied. Kathryn Tanaka discusses Esperanto in sanatoria for Hansen’s disease, tracing how its artificial internationalism destabilized national and cultural identity and enabled alternative forms of cosmopolitanism within medical quarantine. Irina Holca, as discussant, connects these topics to her research on Arai Takako’s poetic experiments with real and imaginary dialects. Together, the papers show how minor languages, whether real, invented, or imposed by colonial regimes, expose the fault lines of “Japanese” literature as a homogenizing project, revealing language as a tool of colonial negotiation and reinvention.

Organizer: Kathryn M. Tanaka, University of Hyogo

Chair: Irina Holca, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Discussant: Irina Holca, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

1) Joshua Solomon, Hirosaki University

Linguistic Plurality and Japanese Manchurian Literature

The Japanese satellite state of Manchukuo was united, in theory, under the banner of *gozoku kyōwa*, or “harmony among the five ethnicities.” Unity of the Japanese, Han Chinese, Manchu, Korean (Chōsen), and Mongolian peoples was touted by the Concordia Association (Kyōwakai) as the foundation of a new pan-Asian order. This story, written onto the palimpsest of Manchuria even before Manchukuo’s 1932 founding, reimagined the region in the image of the Japanese empire. Rewriting was conducted in institutional and cultural spheres, ranging from the expressly political Concordia Association to the ostensibly apolitical realm of popular entertainment. Indeed, serious attempts to delineate a Japanese-language “continental literature” distinct from “Japanese literature” can be traced at least to the 1924 founding of the poetry journal *A* (as in “Asia”) in Dalian, Manchuria. Later works in the region often centered on ethnicity in shaping what became known as “Manchurian literature” (*Manshū bungaku*). Here, ethnicity was inextricably bound to language. This paper analyzes how literary works written in and about Manchuria for Japanese audiences deployed minority language. It focuses on two complimentary techniques: the inclusion and nativizing of non-Japanese words, and the depiction of non-Japanese speech. I argue that these techniques participate in a form of pedagogical poesis, guiding the formation of Manchuria and Manchukuo as an object of empire in the imaginations of the readers.

2) Eunae Kim, International Peace Research Institute, Meiji Gakuen University

The Social Practice of Sōzō Theatre in Okinawa: Critical Expression through Language and Performance

Sōzō is an amateur theater group with a history spanning more than sixty years, an achievement rare in both Okinawa and Japan. The members’ lived experiences have served as a source of critical creativity within the group. Through its productions, Sōzō has offered social critiques that could not be openly expressed during the period when Okinawa’s “reversion” to Japan dominated local social movements. Despite the limitations and contradictions inherent in their productions, Sōzō has always taken a critical stance toward the relationship between Japan and Okinawa, posing questions about power, representation, and history from the perspective of Koza and its surrounding areas complex social experiences. In the 1960s, Sōzō performed plays in refined Japanese, which under U.S. military occupation carried subtle meanings of resistance. After reversion, their production *Humanity Pavilion* addressed linguistic challenges faced by Okinawan society by incorporating Japanese, Uchina-guchi, and Uchinaa-Yamato-guchi. Recent works, including *The Spring of the Tanme*, also integrate Uchina-guchi. Sōzō provides Japanese subtitles, which most audiences rely on to follow performances. While Uchina-guchi plays are common locally, combining it with Japanese subtitles is rare. Sōzō also integrates traditional dance and music. This presentation highlights Sōzō’s contributions to Okinawa social movements and situates the group within the historical and social landscape of contemporary Okinawa.

3) Kathryn M. Tanaka, University of Hyogo

Esperanto and the Politics of Language in a Japanese Leprosy Sanatorium

In 1920s Japan, there was a surge of interest in Esperanto as a tool for international communication. While research has focused on its political and popular uses, its role in medicine remains unexplored. Medical journals published articles in or about Esperanto, and physicians including prominent leprologists Mitsuda Kensuke (1876–1964) and Hayashi Fumio (1900–1947) promoted it as a medium for global medical discourse. Within this context, an enthusiastic group led by doctors and joined by up to fifty resident patients at Tokyo’s Zensei Hospital, a medical quarantine facility for Hansen’s disease, embraced Esperanto. Between 1929 and 1935, members of the Zensei Esperanto Club contributed to the institution’s magazine, *Yamazakura*, publishing translations, poetry, short prose, and correspondence with Esperantists in other sanatoria. They also taught Esperanto in Zensei’s elementary school, reflecting the commitment of both doctors and residents. For these writers, Esperanto connected them to communities beyond the sanatorium and cultivated solidarity, while references to Esperanto in Japanese writing signaled cosmopolitanism and claimed cultural capital from within a marginalized medical space. In the writings of the Zensei Esperanto Club, both in Esperanto and Japanese, language and power intersected, transforming linguistic experimentation into a site of intellectual engagement and a tool for navigating social status and global connections from within confinement.

Session Code: 3-G (changed to 5-M)

! **MOVED TO SUNDAY MORNING
BLOCK 5 (10:00–11:30), ROOM 2-411**

Panel Code: p-022

Title: Reimagining Nō Theatre: Tradition, Modernity, and the Multiplicity of Identity

Abstract:

Nō theater is often regarded as a faithfully preserved Japanese traditional art dating back to Zeami's time (1363–1443). This panel challenges such a view by exploring key historical moments in which Nō has been imagined, constructed, and reconstructed to express diverse and sometimes conflicting identities. We investigate how this fluid theater form has been shaped by the ideals and sociological needs of its interpreters, serving as a dynamic vehicle for national, communal, and class self-fashioning across centuries. Francesca Lerz analyses Zeami's treatises to reveal how religious practices of visualization and ritual embodiment inform his pedagogical framework. Through concepts such as *hana* and *yūgen*, she reveals the dynamic, cross-cultural basis of Nō aesthetics. Alberto Zizza demonstrates how Haga Yaichi, architect of the Meiji national literary canon, responded to international cultural anxieties by reframing Nō as both the essence of Japanese tradition and a modern art form. Ivan Croscenko examines how "Provincial Nō Theatre" traditions emerged through redefinitions of Nō, expressing plural communal identities beyond official contexts. Bringing together scholars of premodern and modern intellectual history, literary studies, and Nō history, this panel employs close reading, discourse, and comparative analysis to interrogate Nō not as a static relic but as a contested field for performing and negotiating Japanese identity.

Organizer: Alberto Zizza, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich

Chair: Francesca Lerz, University of Trier

Discussant: Akiko Takeuchi, Hosei University

1) Francesca Lerz, University of Trier

Negotiating Identity: Zeami's Nō Aesthetics in Medieval Japan

This paper investigates the composite and fluid nature of Nō aesthetics through an analysis of Zeami's treatises, highlighting how their philosophical and ritual foundations challenge static interpretations of Japanese artistic identity. The study argues that the theoretical structure of Zeami's writings reveals multidimensional frameworks shaped by cross-cultural and transdisciplinary influences. Drawing on patterns of ritual embodiment and epistemological models derived from Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucian thought, Zeami's aesthetic concepts cannot be reduced to a fixed essence. Instead, they reflect a dynamic process of assimilation and reinterpretation that mirrors the intellectual hybridity of medieval Japan. Core notions such as *hana* and *yūgen* exemplify this complexity: rather than denoting immutable ideals, they function as performative and experiential categories, constantly negotiated through practice and transmission. By examining Zeami's use of structural and ritual metaphors—particularly those drawn from Buddhist visualization practices and performative embodiment—this paper reveals how Nō's aesthetic system is grounded in transformation rather than permanence. In doing so, it underscores the permeability of premodern Japanese performance theory. Ultimately, Zeami's thought suggests that Japanese artistic identity emerges from dynamic interactions between local traditions and transregional systems of thought, rather than from a homogeneous or immutable essence.

2) Alberto Zizza, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich

Truly Ancient, Truly Modern: Haga Yaichi's Imagining of "nogaku" as a Japanese National Theatre

This paper examines the complex and often overlooked role of Haga Yaichi (1867–1927), a pivotal figure in the creation of Japan's national literary canon, in the re-imagining of Nō theater during the Meiji period. Following the loss of its samurai patronage, Nō faced a life-threatening decline. Driven by the patriotic need to establish a national culture comparable, if not superior, to that of Western nations, Haga championed a rebranded vision of this performative art. Through close reading and discourse analysis of his ideas, disseminated from the 1890s through the pages of *Teikoku Bungaku*, *Nōgaku gahō*, as well as his 1907 bestseller *Kokuminsei jūron*, this presentation analyses Haga's construction of Nō as a "national theater." His project, however, was inherently transnational, defining Nō's "pure, non-realistic beauty" and spiritual energy (*kiai*) through comparison with Greek drama (mediated by German philology) and contrasting it with contemporary "Western" opera. This construction was even more ambivalent: the new *nōgaku* was celebrated as a repository of ancient Japanese ideals and utilized as a sharp critique of the contemporary Japanese public's intellectual stagnation and failure to appreciate its own superior art. This paper argues that by imagining Nō as a theater that is both

truly ancient and truly modern, Haga created a complex cultural symbol central to his nation-building project and the performance of a respectable modern Japanese identity.

3) Ivan Croschenko, University of Naples L'Orientale

One Becoming Many: Provincial Nō Theatre as a Cultural Symbol of Provincial Communities

This paper examines how the sociocultural meanings of Nō theater have been reshaped in provincial Japan, leading to the emergence of numerous heterodoxies which might be referred to as “Provincial Nō Theatre.” The traditions of the Yamagata and Niigata prefectures—namely Kurokawa Nō, Yamato Nō, Matsuyama Nō, and Ōsuda Nō—are analyzed as case studies. Since the Meiji period, Nō theater has often been regarded as one of the highest examples of Japanese culture. Since then, its image has been shaped as a crystallized and immutable theatrical tradition that reached the contemporary era as it was in the past. However, the Nō we know today was not the only form transmitted. Indeed, as it diffused from the elite to provincial settings between the late Muromachi and Edo periods, various heterodox traditions developed in numerous farmers’ villages and provincial towns. In a short time, Provincial Nō Theatre became a central cultural symbol of local communities, embedded in both cultic and daily lives. Through the analysis of historical documentation, cultural transformation, and ethnographic fieldwork data, this paper challenges the notion of Nō theater as a singular, homogeneous entity and illustrates the multifaceted, kaleidoscopic nature of this complex form of Japanese theater. The redefinition of Nō theater’s meanings within local communities clearly shows the active and dynamic interaction with surrounding cultural environments.

Session Code: 3-H

Room: 2-411

Panel Code: p-092

Title: Nomizo Naoko, Kōda Aya, and Yoshiya Nobuko: Texts That Transform and Are Transformed

Abstract:

This panel looks at three modern Japanese women writers—Nomizo Naoko, Kōda Aya, and Yoshiya Nobuko—with transformation, translation, and adaptation as guiding themes for analysis. Asli Kaynar’s research focuses on Western archetypes of femininity in Nomizo’s *Jōjū shinri* (Psychology of a Female Beast, 1930). In particular, she considers references to Dante’s *Beatrice* and Dumas’ *Madame aux Camélias*, and how women characters resist these archetypes and transform notions of femininity. Laura Marshall explores the connections between translation studies and literary studies by comparing two English translations of Kōda Aya’s *Hina* (Dolls, 1955), and the original. By analysing differences in translations, Marshall uncovers key points of ambiguity within the original text, producing new insights into Kōda’s *zuihitsu* writing style. Saffron Nyx’s project outlines and examines differences between two versions of Yoshiya Nobuko’s *Hinageshi* (Poppy, 1924)—the original short story and Ozawa Mari’s manga adaptation. Both versions feature poppies as a motif, and the symbolic meaning of the flower shifts throughout the story. In the adaptation, the change in medium invites creative uses of poppies through visual elements. By bringing attention to writers sidelined in the literary canon and revealing how their works continue to invite reinterpretation and exchange, the panel ultimately demonstrates the insight to be gained through close analysis of women’s creative reworkings.

Organizer: Saffron Nyx, University of Queensland, Aoyama Gakuin University

Chair: Tomoko Aoyama, University of Queensland

Discussant: Tomoko Aoyama, University of Queensland

1) Asli Kaynar, University of Queensland

Leda as the “Beast”: Rewriting Desire and Art in Nomizo Naoko’s “Jōjū shinri”

Nomizo Naoko’s *Jōjū shinri* (Psychology of a Female Beast, 1930) engages deeply with Western visual and literary archetypes of femininity, particularly through its portrayal of two friends, Soya and Shako. Other characters depict them through opposing images: Shako is likened to figures such as Dante’s *Beatrice*, associated with purity and spiritual love, while Soya is labelled *Madame aux Camélias*, a fallen woman. However, both women resist these stereotypes: Shako through her love for Soya, and Soya through her art, as seen in her *Leda and the Swan* painting. By painting *Leda* using herself as the model, Soya transforms a myth that Renaissance painters and modernist male poets often eroticized and stripped of violence into a self-portrait, reclaiming control over her body. Her later killing of Count Suwa (the swan) completes this rewriting: the violence of the myth persists, but *Leda* is no longer the victim. I read the layered invocations

of Western art and literature in Nomizo's novel through Hélène Cixous's *écriture féminine* and Julia Kristeva's theory of the "abject" to explore Soya's desires and self-representation. In doing so, I demonstrate how *Jojū shinri* offers a transgressive rewriting of dominant cultural and aesthetic codes of femininity and artistic creation.

2) Laura Marshall, University of Sydney

"It Seems to Me": The Role of Epistemic Verbs in Kōda Aya's "Hina" (1955) and "zuihitsu" Style

My project proposes a new methodology for analyzing literature through translation, emphasizing translation studies' hitherto underutilized value for literary analysis. It identifies key differences between translations and the ambiguous features of the source texts. The approach contributes to scholarship by opening up new interpretative fields within the works. This presentation shares my translational analysis of Kōda Aya's short story *Hina* (1955). In *Hina*, the narrator reflects on the history of Hinamatsuri dolls, recalling her attempts to coordinate the perfect celebration for her daughter. Comparing the story's English translations (Tansman 1993, Sherif 1997) reveals significant distinctions between the translators' portrayals of the father character: one a distanced intellectual who advises that "it seems to me that's not quite the way to use your energy," the other a stern authority figure who declares that "I'm having a hard time swallowing your way of putting on a show." I argue that these divergences result from a key site of textual ambiguity: epistemic verb inflections. Analysis of these verbs throughout the text reveals the narrator's preference for stating her views more directly in the introductory discussion of the Hina dolls than in her subsequent recollections. I thus join scholars in considering Kōda's *zuihitsu* (essay) style, contributing new insight into how Kōda reinforces her story's message through structurally modulating expressions of opinion.

3) Saffron Nyx, University of Queensland & Aoyama Gakuin University

Poppies Fluttering in the Margins: An Analysis of Yoshiya Nobuko's "Hinageshi" (Poppy) and its Manga Adaptation by Ozawa Mari

This research project compares and analyses two versions of Yoshiya Nobuko's *Hinageshi* (Poppy). I will focus on the original short story first published as part of the *Hanamonogatari* (Flower Tales) collection in 1924 and Ozawa Mari's 2014 manga adaptation by the same name. Yoshiya is best known for her stories of tragic love between girls in early *shōjo* magazines, which became foundational to Japanese girls' culture and representations of queer girls and women in Japanese literature and pop culture. In this project, I outline the techniques employed in Yoshiya's story, and the range of readings and interpretations made possible through her work. To do this, I refer to scholars such as Honda Masuko and Kawasaki Kenko. Furthermore, I aim to deepen this analysis by looking at Ozawa's adaptation and its use of visual elements and techniques such as textual overlay, panel composition, and visual floral motifs. For example, one difference is the design of the handkerchief that a young girl nicknamed Hinageshi receives from another girl. In Yoshiya's version, Hinageshi receives a scarlet handkerchief that is reminiscent of red poppies; however, in Ozawa's manga, it is described as scarlet but also features embroidery of a poppy. Ozawa's change to the handkerchief design allows her to clearly maintain the flower motif while adhering to a black and white medium.

Session Code: 3-I

Room: 2-407

Panel Code: p-088

Title: Affective Democracy and Civil Society Under Strain: Comparative Insights from Asia and Europe

Abstract:

Democracies worldwide are under strain as emotional attachment, polarization, and structural constraints reshape civic life. Citizens increasingly engage through affective, performative, and digital channels, which can boost participation but also deepen societal divides. This panel examines these dynamics across Asia and Europe, highlighting political fandom, digital mobilization, and institutional weaknesses that challenge democratic governance. Evidence from Korea and Poland shows younger, digitally active citizens often substitute trust in institutions with intense symbolic engagement. Generational divides, populist narratives, and external influences intensify polarization, while structural and cultural legacies, such as majoritarianism, hierarchical traditions, and fragmented civic networks, limit civil society's capacity to mediate conflict. Digital platforms amplify affective engagement and antagonistic participation, reshaping political behavior and influencing elections. Integrating psychological, structural, and digital perspectives, the panel highlights the mechanisms behind

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democratic strain and polarized societies, offering a comparative framework to understand democracy's vulnerabilities and the evolving role of civil society in maintaining democratic balance.

Organizer: Suk-Ki Kong, Seoul National University Asia Center

Chair: Gihong Yi, Seoul National University Asia Center/Metrix R&C

1) Miongsei Kang, Jong-Cheol Kim & Hyun-Chin Lim, Seoul National University Asia Center

Political Fandom, Partisan Media, and Affective Polarization: An Empirical Study of Fandom Index, SNS Consumption, Candidate Support, and Affective Polarization

Political fandom, emotionally intense, community-based attachment to political figures or parties, has become a key feature of contemporary politics. Beyond conventional partisanship, fandom reflects affective and performative engagement shaped by digital media and participatory culture. While research on affective polarization and parasocial politics highlights personalized political attachment, little is known about who develops fan-like devotion and why. This study uses the 2025 Korean Voter Panel Survey (Wave 2) to examine predictors of political fandom among major-party supporters. Fandom is conceptualized as strong emotional identification with a figure, defensive reactions to criticism, and expressive participation, such as online promotion or content sharing. OLS and ordered logit models test effects of age, gender, education, political efficacy, and social media use, including interactions with affective polarization and media dependence. Preliminary findings show younger, digitally active, and polarized citizens are more prone to fandom, which substitutes institutional trust with symbolic participation. The study situates fandom at the intersection of political psychology, media culture, and democratic engagement, showing how it mobilizes participation while deepening affective divides.

2) Akira Ichikawa, Toyo University

New Types of Polarization in Civil Society?: Analysis of the 2025 Polish Presidential Election and Implications for Asia

This presentation analyzes the Polish presidential election of 1 June 2025 within the broader context of Europe's far-right populist resurgence. Drawing on discourse analysis of campaign materials and first-round voting data (18 May), the study identifies three key dynamics. First, the ruling Civic Platform (PO) framed its campaign against Law and Justice (PiS) but failed to mobilize younger voters fatigued by the two-party conflict. Second, while PO feared Russian interference, the United States exerted the most tangible external influence, as eastern voters favored Nawrocki's pro-U.S. stance despite PO's engagement with Germany and France. Third, PO's urban, educated base remained stable, yet under-40 voters gravitated toward far-right and far-left alternatives. The runoff became a direct contest between PiS and PO. Nawrocki's victory relied on far-right, anti-Semitic narratives appealing to young voters, reinforced by endorsements from U.S. MAGA networks. The study highlights Poland's political polarization, shaped by generational, ideological, and pro-U.S./pro-EU divides, with implications for comparative analysis of polarization in Asia.

3) Suk-Ki Kong, Seoul National University Asia Center

Polarized Korean Civil Society: The Structural Limits of South Korean Democracy and Its Asian Implications

South Korea's democratic consolidation, once seen as a model of post-authoritarian transformation, now faces deep polarization and institutional paralysis. Despite peaceful transfers of power since 1987, persistent distrust in representative institutions and three presidential impeachments highlight systemic vulnerabilities. This paper argues that these challenges stem from the structural fusion of presidentialism and majoritarianism, hierarchical political traditions, and affective populism amplified by social media. The rise of fandom politics, where emotional attachment supplants deliberative reasoning, has turned civic engagement into antagonistic partisanship, with digital mobilization overwhelming traditional institutions. Situating South Korea within the broader Asian context of compressed modernization, digital populism, and weakened civic mediation, the paper shows that eroding mutual toleration and declining civic trust signal a deeper democratic crisis. Sustainable democracy requires a shift from mobilizational activism toward deliberative-associational governance, revitalizing civil society as a mediating institution capable of transforming conflict into reciprocity. Korea's experience illustrates both the vulnerabilities and potential of Asian democracies to evolve toward normative sustainability.

Session Code: 3-J

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-077

Title: Beyond the Sacred: The Fabric of Ritual Lives in Japan

Abstract:

Ritual practices have long been the subject of interest for anthropologists, scholars of religion, historians, and scholars of many other disciplines. The publication of Catherine Bell's seminal work, "Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice," further propelled rituals as a functioning framework to study communities, institutions, traditions, and even objects. And yet, studies of rituals often treat them as an exception, a specific practice performed at a specific time at a specific place, removed from the sociocultural contexts that gave birth to that very practice. There has been a lack of attention on what Bell considers "The Fabric of Ritual Life," that is, the "context of social customs, historical practices, and day-to-day routines that, in addition to the unique factors at work in any given moment in time and space, influence whether and how a ritual action is performed." To put it another way, rituals can only exist through the support of various elements that may include, but are not limited to, music, art, traditional crafts, tourism, martial arts, popular culture, and many others that are often overlooked. This panel seeks to explore the diversity of these elements to investigate how they form and construct the "fabric" of ritual lives in Japan, revealing how rituals influence the lives of those who participate in them. By gazing beyond simply the practice, this panel explores how rituals shape communities and traditions, and vice versa.

Organizer: Raditya Nuradi, National Museum of Japanese History

Chair: Raditya Nuradi, National Museum of Japanese History

Discussant: Raditya Nuradi, National Museum of Japanese History

1) Ai Sazaki, Tohoku University

Things that Make Prayer Possible: Home Altars and Orthodox Life in Japan

The Orthodox Church in Japan, the focus of this presentation, was introduced to Japan by St. Nicholas, who came from Russia during the Meiji period. However, due to the Russo-Japanese War, the number of believers has remained small; today, Orthodox Christianity is a minority religion with approximately 9,000 believers nationwide. Many Orthodox families have inherited their faith across generations as a "family religion," maintaining home altars where they engage in daily prayer. It is well known that Japanese people place great importance on mourning the dead, a tendency that is also observed in the practices of Japanese Orthodox Christians. The home altar is originally a site for prayer and communion with God, and a device to connect the individual to God. Yet, many Japanese Orthodox Christians also place items related to deceased family members there, offering prayers for the dead within their homes. In Japanese Christian studies, home altars and the objects placed upon them have been considered solely as evidence of "Japanese-style memorial practices for the dead." Consequently, these studies have often overlooked the wide variety of other objects on home altars, other than items representing the deceased, that support believers' daily prayers. This presentation examines the various objects placed on the home altars of contemporary Japanese Orthodox Christians, exploring how they interact with and influence ritual practices, religious life, and the local community.

2) Alejandra Rojas, Kyushu University

Memory, Identity, and Resilience: The Sarayama Festival in Arita, Saga Prefecture

The town of Arita, in Saga Prefecture, identifies itself as the "Birthplace of Japanese Porcelain" (*Nihon jiki hasshōchi* 日本磁器発祥地), a history that began in the early seventeenth century. This historical narrative functions as an element of local identity, especially significant amid the decline of the ceramic industry since the late twentieth century, along with other social issues such as population aging and the migration of young people to cities. Despite such difficulties, the local community continues celebrating various traditional events throughout the year. One of these traditions is the Sarayama Festival, originally a harvest celebration held across northern Kyushu commonly referred as Kunchi or Okunchi festivals. After being restructured in 1959 as an industrial festival (*sangyōsai* 産業祭), its current form emphasizes civic and community activities rather than its earlier religious significance. Drawing on memory studies, this paper approaches cultural memory as a form of collective memory that both unites a group and conveys a shared cultural identity. Based on this perspective, I examine the Sarayama Festival as a performative act of cultural memory through which Arita residents engage with their shared past and reaffirm communal identity. Based on ethnographic observation during the 2025 festival, this study sheds light on how ritual performances sustain local cohesion amid the socioeconomic challenges of contemporary rural Japan.

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3) Andrea Castiglioni, Nagoya City University

The One-Thousand-Day Practice of Yudono Ascetics in the Edo Period

During the Edo period, the ritual that characterized the ascetics of Mount Yudono (present-day Yamagata Prefecture) was known as the one-thousand-day practice (*sennichigyō*). Over the course of this three-year retreat, the anchorite isolated himself in the Valley of the Immortals, where he performed ordeals and esoteric ceremonies in veneration of Yudono Daigongen. At the same time, the renunciant accumulated ascetic merits to be transferred, upon completion of the undertaking, to the lay donors who had supported him both financially and devotionally throughout the retreat. The study of *sennichigyō* allows us to challenge Durkheim's view that the ritual protocols of asceticism function primarily to separate the practitioner from the ordinary social sphere in order to reintegrate him into the extraordinary realm of the sacred. On the contrary, *sennichigyō* shows how the ascetic can enact a radical detachment from the world only insofar as he remains firmly anchored to it through a dense network of social actors who support him unceasingly. The *sennichigyō* ritual is therefore structured around a triad of human and non-human agencies whose entanglement enables us to grasp key dynamics in the relationship between nature and culture. These three agencies are: the ascetic; his clientele of lay devotees; and the mountain landscape within which the human actors operate—thus destabilizing the (fictitious) separation between natural and cultural domains.

Session Code: 3-K

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-058

Title: Menstruation Matters in Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Representations, Governance, and Innovation in Menstrual Health

Abstract:

Menstruation is integral to womanhood and reproduction, yet it has long been associated with shame, impurity, and pollution across many cultures. Japan is no exception. This panel brings together insights from political, sociological, ethnographical, and historical analyses to explore these complexities. Shiyu Sun investigates menstrual poverty through a critical reading of Japanese government policy documents, pointing out that the current initiatives risk perpetuating menstrual stigma and calling for a reframing of menstrual poverty as a human rights issue. Xiaoyang Hao delves into early twentieth-century advertisements on menstruation, arguing that while these ads created a discursive space for discussing menstruation, they ultimately pathologized menstrual bodily changes and subjecting women's bodies to biomedical surveillance. Keiko Masuo examines the recent popularity of "femtech" in the Japanese FemCare industry and traces the historical evolution of women's health within social welfare systems, highlighting the importance of addressing the health needs of all women, whether inside or outside the capitalist labor market. Angela Louise Cruz Rosario zeroes in on the Otohime, or the "Sound Princess" masking sounds in toilets, contending that this sensory device constitutes a form of menstrual governance, encouraging women to exercise greater discretion during menstruation.

Organizer: Xiaoyang Hao, Kyushu University

Chair: Xiaoyang Hao, Kyushu University

1) Shiyu Sun, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Rethinking Period Poverty in Japan: Institutional Responses and Structural Barriers

This study examines how the concept of "period poverty" has been narrowly framed as a matter of economic hardship in Japan, by analyzing local government initiatives implemented over the past five years. Drawing on official documents from the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office, this paper provides a comprehensive overview of both national and municipal efforts to address period poverty and identifies critical challenges within their approaches. These efforts fall into three main categories: the implementation of surveys to assess menstruation-related needs, the establishment of grant programs, and the distribution of menstrual products. The findings show that although the concept of "period poverty" gained traction during the COVID-19 pandemic, it continues to be primarily understood through the lens of economic deprivation. This narrow framing hampers broader public recognition of menstruation as a social and political issue. In particular, the personalization of aid, over-reliance on local governments, and overly cautious distribution practices—often designed to avoid stigma—ironically create new obstacles for recipients. The paper argues for the need to reconstruct period poverty as a matter of comprehensive rights-based protection, moving beyond the confines of economic assistance and toward the acknowledgment of menstruation as a public concern deserving of structural and inclusive policy responses.

2) Xiaoyang Hao, Kyushu University

Pathologizing and Sanitizing Menstruation: Advertisements for Menstruation Medication and Sanitary Products in the Early Twentieth Century

During the early twentieth century, Japan witnessed the flourishing of consumer culture, with women's magazines emerging as a primary platform for advertisements targeting female readers. These were also decades marked by the influx of Western medical knowledge, which reshaped medical discourses on a variety of subjects, menstrual health and hygiene in particular. This paper analyzes advertisements for sanitary products, mostly so-called sanitary belts, and remedies for menstruation-related symptoms published in women's magazines in early twentieth-century Japan. More specifically, it scrutinizes how these ads represented bodies, sexuality, and menstruation. This paper notes that while these advertisements brought menstruation into the public sphere, they simultaneously medicalized women's bodies, exhorting them to subject their menstrual cycles to biomedical surveillance. Overall, this paper argues that while discourses manifested in sanitary product ads to a limited extent contributed to de-stigmatizing regular menstruation per se, those in medical promotions, such as advertisements for herbal medicines, spawned an alternative rhetoric that stigmatized any perceived irregularities in women's menstrual cycles, implicitly exhorting them to monitor their bodies and reproductive health. By examining these discursive tensions, this paper sheds light on how advertising shaped social attitudes toward menstruation, contributing to broader discussions on gender history.

3) Keiko Matsuo, Kobe University/Doshisha University

From Technology to Social Practice: Femtech and Women's Health in Contemporary Japan

This study analyzes the rapid expansion of "femtech" in Japan, positioning it as a critical opportunity to embed the perspective of "promoting women's health" within society. Although femtech has primarily advanced under the leadership of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and private sector initiatives, academic discussions on its background, practices, and broader social significance remain limited. Employing qualitative research methods, this study examines the current state of femtech practices in Japan through selected case studies, including femtech-related events and menstrual health initiatives in high schools and universities. It also investigates how women's health has historically been treated in the field of social welfare, exploring both its continuities and discontinuities over time. Based on this analysis, the study illustrates how femtech is gradually taking root as a form of social practice. This research argues that the spread of femtech should not be seen as mere technological adoption but must be accompanied by behavioral changes at the individual level. It emphasizes the necessity of fostering a societal perspective that supports the health of all women—not just those in the labor market. Ultimately, this study proposes that Japan's practical experiences can serve as a foundation for comparative research on women's health and femtech across Asia.

4) Angela Louise Cruz Rosario, National University of Singapore

Silencing the Abject: Otohime (Sound Princess) and the Everyday Governance of Menstruation in Japan

Japan's globally admired toilet technologies offer a unique lens into the everyday governance of gendered bodies. Among them is *Otohime*, a sound-masking device installed in public restrooms. I examine how *Otohime* mediates the cultural regulation of menstruating bodies through the auditory management of shame, propriety, and abjection. Drawing on interview data and autoethnographic reflection, I frame *Otohime* as part of Japan's menstrual somatechnical infrastructure; rather than a neutral convenience, it is an everyday technology that regulates bodily conduct through sensory cues, gendered norms, and technosocial expectations. Although lacking digital interactivity or datafication, *Otohime* functions as a regulatory technology by enabling greater menstrual discretion. Moreover, *Otohime* mobile apps can reproduce the sound-masking effect via smartphones, with a wider range of sound options available, suggesting a digitization of discretion that allows more flexible camouflaging of menstrual care sounds. By comparing physically installed and digital forms of *Otohime*, I argue that menstrual governance in Japan operates not only through tracking and health metrics but also through sensory infrastructures that silence signs of embodiment. Situating *Otohime* within frameworks of menstrual somatechnics, abjection, and embodied performativity, I reflect on how menstruation culture in Japan is shaped by technologies that prioritize silence and control, rather than openness or autonomy.

Session Code: 3-L

Room: 2-409

Individual Session 1: Media, Popular Culture, and Transnational Circulation

Chair: Mathew Thompson, Sophia University

1) (i-034) Ivan Jaramillo, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Tactile Deterioration: Texture and Affect in Itō Junji's Manga

Itō Junji's horror manga is renowned for its visceral, body-centric horror, inviting a "haptic" reading where beyond merely seeing it, the reader is invited to feel the instances of body horror on their skin. Building on concepts of haptic visuality and affect, this paper explores the role of artistic materiality in generating this somatic response. While Itō's themes remain consistent in his most recent work, his production has shifted from traditional ink-on-paper techniques to the use of digital tools. This paper questions the affective consequences of this material evolution. I argue that this move to digital tools has paradoxically "diluted" the haptic—and therefore affective potential—immediacy of his manual work. The textural imperfections and tangible weight of his traditional linework have been crucial for generating skin-crawling sensations which might be linked to Itō's international success. This study juxtaposes his foundational work with recent manga like *Sensor* (2019), *The Liminal Zone* (2021), and new *Tomie iterations* (2024). By foregrounding the medium's materiality, this research aims to demonstrate how production methods are linked to affective potential. Ultimately, this paper contributes a new, material-focused perspective on Itō Junji's artistic evolution and offers a framework for analyzing the impact of digital technologies on the embodied experience of reading horror manga.

2) (i-120) Chihiro Watanabe, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg

Temptation to Publish "Hate Articles": Japanese Tabloid Magazines Floating Between the Waves of Entertainment and Journalism

In 2018, an anti-LGBTQ article written by Mio Sugita, a Diet member of Japan, provoked a sensational controversy, which gathered more attention because its publisher, Shinchosha, was one of the Japanese general and traditional publishers. Eventually, *Shincho 45*, which published the article, was forced to cease the publication of the magazine. Seven years later in 2025, Shinchosha was involved in a serious controversy again about an anti-Korean article in *Shukan Shincho*. Looking back at the history of the industry, Japanese tabloid magazines published by large general publishers have repeatedly published such articles since the late 1990s. The questions of this presentation are: how did the Japanese publishing industry find their attractiveness of "hate articles" for magazine readers, and how did such articles gain popularity? Several commentators have pointed out that the rise of such articles resulted from the publishing industry's slump since the second half of the 1990s. To get out of the slump, tabloid magazines began publishing such articles as one of the genres of entertainment. However, the attitude of the editors who produce such articles has never been investigated. This presentation analyses editors' attitudes towards such articles, their expertise in eliciting emotion, and the decision-making structure within publishing houses. The analysis is based on qualitative content analysis of literature on hate books and exploratory interviews with 30 editors.

3) (i-261) Li Ziwei, Waseda University

Loading Love Since the 1990s: Chinese Otome and Gal Games in Trans-Asian Genre Circulations

Since the 1990s, romantic video games have circulated between Japan and China as part of broader trans-Asian media flows, shaping the development of the Chinese ACG field. Among them, *otome* (female-oriented) and *gal* (male-oriented) games have followed two parallel but distinct trajectories. Existing studies often treat them separately, relying on Japanese definitions and focusing on gender ideologies or consumption behavior (Galbraith 2011; Gao et al. 2025), but rarely compare their historical development within Chinese cultural-industrial context. This study fills that gap by examining how these two genres have been localized, transformed, and debated in China from 1997 to 2025. Drawing on Bourdieu's field theory (1984), the research combines a three-year participant observation in major *otome* and *gal* communities, twelve in-depth interviews with long-term players, and an extensive archival corpus including seventeen developer interviews and historical records of Chinese romantic games. The analysis identifies three major divergences: narrative orientation, production structures, and community dynamics. In addition, an ecological niche misalignment in the Chinese game market has also shaped their paths. By situating these findings within media circulations, the study provides a historically grounded account of how imported genre concepts are re-encoded within new media ecologies, contributing to trans-Asian media and genre studies.

4) (i-298) Aurel (Baele) Ito, KU Leuven

Exporting Recorded Sounds? Japan and the Interimperial Trade of Gramophones with Asia during the First World War

In the 1910s, Japan's emerging record companies quickly began exporting gramophones, records, and accessories to overseas markets. The First World War presented a unique opportunity to temporarily compete with Western rivals in regions like British India, China, and even the Dutch East Indies, as the European belligerent powers shifted to a war economy. The state played a crucial role, providing highly valuable commercial intelligence about these markets. This paper examines the hitherto neglected dimension of interimperial trade in gramophones and records between Japan and these Asian regions. Focusing on Ōsaka Chikuonki Kabushiki Kaisha, the paper asks what the cooperation between the Japanese state and record companies reveals about the interimperial trade of gramophones and records during the First World War. It draws on a wide variety of contemporary handwritten archival documents from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, statistical data, specialized trade magazines such as *Chikuonki sekai* (The Phonograph World), and newspaper articles. Since many company documents are destroyed due to natural disasters and destruction of the Second World War, these sources then provide an essential reconstruction of Japan's role in such global trade. In turn, this case not only decenters the global history of the recording industry at a much earlier stage. It also demonstrates how the war catalyzed path dependent development of Japan's recording industry in the next two decades.

Session Code: 3-M

Room: 2-415

Individual Session 13: Migration, Mobility, and Diasporic Communities

Chair: Pornphan Wajjwalku, Waseda University

1) (i-112) Kuplay Busra, University of Zurich

Rethinking Migration as a Peacebuilding Process: The Case of Turkish Immigrants in Kawaguchi

Since 2023, Turkish immigrants, particularly Turkish Kurds, have increasingly become targets of anti-immigrant hate speech and neighborhood conflict narratives in Japanese media. This study investigates why these narratives center on Turkish Kurds through a case study of the Turkish immigrant community in Kawaguchi, Saitama. Drawing on semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and passive social media monitoring, it examines how ontological insecurity and asymmetric power relations shape peacebuilding between host and immigrant communities. Applying a combined framework of ontological security and agonistic peace, the research reframes migration as a dynamic peacebuilding process, not just a demographic or economic issue. Preliminary findings suggest that Turkish immigrants' precarious legal status, as mostly unrecognized asylum seekers, and their visible, close-knit community, reinforce stigmas. These conditions fuel ontological insecurity in the host society, casting Turkish Kurds as "fake" refugees or criminals and framing them as existential threats. This obstructs their recognition in public discourse as "equals" and deepens power imbalances. The resulting conflict narratives hinder possibilities for agonistic peace based on mutual respect and democratic engagement. Integrating peace studies into migration research, this study offers a new perspective to understand conflict in diverse societies and the challenges to peaceful coexistence.

2) (i-172) Ilju Kim, Sophia University

From Export to Reintegration: The Transformation of South Korea's Labor Export Policy and its Impact on Skilled Migration

Since its implementation around 2000, the Korean government's comprehensive labor export policy has trained and sent thousands of college graduates overseas annually. This study examines how the discourse surrounding this policy has evolved over time. Based on a document analysis of Korean government reports, newspaper articles, and in-depth interviews with relevant actors, this study highlights the state's flexible adaptation of its labor export policy to changing domestic labor market conditions. The government's rationale, initially framed as a solution to address youth unemployment policy, has evolved over time to cultivate "global talent." However, as Korea faces an aging and shrinking population, the policy has recently refocused on the "reintegration" of overseas Korean workers into the domestic labor market. The study uses the case of Korean IT skilled migration to Japan to further demonstrate how the Korean state's changing policy and discourse reconfigured the roles of migration intermediaries and the migratory trajectories of Korean IT workers over time.

(3) (p-019) Kexuan Li, National University of Singapore

Echoes of Uncertain Time: The Regimes of Youth Waithood in Post-socialist China and Neoliberal Japan

This paper conceptualizes waithood as a generational condition embedded in East Asian modernity. Focusing on post-socialist China and neoliberal Japan, it examines how distinct political-economic transformations—China’s market transition and family-centered welfare, Japan’s post-industrial stagnation and labor flexibilization—produce divergent yet convergent experiences of suspended adulthood. By comparing two societies shaped by contrasting moral economies of time—collective familialism and individualized self-responsibility—the study shows how youth uncertainty is differently moralized, managed, and lived. Drawing on the life course approach, the analysis identifies three interlocking forms of waithood: academic (prolonged schooling, gap years), occupational (career instability, irregular work), and intimate (postponed marriage and family). These domains reveal how institutions, emotions, and expectations jointly define access to “adulthood.” Using comparative qualitative methods combining interviews and discourse analysis, the paper finds that Chinese youth treat pauses as strategic recalibrations toward normative timelines, while Japanese youth increasingly normalize non-linear life courses. Situated within the macro-history of post-socialist and neoliberal restructuring, the study contributes to a comparative anthropology of time, showing how East Asian modernities redistribute not only economic resources but also temporal opportunities and the moral right to the future.

Session Code: 3-N

Room: 2-401

Roundtable 4: Confrontation and Cooperation in Japan-Korea Relations, 1868 to the Present

Panelists:

Robert Winstanley-Chesters (Organizer)

Igor Saveliev, Nagoya University

AhRan Ellie Bae, Musashi University

Ágota Duró, Hiroshima Jogakuin University

Only 135 miles separate Korea from Japan, two nations who share a long history of interactions. This roundtable inspired by the recent MHM/Routledge edited volume seeks to explore these relations and interactions within the volume’s timeframe, 1868 to 2026. This period has seen rapid modernization of Korea and Japan, including Japan’s colonization and Imperialist subjugation of the Korean peninsula (1910–1945), generally experienced as a harsh period for Koreans, but which contained moments of possibility and cooperation. The colonial period’s memory often works to impede congenial relations between the two nations which might resolve contested issues of the past. There has also been the separation of the two Koreas and Japanese and Korean transformations post 1945. The roundtable includes the discussants Igor Saveliev who considers a less frequently covered post-Imperial migration and remigration of the Sakhalin Koreans. AhRan Ellie Bae examines management and conceptualization of wartime and colonial collaboration with the Japanese Empire in early South Korea, particularly discussions of what constituted Ch’inilp’a status in 1947 and 1948. Ágota Duró engages with the politics of non-Japanese *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) and explores the social, political, and institutional difficulties faced by Korean victims, emphasizing that Japanese civil society activism was instrumental in securing their official status and benefits comparable to those of their Japanese counterparts.



[Block 4] 15:30–17:00**Session Code: 4-A****Room: 2-402****Panel Code:** p-010**Title:** Asia-Pacific Fandom and Home**Abstract:**

The papers presented in this panel will appear in a forthcoming collection; “Asia-Pacific Fandom, Screen Media and Home” (Amsterdam University Press). This panel brings together studies of fandom from across Asia, expanding on recent scholarship that highlights the home as a neglected site for fan practices, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. (Baker 2019; Duncan 2022). Topics of this panel include: *oshi-katsu* culture amongst Japanese fans of Sanrio characters; digital nomadism of Chinese fanfiction writers; performative practices of South Indian film fans; and video fancalls within the K-pop industry. We position the Asia-Pacific as an unfixed geographical region that has complex transnational flows (Martin et al. 2019), and a rich landscape of fan practices, performances and identifications. Our panelists examine how fandom unfolds in everyday domestic spaces. Our approach to the home is informed by feminist and post-colonial scholarship that understands home as both a material site and an imaginary that intersects with questions of mobility, labor, belonging and economics. We explore what it means to think about fandom as a home-making practice, how fan collections and displays are enmeshed with domestic space, and how the boundaries of the home are expanded beyond the limitations of a physical space by new digital mobilities. We consider how the cross-cultural movement of media texts, and fans themselves, create new registers of belonging and re-imaginings of home.

Organizer Meenaatchi Saverimuttu, Cardiff University**Chair:** Jane Simon, Macquarie University**Discussant:** Meenaatchi Saverimuttu, Cardiff University

- 1) Rebecca Lelli, University of Technology Sydney

Fancalls from Home: Intimacy and Parasocial Relationships between K-Pop Idols and their Fans

For K-pop fans, meeting one’s idol is the ultimate form of fandom cultural capital. The recent phenomenon of the video “fancall” have made this more attainable than ever before, as fans may now video-call their idols one-on-one, without leaving the comfort of their own home. K-pop idols are expected to maintain strong parasocial relationships with their fans, through constant engagement with digital platforms, such as livestreaming. Whilst livestreaming has opened a virtual window into the domestic lives of idols, fancalls display the domestic spaces practices of fans. Building on Joanna Elfving-Hwang’s model of “parasocial-kin,” this article explores how the development of video-fancalls blurs the boundaries between celebrity and significant-other, cultivating deep parasocial relationships between idols and fans, sharing intimate home spaces around the world. This paper explores the affective para-proxemic and parasocial functions of video fancalls, as well as their limitations and possible ethical consequences for both idols and their fans.

- 2) Maiko Nakamura, Tokyo Metropolitan University

Home as a Topos for One’s Fave: Oshi-Katsu, Sanrio and Japanese Girls Culture

Japanese *kawaii* is known worldwide and has influenced various popular cultures. *Oshi-katsu*, refers to fan activities including collecting memorabilia and posting photos of one’s rooms on social media. These practices have spread widely, and Sanrio has contributed significantly to the popularity of *oshi-katsu* through collaborations with anime and video game characters as well as pop idols. Sanrio characters My Melody and Kuromi inhabit a peculiar position. Not only do fans buy their memorabilia, but these two evoke among fans a desire for identification through self-presentation and fan activities at home. Their popularity may be partly due to the influence of anime for young girls, which established My Melody’s and Kuromi’s personalities, but also on the part of products that immerse fans in their universe. Focusing on Sanrio, My Melody and Kuromi, this paper analyses the characteristics of fan activities and idol culture at home by young women in Japan.

- 3) Jane Simon, Macquarie University

Photography, Performance, and Everyday Fandom in Cop Shiva’s I Love MGR

This paper examines the intersection of South Indian film fandom and photography through the work of Cop Shiva: a contemporary photographic artist based in Bengaluru. Cop Shiva’s series I Love MGR documents a Bengaluru resident,

VidyaSagar and his daily practice of dressing and performing as MGR: a popular Tamil film star and politician. This paper tracks the overlapping layers of performance between MGR the actor and politician and VidyaSagar's masquerade as MGR. Cop Shiva's series demonstrates the enmeshment of South Indian visual culture and fandom in everyday domestic realms. VidyaSagar's iteration of two of MGR's infamous forms, the onscreen actor and the offscreen politician, is one of many ways in which South Indian film fans express kinship with stars. Cop Shiva's framing of VidyaSagar's MGR alongside the everyday features of his home life, emphasizes the everyday intimacy of film fandom in India. Across the chains of iteration between MGR, VidyaSagar, Cop Shiva's photographs and, more recently, Cop Shiva's own masquerade as MGR, performance and emulation become key aspects of loving and celebrating, as shown by both subject and photographer.

Session Code: 4-B

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-025

Title: A Culture Transformed, A Nation Redefined: China's Cultural Production During and After World War II

Abstract:

In recent years, studies on modern Chinese history have paid close attention to how crises and displacements during the War of Resistance against Japan have led to profound transformations in China's political, social, and economic structures. This panel demonstrates how practices and norms of China's cultural production underwent fundamental transformations during the war through efforts at both the top-down and grassroots levels. In the postwar period, some of the wartime legacies survived the contingencies of the civil war and played a crucial role in shaping models of cultural production under the new PRC state. Chen Nuo's paper investigates how left-wing musicians in Shanghai adopted numbered musical notations during the 1930s to amplify the transformative power of songs in reshaping social consciousness. Yiwei Li's paper examines the creation and promotion of children's rhymes in wartime China, pointing out that the emergence and development of these children's rhymes combined top-down government policy promotion with bottom-up spontaneous response and support from children's rhyme creators. Finally, Jiacheng Dong's paper examines the continuities and transformations in the relationship between the newspapers and the state from the postwar to the early PRC period.

Organizer: Jiacheng Dong, Indiana University Bloomington

Chair: Mariko Kubo, Saitama University

Discussant: Mariko Kubo, Saitama University

1) Chen Nuo, Kyoto University

The West-East Transfer and Modernization of Numbered Musical Notation: From Enlightenment Paris to Socialist China

This paper traces how numbered musical notation, originating in Enlightenment-era Paris, spread to East Asia during global modernization and eventually became the primary method for recording socialist music texts (Jian Pu) in the Chinese mainland, due to its accessibility and flexibility. It seeks to uncover how this form of music technology, embedded in the evolution of social order in early modern Europe and East Asia, flowed across temporal and spatial dimensions within different socio-political and cultural frameworks. In 1742, Jean-Jacques Rousseau proposed a new musical notation system that replaced the traditional five-line staff with Arabic numerals, thereby reducing the difficulty of music learning, and making musical texts easier to record and disseminate. By the 1930s, socialists in Shanghai, China, began to recognize the transformative power of songs in reshaping social consciousness. They adopted Meiji Japan's national singing practices (the Galin-Paris-Chev e system—a modified version of Rousseau's method—combined with singing based on European songs for schools and the masses) to advance the left-wing music movement. As this cultural movement became increasingly incorporated into the political practices of the Chinese Communist Party, this paper argues that the numbered musical notation completed its modernization, shifting from the political margins to the center through geographic and functional transitions.

2) Yiwei Li, University of Sydney

The Creation, Promotion and Circulation of Chinese Children's Rhymes about the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, 1931–1945

Since the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression broke out in full scale. During the war, a great number of literary works with themes of resisting invasion and national salvation emerged. As a

common literary form in the early stages of children's growth and education, children's rhymes also actively played a role in patriotic education and propaganda during the war. Chinese children's rhymes with the theme of resisting Japanese invasion can be traced back to shortly after the Mukden Incident in 1931, and similar themed children's rhymes were continuously created between 1931 and 1937, spreading nationwide in China through children's magazines, newspapers, and other media. This paper examines the creation and promotion of Chinese children's rhymes with themes of resisting Japanese invasion from 1931 to 1945, pointing out that the emergence and development of these children's rhymes combined top-down government policy promotion with bottom-up spontaneous response and support from children's rhyme creators. This study aims to use children's rhymes as an object of observation to examine the historical interaction between war and children, and to deeply explore how war is constructed and transmitted in collective memory.

3) Jiacheng Dong, Indiana University Bloomington

Trinity to Chain of Command: Transformation of the State-Press Relationship in China from Post-WWII to the Early PRC Period

How did China's Party-state establish control over the news and publishing business? This paper intends to examine this question by comparing the relationship between newspapers and the state during the postwar (1945–1949) and the early PRC (1949–1955) period. Focusing specifically on Shanghai, the center of China's news and publishing business during this time, this paper argues that while censorship and surveillance were still in place, neither the Guomindang nor the CCP relied on these measures to control the press. Instead, both parties preferred to maintain the status quo by incorporating newspapers and journalistic communities into the party-state apparatus. The difference, however, was that while the Guomindang sought to acquire greater influence in newspapers by controlling commercial guilds and civil organizations, the CCP was keen on building a top-down governmental structure that allowed the Party to bridle the press directly. The first part of the paper investigates the state-press relationships in the postwar period, highlighting the horizontal connections between newspaper corporations, civil organizations, and government agencies. The second part traces how the CCP has simultaneously inherited and transformed the system from 1949 to the end of the Korean War in 1953. The final part demonstrates the system's replacement by a bureaucratic hierarchy governed by the PRC's cultural and publishing apparatus.

Session Code: 4-C

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-051

Title: The (Un)Making of Colonial Relationality: Circulation of Culture Across Japan's Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds

Abstract:

The Japanese empire deployed various imperial cultural practices to integrate diverse imperial and colonial populations. However, the circulation of imperial culture across the empire and its postcolonial world not only perpetuated Japanese superiority but also challenged it and diversified colonial relationality. This panel examines how language, songs, and literature serve to make and unmake colonial dynamics from transregional and transcolonial perspectives. Suzuki explores how Iwaya Sazanami's storytelling tours throughout Japan's colonies uncovered the limits of imperial authority, as local children's participation revealed subtle forms of everyday resistance. Nazzicone analyses the use of children's songs in Japanese colonial education programs, and the impact of mass production practices on their intended results. Ishida turns to the settler writer Ushijima Haruko's Japanese-language literary works as a site for the intersection between imperial feminism and settler-colonial racial logic. Thai analyzes Nakagami Kenji's novella *Nihongo ni tsuite* to explore how translation works both as individual transgression of the imperial syntax and enduring structures of imperialization. By investigating various sites of cultural imperialism in the Japanese empire and its persistent legacy in postwar Japan, our panel illuminates the structure of cultural hegemony that constantly (re)arranges the dynamics of diverse groups, thereby exploring a possible framework for decolonization.

Organizer: Mari Ishida, Wake Forest University

Chair: Mari Ishida, Wake Forest University

Discussant: Hideto Tsuboi, Waseda University

1) Wakako Suzuki, Whitman College

Echoes of Nation, Voices of Children: Iwaya Sazanami's Storytelling in Imperial Japan

Iwaya Sazanami is widely known as a foundational writer in the development of modern Japanese children's literature. From the late Meiji period onward, his *otogibanashi* (fairy tales) played a critical role in shaping the ideal of the "little citizen," navigating between entertainment and ideological instruction. This paper examines Sazanami's practice of *kōen dōwa* (live oral storytelling), which reveals how oral performance persisted and evolved alongside the rise of print media. Through its emphasis on improvisation, *kōen dōwa* both reflected and resisted the emerging standardization of childhood in imperial Japan. Sazanami's storytelling tours extended from the Japanese mainland to regions under Japanese imperial influence, such as Taiwan, Manchuria, Korea, and Karafuto. Designed to instill loyalty among non-metropolitan audiences, these performances provoked unexpected responses at times that unsettled the imagined unity of the nation-state. When storytellers improvised beyond prepared scripts or when regional dialects and customs shaped delivery, the ideal of a culturally homogeneous childhood began to fray. I argue that Sazanami's storytelling both supported and disrupted the aims of state-sponsored education. Ultimately, this paper demonstrates how ephemeral encounters between storyteller and audience opened unique spaces that complicated the state's project of molding "little citizens," revealing the diversity of children's experiences across Japan's expanding empire.

2) Joelle Nazzicone, Kyoritsu Women's University

Keeping Time with Dōyō: Children's Songs as Education Materials in Japanese Colonies

Beginning in the late 1910s, *dōyō* (children's song/poetry) spread rapidly as a new literary form and mode of pedagogy. Represented by literary luminaries like Kitahara Hakushū and Noguchi Ujō, who both wrote and advocated for its wider applications, *dōyō* became the grounds for debating what qualities children's literature should exhibit, what roles it should occupy in children's education, and what such education should seek to accomplish. While proponents' efforts led to *dōyō*'s expansion across different platforms, including Ministry of Education textbooks, the subsequent range of materials and discourses around *dōyō*'s pedagogical promise also led to its deployment as a key component of language education programs across Japanese colonies. In examining these shifts in *dōyō*'s applications, I identify a recurring pattern of approaching *dōyō* as a tool for translating different temporalities into simplified, yet uneasy trajectories of development—for the child, the nation, and the metropole's shifting relationship with its colonies. I argue that attempts to wield *dōyō* thus indicated recognition of literature's affective and practical capacities to push for different socio-political outcomes. I demonstrate how, even in the case of *dōyō*'s colonial application, the breadth of its forms, of the performers and audiences tasked with its proliferation, meant that the architects of colonial education programs ultimately could not exercise full control over all end results.

3) Mari Ishida, Wake Forest University

Fantasy of Cross-Racial Affection: Ushijima Haruko's Imperial Feminism in her Colonial and Postcolonial Writings

Ushijima Haruko (1913–2002) gained attention as a writer when she lived in Manchukuo, Japan's puppet state that existed from 1932 until 1945. While her Japanese-language works engaged in the ideology of racial harmony undergirding multiethnic Manchukuo, this paper uncovers how her works serve as a platform where imperial feminism intersects with settler-colonial logics of race, by reading her short story *Zhang Feng-shan* (1941) and her essay *Silent Smile* (1969) together. Ushijima's story, set in Manchukuo, addresses the dually ambivalent subhuman position of a Japanese female settler in the Japanese empire, as a settler estranged from the metropole and as a woman marginalized in a patriarchal settler society. Yet, her narrative also aims to displace both colonial violence and the subhuman position of female settlers with the fantasy of racial harmony. I argue that, to do so, it mobilizes a feminized trope of affection as a means of indigenizing female settlers and thus of envisaging an affective bond with Chinese natives as the bond that separates subhumanized collaborating natives from non-humanized local dissidents who can be killed with impunity. I conclude my paper by discussing how Ushijima's postwar writing both perpetuates the imperial feminist logics of affection in her settler nostalgia for the romanticized colonial relation and provides a clue for undoing the settler-colonial logics of race and the imperial feminist mode of relationality and feeling.

4) Suong Thai, UCLA

Translation as (Un)Relation: Reading Nakagami Kenji's "Nihongo ni tsuite" in the Entanglements of Empires

Set and published during the Vietnam War, Nakagami Kenji's novella *Nihongo ni tsuite* (1968) explores the vexed affinity between a *burakumin* youth and a Black American soldier in the layered context of the American war in Vietnam, the US-

Japan Cold War alliance, and the Japanese leftist student movement. The black-*buraku* transnational, transracial solidarity is based on the parallelism of minority identities that each character assumes in their respective social order. However, that affinity is troubled by the politics of language and translation where the impassable gap between English and Japanese portends the incommensurability between these identities in the postcolonial world of war and empire. Using postcolonial translation and relation theories, this paper focuses on untranslated/untranslatable moments between these minority subjects to explore how their impossible communication signifies not only loss in translation, but rather, loss as translation—loss of signification, identification, and relation in the racial-political entanglements between American empire, Japanese subempire, and Vietnamese battleground in the Cold War apparatus. Situating the minority subjects in the correlated network of trans/national conflict and alliance, this paper examines processes of translation, as well as its lapses and absences, not only as individual attempts to transgress the imperial syntax but also as structures of imperialization that both enable and disable minority relations.

Session Code: 4-D

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-103

Title: Ghostly Geographies of War and Memory: Transnational Feminist Traces Across Seas, Borders, and Empires

Abstract:

This panel examines the ghostly geographies left by war, empire, and industrial modernity across East Asia's seas and borders. Tracing the lingering afterlives of violence, labor, and displacement, the four papers illuminate how gendered memories and transnational solidarities emerge from the ruins of the twentieth century. Shin Hyeona's "The Ghost Ship of the Arms Industry" follows the rise and decline of shipbuilding cities from postwar Japan to South Korea, revealing how the Cold War military economy created migrating zones of prosperity and decay. Jang Soohee's "At the Site of Violence" juxtaposes Filipino "comfort women" narratives with Japanese soldiers' memoirs of the Battle of Leyte, exposing intertwined memories of victimhood and denial. Yiyi Tsai's "Bridging Tides" reimagines oceanic coexistence as a posthuman, ecological response to modernity's violence. Finally, Sijin Paek's "Bridging Borders" investigates Zainichi Korean women's peace activism during the Cold War, highlighting solidarities that transcended racial and national divisions. Together, these papers chart a transoceanic feminist cartography of memory that connects industrial ruins, colonial archives, and embodied testimonies. By foregrounding the spectral presence of the past within contemporary feminist politics, the panel reveals how the ghosts of war continue to drift—across waters, borders, and histories—shaping new imaginaries of coexistence and resistance in East Asia.

Organizer: Hyeona Shin, Pusan National University

Chair: Sijin Paek, University of Toronto

1) Hyeona Shin, Pusan National University

The Ghost Ship of the Arms Industry: From Japan to Korea, Through the Cold War Currents and the Fall of Shipbuilding Cities

This paper traces the rise and decline of Japan's postwar shipbuilding industry within the military economy of the Cold War, reading its trajectory through the metaphor of a "ghost ship." Beginning in 1947, Japan's state-funded Planned Shipbuilding Program rebuilt the wartime shipyards under the supervision of the United States, transforming them into a crucial base for the Cold War economy. Shipyards such as Hakodate and Nagasaki once achieved the status of a "shipbuilding kingdom," accounting for half of global ship launches. Yet this rapid growth rested upon temporary contracts, subcontracted labor, industrial accidents, and recurring dismissals. The boom of the 1950s and the heavy industrialization drive of the 1970s briefly inflated regional economies, but as the Cold War receded, the shipbuilding cities were abandoned—adrift like derelict vessels on a quiet sea. The industry's center shifted from Japan to South Korea, only for Korean shipbuilding cities to encounter the same decline in the 2010s. This study follows this transnational cycle of rise and ruin, or what may be called a history of "migrating decline," to reveal how the military-industrial complex repeatedly produced and discarded local lives. The "ghost ship" ultimately stands for those shipbuilding cities that once carried the national dream of prosperity, now left behind as spectral ruins of the Cold War's industrial modernity.

2) Soohye Jang, Dong-a University

At the Site of Violence: Filipino “Comfort Women” and the Memory of the Battle of Leyte

This study compares two contrasting narratives of the Battle of Leyte: picture books created by Filipino women who were forced into the Japanese military “comfort women” system and memoirs written by Japanese soldiers who participated in the same battle. The Battle of Leyte—the largest naval engagement of the Asia-Pacific War—functions here as a shared historical event through which the perspectives of victims and perpetrators are brought into critical relation. Ōoka Shōhei’s *Record of the Battle of Leyte (Reite senki)*, based on his own wartime experience, offers insight into how Japanese soldiers perceived the battle and how, in the postwar period, the memory and responsibility of military violence came to be selectively forgotten. In contrast, *Another Leyte Battle*, authored by a Filipino survivor, conveys the embodied and sensory reality of violence experienced by women who continued to live in proximity to the very site of their trauma. By placing these texts into dialogue, this study examines how narratives of violence diverge depending on positionality—occupier versus occupied, soldier versus victimized woman. It further argues that a victim-centered narrative of the Japanese military “comfort women” system allows for a deeper understanding of how the violence of the Battle of Leyte was lived, remembered, and continues to resonate in the present.

3) Sijin Paek, University of Toronto

Bridging Borders: Zainichi Women and Transnational Feminist Activism in Cold War East Asia

This paper examines the transnational feminist activism of Zainichi Korean women—Koreans residing in Japan—during the early Cold War, focusing on their participation in the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF) with Korean and Japanese feminist groups. While recent scholarship revisits feminist voices in postwar peace movements, many studies remain confined within national frameworks, overlooking the diasporic women who bridged Japan and Korea. Focusing on 1945 through the Korean War, the paper explores the activities of the Chae-il-cho-sŏn-min-ju-yŏ-sŏng-dongmaeng (Nyŏmaeng), which joined WIDF’s internationalist peace campaigns by sending petitions, letters, and donations. Through critical readings of Nyŏmaeng newspapers, archives, and essays, it examines how these women envisioned peace shaped by wartime experience while negotiating racial, colonial, and national hierarchies. Analyzing both official and personal records, the study reveals how Zainichi women built cross-border solidarities linking the two Koreas and Japan amid Cold War divisions. Their activism exposes the fluidity and contradictions of “internationalism,” highlighting contested diasporic subjectivities and redefined feminist agency. By centering women positioned at geopolitical margins, this paper offers a nuanced understanding of transnational feminism and peace activism in Cold War East Asia.

4) Yiying Tsai, Tainan National University of the Arts

Bridging Tides: Oceanic Coexistence and Pluralistic Knowledge in the Posthuman Era

This study explores posthuman cultural transmission and calls for a shift from anthropocentric frameworks toward ecological coexistence. In the face of escalating climate and ecological crises, it focuses on cultures formed through diverse and fluid networks rather than one-directional dissemination. The oceanic environment—central to many Asian societies—serves as a key site for examining human-sea relations sustained through oral histories, music, culinary practices, and the arts, contributing to SDGs 11, 13, 14, and 17. Amid overlapping global challenges such as war, pandemics, and environmental disruption, the pursuit of sustainable coexistence emerges as both an ethical and imaginative task. Cultural practices and exchanges offer critical insights for addressing these intertwined crises. Using urban cultural nodes— independent bookstores, art spaces in Northern Taiwan, port city centers, and community-based events—as case studies, the research investigates how local dynamics are revitalized and cultural memory sustained. The historical exchange between Taiwan and Japan provides an essential transnational perspective. By positioning researchers and cultural participants as co-creators, this study continually asks: “How can we coexist with others?” in a changing world. Ultimately, it proposes a collaborative and pluralistic model of cultural transmission that bridges ecological and cultural dimensions of coexistence.

Session Code: 4-E

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-091

Title: Real Virtualities in Subaltern Philippine Experience

Abstract:

Virtuality is concerned with doubling—a doubling that hinges on contradictions that are seemingly unreconcilable. Often, virtuality is set against reality, something notable in the assertion that truthful and actual counterparts exist before and behind our phone and computer screens. Convention dictates that, with the speed of technological advancement, this dynamic would lean one way or the other, with recent news coverage and op-eds echoing concerns about the primacy of the virtual in navigating the real. This circumstance, however, begs to be complicated further through a particular Deleuzian project, specifically articulating the false dichotomy between virtual and real and, by extension, the notion that one supersedes the other. This panel seeks to explore this very complication through subaltern experiences that are continuously articulated via virtual spaces. Such gestures are motivated by the virtual distribution, access, and processing of material experiences. For example, several resistance movements were born of virtual exchanges online in response to corruption in Asia. Natural disasters, so common an occurrence in the global south, are reported through social media with little reference to these countries bearing the brunt of the climate change resulting from corporate greed. Thus, we propose viewing similar cases, common throughout Asia, through the lens of Philippine experience in an attempt to respond to questions resulting from the virtual-real dynamic.

Organizer: Regina Carmeli D.C. Regala, University of the Philippines Diliman

Chair: Regina Carmeli D.C. Regala, University of the Philippines Diliman

- 1) Regina Carmeli D.C. Regala, University of the Philippines Diliman

Procedural Persuasion: Extrajudicial Killings and Player Immersion in Hapunan

Though Rodrigo Duterte's presidential term ended in 2022, the Philippines still grapples with a prominent and under-documented atrocity: extrajudicial killings (EJKs) of suspected drug offenders committed by police and citizens under Duterte's so-called "war on drugs." These EJKs leave victims' loved ones to acquire justice through diverse modalities such as films, art, and even video games. Hapunan is a horror game within which justice might be pursued. Here, the player takes on the role of a young man who supports his family by selling balut in a town threatened by "Pay to Kill" incidents. The horrors he encounters escalate in scale and scope: where he initially overcomes mere darkness, he must eventually overcome a greater horror—one where previous murders play out in the present and lead to a possible demise. Through Hapunan, players partake in a situation only approximately accessed given its flawed virtual documentation in mainstream media. Of use here is Bogost's procedural rhetoric, referring to the "practice of persuading through processes in general and computational processes in particular," especially noting how coded procedures ensure games are playable according to authorial intent while also influencing player behaviors inside and outside the game—"structur[ing] behaviors in all cases." First-hand immersion in violence then, despite Hapunan's repelling premise, visuals, and narrative, encourages one to think and act in the name of justice regarding EJKs.

- 2) Shaira Kristine M. Venzon, University of the Philippines Diliman

Malayang Malaya: A Case Study of Malaya, an Audio Porn Artist on r/AlasJuicy

In the Philippines, women are portrayed as "non-complaining and silenced" martyrs (Roces, 2009), a result of dominant cultural and mediated texts. Resulting discourse on female pleasure and sexuality is subverted by the active "normalization" of such expectations on female bodies (Bordo, 1999). Filipinas are subordinated within these vulnerabilities and conceptions of "femininity," reducing them to mere pleasure-giving bodies in a heterosexual relationship. This leads to the suppression of female sexuality and pleasure within the Philippine context and its Catholic faith. Feminist body politics has long been subverted within systems of power, while also being seen as a potentiality for resistance. Dworkin (1999) emphasizes how "not one part of a woman's body is left untouched, unaltered," showcasing the extent of objectification female bodies have endured. Women's bodies have always been subject to the male gaze, even more so in pornography. This research challenges the corporeal as a place of resistance by pushing for a discourse of pornography that is not only seen and embodied, but is also heard and uttered for emancipation. The voice is sensed as an "embodied sound" of social ideology and experience, and how aurality and the voice can impose social position and power (Weidman, 2014). Using the case of Malaya, an audio porn artist, this study further complicates corporeal utterances to reclaim her agency over her femininity and sexuality on the subreddit r/AlasJuicy.

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3) Ma. Rosa Cer D. Bragais, University of the Philippines Diliman

Posthegemonic Power in Hyperrealized Protests and Social Movements

Global politics in 2025 involved massive upheavals heavily rooted in our mediatized lives. This includes the rise of right-wing ideology and the legitimization of Israel's genocide in the West, and media-driven, hyperrealized social movements that toppled fascist regimes in the Global South. Specifically of note is Nepal's Discord-powered ouster that co-opted the pirate flag from the anime *One Piece* as their symbol for resistance, which in turn led to a wave of similar protests in other countries, including the Philippines. Filipinos took to the streets in September 2025 following the exposure of massive corruption involving the government's flood control projects. While thousands of Filipinos physically attended simultaneous protests in symbolic spaces such as Luneta Park, the EDSA Shrine, and Mendiola, virtual protests were also held across various platforms, from social media campaigns to an in-game protest held at a Roblox server. This paper explores these novel forms of protests and social movements which have emerged from the hyperreal intersections of the virtual and the real. Through a posthegemonic lens, I frame these protests as the global subaltern's resistance to the neoliberal mode which has permeated all aspects of our lives—and material evidence from which progressive movements can draw our politics of hope.

4) Mark Benedict F. Lim, Ateneo De Manila University

Alice in Borderland: The Online Non-Presence of Alice Guo as a Premonition of the Postnational via a Reading of Everything Everywhere All at Once

The Philippines was shocked to learn that Chinese-Filipino Bamban Mayor Alice Guo was a fake Filipino citizen. Conspiracy theories abounded, suggesting that she was a deep-penetration agent paving the way for a Chinese occupation of the Philippines. Senate hearings were held, memes disseminated, and racist rhetoric ran amok. Still, Guo's origins, as constructed through the media, only served to further a crisis of national imagination—further destabilizing the epistemic boundaries of who may be inscribed within the category of “Filipino.” This incapacity to locate and stabilize Guo within the coordinates of national(ist) imaginaries should not be read as indicative of renewed or extended colonial anxieties. Rather, her predicament provides an avenue to reimagine subjectivity beyond the logistics of nationhood. Guo's indeterminacy refuses fixity and, instead, posits the world as an assemblage of infinitesimal human experiences and histories. To structure a mediating lens in an attempt to harness and critique both Chinese and Philippine discourses, the multiversal cinematic worldbuilding of *Everything Everywhere All at Once* suffices as a means to reconfigure one's being from conventionally-bound citizenship (and its preoccupation with nation, race, and cultural belonging) to the unbound network of relations that undeniably exist and construct identities today.

Session Code: 4-F

Room: 2-407

Panel Code: p-044

Title: The Sojourning Self: Ambiguity, Belonging, and Transformation in Sinophone Literature

Abstract:

Paul Siu's influential 1952 article “The Sojourner” defines the sojourner as an immigrant who clings to their cultural heritage while remaining unwilling to become a permanent resident in their host country. Over seven decades, scholars have revised this concept, recognizing its empirical heterogeneity and complexity. Recent scholarship observes the transformative power of the sojourning experience: from physical diaspora and psychological liminality emerge resilience, adaptation, and a protean selfhood that transcends national, ethnic, cultural, and anthropocentric boundaries. This panel examines how Sinophone literature, compared to Anglophone and Japanese literary traditions, produces visions that embrace ambiguity and foreignness, articulating aspirations for inclusivity, mutability, and transformation. The four papers explore works by Eileen Chang, Li Kotomi, Liu Cixin, and Arthur C. Clarke to investigate how the sojourning self operates across multiple registers: recasting personal story as intersubjective experience; reflecting on belonging and identity amid cultural clashes; positioning sojourning as a site of productive irreconcilability; and revealing humanity's continual redefinition as sustainable movement between displacement and transformation.

Organizer: Chialan Sharon Wang, Middlebury College

Chair: Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, Oberlin College

1) Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, Oberlin College

Know Thyself in Eileen Chang's Little Reunions

Eileen Chang (1920–1995) was arguably twentieth-century China's most eminent celebrity writer. Her personal history has generated as much interest as her stories, fueling examination of her aristocracy, childhood trauma, East-West education, politics, and romances. As a 1940s literary star, Chang knew firsthand the rewards and perils of fame. Critics often treat her biography as an analytical guide, while her characters' moral failings are sometimes seen as reflecting her own deficiencies, making her a perennial gossip target. This conflation of life and fiction intensified after the posthumous publication of *Little Reunions* (2009), which invited readers to verify protagonist Julie's story against Chang's experience, raising questions: Why did Chang expose her darkest thoughts without naming herself as protagonist? This paper suggests Chang's autobiographical fiction creates narrative space exploring self-knowledge as a means of knowing the world and others. Chang employs an "aesthetic of interruption" that shifts perspectives unexpectedly, making readers unsure whose viewpoints are privileged. This deliberate self-other obfuscation transforms personal story into intersubjective sojourning experience, making private public, fictional historical, and transient timeless.

2) Jessica Tsui-yan Li, York University

Sojourning Selves and Transcultural Spaces: Diasporic Identity in Eileen Chang's "June Bride"

This paper examines the sojourning self in Eileen Chang's *June Bride* (1960), a Mandarin screenplay set in postwar Hong Kong, exploring how it articulates diasporic Chinese desires for social integration, emotional fulfillment, and autonomy. The film portrays Chinese diasporas from Japan, the Philippines, the U.S., and Southeast Asia converging in Hong Kong—a transient, hybridized space accommodating multiple forms of "Chineseness." Through protagonist Danlin, the screenplay foregrounds female autonomy and redefines romantic fidelity as mutual expectation, disrupting patriarchal norms that treat women as commodities. Blending Hollywood screwball comedy with localized concerns, *June Bride* offers an incisive portrayal of middle-class diasporic leisure in capitalist Hong Kong, contrasting sharply with Communist China's political severity. The screenplay engages tensions between tradition and modernity, East and West, and male and female subjectivities, staging cultural clashes that reflect broader questions of belonging and identity. The socio-historical context of Motion Picture & General Investment Co. Ltd. underscores the film industry's role in shaping postwar Mandarin cinema and Hong Kong's transnational cultural landscape. Situating *June Bride* within the framework of the sojourning self, this paper contributes to understanding transcultural identity, gender politics, and diasporic modernity in Chang's cinematic oeuvre.

3) Chialan Sharon Wang, Middlebury College

Inhabiting Irreconcilability: Queer Sojourning in Li Kotomi's Fictions

Li Kotomi's *Moon and Starlight Night* and *Counting Five to See the Crescent Moon* depict romantic encounters between characters from different countries—encounters fraught with clashes between languages, political ideologies, and ethnic differences. In both works, physically and psychologically sojourning characters navigate a complex network of power, privilege, liberation, and disenfranchisement. This paper studies how queerness manifests as a fractured sojourning self-constituted by encountering the Other. It examines how transient or unsettled dwelling in a foreign country—motivated either by escape from one's native self-shaped by one's birth country or pursuit of one's ideal self-cultivated by a non-native culture—foregrounds compulsive self-translation. Such translation demands that one account for oneself as a misrecognized and misrecognizing entity. Although Li's works predominantly portray lesbian relationships, queerness in these texts connotes women's bonding that simultaneously reveals and inhabits differences and sometimes irremediable gaps. The paper examines how Li queers the notion of sojourning with alternating perspectives and multiple linguistic registers, making it a site of irreconcilability and indeterminacy through which her characters exercise a queer agency that rejects assimilation.

4) Jack Hang-Tat Leong, York University

The Sojourning Self and Cosmic Diaspora in the Science Fiction of Liu Cixin and Arthur C. Clarke

This paper examines space travel in Liu Cixin's and Arthur C. Clarke's science fiction through the interconnected themes of the sojourning self and diaspora. Space travel has long reflected humanity's aspirations toward sustainability, transcendence, and ecological renewal in Chinese and Western traditions. Comparing Liu's *Three Body Problem* trilogy and Clarke's *Space Odyssey* series, this study investigates how interstellar journeying transforms humanistic ideologies and redefines subjectivity and belonging. Both authors portray humanity as a cosmic diaspora—a species in exile

navigating displacement and searching for continuity amid space's vastness. The sojourning self-embodies this existential condition: transient, uprooted, yet persistently constructing meaning and home beyond Earth. Through visions of planetary migration, ecological fragility, and technological transcendence, Liu and Clarke imagine futures where humanity's progress depends on reconciling alienation with renewal, and exile with endurance. Drawing on the transcendental and ethical dimensions of space exploration in their novels and adaptations, this paper argues that Liu and Clarke transform cosmic expansion into meditation on diasporic identity and ecological consciousness. The interplay between ideology, technology, and the sojourning condition reveals humanity's continual redefinition—a sustainable movement between displacement and transformation in the search for cosmic belonging.

Session Code: 4-G

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-081

Title: Iconographies and Islamophobia: Visual Culture and Concerns of the Nation

Abstract:

This panel explores the intersection between visual culture and technologies and strategies for imagining belonging, particularly in the context of institutionally entrenched Islamophobia in various regions of Asia. While Benedict Anderson found the crux of imagining the nation in the newly crystallized technologies of publication and linguistic community-making, we now live in a world wherein the preponderance of audiovisual forms of communication have minoritized textual discourse. Increasingly, younger citizens seek information and community through visual communities in online spaces and through social media technologies, although traditional media such as television and cinema continue to play an important role. Furthermore, hegemonic displays of nation and ethnonationalistic ambitions, often funded by capitalist elites, manifest in hypernationalist populist forms. These diverse media adopt different kinds of storytelling techniques from testimonies of “direct address” to cinematic excesses. Against this milieu, we interrogate the ways in which visualizations and visual technologies are being used in relation to Muslim and Middle Eastern cultures. In particular, this panel explores the way that cultural producers are engaging with iconography associated with Middle Eastern nations and Muslims, including stereotypes, as a way to challenge, rework, or call out the notions of the nation these symbols suggest.

Organizer: Sowparnika Balaswaminathan, Concordia University, Montreal

Chair: Sascha Crasnow, Drake University, Des Moines

Discussant: Yamamoto Yoshitaka, Yale University

1) Sascha Crasnow, Drake University, Des Moines

“Ceci n’est pas une echarpe”: Artist Responses to the Commodification and Stereotyping of the Keffiyeh

Since 7 October 2023 and the military onslaught of Gaza by Israel that has followed, the keffiyeh has been a more prevalent sight globally as thousands have gathered to protest Israel's genocide in Gaza and show their solidarity with Palestinian liberation. This prevalence has been met with attempted bans on the wearing of the keffiyeh in certain locales—labelling it as a symbol of “terrorism” or “antisemitism”—as well as the hyper-commodification of the scarf, sold online by Walmart and army surplus stores alongside Palestinian-run smaller companies. This polarization of the keffiyeh as either read as a symbol of violence or commercialized accessory is however not new. Retailers like Urban Outfitters were slammed in 2007 for selling the scarf (sometimes in a variety of colors) as a fashion item, labeling it an “anti-war scarf.” The company was critiqued both for the commodification of a Palestinian heritage symbol and by those who associated it with “terrorism”—building on an equivalency produced in mass media between keffiyeh-clad resistance fighters and terrorists. In this paper, I examine the work of four contemporary artists—Larissa Sansour, Mona Hatoum, Monther Jawabreh, and Haitham Haddad—who utilize the keffiyeh in their work as a means to comment on the commodification and stereotyping associated with this nationalist symbol. Furthermore, I discuss how these works challenge existing nationalist narratives within Palestine as well as perceptions of Palestinians globally

2) Michelle Al-Ferzly, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

The Islamic Book: Between Collection and Erasure

Fetching millions on the art market and coveted by institutions worldwide, historic illustrated Islamic manuscripts and paintings on paper have long occupied the attention of collectors since their first arrival in the Euro-American spheres over a century ago. Displayed in museums, these intricate illustrations—depicting epics, histories, or romances—are shown as

examples of the Islamic world's contribution to portraiture and painting. These images have also been of interest to scholars, as their figural depictions challenges public understandings of Islamic art's prohibition of the portrayal of the human form. These items, then, have been instrumentalized to shed misconceptions of Islamic art and counter narratives of the regressive nature of Islamic tradition. This paper considers this legacy, examining contemporary book artists working within the Islamic form, including Islam Aly, Joumana Medlej, and Halah Khan. These artists' works have often been discussed as part of spreading cultural understanding and addressing Islamophobia, where they are divorced from their immediate artistic milieu in favor of their role as objects of cultural ambassadorship. While critiquing this mode of reception, I argue that these artist books, which constitute a growing area of artistic practice, should instead be seen as expressions of cultural belonging, Arab nationalism, especially in the context of identity formation in the diaspora.

3) Sowparnika Balaswaminathan, Concordia University, Montreal

Cinematic Victims: "Itihasa" Tradition and Hindu Nationalism in Contemporary Indian Films

While tensions between Hindu and Muslim communities have been historically valent in the Indian subcontinent, the exacerbation of these conflicts took genocidal overtones during the Partition of India and Pakistan (and Bangladesh) in 1947. In India, a series of Islamophobic events have followed since the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the Godhra riots in 2001, including the abrogation of the special status accorded to Kashmir, the Citizenship Act Amendment, the Shaheen Bagh protests, the targeting of liberal arts universities and student protests, beef bans and consequent lynchings of mostly Muslim men suspected of killing cows, and purdah and hijab bans in several states. Several of these events have occurred under the aegis of the political party forming the current Central government, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and its allies, all of whom claim a Hindu nationalist ideology in which India belongs to Hindus and Muslims are immigrant others. In this paper, I focus on a series of films released between 2019 and 2025 which narrate precolonial and postcolonial "histories" that make cinematic the suffering of Hindus at the hands of violent Muslims. I use the concept of "itihasa" which refers to a set of religious Hindu literature that combine history, hagiography, and mythology, to analyze how these films contain an infrastructure of historical moments scaffolded with imagined motivations and incidents, consequently manufacturing violent melodrama.

Session Code: 4-H

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-038

Title: Japan's Immigration Policy: Politicizing the Depoliticized

Abstract:

Although Japan's 2019 Immigration Law marked a new era in the country's migration policy, the subsequent series of immigration reforms were characterized by their "depoliticized" nature. The government emphasized continuity with previous policies to avoid triggering political debate on the issue. However, signs of politicization emerged in the 2020s. In 2021, the MOJ attempted to submit a bill to tighten refugee policies, but it was withdrawn three times due to civic protests. Immigration became a central issue in the 2025 Upper House election. The "foreigner problem" featured prominently in electoral campaigns, contributing to a landslide victory for Sanseito. This outcome influenced the migration policies of other parties: the Takaichi administration appointed Kimi Onoda as minister in charge of migration policy. Has Japanese politics turned migration into a site of political conflict? The papers in this session explore the role of various political actors to clarify what drives the politicization of immigration in Japan. The first paper analyzes the MOJ's withdrawal of the revised immigration bill, focusing on the role of civil society organizations and opposition parties. The second paper disaggregates the "foreigner problem" by analyzing voter attitudes toward various contested issues involving foreign nationals and capital from recent elections. The last paper investigates how both inter- and intra-party competition have shaped migration policies within the right.

Organizer: Naoto Higuchi, Waseda University

Chair: Naoto Higuchi, Waseda University

Discussant: Toake Endoh, Waseda University

1) Nanako Inaba, Sophia University

The Political Impact of Undocumented Migrants' Voices Coming Out of the Shadows of Immigration Detention Centers in Japan

The proposed amendments to the Immigration Act in 2021 aimed to facilitate the deportation of undocumented migrants more easily than under the existing framework. Undocumented migrants constitute one of the most resource-deprived groups in society and often face significant challenges in organizing protest movements. Nonetheless, they can be considered active citizens who exert influence on legislative processes. This study examines how the participation of undocumented migrants in protest movements affected the outcome of the proposed amendments to the Immigration Act, in which undocumented migrants were the primary targets. Since the post-war period, undocumented migrants have repeatedly sought to shape immigration policy. In 2021, as a result of large-scale protests involving undocumented migrants themselves, the bill was ultimately withdrawn. Undocumented migrants protested through hunger strikes while detained in immigration detention centers. Upon their provisional release, they continued to assert their political agency by appearing in public spaces, speaking publicly, and exercising their rights as citizens. The more undocumented migrants were excluded from various rights by the government, the more they became integrated into civil society through their participation in protest movements, culminating in successful social mobilization by undocumented migrants.

2) Yunchen Tian (Kyoto University) & Michael Strausz (Texas Christian University)

Xenophobia or Economic Anxieties? Disaggregating the Foreigner Problem in Contemporary Japan

Although lacking an official immigration policy, Japan's foreign population has grown rapidly in recent years to reach over 3.5 million in 2025. Despite government initiatives at "multicultural coexistence," migration has surged to become one of the most salient political issues as populist political entrepreneurs such as Sanseito have rallied supporters under its pledge to address Japan's "foreigner problem," a move soon embraced by establishment leaders such as Takaichi Sanae, who was elected president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in October 2025. However, the "foreigner problem" is not a single policy issue but rather an arbitrary amalgamation of claims regarding issues ranging from overtourism, inflows of foreign investment capital, acquisitions of land and real estate by foreign nationals and entities, crimes committed by resident foreigners, and racialized targeting of specific demographic groups. Which issues resonate the most with the public, and how do socioeconomic factors impact the salience of each issue? We will investigate and present results from a novel conjoint survey experiment designed to disaggregate the various components of the "foreigner problem" and their relative salience to a broadly representative sample. In particular, we will investigate the interaction of factors such as migrants' race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and geographic distribution in mediating the response of survey respondents.

3) Naoto Higuchi (Waseda University), Yoojin Koo (International Christian University), Sachi Takaya (The University of Tokyo), and Nanako Inaba (Sophia University)

Explaining the Political Construction of the "Foreigner Issues" in Japan

The 2025 election marked a turning point in the politicization of migration in Japan. This period witnessed not only the rise of Sanseito but also a subsequent rush to tighten migration policies. Why did migration emerge as a major political issue in Japan? Existing explanations typically emphasize two factors: (1) social strain stemming from economic stagnation and widening social inequality, and (2) backlash against growing diversity, reflected in the increasing numbers of migrants and tourists. While these accounts appear plausible, they offer limited explanatory power for understanding the phenomenon. Rather than relying on such structural or cultural explanations, we propose an alternative framework centered on the relationship between challenger and established parties. Specifically, it examines how patterns of party competition, and the strategic responses of established parties to emerging issues shape the politicization of migration in Japan. Our tentative explanations are as follows. The declining power of the LDP created space for more extreme alternatives. Despite high public interest in the election, the campaign lacked a central issue, which redirected attention toward fringe topics such as migration. Sanseito's focus on this issue enabled it to claim ownership over immigration. Sanseito's growing salience prompted the LDP to propose accommodative responses, and thus the Takaichi administration subsequently incorporated "foreigner issues" into its policy agenda.

Session Code: 4-I

Room: 2-411

Panel Code: p-111

Title: Modern Burmese Buddhism in Context: Psychic Powers, Political Activism, and Heritage Diplomacy

Abstract:

The study of Buddhism in Burma over the last century defies many axioms of Asian Studies. This panel deploys three case studies to draw out new directions emerging in Burmese Buddhist Studies, reassessing what we thought we knew of Buddhist practices, political figures, and international relations. The first paper explores the role of psychic powers in the popular meditation practice of Hpa-Auk Sayadaw. Known as “*abhiññās*” in Pali, these powers are often framed as outside mainstream practice or fantastical relics of the past, but the first presenter will show how they reanimate fundamental doctrines and reconcile traditional soteriological goals with modernist values. In the second paper, the focus will be on U Ottama, considered a “political monk” and early champion of Buddhist nationalism; yet our second presenter will argue that such characterizations fail to account for the broader ideological climate of that time, wherein U Ottama and Burma were critical nodes in a transnational, anti-colonial movement. The last paper uses the participation of the Japanese delegation to the 1954 Sixth Buddhist Council in Yangon to explore how Buddhist Heritage Diplomacy forged connections between the two communities, while reinforcing mutual misperceptions of each other’s goals. However, this state diplomacy, according to our last presenter, often gave way to a more radical internationalism. Taken together, all three papers aim at disrupting common narratives in Asian Studies.

Organizer: Kanae Kawamoto, Keio University

Chair: Takahiro Kojima, Tsuda University

Discussant: Takahiro Kojima, Tsuda University

- 1) Maynadi Kyaw, Kyoto University

The Burmese Monk U Ottama: Transnational, Anti-Colonial Activist in India and Japan

U Ottama was an Arakanese monk during Burma’s colonial era. He is known as a Buddhist nationalist, political monk, forerunner of Burmese nationalism, and hero of the Arakanese people, renowned for his travels, anti-colonial activities, pan-Asian alliances with India and Japan, and role as a political monk. This study reexamines the labels applied to U Ottama in current scholarship, such as “Political monk,” “Buddhist nationalist,” and “forerunner of Burmese nationalism,” which fail to account for the broader ideological and activist context of his time. The Pan-Asian movement, comprising Buddhist revivalism, theosophy, and transnational anti-colonial activism, provides the context for situating his anti-colonial Buddhist thought. Drawing on multilingual archives, this study questions the view that positions U Ottama as a Buddhist nationalist. It examines his role as a transnational Buddhist monk who traveled the world, engaged with diverse ideologies and movements across Asia, forged alliances, and conducted anti-colonial activities. At the center of this paper is U Ottama’s anti-colonial thought, evidenced by his writings, speeches, and connections with India and Japan. Through a case study of this figure, it becomes possible to redefine Burma’s past and envision a different future. This research reveals Burma’s past relationship with the extensive pan-Asian Buddhist network connecting Asia, positioning Burma as an active participant in transnational anti-colonial movements.

- 2) Kanae Kawamoto, Keio University

Practicing Supernatural Powers: Abhiññā in the Hpa-Auk Buddhist Meditation Method in Contemporary Myanmar

This paper explores the practical role of supernatural powers (*abhiññā*) in Theravāda Buddhism in contemporary Myanmar, focusing on the meditation method of the Burmese monk, Hpa-Auk Hsayadaw (b. 1934). While supernatural powers are not the goal of practice, they are seen as byproducts of advanced meditation achieved through deep concentration (*jhāna*). The Hpa-Auk method emphasizes tranquility (*samatha*) as a prerequisite for insight (*vipassanā*), in contrast to mainstream *vipassanā*-centric practices that do not require *samatha*. The article also examines the socio-political factors that marginalized *samatha-jhāna* meditation and the *abhiññās* in favor of *vipassanā* during Myanmar’s modernization. Such powers were suppressed as animistic magic in the nation-building period. As such, the cultivation and display of the *abhiññās* came to be framed as outside of orthodox Buddhism. However, the Hpa-Auk method teaches *abhiññā* to all practitioners as an option. It integrates *samatha-jhāna* and *abhiññā* training into a system based on Pāli canonical and para-canonical texts. Through interviews with advanced practitioners of this method, this study highlights how *abhiññā* practices are framed as tools to enrich meditation experiences and foster understanding of core teachings. The Hpa-Auk method

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represents a resurgence of such practices, reconciling traditional attainments with modern Buddhist values, demonstrating the evolution of Burmese Buddhism in response to historical and cultural shifts.

3) Tony Scott, The University of Tokyo

Buddhist Heritage Diplomacy between Japan and Burma: Mutual Understanding and Misconceptions

The Sixth Buddhist Council began in Yangon in 1954. Along with the Third World Buddhist Conference in 1953 and the Asian Socialist Conference in 1954, the Sixth Council was part of a growing international circuit of Buddhist conferences centered in Burma. In this paper, I examine the activities of the Japanese delegation to the Sixth Council, which consisted of several monks and one nun sponsored by the Japan Buddhist Federation. While their ostensible mission was to learn about and experience first-hand Burmese Buddhism, I argue they were also sent to smooth negotiations for the recovery of bodies of soldiers from Japan who had fallen in the Pacific War, a new government initiative at that time. Defying this mandate, one member of the delegation created the Nihon Shakuson Shōbōkai to propagate Burmese Buddhism back in Japan, eventually helping establish the World Peace Pagoda in the late 1950s, a symbol of international Buddhist solidarity. By analyzing the accounts of the Japanese delegation in the *Zenbutsu tsūshin*, the journal of the Japan Buddhist Federation, I will show how the heritage diplomacy practiced at the Sixth Council both reinforced the connections between the two communities but also led to mutual misconceptions. This contradiction also meant that state-sanctioned diplomacy often gave way to a more radical internationalism, evidence of the centrifugal forces of Buddhism during the Cold War in Asia.

Session Code: 4-J

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-090

Title: Rethinking Inclusion in Contemporary Japan Through the Voices of Marginalized People

Abstract:

Japanese society has long been shaped by a dominant majority culture marginalizing those seen as disrupting an imagined homogeneity. Women were also restricted, largely confined to domestic roles and excluded from equal labor participation. People with disabilities were historically excluded from public life, while Koreans and Chinese were compelled to adopt Japanese names yet remained structurally marginalized. Contemporary Japan shows important shifts. Women increasingly pursue full-time employment across varied family arrangements. People with disabilities have gained visibility and political voice, seen in the election of two senators with disabilities. Foreign residents, especially those classed as “highly skilled,” can more readily obtain permanent residency, signaling partial movement toward broader inclusion. Yet new and persistent exclusions remain: LGBTQ+ communities lack legal protections, older adults experience isolation and heightened disaster vulnerability, and children in single-parent or low-income households struggle for recognition and support. Populist actors such as Sanseikyō promote “Japan First” nationalism, which some mainstream parties also support, illustrating their ambivalence toward “outsiders.” This panel examines how these tensions are lived by people with disabilities, women, foreigners, and other marginalized groups. By placing Japan in comparative Asian perspective, it explores evolving practices of inclusion, exclusion, belonging, and visibility.

Organizer: Sébastien Penmellen Boret, Tohoku University

Chair: Sébastien Penmellen Boret, Tohoku University

Discussant: David H. Slater, Sophia University

1) Megha Wadhwa, Sophia University

We Care, but Do We Belong?: Indian Women Migrants as Caregivers in Japan’s Ageing Society

Japan’s rapidly aging population has brought an acute shortage of care workers, leading to the gradual opening of its borders to foreign labor. Among the newer groups entering this field are Indian women, whose migration reflects both economic pressures at home and shifting attitudes toward care and foreign workers in Japan. India’s expanding but uneven economy produces a surplus of skilled and semi-skilled youth seeking opportunities abroad, while Japan’s demographic crisis creates a parallel demand for care labor—a convergence that is both pragmatic and deeply political. This paper explores how Indian women navigate life and work within Japan’s care sector, a space marked by cultural hierarchies and the uneasy inclusion of outsiders. It examines the networks of training schools, intermediaries, and bilateral programs that facilitate their movement, as well as the ways gender, class, and nationality shape their experiences of care and belonging. Through ethnographic insight, it considers how these women negotiate expectations of empathy, discipline, and service in

a society that relies on their labor but often withholds full acceptance. By tracing their journeys, this study reveals how global inequalities, and local demographics intersect in intimate settings of care, challenging prevailing notions of who belongs and who cares in contemporary Japan.

2) Julia Gerster, Tohoku University

Disasters as Windows of Opportunity? Gender, Space, and Social Transformation in Post-3.11 Japan

Traditional gender roles shape how people construct and inhabit social spaces, influencing patterns of interaction, belonging, and participation. In Japan, private spaces such as the home have traditionally been regarded as women's domain, while men are expected to assert themselves in public arenas such as workplaces or neighborhood associations. Although various political measures have sought to expand women's participation in public life, progress has been slow and, in recent years, increasingly constrained by conservative backlash. Institutional theories often explain this persistence through the concept of path dependency. Yet crises such as the Great East Japan Earthquake (3.11) can disrupt long-standing social patterns—opening a temporary “window of opportunity” for change. This presentation examines how gender role expectations have shaped people's engagement within private and public spaces in post-3.11 Japan. Gender norms have limited men's participation in community events held in temporary and disaster recovery housing—spaces culturally associated with the private and feminine, sphere—while simultaneously enabling greater involvement of women in public domains such as workplaces and community planning. These shifts indicate that 3.11 momentarily expanded opportunities for individuals to renegotiate gendered spatial boundaries. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and recent conservative trends suggest that this window for transformation may once again be closing.

3) Sébastien Penmellen Boret, Tohoku University

Disability, Disaster, and Ableism in Contemporary Japan: Voices from Tohoku

This presentation explores how people with disabilities in Tohoku navigated both everyday ableism and the extraordinary conditions created by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. While official disaster plans emphasize preparedness, NHK reported that mortality among disabled residents during 3/11 was roughly double that of non-disabled people. These disparities do not simply reflect “vulnerability” but structural exclusion: disaster systems are designed around able-bodied norms, and limited recognition of disabled people's capacities and needs leads to inadequate support. Drawing on interviews, field observations, and archival materials, this research highlights how families and individuals often avoided evacuation centers—spaces perceived as inaccessible and socially hostile—and instead remained in damaged homes or cars to avoid discrimination and *meiwaku*. In doing so, they demonstrated agency, resilience, and creative coping practices, even as they were forced to operate outside formal systems. Our findings show that disasters do not only create hardship; they expose and intensify pre-existing inequalities in an ableist society. For many disabled people in Tohoku, the disaster was not a rupture but an extension of everyday barriers. By centering their voices, this presentation underscores the need to rethink “inclusion” in Japanese disaster policy and practice, moving from protection toward genuine participation, dignity, and rights.

Session Code: 4-K

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-017

Title: Dialects Endangerment and Language Policies in Japan: From Ainu to the Ryukyus

Abstract:

Across Japan, regional and indigenous languages face endangerment from modernization, geography, and past assimilation policies. The Tsugaru dialect of northern Japan has declined due to Meiji-era promotion of Standard Japanese, *hōgen fuda* punishments, depopulation, and media-driven homogenization—making it a symbol of linguistic “murder.” Educational efforts show that revitalization can extend beyond native speakers. A high school project on the Shiiba dialect improved students' linguistic awareness, while an adult workshop in Miyakonojo used dialect comparison to connect residents and newcomers, reframing dialects as shared cultural resources. The Ainu language, suppressed since 1869, now attracts learners mainly through “continuity motivation”—a desire to reconnect with ancestors—rather than practical or social incentives. Current policy supports heritage preservation but fails to embed Ainu into education or civic life, limiting broader engagement. In the south, the Ryukyuan languages also suffer from internalized stigma. Research on Yaeyaman revealed a unique spatial system anchored in the house and used “stamp rallies” to promote it publicly. Together, these

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studies show that Japan's linguistic diversity continues to erode under centralization, yet inclusive education, policy reform, and renewed community pride can sustain endangered languages and the cultural identities they embody.

Organizer: Daniel E. Josephy-Hernández, Dokkyo Daigaku; UNED, Costa Rica

Chair: Matthew Guay, Ryutsu Keizai Daigaku

Discussant: Daniel E. Josephy-Hernández, Dokkyo Daigaku; UNED, Costa Rica

1) Matthew Guay, Ryutsu Keizai Daigaku

Language Revitalization for All Ages: How Documentation of Spatial Frames of Reference in Yaeyama Okinawa Led to Activism in the Form of Stamp Rallies

Over one and a half centuries have passed since monolingual Japanese language policy was introduced into the Ryukyus, eventually culminating in all six indigenous languages of the Ryukyuan archipelago now facing extinction (Anderson 2019). This has sparked a movement of language revitalization, but one that still struggles to decolonize, including dealing with the low status of the language and its concepts (Brenzinger 2006) in the minds of these islanders raised psychologically addicted to being Japanese (Hammime 2021). This devalued attitude towards their own heritage creates many obstacles including a strong hesitation to call their words languages and embrace the more activist behavior critical for the survival of the language. This presentation will describe the orientation system used in Yaeyaman before explaining how the public stamp rallies have been conducted using clues in the language and with the house-bound spatial terms. Finally, survey results from the public who participated in the public rallies held March 29, 2025, and August 12, 2024, will be presented. I show how the stamp rallies improved all participants' attitude toward the language and its unique way of giving directions regardless of their previous viewpoint.

2) Naoyuki Hirose, Kyushu University

Dialect Education for All Case Studies from High School and Community Outreach

This presentation introduces two case studies of dialect education. In Japan, many regional dialects are currently endangered, and efforts to document and revitalize them are underway across the country. However, such revitalization activities are often limited to members of the communities where these dialects have traditionally been spoken (Fudano 2016). Two practical examples of this approach are presented. The first is a high school classroom implementation (Hirose 2024). The instructional material was based on the Shiiba dialect (Shimoji and Hirose 2022), a variety I am currently documenting in a descriptive grammar. Although this dialect is not local to the students, engaging with an unfamiliar linguistic system fostered their metalinguistic awareness and grammatical reasoning. The second example is a dialect workshop for adults, conducted as an outreach activity in Miyakonojo City, Miyazaki Prefecture. Rather than simply explaining the local dialect, the workshop included comparisons with other dialects across Japan. This approach provided participants with a multifaceted perspective on their local variety and, through discussions involving both long-term residents and newcomers, contributed to the development of the regional community through language.

3) Silja Ijas, Hokkaido University

Motivation, Policy, and Practice: What Drives Ainu People's Ainu Language Learning?

The Ainu, the indigenous people of northern Japan, have been engaged in revitalizing their ancestral language since the 1980s after more than a century of suppression under Japan's assimilation policies, which began in 1869. Although government attitudes shifted toward limited cultural support in recent decades, revitalization efforts remain modest, and only a small proportion of Ainu actively learn or express interest in their language. Drawing on 15 interviews with Ainu residents in Biratori, Hokkaido (2024–2025), this study examines the motivations behind Ainu language learning through three categories: instrumental (seeking practical or economic benefits), integrative (wanting to belong to a community of speakers), and continuity (connecting with ancestral heritage). The findings show that continuity motivation overwhelmingly drives current learners, reflecting a desire to recover identity and lineage rather than to gain social or economic advantages. The paper concludes that for Ainu language revival to succeed, policy must move beyond heritage-oriented support and instead integrate the language into everyday social and institutional domains. Only by linking the Ainu language to broader educational and professional opportunities can revitalization efforts generate lasting, community-wide engagement.

4) Max Monson, Kyushu University

Tsugaru Dialect: An Endangered Dialect of Northern Japan at the Intersection of Geography, Policy, and History

The Tsugaru dialect (TD), an endangered dialect of Japanese spoken in northern Japan, is often considered to be one of the least intelligible to speakers of other Japanese dialects. TD is spoken in the Tsugaru region of western Aomori prefecture, a region that corresponds to a former feudal domain and which is geographically isolated by several mountain ranges and the Sea of Japan. The region was once a stop on the *kitamaebune* sea route and was historically populated by the indigenous Ainu people. Since ancient times, these and other factors have engendered a particularly unique linguistic and cultural identity. However, TD has experienced a precipitous decline in recent decades due in part to policies enacted by the Japanese government that can be described as “language murder.” In the late 19th century, the government began to vigorously promote the “standard language” (*hyōjungo*), and in the early 20th century, enacted a policy whereby schoolchildren who spoke regional dialects (and Ryukyuan languages) were forced to wear “dialect tags” (*hōgen fuda*) as punishment for speaking their native language. Examining TD can thus serve as an illustrative case study in how numerous factors—geographical, political, and historical, among others—can impact the formation and decline of critically endangered Japanese dialects.

Session Code: 4-L

Room: 2-412

Individual Session 6: Literature, Identity, and Marginalized Subjectivities

Chair: Teh Tian Jing, University of Southern California

1) (i-077) Tabreya Ryan, Princeton University

Unmasking Eros: Demystifying the Liberative Potential of Female Masochism in Hotel Iris

My research explores female masochism’s role in reimagining liberation in post-1990s Japan. Using Ogawa Yōko’s novel *Hotel Iris*, along with its film adaptation, as a case study, I examine how the protagonist deploys masochistic contracts to navigate oppressive matriarchal structures. I draw on Frantz Fanon’s postcolonial theory to analyze how the adaptation reconfigures space and race, and engage Michel Foucault and Jack Halberstam’s theories of queer time to explore how female masochism spreads infectiously, enabling liberation for adjacent marginalized figures. I distill this spatial and social praxis of female masochism into the term “osmotic masochism.” I then situate *Hotel Iris* within a broader literary tradition. Drawing on Monica Swindle and Honda Masuko’s theories of “girl” elusivity, I argue female masochism’s fluidity offers diverse and adaptive forms of liberation. In this context, I examine tensions within Japan’s Women’s Liberation Movement—particularly following the 1994 publication of the women’s studies journal *Joseigaku Nenpō*, which addressed rifts between mainstream feminism and marginalized groups. I argue that female masochism reflects these divisions and challenges dominant feminist boundaries, offering emancipatory potential for those excluded from mainstream discourse. Ultimately, this essay highlights the evolving significance of female masochism as a tool for contesting dominant social structures in contemporary Japanese media and culture.

2) (i-288) Coco Kejia Ruan, Stanford University

Between Japan’s Privileged Other and Japan’s Disadvantaged Other: A Case of Benign Orientalism in Mizumura Minae’s “Ambassador and His Wife”

This paper examines how Mizumura Minae’s *Ambassador and His Wife* (2024) complicates the conventional postcolonial critique of Orientalism through its portrayal of a white male Japanophile and a Brazilian-Japanese return migrant woman who connected on their appreciation of Japanese language and culture. While the novel initially follows a familiar trajectory of anti-Orientalist reversal—where a privileged Western man’s romanticization of Japan and an ethnic Japanese woman is overturned as she is “revealed” to be not fully Japanese—it ultimately resists cathartic subversion. Instead, *Ambassador* reimagines cross-cultural understanding as a process of gradual negotiation rather than political rupture. By situating the novel within the rare triangulation among Japan, Japan’s privileged Other (the West) and its disadvantaged Other (semi-postcolonial subjects such as *dekasegi* return migrants), this paper argues that Mizumura critiques the limits of Orientalism as a binary model. Through its linguistic and narrative mediations, *Ambassador* gestures toward a post-Orientalist ethics grounded not in antagonism or reversal but in mundane, sustained encounters that reconfigure what counts as “culture.” By examining how the novel redefines both knowledge of and relationality to the Other, this paper reveals how Mizumura’s work intervenes in the discursive gap identified by Nayoung Aimee Kwon between “global Japanophone” literature and “postcolonial Japanophone” literature.

3) (i-296) Shota Iwasaki, University of British Columbia

Disability, Equality, and the National Subject in Postwar Japan: A Reading of Kojima Nobuo's "Kitsuon gakuin" (1953)

Through Japan's defeat in the Pacific War in 1945 and the subsequent Allied Occupation (1945–1952), postwar Japan underwent an intensive discursive reconfiguration of "Japan" and "the Japanese people." As Mike Molasky (1999) and Sharalyn Orbaugh (2006) have argued, Kojima Nobuo (1915–2006) was among the Japanese writers who critically responded to this process. Focusing on representations of disability in his 1953 short story *Kitsuon gakuin* (The School of Stuttering), this paper explores how disability in the story problematizes and complicates the conception of the new postwar national subject in democratized Japan. Set in a correctional school for stutterers under the new democratic order, Kojima's story exposes gendered contradictions in the rhetoric of equality embedded in the postwar constitution, which disability historian Mark Bookman (2023) calls an "unequal egalitarianism." The story reveals the gap between constitutional equality and the historical and embodied realities of postwar society, foregrounding the socially hierarchical distinctions among disabled people. This paper situates the story's framing of disability within contemporaneous discourses on liberal citizenship, individual autonomy, and disability legislation. In doing so, it argues that the story illuminates a postwar condition in which legal equality obscures historically embodied experiences and (re)produces normative ideals of the new national subject by marginalizing non-normative bodies.

Session Code: 4-M

Room: 2-408

Individual Session 16: Modernity, Nationalism, and Knowledge Production in East Asia

Chair: Nur Ayuni Mohd Jenol, Universiti Sains Malaysia

1) (i-177) Chien-Yuan Chen, National Chung Hsing University

Acidic Modernities in the Colony: Calpis, Hygiene, and the Reclassification of Refreshment in Colonial Taiwan

This paper centers on Calpis in colonial Taiwan to examine how drink categories—lactic beverage, nutritional supplement, and refreshing drink—were negotiated under Japanese rule. While in Japan Calpis arose amid the 1910s enthusiasm for lactic acid and longevity, in Taiwan it entered a colonial environment preoccupied with epidemic control, water sanitation, and tropical "coolness." Drawing on newspapers, police ordinances, and household pages, I trace how Calpis was reimagined as both hygienic aid and fashionable refreshment, embodying the colony's intersection of health governance and consumer desire. A 1935 *Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* cartoon—"If Calpis Were Poured into the Reservoir"—visualizes this logic: acidity becomes a metaphor for purification, promising to transform polluted water into a modern beverage infrastructure. Comparing this colonial imagination with Japan's contemporaneous "refreshing-drink" regulations, the paper argues that legal, sensory, and microbial regimes produced distinct ways of drinking across the empire. In Taiwan, Calpis's in-between status—at once nutritional aid and leisure drink—embodied how colonial hierarchies of race, climate, and taste sustained Japan's experiments with modern refreshment. Reframing Calpis as a colonial artifact rather than a metropolitan brand, the paper highlights the translocal production of "modern refreshment," where acidity, sanitation, and desire converged to define what counted as a modern drink in East Asia.

2) (i-229) Wendy Wenxin Zhang, University of California, Irvine

Digital Enclosure: Tanka People and Smart Fishing Port in the Pearl River Delta

Lotus Mountain Fishing Port (LMFP) in Panyu District of Guangzhou City, located at the mouth of the Pearl River in South China, houses many Tanka people. In 2021 when Panyu District in Guangzhou was designated as the pilot area for the National Fishing Port Economic Zone, LMFP in this district was transformed into a smart fishing port incorporating big data technologies. This paper investigates AI applications and universalizing technologies in the smart fishing industry at LMFP in China and the sociotechnical imaginary underpinning data-driven fisheries in this area. I borrow from Mark Andrejevic's notion of "digital enclosure," which details the relationship that arises between surveillance and the new emerging interactive data economy. I argue that, when smart infrastructures like these at LMFP replace archipelago-like, relational fishing practices of the boat people with algorithmic surveillance and optimization, it is not just a technological shift but demonstrates the renewed relationship between a material, spatial process—the construction of networked, interactive environments—and the private expropriation of information. By attending to a multitude of news articles, journals, official documents, as well as conducting field trips, this paper seeks to interrogate the digital enclosure of the big data economy in fisheries and uncover its extractive dynamic in China.

3) (i-334) Yi Wang, University of Birmingham

The Enemy Who Never Went Away: Memory, Nationalism and China's Japan Policy during the Cold War

This study examines how the collective memory of the Second Sino-Japanese War was recalled and utilized in China's official foreign policy discourse during the Cold War (1949–1972). Contrary to the dominant view in existing scholarship that China's nationalist remembering of the war emerged during the 1980s and 1990s, this study conducts an extensive survey of the *People's Daily* and reveals that nationalist interpretations of the past were actively employed during 1949 to 1972. It suggests that China's memory-making and the history disputes with Japan after the normalization have their political origins in China's strategic and ideological rivalry with the U.S. and Japan during the Cold War.

4) (i-452) Jonathan Puntervold, University of Gothenburg

Different Shades of Japanism: Reading Tokieda Motoki in Context

This paper offers a new reading of the Japanese linguist Tokieda Motoki (1900–1967), known for creating his own “processual theory of language” which he framed as a “Japanese” antithesis to “Western linguistics.” Previous studies have mainly focused on Tokieda's engagement with European theorists and on whether his anti-Western stance and (albeit muted) support for Japan's assimilationist language policies in colonial Korea justify the label of “Japanism.” I suggest that Tokieda's writings can also be read as a domestic intervention—one directed not only against Western influence on Japanese linguistics but also against conservative currents within the field. Drawing on Quentin Skinner's contextualist approach, I read Tokieda's *Kokugogakushi* (1932; 1940) and *Kokugogaku genron* (1941) as speech acts situated in the intellectual milieu of early Shōwa Japan. I argue that from this perspective, his works read less as a critique of Western theory than as an effort to challenge the ascendancy of his contemporary Yamada Yoshio (1875–1958), who rose to prominence in the 1920s by advocating for a neotraditionalist and explicitly ethnonationalist linguistics. By contesting Yamada's notions of “tradition,” “national language” (*kokugo*), and the ontology of language itself, I contend that Tokieda sought to carve out an alternative path for Japanese linguistics—one that preserved an ostensibly “Japanese” mode of theorizing while resisting its ideological co-optation by the ultra-right.

Session Code: 4-N

Room: 2-401

Roundtable 5: Postwar as Timeframe and Methodology in Japan Studies, Reflections on the States of the Fields

Panelists:

Mariko Takano, Whitman College (Organizer)

Kei Nagase, J. F. Oberlin University

Richi Sakakibara, Waseda University

Julia Clark, Sarah Lawrence College

Junko Yamazaki, Princeton University

This roundtable examines “postwar” as a condition and framework of thinking in the study of Japanese literature and culture. With participants who have trained and taught in the U.S. and Japan from the 1990s to 2020s, we examine how the “postwar” has been working as a framework of thought in various contexts including literary and film criticism, Japan studies in North America, intellectual discourses in the 90s, shifting dynamics around Asia, and the current socio-political landscape in both Japan and the U.S. Mariko Takano addresses the question of inheritance and gap in talking about “postwar.” Kai Nagase brings insight on literary critic Katō Norihiro, as well as contemporary literary publishing scene and recent works dealing with topics of the war and memory. Richi Sakakibara addresses the expansion of Katō Norihiro's writing by other thinkers such as Azuma Hiroki. Junko Yamazaki offers viewpoints from film and media studies and historical thinking. Julia Clark brings perspective on the shifting direction in study of Zainichi Korean literature and culture over the last several decades, and new avenues of teaching and research on “postwar Japan” through a transnational lens. By examining how “postwar” is working in these contexts and milieus, we will review the morphing significance of “postwar” in shifting global and academic currents.

17:15–18:00 Building 10, Auditorium

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE
LINDA GROVE GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE 2026**

and

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Elora Shehabuddin

University of California, Berkeley & President, Association for Asian Studies (2026–27)

Cultivating a Revolutionary Imagination

Communist Women's Mobilization in

Mid-20th-Century Eastern Bengal and Assam

This talk examines the lives and political projects of young women activists in 1930s–40s Sylhet who were drawn to join the Communist Party. Among them was Hena (Dutt) Das, whose family chose to remain in (East) Pakistan, and who would remain politically and socially engaged in Bangladesh until her death in 2009. I focus on the revolutionary education and motivations that first brought Hena Das and her teenage classmates to the Communist Party, how they understood and inhabited communism in their daily lives, and how their personal and political histories complicate ideas about religious and national belonging, about the much-described tug between communism and feminism, and about the relationship between the personal and the political.

18:15–20:45 Building 2, 5th floor Cafeteria

RECEPTION

Sunday, July 5

[Block 5] 10:00–11:30

Session Code: 5-A

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-099

Title: Demon Hunters and the Transnational Turn in Asian Popular Culture

Abstract:

What do Netflix's most-watched film and one of cinema's highest-grossing movies have in common? Demons. And neither is as "Korean" or "Japanese" as their labels suggest. *K-pop Demon Hunters* was produced in the U.S, co-directed by a Korean Canadian, and voiced by performers who grew up between Korea and North America. *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba—The Movie: Mugen Train* achieved global success through transnational distribution. So why do national labels like "K-pop" and "Japanese anime" persist? These labels matter because they have brought global recognition to nations once overlooked in international popular culture. Yet this success was built through transnational collaboration. K-pop draws on American R&B and hip-hop, borrows its idol system from Japan, and relies on diaspora performers. Japanese anime circulates through international platforms and audiences who find universal resonance in culturally specific stories. We ask what it means when national labels become banners for global collaboration in an age when Asian popular culture is always already transnational. Together, our papers ask: What happens when "Asian" culture is always already transnational?

Organizer: Jayson M Chun, University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu

Chair: Jayson M Chun, University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu

Discussant: Jinsuk Yang, Osaka Metropolitan University

- 1) Jayson M Chun, University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu

Demon Hunting and the Transnational Turn in Asian Popular Culture

When a K-pop idol in *K-pop Demon Hunters* says "I lived two lives. I tried to play both sides," she's talking about fighting demons. But the Korean American actor voicing these lines reveals a double meaning: diaspora itself, hiding Korean identity in America, yet feeling not Korean enough in Korea. The Japanese film *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba—Mugen Train* became one of the highest-grossing films globally, yet much of its production and audience was overseas. Demons, it seems, have taken over Asian popular culture, or perhaps they reveal something we needed to see. These narratives of hidden identities and supernatural battles resonate across borders, revealing how Asian popular culture has become transnational. Both films exemplify this reality. *K-pop Demon Hunters* features Korean American voice actors whose experiences infuse the film with diasporic meaning. *Demon Slayer* achieved global success through international distribution, fan translations, and cross-cultural appeal that transcended its Japanese origins, reaching audiences who found universal resonance in its themes of family, loss, and perseverance. What happens when we take seriously that "Korean" and "Japanese" popular culture is created by people from many countries? Through analysis of both films' production, reception, and cultural impact, this paper reveals how culture moves across the Pacific today, and why Asian Studies needs new frameworks for culture that is always already transnational.

- 2) So Hyun Park, Seoul National University

How Demon Hunters Shapes our View of K-Pop: Historicizing K-Pop Through Adaptation of Foreign Popular Music

Golden exemplifies K-pop's spectacular global success and signals how Korean popular music has come to be imagined as a transnational commodity. Notably, the animated series *Demon Hunters* illustrates this shift especially well: its depiction of K-pop as music with synchronized movements, danceable tunes, and catchy hooks reflects a global gaze that assumes K-pop's universal accessibility. Yet such a style did not suddenly emerge in the twenty-first century. Rather, it was forged through decades of adapting and reworking foreign popular music within Korea's own cultural and industrial frameworks. From the 1950s onward, the Korean popular music industry appropriated Western repertoires and performance styles, imitating and vernacularizing them to suit local society and comply with state regulations. Before the 1990s, Korean musicians learned westernized sounds, while government censorship and promotional policies simultaneously restricted

and encouraged particular sounds. Entering the 1990s, Japanese popular music shaped the systematization of idol production, along with the influence of Western hip-hop and dance music. By examining the history of local appropriation under shifting cultural policies, I argue that K-pop's current transnational identity was built through historical negotiations between global influences and local responses. Its transnationality is the cumulative outcome of Korea's own vernacular strategies for mediating foreign popular culture.

3) Tawanza Farmer, University of Hawai'i, Mānoa

Who Speaks the Lingua Franca? Digital Nostalgia, K-Pop, and the Erasure of Black Cultural Labor

Appadurai (1996) described nostalgia as "mediatized and deeply cultural." That is, there are elements of wide influence and shared beliefs that cause us to crave a previous norm, even if it did not really exist. I argue that since the internet raised a generation fluent in memes, music videos, and multimedia, it has caused a unique sense of nostalgia tied to its take on language: The film *K-pop Demon Hunters* speaks that language fluently, weaving humor and nostalgia into a story of "belonging." As a linguist-in-training and a Black former K-pop fan, I ask who can belong and who is left out of this online nostalgia. Within this online, digitized culture, there are clear boundaries. Being "in" often means celebrating or borrowing from Black cultural iconography, while being "out" can mean simply being Black. Online references and multimedia interactions have become a kind of lingua franca due to this emerging digital language, but because this space is largely shaped by English, it also carries the biases of Eurocentric and Western media norms. Building on that idea, I argue that online nostalgia can both nurture community and reinforce exclusion, even when the past being remembered never truly existed. This is a feeling shared by the hyphenated American. However, that healing often depends on overlooking the contributions of marginalized people, reminding us that shared nostalgia can unite, but also divide, those who created the culture it celebrates.

4) Dain Choi, University of Hawai'i, Mānoa

The Cultural Capital of K-Pop

I will hardly have to ask an audience at a talk on *K-pop Demon Hunters* about the reasons for Korean culture's sudden popularity. Its pop culture has become the object of international fascination, creating avenues for legitimacy and economic opportunity. As scholars, we must consider all fields related to Korean studies as transnational markets. For this paper, I examine two markets downstream of K-pop: K-beauty and diaspora Korean literature. The story of K-beauty is one of economic diversification made possible by hallyu. Originally, Korean road shops provided cheaper alternatives to international brands. But as Korea's pop culture skyrocketed, this reversed. Today, K-beauty sets the global standard. Aligned with the Korean government's position that its best economic strategy lies in cultural soft power, companies now deliberately target international markets. This picture becomes more complicated when culture is packaged for importation and the arts benefit from that affective economy. Aspects of Korean culture that once required exposition in footnotes, such as kimchi, no longer need explanation. The Korean or Korean-American author no longer needs to perform their culture for an audience. The transnational dissemination of Korean culture has opened up spaces for the arts in ways academia is not yet fully willing to acknowledge.

Session Code: 5-B

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-043

Title: Evolving Traditions in the History of Japanese Health Care

Abstract:

This interdisciplinary panel on the history of health care brings together three papers examining the discourses surrounding the healthy body between 1800 and contemporary times. Although the main geographic focus is Japan, the papers also encompass East Asian and international contexts. We explore how, through the process of modernization, local community traditions evolved and interacted with state-sponsored health care policies; how magazines, public media, and political agendas have shaped the discourses of childbirth and disability; and how individuals have negotiated these social and political expectations, using examples from the past and present.

Organizer: Ellen Nakamura, University of Auckland

Chair: Kathryn Tanaka, University of Hyogo

1) Akihito Suzuki, The University of Tokyo

Cholera and Water Management in the Modernization of Japan: 1800–2000

Cholera was one of the most significant infectious diseases in Japan and other countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cities and villages experienced sharp and large-scale outbreaks of cholera from the early nineteenth century to approximately 1900, followed by a rapid decline in the early twentieth century, despite the persistence of water-related problems up to the end of the twentieth century. This paper will first situate cholera and Japan in the contexts of imperialism and infectious diseases, through an international comparison with other countries in East Asian and beyond. Secondly, this paper goes into the microenvironment of water for individuals and households in the large city of Tokyo (Edo) and a small village in the Tohoku region. One of the characteristics of cholera in Japan was that the disease spread not only in large cities but also in rural villages. I will argue that the continuity of traditional hygiene and rules in forming communities played a crucial role in shaping modern public health in cities and villages. Thirdly, the paper will examine the relationship between the government and the ordinary people over the issue of water environment. Japan had a relatively quick conquest of cholera, but other infectious diseases and environmental issues related to water persisted until the very late twentieth century. This paper attempts to connect cholera with the rights of citizens.

2) Ellen Nakamura, University of Auckland

Nourishing Life in Meiji-era Japan: Traditional Philosophies for a New Era

During the Meiji era, popular theories of health care in Japan came to be influenced by a growing attention to germ theory, public hygiene, and infectious diseases. Books about theories of “hygiene” or “sanitation” proliferated and gradually came to replace the long tradition of preventative health care that was called *yōjō*, or “nourishing life.” With a growing emphasis on controlling infectious diseases such as cholera, there was a shift in focus in these works from the internal environment within the individual body to the external environment, and from self-control or personal morality to government control. Some Japanese writings about *yōjō* came to adopt social Darwinism as their philosophy in the Meiji era, reflecting the desire to achieve civilization and enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*) and a rich country and strong army (*fukoku kyōhei*). Yet, this evolution in ideas produced some unique examples of confluences between the different strains of thought. At the intersection of Confucianism, Social Darwinism, and nationalism lay some creative ideas about how Japanese individuals could contribute to the nation by caring for their own health. This paper considers authors such as Seki Kansai (1830–1912), Itō Jū (1857–1926), Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929) and Toki Yorinori (1843–1911) to demonstrate not only the nationalistic application, but also the longevity, flexibility, and creative potential of traditional *yōjō* thought.

3) Manami Yasui, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Birthing in Contemporary Japan: Technology, Media, and Customary Practice

This presentation examines the modern and contemporary history of childbirth in Japan. Currently, 99.9% of all births in Japan occur in medical facilities such as hospitals. However, the medicalization and institutionalization of childbirth have not progressed uniformly worldwide, as political, social, and historical factors have intertwined in complex ways. To explore these intertwined situations, this presentation uses three perspectives: 1) Medical technology, including pain-relief delivery methods, ultrasound diagnostic devices for fetal visualization, and prenatal testing; 2) Media, encompassing women’s magazines, childbirth guides, and social networking services; and 3) Customs and values, particularly approaches to pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum periods based on East Asian concepts of *yōjō* (nourishing life), and associated understandings of the body. For instance, an increasing number of women in Japan are choosing pain-relief delivery methods involving anesthesiologists in hospitals. This trend is significantly influenced by social media. In contrast, East Asia has a cultural tradition of *yōjō*, emphasizing restful postpartum care. This paper shows how pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum practices have been continuously created in response to the needs of each era, influenced by the medicalization and institutionalization of childbirth, policies, technologies, and media, while also being intertwined with customary behaviors and values.

Session Code: 5-C

Room: 2-402

Panel Code: p-054

Title: Rethinking Youth Media in the Sinophone

Abstract:

Our panel introduces diverse youth media produced in the 20th century Sinophone world. We employ the concept of youth media to designate both the subject of representation as well as a distinct mode of media epistemology, a way of knowing the self and the world through media practices characterized by amateurism, improvisation, and low-tech configurations. Youth media occupies a marginal position in relation to the official and the mainstream, yet it has played an indispensable role in meaning-making and world-making across diverse Sinophone locales. In revolutionary, diasporic, and colonial contexts alike, youth media mobilized the figure of youth to reimagine art, life, labor, and affect. The labor of producing youth media, moreover, instantiated acts of radical activism, revolutionary transformation, inter-ethnic intimacy, and scientific imaginings. Youth media thus anchors subjectivity while envisaging contested visions of the future. The panel's four papers examine: the mass art project through the activities of "Red Art Soldiers" in Maoist China, student-centered media production in the Chinese diaspora, photographs of mountaineering indigenous youth in colonial Taiwan, and the use of "little movies" in children's education in 1950s China. Together, the papers collectively invite us to rethink how youth media carves out alternative discursive, representational, and material chronotopes outside dominant frameworks and mediates youthful concerns and socialities.

Organizer: Angie C. Baecker, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Dept. of Chinese History and Culture

Chair: Yucong Hao, Vanderbilt University, Dept. of Asian Studies

Discussant: Chang-Min Yu, National Taiwan University, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures

1) Angie C. Baecker, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Dept. of Chinese History and Culture

Red Art Soldiers: Youth, Agency, and Militancy in the Mass Art Movement of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1979

During the early years of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1969) in China, self-organized groups of amateur artists banded together to create artwork to wage revolution. Called Red Art Soldiers (*Hong hua bing*), these groups often consisted of secondary school students who created sketches, posters, and paintings as an insurrectionist practice to bolster support for Chairman Mao. In this paper, I examine exhibitions of artwork by Red Art Soldier groups in Guangdong and Shaanxi provinces to argue that guerrilla youth artwork should be understood as a critical component of a larger Maoist mass art project (*qunzhong meishu*). Throughout the socialist period (1949–1976), children and students were key members of the mass art movement, presented as exemplary of the authenticity and naivety that distinguished the work of the mass amateur over the artifice of the trained professional. Yet studies of the mass art movement have largely failed to account for the involvement of children and youth. In this paper, I show that student and youth participation in militant mass art activities was not limited to the Cultural Revolution, but rather a key component of the mass art project across the socialist period (1949–1979) in the People's Republic of China. I contend that examining Red Art Soldier artwork in the context of the broader exhibition of artwork by children and students allows for a fuller accounting of agency within youth media practices and its circulation across borders.

2) Yucong Hao, Vanderbilt University, Dept. of Asian Studies

Embodying Labor in Amateur Student Baodiao Media, 1971–1976

The paper examines the representation and amateur performance of labor in the Baodiao (Defend Diaoyu Islands) movement, an activist-cultural movement among diasporic Chinese students on 1970s American campuses. The movement began as political protests to safeguard the contested sovereignty of Diaoyu Islands, but soon evolved into a leftist cultural movement that rethinks social and economic production under the contending knowledge regimes of the global Cold War. To the diasporic students who became cognizant of Chinese socialism for the first time, the socialist vision of labor constituted a valuable prism through which they (re-)envisioned their cultural activism, transnational identity, and aesthetic pursuits. They subsequently materialized these visions through amateur theater production and radio work. Baodiao amateur media mediates socio-economic knowledge and aesthetic resources from socialist China to explore the intersection of labor with gender, law, and solidarity and critique the socio-economic production of labor in the American empire. Yet diasporic students also challenged their own social relations through the labor of print-making, radio, and theater production. Through close readings of media in the Cultural Baodiao, especially the spoken drama *Before Dawn* and the

radio program Chinese Youth Voice, this paper reconstructs the transpacific circulation and transnational imaginary of socialist labor as well as its transmutations and imperfections.

3) Wendy Wan-Ting Wang, Harvard University

Ode to Indigenous Companionship in Mountaineering Photography in Colonial Taiwan

This presentation examines photography from Japanese university mountaineering clubs in the 1920s–1930s, where Taiwan’s Indigenous peoples emerge as essential participants in modern mountaineering. Photographs from Japanese climbers reveal that mountaineering was fundamentally dependent on Indigenous peoples as knowledge providers and land stewards. Yet when imperial mountaineering clubs extended their adventures to Taiwan, their narratives focused on Japanese achievements, such as first ascents of peaks or record-setting expeditions. Indigenous peoples remain conspicuously absent from these narratives of mountaineering history, despite forming the backbone of Taiwan’s mountaineering activities. While Taiwan’s mountaineering infrastructure was built upon Japanese colonial military and economic campaigns, photographs of youth mountaineering clubs capture Indigenous and Japanese youth practicing rock climbing and skiing, sharing modern equipment, and moving as equals across treacherous terrain. These images gesture toward a world of partnership, even as mountaineering functioned as a practice for cultivating independent and autonomous modern subjects in imperial Japan. Such experiences created opportunities for Indigenous youth to experiment with novel tools, techniques, and knowledge. Ultimately, these photographs expose the myth of mountaineering as autonomous achievement, revealing instead the essential Indigenous partnership upon which the sport depended.

4) Linda C. Zhang, Fulbright University Vietnam

The Little Movies: Mobilizing, Visualizing, and Animating the Socialist Chinese Child

This paper examines the proliferation of slides and filmstrips during the early socialist era in 1950s China. Called “little movies” and “native movies,” these slides and filmstrips were deeply rooted in local, grassroots education, receiving less centralized government and institutionalized support than the film industry. In this paper, I focus on slides and filmstrips used in classroom or community education settings as part of hygiene and science education initiatives, as well as shows adapted from films with limited circulation outside of major urban areas. I find that these works operated with more flexibility and mobility than big-budget films, arguing that “little movies” strategically invoked the animated cel and the animation filmmaking apparatus to promote their own production and reproduction, while also drawing on performance strategies from theatrical live performance. Furthermore, low costs and “low-tech” set up allowed slides and filmstrips to promulgate illustrated visions of an increasingly high-tech, scientifically literate population focused on children. In conversation with critical work on modern perception, mass visual culture, toys and technology, I demonstrate that slides constructed the figure of the child as the ideal user and creator of technologies of science and vision. “Little movies” imagined the possibility of a scientifically and technologically oriented world, extending to viewers an invitation to project themselves into the show.

Session Code: 5-D

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-089

Title: End of Empire Migration After the Asia-Pacific War: New Perspectives and Comparative Approaches

Abstract:

The collapse of the Japanese empire led to a multidirectional movement of approximately 9 million people (Araragi 2017). These end of empire migrants are usually called repatriates (*hikiagesha*) although, as researchers have argued, this problematically reinforces a dominant narrative of one-way Japanese return to Japan. Building on this research, this panel introduces new perspectives to advance the existing understanding of repatriation and repatriates. Sumiyo Nishizaki uses statistical data compiled by the Welfare Ministry to track the distribution of repatriates in Japan from the mid-1940s to the early-1970s. Following this national perspective, Garrett Washington focuses on ports with a strong connection to end of empire migration—Hakata in Kyushu and Marseilles in France. Michiko Suzuki explores the role of the Japanese Red Cross in repatriation in the Asia-Pacific between 1945 and 1952. Previous research mostly considered the role of the state in repatriation so a focus on international organizations has much to offer. Jonathan Bull moves from history to the historicization of repatriation and displaced persons more broadly. He analyses the display at a state-run museum in

Germany to understand what techniques might transfer to a Japanese context. Steven Ivings, whose research has frequently problematized the idea of the repatriate, will be the discussant.

Organizer: Jonathan Bull, Hokkaido University

Chair: Jonathan Bull, Hokkaido University

Discussant: Steven Ivings, Kyoto University

1) Sumiyo Nishizaki, Rikkyo University

Mapping Postwar Repatriation: Statistical Storytelling of Japanese Repatriates, 1945–1972

Most studies on post-World War II Japanese repatriation have focused on micro-level qualitative analyses. Unlike previous studies, this paper analyzes statistical data published by the Ministry of Health (1946–1949) and the Ministry of Finance (1973) to examine the regional distribution of repatriates and its effects. As is already known, Hokkaido and Fukuoka were the top two destinations for settlement. Statistical analysis confirmed that the number of previous emigrants, employment in coal mines and postwar reclamation, and other economic factors—such as Fukuoka’s leading position in the Kyushu economy—could explain the trend. However, these factors are not necessarily useful to understand the regional distribution of demobilized soldiers. This study also reveals the presence of many repatriates in Kumamoto and Kagoshima, which have not received sufficient scholarly attention. Population influx imposed significant pressure on these receiving societies and accelerated domestic migration. However, the regional distribution pattern remained unchanged even in 1972. This study shows a particularly high mortality rate among people under 20 years old in the latter regions, including enormously high death rates in Nagano and Yamagata, which were the top sending prefectures of immigrant farmers to Manchuria. This new statistical approach not only confirms settlement patterns but also sheds light on previously overlooked regions of settlement, repatriate groups, and trends.

2) Garrett Washington, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Comparing Hakata and Marseilles Repatriation Ports as Urban History

Acknowledging decolonization’s global nature, scholars have increasingly advocated the use of a comparative lens to study its processes, including those of repatriation after empire. My paper brings into direct conversation the relatively siloed historiographies of repatriation of two distant and seemingly dissimilar former metropolises. The research investigates the meaning and making of “home” for French *Pieds-noirs* and Japanese *Hikiagesha* after repatriation and the impacts of those definitions and processes on their nation’s postimperial postmodernities. This comparative, interdisciplinary history borrows from ethnology, geography, and architecture to analyze repatriates’ spaces of “return,” spaces of life and livelihood, and spaces of memory in Marseille and Fukuoka, two of the postcolonial world’s largest ports of return. Letters, diaries, newspaper articles, government reports, archived interviews, the author’s recent interviews, photographs, blueprints, and neighborhood maps, and various other sources form the basis for this consciously comparative project. This presentation will focus specifically on spatial dynamics and their relationship to the experiences of “return” for Japanese and French repatriates at the port of Hakata between 1945 and 1948 and Marseille between 1959 and 1963, respectively.

3) Michiko Suzuki, The University of Tokyo

Regeneration of the Japanese Red Cross Society, 1945–1960s

This project explores the history of the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) under the Allied occupation of Japan (1945–1952), the Cold War period up to 1960 and the renewal of the US-Japan security treaty. The research for this book builds on my first research monograph, *Humanitarian Internationalism Under Empire: The Global Evolution of the Japanese Red Cross Movement, 1877–1945*, which was published by Columbia University Press in August 2024. The project has three research foci: the rebirth and democratization of the JRCS under the direction of SCAP; the JRCS’s role in the postwar repatriation; and the expansion of the role of women in the humanitarian sector in the postwar period. Japanese women in particular, became advocates for world peace, nuclear disarmament, and even Japanese neutrality. The second set of questions relates to JRCS’s role in the postwar repatriation of the 6.2 million Japanese left stranded outside Japan when the war ended. In Manchuria and northern Korea, tens of thousands of Japanese soldiers and some civilians, including Red Cross medical workers, were captured by the Soviet Union and Communist Chinese forces. The JRCS facilitated the repatriation of Japanese POWs and civilian nationals, and may have served as a back channel of communication with Japan’s Communist neighboring states through their respective Red Cross societies. No less important was the JRCS role in organizing the repatriation of several million resident Koreans.

4) Jonathan Bull, Hokkaido University

Changing Displays of Japanese Repatriation at the Memorial Museum for Soldiers, Detainees in Siberia, and Postwar Repatriates

This paper compares two special exhibitions held in Tokyo and Berlin in 2025. The Memorial Museum for Soldiers, Detainees in Siberia, and Postwar Repatriates held “A difficult journey: Korean repatriation in memory and documentation.” It focused on the repatriation of Japanese former colonial settlers between 1945 and 1948. Approximately 900,000 people repatriated from Korea in 1946, with the majority leaving from the southern port of Pusan. Photographs by a Japanese man working for the Pusan Compatriots’ Relief Association in addition to photographs taken by the American occupying forces were central to the display. The second exhibition was at the Documentation Centre for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation titled “The Trek—Photographs of a Displacement, 1945.” It was about a refugee trek made in January 1945 by about 350 people from Lower Silesia to western Germany and its documentation by two photographers. The Memorial Museum is run by the Home Ministry and its permanent display has often been criticized by researchers for failing to acknowledge the historical context of Japanese imperialism when explaining repatriation. The special exhibition shows some indications that the curators are willing to take a more critical approach to repatriation. In this paper I argue that techniques used in the Documentation Centre could be incorporated into future exhibitions at the Memorial Museum to provide a more convincing historical interpretation of repatriation.

Session Code: 5-E

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-079

Title: Under the Radar: Quiet Interventions in East Asian Painting

Abstract:

This panel explores inconspicuous yet pivotal artistic developments in East Asian painting. Spanning from Tang China until just post-Joseon Korea, these case studies unveil the first ripples of reinvigorated painting modes and enduring practices. From the introduction of new technologies to the circulation of pictorial idioms overseas, these papers consider unassuming developments in three related themes: iconographical innovations, text-image relationships, and women artists. Two papers reveal the origins of iconographical innovations. Steffani Bennett’s paper explores the heretofore hazy origins of the definitive and enduring Japanese pictorial iconography for the celebrated Chinese site at West Lake in the work of a little-known medieval painter. Seung Hee Oh’s paper enlightens us about a narrative iconography of the Buddha’s life distinctive to Joseon that arose with the earliest Buddhist writings in the Korean alphabet. Such connections between text and image resonate with Isabel McWilliam’s paper on fluidity between artistic modes and epistolary exchange of female artists in China and Japan before 1300. This third theme, women artists, is also the subject of Soojin Kim’s illuminating paper on the reemergence of female portraiture in Korea that occurred uniquely because of female photography. Through discussions of inspirations across regions and media, this panel highlights the imaginative interventions that shaped and transformed East Asian painting.

Organizer: Isabel McWilliams, College of Design, Iowa State University

Chair: Noriko Murai, Sophia University

Discussant: Noriko Murai, Sophia University

1) Steffani Bennett, University of Wisconsin-Madison

An Enduring Vision: The Origins of West Lake Iconography in Japanese Visual Culture

Few Chinese sites have captured the premodern Japanese imagination like the celebrated West Lake in Hangzhou. During the premodern period, paintings of West Lake formed an indispensable pillar of the Japanese landscape genre. This presentation traces the origins of Japanese West Lake imagery in the work of a little-known medieval painter—Shūgetsu Tōkan (act. late 15th–early 16th century). A pupil of the renowned painter Sesshū Tōyō (1420–ca. 1506), Shūgetsu had the rare opportunity to travel to China. It was there, in 1496, that Shūgetsu produced his painting of West Lake (Ishikawa Prefectural Museum), an unassuming sketch-like drawing that would establish the definitive and enduring iconography for this beloved site in Japan. Significantly, my paper demonstrates that this distinctive iconography was pictorially rooted in contemporary Chinese print culture—specifically the genre of illustrated regional gazetteers—while being epistemologically informed by the conditions of Shūgetsu’s first-hand encounter with the lake and its environs. These two

recovered vectors—the xylographic and the experiential—would thus become deeply embedded in Japanese pictorial culture, conditioning virtually all subsequent evocations of the site by Japanese painters.

2) Seung Hee Oh, Art Institute of Chicago

Localizing the Buddha: Buddhist Narrative Painting and the Politics of Devotion in Early Joseon Korea (1392–1910)

This paper examines East Asian Buddhist narrative paintings from a period that witnessed a flourishing of visual depictions of Śākyamuni Buddha's past and present lives across regions from western China to the Korean peninsula. While these images emerged concurrently, they were grounded in distinct textual traditions and shaped by local devotional and political contexts. Focusing on a set of eight images from early Joseon Korea (1392–1910), this study articulates their unique iconographic program by comparing them with their Chinese and Tibetan counterparts. Particular attention is given to the exceptional prominence of Queen Māyā and the Rocana Buddha, whose presence reflects the direct engagement with the two early Buddhist texts composed in the Korean alphabet—*Seokbo sangjeol* and *Worin seokbo*. These textual sources not only shaped Joseon Buddhist imagery but also reveal how the newly invented alphabet contributed to the localization of Buddhist visual traditions. The paper further explores the liturgical contexts of these images, suggesting their connections to the deaths of royal family members and the ideological consolidation of kingship in fifteenth-century Joseon. By situating these works within a trans-regional visual conversation, this study demonstrates how the Joseon pictorial biography of Śākyamuni subtly redefined East Asian Buddhist narrative painting by celebrating a distinctively local voice in the visual retelling of Śākyamuni Buddha's life.

3) Isabel McWilliams, Iowa State University

From Needle to Brush: Women Artists Before 1300 in History and Painting Discourses

This paper explores women artists who lived before the flourishing of female painters after the fourteenth century; the latter has received scholarly attention through notable exhibitions on Chinese artists from Indianapolis to Taipei and publications such as *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting*. Using biographical dictionaries as a point of departure, this paper investigates the numerous but scattered records of women artists who lived before 1300. They reveal under-recognized artistic versatility and illuminate historiographical trends in attitudes towards women artists. The versatility of artists who both lived and were recorded before the Song lied in the mastery of the painting-adjacent arts of calligraphy and embroidery, where they excelled in multiple brush styles and in demonstrating purified minds. While the Ming-Qing emergence of women painters is credited for encouraging contemporaneous projections of painterly activity onto female poets of these earlier periods, records show that the image of a female painter began already in the Song. Not only was a woman's pursuit of painting over the more common feminine arts celebrated, her extraordinary skill was recognized. Furthermore, an emerging interplay between poetry and painting in female correspondence is shown through juxtaposing Song and Heian examples as recorded in Ming and Edo sources. In sum, this paper unveils the complex background from which women painters emerged.

4) Soojin Kim, Academy of East Asian Studies, Sungkyunkwan University

Making the Female Visible: Emergence of Female Photographers and Portraits in the Early 20th Century

This paper examines how women in early twentieth-century Korea navigated between painting and photography, participating as both creators and subjects of art during the transition from the premodern to the modern era. In the 1920s, more than twenty female portraits were produced in Jeolla Province, marking an extraordinary revival after more than two centuries of absence caused by the Neo-Confucian separation of men and women. In contrast to the 1701 episode in which King Sukjong abandoned his plan to commission a portrait of his deceased queen due to official opposition, painter Chae Yong-sin (1850–1941) in the 1920s actively portrayed women, particularly elderly ones, using photographs as intermediaries. These photographs were taken by his daughter-in-law, Lee Hong-gyeong, one of the earliest Korean women to practice photography, who had learned the skill from Chae's son trained in Japan. Their collaboration exemplifies how modern technologies such as the camera and the railway enabled new visual possibilities and female agency within Korea's changing cultural landscape. By analyzing works such as *Folding Screens of Beauties from the Eight Provinces* and the portrait of Patriotic Courtesan Choi Yeon-hong enshrined in Pyongyang, this paper investigates how images of ordinary women, courtesans, and female patriots were newly constructed in modern Korea through the convergence of art, technology, and gender.

Session Code: 5-F

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-008

Title: Alternative Translation Practices Across Media and Cultures: Retranslations, Scanlations, and Simulpubs

Abstract:

Focusing on children's literature, comics, and digital media, the panel aims to explore alternative forms of translation differing from the more traditional or dominant professional norms and practices in these fields. It examines new ways of mediating texts and products in audiovisual and literary landscapes dealing with diverse cultural contexts and languages, including English, Polish, Japanese, and Spanish. The concept of alternative translation has been selected as an overarching theme as it provides an effective framework for examining the translation practices and contexts explored in the panel. We see it as a universal concept that can manifest itself in different contexts, yet we concentrate on the specific cultures that reflect our areas of expertise. The panel explores a range of compelling but under-investigated fields of translation activity, such as retranslations, scanlations, and digital manga simulpubs. Each presentation also offers new contextual and methodological perspectives on these translation practices. The purpose of this panel is, then, to examine alternative approaches to translation in different cultural and linguistic settings and provide valuable contrasts which can allow new and more nuanced understandings of translation in general. What the three perspectives in this panel have in common is that they are part of our co-authored book on alternative translation contracted for the Routledge Advances in Translation and Interpreting Studies series.

Organizer: Paula Martínez Sirés, Sophia University

Chair: Alberto Millán Martín, Keio University

Discussant: Alberto Millán Martín, Keio University

- 1) Dominic Cheetham, Sophia University

Re-translation and Competing Translations: A Look at the Japanese Situation

The traditional justification for translation is that the translator is making something available which would not otherwise be available, that translation is bringing a text to new audiences. Upon this justification lie some of the common perceptions of the aims of translation (i. e., fidelity), and indeed, what should count as translation, as opposed to "adaptation." Re-translation is the creation of a new translation even though an older translation already exists. This results in competition between two nominally equivalent texts. Competing texts, however, are not restricted to re-translation. For example, two different translations in one language (e.g. UK English and USA English) are also competing for an audience, especially if you are buying an English language book in a country with a different home language, such as Japan. This presentation examines the practice of re-translation, and competition between translations, focusing upon what this situation, or activity, can tell us about the aims and beliefs behind translation, and reciprocally, uses this understanding to inform translation theory. The focus will mainly be upon the Japanese situation, and Japanese examples of re-translation and competing translation, including *Where the Wild Things Are*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Winnie-the-Pooh*, but with reference to other cultures and languages as discussion background.

- 2) Michal Borodo, Kazimierz Wielki University

Comics Flying Circus and the Scanlation Adventure

The paper examines scanlation, a form of alternative translation of comics and a prime example of fan translation situated within the "co-creation paradigm." Scanlation has been examined by various researchers focusing on fandom, copyright, Japanese culture, the directness of translation, and its relation to the publishing world. However, this alternative translation practice has not been sufficiently explored from a Translation Studies perspective in Central Europe. The paper thus focuses on the activities of the Comics Flying Circus collective, which was founded in 2004 and is one of the most vibrant scanlation communities in Poland. It is argued that Comics Flying Circus is not only an alternative comics platform in terms of offering non-official translations but also a platform literally offering alternative comic books in terms of their content. These include non-canonical, alternative narratives (e. g. *Spider-man India*), non-mainstream superhero comic books (e.g. *Captain Britain*) or classic US comics from the 1970s or 1980s (e.g. *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Love and Rockets*). These works are less likely to be officially published and in this sense scanlators fill a gap in comics fan culture in Poland. The paper examines the scale of the Comics Flying Circus enterprise, the collective's relationship with the official publishing sector and the key features of this type of "fan-to-fan" translation, which has been ongoing for more than twenty years now.

3) Paula Martínez Sirés, Sophia University

Digital Manga Translations: A Multimodal Analysis of Simulpub Manga Translations in the Spanish Context

This paper conceptualizes digital manga translation as a form of alternative translation, examining how the digital environments have reshaped translation practices and challenged established notions of authority and legitimacy. Focusing on simulpubs—official translations of manga chapters released simultaneously with their Japanese originals—it explores how the digital medium, online readerships, and industry responses to piracy have produced hybrid practices at the intersection of authoritative and non-authoritative translation. Drawing on comic translation studies and multimodality approaches and relying on interviews with translators, the paper analyzes how the intermedial and fluid nature of digital comics influences translators' decision-making, especially when working under conditions of reduced narrative context and temporal constraints. By identifying four analytical dimensions—context, simultaneity, multimodality, and fan community—the paper situates simulpubs within broader debates on translation in the digital age and draws parallels with audiovisual translation, given their shared temporal and multimodal constraints. Ultimately, it argues that digital manga translation exemplifies the diversification of translational agency in contemporary media, revealing how the digital medium fosters new, alternative forms of collaboration, visibility, and creative negotiation.

Session Code: 5-G

Room: 2-401

Panel Code: p-109

Title: Form and Formation: Reading Japanese Television as Social and Aesthetic Test Site

Abstract:

Television has often been theorized as a medium complicit in producing and maintaining the fantasy of a homogenous national body. While in Japan studies much work has already been done in questioning the uniformity of imagined community, this panel targets the overdetermination of the televisual form itself. We begin from the premise that what sustains the narrative of national homogeneity is the parallel teleological framing of television's development between the 1950s and 1980s as the realization of a stable "mass medium." Calling into question this linearized media history, this panel throws light on early Japanese television as a crucial, dynamic, yet hitherto undertheorized testing ground for aesthetic form and social formation. We draw attention to different and unfamiliar forms and manifestations of television across this period: the Asahi Broadcasting Corporation's attempts to create a television network beyond the hegemony of Tokyo, the physically towering but contradictory presence of Rashomon Tsunagorō across film and television, and the role of television in the overdetermined careers of film auteurs Ozu Yasujirō and Itami Jūzō. In stressing the heterogeneity of television and the networks of people and other media forms that surround it, we not only show the heterogeneity of national space, but also how alternative social formations historically co-emerged and interacted with the ever-evolving postwar media conditions in highly contingent and complex ways.

Organizer: Wei Lin Tan, University of California, Berkeley

Chair: Wei Lin Tan, University of California, Berkeley

Discussant: Yuta Kaminishi, Waseda University

1) Jonathan Zwicker, University of California, Berkeley

Ozu and Television

When he died in 1963, Ozu Yasujirō was working on the script for a film titled *Daikon and Carrots*. Instead, Ozu's last finished work was the script for the television drama *School's Out on Youth*, which he co-wrote with the novelist Satomi Ton for NHK. *School's Out on Youth* has always occupied a tenuous place within considerations of Ozu's oeuvre, treated as an anomaly and largely ignored by film historians and theorists preoccupied with questions of Ozu's style and idiosyncratic filmic grammar. But looked at from a different perspective, it is easy to see how *School's Out on Youth* fits into Ozu's work: not just in terms of plot (it centers on a perennial question in Ozu's films, the marriage prospects of an unwed daughter) but, more importantly, in terms of Ozu's longstanding interest in the possibilities that new modes of technology held for artistic and narrative expression. Indeed, beginning in 1953 with what is often considered Ozu's masterpiece, *Tokyo Story*, the televisual appears—sometimes obliquely, sometimes less so—as a kind of *basso continuo* in Ozu's films. This talk is an attempt to take seriously the fact that the last decade of Ozu's career coincides with the first decade of television and to grapple with how an attention to Ozu's own interest in the medium both allows us a new vantage point onto Ozu's films and opens up a new way of understanding the early history of the medium of television in Japan.

2) Patrick Chimenti, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

“Selling” How It’s Made: Amateur Documentary Aesthetics as Consumer Spectacle in Itami Jūzō’s Late Television Era

This paper examines how filmmaker Itami Jūzō developed a sociologically inflected media practice through his work in commercial publishing and television in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Before achieving international fame with *The Funeral* in 1984, Itami fashioned himself as a “professional amateur”—a self-reflexive media persona blurring the line between consumer and critic, expert and layperson—working across a wide array of media formats. Through his work in lifestyle magazines, “how-to” literature, and television reportage, Itami crafted this persona as both media commodity and prescriptive model of popular spectatorship, merging amateur psychology/anthropology with mass entertainment. Drawing on Itami’s collaborations with psychoanalyst Kishida Shū in lifestyle magazine *Mon Oncle* (1981), call-in programs like Asahi TV’s *Afternoon Show* (1981), and his experimental CM work, I trace how the professional amateur emerged as a key subject for sociological introspection in late 20th-century Japan. In these projects, Itami cultivated a commercial documentary aesthetics that staged self-study and ethnographic observation as consumer pleasures, fusing the intimacy of the talk show, the authority of documentary reportage, and the visual grammar of advertising into a new model of media expression. Television thus served as a key aesthetic and structural laboratory for Itami’s later cinematic practice, extending the commercialization of reflexive media expression in 1980s Japan.

3) Xun Zheng, Columbia University

Maps, Stamps, Fingerprints: Asahi Broadcasting Corporation’s PR Campaign, Awazu Kiyoshi, and the Recursiveness of the Information Industry, 1961–1965

Hōsō Asahi, the PR journal of the Osaka-based Asahi Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), is widely known as the birthplace of cultural anthropologist Umesao Tadao’s influential 1963 essay on “information industry.” Moving beyond Umesao’s discursive contribution, this essay contextualizes the broadcaster’s uptake of the concept “information” (*jōhō*) within a larger transmedial project that articulated a processive view of knowledge making. A then-young postwar commercial station in the early 1960s, ABC was working against the grain of the Tokyo-centered serialization of broadcasters and striving to secure and expand its own service area in the Kansai area. Against this backdrop, I examine the broadcaster’s unusual investment in a PR campaign centered around print media, a self-recursive “informatization” of the information industry itself. Specifically, this essay focuses on *Hōsō Asahi*’s recruitment of the emerging graphic designer Awazu Kiyoshi (1929–2009), who was exploring the epistemic potential of operational images such as maps, trademarks, and statistical charts as a form of visual communication around the same period. Repackaging *Hōsō Asahi* as a cognitive tool to map “Japan” from the perspective of Kansai, this editorial project articulated an asymmetric logic of communication, which gestured toward the trans-individual production, rather than neutral transmission, of meanings in television and its media networks.

4) Wei Lin Tan, University of California, Berkeley

The Ordinary as Ordinance: Rashōmon Tsunagorō as “Franken” in the Live-Action “Tetsuwan Atomu” Television Series (1959–1960)

Television in Japan’s late 1950s to early 1960s has been theorized as a key technology for the reparation of a postwar national consciousness in parallel with an ideology of high economic growth and white collar middle class homogenization. What, then, would be the place of bodies that exceed the boundaries of Japaneseness within this televisual space? This presentation seeks to explore this question via attention to the body of actor Rashōmon Tsunagorō as “Franken” in the live-action *Tetsuwan Atomu* television series (1959–1960). Rashōmon visually exceeds the normative male Japanese body due to his gigantism, though this visible excess obscures an invisible one which stems from his Taiwanese origin. Playing as Tezuka Osamu’s character, which was inspired by Frankenstein’s monster, Rashōmon’s body becomes a paradoxical site of superability and ordinariness. If the former is expressed through an emphasis on the character’s superhuman strength (which Rashōmon did not possess in reality), the latter emerges in how contemporaneous intellectuals theorized television as emplaced in the everyday. Following this, I argue that television is not only an ordinary medium but also a medium of ordinance. Television ordinates excessive bodies by rendering them ordinary, thus effacing the difference that those bodies pose to the hegemony of national televisuality.

Session Code: 5-H

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-067

Title: Crisis or Continuity: Contemporary Japanese Conservatism Revisited

Abstract:

Given the manifold disruptions by radical right-wing actors all over the globe, conservatism has been widely discussed as “in crisis.” While Japan has developed into a mature liberal democracy since the end of World War II, the almost uninterrupted dominance of conservative actors has made the country’s domestic and international politics a unique case to study conservatism’s adaptiveness, continuity, and change. Given the sudden rise of right-wing populist Sanseitō in Japan, such a discussion is especially relevant. For this purpose, this panel brings together experts on conservative intellectuals, debates, and global networks and presents a critical discussion of the political ideas of and struggles within Japanese conservatism. Including spotlights on public intellectuals, academics and politicians, this panel aims to revisit often reductive analyses of conservatism in Japan. Discourses on the nature of “the Japanese,” their relation to the state, or “traditional values” are manifold and often homogenized to overshadow ideological struggles within the conservative sphere in Japan. We aim to bring deeper understanding of the current political moment by addressing continuities and ruptures in mainstream and non-mainstream conservative politics from a multi-disciplinary (history of thought, international relations, political science) perspective.

Organizer: Andreas Eder-Ramsauer, University of Vienna

Chair: Andreas Eder-Ramsauer, University of Vienna

Discussant: Yamaguchi Tomomi, Ritsumeikan University

- 1) Misato Matsuoka, Teikyo University

Think Tanks, Policy Expertise, and Conservative Hegemony in Postwar Japan

This paper examines how conservative hegemony in postwar Japan has been sustained and reproduced through the production and circulation of policy knowledge. It focuses on the epistemic infrastructure formed by think tanks, policy institutes, and affiliated media that constitute the intellectual backbone of Japan’s conservative order. Far from functioning merely as advisory bodies, these institutions serve as key mechanisms through which ideology is professionalized, institutionalized, and legitimized. The central research question is: How has conservative hegemony in postwar Japan been maintained through the institutional production and circulation of policy knowledge? Addressing this question illuminates the ways in which think tanks embed ideological commitments within bureaucratic routines and advisory structures. Drawing on policy documents and publications, this paper shows how conservative ideas are synthesized into coherent policy frameworks, normalized through their institutionalization, and are circulated across institutional and transnational boundaries, often engaging with U.S. conservative networks for methodological inspiration. The institutionalization of conservative assumptions allows conservative actors to govern by epistemic authority, creating a hegemonic knowledge regime beneath formal politics. It concludes that the endurance of conservative dominance rests on the deep institutional embedding of its knowledge systems.

- 2) Nathaniel Smith, Ritsumeikan University

What Was New about the New Right?

Critical of pre-existing rightist activism and inspired by radical new forms of leftwing activism, Japan’s New Right emerged in the early 1970s betwixt major political rivals. The New Right drew together several significant social bases. First, students at elite universities who had experienced neither the war itself nor the mass mobilizations of the 1960 anti-ANPO movement. Next, personal experiences with campus-based anti-student movement activism and young men who had been members of novelist Yukio Mishima’s *Shield Society*. In some cases, they were alumni of the private army that disbanded after Mishima’s protest suicide in 1970. Lastly, activists that contributed to the early phases of the New Right hailed overwhelmingly from families associated with the conservative new religion Seicho no Ie. How did these various influences converge in the movement and inform what was new about the New Right? Although involved in traditional political activism like street oratory, the New Right placed significant emphasis on internally oriented intellectual work, including study groups and publication of political writing. Based on an analysis of the first decade of influential New Right group Issuikai’s newsletter *Rekonkisuta*, this paper will consider the early history of Japan’s New Right, introduce notable activists who emerged from its milieu, and survey the topics and themes that animated their activism by the pen despite being inspired by the legacy of Mishima’s sword.

3) Andreas Eder-Ramsauer, University of Vienna

The People in or as Crisis: Postwar Japanese Conservatives' Strategies of Hegemony and the Question of Popular Sovereignty

Japanese post-war politics is characterized by an uninterrupted conservative hegemony. As analyses during the “global populist moment” of the 2010s exemplify, assessments on the democratic soundness of this condition are lacking. Political dominance under Abe Shinzō correlated with sighs of relief among many commentators, who saw Japan as a much-welcomed outlier to the populist frenzy. The supposed insignificance of populism in Japan was explained by a unique responsiveness of Japanese conservatism, much in the vein of Pempel’s (1982) “creative conservatism,” as visible in tough immigration policies, protectionist trade policies, and persistent low inequality. However, these explanations are reductive, as surveyed anti-establishment sentiments and levels of perceived efficacy were not higher in Japan than in countries with model cases of populism. Building on the Essex school of Discourse Analysis, this presentation uncovers the repeated usage of antagonistic political logics by conservative actors in moments of regime instability. By analyzing conservative moments of crisis—from 1970s neo-conservatism to Abe Shinzō’s return to power—the paper argues that conservatism in Japan has repeatedly ensured stability by creating an essentialist, depoliticized, and exclusionary collective subject of “the people.” The uncovered repeated shrinkage of popular sovereignty and exclusionary practices shine a critical light on conservative’s uninterrupted hegemony.

4) Andrew Levidis, Australian National University

The Right Made Me: The Kakushin Faction and Japanese Conservatism, 1945–1960

This paper discusses Japanese postwar conservatism through the lives of two key postwar political leaders—Kishi Nobusuke and Shigemitsu Mamoru. It explores their parallel efforts to modernize Japanese conservatism in the late-1940s and 1950s focusing on Shigemitsu’s leadership of the Kaishintō and Kishi’s short-lived mass movement, Japan Reconstruction Federation. Unlike contemporary leaders like Yoshida Shigeru or Hatoyama Ichirō who represented an older, bureaucratic political leadership, their politics never mapped onto simple Left-Right divides. While they asserted themselves as men of order and opponents of Marxism, both men denied they were conservatives and were ambivalent with their identification as party politicians or democrats. Their generationally rooted distaste for capitalism, preference for popular movements over parties, and doubts about the resilience of mass democracy bore the temporal markers of the so-called Kakushin faction. This talk situates Kishi and Shigemitsu within a broader network of ex-Kakushin activists, bureaucrats, journalists and politicians who sought to reconcile prewar political commitments and shows that prewar notions of Kakushin were integral to the reinvention of conservatism in post-1945 Japan. Tracing the entanglements of renovation and conservative politics allows us to engage historically with these intellectual lineages and uncover the personal experiences that challenge conventional views of Left and Right in postwar Japan.

Session Code: 5-I

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-085

Title: After Growth: Community Paradigms for Japan’s Demographic Transition

Abstract:

This panel examines how Japanese communities are navigating demographic decline through grassroots initiatives and alternative development paradigms. Each paper explores bottom-up strategies that challenge conventional growth-oriented approaches, revealing how residents and municipalities are adapting to shrinkage by cultivating social capital, recognizing informal community assets, and embracing sustainable transitions. “Community Gardens as a Source of Social Capital for Earthquake Preparedness” examines how Kobe residents repurpose vacant land as community gardens that provide disaster evacuation areas while building social capital and strengthening resilience for vulnerable populations. “Cartographies of Attachment: Revealing Informal Community Places in Tokyo’s Shrinking Metropolitan Peripheries” demonstrates how mapping residents’ perceptions uncovers overlooked community anchors in suburban Tokyo, identifying informal gathering spots as vital nodes for revitalization. “Beyond Growth: Sustainable Transitions in Japan’s Depopulating Towns” examines municipalities pioneering alternatives to growth-at-all-costs policies. Through the Shimokawa and Kamikatsu cases, it demonstrates how shrinking communities can embrace managed decline by centering socio-environmental concerns. Together, these papers illuminate how grassroots practices and policy innovation are reshaping Japan’s response to demographic change, emphasizing community-led resilience and sustainable adaptation.

Organizer: Alejandro Pineda, Keio University

Chair: Alejandro Pineda, Keio University

Discussant: Heide Imai, Senshu University

1) Naomi Shimpo, The University of Tokyo

Community Gardens as a Source of Social Capital for Earthquake Preparedness: Case Studies from Old Neighborhoods in Kobe, Japan

Japan's densely built wooden residential areas face high risks of destruction and fire from major earthquakes. While an aging and shrinking population leads to random vacant land, these spaces are urgently needed as open areas for firebreaks and emergency access. This paper examines the use of such vacant land as community gardens, which serve critical dual functions: as disaster risk reduction assets and as catalysts for social capital formation. Community gardens provide immediate benefits as evacuation spaces and food sources post-disaster. Crucially, the daily, collaborative gardening routine builds social ties essential for mutual support during crises. This is particularly vital for vulnerable groups like foreign and elderly residents. Drawing on two case studies from Kobe City, this paper demonstrates the process of establishing these gardens and the resulting connections. The analysis indicates that shared gardening creates a non-verbal communication platform, effectively bridging gaps and cultivating cross-cultural trust for inclusive disaster response. To make this grassroots model scalable and sustainable, the study proposes that municipal support must expand beyond financial aid. It must include developing a legal framework for temporary land use and training community coordinators for garden management and disaster preparedness. These findings offer a tangible, replicable model for enhancing resilience in high-risk, demographically challenged urban environments.

2) Alejandro Pineda, Keio University

Cartographies of Attachment: Revealing Informal Community Places in Tokyo's Shrinking Metropolitan Peripheries

This study examines how residents' subjective perceptions can reveal informal community places in Tokyo's shrinking metropolitan peripheries, drawing on two case studies: Chōfu (Tokyo Prefecture) and Minamiashigara (Kanagawa Prefecture). In Chōfu, workshops with visitors and stakeholders identified overlooked gathering spots—urban farms, community spaces beneath elevated rail lines, and neighborhood markets—that serve as vital social nodes within a bedroom-town fabric. In Minamiashigara, in-depth interviews uncovered micro-green pockets between buildings and renovated abandoned homes repurposed as informal community spaces, highlighting the connective potential of seemingly ordinary sites in sprawling metropolitan peripheries. These findings demonstrate that mapping place-based attachments not only uncovers underrecognized community anchors but also delineates emergent urban structures. Although small and informally maintained, these sites offer practical foundations for revitalization in aging, population-declining peripheries, despite challenges of limited accessibility and resource constraints. By connecting these insights to international urban theories, this study proposes a method for identifying grassroots community places and concludes with methodological insights and policy recommendations to integrate these practices into broader planning frameworks.

3) Fernando Ortiz-Moya, Waseda Institute for Advanced Study

Beyond Growth: Sustainable Transitions in Japan's Depopulating Towns

Japan faces an unprecedented demographic crisis: a projected decline of nearly 40 million people over the next 50 years. Smaller cities and towns, already experiencing depopulation, aging populations, and economic contraction, face the greatest challenges. Unmanaged decline threatens municipal viability, as reduced tax revenues, surplus infrastructure, and difficulties delivering essential services compound. How are Japanese municipalities managing shrinkage? This presentation examines emerging alternatives to pro-growth policies that envision sustainable transitions to smaller populations. Traditionally, Japanese local governments—encouraged by national policy—have pursued growth-at-all-costs strategies: attracting urban migrants, boosting birth rates, luring businesses, and preventing outmigration. This approach risks limiting opportunities for managed transition while exhausting limited resources. Eventually, continuous shrinkage will compel municipalities to abandon growth-based planning and redesign their communities around sustainability rather than expansion. Some municipalities are already pioneering this approach. Through the cases of Shimokawa and Kamikatsu, this presentation demonstrates how shrinking municipalities can break free from pro-growth paradigms by centering socio-environmental concerns and developing models for sustainable downsizing.

Session Code: 5-J

Room: 2-407

Panel Code: p-108

Title: Ethnographies of Margins and Moralities

Abstract:

In the 1990s and early 2000s, ethnographic research in and on Japan forcefully challenged the notion that Japan is, or ever has been, homogeneous. This work was an essential corrective to earlier reductionist takes that reinforced *nihonjinron* connotations and constructions of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and national Japanese-ness. This panel examines the continued significance of a vaunted Japanese “sameness” for diverse actors in Japan by focusing on marginal groups and contextually situated moralities. From O’Brien’s study of pro-Israeli voices and Christian Zionists’ attempts to appeal to a majoritarian ethos to develop sympathy for an unpopular political cause, to Dahlberg-Dodd’s survey of how adopting uniform linguistic forms can build solidarity, this panel offers insight into the practical stakes of homogeneity through ethnographies of how sameness is made legible in marginal social settings. Our panel locates *nihonjinron* as still very much mainstream—for reasons that offer salient insight into everyday life and organizations alike. Dahlberg-Sears reads the Teruhime Festival as an attempt to bind citizens together through a shared heritage. This, he shows, reorients their use of shared space and interactions with one another. On the organizational level, Koike’s paper contributes an analysis of how homogeneity can motivate civic action—all while obfuscating class differences.

Organizer: Dylan O’Brien, Temple University

Chair: Dylan O’Brien, Temple University

1) Hannah Dahlberg-Dodd, Tohoku University

Characterological Engagement and Fan Practice: Perspectives from a Vtuber Livechat

As a self-described “normal YouTuber who aspires to become an *o-jōsama*,” virtual YouTuber Hyakumantenbara Salome streams live playthroughs of one of a rotating list of videogames on a near-nightly basis, and at over 1.8 million subscribers, her streams are well-attended. Given her aspiration to a bourgeois life, her playthroughs are accompanied by her running commentary in the speech style *o-jōsama kotoba*, a fictionalized speech style that is characterized by its high frequency of stereotypically “feminine” linguistic features that similarly reflect a sense of refinement and high social standing. As a part of fandom participation, however, her fans also utilize this speech style in the largely anonymized live chat that runs alongside the stream, including grammatically marked constructions such as *go-kigenyō desu wa!* and *konbanwa desu wa!* Drawing on recent work that explores fandom communities and practices from the perspective of the “speech community,” I draw on the idea of “characterological engagement” to examine the process by which both Salome and her fandom have allowed for the reinterpretation of a marked, gendered linguistic variable as a means of fandom engagement and interaction. I analyze how the use of the stereotypically “feminine” sentence-final expression *desu wa* in livechat comments is transformed, serving not as a marker of femininity, but as a gender-neutral marker for engaging in anonymized linguistic play and fandom interaction.

2) Dylan O’Brien, Temple University

Parallelism in Political Rhetoric and the Pragmatics of Sympathy for Israel in Contemporary Japan

Since October 7, 2023, Japan has seen weekly protests against Israel in its major cities. A 2025 survey showed that 79% of Japanese feel negatively about Israel. Publications, both critical and sympathetic to Israel, have routinely presented the conflict as distant and foreign to a Japanese audience. From op-eds by Japanese politicians seeking bilateral cooperation with Israel to Christian Zionists’ rallies in Osaka and Tokyo, diverse figures have employed parallelism to describe the conflict, utilizing word and sentence-level repetition and similarities. Such parallelism has ranged from describing the security threats posed to Japan by North Korea, and to Israel by Iran, in the exact words, to grammatical repetition when describing hostages taken by Hamas and several situations of Japanese abductees. Drawing on over two years of ethnographic fieldwork with Jewish organizations, Christian Zionist groups, and activists, I argue that attempts to elicit sympathy from Japanese audiences for Israel routinely fail. Utilizing a linguistic anthropological focus on discursive authority and pragmatics, I describe data that show how listeners’ understandings of Japan as unique thwart speakers’ speech acts. Thus, this paper contributes to both an understanding of parallelism’s political use and how turning to a likeness between “us” and “them” for an affective politics based on sympathy is troubled in the Japanese context by enduring ethno-nationalism.

3) Evan Koike, Shimonoseki City University

The Challenges Facing Kodomo Shokudō: Navigating the Potential and Limitations of Welfare from Below

Over the past decade, the number of *kodomo shokudō*—or children’s cafeterias—has risen sharply across Japan. Once portrayed by the media as volunteer-run initiatives predominantly supporting low-income families, *kodomo shokudō* have since diversified to fill a wider range of roles that are tailored specifically to the needs of their communities. Nevertheless, one of their primary functions remains the provision of services to single mothers and their children. In this endeavor, *kodomo shokudō* encounter a variety of obstacles that test the ingenuity and creativity of their staff. Drawing upon ongoing fieldwork conducted among *kodomo shokudō* in Hokkaido and Okinawa, this paper examines several of these challenges, including a lack of resources, a shortage of volunteers, and the need for robust institutional support. By situating this analysis of *kodomo shokudō* within a shifting welfare landscape, the paper further considers both the potential and the limitations of “welfare from below” in contemporary Japan.

4) Robert Dahlberg-Sears, Independent Scholar

May the Livelihoods of Shakujii’s Good People Continue: Local Folklore and Civic Engagement at the Teruhime Festival

This presentation addresses the legend of Teruhime, a 15th century daughter of the Lord Toshima who held Shakujii Castle in today’s Shakujii Park, Nerima ward, Tokyo, and discusses how the park itself serves to support experiences of the legend in everyday life. The tragic legend of Teruhime’s death is retold yearly as a parade and short stage play at the local Teruhime Festival, a civic celebration in the Ward, but it can also be experienced at any point through the scattered memorial sites throughout the park. Although the legend is a modern fiction, I posit that as the population of Nerima grew in the post-World War II period, so too did a need to bring the disparate groups of people moving there together. Jennifer Robertson noted in 1987 that civic festivals, modeled on the approach to space making taken up by shrines and temples, were being used by local governments to foment community bonding. The legend of Teruhime vis-à-vis physical sites of legend and playful reinterpretation offers an example of drawing on local folklore to produce a civically curious local populace. This presentation relies on several years of interacting with the park nearly daily and three years of participating in the Teruhime Festival between 2021–2024. Included are observations of the permanent memorial sites, attendance at the festival to illustrate attitudes toward the story, and what the festival offers for using the area as a site of civic engagement.

Session Code: 5-K

Room: 2-408

Individual Session 2: Art, Politics, and Historical Networks in Asia

Chair: Julie N. Davis, University of Pennsylvania

1) (i-028) Xiao (Anne) Liu, Yale University

The Visual Representation of Khotan and Ganzhou Uyghur Royalty in 10th-Century Dunhuang

In 10th-century Dunhuang, the ruling Cao family of the Guiyijun regime forged extensive marital alliances with the neighboring Khotan and Ganzhou Uyghur kingdoms. These intermarriages resulted in the inclusion of Khotanese and Uyghur royals as donor figures in Buddhist cave murals commissioned by the Cao clan in the Mogao and Yulin grottoes. While previous scholarship has often interpreted these portraits as symbolic gestures of diplomatic alliance, this paper argues that they reveal more complicated processes of identity formation and political negotiation. Through close visual and textual analysis, this study argues that identity in Dunhuang was not fixed but fluid, composite, and strategically mobilized. The portraits reflect how foreign royals, especially women, were integrated into the Cao lineage and played active roles in religious patronage, familial cohesion, and transregional exchanges. Additionally, stylistic differences between murals in Cao family’s caves and Uyghur caves suggest the coexistence of multiple painting workshops in Dunhuang. By examining these donor images as dynamic agents of social and political meaning, this study offers a more nuanced understanding of identity, diplomacy, and artistic production on the 10th-century Silk Road.

2) (i-103) Tingting Zhou, Mae Fah Luang University

Bridging Cities through Design: Creativity, Urban Development, and Industrial Collaboration between Chiang Rai and Chongqing

In 2023, Chiang Rai and Chongqing were designated as UNESCO Creative Cities of Design. The two cities have been pursuing sustainable development and international cooperation, with “design” serving as a driving force and linking node. However, effective collaboration is challenging, as each city’s local contexts shape how creativity is interpreted and deployed. This comparative research builds on participant observation and interviews with focal-point leaders and creative workers in both cities, integrating both institutional and grassroots perspectives. Each city articulates distinct narratives of creativity and positions it differently according to local cultural capital, economy capacity and industrialization level. Chiang Rai highlights city transformation through mobilizing historical-ethnic intellectual heritage, while Chongqing emphasizes “added value” and “empowerment” for intelligent manufacturing, reflecting contextualized translations of the design city concept. Moreover, Chiang Rai exemplifies a bottom-up approach led by private sectors and communal activists, whereas Chongqing illustrates a typical top-down model driven by policy-oriented industrial upgrading. This research further examines how inter-city industrial collaboration is strategically promoted through creative culture-based bridging, focusing particularly on technological knowledge transfer in new energy automobile sector, as well as its broader implications of creative city cooperation across Asia.

3) (i-312) Adam Bronson, Durham University

Petitions and Print Media in Japanese Political Culture, 1913–1927

My presentation explores the changing relationship between petitions and print media in twentieth-century Japanese political culture. I focus on how print media circulated, facilitated, translated, and reported on petitions in the 1910s and 1920s, a period associated with the rise of imperial democracy. While petitioning has tended to be treated as a traditional form of political participation that diminished in significance as the franchise expanded and protest movements grew, this presentation builds on recent historical scholarship that challenges the teleological narrative whereby petitioning was supplanted by elections and mass demonstrations in the twentieth century. It highlights how new political and literary journals—such as *Daisan Teikoku* and *Ajia Kōron*—facilitated the submission of petitions in support of universal male suffrage and other causes by including guides to petitioning and petition templates and forms. These initiatives appeared among reader surveys, polls, and invitations to submit letters to the editor and join reading groups. Rather than passivity, interactive relationships forged between the producers and consumers of print media encouraged new forms of political participation. I consider how relationships mediated by print sustained and promoted a culture of petitioning while commodifying it in ways that impinged upon the perceived relationship between petitions and public opinion.

4) (i-479) Syeda Momina Masood, University of Pittsburgh

Scatter as a Historiographical Heuristic: The Case of Pakistan

This paper explores the film culture in Pakistan during the tumultuous years of General Zia-ul-Haq’s military dictatorship in the 1970s. Zia’s authoritarian regime ushered in a period of extreme media censorship which adversely impacted the film industry and further made the culture of cinemagoing culturally taboo and highly monitored and regulated by the state. As a result, film historian Mushtaq Gazdar (1997) writes of this period as the beginnings of the decline and eventual death of cinema in Pakistan, as the number of film productions declined, and many cinema houses shut down. Despite the culture of state surveillance, unusual exhibition practices emerged as cinema operators and projectionists developed creative methods to screen banned and transgressive films with the participation of audiences. Therefore, cinema circulated as material dispersal and scatter, bypassing the state and its heavily policed borders. In theorizing this fugitive film culture, I center the media practices which kept Pakistani cinema circulating locally and transnationally even after the worst years of military repression. Furthermore, the cinema of the post-Zia years interrogates the very ethno-nationalist construction of “Pakistani cinema” that had been imagined after the partition of the Indian subcontinent. As such this transgressive film culture extends existing histories of national cinemas in the subcontinent and offers alternative historiographical models to reimagine the past.

Session Code: 5-L

Room: 2-405

Individual Session 14: Identity, Gender, and Social Negotiation in Transnational Contexts

Chair: Dodom Kim, Sophia University

1) (i-289) Ho Lam Cheng (Roland), University of Toronto/University of Hong Kong

Is Market Necessarily a Foe? Queer(ing) Geographies through the Lens of Queer Spaces in Post-2019 Hong Kong

Existing literature in queer geography often portrays capitalist consumption and profit-making practices in queer spaces as homonormative and depoliticizing, possessing the risk of (re)creating a sexual hegemony that reinforces the economic interest of the heteronormative, patriarchal capitalists, and resulting in marginalization of sexual and gender non-conforming individuals under the neoliberal capitalist logic. I argue that such queer scholarship centers Euro-American experiences, overemphasizing the interwovenness of queer culture and capitalism, and downplaying the state as an equally significant role in reproducing heteronormative governance over people's everyday lives. Amid the emergence of two new queer spaces in Hong Kong after 2019, I scrutinize the shortcomings of existing queer geographies scholarship using my ethnographic data, which sheds light on LGBTQ+ lives under an illiberal regime. The data illustrate that "doing business as usual" can be a pragmatic economic practice for survival within an increasingly authoritarian, neoliberal, and patriarchal environment, instead of merely a conformity to capitalist vision. By examining their self-exploitative labor, disavowal of labor, and affective boundary work, my study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of queer Asian geographies, explaining the disjunctive queer spatialities in Hong Kong which serves as a space of (geo)political disjuncture, unruliness, uncertainty, and illiberal sexuality.

2) (i-308) Hilda Widya Kemala, Waseda University

Challenging Norms, Preserving Harmony: Women Ulama's Strategies in Combating Child Marriage in Indonesia

Women religious leaders (*ulama*) have become pivotal agents in combating child marriage in Indonesia. Drawing on Islamic feminism and community-based intervention frameworks, this study examines how women *ulama* employ layered, transformative, and socially harmonious faith-based approaches. Based on twelve semi-structured interviews (2021–2025) with *ulama*, NGO actors, and government officials, complemented by documentary analysis, the study identifies three key strategies. First, *ulama* reinterpret Qur'anic teachings using *maslahah* (public good) and *al-'adl* (justice), embedding gender equality within Islamic epistemology while sidestepping the contested "feminism" label. Second, they utilize *pengajian* (religious study circles) and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) to convey prevention messages in culturally resonant language. Third, they form multi-level partnerships: urban *ulama* engage ministries to shape policy, while rural *ulama* collaborate through village and NGO networks. This top-down and bottom-up synergy defines a uniquely Indonesian model of Islamic feminist activism which is gradual, trust-based, and locally grounded yet also revealing tensions between community-driven reform and urgency for structural change.

3) (i-325) Yingjing Du, Waseda University

Negotiating Womanhood across Borders: Pakistani Female Postgraduate Students' Experience in China

Across Asia, women's participation in transnational higher education reflects complex negotiations with gender norms. Focusing on a small cohort from China's third-largest sending country of international students, the study draws on in-depth interviews with 17 Pakistani women, mostly enrolled in STEM subjects. These women cultivate community-based identities by forming Muslim networks in China, participating in daily prayers, and attending women's mosque gatherings. Through these practices, they develop a shared understanding that women can pursue higher education and professional careers, rather than being confined to traditional family roles in Pakistan. While most Pakistani women face significant barriers to both domestic and international mobility, these participants leverage their overseas education to embody the *parhi likhi* (educated woman) ideal: a classed notion prevalent among middle- and upper-middle-class families that links women's education to enhancing "familial honor" (*izzat*). Their practices do not reject traditional womanhood but creatively reinterpret the concept of honor to legitimize their educational pursuits. In this way, their community-based identities represent a negotiated and collective reinterpretation of womanhood. By adopting a culturally grounded perspective, the study offers empirical insights into South-South educational mobility and the gendered processes through which transnational communities shape women's identities.

4) (i-428) Zhuhao Yang, Waseda University

When Feminism Excludes: Transnational Translation, TERF/SWERF Politics, and the Ueno Chizuko Fever in China

Since 2019, the Chizuko Ueno fever in China has become a key case of transnational and inter-Asian feminism, drawing attention from both activists and scholars. This paper examines the darker underside of this phenomenon—how Ueno’s works and image, as those of a feminist icon, have been selectively translated and appropriated as an exclusionary weapon. Re-examining the Ueno fever through historical and transnational lenses, I argue that it reveals the rise of anti-gender politics and the reproduction of biological essentialism and gender separatism in China and globally. Amid intensified surveillance and suppression, feminist engagement has largely shifted to social-media spaces. The selective translation of Ueno’s works on these platforms exposes the epistemic logic of digital knowledge production and the exclusionary tensions within feminism itself. Focusing on Douban—a major social-media site widely used by feminist communities—this paper analyzes how such translations have been mobilized to police feminist identities and authorize exclusionary regimes of knowledge, belonging, and respectability. I call for rethinking the politics and power structures of translation in transnational and inter-Asian knowledge production, and the possibilities of rebuilding political coalitions among trans/queer, sex-worker, and feminist movements in contemporary China.

▶▶▶ **Session Code: 5-M (previously 3-G), Room: 2-411 (for panel details, see p. 47)**

[Block 6] 11:45–13:15

Session Code: 6-A

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-102

Title: Reframing Hallyu: Transnational, Digital, and Glocal Futures of K-Culture and K-Identity

Abstract:

Over the past two decades, the Korean Wave (Hallyu) has evolved far beyond K-pop, K-drama, and K-film, reshaping global cultural flows and discourses on identity, technology, and transnationality. This panel examines how diverse agents—immigrants, entrepreneurs, artists, fans, and digital creators—reconstruct the meanings of “K-” and “Koreanness/Koreanism” across shifting local and global contexts. Moving beyond celebrity fandom and media consumption, the discussion explores intersections between glocalization, migration, cultural entrepreneurship, and emerging technologies, including AI-mediated interpretations of K-pop and K-culture. The papers interrogate how Hallyu transforms through cultural hybridization, transnational circulation, and posthuman mediation, generating new forms of identity, community, and affect. Combining ethnographic, cultural, and theoretical approaches, the panel highlights how “Koreanness/Koreanism” is continuously negotiated across production, consumption, and imagination—from diasporic entrepreneurship to AI-generated pop, from fandom activism to global cultural discourse—tracing a post-Hallyu era in which Korean culture operates not merely as exportable content but as an evolving framework for global exchange.

Organizer: Jihye Kim, University of Melbourne

Chair: Jihye Kim, University of Melbourne

1) Jihye Kim, University of Melbourne

K-Cuisine and K-Diaspora: Glocalizing Hallyu through Korean Restaurant Businesses in Melbourne

Approximately 150,000 Koreans live in Australia, with a significant concentration in Melbourne, where Korean restaurants have been steadily increasing. This study investigates the reasons behind and methods by which Korean immigrants in Melbourne have become actively involved in the Korean restaurant business, as well as why the number of such businesses has grown notably in the city over the past decade. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Melbourne, this research examines the socio-structural factors shaping the management and decision-making of Korean restaurant businesses, moving beyond traditional frameworks of immigrant entrepreneurship and highlighting how motivations are shaped by interactions between home and host countries. In light of the recent global rise in interest in Korean culture and food, particularly through Hallyu (the Korean Wave), this study argues that the dynamics of Korean restaurant businesses should be examined from new perspectives. These include the glocalization of Korean culture and food, the transnational

circulation of Hallyu, and the influence of government policy and soft power. By linking diasporic entrepreneurship to global cultural flows, this study highlights how Korean restaurants in Melbourne serve not only as economic enterprises but also as sites where Hallyu's cultural influence is locally embedded and actively negotiated.

2) Sunhee Koo, University of Auckland

Dancing Beyond Borders: K-Pop Fandom and Affective Belonging in Aotearoa New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand has a vibrant music scene spanning indie rock, reggae, pop, and hip hop in English and Indigenous Pacific languages. Traditionally oriented toward U.K. and U.S. Anglophone music, New Zealanders are increasingly drawn to K-pop, which attracts fans across diverse ages, ethnicities, and gender identities. This paper examines K-pop fandom as a participatory space where ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ individuals construct and express identities, resist dominant cultural narratives, and create their own zones of cultural and emotional belonging. Drawing on ethnographic research of K-pop events, performances, and online interactions—particularly in Auckland and other urban centers—the study explores how fans negotiate transnational and local identities. K-pop's global circulation and localization foster affective networks that transform digital and urban spaces into dynamic sites of community-making, self-expression, and cultural performance. Through these practices, New Zealand K-pop fans reshape urban soundscapes and strengthen the visibility and sustainability of marginalized cultures. The paper situates these dynamics within Asia-Pacific and transnational frameworks, highlighting cultural connections between Korea, Aotearoa New Zealand, and the wider Australasian region, showing how global cultural flows are locally adapted to create meaningful, affective, and socially significant communities.

3) Jinhee Park, Lingnan University

From Trainee to Training Data: Programmable Femininities of AI K-Pop Girl Groups

Situated at the intersection of feminist media studies and posthuman theory, this article examines AI-powered K-pop girl groups to explore how gender and race are constructed and reconfigured when idols are designed in code. Combining a literature review with a close analysis of lore, visual aesthetics, industry discourse, and fan/media reception, this research demonstrates that while fully virtual idols promise a transhuman "perfection," they largely reinscribe heteronormative, East Asian feminine ideals and a pan-Asian racial imaginary. Reading these cases through Haraway's cyborg and posthumanist critiques, I argue that the virtual idol functions as a hyperreal commodity that fragments and obscures women's labor (including voice actors, motion-capture performers, and designers) while optimizing bodies for data-driven market logics. At the same time, the research identifies limited openings—programmable multilingual personae, modular authorship, and narrative experimentation—that could be mobilized for more plural gender expressions and racially diverse representation. By juxtaposing theoretical debates with Korean industrial pragmatics, the article clarifies why first-wave AI idols appear technologically novel yet socially conservative, and it outlines what a genuinely posthuman pop practice would entail. The analysis contributes to transnational feminist media scholarship on authenticity, embodiment, and cultural production in the metaverse era.

4) Jimmyn Parc, University of Malaya

The Global Rise of the Korean Wave and Its Future Sustainability: A Critical Analysis of the "Koreanism" Discourse

Since the late 1990s, Korean entertainment—including dramas, pop music, and films—has gained widespread popularity across East Asia, known as the Korean Wave or Hallyu. Initially dismissed as a short-lived fad, Hallyu has expanded globally over two decades. Diversified producers, changing distribution platforms, and broadening audiences have shaped its multilayered development. Works such as *Parasite* (2019), *Squid Game* (2021, 2025), and *K-pop Demon Hunters* (2025) offer rich portrayals of Korean society and culture, attracting devoted international audiences. Media and scholarship have introduced concepts such as "Koreanism," "Koreaness," and "Koreanness," suggesting that distinct Korean elements drive Hallyu's success. While global recognition is notable, sustainability requires critical reflection on these perspectives, often dismissed as "nationalistic hype" or *gukppong*. This study focuses on Hallyu as a collective phenomenon rather than individual works. By comparing Hallyu content across countries, it examines discourses of Korean identity. The analysis shows that success does not rely solely on Korean cultural elements, which are often reconstituted as symbolic objects through producer intent and audience perception. For Hallyu to remain sustainable, producers must distinguish between "content appeal" and "cultural elements," leveraging both strategically to create works that resonate with global audiences.

Session Code: 6-B

Room: 2-402

Panel Code: p-026

Title: Materiality of City Landscape in Twentieth Century Korea

Abstract:

This panel reexamines the multi-faceted experiences of urban life in twentieth century Korea. Korean cities, serving as spatial nexus points for people and materials, underwent rapid cycles of destruction, development, and preservation fueled by technological advancements and political upheavals. The materiality of the urban environment—which shapes and conditions daily life, fundamentally determines how residents recognize their identity, experience mobility, build their homes, and engage in worship. In this panel, we explore how twentieth-century materials defined Korean capabilities, experiences, and ideals. Tillman offers insight into how one local community—female students in 1930s Seoul—engaged with global systems of modern transportation. Ro approaches city life from the distinct angle of a religious shrine and site, analyzing the liturgical spectacle of and at Munmyo (the Confucian Shrine). Finally, Ha illuminates how concrete came to dominate residential construction in South Korea, and by extension, East Asia. He demonstrates how Cold War geopolitics reshaped the cement industry, transformed urban landscapes, and altered the everyday lives of city dwellers.

Organizer: Sang-ho Ro, Ewha Womans University

Chair: Sang-ho Ro, Ewha Womans University

1) Nathan Tillman, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

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

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

2) Sang-ho Ro, Ewha Womans University

Repositioning a Confucian Site in Wartime Colonial Korea: The Confucian Shrine, Munmyo, and the New Order Movement in 1930s–1940s Colonial Seoul

This paper traces the historical evolution of the Confucian shrine, Munmyo, and its corresponding public status between the 1930s and 1940s. While Munmyo was an established religious site and a symbol of thought throughout the pre-modern era, it developed an intense relationship with politics and the modern colonial state during the first half of the twentieth century. The Japanese annexation of Korea initially appeared to diminish the authority and influence of both Confucianism and its primary shrine. Yet, the subsequent emergence of the New Order Movements offered a pivotal opportunity for their revival and ideological reconfiguration, leveraging them as instruments for state-sponsored campaigns. I will specifically examine the interaction between Korean Confucian organizations, Munmyo as a holy site, and the New Order Movements to understand how they repositioned themselves amidst the pressures of World War II.

3) Jaeyoung Ha, Tsinghua University

Birth of Concrete Cities: The Origins of Mass Concrete Residential Buildings in the Cold War South Korea

This research examines the origins of the mass construction of reinforced concrete (RC) housing in South Korea at the intersection of U.S. aid policy and architectural technology. Nearly all modern residences in South Korea now use RC structures. The rapid spread of RC housing in South Korea resulted from three intertwined forces: U.S. aid directed toward the cement industry (initially for agricultural infrastructure), the colonial legacy of architectural education, and authoritarian regimes' efforts to alleviate housing shortages to consolidate legitimacy. This study reveals how Cold War

geopolitics reshaped the cement industry, transformed urban landscapes, and altered everyday life. RC combined the compressive and fireproof strength of concrete with the tensile durability of steel. In colonial and postcolonial Korea, RC remained rare, reserved for government buildings and elite apartments, due to the underdevelopment of cement in the Korean Peninsula and resulting high cost of cement. Before 1945, only one cement plant existed south of the 38th parallel. During the U.S. occupation, aid targeted agricultural infrastructure invested in limestone mining and cement plants in South Korea. As cement prices dropped, RC was largely applied to residential housing since the 1960s. RC's durability during the heavy summer rains made it especially well suited to the country's environmental conditions, further ensuring its adoption in government housing initiatives.

Session Code: 6-C

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-055

Title: Technologies of the Body and Its Measurement

Abstract:

This panel examines discourses and technologies of the body across 20th and 21st century Japan. The body has long represented a site of analysis, measurement and management in Japan, from the early twentieth century import of technologies and techniques, such as Taylorism, to later adaptations, such as Toyotism. At present, the body persists as an object of focus, as evidenced by the interest and investment by Japanese technology firms in facial recognition and other forms of biometric surveillance. Panel papers explore the implications of continued interest in the body as a site of technological measurement and control. In a discussion of the 1920s and 30s, Ryan Moran analyzes Japanese labor science's pivot during the era to wartime mobilization, highlighting the flexibility of the management theory's choreography of the body. Focusing on the 1980s, Diane Lewis critiques the role that smart buildings proposed during the decade played in extending and complicating discourses on the bodies of female office workers as a contested site of labor politics. Bridging the 20th century to the present, Paul Roquet turns to the technologies of 3D scanning and examines the tenuous status of the scanned body as an index in the context of VR and gaming. Finally, David Humphrey examines the development of facial expression recognition as a form of "natural" interface from the 1990s to the present, arguing that it belies the contradictions of so-called human-centered computing.

Organizer: David Humphrey, Michigan State University

Chair: David Humphrey, Michigan State University

- 1) Ryan Moran, University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Labor Science Goes to War

In 1921 Teruoka Gitō helped to found the Labor Science Research Institute with support from noted philanthropist Ōhara Magosaburō. At LSRI, Teruoka and other researchers aimed to understand the physiology and mental capacity of laboring bodies. This involved the utilization of a wide variety of aptitude tests, through which practitioners attempted to gauge the best conditions under which workers might toil. In practice, this was more limited, however, as the LSRI's aptitude tests established an averaged life course from which employers could determine the age range in which workers would be most productive. In 1937, the emerging wartime state decided that labor science would aid its Total War aims of maximizing production and efficiency. The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science took over the administration of the LSRI to focus its research on wartime aims. In this talk, I will introduce the history of the body in Labor Science studies and discuss its value to the wartime state. I explore how wartime ideologues and government officials attempted to harness the insights of Labor Science in the interests of wartime mobilization and efficiency. In the aftermath of the global depression of 1929, LSRI had already started to expand its research from the factory to food production. I examine how the wartime state sought to integrate the scientific management of labor and human resources to overcome Japan's lower productive capacities when compared to the US.

- 2) Diane Lewis, Washington University in St. Louis

Counted Out: How Women's Health Information Helped Shut Down Telework Programs in 1980s Japan

This presentation analyzes the gender politics of techno-utopia and technophobia in 1980s Japan through an examination of arguments for and against "intelligent buildings." Intelligent buildings, like the Honda Aoyama Building, incorporated new communications and programmable technologies, such as LAN, automatic sprinkler systems, keycard entry, and

computer-controlled elevators. Proponents framed the buildings as something different than office automation to assuage concerns about the mental and physical health impacts of office rationalization. Indeed, unions, public health officials, and psychologists used arguments about stress, fatigue, and routinization to push back against computerized automation. To amplify their arguments, these critics drew attention to women workers who suffered reproductive harms from long hours at screens. However, while critics of computerization and office rationalization warned of women's reproductive health, they did not agitate for more family-friendly policies in the workplace, like parental leave, equal pay, and paid childcare. In examining this problem, I draw on the Disco Network's theorization of technoskepticism, which emphasizes the importance of curiosity and openness as well as refusal. A technoskeptical analysis reveals similarities between technoutopian discourses and technophobic strategies surrounding intelligent buildings, which both ignored the ambivalent position of women who stood to gain from network technologies.

3) Paul Roquet, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

My Life as a 3D Asset: The Scanned Body in Japan's Game Engine Arts

How does understanding of the human form shift once it can be mapped into a 3D asset for use in virtual space? Starting with early scientific attempts to map the contours of the human body through photogrammetry, this talk tracks how the 3D human form comes to be introduced into the computer and reanimated through the game development software. From the rhetoric surrounding scanned actors in the *Ryū ga gotoku* Yakuza series, to the notion of the "real avatar" in Japanese social VR, I examine the troubled indexicality of the human scan as a vector for real-world fidelity. I then turn to a set of contemporary Japanese media artists using human assets against the grain to explore alternatives to this dominant "reality capture" discourse. Here, the 3D model promises not a perfect match but a twisted mirroring of offline embodiment, a way of imagining instead what it might feel like to be subjected to the parametric logic of the game engine itself. Positioning the scanned body within a broader philosophy of the computer-generated image, I argue the 3D asset offers a way to think through the broader impact of computation on human embodiment.

4) David Humphrey, Michigan State University

Human Capture: Expression Recognition and the Quest for Natural Interfaces

I explore the Japanese technology industry's pursuit, from the 1990s onward, of automated facial expression recognition (FER) as a vehicle for naturalizing interactions between human agents and computers. Spurred by developments in the US, Japanese firms and their research divisions turned in the late 1980s to the growing field of human-computer interaction (HCI), often referred to there as "human interface" (HI). While much of the work aimed to improve input-output devices and user interfaces, a subset explored the use of emergent technologies, such as neural networks, to design digital systems that could recognize and respond to users' corporeal movements, such as gestures and facial expression. Researchers argued that, by quipping computers with such capabilities, they could enable them to interact with users in a more natural and seamless fashion, akin to how humans interact with one another in everyday conversation. I focus on the development of expression recognition systems, an area in which Japan was an early leader in the 1990s and which intersected with HI work, with an emphasis on NTT's Human Interface Laboratories and its development of a "Human Reader" platform. I argue that the work anticipated the emergence of what I identify as human capture, a systematic move within contemporary digital systems to surveil and thus lock in the human user, belying the rhetoric of human-centered technology that typifies much of contemporary technology discourse in Japan.

Session Code: 6-D

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-074

Title: Revisiting the Global and the Local in East Asian History: From the Western Pacific Perspectives

Abstract:

This panel reexamines East Asian history through a Western Pacific lens, emphasizing how maritime dynamics and institutional initiatives consistently transcended national boundaries. The first two presentations situate the Yellow Sea as an expandable corridor extending toward the Western Pacific's edge. The first examines archaeological evidence from Tongsong Fortress on the Yellow Sea coast, highlighting its role as a strategic outpost for Sino-Korean exchanges and institutionalized interactions between the seventh and tenth centuries. The second carries this narrative into the early modern period, demonstrating that Ming China's security during the East Asian War depended on the coordinated defense

of Korea's southern coast, a maritime gateway to the Yellow Sea Rim. The final two papers extend this framework into the modern era, underscoring the persistence of maritime connectivity intertwined with institutional logics. The third traces the trajectory of international health governance linking East Asia with Pacific islands under shared administrative practices. The fourth revisits the Ryukyu Disposition by analyzing how its incorporation as a Japanese frontier reverberated through imperial, Cold War, and postcolonial geopolitics. Together, these papers contend that East Asian history unfolds within a Western Pacific paradigm where maritime dynamics and institutional forces converge, thereby revisiting the interplay between the global and the local on a broader spectrum.

Organizer: Jeong-il Lee, Northeast Asian History Foundation

Chair: Barend Noordam, Heidelberg University

Discussant: Barend Noordam, Heidelberg University

1) Hyunjoon Bae, Northeast Asian History Foundation

The Maritime Silk Road between Ancient Korea and China: Material Evidence of Exchange between the Central-Western Korean Peninsula and the Shandong Peninsula

In antiquity, Korea, China, and Japan actively engaged in maritime exchange, with the Unified Silla period (mid-7th to mid-10th centuries) marking an era of intensified trade along the Yellow Sea. On Korea's west coast, Tangsŏngjin and Chŏnghaejin served as principal commercial hubs with Tang China. While Chŏnghaejin, known as a hub of international trade among the three countries and recorded in Ennin's Record of a Pilgrimage to the Tang in Search of the Buddhist Law, has received considerable scholarly attention, Tangsŏngjin's location and significance have long remained obscure due to sparse documentation. Recent excavations at Tangsŏng in Hwasŏng, approximately 60 kilometers southwest of Seoul, have uncovered roof tiles inscribed with the character 唐 and Chinese ceramics, suggesting its function as a strategic outpost for Sino-Korean exchange. Analysis of these materials underscores the vitality of networks linking Unified Silla and Tang, particularly a direct maritime connection between the Shandong Peninsula and the Sillan capital Kyŏngju, located near the Sea of Japan/East Sea in alignment with the Japanese archipelago. By situating these findings within the historiography of East Asian maritime history, this study reframes the Yellow Sea not as a peripheral passage but as a decisive corridor of pan-East Asian connectivity—one that anchored early transnational exchange and decisively shaped the material, cultural, and political interactions of the region.

2) Jeong-il Lee, Northeast Asian History Foundation

The Geostrategic Role of Korea and the Yellow Sea in the Defense of Beijing during the East Asian War (1592–1598)

During the East Asian War (1592–1598), particularly its second phase (1597–1598), Ming China deemed Chosŏn Korea's southern littoral vital to its security. This perception spurred a unified defense strategy linking Liaodong, Shandong, and Jiangsu to protect the empire's eastern seaboard and Beijing. Even before peace negotiations with Toyotomi Hideyoshi collapsed in October 1596, Ming commanders in Chosŏn crafted a multi-regional defense plan, integrating the seashores of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, and Shandong into a cohesive fortification line closely tied to Chosŏn's coastal strongholds. To implement this plan, they demanded precise topographical and hydrographic intelligence from Chosŏn to align its defenses with Ming fortifications. Building on these preparations, strategic deployments were urged along the Shandong Peninsula and Bohai Gulf, with warnings that losing Hansan Island—Chosŏn's naval headquarters at the heart of its southern coast—would jeopardize Beijing. By framing the war as a transnational conflict and positioning Chosŏn's southern coast as a pivotal fulcrum, this presentation reinterprets sixteenth-century East Asian geopolitics. It draws parallels with contemporaneous Eurasian wars and offers diachronic insights into maritime dynamics across early modern and twenty-first-century contexts.

3) Hohee Cho, University of Oxford

Viewing the Western Pacific as a Medical Frontier of Empires

The Western Pacific has long been a space where empires both clash and collaborate in the field of medicine. The grouping of the Western Pacific as a region may be unusual in political or economic spheres. But why does the World Health Organization's Western Pacific Region group East Asian countries with Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands under one governing unit to tackle common health problems? How did contemporary multilateral health diplomacy come to treat China, Korea, and Japan in the same region as small tropical islands such as Fiji, Samoa, or Tonga? This paper traces the history of the Western Pacific as a region to the early 20th century, when empires active in the Pacific World collaborated in indigenous healthcare. The British, French, Japanese, and even the American, Australian, and New Zealand authorities

worked together in medical and health programs when they might be competing with one another in different fields. This was partly due to the peripheral status of the Pacific Islands to empires and partly due to economic efficiency in managing colonies in such a vast region. The result is shown in the League of Nations Health Organization's Far Eastern Bureau, the British Empire's Western Pacific Health Service, or medical aid during the Second World War. This paper examines how the Western Pacific region was categorized as a distinct region in medical history. By doing so, this paper aims to frame the Western Pacific as the medical frontier of the empire.

4) Chihiro Narita, Ritsumeikan University

Differences and Changes in Perceptions of the Ryukyu Disposition in East Asian Countries

This paper reexamines the “Ryukyu Disposition”—Japan’s coercive incorporation of the Ryukyu Kingdom in the 1870s—within a longue durée geopolitical framework. It interprets this incorporation as a pivotal nexus of international relations, regional hegemony, and evolving national identities. From the 1910s to the 1972 Okinawa Reversion, academic discourse in Okinawa and Japan largely portrayed the “Ryukyu Disposition” either as national unification under Japan or as liberation by Japan, both reflecting assimilative and nationalist narratives. The 1972 Reversion, however, reignited deep-seated grievances: perceived discrimination led many Okinawans to equate the turnover with the original annexation. China’s position also shifted over time. The Qing abandoned its opposition after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895); the Republic of China later advanced an irredentist claim; and during the Chinese Civil War (1945–1949), the ROC on Taiwan advocated Okinawan independence while the PRC initially supported reversion to Japan. The contemporaneous rise of the Senkaku Islands dispute has further intensified tensions among Japan, Okinawa, the PRC, Taiwan, and the United States. By recontextualizing these historical transformations, this paper demonstrates how perceptions of the “Ryukyu Disposition” evolved alongside regional geopolitics, underscoring Okinawa’s significance at the strategic intersection of the East China Sea and the Western Pacific amid East Asia’s “new Cold War.”

Session Code: 6-E

Room: 2-404

Individual Session 15: Memory, Culture, and Future-Making

Chair: William Andrews, Sophia University

1) (i-141) Sergio Mateo Aranda, Saitama University

From Pilgrimage to Settlement: Cultural Content and Migration in Post-Disaster Ōarai

Depopulation and demographic decline have long posed serious challenges for rural Japan, prompting a variety of regional revitalization initiatives. The coastal town of Ōarai in Ibaraki Prefecture offers a unique case in which collaboration with the anime *Girls und Panzer* has evolved beyond short-term tourism promotion to foster more profound social change. Originally launched as part of post-disaster recovery efforts following the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, the anime partnership revitalized local commerce, tourism, and community engagement. In recent years, however, the phenomenon has entered a new stage: fans of the series have begun relocating to Ōarai, seeking to live within the setting of their beloved narrative. Drawing on field observations, interviews, and comparative analysis with existing research on content tourism and rural migration, this study examines how symbolic and emotional attachment to fictional worlds can translate into real-life mobility. It explores the socio-cultural dynamics of these new residents, their integration into local networks, and the broader implications for sustainable regional development. The case of Ōarai suggests that media collaborations can move beyond tourism, becoming catalysts for population stabilization and community regeneration through shared identity and affective belonging.

2) (i-239) Ben Moeller, University of Oxford

Marching to Yasukuni: Memory and Politics in Japanese Military Training

Visits by senior government officials to Tokyo’s Yasukuni Shrine, known for its enshrinement of war criminals as well as its revisionist history museum, have long featured prominently in debates about the state of nationalism in Japan. The outsized attention paid to headline-making visits by prime ministers and cabinet members, however, obscures the extent to which entanglements between Yasukuni and the state are institutionalized throughout the levels of government, despite the constitution’s explicit prohibition of such links. This paper addresses this knowledge gap, asking specifically how members of the country’s Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are taught to think about Yasukuni during their training. It is based on thirteen

months of ethnographic fieldwork at the National Defense Academy (NDA), a university-level officer academy directly administered by the Ministry of Defense, whose graduates dominate the senior leadership of the SDF. Focusing on the annual march to Yasukuni organized by the academy's student corps, this paper argues that while the NDA leadership officially supports the separation of state and religion, unofficial traditions and practices that dominate student life at the academy teach students the opposite lesson. This "hidden curriculum," condoned and aided by the NDA leadership, teaches future SDF officers to embrace the revisionist narrative embodied by Yasukuni and to consider visits to the shrine a natural part of their occupation.

3) **(i-285)** Balawansuk Lynrah, Tokyo College, The University of Tokyo

Anticipating the Future: Youth, Uncertainty, and the Crafting of Futures in Bodoland, Northeast India

Alongside the rise of higher education in India, young people grapple with growing unemployment and deepening uncertainty within the broader crisis of neoliberalism. This uncertainty has become a shared yet unevenly experienced structure of feeling, differentially articulated and individuated, that shapes, blurs, and creates social differences. Focusing on Bodoland, a peripheral region in northeastern India that has transitioned from conflict and statehood movements to aspirations of development, this paper explores how young people aged 18–30 navigate precarious futures. Drawing on qualitative interviews, I examine the everyday strategies through which they respond to uncertainties by cultivating "backup plans." Building on Jeffery's (2010) concept of "timepass" and Anderson's (2019) concept of "mode of uncertainty," I argue that backup plans illustrate young people's active engagement in strategizing for future security, challenging the notion of passivity. Through these practices, futures are made present and felt, and animated by a distinctive mood of cautious hope. The concept of "backup" thus provides a lens to understand how young people anticipate, adapt, and reimagine futures within structural constraints, highlighting their agency, resilience, and capacity to aspire from the margins.

4) **(i-094)** David Adebahr, Kobe University

Middle Powers and the Making of Order: Japan and Germany's Strategic Narratives on Non-Traditional Security in the Indo-Pacific

Recently, non-traditional security (NTS) has emerged as a central theme in German-Japanese cooperation and as a new arena for shaping the Indo-Pacific order. Issues such as climate resilience, cyber security, and critical supply chains are increasingly framed not merely as technical challenges but as questions of international order. While existing scholarship has examined Japan and Germany's roles as economic or normative powers, little attention has been paid to how both states employ strategic narratives on NTS to legitimize their order-building ambitions. Studies that explain how domestic political contexts and identity narratives shape strategic communication on non-traditional security are rare. This study analyzes how Japan and Germany construct narratives that connect responsibility, order, and security in the Pacific. Combining neoclassical realism and discourse analysis, it investigates how domestic factors, strategic cultures, and alliance structures influence the framing of non-traditional threats. Through qualitative analysis of policy documents and speeches, the study compares Japan's OSA and Germany's Indo-Pacific Guidelines as key cases where normative and strategic considerations intersect. By situating these narratives within the contested liberal order, the research demonstrates how both countries seek to sustain order not through military balancing but through the construction of shared frameworks for non-traditional security cooperation.

Session Code: 6-F

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-059

Title: Subtle Hands: Translating, Transforming, and Reframing Art and Literature Across Japanese History

Abstract:

Translation always involves creative acts of reinterpretation. Translators exercise agency over what texts they translate and how but are bound by constraints relative to the contexts in which they operate. Translation is thus characterized by "subtle" interventions, whether through expressions of taste, acts of commissioning, or the re-appropriation of older narratives and images in new contexts. This panel takes an expansive view of translation to examine literary production, gender, and negotiations of power in Japanese art and literature from the medieval period to the 20th century. Each panelist focuses on how translators, artists, and commissioners reconfigured texts and narratives through such acts as commission, omission,

and reappropriation of existing images in new contexts. Jiayin Yuan shows how female survivors of the Genpei War commissioned illustrated scrolls to articulate their experiences in ways that diverged from warrior-centered narratives of the conflict. Serena Forrest explores how the Edo author Tamenaga Shunsui employed frame narratives in his *ninjōbon* works to cultivate sympathy for female characters. Marina Nascimento examines how feminist translators of the sexologist Edward Carpenter recast his work in Japanese and influenced discussions of female same-sex love in Korea and China. Patrick Carland-Echavarria argues that the postwar artist Naitō Rune reworked *shōjo* illustrations to reimagine heterosexual romance from a queer perspective.

Organizer: Patrick Carland-Echavarria, University of Oxford

Chair: Patrick Carland-Echavarria, University of Oxford

Discussant: Chinami Oka, Nagoya University

1) Jiayin Yuan, University of Pennsylvania

Circulating Passions: Gendered Memory and Narrative Afterlives of the Genpei War (1180–1185)

Where is the equivalent of Murasaki Shikibu in medieval Japan? In searching for prominent female literary figures in the aftermath of the Genpei War (1180–1185), scholars have been frustrated by the absence of female writers with the prestige of earlier authors. What they encounter instead are works centered on male warriors, such as the fourteenth-century *The Tale of the Heike*, which recount the conflict retrospectively. But where did the women go, especially those who survived the conflict? Where are their perspectives on the war and its aftermath? This paper argues that recovering the memories and experiences of medieval women in the post-Genpei eras requires methodological innovation. We must reconsider women's involvement with works not overtly associated with them. To this end, this paper examines *Heike kindachi zōshi*, a set of illustrated scrolls depicting the Taira, the defeated side of the war. Considering a group of Taira women who survived the conflict and later regained influence as its likely commissioners, this paper shows how they, though not the authors, collaborated in the creative process, shaping key editorial and visual decisions—what to include, emphasize, or omit—and embedding their perspectives into the text. Through these curatorial interventions, *Kindachi zōshi* constructs a counter-narrative that reframes the Taira's downfall as spiritually redemptive, offering a gendered reinterpretation of the Genpei War that contests the dominant *Heike* narrative.

2) Serena Forrest, University of Chicago

Reframing Sympathies: Layered Female Perspectives in Tamenaga Shunsui's Stories-Within-Stories

Tamenaga Shunsui (1790–1844) was a prolific author of commercial fiction in the late Edo period, best known for his *ninjōbon*, sentimental stories depicting the romantic entanglements of young men and women. Shunsui's contemporaries were critical of his work, considering it frivolous and lewd for peddling romance to female readers. Scholarship on *ninjōbon* has historically been similarly dismissive of the genre as little more than melodrama with negligible literary value. However, in more recent years, the *ninjōbon* has been gradually reassessed, with research exploring what these works offered female readers beyond just romance: fantasies of agency, familial bonds, and intimate friendship. This paper explores one characteristic technique of Shunsui's *ninjōbon*: the micro story-within-a-story. Characters are often depicted idly reading aloud, and short excerpts of the books they read are inserted with their commentary. These micro stories-within-stories range from retellings of ancient myths to excerpts from contemporary plays. Embedding these stories into his narrative through the character's reading aloud, Shunsui reframes and imbues them with new meaning. Ultimately, the micro stories-within-stories serve as a tool to create a multi-layered framework of sympathy: for the women in the stories-within-stories, for the female characters reading or reacting to the stories, and finally, for the presumed female readership of Shunsui's works themselves.

3) Marina Nascimento, University of Pennsylvania

Translating Desire: Women, Sexology, and the Genealogy of Female Same-Sex Love Discourse in East Asia (1910s–1930s)

This paper examines how female same-sex love became a key theme in early twentieth-century East Asia through the circulation of sexological ideas and their reinterpretation by women translators and writers. In Japan, discussion of women's attachments intensified after the 1911 double suicide of two schoolgirls, which sexologists read through imported theories of deviance. Thinkers such as Havelock Ellis and Edward Carpenter, translated in the 1910s, became central to this debate. Feminists reshaped these works to address same-sex love among female students. While Carpenter rejected stigma, his focus on male relations left girls' friendships undervalued. Translator Yamakawa Kikue softened his criticism,

highlighting women's emotional bonds. Writer Yoshiya Nobuko later cited Carpenter to defend schoolgirl affection as spiritual and pedagogical. This feminist reinterpretation, though not universal, spread across East Asia. Through magazines, novels, and essays, women's readings of Ellis and Carpenter reached colonial Korea and Republican China, where *tongsōng yōnae* and *tongxing'ai* described similar ideals, romantic bonds between girls, seen as pure and formative. Tracing the movement from Japan's *dōseiai* to Korea's *tongsōng yōnae* and China's *tongxing'ai*, this paper shows how women's translation and literary creation forged a shared East Asian vocabulary of intimacy that redefined modern girlhood.

4) Patrick Carland-Echavarria, University of Oxford

Rescripting Love: Naitō Rune and the Queering of Heterosexual Romance in Postwar Japan

Naitō Rune (1932–2007) was one of the most prominent illustrators of *shōjo* (young girls) magazines in the postwar period and has been hailed as an innovator of the now globally-famous *kawaii* aesthetic. Gaining prominence in the late 1950s and 1960s, Naitō studied under *shōjo* illustrators prominent before the war including Nakahara Jun'ichi and Takabatake Kashō, but developed a unique style that emphasized the independence of his female figures and their healthy romantic relationships with young men. In doing so, Naitō's figures embodied a more egalitarian idea of heterosexual romance actively promoted after the war and made prominent through such acts as the Crown Prince marrying a commoner in 1959. In the 1970s, Naitō also became one of the first illustrators for the gay magazine *Barazoku*, making him a unique artist who portrayed heterosexuality and homosexuality in parallel ways. This paper examines Naitō's early career and argues that he took advantage of the more liberal atmosphere in postwar Japan to make explicit a queer sensibility that early artists like Nakahara and Kashō could only hint at. It will suggest that in his depictions of same-sex and opposite sex couples, Naitō drew on the aesthetics of earlier *shōjo* illustrators while also rescripting the ways they portrayed romantic love. By reappropriating the *shōjo* aesthetic, Naitō created new artistic and discursive space to imagine the ways same-sex and opposite-sex love could be visualized in postwar Japan.

Session Code: 6-G

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-100

Title: Infrastructures of Modern Life: Gender, Technology, and the Spaces of Cold War Asia

Abstract:

This panel explores how material environments and affective imaginaries shaped postwar and Cold War modernities across Japan and its transnational spheres of influence. Together, the papers investigate how gendered bodies, domestic spaces, and consumer sensibilities were mobilized to define progress and identity within shifting geopolitical and economic orders. Yusung Kim examines how electrification and kitchen modernization in Cold War Japan and South Korea reconfigured the “home” as both a technological frontier and normative space, positioning the housewife as an agent of scientific modernity. Takuya Maeda explores the colonial continuities and postwar developments that made Southeast Asia a postwar “frontier” for Japanese expatriate men through an analysis of the Eastern Seaboard Development Program, a Japanese infrastructure project in 1980s Thailand. Ajjana Thairungroj turns to Tanaka Yasuo's *Somehow, Crystal* (1980), analyzing how the novel's catalog-like aesthetic and “Crystal lifestyle” mapped urban consumer identities through mood, sensibility, and media circulation in Bubble-era Tokyo. By juxtaposing domestic, urban, and transnational sites, the panel illuminates how Japan's material modernities and gendered subjectivities were unevenly imagined, consumed, and exported across Cold War Asia.

Organizer: Ajjana Thairungroj, Tohoku University

Chair: Takuya Maeda, The University of Tokyo

Discussant: Joelle Nazzicone, Kyoritsu Women's University

1) Yusung Kim, Seoul National University

Scientific Homes: The Cold War Kitchen in Japan and South Korea

This presentation explores how the image of home was imagined and reconfigured in Cold War Japan and South Korea, with particular attention to the processes of electrification and the transformation of the kitchen. In both countries, idealized visions of modern homes—equipped with electric appliances and American-style stand-up kitchens—were disseminated through various media as representations of both an advanced techno-environment and a warm, desirable domestic space. These images and discourses on the American home were primarily directed toward Japanese and Korean women, serving

not only as an aspirational model of technological modernity but also as a normative measure that marked their existing homes as old-fashioned, unsanitary, unscientific, and even uncivilized. The home was presented as a site to be modernized by embracing scientific and rational lifestyles (Jp. *seikatsu*, K. *sangwhal*). Within this process, the figure of the housewife emerged as an active agent in shaping and rationalizing the domestic sphere. This presentation examines how the role of the housewife was imagined, discussed, and visualized in Japan and South Korea from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s, and how women's bodies engaged with these new domestic environments. Ultimately, the "home" will be considered as a medium through which new science and technology were unevenly adopted and localized at the intersection of Cold War geopolitics and material modernity.

2) Takuya Maeda, The University of Tokyo

"Nanpo (Southeast Asian) Fever": Postwar Japanese Settler Masculinity and the Eastern Seaboard Development Program in 1980s Thailand

This paper explores the colonial continuities and postwar developments that made Southeast Asia, specifically Thailand, a postwar frontier for Japanese expatriates. It analyzes the Eastern Seaboard Development Program (ESDP), a series of 16 integrated infrastructure projects financed by the Japanese government in the 1980s. The ESDP focused on three provinces next to Bangkok, collectively known as the Eastern Seaboard, to establish a new industrial cluster in the region. As a result of Japanese commitments to financing and technical aid, droves of Japanese engineers were dispatched to the Eastern Seaboard in order to turn the area's fishing villages into a petrochemical industrial hub. In this paper, I explore the gendered discursive production of the Eastern Seaboard as a postwar "frontier" for Japanese expatriate men. The characterization of the region as an empty and undeveloped "frontier" was the product of both colonial continuities and new postwar imperatives. On the one hand, they were shaped by the legacies of colonial-era "Nanpo (Southeast Asian) Fever" discourse that gripped diverse sectors of Japanese society in the final years of the Japanese Empire. On the other hand, they were also the result of new pressures for overseas investment created by the Japanese Bubble Economy in the 1980s. I show how Japanese involvement in the ESDP was shaped by the affective and spatial pulls of what I describe as "postwar Japanese settler masculinity."

3) Ajjana Thairungroj, Tohoku University

Catalog Infrastructures: Mood and "Somehow, Crystal"'s Urban Media Milieu in Early 1980s Japan

In 1980, Tanaka Yasuo published *Somehow, Crystal*, an enigmatic novel that would come to retrospectively epitomize the conspicuous consumption and materialistic lifestyle associated with Japan's bubble-era and high-economic growth prosperity. Featuring 442 footnotes explaining specific references to brand names, music, and fashionable locations, the text has been characterized as resembling a city lifestyle guidebook to the "nowy" present of early 1980s Tokyo. This paper examines the landscape of consumer culture as presented by the text, in relation to the negotiation of identity. It looks at the intersections between modes of self-crafting and consumption, paying particular attention to the text's emphasis on mood and the "Crystal" lifestyle—a lifestyle dictated by individual sensibilities and consuming whatever "feels good." Situating the text's emergence in an urban media milieu through active dialogue with advertising practices of catalog fashion magazines *Anan* and *Nonno* published in the early 1980s, I show that "mood" and "sensibilities" are discursively formulated by circulation within this media environment.

Session Code: 6-H

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-080

Title: Reimagining Social Movement Theory Through East Asian Feminisms

Abstract:

Social movement theories have largely been developed through the analysis of movements in the United States and Europe, often overlooking the complex dynamics unfolding in other global contexts. In recent years, feminist movements in East Asia, particularly in Korea and Japan, have emerged with remarkable force, challenging deeply entrenched gender norms, confronting institutional inequalities, and reshaping public discourse. These movements have not only ignited widespread activism but have also led to cultural and policy changes, while provoking significant countermobilizations. This panel asks: What can feminist movements in Korea and Japan teach us about the conditions for movement emergence, resilience, and transformation? What triggers countermovements in contexts where traditional gender ideologies remain powerful?

How does external funding impact movement sustainability, legitimacy, and internal dynamics? Under what conditions can diverse movement actors—despite strategic differences—collaborate effectively and generate synergistic outcomes? And what kinds of leadership practices facilitate such coordination? By engaging these questions, our panel seeks to expand and refine existing social movement theories through the lens of feminist movements in East Asia. We aim to contribute a perspective that challenges dominant theoretical paradigms and foregrounds the agency, innovation, and complexity of movements operating outside the Western canon.

Organizer: Kanoko Kamata, Keio University

Chair: Kanoko Kamata, Keio University

Discussant: Kyoko Tominaga, Ritsumeikan University

1) Kazuhiro Terashita, The University of Tokyo

What do Young Men Oppose about Feminism?: A Survey Experiment in South Korea

This study examines how young men respond to different feminist claims through a survey experiment. While young men are often portrayed as egalitarian and diversity-oriented, many express opposition to feminism, especially when facing collective threat or economic vulnerability. Previous research has typically treated feminist claims as uniform and focused mainly on young men, without sufficiently addressing how responses vary across generations. To address these gaps, this study uses an unsupervised machine learning model to classify distinct feminist claims in South Korea and designs a survey experiment based on these categories. The experiment was conducted with a nationally representative online panel of South Korean voters aged 18 and older. Results show that young men strongly oppose quota-related claims but are more moderate toward others, such as care work and gender-based violence. Importantly, the analysis reveals that generational context significantly shapes attitudes, with older respondents also showing unique patterns of resistance. These findings contribute to research on political polarization and social movements by highlighting how feminist discourse interacts with generational and gender dynamics, offering insights into how polarization may be mitigated.

2) Yeneca Lee, University of Pittsburgh

Negotiating Survival: Organizational Structures, Funding, and the Sustainability of Feminist Movement Organizations in South Korea

Marking ten years since the Feminism Reboot—a resurgence of feminist activism in South Korea—this study examines two emerging organizations, Women Against Violence Online (WAVO) and Rally 4 Feminism (R4F), to explore how organizational structure and external funding shaped their divergent paths. Both received major grants in 2019: WAVO expanded and stabilized, while R4F became inactive after its funding ended. Using a comparative case study approach, this qualitative research investigates how organizational development interacted with funding to produce differing outcomes. I argue that the groups' early aims shaped distinct structures, influencing their capacity to absorb funding. WAVO's pragmatic focus fostered a centralized yet flexible system, allowing it to adapt without destabilization. In contrast, R4F's broad, ideal-driven agenda encouraged informality and autonomy, which clashed with the formal structures required by funders, creating internal tension, demotivation, and eventual dissolution. The study contributes to social movement and organizational theory by showing how preexisting structures affect a group's ability to integrate institutional support and how activists navigate funding constraints. Documenting feminist organizing a decade after the Feminism Reboot, it highlights the sustainability challenges of grassroots feminist activism in South Korea and beyond.

3) Kanoko Kamata, Keio University

Strategic Synergies: Feminist Advocacy, Protest, and Education in Achieving Criminal Code Reform in Japan

Social movements employ strategies to pursue policy change, including advocacy, public education, and protest. While each has its own strengths and limitations, they can work synergistically, reinforcing one another to amplify a movement's impact. This paper examines the 2023 criminal code reform on sex crimes in Japan as a case study to explore how feminist movements employed a multi-strategy approach to enact significant legislative change. The reform included renaming the offense from "Constructive Forcible Sexual Intercourse" to "Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse." The feminist activists secured a major victory through a combination of strategic action. A survivors' advocacy organization played a pivotal role by navigating opaque policy-making processes and engaging persistently with politicians and bureaucrats. This advocacy was bolstered by a coalition of 12 feminist organizations, which provided institutional support and collective legitimacy. Meanwhile, the public protest campaign Flower Demo raised national awareness of sexual violence and exerted visible pressure on political elites. At the cultural level, various feminist groups developed educational programs on sexual

consent in schools and universities, helping to shift public discourse and build societal support for legal reform. This case demonstrates how diverse forms of feminist activism can interact to produce meaningful policy outcomes, even in politically challenging contexts.

Session Code: 6-I

Room: 2-412

Panel Code: p-018

Title: Encoded Politics: Private and Public Emotions in Chinese Poetry, From Qin to Qing

Abstract:

Using poetry to convey political messages is not an exclusive feature of the Chinese literary and intellectual world. On the contrary, it appears as a well-established mechanism employed by authors across time and space, making verses in both prose and poetry a powerful tool to communicate individual or collective political aspirations and criticism. In the Chinese case, however, the entanglement between the public sphere and the poetic universe was established and accredited already in the Confucian Canon, and for centuries influential figures (from ministers to emperors, from philosophers to party leaders) have used poetry to send public messages, either by writing, commenting upon or quoting poems. The present panel intends to reflect on this significant aspect of Chinese literature and intellectual history by putting in dialogue three different historical periods—covering the birth, consolidation, and crisis of the imperial system—to shed light on how literati have woven, arranged and manipulated characters and verses to transfuse private emotions into public criticism. The selected poems will be analyzed intersecting text and context: rhetorical devices and literary imageries will be decrypted against the backdrop of their authors' biographies, social environments and political agendas, with the aim to show the close entanglement between the public and private spheres and the intellectual dimension of poetics in Chinese literary history across the ages.

Organizer: Federico Brusadelli, University of Naples L'Orientale

Chair: Takahiro Nakajima, The University of Tokyo

Discussant: Vincent Leung, Lingnan University

1) Lisa Indaccolo, Tallinn University

The Politics of Sorrow: Reading Qu Yuan's Lisao as a Polemical Manifesto

The Warring States minister and literatus Qu Yuan (ca. 340–278 BC) is possibly the most cherished poet in the Chinese tradition. Viciously slandered at court and forced into exile twice, he embodies the figure of the Confucian tragic hero: a true minister who is persecuted and unjustly punished due to his loyalty. Among Qu Yuan's extant compositions, the *Lisao* (Encountering Sorrow) stands out for its autobiographical elements and the pathos that permeates the whole piece. The poem is renowned for the heartfelt personal reflections, deeply imbued with longing for the homeland and heartbreak for the severed relationship with his Lord. It is celebrated for its sophisticated language and the subtle allusiveness of its imagery, however the elegiac tone occasionally leaves place to a *cri de coeur*. As this paper aims to show, a bitter political denunciation of the moral corruption and decadence of the time is also embedded within this intricate tapestry. Qu Yuan harshly criticizes sycophants at courts who are deliberately misleading the ruler to take advantage of him, but also scolds the king himself for his fickleness. The paper approaches the *Lisao* as an example of politico-polemical poetry, shedding light on the inextricable entanglement of the public and private dimensions of a literatus' life. Through a systematic analysis of relevant clusters of verses, this contribution offers a fresh perspective by providing an alternative reading of this beloved poetical piece.

2) Anne Schmiedl, University of Münster

Subversive Strokes: Encrypting Political Criticism via Chinese Character Manipulation

In imperial China, officials often refrained from directly voicing complaints to emperors or high-ranking officials, instead presenting them in veiled ways to avoid risking their careers and lives. This paper examines poems and songs from the Song (960–1279) to the Ming dynasties (1368–1644), focusing on a method used by Chinese literati to encrypt political criticism: Chinese character manipulation (*xizi*). Demonstrating the author's erudition and wit as well as testing the reader's intelligence, this method appropriates written Chinese characters to conceal secret messages. In so-called splitting and combining poems (*lihe shi*), authors hid a secondary, covert meaning, which could be uncovered by dissecting and recombining the strokes and dots of characters. Chinese character manipulation was, however, more than just a literary

device. Owing to the close connection of writing and divination as well as poetry and prophecy in China, written characters were seen as embodying realities in the human realm. In divinatory folk poems (*minyao*) and children's ditties (*tongyao*), character manipulation was thus not only used to obscure political commentary but also served as an attempt to actually influence contemporary political realities. By examining its application in both splitting and combining poems as well as divinatory poems, this paper shows how character manipulation functioned as a tool for political criticism and activism.

3) Federico Brusadelli, University of Naples L'Orientale

The Red Sun and the Yellow Tiger: Decrypting Huang Zunxian's "Lament for Taiwan" (1895)

In 1895, the acting governor of Hunan province, Huang Zunxian (1848–1905)—a prominent official of Hakka descent, former consul in San Francisco, soon to figure among the protagonists of the aborted Hundred Days reforms of 1898—wrote a poem entitled “A Trip to Taiwan” (*Taiwan xing*), in which he lamented the fate of the island, ceded to Japan following a humiliating military defeat. The present paper will analyze this understudied piece of Huang's rich literary legacy, positioning it within its author's political elaboration (especially regarding conceptualizations of “sovereignty” and “power”), geopolitical vision, and historical agency. The poem will offer an insight into Huang's tense intellectual engagement with Meiji Japan, oscillating between admiration and despise, while also shedding light on his diagnosis of the Qing decline. By focusing on its literary mixture of traditional form and contemporary content, a study of this poem will reveal the internal complexity of Huang's own version of “Confucian reformism,” a form of moderate progressivism rooted in classicism but projected towards wider horizons, both geographically and conceptually. On another, and more specific level, Huang's emotional description of the Sino-Taiwanese elite's aimless resistance to the Japanese in the turbulent summer of 1895, will provide interesting elements for an updated (and necessary) historiography of the short-lived Republic of Formosa.

Session Code: 6-J

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-029

Title: (Un)Becoming Asian: Reclaiming the Lives and Memories Beyond Dominant Narratives

Abstract:

As diasporic Korean researchers and writers, we share a sense of alienation from the mainstream and resist the homogenization of self and human experience. From this standpoint, this panel brings together four different presentations that challenge the dominant narratives in Asian history (1935–present) that largely influence how we remember and who we become. Instead, we offer counternarrative–stories that give life to silenced emotions, hidden memories, and the lives nonexistent in official records. We seek to unsettle the boundaries of identity, history, and representation as an ongoing process of (un)becoming. This panel employs narrative approaches, understood as methods that examine how people make sense of their lives through stories situated within social, historical, and political contexts. Through autoethnography, ethnographic case study, and media analysis, we reimagine the ways in which history is told and felt. We revisit dominant historical narratives within each research focus and seek to reveal gaps between mainstream discourses and lived experiences. By interrogating mainstream representations of Asian diaspora, we attempt to make visible the testimonies of the Korean War orphans, migrant mothers, people with disabilities, and contemporary Zainichi Koreans. Our work is a collaboration between representative subjects and ourselves. Taken together, our research opens up a way to explore the unresolvable, fragmented, and fluid aspects of the human experience.

Organizer: Christina N. Lee, University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Chair: Jinsuk Yang, Osaka Metropolitan University

1) Jinsuk Yang, Osaka Metropolitan University

The Gendered Care Regime and Multilingual Practices: The Case of a Nepali Mother in Japan

This study examines how a Nepali immigrant mother in Japan navigates Japanese learning and settlement within the constraints of gendered family roles. In Japan, discrepancies in Japanese proficiency within multilingual families have become increasingly evident, with husbands generally more proficient than wives. Whereas previous studies on immigrants' women and social integration have tended to view care labor as obstacles to overcome or, at best, as additional or secondary concern, this study examines how women embrace motherhood and develop tactics that operate within, rather than beyond, maternal constraints. In this study, I present the case of Bitu, a Nepalese mother of two children in Japan on

dependent visa status. Contrary to the mainstream expectation, her life in Japan required little use of Japanese. Specifically, her multilingual practices were embedded in the gendered care regime, which required the extensive use of Nepali and English in performing motherhood across local and transnational domains. Her limited access to Japanese is further reinforced by the unequal division of household labor. Throughout the study, I highlight that limited proficiency should not be understood as an individual deficit but as an outcome of the division of communicative labor within migrant households, where language-related responsibilities are distributed in gendered and uneven ways.

2) Bora Hah, University of Hawai‘i, Manoa

The Han of a Woman: Tracing the Forbidden Memory of the Korean War and the Invisible Wounds of Korean Womanhood

In Korea, there’s an old saying: “The *han* of a woman can make it snow in May.” *Han* is an emotion so deep, so unrelenting that even the heavens are moved by its desperation, summoning frost in the heart of spring. In my late twenties, I learned that I, too, carried *han* inside me. Based on my speculative memoir *The Han of a Woman*, this presentation explores the concept of *han* through an autoethnographical approach. Tracing my personal, familial, and national history, I learn that my grandmother’s lifelong secret as a disowned war orphan—first abandoned by her teenage mother at birth, then orphaned again when her father was executed during the Korean War—created a powerful *han* that was passed down to subsequent generations. For decades, my grandmother hid her orphanhood, even from her own children. This illustrates how silence as a survival strategy under such extreme situations becomes the very form of transmission. I, as a narrator and descendant, then make a full circle by identifying her long-forbidden memory with my own physical and psychological wounds—all of which I have kept as a secret. While *han* is often theorized as a collective cultural sentiment, my presentation offers a vivid manifestation of *han* in an individual’s life. Ultimately, it reveals that *han* is not merely an abstract emotion, but a raw, visceral, and socially inflected experience that impacts a person’s intimate relationships, mental and physical health, and formation of identity across generations.

3) Jinhee Masahiro Lee, Kwansai Gakuin University

(Un) Framing Zainichi Korean Stories

Japanese media has portrayed the stories of people referred to as Zainichi Koreans through countless publications, broadcasts, and films from the postwar period to the present. Meanwhile, in recent years, the English-language novel *Pachinko* and its Apple TV series have brought Zainichi stories to global attention. Other international news programs and documentaries have also covered Zainichi Korean stories in English. This study focuses on the perspectives English-language media employs to frame Zainichi Korean. For instance, perspectives framing Zainichi as “immigrants” or as “North Koreans” exist, but this study discusses the points which are obscured by such framing. Viewing Zainichi Koreans as immigrants would make it difficult to see the context of their movement from a colony to the colonial power during the Japanese imperial period, as well as the loss of their homeland due to the postwar division of the Korean Peninsula. Also, framing them as North Koreans risks losing sight of the complex, often chaotic relationship between Korea and Zainichi Koreans—a relationship where the term “Chōsen” carries multiple, layered meanings for Zainichi Koreans. This study analyzes how recent English-language media portray and frame Zainichi Koreans and discusses the unconscious simplifications that create these frameworks.

4) Christina N. Lee, University of Hawai‘i, Manoa

The Politics of Memory: How Diasporic Koreans Recall South Korea’s Social Purification Project of the 1970s–1980s

In her *Haunting the Korean Diaspora*, Grace M. Cho says that what haunts us are not the dead, but the secrets of our families left within us. For a long time, Korea was a source of hurt within my maternal family. This chasm and the desire to reconcile it, became the foundation of my dissertation, *The Hunger*. The interviews with my family conducted for this project brought to life not only the history of discrimination, but also family secrets. The decade before my uncle was born, President Park Chung Hee began his social purification project as a means to transform the impoverished country into a flourishing economy. He had people he called “vagrants” including the disabled and the homeless, incarcerated in rehabilitation facilities and promised to provide them vocational training. Framed as a form of “rehabilitation,” many people, including some members of my family, were in support of Park and his social purification. This presentation interrogates the discourse of “rehabilitation” as a form of silence. Personal memory can rupture the silences created by dominant narratives of history. At the same time, it contends with the contradiction of lived experience and memory, and the impossibility of providing a stable, unified account of history. Memory is multiple, fluid, and constantly changing.

Session Code: 6-K

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-072

Title: The Emotional City: Memory, Sound, and Belonging in Tokyo's Liminal Spaces

Abstract:

This panel explores how emotion, sensory experience, and everyday practice shape Tokyo's liminal urban spaces—narrow streets, niches, and interstitial zones that resist the monumental image of the megacity. While urban studies often focus on large-scale infrastructures, the affective and sensory dimensions of these spaces remain underexplored. Framing them as emotional infrastructures, the panel shows how small-scale urbanity sustains memory, social cohesion, and resilience amid redevelopment. These affective dynamics reveal embodied processes through which urban life is lived and reproduced, contributing to debates in affective urbanism, memory, and inclusive city-making. The first paper, “Soundmarks of the City: Memory and Belonging in Tokyo's Sonic Micro-Spaces” (Eduard Hauska), traces historical and ethnographic soundscapes showing how everyday sounds anchor belonging. The second, “Resonating Thresholds: Emotions and Networks in Tokyo's Liminal Spaces” (Heide Imai), examines how encounters in narrow passages create affective ties that endure despite redevelopment. The third, “Augmented Echoes: Soundwalking as Urban Re-Appropriation along Tokyo's Waterfronts” (Lisa Woite), explores augmented-reality interventions that reanimate disappearing thresholds. Together, these papers reveal how Tokyo's liminal spaces sustain emotion, belonging, and resilience, offering a new view of the affective politics of urban change.

Organizer: Heide Imai, Senshu University

Chair: Johannes Kiener, Saitama University

Discussant: Fernando Ortiz-Moya, Waseda Institute for Advanced Study

1) Eduard Hauska, Institute of Science Tokyo

Soundmarks of the City: Memory and Belonging in Tokyo's Sonic Micro-Spaces

Starting from the recognition that cities, and Tokyo in particular, are often studied through their visual features such as skylines, commercial streets, or images of postwar reconstruction, this paper instead turns attention to the city's sonic environments as crucial yet often overlooked dimensions of urban experience. Tokyo's soundscapes, from the winter calls of *ishi-yakiimo* (roasted sweet potato) vendors to the rhythmic clapping of *hyōshigi* fire-watch patrols and the chants of neighborhood festivals, once formed part of the everyday fabric of community life. In recent decades, however, commercialization, post-bubble redevelopment, gentrification, and the spread of individualized sound technologies have transformed both the production and perception of urban sound. While governmental frameworks have historically treated sound through a technocratic lens of noise control (Smith, 2023), this paper argues that such approaches obscure the cultural and affective roles of everyday sounds, which serve as soundmarks, anchors of memory that sustain attachment, continuity, and belonging amid urban change (Schafer, 1994). Drawing from recent sound studies and ethnographic observations in Tokyo's changing neighborhoods, the paper clarifies how nostalgia and sound contribute to the city's cultural sustainability in the twenty-first century.

2) Heide Imai, Senshu University

Resonating Thresholds: Emotions and Networks in Tokyo's Liminal Spaces

This paper examines Tokyo's small-scale urban aces, narrow passages, thresholds, and interstitial zones between residential and commercial life, as emotional infrastructures sustaining community and continuity amid redevelopment. Drawing on long-term ethnographic research and spatial documentation in Jimbōchō, it explores how encounters within these confined and often overlooked sites, doorstep conversations, local repairs, or shared rituals, generate affective ties that resist the anonymity of the large-scale city. Engaging with debates in affective urbanism (Anderson, 2008), social infrastructure (Klinenburg, 2013), and vernacular resilience (Allouche, 2025), the paper conceptualizes these spaces as micro-ecologies of emotion, where sensory familiarity and repetition foster attachment and care. Yet they remain precarious—subject to gentrification, zoning change, and overtourism that commodifies intimacy as aesthetic. By foregrounding how residents, customers and shopkeepers sustain everyday sociability in such marginal zones, this paper argues that Tokyo's liminal spaces reveal the persistence of an affective urbanism grounded in proximity, maintenance, and shared vulnerability. They illuminate how emotional infrastructures enable resilience and belonging within a city otherwise dominated by the logic of redevelopment.

3) Lisa Woite, Musashino Art University

Augmented Echoes: Soundwalking as Urban Re-Appropriation along Tokyo's Waterfronts

This paper examines how audio-based augmented reality can reactivate hidden layers of memory and foster engagement with urban histories in Tokyo's *shitamachi*. Focusing on often-overlooked waterfronts, from concrete embankments to hidden underground canals, soundwalks are explored as ways to facilitate embodied and participatory urban memory. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1996) as the right to participation and appropriation, the project treats walking and listening as relational practices through which residents and visitors re-engage with public spaces. The *shitamachi* waterfronts historically functioned as zones of "social nonattachment," where temporary markets and amusements emerged outside regulation. Today, these areas are shaped by architectures that channel movement, reflecting trends toward spatial control and privatization. The soundwalk uses geolocated audio to highlight this shift and test whether sensory immersion might prompt participants to move differently, reimagining controlled spaces as urban commons. Methodologically, soundwalks are both a research tool and artistic intervention, expanding debates in sensory ethnography and practice-based urbanism. Walking and listening are treated as civic gestures that can rewrite urban space. By encouraging open-ended movement and ...multisensory attention, the project counters detached modes of inhabiting the city, reclaiming shared sensorial grounds for belonging and encounter.

Session Code: 6-L

Room: 2-411

Panel Code: p-066

Title: Masculinity and Stardom in Postwar Japanese Cinema

Abstract:

This panel examines the role of masculinity in the construction of star personas in postwar Japanese studio cinema. Masculinity has been underrepresented in film studies, but the panel demonstrates the constitutive status of different iterations of masculinity in the production of three major actors in the second "golden age" of Japanese cinema. Film's central social function in the decades after the war suggests that how cinematic masculinities are fabricated bears upon broader cultural perceptions of masculinity—dominant, alternative, or otherwise. Yutaka Kubo analyzes actor Takakura Ken's turn to films representing *dekasegi* (migrant work). He argues that such films personify a vulnerable masculinity that reflects the homesickness felt by audience members engaged in similar forms of labor. Kenta Katō similarly examines the relationship between masculinity and melancholy through Shinto actor Amachi Shigeru, arguing that Amachi's performances of vulnerable masculinity are ironically undermined through Shinto's use of *ero-guro* aesthetics. Hannah Airriess reads the star persona of Kobayashi Keiju, contending that the popularity of his purportedly "average" masculinity reveals the shifting framing of the postwar "everyman" into a white-collar salaryman subject. Each paper utilizes textual analysis to engage the fabrication of postwar cinematic masculinities, attending to how these films reflected back the experiences and desires of audiences.

Organizer: Hannah Airriess, Indiana University

Chair: Hannah Airriess, Indiana University

1) Kenta Kato, Meiji University

The Cult of Vulnerable Masculinity: Amachi Shigeru in His Shinto Years

While there has not been much research on masculinity and stardom in Japanese cinema, those that exist have tended to explore the extraordinary bodily images of male stars who appeared from the 1950s onwards, such as Ishihara Yūjirō and Takakura Ken (Saitō 2004; Raine 2010). This paper aims to complicate that tendency by looking at different types of male stars who embodied more vulnerable aspects of masculinity, focusing on the performances of Amachi Shigeru in Shinto films through the lens of cult film theories. In the reign of Ōkura Mitsugu (1955–1960), the Shinto studio was geared toward producing erotic and grotesque films, and Amachi rose to stardom by appearing in crime and horror films, some of which have gained cult status today. While he mostly played despicable villainous characters in these films, Amachi's melancholic presence hints at the fragility of masculinity and the sadness of being overtaken by one's own desire. However, his performances that suggest inner darkness are oftentimes overshadowed by Shinto's *ero-guro* aesthetics, which could ironically invalidate the consolation of masculinity. Through textual analysis of selected works, this paper proposes that Amachi's performances in Shinto films express the inner conflicts of the male psyche, but with an ironic distance that

undermines vulnerable masculinity, allowing the audience to safely consume both men's transgressions from social norms and the punishments that come out of them.

2) Yutaka Kubo, Kanazawa University

“Dekasegi” Masculinities: Takakura Ken’s Performances of Migrant Men’s Vulnerability, Loneliness, and Homesickness

Best known for his roles in *ninkyō* and yakuza films by Tōei, Japanese actor Takakura Ken was one of the most defining male stars of 1960s Japanese cinema. In the midst of Japan's rapid-economic growth era since the mid-1950s, Takakura's tough-but-tender star persona gave voice to male audiences' struggles in blue-collar work. Previous scholarship on Takakura's star persona has largely centered on his performances in *ninkyō* and yakuza film cycles (Ishida 2015; Watanabe 2015). To re-contextualize his star persona from a lens of labor and gender, this paper shifts the focus to films depicting *dekasegi* (migrant work) such as *Gorotsuki* (Makino Masahiro, 1968). In these *dekasegi* films, Takakura's performances seem to embody a masculinity delicately braided with vulnerability, loneliness, and homesickness. This paper argues that his performances generate a cinematic affect that resonates with viewers' own experiences of relocation and dislocation away from home—especially when his characters fail to return. Over time, Takakura shifted from portraying men in motion to men who have made home—and thus ceased migration. In these later roles, he often mentors younger *dekasegi* workers, and it is through these intergenerational exchanges that vulnerability, loneliness, and homesickness find expression. Tracing this transition, this paper develops a framework for *dekasegi* masculinities grounded in Takakura's star performance.

3) Hannah Airriess, Indiana University

Becoming the Everyman: Kobayashi Keiju and Typical Masculinity

This paper examines the star persona of actor Kobayashi Keiju (1923–2010) and his role in the fabrication of the salaryman as a postwar hegemonic masculinity. Scholarship on actors contemporary to Kobayashi, such as Ishihara Yūjirō and Takakura Ken, have focused on how such figures impart an exceptional manhood. Kobayashi, however, was promoted based on his unexceptional nature. While Kobayashi was first unsuccessfully promoted as a leading man (*nimaime*), he ultimately earned acclaim for roles in salaryman films like *Mr. Hope (Hōpu-san; dir. Yamamoto Kajirō, 1951)* based on his ability to impart the *shomin*, or “common person.” I argue that Kobayashi's association with *shomin* sensibility reveals the shifting framing of the “everyman” into a white-collar subject in postwar Japan. Examining postwar film journals' writing on Kobayashi, I analyze how magazines such as *Kinema junpō* focused on his personality and physique to emphasize the absence of distinguishing characteristics (*kiwadatta kosei*) as key to his appeal. The typicality he presents—as both a star and through his salaryman roles—became a basis of identification for white-collar viewers, witnessing their workplace grievances mediated on screen through Kobayashi's characters. I contend that Kobayashi's star persona in a series of popular salaryman comedies contributed to the mass media image of the salaryman as a normative subjectivity in the early years of Japan's era of high economic growth (1954–1971).

Session Code: 6-M

Room: 2-407

Individual Session 5: Governance, Social Order, and Everyday Life in East Asia

Chair: Roger Brown, Saitama University

1) (i-095) Max Ward, Middlebury College

Portals of Power: The Treaty Port System and the Distribution of Police Power in East Asia

Recent postcolonial studies of western police forces have emphasized the importance of colonialism in the early formation of metropolitan police and their subsequent policies. These studies prompt us to understand the police, not simply as self-contained national forces, but as forming within dynamics between metropolises and colonies in the 19th century, which also imparted important legacies in both regions' police agencies. In this paper I would like to push this perspective further by considering the treaty port system as a portal through which police power was distributed and developed in East Asia. I will focus on the activities of Deputy Superintendent of the Kanagawa Constabulary in Japan, Ishida Eikichi (1839–1901), who observed police in both the international settlement of Yokohama as well as in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Macao. Expanding upon Umemori Naoyuki's theory of the “colonial mediations” of the Japanese police, I will suggest

that a focus on the treaty port system not only shifts the analysis beyond simple dichotomies between metropole and colony or western models and East Asian adaptations, but also figures police as central to the political-economy that the treaties and their ports established in East Asia.

2) (i-184) Tianyu Cheng, Syracuse University

The “Gambler’s Code”: Gambling, Law, and Violence in Eighteenth-Century China

This project examines gambling and the law in eighteenth-century Qing China. Although gambling was explicitly banned under the Great Qing Code and repeatedly condemned in imperial edicts, it persisted—and even flourished—throughout the empire. Drawing on legal archives, local gazetteers, and clan regulations, this study explores what happens when authorities issue laws they know to be unenforceable. I argue that such laws created a vacuum of authority in which gamblers developed their own informal regulatory and moral framework—“gambler’s code”—that governed behavior and contributed to broader patterns of social disorder. Gambling was not only a legal offense but a threat to the moral foundation of imperial rule: it generated debt, violence, and dishonor, yet it resisted suppression and was tacitly tolerated by officials and elites alike. Local magistrates, constrained by limited resources and pressure from above, often ignored gambling altogether. The Qing state’s three layers of regulation—imperial statutes, local judicial enforcement, and communal oversight through lineage institutions—all failed to contain the practice. This study uses gambling to probe a broader question: how does law function when enforcement is weak or absent? It argues that in Qing China, the gap between law and practice transformed prohibition into a hollow symbol, allowing vice to embed itself more deeply in society.

3) (i-274) Hanne Deleu, University of California/The University of Tokyo

Killer Breasts and Poisonous Milk: Wetnurses as the Antithesis of Ideal Mothers in Modern Japan

In this paper, I examine how wetnurses came to be depicted as the antithesis of the ideal wise and selfless mother in modern Japan. With prewar infant mortality far outstripping Western rates, medical experts and educators identified the persistence of various premodern childcare practices as contributors to this “national scandal.” Wet nursing, which was predominantly performed by young women from lower socio-economic classes and rural households, was seen as particularly problematic. By analyzing prewar pediatric literature and popular print media, I explore how social commentators and medical practitioners blended premodern beliefs, Western understandings of hygiene and nutrition, and modern moralities surrounding motherhood to paint wet nursing as outdated and selfish at best, and downright evil at worst. The commercialization of their “natural gift” of lactation and the alleged killing of their wards with diseased or poisonous breastmilk contrasted the ideal of modern motherhood, which was characterized as motivated by unconditional love and rationalized through childcare education. I argue that despite their portrayal as a threat to modern motherhood and the health of the nation, wetnurses served an indispensable role in public discourses on childcare and motherhood. They symbolized premodern childcare practices, which often centered around communal parenting rather than individual motherhood, and as such became archaic archetypes that served as instructional models.

4) (i-343) Megan Hanyu Yao, University of Cambridge

Kitchen Be Her Name: Rural Farming Women’s Food Labor in Imperial Japan 1925–1935

This paper investigates rural farming women’s domestic food labor in Imperial Japan (1925–1935), consisting of all kitchen and para-kitchen work, such as foodstuff procurement, cooking, and kitchen space maintenance, among many others. The kitchen was the main stage of a rural farming woman’s daily work and life, an enclosed space that relied solely on open fires, yet without ventilation and lighting. Laboring over eight hours a day in that space, the women were constantly exposed to smoke, heat, and fire hazards. Yet, literature dedicated to their food labor and kitchen work remains rare. This paper attempts a systematic definition of Japanese farming women’s food labor by examining the components of the laboring process and exploring the women’s relationships with their kitchens and with food. It interrogates how the Imperial state, in the name of hygiene, nutrition, and efficiency, co-opted such food labor for its ultranationalist political agenda. It also discusses how these women adapted and adjusted to their changing relationships with the kitchen and food, rendering food labor a realm for resilience and resistance. Setting the backdrop in Akita Prefecture during the prewar state-directed lifestyle improvement campaigns—Seikatsu Kaizen Undō and Daidokoro Kaizen Undō—the paper recovers rural farming women’s life ways through archival research of newspapers, women’s magazines, girls’ high school textbooks, manuals, and proceedings from organization meetings.

Session Code: 6-N

Room: 2-401

Roundtable 2: Listening to and Writing with Sound: Rethinking Japanese Studies through Sonic Practices

Panelists:

Iris Haukamp, Tohoku University (Organizer)
Irina Holca, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
Jeremy Corral, Bordeaux Montaigne University
Masayuki Iwase, Independent Scholar

How can listening to and writing with sound deepen our understanding of Japan and Japanese Studies? This roundtable brings together contributors to *Listening to Japan* (Haukamp & Smith, Routledge), which explores how sound mediates culture, identity, and everyday life across historical and contemporary contexts. Rather than treating sound as peripheral, the participants position it as central to Japan's histories and practices, asking how sonic approaches can reveal dynamics "invisible" within dominant paradigms of text and image in area studies. Taking listening as both sensory and analytical, the discussion asks whether sound—understood as a form of writing—might act as a shared language that redefines cultural and political boundaries and offers new ways of researching and representing Japan. Irina Holca examines post-3.11 Tōhoku translation and performance projects where poetic recitation and vernacular voicework become acts of care and community, highlighting ethical and gendered dimensions of listening. Jeremy Corral discusses Japan's postwar years, when electronic sound entered homes and cities, shaping everyday sensibilities and subjectivities. Masayuki Iwase presents sound art adopting "sonic materialism" to sense the force of locally specific "minor noise" amid encroaching "major signals" of a global mnemotechnical system. Together, the discussants consider how listening to and writing with sound can expand Japanese Studies, attentive to the auditory dimensions of cultural life and to the many ways people make sense of the world through sound.

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[Block 7] 14:00–15:30

Session Code: 7-A

Room: 2-402

Panel Code: p-032

Title: Reverberations of the *Lost Decade* in the Style and Theory of Japanese Cinema

Abstract:

Our panel examines the stylistic and thematic trajectories of Japanese cinema from Japan's "lost decade." We focus on the style and themes of filmmakers associated with what Aaron Gerow has described as "detached style": eschewing familiar patterns of editing and narration in favor of an ambiguous, demanding style within familiar genre frameworks like horror and crime. These films articulate anxieties of social alienation, media attachment, and industrial decay in the wake of Japan's economic downturn, transforming social interactions in the wake of new media, and the trauma of the Aum Shinrikyo subway attack. First, Adam Silverman works through testimonies of contemporary independent filmmakers to argue that Sōmai Shinji's long-take style is a key origin point for the "detached style" of the 1990s. Next, William Carroll uses his interviews with filmmakers from Rikkyō University's 8mm film collective to examine their stylistic and thematic transformation in 1990s Japan. Finally, Lindsay Jolivette examines ecocritical themes in Kurosawa Kiyoshi's films from the 1990s to the present to argue that they express concerns about nonhuman life alongside the degradation of human society. Finally, discussant Takuya Tsunoda generates a conversation between these papers about the stylistic and thematic transformation in independent Japanese cinema in response to the sociocultural realities of the "lost decade."

Organizer: William Carroll, University of Alberta

Chair: William Carroll, University of Alberta

Discussant: Takuya Tsunoda, Columbia University

1) Adam Silverman, Yale University

Sōmai Shinji and the Genealogy of the “Detached Style”

Independent and arthouse Japanese cinema of the 1990s is frequently characterized by what has been termed the “detached style”: aesthetic strategies marked by long shots and long takes, narrative obscurity that rejects the Classical Hollywood axiom of clarity, and resistance to the postmodern stylistic indulgences of the 1980s. While this sensibility is often associated with the filmmakers who emerged from Rikkyō University—such as Aoyama Shinji, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, and Shiota Akihiko—this paper traces key antecedents in the films of Sōmai Shinji, whose work in the preceding decade already demonstrates the hallmarks of oblique narration, formal distance, and affective restraint that come to define the later “detached style.” This paper surveys the landscape of cinematic detachment in Sōmai’s oeuvre and considers how his aesthetic strategies—particularly the extreme articulation of his one scene, one shot style—anticipate and inform, but also differ from, those of the Rikkyō Nouvelle Vague. In addition, it situates Sōmai alongside other contemporary directors who similarly contribute to the formation of the detached style, including Kitano Takeshi, Kawase Naomi, and Hashiguchi Ryōsuke. Through comparative close-analysis and testimony from contemporaneous filmmakers and crew, this study reconsiders detachment genealogically as a broader aesthetic tendency within late-20th-century Japanese cinema both across the height of the bubble and the ensuing malaise of its eventual burst.

2) William Carroll, University of Alberta

How Parodious Unity Became the Rikkyō Nouvelle Vague: The Rikkyō University 8mm Film Collective

This presentation traces the development of the film style and thematic concerns of a group of filmmakers who emerged from Rikkyō University’s 8mm film club including Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Aoyama Shinji, Manda Kunitoshi, Shiota Akihiko, Shinozaki Makoto, and Suo Masayuki. In 1979, Manda published a tongue-in-cheek manifesto in the film journal *Shinario* with the name Parodious Unity, situating the group at the nexus of film history, experience, and production. Written in dense, ironic prose filled with obscure citations from film history and theory, the manifesto mirrored its films such as *Kandagawa Pervert Wars* (Kurosawa, 1983) and *Abnormal Family* (Suo, 1984). Two decades later, Aoyama Shinji published “How I Became a Disciple of Philippe Garrel” in *Cahiers du Cinéma Japon*, defining what would be called the Rikkyō Nouvelle Vague—a new name for the same filmmakers that had declared themselves Parodious Unity in the earlier manifesto. This “new wave” rose to prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000s with austere, somber films that many critics read as meditations on Japanese post-bubble social malaise and the trauma of the 1995 Aum Shinrikyō gas attack. This talk draws together analyses of the films and writings of this group of filmmakers with new interviews of filmmakers and their mentor (Hasumi Shigehiko) to examine the transformation from playful cinephilic experimentation to serious national reflection in their work.

3) Lindsay Jolivet, University of Southern California

Moving Beyond the Human: Kurosawa Kiyoshi’s Ecocinema Oeuvre

It is commonplace for terms like “suspense,” “thriller,” and “horror” to be used to define Kurosawa Kiyoshi’s films. These monikers are not surprising given the popularity of *Cure* (1997) and *Pulse* (2001) and his early works’ association with the tumult of the “lost decade.” However, Kurosawa was not only concerned with the way the lost decade affected humans; he was also concerned with the way the decay of society affected the relationship between humans and the nonhuman environment. In this presentation, I argue that Kurosawa’s oeuvre is an ecocinema oeuvre showing an ongoing dedication to exploring the significance of nonhuman beings’ presence and agency in both the narratives and *mise-en-scène* of his films. This argument draws on theorizations of the term “ecocinema” in recent scholarship on Japanese disaster cinema and in the work of Sean Cubitt and Stephen Rust who posit that “all films present productive ecocritical exploration” (*Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, 3). In other words, while anthropocentric concerns have long dominated English-language considerations of Kurosawa’s oeuvre, an inclusive definition of ecocinema provides a valuable inroad to articulate the ecological concerns that have long been present in the auteur’s work. This presentation will build on previous ecocritical scholarship on *Charisma* (1999), and will argue that *Retribution* (2006), *Creepy* (2016), and *To the Ends of the Earth* (2019) also exemplify ecocinematic narrative and/or visual design.

Session Code: 7-B

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-040

Title: Positioning Taiwan in the Post-War International Order: Local and Transnational Perspectives

Abstract:

The question of political status has been a persistent challenge for the history of Taiwan. An “accidental state” made in the aftermath of the Chinese Civil War, its postwar trajectory has been marked by the struggles over legitimacy, which began from the 1945 transfer to Republic of China (ROC) control, and remains unsettled after the ROC lost UN recognition in 1971. Moving beyond the state-centered framework, this panel revisits Taiwan’s international status from the multiple perspectives of local actors: In the global wave of nation-building, how did Taiwanese imagine their political future from within their liminal position in the international order? How did this liminality interact with global circuits of political ideas, from the immediate postwar years to the end of the Cold War? Drawing on approaches of cultural and intellectual history as well as transnational networks and knowledge circulation, we reveal how Taiwan was placed in various political orders—postwar nation-state system, international humanitarian regime, postmodern Third World, and the geobody of Chinese civilization—at different historical moments. Taken together, this panel sheds new light on the political history of postwar Taiwan. Taiwan’s experience also invites reflection on the tension between legality and legitimacy in the post-war order, particularly as sovereignty claims continue to be weaponized to justify the negation of basic rights for marginalized politics and peoples.

Organizer: Chao-Hsuan Peng, School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHSS)

Chair: Sebastian Veg, The University of Tokyo/ School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHSS)

1) Julian Tash, University of Pennsylvania

Becoming (Overseas) Chinese: Taiwanese Nationality and Identity in Postwar Japan (1945–1972)

Between 1946 and 1947, the Republic of China (ROC), Japanese government, and US Occupation forces registered 20,000 Taiwanese people living in Japan as Overseas Chinese. No longer Japanese subjects, Taiwanese people suddenly accounted for half of the Overseas Chinese community in Japan and quickly became prominent leaders due to their high levels of education. In 1949, the Chinese Civil War divided Overseas Chinese. Taiwanese were generally disenchanted with the corruption of the ROC and supported the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Meanwhile, mainland Chinese, who largely arrived in Japan through connections to conservative regimes, supported the ROC. The result was a decade of ironic polarization, during which Taiwanese supported the PRC on the mainland whereas Mainlanders supported the ROC on Taiwan. This paper uses newspapers, magazines, film, music, and textbooks to examine how Taiwanese people sought to establish nationalized identities in Overseas Chinese assemblies, schools, and student groups. As an elite and numerous group, Taiwanese people were critical in the battle between the PRC and ROC for international legitimacy. Investigating how Taiwanese navigated the choice between PRC, ROC, or rejection of both states reveals a fascinating intersection between Cold War competition, the construction of foreignized others during Japan’s postwar de-imperialization, and the rise of nationally defined identities in postwar East Asia.

2) Wolfgang Thiele, Free University of Berlin

Liu Wenqing’s 1968 Deportation from Japan and its Repercussions for East Asia’s Human Rights Landscape

The year 1968 was a pivotal turning point for the Taiwan independence movement in Japan. The detainment and following deportation of exiled Taiwanese independence activist Liu Wenqing within less than 24 hours despite on-going legal proceedings led to protests not just in Japan and her parliament, but as far away as North America and Western Europe. This panel contribution will examine the reasons for Liu’s deportation including the allegations of an illegal secret agreement between the governments of Japan and the Republic of China, as well as how the deportation shaped the human rights discourse and legal framework within the Taiwan independence movement and Japanese society. It presents new evidence for the existence of such an illegal agreement and argues that the lawsuits brought forward by Liu’s family and friends in Japan, and the dissent the deportation provoked within Japanese society and parliament shaped Japanese immigration and refugee law as well the human rights activism landscape in East Asia through the establishment of the Japanese chapter of Amnesty International Japan.

3) Ruo Chen Xi, School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHSS)

A Tale of Two Histories: Writing the Republic of China across the Taiwan Strait (late 1970s–1980s)

In the early 1980s, historians on both sides of the Taiwan Strait engaged in massive state-sponsored projects to write the history of the Republic of China (ROC). Why was ROC history so crucial for both regimes, and how were such official initiatives perceived by various actors, from academics and intellectuals in each society, to diasporic Chinese and foreign scholars overseas? By tracing the unfolding of this cross-strait historiographical contest—its institutional developments, infrastructure building and transnational echoes during the 1980s—this panel contribution unravels the broader implications of this concomitant moment of (re)writing the ROC in the context of political transition in both PRC and Taiwan. While initially framed as a struggle over legitimacy between two Chinese states-in-crisis, it nevertheless opened a discursive arena, where, in the closing decade of the Cold War, reconstructing China’s modern past intertwined with ideological realignments, nationalistic mobilization, and diplomatic maneuvers for international recognition. For contemporary Taiwan, this episode of cultural affirmation under the Martial Law might have more enduring legacies than just a footnote to its path towards democratization. For present-day China scholars, this late-Cold War outpouring of historical data calls for a critical examination of the field, itself continuously reshaped by historical contingencies.

4) Chao-Hsuan Peng, School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHSS)

Modernization as Political Concept in Cold War Taiwan

Existing scholarship has shown that modernization discourse laid at the core of Cold War struggles between the USA and the USSR to expand their influence in the postcolonial world. Drawing on the sociology of knowledge and conceptual history, this presentation examines how the idea of modernization was reappropriated in postwar Taiwan by different actors. The renowned sociologist Ambrose King, for instance, enthusiastically embraced modernization theory since the mid-1960s and integrated it with the Chinese nationalism upheld by the Kuomintang regime in close alignment with the United States. In contrast, nativist writers in the 1970s criticized modernization while remaining in a Chinese nationalist framework, emphasizing cultural authenticity as opposed to modern decadence and foreign domination. Finally, student activists of the 1980s rejected not only modernization but also its state-centered focus, advocating instead a bottom-up agenda of social justice and political enfranchisement. This historical inquiry argues that the critique of modernization constituted a vital yet overlooked current in Taiwan’s democratization, because of the revival of modernization theory as a dominant explanatory paradigm for political transitions after the Cold War. By recovering this neglected perspective, the study enriches our understanding of Taiwan’s democratization and bridges it to a critical dialogue with the broader context of the Cold War and its enduring intellectual legacies.

Session Code: 7-C

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-047

Title: Play and Sexuality in Japanese Popular Culture

Abstract:

The study of sexuality in Japanese popular culture is a rich field: from the social function and intertextuality of Edo-era *shunga* prints to women’s use of boy’s love media from the 1970s onward, there is a diverse body of work on the connections between sexual expression, sexual orientation, and both professional and amateur media. Likewise, the concept of “play” within sexual desire, expression, and performance is of increasing interest to scholars worldwide: in games with sexual content in a narrow sense, but also the concepts of playfulness, roleplay, and so on. This panel seeks to integrate facets of both these research areas, in order to explore ways in which Japanese pop culture forms across time have made use of the idea of play to consider and express various aspects of sexuality. Michelle Kuhn’s presentation will discuss Edo-period erotic versions of the *Thirty-Six Poetic Immortals* collections with primary focus on a set of playing cards, showcasing the Edo period concept of play when interacting with classical literature. Lucy Glasspool will examine Japanese erotic video games from the perspective of the recorded voice, analyzing its functions in this ludic media form in terms of sexual gratification, playability, and entertainment. Gamze Kelle explores how play and voice create intimacy through two case studies: the romance game *Boku wa Kimi ni Koi wo Suru: Futari dake no Love Song* and a story-voice app *Soine Bandman*, both featuring visual-kei artists.

Organizer: Lucy Glasspool, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Chair: Lucy Glasspool, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Discussant: Alexandra Hambleton, Waseda University

1) Michelle Kuhn, Nagoya University

Edo Period Erotic Playing Cards

This presentation explores the intersection of eroticism, audio-visual games, and classical Japanese literary texts. Recent scholarship has demonstrated how Edo period townspeople read, rewrote, illustrated, and subverted the classical Japanese literary canon (Moretti, 2016; Mostow, 2024). This presentation discusses a set of erotic illustrated playing cards depicting the *Thirty-Six Immortal Poets* where each poem has been reworded to include sensual double meanings. Each poem is split between two cards, as in the famous *karuta* game. A reader would read aloud the first half of the poem and players must grasp for the card that contains the second half of the poem. The concept of “One Poet, One Poem Each” texts, as seen in the *One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each* collection featured in the standard *karuta* game, is based on the *Thirty-Six Immortal Poets* collections chosen by Fujiwara Kintō and Fujiwara Shunzei. Though creating “One Poem Each” texts from the 250 poems should create limitless possibilities, nearly all Edo period print versions are based on only two “One Poem Each” sets, making it easy for Edo readers to memorize. I examine this set of erotic playing cards via classical Japanese literary analysis as well as through the lens of humor theory and the history of oral literature in Japan. Though this set of cards can be appreciated visually and the text read silently, to play the game the cards must be read aloud, and the double meanings are best appreciated aloud.

2) Lucy Glasspool, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

The Main Girl Didn't Sound Hot: Character Voice Functions in Japanese Erotic Video Games

This presentation examines the roles of the mediated voice in the little-studied field of Japanese erotic video games. An increase in scholarly intersections between voice studies and video games suggests that while gameplay mechanisms and visual design are key to a game's success, its character voices also have important functions. Some scholars suggest that the sound of the voice, as in anime, influences players' perceptions of a character. Others, working in the field of games and sexuality, demonstrate that game voices can trigger an erotic response in players, even in games that are not explicitly sexual (Pozderac-Chenevey, 2025). Animation in Japanese erotic games (*eroge*) and visual novels is limited, with most screens featuring an almost static character image, written text, and a voice (Ishida, 2019). This presentation uses as its main case study a popular *eroge* series of this type, *Can Can Bunny*, which ran from 1989 to 2018 on the Sega Saturn and PC, in addition to supplementary material from *eroge* magazines and online user comments. Technological advances through the years have shaped the possibilities of visuals and sound in games, but the voice has remained a central component. This study suggests that, compared to games in mainstream genres with higher budgets, the recorded voice in *eroge* has functioned as a conveyor of character, a guide through the game narrative, and most importantly an affective trigger for arousal as far back as the 1980s.

3) Gamze Kelle, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

You Are the Only One I Show My True Face To: Intimacy, Play, and Voice in Visual-kei

This study investigates how intimacy is created and reinforced through play and voice within the Japanese fashion and music subculture visual-kei, which to date has little research on its affective and auditory dimensions. Visual-kei artists frequently collaborate with anime and manga, using exclusive content and merchandise to increase fan engagement. Some were involved in immersive media projects such as romance games and story-voice apps. These are rare, with only two known examples: a romance game, *Boku wa Kimi ni Koi wo Suru: Futari dake no Love Song*, where players can interact with visual-kei artists as characters, and the story-voice app, *Soine Bandman*, in which four artists deliver lines using dummy-head microphones to create a sense of closeness with players. These now-defunct apps demonstrate how immersive media can be used to reinforce parasocial connections and intimacy. Building on past research on parasocial relationships as well as Goffman's dramaturgy, this study explores the connection between immersive media and intimacy. The methodology combines textual analysis of the surviving data of the two apps, and a semi-structured interview with the developer of the romance game. This study argues that interactive play and intimate voice in romantic situations create a sense of intimacy by promising the players engagement with the true self of the artists, intensifying the parasocial bond.

Session Code: 7-D

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-061

Title: Mobilities Between Hong Kong and Southeast Asia: Networks, Regulations, and Entanglements in the Twentieth Century

Abstract:

This panel explores how Hong Kong functioned as a hub of mobility and its connections with Southeast Asia across the twentieth century. This movement of people, circulation of ideas and exchange of governance knowledge played a pivotal role in shaping the region's landscapes. Drawing on under-explored archives, this panel examines diverse forms of mobility—of people, technologies, policies and disciplinary practices—revealing how Hong Kong transcended boundaries of empire and legality and became deeply entangled with Southeast Asia's regional circuits. Mok traces how Hong Kong cremation policies adapted knowledge from other territories in Asia, transforming the city's deathscape. Chan investigates postwar Chinese labor migration between Hong Kong and Singapore, highlighting how colonial officials balanced immigration control, Cold War security and international labor conventions. Yeo turns to early twentieth-century Sandakan, revealing how traders, migrants and smugglers used maritime routes linking Hong Kong and the Sulu Archipelago to navigate colonial borders and illicit economies. As such, this panel invites a new and de-territorialized understanding of Hong Kong's connections, situating it within the broader networks of Southeast Asia.

Organizer: Florence Mok, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Chair: Florence Mok, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

- 1) Florence Mok, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

From Earth to Ashes: Transforming Burial Practices and Knowledge Transmission in Colonial Hong Kong, 1950s–1980s

Using under-explored archival data and published sources in Hong Kong and London, this article examines why land burial declined since the 1960s and how cremation replaced it as the primary burial practice in Hong Kong by the 1980s. It first investigates how rapid population growth and urbanization led to an increased number of illegal burials in New Territories since the 1950s, hindering the colonial government's land development plans, and posing environmental and sanitary risks to the local communities in the 1970s. The problematization of illegal burials then provided impetus for the colonial government to promote cremation and closely regulate local burial practices in the 1970s and 1980s. In this period, various initiatives were implemented to curb illegal hillside burials and promote cremation. In particular, knowledge and technologies of burial practices and policies in Asia, including Singapore, Malaysia and Japan, were used as references. However, the prevalent use of cremation after the 1970s did not genuinely transform cultural perspectives of Hong Kong Chinese in death and burial practices. Therefore, this case study on deathscape, while inviting us to reimagine the cultural, political, and spatial networks between Hong Kong and other territories in Asia, also highlights the constraints imposed by colonial governance and the endurance of cultural traditions.

- 2) Doris Chan, University of Bristol

Conditioning Colonial Connections: Chinese Skilled Labor Migration from Hong Kong to Singapore, c. 1950s

After WWII, wartime casualties, injuries, malnutrition and displacement had greatly reduced the availability of laborers in British Southeast Asia for reconstruction and economic development. How did the British authorities handle this urgent problem? The pre-WWII method was to rely on colonial networks to import labor immigrants from India and China via Hong Kong and other Chinese treaty ports. This method became increasingly difficult due to the reconfiguration of the post-WWII global order and the decline of imperial power. This paper argues that Hong Kong continued to receive labor supplies due to the influx of Chinese immigrants from China after 1945. However, the further migration of Chinese laborers from Hong Kong to Singapore was restricted by the new immigration regulations in British Southeast Asia and conditioned by international labor conventions that were not simultaneously ratified in both colonies' labor codes. Utilizing colonial archival materials, this paper demonstrates how colonial officials sought to circumvent the immigration controls they implemented due to Cold War concerns in the late 1940s. It reveals the entanglements of post-WWII Chinese migration with local socio-economic development and state-building in Singapore, regional geopolitics in Southeast Asia and obligations to international organizations. This paper thus contributes to the post-WWII global history of migration, labor and decolonization in British East and Southeast Asia.

3) Michael Yeo, Nanyang Technological University

Smugglers in Sandakan: Moving People from Hong Kong to the Philippines, 1900s–1930s

During the early twentieth century, Sandakan was the bustling port capital of British North Borneo, exporting tobacco, timber, and other tropical commodities. After the extension of the U.S. Chinese Exclusion Act to the American Philippines in 1902, it also became a hub for the clandestine movement between Hong Kong and the Sulu Archipelago. In 1931, the British Consul-General in Manila observed that the port had become a “regular bridge” that Chinese migrants crossed to enter the Philippines illegally. How was this “illicit” mobility carried out? Why did smugglers choose to operate in Sandakan? This paper explores the people, politics, and policies associated with illicit travel in Sandakan. It begins by tracing how groups with various agendas exploited the port’s location and connections. Traders, travelers, and theatre troupes used it as a brief stopover, while smugglers—often taking along opium or human “cargo”—treated the port as a springboard into black markets near and far. Colonial officials struggled to police the movement of this latter group, who deployed indigenous seafaring knowledge to their advantage. Ultimately, the paper demonstrates how these entanglements at Sandakan shaped the nature of migration and mobility in this relatively understudied zone between East and Southeast Asia.

Session Code: 7-E

Room: 2-411

Panel Code: p-110

Title: Engendering Relevance, Moving Beyond Present State: Critical Perspectives on the Cultural Heritage of Indonesia

Abstract:

As a sovereign nation, Indonesia often asserts its proud identity through historical narratives and the interpretation of objects to portray itself as culturally rich. The narratives within objects and traditions, which in colonial times were labelled as exotic and seen as collectable, often maintain their identity after independence. Within those object identities, the idea of objects and tradition as a representation of national pride lies in a thin border with the colonial agenda of exoticizing cultural heritage as something exploitable. This led to the establishment of a static concept of heritage, embedded with singular values and meanings that are paramount to preserve. The proposed panel intended to deconstruct this perspective in Indonesian society and to present cultural heritage as a multilayered issue. By conducting a critical analysis of how Indonesian heritages could be managed, presented, or optimized in immersive ways in museums and sites, domestically and abroad, the panel endeavors to explore how present matters and their power to establish multilayered knowledge production could bring new life to the idea of heritage embedded within Indonesians. Beyond Indonesia’s borders, the expected outcome of this panel is a discussion that emphasizes an alternative perspective on heritage for a more inclusive and sustainable cultural policy and management by shifting the status quo, which views objects as mere displayable collections and sites as reminders of past glory.

Organizer: Abednego Andhana Prakosajaya, Sanata Dharma University

Chair: Abednego Andhana Prakosajaya, Sanata Dharma University

Discussant: Simon Arsa Manggala, Sanata Dharma University

1) Abednego Andhana Prakosajaya, Sanata Dharma University

The Indonesian Hindu-Buddhist Objects in the Tokyo National Museum: Reconsidering the Idea of Heritage through Museum Display Statement

Museums have always been about the display of power, constructing ideological frames through their collection presentation. This practice is reflected in a section of the temporary display, “Gilt Bronze Statues of Southeast Asia,” in the Tokyo National Museum, where four of its objects bear Indonesian Hindu-Buddhist-era origins. The seldom-discussed artefacts are juxtaposed as products of a clustered conceptual region of Southeast Asia rather than as unique artefacts of distinct cultures. This perception castrates the modern-day nation’s denizens’ relationship to remnants of Hindu-Buddhist culture, severing the established concept of heritage in Indonesia. This display raised questions regarding the unintended marginalization and overgeneralization in its display statement. Aiming to provide a broader understanding of the display statement, this research introduced a methodology that analyses the narrative and display aspects, contextualizing the display space of Indonesian objects within sections, buildings, and the museum itself as a sequence of scenography. The scenography, as a methodology, discerns display design as a multi-layered, performative feature developed to immerse the audience in the narrative through the *mise-en-scène* of interior and architectural elements. This presentation highlights how

display statements contribute to the engendering of heritage, particularly through the relations between display strategy and objects valued as passive collections.

2) Pratama Dharma Surya, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Reclaiming the Sacred: Crowdfunding and the Future of Temple Heritage in Indonesia

The discourse of heritage in Indonesia often positions temples as symbols of national pride, sacred but distanced from the living communities surrounding them. Rooted in a colonial legacy that objectified temples as static monuments, post-independence management continues to emphasize preservation over participation. This centralized state-funded system has framed temples as “national possessions” rather than “shared cultural inheritances.” This study proposes crowdfunding as a transformative approach to reclaim the sacred by returning agency to the people and seeing temples not merely as archaeological artefacts, but as living cultural and spiritual spaces that invite dialogue and shared responsibility. This research integrates literature review, policy analysis, and comparative case studies of domestic and international crowdfunding initiatives. Findings show that crowdfunding can democratize and foster emotional engagement, thereby renewing public ownership. However, structural barriers persist in the form of rigid preservation laws, bureaucratic mistrust, and educational narratives that privilege state authority over communal stewardship. Positioned within broader debates on recontextualizing heritage, this paper argues that crowdfunding offers not merely a financial alternative but a cultural reawakening to bridge the divide between policy and people and to envision a future in which temples are not relics of past glory but living embodiments of cultural continuity.

3) Isradina Paricha, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Curator's Paradox: Reviving Collection Narrative and Re-reading the Bibis Museum in Bangunjiwo in a Post-colonial Perspective

The curator's paradox emerges when the curator strives to preserve the cultural heritage while simultaneously being trapped within the colonial logic that immobilizes the meaning of collections. Curators often—consciously or not—reinforce the status of collections as passive objects, detached from the narratives and values that were initially engendered within them. Drawing on a case study of the Bibis Museum, the proposed research intends to explore how the processes of collection selection and the relocation of collections from a historic house to a new building with vitrines have eradicated socio-organic relations between objects and their environments. Instead of preserving, this act has reinforced the colonial ideology that presents objects as frozen artefacts devoid of social life. By mobilizing the local community to create a space for dialogue that repositioned narratives as an integral part of the collections and by utilizing collections as active agents in knowledge production, this research seeks meaningful results in “activating” the collections. Furthermore, in establishing a strategy of recontextualization that emphasizes original context, social function, and sacredness beyond aesthetics and history, this presentation argues that museums could exceed the stigma of display storage that legitimizes colonial perspectives and become active spaces of dialogue capable of creating an inclusive concept of heritage.

4) Laurensia Dhamma Viriya, Banyan Art & Heritage

Ecomuseum Conceptual Framework: Dialogue Dramaturgy of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Inheritor

Ecomuseum, coined in France in 1971 by Rivière and de Varine during the 9th ICOM Triennial Conference, emerged from concerns that traditional museums inadequately address the living cultural identities of communities. Supported by UNESCO and ICOM, the ecomuseum concept promotes a museum without walls, focusing on local participation, sustainable development, and holistic heritage preservation beyond mere objects to include places and intangible knowledge. This paper proposes a framework where museum managers act as dramaturgs, facilitating dynamic, non-hierarchical interactions between tangible cultural heritage and cultural heirs—local communities and stakeholders—across ex-situ and in-situ contexts. The exchange fosters collective ownership and generates new meaning rooted in time and place. With increasing repatriation of cultural heritage, ecomuseums serve as vital bridges enabling communities to reconnect with and interpret returned artefacts. The research explores challenges in managing diverse stakeholders and the prolonged engagement required, where communities initially hold distant perceptions of their heritage environment. This model advances understanding of ecomuseums' critical role in cultural stewardship and deepens relationships with the community.

Session Code: 7-F

Room: 2-407

Panel Code: p-039

Title: Cold War East Eurasian Cultural Diplomacy and the Geopolitics of Literature

Abstract:

The cultural Cold War (1945–1989/1991) initiated by the Soviet Union-led Communist bloc and soon joined by the United States-led capitalist bloc, was marked by aggressively ideological and propagandistic deployments of literary education and research. The Soviets claimed the glories of Russian literature as proof of the superiority of Communism, while the U.S. spread the idea that British and American literature carried a clear ideology of freedom and democracy. Both sides made extensive use of cultural diplomacy efforts—including establishing and funding journals and publishers, supporting and staffing academic programs, and sponsoring author lecture tours—to engage in a form of information and psychological warfare that had an enormous impact on institutions and cultures throughout the world. This panel will explore how in East Eurasia the East-West, communist-capitalist binary became obscured and contested, as well as deeply entangled in local colonial, post-colonial and decolonizing contexts, resulting in a changed and charged literary-cultural terrain. Through archival research and theoretical analysis, papers in this session will address relationships between state and non-state cultural diplomacy programs, literary representation, and institutional developments—aspects of the cultural Cold War which deserve greater scrutiny, given how present and future geopolitical conditions carry echoes of a not-too-distant past.

Organizer: Myles Chilton, Nihon University

Chair: Yukari Yoshihara, University of Tsukuba

Discussant: Yukari Yoshihara, University of Tsukuba

1) Hiromi Ochi, Senshu University

Sakanishi Shiho: A Democratic Facilitator

In post-World War II Japan, Sakanishi Shiho played a vital role in fostering U.S.-Japan relations through her connections with the Rockefeller Foundation and her work as both an author and translator. After earning a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, she served at the Library of Congress throughout the 1930s until her arrest and repatriation to Japan in 1941 following the outbreak of the Pacific War. Drawing on the transnational networks she had built before and during the war, Sakanishi contributed to shaping Japan's understanding of democracy in the early Cold War period. Yet, her contributions have remained underexamined due to the scarcity of archival sources and the gender norms that often-silenced women's intellectual labor. This paper examines how Sakanishi disseminated democratic ideals within postwar Japan by analyzing her writings and translations. She was known for her discussions of democracy, family, and marriage, particularly her advocacy of the nuclear family as the fundamental unit of democratic society. Furthermore, she had a key role in founding the Institute for Democratic Education in 1954—a network of university professors funded by the Asia Foundation, whose covert ties to the CIA were later revealed in the late 1960s. Through her work in IDE and her writings, Sakanishi emerges as a key cultural mediator and participant in the ideological reconstruction of Japan during the Cold War.

2) Myles Chilton, Nihon University

How Canada's Cold War Cultural Diplomacy Undermined CanLit

Cold War Canadian culture was a statist project that allowed Canadians to see themselves as both not-American and as part of the broader anti-Communist Western security structure. The creation and consumption of national culture resulted in a narrow, Eurocentric menu of “high” cultural forms that were meant to create a national identity, more easily controllable because grateful and proud of the culture produced by the “home team,” while also not feeling “colonized” by American culture. Culture was thus aestheticized—an affair of affect, style, emotion, creativity, and entertainment, with the political sub-text repressed. In fact, the only culture for which the political was acknowledged was Soviet propaganda. One effect of this insular, conservative statist cultural project was to render Canadian literature in East Asian contexts a niche subject. The Eurocentric, high culture biases of Canada's Cold War cultural diplomacy meant that East Asia was not a priority, as such it was left largely to private or small-scale efforts by individuals with strong personal links to Asia. While the Canadian government did contribute to the establishment of a handful of Canadian literature scholarships and programs, ironically many of them were merged into North American or American-Canadian studies. Ultimately, Canada's cultural development would be determined by Cold War geopolitical dynamics, a condition that has echoes in the present historical moment.

3) Takuya Matsuda, Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

Soft Power's Hot Wars: Reimagining Asia's Battlefields in Cold War America

Richard Kim and Wilfrido D. Nollo do are two Asian writers who studied creative writing at the University of Iowa during the Cold War. Following their education in the U.S., both writers went on to publish war novels. Kim's *The Martyred* (1964) depicts the Korean War, and Nollo do's *But for the Lovers* (1970) tells a story about World War II in the Pacific. Furthermore, both are transnational narratives set in Asia—South Korea and the Philippines, respectively—mainly depicting Asian characters. My presentation situates these two novels within recent discussions of the role of creative writing programs in the U.S. during the Cold War. I examine the political and ideological meanings of the novels in relation to the U.S. foreign policy in Asia, as well as how the Cold War impacted the representation of the recently concluded hot wars in the respective novels. Both novels similarly emphasize a sense of sovereignty, a status seemingly unaffected by the wars, while also implicating the presence of the U.S. military in their lands. Both novels also depict freedom, independence, and resilience, thereby performing these American values, even though Asia in reality was still a long way recovering from the aftermath of the destructive wars. As products of soft power created in the U.S., Kim's and Nollo do's novels demonstrate the timely reframing of the wars, depicting Asia's ability to cope with the wars as well as the Cold War alliance between Asia and the U.S.

4) Amado Anthony G. Mendoza III, Kyoto University/University of the Philippines Diliman

Amorphous Anticommunism: "Horison" from 1970–1986

Founded in 1966 as one of only two Congress for Cultural Freedom journals in Southeast Asia, *Horison's* first five years were marked by works that sought to delegitimize all remaining forms and legacies of communist cultural politics in Indonesia. By the 1970s, however, the PKI (Communist Party of Indonesia) and all its allied organizations, including its cultural arm, LEKRA (Institute of People's Culture), had been completely decimated. Most political, cultural, and social life in Indonesia was, to varying degrees, shaped by the New Order regime's propaganda. For most anticommunist writers and intellectuals, particularly those associated with *Horison*, this meant the loss of a clear ideological adversary. With the communist "boogeyman" gone, *Horison's* overall tone and orientation underwent a significant shift. Through a comprehensive editorial history of *Horison* from 1970 to 1986, this paper examines the journal's use of abstract concepts such as "creative freedom" and "human rights" and how they constituted a form of amorphous anticommunism, unsurprisingly aligned with the overall timbre of Euro-American anticommunist cultural politics.

Session Code: 7-G

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-105

Title: Media, Mediation and Identity in Japanese Literature and Art, 1885–2005

Abstract:

While media, mediation, and identity are constant themes of this digital age, the interweaving of media and subjectivity in modern and Japanese literature and art demands fuller expression. This panel examines how various media—newspapers, letters, magazines, and digital algorithms—contribute to modern conceptions of Japanese literature and art. We ask: How do the formal constraints of each medium limit or enable artistic expression? How do they work at outlining the contours of modern identity? Can mundane interactions with media both contribute to a sense of self and threaten to disrupt stable identity formations? How might mediation produce new consciousness of nation, gender, reading, and our sense of the everyday? Tim Kawanishi-Young examines the war reporting of Kunikida Doppo, revealing how Doppo's personal letter format teaches the audience to read the meaning of nation and war. Kevin Niehaus takes up letters in canonical middle Meiji fictions, arguing that modern Japanese subjectivity emerges via a rejection of the female otherness expressed in intimate epistolary exchanges. Jason Beckman examines I-novel criticism at the turn of the 21st century, revealing a nascent algorithmic thinking that predates the identity construction of digital social media. Finally, Andrea Mariucci looks at the art collective Maywa Denki and the electronic magazine *Bug News* to reconsider how interactions with everyday objects can both mold and disrupt one's sense of place and self.

Organizer: Kevin Niehaus, Sophia University

Chair: Tim Kawanishi-Young, Kyoto Women's University

Discussant: Toba Koji, Waseda University

1) Kevin Niehaus, Sophia University

Letters from the Homeland: Male Subjectivity and Women's Writing in Middle Meiji

This presentation examines letters embedded within canonical Meiji era fictions—Futabatei Shimei's *Ukigumo*, Mori Ōgai's *Maihime*, and Tokutomi Roka's *Hototogisu*—to reconsider narratives of contemporary “women's writing” against the backdrop of Japan's development as a modern nation-state. Typically read vis-à-vis narratives of Japanese identity formation, these fictions narrate their male protagonists' struggles to become properly Japanese subjects. Scholarship on the modern Japanese postal system and the letters it transmitted similarly adopts the nation as its theoretical grounding. If the post was tasked with suturing the nation via regular information exchange, letters too—particularly women's letters—were subsumed under the banner of nation building, as epistolary composition evinced the populace's educational attainments. Strikingly, the letters embedded within these fictions emerge as a threat to an assumed national cohesion. Penned by women and melodramatic in tone, they provoke anxiety, longing, and pathos that must be symbolically rejected by male protagonists for them to assume their duties as national subjects. The feminine letter, that is, emerges as the other against which male characters write their masculine Japanese subjectivity. In so doing, however, they recast typical conceptions of the letter and feminine writing from this period, as ostensibly private, feminine, and sentimental utterances take on a decidedly public, masculine, and political valence.

2) Tim Kawanishi-Young, Kyoto Women's University

Landscape, Nation, and Metropole: Kunikida Doppo's War Writing

This presentation takes up the dispatched reporting of Kunikida Doppo (1871–1908) for the *Kokumin shinbun* in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95). Posthumously collected and published under the title *Aitei tsūshin* (Reports to My Dear Brother, 1908), Doppo's reporting rejects the conception of the war correspondent as reporter of fact that was already prevalent in the 1890s. Instead, Doppo seeks to poetically evoke the experience of being at sea. On the one hand, this focus on lyricism serves as a grounds to develop the written style which Doppo would put to use in much of his later fiction, especially the works that have been noted for their attention to “landscape”: *Wasureenu hitobito* (Unforgettable People, 1898) and *Musashino* (1898). Tracing the origins of Doppo's literary style to a foreign wartime landscape complicates the usual reading of these works as articulating a shared modern national consciousness. On the other, however, Doppo's reportorial style changes. Over time, the author/journalist employs a succession of written styles and rhetorical approaches which construct and perform a variety of literary/journalistic personae. These shifts produce a narrative arc whereby the romantic but callow poet is awakened to the grand ideas of nation and war. As a whole, Doppo's writing reveals how conceptions of individual subjectivity articulated through written style intersect with consciousness of national identity in the reporting of modern Japan's first foreign war.

3) Jason Beckman, Stanford University

Algorithmic Accounts: Social Mediation and Contemporary I-Novels

The boom of autofiction as a defining genre of contemporary world literature carries echoes of the I-novel, which held a central position in the development of the modern novel in Japan over a century ago. These two forms share similarities with regard to the complex relationships they establish between the author and the focal figure within the text. The critical debates surrounding the I-novel in Japan have produced a generative cultural discourse, following Tomi Suzuki's pivotal analysis, and within the literature of the late Meiji and Taisho period played out a reconfiguring of the relationship between individual and society, fiction and truth within new modern contexts. In the internet era, the question of how to read such texts has never been more relevant. Surveying I-novel criticism of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, this paper locates in the modes of reading and constructing I-novels an algorithmic thinking that long predates the emergence of networked social media, but one that nevertheless hinges upon layers of mediation between author, reader and text. Through textual case studies, I argue for the I-novel's renewed relevance as a precursor to digital interaction and identity construction today.

4) Andrea Mariucci, Cornell University

What am I?: Habitual Technologies, Bugs, and Nonsense

This paper examines the role of technical interactions in the construction of a situated experience of the everyday through a reading of the work of the art unit Maywa Denki, together with 1980s electronics magazine *Bug News*. I revisit the tradition of writing about technology as a place- and community-building force, and I examine the process through which a place is understood in terms of habitual interactions with technical objects in order to conceptualize the emergent possibilities when these routine interactions are disrupted. Maywa Denki is an art unit emerging from a failed electronics

company. Beginning with the question “what am I?,” their work is characterized by mass production of toys and musical instruments, together with individual art pieces, all under the keyword “nonsense.” The work threads the line between consumer goods and cognitively disruptive artworks. *Bug News*, on the other hand, is an electronics magazine whose content ranges from think pieces by telecom executives to subcultural critique and speculative essays. Analyzing these combined archives, I highlight the mundanity of technical interactions and the role of everyday artifacts in the molding of a sense of place and self. At the same time, by focusing on speculation, emergence, and on the disruption of the ordinary and its flow, I propose an understanding of technicity that goes beyond social reproduction through harmonized performances passing from technology to individuals and vice versa.

Session Code: 7-H

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-082

Title: Tales: Chinese Narratology Across Disciplines

Abstract:

The study of narratology in early China has long centered on “fact versus fiction,” bibliographic terminology, or genre criticism, leaving other crucial aspects of early Chinese narratology underexplored. This panel seeks to broaden the scope of media, devices, and texts that merit narratological consideration by asserting that the narrative structure and its transmission can also be profoundly informed by issues of philology, diplomacy, politics, pathologization, and hierology. To this end, this session examines the following: Zheyu Su reexamines the controversial disciple Zaiyu, showing how later portrayals of him reflect negotiations within early Confucian tradition. Yixuan Cai compares two bronze vessels from the ancient state of Zheng, revealing how their inscriptions silently recount history and inform modern cross-strait relations. Masha Kobzeva analyzes the reshaping of Silla’s diplomatic missions to Tang China in both Chinese and Korean sources, emphasizing translation and historiography as competing forms of medieval political storytelling. Thomas Noel reinterprets the Nie Yinniang narrative as a meditation on the hierological ideals of the unseen and the supramundane within 8th-century Chinese fiction. Collectively, these papers propose new approaches to Chinese narrative structures while linking narratology to material culture, reception theory, and neo-medievalist scholarship.

Organizer: Thomas Donnelly Noel, Villanova University

Chair: Thomas Donnelly Noel, Villanova University

Discussant: David Hogue, Dankook University

1) Masha Kobzeva, Korea University

Diplomatic Narratives as Intertextual Negotiation: Narratologies of Silla’s Missions to the Tang in Medieval Chinese and Korean Historiography

In 648, the Tang emperor Taizong (r. 626–649) presented the Silla envoy Kim Ch’un-ch’u (future King Muryŏl, r. 654–661) with three texts, including the newly compiled *Jin shu* (Book of Jin). This mission, the last of three dispatched within a single year as Silla sought Tang’s aid against Paekche, was later recorded in both Chinese and Korean histories. Difference in emphases revealed intentionality of authorial intention and narrative strategies. While Chinese standard histories framed Silla’s embassies as part of the tributary order under Tang’s moral authority, Korean chronicles such as the *Samguk sagi* reconfigured these same events to highlight Silla’s diplomatic acumen and emerging sovereignty. This paper examines how the biographical and diplomatic accounts of Silla’s missions to Tang were composed, adapted, and translated across these historiographical traditions. Drawing on close readings of relevant passages in Chinese and Korean sources, it compares their narrative structures, formulaic expressions, and patterns of moral evaluation. Particular attention is given to the compositional techniques through which Korean historiographers appropriated and transformed Chinese models of biography and official record-writing. By tracing these intertextual negotiations, the paper seeks to illuminate how translation and historiographical composition together mediated Silla’s shifting position between subordination and self-assertion within the East Asian diplomatic world.

2) Yixuan Cai, Randolph-Macon College

Wine Pots that Tell: The Story of the Paired Bronze Drinking Vessels of Zheng

This paper examines two pairs of bronze drinking vessels from the Zheng state (806–375 BCE), which were excavated in the 1920s in Xinzheng, the former capital of Zheng, in China. The paper also explores the historical narratives associated with these vessels in early and modern China. Despite constant warfare among the central states, including Zheng, Jin, and

Chu, as recorded in textual materials, the bronzes silently narrate interstate circulation and communication of material culture during the late Spring and Autumn period. The bronzes also serve as a medium for new historical narratives in modern China that expand the boundaries of historiography across several decades. In the 1920s, their excavation coincided with new intellectual trends that advocated for a “scientific archaeological method.” In contemporary interpretations, the wine pots have become symbols of the spirit of the Spring and Autumn period and early 20th-century China. Moreover, in the 21st century, the narratives of the pots have become intertwined with politics concerning the relationship between China and Taiwan. Building on recent scholarship that rethinks reliance on textual materials from pre-imperial China, this paper examines one of the most significant archaeological finds from the Spring and Autumn period, demonstrating the powerful potential of material objects in historical narratives about the pre-imperial period.

3) Zheyu Su, Princeton University

A Multifaceted Figure: The Various Discourses on Zai Yu

As one of the most notable disciples of Confucius, Zai Yu’s figure displays various attributes in the extant material. On one hand, he was renowned for his eloquence and was recognized as one of the ten best of Confucius’ disciples. On the other hand, historical writings described him as being involved in a rebellion in the Qi state. Sima Qian, the author of the *Shiji*, even mentioned that Zai Yu’s failure brought shame to Confucius. Recently excavated materials portrayed him similarly to other prominent disciples, as one who asks questions and receives Confucius’s instruction. This paper evaluates the complex portrayals of Zai Yu, and addresses the following questions: is it possible for modern readers to trace the process of the accretion on the Zai Yu discourses? Why did Sima Qian, despite evidence suggesting the rebellion might be inaccurately recorded, include it in his historical writings? And, to what extent can we assess the status of Zai Yu in the development of Confucianism and the Confucian community? By arguing that Zai Yu is not the only case that bearing such multilayered discourses, this paper offers insights into the formation of his multifaceted character and reveals that it is a popular trend in creating and revisiting Confucian figures during the pre-Qin to early Han Dynasty period.

4) Thomas Donnelly Noel, Villanova University

A Mid-Tang Kafkaesque? Pei Xing’s Nie Yinniang and the Aesthetics of the Unseen

Contradiction and ambivalence have defined the reception of *Nie Yinniang* (Nie the Hidden Lady). First appearing Pei Xing’s famed collection *Chuanqi* (Traditions of the Marvelous) and yet absent from Lu Xun’s (1881–1936) influential *Tang Song chuanqi ji* (A Collection of Chuanqi from the Tang and Song); a rare example of genuine female agency in early fiction, but oft-overlooked in favor of less potent heroines, *Nie Yinniang* has largely been consigned to more marginalized discussions of *wuxia* (knight-errantry) fiction. This paper advocates a more nuanced reading of the tale informed by an “aesthetics of unseen.” It posits that this tale’s narrative is driven by a complex interplay between the material and the immaterial, the said and the unutterable, and mundane versus the otherworldly. In stressing the titular character’s unorthodox arrangement of her own marriage to a lowly mirror grinder, this paper will conclude that of *Nie Yinniang* should not be read as a tale of knight-errantry or even an exemplar of feminine emancipation, but rather as a subtle and almost Kafkaesque commentary on bewildering and oft unseen qualities of the paranormal. In so doing, this paper both hopes to enrich the reception of a tale deserving of more nuanced exegesis and further stress the importance of hierological topoi in the development of early Chinese narrative fiction.

Session Code: 7-I

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-084

Title: The Historical Formation of the Notion “Not Wanting to Be a Burden” in Japan: Perspectives from Samurai Instructional Texts, the Life Improvement, and Narratives of “*ubasute*”

Abstract:

In contemporary Japan, when reflecting on aging, caregiving, and death, many people express the desire “not to be a burden” on their family. A 2024 Rakuten Insight survey on *shūkatsu* (preparing for one’s own death) found that across all age groups, the most common reason for such preparation was “not wanting to be a burden to one’s family” (60.2%). In daily life as well, the moral injunction “not to inconvenience others” is deeply ingrained in social discourse. Scholars have debated whether this *meiwaku* (trouble or burden) consciousness has premodern roots or whether it is a modern construct. Building on this discussion, the panel examines the historical formation of the notion “not wanting to be a burden” in Japan,

focusing on aging, caregiving, and death from the early modern period to the present. Eisuke Nakajima explores *meiwaku* within samurai moral teachings in early modern Japan. Masafumi Motomura investigates how it was articulated in the Life Improvement of the modern era. Daisuke Yamamoto analyzes the interplay between *meiwaku* and narratives of *ubasute* in contemporary elder care. Through these three perspectives, the panel seeks to illuminate the historical and cultural genealogy of *meiwaku* consciousness in Japan.

Organizer: Masafumi Motomura, Okayama University

Chair: Tomoko Ikeuchi, Takachiho University

Discussant: Haruka Hikasa, Okayama University

1) Eisuke Nakajima, Xi'an International Studies University

The Consciousness of Causing Trouble in Early Modern Samurai Instructional Texts

This presentation examines ethical and military instructional texts of early modern Japan, focusing on the *meiwaku ishiki*—a consciousness of causing trouble—among samurai who served their lords. In the latter half of the seventeenth century, each school of military studies developed its own core textbook—such as *Shikan yōhō* of the Hōjō school. These works continued to be annotated and reinterpreted throughout the Edo period. Alongside these canonical works, the evolution of print culture enabled the publication and circulation of numerous instructional manuals for foot soldiers and young retainers. These writings not only emphasized loyalty to one's lord but also explored the moral aspects of daily life—filial piety, interpersonal relations among lower-ranking warriors, and honorable behavior in both wartime and peace. Central to this discussion is the notion of *meiwaku ishiki*, or an awareness of causing inconvenience or dishonor to others. Many of these texts warn against conduct that could bring shame upon one's ancestors or descendants, or impose hardship upon one's lord through acts of disloyalty. By analyzing how this moral awareness was expressed within samurai discourse, the paper seeks to clarify how loyalty and responsibility were articulated as ethical ideals. Ultimately, it argues that samurai ethics encompassed not only obedience but also a reflective sensitivity toward the social and emotional consequences of one's actions.

2) Masafumi Motomura, Okayama University

Not Wanting to Be a Burden in the Context of Life Improvement: Focusing on Nakamura Kaju (1880–1965)

This presentation examines how the notion of “not wanting to be a burden” emerged in the context of aging, caregiving, and death in modern Japan, focusing on the figure of Nakamura Kaju (1880–1965). Previous studies based on materials from the Life Improvement Movement of the 1920s have shown that the moral norm of “not causing trouble to others” developed in the modern period, and that this discourse, once directed toward others in the public sphere, gradually came to apply within the family as well. Building on these insights, this study explores the relationship between such normative discourse and the consciousness of “not wanting to be a burden” that appears in discussions of aging and death. Nakamura Kaju, active in the intellectual prehistory of the Life Improvement Movement, introduced to Japan the ideas of French Christian pastor Charles Wagner (1852–1918), whose *La Vie Simple* (1895) advocated a simple, essential way of living amid modern materialism. Nakamura translated this work as *Tanjun seikatsu* (The Simple Life, 1905) and later produced two adapted versions. Through an analysis of these texts, this presentation clarifies how the idea of “not wanting to be a burden” was articulated within the moral and cultural discourse of Life Improvement in early modern Japan.

3) Daisuke Yamamoto, Okayama University

Narratives of “ubasute” in Contemporary Japan and the Mindset of Not Wanting to Be a Burden to the Elderly: Focusing on Newspaper Reader Submissions

This presentation explores the sentiment of elderly people who wish “not to cause trouble to others,” as reflected in contemporary Japanese narratives of *ubasute*—the legendary practice of abandoning the aged. The study focuses on readers' contribution columns in Japanese newspapers, where *ubasute* or Ubasuteyama are invoked to describe situations such as family members leaving elderly parents in hospitals or facilities, or public policies that impose excessive burdens on the aged. Particular attention is paid to narratives in which elderly individuals themselves refuse to receive care, expressing a wish not to burden their families through the metaphor of *ubasute*. While many readers view this self-denial critically or with regret, others, based on their own caregiving experiences, state that they would “go to Ubasuteyama” rather than depend on family members. Some even accept the prospect of being abandoned and discuss ways of living afterward. The image of Ubasuteyama in these accounts appears to derive not from *The Tales of Yamato* (10th century), where the legend originates, but rather from postwar literary works such as Shichirō Fukazawa's *The Ballad of Narayama*

and Kiyoko Murata's *Warabino kō*. By analyzing these references, this study clarifies how postwar representations of abandonment have influenced the formation of the contemporary desire among elderly individuals "not to be a burden."

Session Code: 7-J

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-031

Title: Gender and Social Transformation in Contemporary China: The Practices and Dilemmas of Rural Women Balancing Productive and Reproductive Labor

Abstract:

This panel examines how women navigate structural constraints and exercise agency amid the ongoing transformation of urban–rural relations in contemporary China. Through three empirical studies, it explores women's adaptive strategies between production and reproduction under shifting social, economic, and cultural conditions. Yu's study investigates rural women who have returned from urban factories to their hometowns amid county-level deindustrialization and rising living costs. Negotiating the competing demands of wage work and motherhood, they develop livelihood strategies that expose the gendered contradictions underpinning contemporary rural households. Zheng's study examines how rural mothers' Peidu migration to cities for their children's education influences their empowerment, family dynamics, and reconstruction of gender roles in contemporary China. Shen's study investigates relationships between urban middle-class female employers and rural domestic workers, showing how unequal labor relations can give rise to cooperation, mutual support, and emotional solidarity. These practices reshape the forms of social reproduction that connect urban and rural families. Together, these studies reveal that women are not passive recipients of social change but active agents who negotiate, adapt, and transform their life conditions through everyday practices, thus illuminating the dynamic interplay between gender, migration, and social reproduction in contemporary China.

Organizer: Le Yu, Ochanomizu University

Chair: Fumie Ohashi, Ochanomizu University

Discussant: Fumie Ohashi, Ochanomizu University

1) Le Yu, Ochanomizu University

Between Labor and Motherhood: Structural Dilemmas and Life Strategies of Rural-Origin Middle-Aged Women

This study focuses on rural-origin middle-aged women who have left factory jobs in large cities and returned to their rural hometowns for their children's education. However, county-level towns and surrounding areas are now undergoing deindustrialization and the endogenous relocation of factories. Meanwhile, the rising cost of social reproduction—especially education—has made manufacturing work an indispensable source of household income. Against this backdrop, the study examines how these women navigate the tension between earning and caregiving, developing strategies to sustain their families and redefine their roles under growing structural pressures. It further reveals how their dual practices embody the structural dilemmas faced by women in contemporary rural areas and highlight the emerging crisis of family reproduction.

2) Yi Zheng, Kyoto University

Negotiating Gender and Empowerment through Peidu: Rural Mothers' Educational Migration in Contemporary China

In China, the phenomenon of Peidu—where parents, often mothers from rural areas, migrate to cities with their children to secure better educational opportunities—has been steadily increasing. While previous research has largely focused on transnational educational migration among urban middle-class families, domestic Peidu involving rural parents with limited social, cultural, and economic capital has received far less attention. This internal form of educational migration presents unique challenges and opportunities for rural women who relocate temporarily to urban areas while their husbands remain in the countryside. This study examines how Peidu shapes the gender roles and empowerment of rural mothers in modern China. It addresses two central questions: (1) under what social and familial conditions do these mothers experience empowerment or disempowerment through Peidu? and (2) does Peidu reinforce traditional gender hierarchies, or does it create opportunities for women to renegotiate and transform their subordinate roles within marriage and family life? By focusing on the lived experiences of rural Peidu mothers, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of gender, migration, and educational practices in modern Chinese society.

3) Siyuan Shen, Kobe University

Reproductive Practices Across Urban and Rural Contexts: Building Bonds between Rural Domestic Workers and Employers in China

Domestic and care work in the global labor market is characterized by capitalization and feminization. In China, rural-origin female domestic workers have become essential to urban households' functioning. This study examines married, childbearing women from rural Anhui who provide long-term household and care labor in urban families, focusing on how they navigate structural urban–rural inequalities while sustaining households at both ends of the migration chain. These women often migrate to support family livelihoods and children's education, undertaking intensive, multidimensional care and emotional labor. Despite significant disparities in status and resources, prolonged co-residence entails continuous negotiation over employment arrangements, care practices, and emotional expression. Domestic workers oscillate between roles as “professional service providers” and “quasi-family members,” while employers renegotiate boundaries between dependence and caution. Through three case studies, this research shows how rural women, situated within structural inequalities and emotional tensions, reconstruct cooperative relations and social solidarity through everyday labor and moral practice, demonstrating agency, resilience, and the capacity to mediate the dual reproductive demands of urban and rural households.

Session Code: 7-K

Room: 2-414

Individual Session 3: War, Empire, and Transnational Lives in Modern East Asia

Chair: Sven Saaler, Sophia University

1) (i-050) Ailin Li, The University of Hong Kong

Trading Pens for Swords: The Militarization of Educated Youth in Wartime China's Rejuvenation Efforts, 1920s–1940s

This paper explores the revolutionary history of modern Chinese youth during WWII under the discourse of “give up pens for swords,” where wartime China's rejuvenation efforts unified the youth's individual bodies and minds in pursuit of collective national struggles. The concept of rejuvenation encompasses the natural process of aging and the idealized power of anti-aging, making the restoration of physical energy central to modern projects of renewal. China's call for revitalization extended beyond preserving youthful bodies—it also emphasized cultivating enlightened future generations. From the 1920s to the 1940s, China's militarization targeted educated youth, envisioning them as qualified citizen-soldiers equipped with both physical and intellectual resilience to defend the nation from imminent threats. Drawing on archives, government documents, and personal diaries, this paper argues that rejuvenation justified the recruitment of intellectual youth as a socio-military force in wartime China. It contributes to ongoing discussions about China's rejuvenation and youth engagement by examining the youth-led Walking Propaganda Teams, the state-organized Intellectual Youth Military Service Movement, and the cross-border practice of the Guangdong Returned Overseas Youth Camp. This paper challenges the view of youth as merely symbolic power in sociocultural narratives, instead highlighting their tangible role as a committed force in wartime China's revitalization efforts.

2) (i-068) Vladimir Tikhonov, Oslo University

The First Red Pilgrims: The Earliest Korean Enrolment to the Communist University of Eastern Toilers, 1921–1922

This presentation examines approximately thirty ethnic Korean students enrolled at the Moscow-based Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV) as early as 1921. Drawing on hitherto unexamined materials—primarily the documents preserved in the Russian State Archive for Socio-Political History (RGASPI)—I analyze the students' backgrounds, factional affiliations, daily experiences as KUTV students, and subsequent career trajectories. The analysis reveals that these pioneering Korean students at KUTV originated predominantly from Hamgyŏng Province. Socially, they may be characterized as “marginal intellectuals.” Few arrived directly from Korea; more commonly, they were Hamgyŏng-born rural teachers or nationalist activists turned Communists who had entered Soviet Russia shortly before or after the 1917 Revolution, often after sojourns in northeastern China. Many were affiliated with the left-nationalist Shanghai faction, although it was ultimately members of the more orthodox Irkutsk faction who came to enjoy greater trust from the Soviet party-state. Nevertheless, certain Shanghai faction members among the early KUTV cohort later played significant roles in the development of the Korean Communist movement in northeastern China.

By illuminating the experiences of these early KUTV students, this study seeks to reconstruct a largely overlooked formative stage in the evolution of the Korean Communist movement and its interactions with Comintern institutions.

3) (i-256) Alina Ivanova, University of Cambridge

Creation of Diasporic Practices Amongst Koryo-saram and Joseonjok as a Method of Survival

This paper will examine the emergence of diasporic practices among Koryo-saram (ethnic Koreans in the former Soviet Union) and Joseonjok (ethnic Koreans in China) as strategies of cultural survival within shifting political and social environments. Beginning with their historical migrations, Korean settlement in the Russian Far East in the mid-19th century followed by forced deportation to Central Asia in 1937, and Korean migration to Northeast China from the late 19th century amid Japanese colonial expansion, the paper will delve into how these two communities developed distinctive modes of ethnic continuity under foreign rule. The study will focus on two central diasporic practices: traditional celebrations and language preservation. Festive rituals such as Chuseok and Seollal persisted as communal anchor points, reinforcing ethnic solidarity despite state attempts at assimilation in both Soviet Central Asia and the People's Republic of China. Simultaneously, efforts to preserve the Korean language, whether through clandestine family transmission among Koryo-saram after the closure of Korean schools in the USSR or state-supported bilingual education among Joseonjok in Yanbian served as mechanisms of cultural resilience. By comparing these practices, the paper will argue that diasporic cultural production functioned not as passive tradition but as an active method of survival, adaptation, and identity negotiation with authorities.

4) (i-446) Satomi Mizoguchi, Doshisha University

In-Between Worlds: Life Stories of Children Fathered by Men from Korea in the Japan-Occupied Netherlands East Indies

This paper examines the life stories of children born to “local women” and men from the Empire of Japan, including those from its colonies, Korea and Taiwan, during the Japan-occupied former Netherlands East Indies (current Republic of Indonesia). Most mothers were Eurasians who repatriated to the Netherlands after Indonesian independence, and many children grew up without knowing their paternal roots until middle age. This study focuses on children whose fathers were Korean civilian personnel attached to the Imperial Japanese Armed Forces. Often marginalized in colonial and postcolonial histories, these individuals later “discovered” their origins and negotiated their roots in postwar society. Rather than situating them within a single nation, the paper traces their lives across multiple empires and postwar nation-states, highlighting how growing up in the Netherlands shaped their experiences. Based on oral histories from second- and third-generation descendants and archival sources, the study adopts a transimperial perspective to explore their position “in-between” empires and nation-states. Focusing on their voices, it shows how they navigated multiple forms of marginalization and social negotiation, and demonstrates the value of personal narratives in understanding layered imperialisms and the complexities of postwar life. This study aims to contribute to rethinking the boundaries of colonial and postcolonial memory.

Session Code: 7-L

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-086

Title: Japan's Screen Encounters with the World

Abstract:

This panel explores how transnational filmmaking operates through infrastructures of mediation: technological, linguistic, industrial, and affective. From the perspectives of industrial and infrastructural international co-production and issues of representation and linguistic mediation, the papers trace continuities in the material and discursive processes that enable Japanese cinema to move across borders. The first part examines how production infrastructures emerge and evolve across time. Haukamp reconsiders 1930s Japan–Germany co-productions as formative experiments that tested new ways of working across linguistic and industrial boundaries, establishing templates later echoed in formal frameworks. Holtzman analyses how French funding programs support contemporary Japanese auteurs, revealing the institutional and linguistic negotiations embedded in transnational production systems. The third paper turns to the linguistic mediation of power/cultural dynamics as Lee tackles representation in code-switching in recent teleseries featuring plurilingual American protagonists. Investigating cinema and television as rich sites of cultural production, both address cross-cultural

negotiation over visibility and cultural hierarchies. Taken together, the papers show how infrastructures—material, institutional, and linguistic—shape and sustain Japan’s screen encounters with the world.

Organizer: Hannah Holtzman, Sophia University

Chair: Hannah Holtzman, Sophia University

Discussant: Megha Wadhwa, Sophia University

1) Iris Haukamp, Tohoku University

Transnational Filmmaking as Infrastructural Continuity: Japan–Germany Co-Production Networks in the 1930s

This paper reconsiders the short-lived collaboration between Japan and Germany in the 1930s as a formative experiment in transnational film production. Rather than approaching co-productions such as *Atarashiki tsuchi* (Die Tochter des Samurai, 1937) and related projects through the familiar lenses of propaganda or cultural diplomacy, I examine them as sites where distinct infrastructures of filmmaking—technical, linguistic, industrial, and personal—were built, tested, and repurposed. Drawing on archival sources, production documents, and the autobiography of a German cinematographer who worked repeatedly with Japanese studios, I trace how experience gained on one project created procedural and communicative templates for subsequent collaborations and shaped new routines of working across languages and media systems. These informal infrastructures of translation, production practice, and circulating know-how often mattered more than official frameworks, creating practical pathways for cross-border work long before “co-production” existed as a formal model. Viewing these films through the lens of infrastructural continuity highlights the everyday negotiations—linguistic, professional, and creative—that sustained transnational collaboration and anticipated the institutional and aesthetic forms that continue to structure global filmmaking today.

2) Hannah Holtzman, Sophia University

Subsidizing Auteurs: French Production Support for Contemporary Japanese Filmmakers

This paper examines how a range of recent funding schemes from the French Centre national du cinéma et de l’image animée (CNC) support transnational filmmaking with a focus on engagements with Japanese auteur filmmakers such as Kore-eda Hirokazu, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, and Kawase Naomi, among others in recent years. The CNC funding schemes also reveal the soft power aims of such support with language referencing the *rayonnement* (influence) of France abroad. While industrial studies of cinematic co-productions often focus on policy, economics, and reception using quantitative approaches, this paper examines the films themselves as case studies with inquiry into stylistics and discussion of challenges of working across linguistic and cultural borders. I argue that Japan’s unique role in cinematic exchange with France, as neither a neighboring EU state nor one with postcolonial ties but one with a significant history of past exchanges across the arts, grants it a distinctive status allowing for flexibility and creativity in co-production, even if the range of opportunities for support is more limited. In the absence of a bilateral co-production agreement between Japan and France, filmmakers in Japan may benefit from French support for their projects and thus indirectly contribute to contemporary efforts to promote Japanese cinema abroad while also complicating understandings of Japanese and French cinemas in an increasingly transnational production and exhibition context.

3) Heidi Ka-Sin Lee, Sophia University

Negotiating Ethnocentrism Through the (Asian-)American Outsider: The Plurilingual Structure of Power in “Pachinko,” “Tokyo Vice,” and “Expats”

With a focus on the interanimating effects of code-switching and power negotiation, this paper addresses the cultural implications of characterizing (Asian-)Americans as inferior outsiders in Asian countries in three recent teleseries that feature plurilingual protagonists, namely *Tokyo Vice* (2022–2024), *Pachinko* (2022), and *Expats* (2024). Whereas *Expats* unwittingly reenacts the “confused American tourists on exotic continents” trope in *The Sheltering Sky* and *Lost in Translation*, *Tokyo Vice*, and *Pachinko* place their savvy American protagonists in Asian workplaces that constantly throw linguistic and cultural challenges at them. All these series actively engage Asian urban spaces and supporting characters in questioning the protagonists’ American points of view and modulating their superiority complex. Despite the immensity of these narrative and linguistic obstacles, the series’ neoliberal perspectives foreground individual identities through narrativizing the protagonists’ delicate balance of two or more cultures and emotional struggles, underscoring the centrality of American individualism in representation. This paper will examine how the (Asian-)American outsider in contemporary transnational television series functions as a strategic representational tool in the streaming era to manage screen diversity

and negotiate ethnocentrism and more specifically, how the frequent code-switching of American protagonists and local supporting characters reflect unequal power structures.

Session Code: 7-M

Room: 2-401

Roundtable 3: Possibilities of “Queer History” in Japan

Panelists:

Kazuyoshi Kawasaki, The University of Tokyo (Organizer)

Sho Akita, The University of Tokyo

Akiko Shimizu, The University of Tokyo

Chelsea Szendi Schieder, Aoyama Gakuin University

Patrick Carland-Echavarria, University of Oxford

In many societies, history has been a complex and problematic terrain for sexual minorities. The desires and sexualities of queer people in the past were often regarded as “private” matters and consequently excluded from the “official” histories of the nation and society. When contemporary identity categories such as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) are retroactively applied, they may prove problematic or misleading, as the historical identities and subjectivities of individuals often diverge from these modern classifications. Furthermore, archival materials related to sexual minority rights movements have been scarce. At the same time, the preservation of materials and the writing of histories about those excluded from official narratives have often functioned as vital components of community formation and activism. This roundtable seeks to examine the dynamic relationship between Japan’s queer communities and their histories in order to explore the potential of developing a “queer history” within the Japanese context. The discussion focuses on the theoretical possibilities and challenges of constructing “queer history” in Japan, with particular attention to issues surrounding the preservation of materials, the creation of archives, and the historical representation of sexual minorities.

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[Block 8] 15:45–17:15

Session Code: 8-A

Room: 2-411

Panel Code: p-034

Title: Sounding Chineseness: Translation, Adaptation, and Hybridity Across the Sinophone World

Abstract:

This panel interrogates how Sinophone soundscapes emerge through acts of adaptation and translation across boundaries. Moving across Bangkok, Singapore, and Hong Kong–Taipei circuits, it explores how popular music and film performance reconfigured meanings of Chineseness within distinct yet interconnected urban sonic worlds. Kornphanat Tungkeunkunt examines the adaptation of Chinese popular music into Thai through *fanchang* (musical covering), showing how Hong Kong singer Frances Yip’s repertoire negotiated corporate infrastructures, linguistic hybridity, and genre conventions to articulate Chineseness within Thailand’s multiethnic soundscape. Goh Song Wei explores how 1950s–1960s Singaporean Chinese gramophone songs, incorporating Malay melodies with Mandarin lyrics, negotiated between lived experiences and the “Malayan” tropes popularized by Hong Kong’s film and music industries to reimagine a Malayan multiculturalism addressing transethnic audiences. Wang Mengqiao analyzes how humor and wordplay were reworked in the Mandarin-dubbed version of Stephen Chow’s *Flirting Scholar* (1993) for circulation in Taiwan and Southeast Asia, revealing how dubbing shaped the aural articulation of Chineseness across transregional Sinophone publics. Together, these case studies underscore an inter-Asian hybridity and transethnic interactions, where Chineseness is continually sounded and reinterpreted.

Organizer: Kornphanat Tungkeunkunt, Thammasat University

Chair: Kornphanat Tungkeunkunt, Thammasat University

1) Kornphanat Tungkeunkunt, Thammasat University

Frances Yip and the Adaptation of Chinese Popular Music in Thailand

This paper examines the circulation and adaptation of Chinese popular music in Thailand through the concept of *fanchang* (musical covering), extending Andrew F. Jones's framework of "circuit listening." Whereas Jones situates Chinese pop in technologically mediated networks of production and circulation, this study emphasizes the performative, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of musical exchange across transregional and transcultural contexts. Focusing on the career of Hong Kong-based singer Frances Yip, who rose to prominence with Cantonese theme songs of Hong Kong television dramas, the paper explores how her multilingual repertoire enabled her to traverse diverse audience bases across Asia. The Thai adaptations of Chinese songs by Yip, enabled the navigation of boundaries through corporate infrastructures, linguistic hybridity, and genre negotiation. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources, including cassettes, CDs, fan magazines, and archival media, this study reveals *fanchang* as a localization strategy that generated hybrid musical exchange until copyright reforms rendered it obsolete. By positioning *fanchang* as a culturally embedded circuit beyond Jones's technological focus, the paper contributes to broader discussions of transnational sound studies.

2) Goh Song Wei, National University of Singapore

Imagining Malayan Multiculturalism: The Local Chinese Gramophone Music in Singapore, 1950s and 1960s

From independence in 1965, Multiculturalism has been a central ideological framework of the Singapore state in managing interethnic relations. Recent scholarship revisits earlier cross-ethnic cultural interactions that emerged from the 1950s anti-colonial movements, albeit privilege Chinese intellectual circles while overlooking the everyday cultural practices. In the 1950s and 1960s, Hong Kong's film and popular music industries produced Malaya-inspired films and songs for the Southeast Asian market, often portraying the region through exoticized or tropicalized imageries. The mediated representations were internalized by music practitioners in Singapore, who reworked such imaginaries into their own creative vocabularies. Engaging this historiographical gap, this paper examines how local Chinese gramophone songs in 1950s and 1960s Singapore negotiated between external imagination of Malaya and lived local experiences to create a distinct form of "Malayan multiculturalism." The repertoire encompassed *Hokkien* and other colloquial songs, alongside newly hybrid compositions that drew upon Malay melodies and vocabularies while rendering them in Mandarin Chinese. Drawing upon David Der-wei Wang's proposition to understand the Sinophone alongside its non-Sinitic interlocutors, this paper foregrounds the hybridity and transethnic mediations embedded in this sound world, listening to how sonic Chineseness was continuously reimagined across linguistic and cultural borders.

3) Wang Mengqiao, National University of Singapore

Intra-Sinophone Translation and the Mandarin Dubbing of Stephen Chow's Flirting Scholar (1993)

This study explores how the dubbing of Stephen Chow's Cantonese comedy film *Flirting Scholar* (1993) into Mandarin reshaped the sonic articulation of Chineseness for Sinophone audiences in Taiwan and the Southeast Asia. During the 1980s and 1990s, Taiwan became a major consumer of Hong Kong cinema, whose commercial and cultural proximity facilitated easy market access. The privilege of Mandarin following the arrival of the Nationalist government in 1949 led to Cantonese films being routinely dubbed by Taiwanese voice actors for broader regional circulation. In Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore, the 1979 Speak Mandarin Campaign prohibited films in Chinese dialect, creating a demand for Mandarin-dubbed versions of Hong Kong movies. Adapted from traditional opera and folk tales, *Flirting Scholar* incorporated distinctive Cantonese comedic idioms and wordplay that posed major challenges for Mandarin dubbing. Rather than a straightforward linguistic conversion, translators had to recreate cultural references and invent new expressions to resonate with Mandarin-speaking audiences. The complex process rendered the dubbed film a unique site of intra-Sinophone translation, mediating identity, humor, and cultural meaning beyond the original text. By tracing these adaptations, the study sheds light on how language policies, transnational film circulation, and creative mediation shaped Sinophone film culture, offering new insights for both film and translation studies.

Session Code: 8-B

Room: 2-402

Panel Code: p-036

Title: The Brokered Empires: Go-Betweens and Iberian Networks in East Asia, 1500–1800

Abstract:

This panel is inspired by *The Brokered World* (Schaffer et al., 2009), which demonstrated how “go-between” as an analytical framework can capture, across multiple spatial scales, the entanglements between individual actors and the social networks they inhabit. Building upon this insight, the panel reexamines the extension and transformation of the Iberian empires in East Asia from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, emphasizing how translation, negotiation, and adaptation functioned as crucial mechanisms of imperial operation. The four papers explore the hybrid literacies of Chinese communities in Manila; the mediation of Canton–Macau relations by local officials; the interpreters who crafted the first Ming–Spanish diplomatic encounters; and the Portuguese magistrate Miguel de Arriaga’s fiscal visions through opium and contraband. Together, they show that brokerage was not merely a logistical necessity but a political and epistemic practice that both connected and disconnected imperial spaces. By reframing the Portuguese and Spanish networks as “brokered empires,” this panel argues that the Portuguese and Spanish empires that remained remarkably flexible and active across East Asia.

Organizer: Yunxiang Gao, Indiana University Bloomington

Chair: Yangyou Fang, Princeton University

1) Yunxiang Gao, Indiana University Bloomington

Mediating Empire: Miguel de Arriaga and the Portuguese Opium Trade in Asia

This paper explores Miguel de Arriaga (1776–1824), a Portuguese magistrate who served in Macau for nearly two decades and emerged as the colony’s “little king.” Trained in law at Coimbra and appointed *ouvidor* in 1802, Arriaga acted as a go-between linking the Portuguese Empire, the Qing world, and the expanding British Asian sphere. He promoted the opium trade as a crucial fiscal resource that sustained Macau’s garrison and administration, while envisioning the enclave as a nodal hub of circulation connecting Goa, Timor, Siam, Aceh, and Madeira. Through these networks of diplomacy, finance, and contraband, Arriaga sought to reposition Portugal within the competitive imperial economy of maritime Asia. By centering both the individual and the city as go-betweens, the paper examines how imperial mediation operated across multiple scales—bureaucratic, commercial, and geopolitical. Yet Arriaga’s vision of a revitalized Portuguese Asia unraveled amid the Napoleonic Wars, British expansion, Qing opium prohibitions, and the liberal revolutions of the 1820s. This paper argues that his downfall formed part of a broader global wave of disconnection that swept across the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Combining biography with global history, the study argues that both Arriaga and Macau embodied the precarious politics of connection and disconnection that defined the Portuguese Empire in Asia.

2) Yangyou Fang, Princeton University

Brokers of Goods and Knowledge: Chinese Literacy and Cosmopolitan Knowledge Production in the Spanish Pacific

This paper examines how Chinese and “mestizo” communities in Manila served as linguistic and cultural brokers within the interconnected world of the Spanish Pacific. Far from being merely merchants or laborers, these migrants developed sophisticated multilingual literacies that positioned them as indispensable mediators between Iberian, Asian, and indigenous spheres of knowledge. Drawing on underexplored materials such as Chinese-Spanish catechisms, bilingual dictionaries, vernacular manuals, and business ledgers, the paper reconstructs a translingual culture of reading and writing that sustained colonial society while fostering cross-cultural communication and intellectual exchange. These texts—compiled, translated, and circulated by Chinese migrants and their descendants—functioned as instruments of negotiation and adaptation amid the tensions of empire, trade, and missionary expansion. They demonstrate that Chinese and “mestizo” actors were not passive recipients of colonial influence but active agents who translated systems of law, commerce, medicine, and belief across linguistic and cultural boundaries. By tracing how practical literacy intersected with cosmopolitan knowledge production, the study situates Chinese communities as essential go-betweens in the Spanish Empire’s East Asian networks and as creators of an everyday cosmopolitanism rooted in translation, exchange, and survival.

3) Junyu Liang, University of Macau

Negotiating the Tide: Brokers, Officials and Mediation in the Sino-Portuguese Trade in the Late 17th Century

Sino-Portuguese trade revived in the late 17th century when Qing China reopened to the sea. The Portuguese in Macao regained the chance after experiencing competition with the Dutch and the closure of trade with Japan in maritime Asia. Previous studies have shown that the Macao government tended to negotiate with Ming and Qing China to maintain the social order and trading environment. In terms of local practice in the transition period, how different actors dealt with the trade disputes between Macao and Canton remains ambiguous. This article will discuss the behaviors of brokers and officials in the mediation by using the archives from Chinese, Dutch, Japanese, and Portuguese. Through case studies from Macao, this article argues that the mechanism of creditworthiness worked when merchants faced commercial lawsuits. It suggests that the Macao government relied on the Queves to withdraw litigation before other officials' intervention. In addition, the Macao experience influenced the Portuguese Empire's attitude in handling commercial risks during its expansion in East Asia.

4) Yehong Qiu, City University of Hong Kong

Language as Power: How Go-Betweens Shaped Ming-Spanish Imperial Encounters in the 1570s South China Sea

This study examines how multilingual go-betweens shaped late sixteenth-century Ming-Spanish imperial interactions through their interpretation and translation work, despite their peripheral positions. Focusing on the interpretive agency of Lin Bixiu (Sinsay in Spanish records), the translator in the 1575 Ming-Spanish first official interaction, and Simon Rodrigues, interpreter for the 1579 Franciscan mission to Guangdong, the study shows how these go-betweens, using their multilingual proficiency, manipulated and transmitted information—whether to serve personal interests, or to defuse tensions and facilitate cross-cultural imperial interactions. The information they provided, despite its strategic “inaccuracy,” shaped the perceptions and diplomatic strategies of both the Ming authorities and Spanish colonial authorities in the Philippines. By shifting the lens from official embassies and central authorities to go-betweens embedded in maritime networks, the study argues that go-betweens did not merely mediate diplomacy but also created it. It thus reinterprets early Ming-Spanish encounter and the formation of the South China Sea network in the late sixteenth century as a negotiated and contingent process in which language, mobility, and information control were decisive instruments of power.

Session Code: 8-C

Room: 2-403

Panel Code: p-063

Title: Sound and Text Across Borders: The Re-Creation of East Asian Musical and Literary Traditions

Abstract:

Throughout East Asia's cultural exchange history, music and text have been crucial for transregional circulation and creative evolution. The absorption, translation, and reinterpretation of sounds and words across civilizations showcase not just the endurance of artistic forms but also profound shifts in social and intellectual frameworks. The interplay and transformation of East Asian literature and music reflect both the clashes and harmonies within musical culture and the renewal of aesthetic concepts—a diversity that demands deeper analysis. This panel features four case studies from China, Japan, and Vietnam, mapping these vibrant cultural paths. The first delves into the inheritance and reinvention of *gagaku* tonal patterns from Tang music, showcasing how ancient sound structures have been revitalized in Japan. The second examines Wenzhou drum storytelling, analyzing the dynamic relationship between textual music and its evolution in contemporary performances. The third investigates the spread and reception of Vietnamese *Nôm* lyric anthologies, emphasizing the fusion of reading and musical experiences. The fourth, focusing on *Kangen yinyi*, traces the intellectual beginnings and progression of Japanese musical thought. By blending historical and ethnographic viewpoints, the panel investigates how music acts as a carrier of knowledge and memory, connecting text and sound, tradition and modernity. Ultimately, it reveals East Asia's fluid and interconnected cultural terrain.

Organizer: Jiao Zhang, Southwest Jiaotong University

Chair: Zongmei Zhang, Nanchang University

Discussant: Zongmei Zhang, Nanchang University

1) Kezhen Sun, Zhejiang Conservatory of Music

Creative Transformation of Modes: Inheritance and Reinvention in Japanese “Tōgaku”

Tōgaku (Tang music) within Japanese *gagaku* originated from Chinese music—primarily that of the Tang Dynasty—which was introduced to Japan. After studying and absorbing Chinese music, Japanese musicians successfully promoted its localization, transformation, and reinvention. Focusing on this phenomenon, this study examines the modal system of Japanese *tōgaku*. The research will proceed as follows: first, by drawing on theoretical accounts from historical Japanese music treatises and analyzing extant *tōgaku* scores, it aims to delineate the modal system of Japanese *tōgaku* itself. Second, through a comparative analysis with the modal theories of Tang and Song China, it seeks to elucidate how Japanese *tōgaku*, while inheriting the Chinese system, achieved internal renewal and creative transformation.

2) Francesco Serratore, Zhejiang Conservatory of Music

From Oral Narrative to Heritage Performance: The Remaking of Wenzhou guci in Contemporary China

Wenzhou guci, a narrative singing tradition from southeastern Zhejiang, seamlessly blends literature and music within the local vernacular. Traditionally performed in temples, teahouses, and domestic settings, it combines poetic texts, melodic recitation, and *niu jin qin* (ox-tendon zither) accompaniment to convey moral tales, historical events, and local legends. Over recent decades, *guci* has shifted from a flexible oral art to a staged, “heritagized” performance under China’s Intangible Cultural Heritage policy. Based on long-term fieldwork in Wenzhou and Rui’an, this paper examines how *guci*’s textual and musical elements are being reshaped by contemporary demands and cultural contexts. It explores the interplay between dialectal poetics, tonal speech, and melodic structure, as well as how traditional forms (*ci*, *ge*, *qu*) are adapted for modern stage and community settings. The study also highlights emerging transmission methods, including institutional instruction, community workshops, and digital dissemination, illustrating *guci*’s ongoing evolution amid social and cultural change. This case underscores the dynamic relationship between literature and music in adapting oral traditions to modern frameworks, revealing how vernacular aesthetics navigate new forms of expression and continuity.

3) Jieying Lin, Southwest Jiaotong University

The Musicality of Reading: The Dissemination, Reception, and Reading Practices of Ci-Poetry Anthologies in Ancient Vietnam

Book exchanges introduced numerous Chinese *ci*-poetry collections to ancient Vietnam. During the Nguyen Dynasty, the spread of comprehensive anthologies offered Vietnamese readers a sweeping overview of *ci*-poetry scholarship, enabling them to reinterpret Chinese works through reading. Collections like Nguyen Mien Tham’s *Cổ Dục Từ* adhered to Chinese compilation styles, while *Cổ Điệu Ngâm Từ* deliberately curated *ci*-poems from Ming and Qing novels and legends, reshaping texts to reflect local contexts. Ancient Vietnamese readers prioritized musical forms over physical book collections, using rhythm and melody to grasp textual essence. This emphasis inspired Nguyen Dynasty scholars to develop *Quốc Ngữ Từ*, a culturally unique musical tradition that shifted *ci*-poetry reception from visual (“eye-oriented”) to auditory (“ear-oriented”), merging music and literature into a harmonious art form. Such innovations highlight the dynamic adaptability of ancient East Asian literature and music in cross-border exchanges, illustrating how traditions evolve through cultural interaction. By reimagining *ci*-poetry through sound, Vietnamese literati not only preserved its literary value but also enriched its artistic expression, creating a vibrant fusion that resonated across regions.

4) Jiao Zhang, Southwest Jiaotong University

From “Kangen yinyi” to Japanese Gagaku Philosophy: The Formation and Indigenization of Musical Thought

The Japanese *gagaku* treatise *Kangen yinyi*, compiled in the late twelfth century, draws upon the reinterpretations of traditional Chinese Buddhist thought, the theory of the Five Elements, and the cosmological concept of unity between Heaven and humanity. By integrating knowledge across historical periods, the treatise synthesizes earlier musical theories to establish a philosophical system of music centered on the hermeneutic interpretation of sound principles. The subsequent reception of this musical-philosophical system in later *gagaku* treatises demonstrates distinct development stages. During the Kamakura period and early Muromachi period, *gagaku* treatises maintained the doctrines of *Kangen yinyi* through translation, citation, and interpretation, employing them to underscore the exalted status of *Kangen*. From the late Muromachi period onward, with the changing historical context, the previously established theoretical framework was reconstructed, giving rise to a Japanized discourse on ritual and music. This historical trajectory illustrates the dynamic transformation of musical-philosophical thought within the *gagaku* tradition and the indigenization of ritual music theory in premodern Japan.

Session Code: 8-D

Room: 2-404

Panel Code: p-068

Title: Shaping the Empire: Knowledge Production and Translation of Labor, Nature, and Techniques in Imperial Japan

Abstract:

This panel complicates Michel Foucault's theory on power and knowledge by examining how knowledge of human and natural resources was produced and translated under modern imperialism. It brings together case studies of labor migration, coastal development, fishery manufacturing, and oceanographic research to investigate how knowledge production shaped the physical, social, and economic terrains of Imperial Japan (1868–1945). Focusing on diverse forms of knowledge production and their intersections with gender, race, and environment, the panel brings imperial studies, migration history, environmental history, and the history of science and technology into dialogue to illuminate the mechanics of a modern empire in the twentieth century. Kim explores how Japanese social scientists employed gender and race to analyze the labor of Chinese “coolies” and Korean tenant farmers in Manchuria in the 1920s. Ito's research examines how expert knowledge of salmon ecology intersected with fishermen's practices in Japan's northward-expanding projects during the interwar period. Barkalow examines salt farming along the coastline of Korea as the industry intensified under Japanese colonial rule, tracing how novel labor and economic regimes intersected with environmental conditions between land and sea. Lin's study analyzes how vernacular knowledge in the production of sardine oil and sardine cake in colonial Korea was incorporated into imperial fishery science during the 1920s and 1930s.

Organizer: Pei-Hsu Lin, Washington University in St. Louis

Chair: Pei-Hsu Lin, Washington University in St. Louis

Discussant: Kjell David Ericson, Kyoto University

- 1) Suyoung Kim, University of Pennsylvania

Labor as an Empirical Source for Japanese Imperial Expansion: Knowledge Production on the Labor of Korean and Chinese Migrants in Manchuria in the 1920s

In the aftermath of World War I, Imperial Japan strengthened its hold on Manchuria. However, excluding the territories along the South Manchuria Railway, it was unfamiliar with the land and competing with other economic and political forces. To overcome this, Japanese social scientists traced the migration patterns and settlement of Korean and Chinese immigrants in different areas. Their labor was central in assessing the economic and political potential of the unfamiliar lands. Challenging the previous scholarship that focused on the 1930s, this paper examines studies published in Japanese periodicals in the 1920s. It demonstrates how knowledge production on labor during this period was crucial to Japan's imperial expansion on the continent in the 1930s. Japanese scientists employed gender and race in their analysis of the labor of Chinese “coolies” and Korean tenant farmers in Manchuria. They argued that their lack of masculinity and inherent “feudalistic” nature proved their inability to govern themselves and the need for modern governance. Yet, the studies reveal how imperial power relied on labor migrants to understand the region. Japanese scientists traced Korean farmers to discover irrigable lands and suitable farming techniques, and traced Chinese “coolies” to understand different regional social dynamics. Thus, this paper argues that labor was a valuable source of information for the Japanese, as it embodied the experience, skills, and knowledge of individuals.

- 2) Koji Ito, University of Osaka

Circuits of Expertise: Oceanographic Knowledge and the Making of Japan's Salmon Fisheries in the Interwar Period

This paper examines how scientific knowledge of salmon ecology was mobilized within Japan's northward-expanding pelagic empire during the interwar years. Earlier accounts explain the rise of prewar Japan's salmon fisheries through political frameworks, gunboat diplomacy, capital investment, and ethnocentric geographies. More recently, historians have paid closer attention to science, examining what kinds of knowledge oceanographers produced and how it was used to promote Japan's salmon fisheries. Moving beyond accounts that portray scientists solely as producers of knowledge, this paper analyzes how specific forms of expertise—oceanographic observations, tagging and netting experiments, and seasonal forecasts—were translated into fishers' everyday practice. Drawing on research-vessel reports, scientific journals, and industry periodicals, it traces the circuits through which information moved from laboratories and survey ships to mother-ship fleets and coastal fixed-net operators. I argue that industry periodicals and technical bulletins functioned as mediating objects that aligned scientific expertise with fishermen's operational decisions about fleet deployment, net placement, and timing. By reconstructing these channels of transfer and the conditions of acceptance on the fishing grounds,

this study shows how science materially shaped the organization, practices, and spatial reach of Japan's salmon fisheries before World War II.

3) Ethan Barkalow, Georgetown University

Sun, Salt, and Sea: Harnessing Natural Knowledge on the Government-run Salt Farms of Colonial Korea

This paper examines salt farming as a meeting point of both traditional knowledge and modern knowledge of the environment in imperial Japan. It uses publications by the Government-General of Korea on its salt farming operation and Korean responses in vernacular periodicals to uncover the impact of colonial industry on coastal environments. The coastal ecosystems of the Korean Peninsula were key zones for industrial, social, and economic transformations during the period of Japanese colonial rule. Observing the vast tidal flats along Korea's western coastline, the Japanese protectorate government (1905–1910) and later the colonial government (1910–1945) established a salt-making industry predicated on the solar evaporation of seawater. The production of salt in the colonies supported a booming market in the Japanese homeland. Scholars have previously examined the colonial salt industry through the lens of its economic impact as a government monopoly. The ecological effects of salt farming have received little attention. The reclamation of coastal waters and tidal flats disrupted critical ecosystems for birds, fish, and mollusks. Salt farming also displaced fishing villages, interrupting rural society and economy. Because the salt industry was run almost entirely by the colonial government, it is a strong example of how environmental change and management brought about economic and cultural developments in Japan's broader empire.

4) Pei-Hsu Lin, Washington University in St. Louis

The Translation of Zairai Knowledge: Institutionalizing Vernacular Manufacturing Practices in the Production of Sardine Oil and Sardine Cake

In 1929, the Government-General of Korea (1910–1945) published a report on the vernacular facilities and techniques employed in sardine oil production in colonial Korea. Although these methods were identified as *zairai* (local), they closely resembled those detailed in a fishery experimental report on sardine cake (*iwashikasu*) production, published in Ishikawa Prefecture in 1912. The Ishikawa Fishery Experimental Station report outlined common practices at each stage of the production process in Aichi Prefecture and Chiba Prefecture with the aim of improving local manufacturing. The parallels between production practices in colonial Korea and those in regional Japan revealed the formation of a shared knowledge system across the Japanese empire. This raises a question of what *zairai* practices meant and how these practices circulated within the empire. In challenging existing scholarship that has predominantly focused on modern fishery technologies, this paper examines how vernacular techniques were translated into an imperial knowledge regime through the work of fishery experimental stations. By tracing how vernacular practices were coded and quantified through fishery experiments and how they were adapted across different local regions of the empire, this paper argues that vernacular techniques were no longer a tacit form of knowledge but became institutionalized as part of imperial fishery knowledge.

Session Code: 8-E

Room: 2-408

Panel Code: p-094

Title: Traumatic Transgressors: Comparing Female Selfhood in Films About Wartime and Neoliberal Japan

Abstract:

Film encourages empathy and reflections about subjectivity through narratives, characterization, and cinematography. Cinema is also used to promote state agendas, patriarchal institutions, and objectification. To understand how this tension operates, our panel explores depictions of transgressive female characters in films by renowned directors focusing on two major themes in Japanese cinema—trauma caused by war and difficulties in forming human connections and families in current neoliberal society. While the goal of the filmmakers under study is not always women's empowerment, the synergies among these different films are surprising. By transgressing limits placed on them, female characters reveal how women have navigated social expectations. We explore this cinematic paradox through case studies of female characters whose behaviors cause harm to themselves and others. Yoshida explicates how Wakamatsu Koji uses sexual violence in *Caterpillar* (2010) to reverse power dynamics and comment on trauma caused by war. Van explores how three global directors adapting Murakami Haruki's stories added dimensions to his female characters but turned them into symbols. Coates examines liars and fantasists in three 2020s films to interrogate how unreliable characters can reveal limits on

women's selfhood. We use comparative approaches, close reading, and contextualization to argue that analyzing transgressive film characters raises awareness of persistent cultural and social problems.

Organizer: Alisa Freedman, University of Oregon

Chair: Jennifer Coates, University of Sheffield

Discussant: Alisa Freedman, University of Oregon

1) Kaori Yoshida, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Complexities in Women's Revenge against Masculine War Narratives: The Abject Body and Female Subjectivity in Wakamatsu Koji's "Caterpillar" (2010)

War films manifest (hyper)gendered mechanisms of remembering a nation's past. Postwar Japanese war films are often criticized for depicting suffering women who associate Japan with victimization and fighting men who symbolize the masculine nation. The genre is also criticized for insufficient representation of female voices. Feminists like H  l  ne Cixous (1976) and Luce Irigaray (1981) claim that the dominant phallogocentric system of language hinders women from expressing their own experiences, thus suppressing their subjectivity. If female language expresses women's experiences of war through filmic narrative, how would it operate to realize female subjectivity? My paper analyzes the Japanese (anti)war film, *Caterpillar* (Wakamatsu, 2010), based on Edogawa Ranpo's novel, to better understand female subjectivity distinguished from its male counterpart. The film disillusions the myth of the masculine nation by depicting a lieutenant who committed brutal wartime sexual violence against Chinese and Japanese women. A reversed power relation with his wife brings her the pleasure of revenge for his wartime abuses. Her previously suppressed emotions and her wartime memories are blatantly embodied through corporal expressions. I explicate how female language in the war film, conveying women's experiences, realizes female subjectivity, which is, distinguished from its male counterpart, articulated collaboratively with the body of male "other."

2) Phan Thu Van, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education

Weak in Literature, Strong in Cinema: Depictions of Female Selfhood in Murakami Haruki's Film Adaptations

While Murakami Haruki's literature is not known for multi-dimensional female characters, his film adaptations are. Arguably, most of Murakami's literary works do not prioritize women's subjectivity or advance feminist visions for Japanese society. But when many of these same works are made into films, the female characters are portrayed with more fully realized personalities and distinct voices. Concurrently, they are made to represent gender expectations for women. In other words, female characters in Murakami's film adaptations are expanded in connotation and embody notions of women's selfhood. I examine how this is true in three mainstream film adaptations of Murakami's literature. I focus on international directors who aspire to make Murakami's stories accessible to global audiences: *Norwegian Wood* (*Noruei no mori*, 2010, directed by Tran Anh Hung), *Burning* (2018, directed by Lee Chang-dong), and *Drive My Car* (*Doraibu mai k  *, 2021, directed by Hamaguchi Ry  suke). I chose these films because they emphasize social and historical contexts and show how individuals are impacted by their relationships and societies. Do these directors change Murakami's female characters to appeal to global viewers, to update stories written in the past, or for other reasons? By depicting female selfhood, how have they turned these characters into symbols and tropes? I trace similarities among these films and explore how they have influenced global reception of Murakami's literature.

3) Jennifer Coates, University of Sheffield

Liars, Frauds, and Fantasists: Mapping the Limits of the Self through Female Characterization in Contemporary Japanese Cinema

If "one is not born, but becomes a woman" (Simone de Beauvoir, 1949), what does that becoming look like? In Japanese cinema of the 2020s, becoming is shaped by deceptions large and small, public and private. Hayakawa Chie's *Renoir* (*Runow  ru*, 2025) follows a young female protagonist with an outside imagination as she explores different ways of becoming a self in the world. The main character of Toda Akihiro's *Ichiko* (*Ichiko*, 2023) does not technically exist; as a person without a family register, she is forced to take on false identities to obtain social security, education, and work. Sekine K  sai's *Stay Mum* (*Kakushigoto*, 2024) tells of a bereaved mother who takes in a runaway child and convinces her dementia-suffering father that he is her real son. Through comparative analysis, I explore an emerging trend in contemporary depictions of women in Japanese cinema, which locates exploration of the meaning of the self and its limits within characters' fantasies and deceptions. This echoes similar developments in Japanese literature, which has turned towards more unsympathetic or unreliable female characterizations, such as Murata Sayaka's *Convenience Store Woman*

(*Konbini ningen*, 2016) or Yuzuki Asako's *Butter* (*Batā*, 2017). By exploring the role of deception in female characterizations of the 2020s, we can see a nuanced account of female identity that surpasses tropes of classical Japanese cinema to reflect a broader understanding of the female self and its limits.

Session Code: 8-F

Room: 2-405

Panel Code: p-023

Title: Aesthetics of Crisis: Reimagining Values Through Chinese Literature

Abstract:

From the late Han Dynasty to the Second Sino-Japanese War, moments of political rupture have inspired writers to rethink the relationship between art, ethics, and cultural identity. Tracing the recurring dialogue between politics and literature across fifteen centuries of Chinese history, this panel examines how Chinese writers have preserved, critiqued, and reinvented enduring cultural values in times of crisis, not through direct polemic, but through aesthetic transformation. Jinghua Wangling demonstrates how Li Shangyin's "Left Untitled" love poems exemplify a new poetic response to political crisis, in which aesthetic innovations begin to rival poetry's traditional social functions. Chengjuan Sun examines how the motif of child's play is used in Song Dynasty poetry to resist the encroaching forces of public service and factional politics on selfhood and personal authenticity. Haosheng Yang explores Zheng Xiaoxu's poetic vision of a utopian "Kingly Way" in Manchukuo, emphasizing the tragic impasse of Confucian statecraft when challenged by the realities of Japanese colonial domination. Together, this panel reveals the power of literature to reaffirm values amid centuries of turmoil.

Organizer: Haosheng Yang, Miami University

Chair: Haosheng Yang, Miami University

1) Jinghua Wangling, Loyola University Maryland

Rereading Li Shangyin's "Left Untitled" Love Poems amid Factionalism in the Late Tang

The "Left Untitled" love poems by Li Shangyin are as enigmatic as the poet's position within the ninth-century Niu-Li factional strife, a prolonged conflict between two factions centered around Niu Sengru and Li Deyu that eroded the stability of the late Tang court. Moving beyond the perennial controversy over whether these works are merely intimate love lyrics or veiled political allegories, this paper argues that their hermeneutic openness constitutes their core significance. Through a close reading of selected poems in their socio-historical context, this study demonstrates how this political crisis catalyzed a shift in poetic practice, compelling poets to reflect on their poetic identity and craft. Compared with his contemporaries affected by factionalism, Li Shangyin's ambiguous political affiliations and unremarkable official career make him a representative figure of this transition, forging a private poetic expression that is thematically and stylistically distinct from public-facing poetry aligned with traditional Confucian ideals. This paper thus contends that the enduring critical debate over the poet's intentions in composing his hermetic, fragmented, and uncertain "Left Untitled" love poems is not a problem to be solved, but rather evidence of poetry's transformed value amid political division: its emergence as a self-consciously complex art form whose aesthetic and interpretive dimensions began to rival its traditional moral and social functions.

2) Chengjuan Sun, Kenyon College

In Praise of Child's Play: From the Creator's Whims to Aesthetic Autonomy and Sensibilities

Due to the influence of Confucian and Legalist schools of thought, child's play in pre-Qin and Han-dynasty texts often carried negative connotations. Its meanings have expanded and bifurcated since the Tang. On the one hand, it is associated with the whims of the Creator, vagaries of fate, and the futility of human endeavors. On the other hand, it evokes freedom, control, and single-minded absorption, thus affirming the autonomy of art and aesthetic experiences. In the Song dynasty, children-at-play not only became a popular new iconographic motif in paintings, but also emerged as a common topos in poetry, often celebrating literati's leisure diversions such as building miniature landscapes and aquascapes in private gardens, fishing, and dashing off calligraphic works with freewheeling charm. The dynamic development of the topos in poems by Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, Lu You, and Yang Wanli offers a glimpse into how scholar-officials turn to carefree childhood and child's play to resist the encroaching forces of public service and factional politics on selfhood and personal authenticity in an era of political activism when civil bureaucracy became the dominant echelon of the ruling elite. It also sheds light on increasing skepticism about finding purpose and meaning solely in grand sociopolitical issues and a growing

appreciation for creating a childlike idiosyncratic alternative rooted in the transformative aesthetic experiences of simple, private life.

3) Haosheng Yang, Miami University

An Impossible Paradise: Zheng Xiaoxu's Poetic Vision of the "Kingly Way" in Manchukuo

The Chinese politician and poet Zheng Xiaoxu (1860–1938) played a key role in the foundation of Manchukuo (1932–1945), a puppet state of the Empire of Japan in Northeast China. As the state's first Prime Minister, he enthusiastically promoted the ideology of the "Kingly Way"—a concept rooted in the Confucian vision of benevolent governance, as an alternative to Western-style imperialism. Ironically, the Japanese colonizers also adopted the "Kingly Way" as the foundational political ideology of Manchukuo, using it to legitimize their rule, despite the regime's totalitarian, colonial, and oppressive nature. This article examines Zheng's poems that reflect his Confucian ideals concerning China's modernization. It draws attention to the cultural dilemma and political failure inherent in Zheng's pursuit of a utopian "Kingly Way" within the colonial structure of Manchukuo. On the one hand, Zheng distrusted the moral and intellectual capabilities of ordinary Chinese people of his time, yet sought to rely on a benevolent, authoritarian ruler to lead China to prosperity by attracting foreign assistance and educating the populace. On the other hand, his attempt to implement Confucian ideals of universal love and righteous conduct in Manchukuo ultimately failed due to the fundamental contradiction between China's national interests and the totalitarian control of Japanese colonial domination.

Session Code: 8-G

Room: 2-409

Panel Code: p-024

Title: Japan-Taiwan Relations in the Changing Geopolitical Landscape of the Indo-Pacific

Abstract:

Japan and Taiwan have had very deep and complex ties since the 19th century. The modern state-to-state relations between the two sides began in 1949, the year that the Republic of China government relocated to Taiwan, and have been through a couple of ups and downs over the decades. Despite Japan terminating its official recognition of the ROC in 1972, the de facto connection between these two geographically close neighbors has never stopped. Today, Japan-Taiwan relations are stronger than ever not only because structurally the great power competition has revisited the Indo-Pacific region but also because of the shared values and economic interdependence between people in the two societies at the grassroots level. Given this, it is both timely and necessary to reflect on several critical issues in Japan-Taiwan relations, including how Taiwan and Japan reconnected with each other in the security realm after 1972, the institutional collaboration on civic technology projects, and the driving factors that move Japan-Taiwan relations forward.

Organizer: Yu-Hua Chen, Akita International University

Chair: Yu-Hua Chen, Akita International University

Discussant: Takeshi Uemura, Meiji University

1) Yu-Hua Chen, Akita International University

The Evolution of Japan-Taiwan Security Relations in the Post-Cold War Era

In 2008, Taiwan once threatened to use force over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute. At the time, Japan viewed Taiwan merely as an economic partner. Less than a generation later, leaders in both Tokyo and Taipei are now using the term "community of shared destiny" to describe the strong connection between the two sides in terms of history, geography, politics, and economy. However, this Japan-Taiwan security linkage widely perceived by political elites and ordinary people of the two countries does not match with the current research status on this issue in the academic world. There is a significant research gap in Taiwan-Japan relations particularly in the area of security after 1972. When and how did Taiwan's geopolitical importance become salient to Japanese political elites? When and why did Taiwanese begin to view Japan as more reliable than the US? In what ways have Taipei and Tokyo developed security cooperation under Beijing's careful watch? Drawing on publicly available historical documents and individual interviews, this research project aims to trace the slowly but steady evolution of Japan-Taiwan security relations from the 1990s to the 2020s within the broader context of US-China competition.

2) Boyu Chen, University of Niigata Prefecture

From Grassroots Innovation to Institutional Collaboration: Civic Tech Pathways in Japan and Taiwan

Against the backdrop of collaboration with civic tech communities, Japan and Taiwan established ministries of digital affairs in 2021 and 2022, respectively. The civic tech movements in Japan and Taiwan possess distinct characteristics, each strongly shaped by its political and social context. In Taiwan, civic tech emerged from grassroots activism and social movements, playing a transformative role in promoting open government and creating participatory policy platforms. In contrast, Japan's civic tech has focused on service provision, regional revitalization, and collaboration with local governments, following a more practical and institutionalized path. This study, through case studies including Taiwan's g0v and Japan's Code for Japan, as well as analyses of major civic tech projects, clarifies the typologies and functions of civic tech communities. While both Japan and Taiwan have made significant progress in digital innovation, the characteristics and development of their civic tech communities remain shaped by broader political contexts.

3) Sachiko Hirakawa, Waseda University

Japan's Methods of Taiwan Policy Upgrades: "People-to-People" Orientation and Indo-Pacific Regional Relevance

Japan strengthened its relationship with Taiwan under the leadership of Abe Shinzo, particularly following the launch of the strategic vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." Today, Japan officially describes Taiwan as "an extremely important partner and a valuable friend with whom it shares fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and the rule of law." While technically still respecting the "One China" principle, Japan has pragmatically enhanced the substance of its ties with Taiwan, moving toward a de facto governmental relationship. This study argues that the Abe administration advanced Japan's Taiwan policy through two distinctive methods, achieved in tacit cooperation with Taiwan. First is a cautious process within a "people-to-people" framework. This approach allowed both sides to safely upgrade representative institutions with the names of Japan and Taiwan. Furthermore, the two democracies facilitated robust interactions between parliamentarians. Second is the construction of a new strategic "region" of Indo-Pacific, which includes Taiwan both geographically and conceptually. It provided Japan with a legitimate rationale to support Taiwan's participation in regional and multilateral platforms such as TPP. Concurrently, Japan has emphasized region-wide human security and defense cooperation to safeguard shared values, thereby enabling Taiwan's involvement.

Session Code: 8-H

Room: 2-415

Panel Code: p-095

Title: Plural Temporalities: Notions of Time in Thought and Practice from the Edo to the Early Meiji Period

Abstract:

Bookshelves are filled with studies of clocks, calendars, and the genealogy of historical consciousness in Japan. However, the field has been dominated by historical approaches that often look to the past merely to explain developments in modern times. As a result, few studies have illuminated the conceptual history of time in early modern Japan itself. This panel explores plural conceptions and practices of time from the beginning of the Tokugawa period to the early Meiji period. By discussing primary sources previously overlooked due to the mainstream orientation of earlier research, it aims to open new methodological perspectives in the study of time. The first paper, by Michael Burtscher, analyzes Nishi Amane's (1829–1897) Japanese translation of Immanuel Kant's concept of "time," demonstrating how Nishi's lexical choices shaped Meiji intellectual discourse. The second paper, by Sheldon Liu, investigates the Confucian scholar Koga Tōan's (1788–1847) arguments concerning era names and imperial chronology, revealing links between time and political thought in the late Tokugawa period. Finally, Yuko Nakagawa explores scholarship on the musical theory of *gagaku* and its reception of Chinese astronomical concepts, identifying an unexplored area in time studies.

Organizer: André Linnepe, Teikyo University

Chair: André Linnepe, Teikyo University

Discussant: André Linnepe, Teikyo University

1) Michael Burtscher, Meiji University

Nishi Amane's Conception of Time as A Priori

Nishi Amane is well known for his many translations of philosophical concepts that became fixtures in the intellectual lexicon of modern Japan. His "translation word" for Kant's concept of "Time" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is not among

them. It may have gone entirely unnoticed into the twentieth century, since the manuscript where it is spelled out was not published before 1933. It also does not seem to have ever been given serious attention since. But it is also this text, his *Sei-sei hatsuun* of 1874, that is habitually cited as a main source for the thinking behind his lexical moves. Moreover, this is presumably the lecture on the history of Western “Philosophy” Nishi gave to the young Meiji Emperor. Nishi’s choice of translation for Kant’s “Time” is of interest not for having entered common usage, but for the light it throws on the logic behind his other lexical choices that have profoundly influenced subsequent Japanese thought: the meanings he inscribed into his terms for “subjective” and “objective,” “idea” and “reason,” “proposition” and “definition” for example. It also helps explain the close connection he saw between the introduction of Western “Philosophy” and the building of the Japanese “Empire,” which he served as Yamagata Aritomo’s intellectual “brain” and a high official in the Ministry of the Army, where he participated in the drafting of the Imperial Rescript for Soldiers and Sailors at the pivotal political juncture of 1882.

2) Sheldon Liu, Tokyo University

The Political Dominion over Time in the Late Tokugawa Period: Koga Tōan’s Discourse in the Compilation of Established Era Names

In premodern East Asia, era names served as symbols employed by rulers to assert their dominion over time. Today, Japan remains the only nation still using them. Therefore, how one marks time – whether by era name, sexagenary cycle, or Western calendar – reveals a political stance. In the late Edo period, the Confucian scholar Koga Tōan (1788–1847) edited the “Compilation of Established Era Names” (*Kengen ihen*, 1811). By drawing extensively upon historical texts, essays and other sources, he explored a series of questions concerning era names. Among other matters, Tōan discussed whether to adopt the principle of “one era name per reign” (*issei ichi gen*), meaning a ruler uses only one era name throughout their lifetime, or whether to avoid reusing previously established era names. Furthermore, he proposed that Japan should emulate the Western calendar by establishing a chronology starting from the founding of the nation by Emperor Jinmu, arguing that this would encourage rulers to place greater emphasis on the continuity of the imperial reign. As is well known, Japan’s adoption of a calendar structured according to the enthronement of Emperor Jinmu (*kōki*, or the “Imperial Year”) after the Meiji Restoration was intended to promote national unity. This paper explores the distinctive features of Tōan’s discourse on the political significance of era names, emphasizing similarities and differences between his arguments and the governance practices implemented in modern Japan.

3) Yuko Nakagawa, Tokyo University of Arts

Time and Cosmology in Early Modern Japanese Scholarship on Music

Confucian scholars and other intellectuals of the Edo period took a keen interest in music. They investigated ancient Chinese tonal systems while also studying gagaku, the oldest of Japan’s performing arts. This paper explores conceptions of time that emerged in this Edo period discourse. In China, determining musical pitch was an enterprise closely connected to the calendar, as well as to weights and measures. The Japanese tradition of gagaku embodies a rich body of musical theory and philosophy deeply influenced by ancient Chinese thought. During the Heian period, when gagaku was systematized, musical theories such as the modes (*chōshi*) came to be associated with the seasons under the influence of Yin-Yang and Five Elements (*gogyō*) philosophy. The scope of gagaku scholarship in the Edo period thus extended across both long-established Japanese musical ideas and the astronomical and musical theories newly introduced from China. Focusing on discourses of calendrical time—such as the cycles of seasons, the calendar, and the months—this paper explores how Chinese astronomical and musical ideas were received, adapted, or at times resisted in Tokugawa-period musical theory. By addressing a topic that has received little attention in previous research, it contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between cultural practices and conceptions of time in early modern Japan.

Session Code: 8-I

Room: 2-406

Panel Code: p-062

Title: Cultural Practices and Structural Transformations in Myanmar Society: A Sociological and Anthropological Exploration

Abstract:

This panel investigates cultural practices and structural transformations in contemporary Myanmar through the interdisciplinary framework of social studies. Drawing on sociological and anthropological insights, it brings together four studies that trace how religion, language, symbolism, and gender intersect with processes of social change. The first paper explores the transnational spread of Bo Bo Gyi worship between Myanmar and Thailand, revealing how folk beliefs adapt to digital platforms and cross-border economies. The second examines Yangon's Chinatown to analyze how multilingual signs and linguistic practices shape ethnic identities and foster social integration in a multicultural context. The third focuses on political cartoons of Aung San Suu Kyi as forms of symbolic resistance and collective sentiment during Myanmar's democratization, uncovering the visual rhetoric of dissent. The fourth addresses gender and security in the post-coup period, showing how women's grassroots resistance and mutual aid networks reconstruct social security under state collapse. Collectively, these papers offer a multidimensional understanding of cultural expression, social transformation, and everyday resilience. By focusing on the case of contemporary Myanmar, the panel contributes to broader discussions in social studies on how belief, identity, and agency operate within shifting political, economic, and technological environments in transitional global south societies.

Organizer: Hao Xueni, National University of Singapore

Chair: Yin Yiguo, Tsinghua University

Discussant: Zhang Tian, Sun Yat-sen University

1) Zhang Yi, National University of Singapore

Belief and Transformation: The Journey of Bo Bo Gyi Spirit from Myanmar to Thailand

Thailand shares many cultural and spiritual elements with Myanmar (Burma) because of their geographical proximity and historical ties. Among these shared traditions are rich folk beliefs, one of the most prominent being Bo Bo Gyi. While veneration of Bo Bo Gyi has existed in Myanmar since at least the mid-twentieth century, it gained recent popularity in Thailand around 2010s, where it was reinterpreted as Thep Than Chai. This Thai adaptation differs significantly from the Burmese tradition, where Bo Bo Gyi is primarily revered as a guardian spirit of temples and pagodas. In Thailand, believers regard him as "the deity who grants wishes immediately," and this new form of worship has been accompanied by a booming digital economy of amulets and related items sold on Facebook, Lazada, Shopee, and other online platforms. Compared with the Buddhism studies of Myanmar, indigenous folk beliefs have received less scholarly attention. Bo Bo Gyi worship therefore offers a unique lens for understanding not only Myanmar's society but also the cultures of its neighboring countries. Moreover, the adaptation of this belief in a new environment illuminates how folk religion evolves amid emerging technologies and digital platforms. This is not a simple secularization process but a far more complex interaction of social, economic, and religious forces.

2) Hao Xueni, National University of Singapore

Language and Boundaries: Ethnic Identity and Social Integration in the Linguistic Landscape of Yangon's Chinatown, Myanmar

Linguistic landscape is a key manifestation of language practice and a carrier of ethnic identity. It reflects the logic of ethnic boundaries and interactions in multicultural contexts. This study examines Yangon's Chinatown, a multiethnic community, integrating sociolinguistic and ethnic sociology perspectives. Using an analytical framework linking linguistic landscape, ethnic boundaries, and social integration, it employs quantitative statistics, surveys, and in-depth interviews to explore the symbolic features, spatial patterns, and mechanisms of ethnic interaction. The research investigates how linguistic symbols shape or blur ethnic boundaries, offering insights into linguistic representation, identity construction, and social cohesion in multilingual immigrant communities. Specifically, the study focuses on three aspects: (1) the physical dimension, quantifying the proportion, combination, and spatial distribution of multilingual signboards; (2) how language order and usage reflect ethnic identity and influence boundary formation or blurring; and (3) the integrative role of Chinatown's linguistic landscape in promoting interaction and shared space. Overall, the study clarifies the connections among linguistic landscape, ethnic boundaries, and social integration, providing empirical evidence and theoretical

implications for preserving overseas Chinese culture, managing multilingual communities, and fostering cross-ethnic cohesion.

3) Yin Yiguo, Tsinghua University

Symbols and Resistance: A Sociological Interpretation of Folk Digital Symbols Under Myanmar's Democratization

With the development of technology and the progress of the times, images have come to play an increasingly important role in communication. Political cartoons, which record and comment on current events, have both objective and subjective qualities. They reflect the political and psychological landscape of society. As one of the most important political figures in contemporary Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi's political rise and fall mirror the country's struggle for peace and democratic reform, yet she has continued to hold the image of a "democratic leader" in Myanmar. Why has Aung San Suu Kyi's personal charisma remained so enduring? What kind of collective psychology does this reveal among the Myanmar people? To explore these questions, this paper examines political cartoons featuring Aung San Suu Kyi published between 2012 and 2022, collected from the online archive of the *Irrawaddy* magazine. Drawing on Weber's theory of charismatic authority and the method of visual political rhetoric, the study analyzes the construction and evolution of Aung San Suu Kyi's image in Myanmar's public discourse during this period, exploring its symbolic meanings and the underlying social psychology. The study aims to reveal how the Myanmar people use visual culture to express their aspirations for democratization, also to examine how political cartoons, as a means of communication, convey dissent, build public consensus, and avoid political censorship under certain environment.

4) Huan Xuanyi, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Gender and Security: Women's Resistance and the Construction of Social Security in Myanmar's Political Turmoil

Since the 2021 military coup, Myanmar's state-centered security system has gradually collapsed, and the government has failed to address the multiple crises in society. Women have become the main victims of violent rule, while the governance crisis has exacerbated gendered security challenges. In response, Myanmar's women have engaged in grassroots resistance and mutual aid, exploring alternative pathways to social security. Drawing on feminist security studies and Bourdieu's theory of "field-capital-habitus," this paper examines how women navigate a crisis-driven environment by creating new security practices through bodily protest, social networks, and everyday survival strategies, thereby reconfiguring social security. The study shows that women reconstruct public space through symbolic bodily protests, enhance relational security through mutual aid networks, and ensure daily survival through caregiving labor. In the absence of effective state security, these actions contribute to alternative social security mechanisms. By focusing on Myanmar, this research broadens the application of feminist security theory and offers insights into gendered approaches to social rebuilding amid political crisis. It underscores the importance of understanding gendered strategies for security and survival in contexts of state failure, contributing to broader discussions of social reconstruction and gender inequality.

Session Code: 8-J

Room: 2-414

Panel Code: p-096

Title: Homelessness (Re)shaped in Contemporary Japan

Abstract:

The convergence of recent crises, including sustained fiscal pressure and the COVID-19 pandemic, has profoundly altered the dynamics of homelessness in many cities. In Japan, efforts to address homelessness—initiated after the bursting of the economic bubble in the 1990s—coincided with the implementation of neoliberal reforms aimed at overcoming economic stagnation. Subsequent cuts in welfare spending and intensified efforts to get people away from streets during the COVID-19 pandemic have fundamentally reshaped the circumstances surrounding homelessness. This panel analyses the major factors (re)shaping homelessness in contemporary Japanese cities through four studies: It first discusses the policy framing of homelessness, examining how official definitions and street counts mediate its recognition. Second, it explores the production of homelessness by investigating how the boundary between formal and informal employment is being redefined, coupled with reforms in poverty management. Third, the pathway to recovery is analyzed through the crucial role of belonging in residential support within the context of day laborer districts, the *yoseba*. Finally, it illuminates the restructuring of Japan's *yoseba* through market forces in response to recent reforms of policies that address homelessness.

Considered holistically, we advocate for increased scrutiny to the manner and mechanisms organizing efforts to delegitimize attention to homelessness within Japan's urban landscape.

Organizer: Johannes Kiener, Saitama University

Chair: Paul Christensen, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

Discussant: Tom Gill, Meiji Gakuin University

1) Paul Christensen, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

What's in a Number? Counting Japan's Unhoused to Ensure their Erasure

Each year, typically in late January, a nationwide count of Japan's unhoused population is undertaken. Municipal employees disperse throughout the country to locations where, legally, the unhoused will be found to tally the number of individuals who, in their assessment, appear homeless. Attempts are made to determine approximate age and sex. Although this is an acknowledged limitation, as the count for "undetermined sex" is often greater than that for women. Collected numbers are tabulated and a report, disseminated in early spring proclaims Japan's total number of unhoused individuals. Consideration of the official number reveals two noteworthy trends: Japan's total number of unhoused has been in steady annual decline and overwhelmingly those who are unhoused are men. Yet, I contend, the official number is far more significant for what it obscures, assumes, and erases from consideration around issues of homelessness throughout Japan. This paper considers the methodology organizing how the number is tabulated, the restrictive legal definition of homelessness that it assumes and operates within, and the consequences for those who are unhoused when official assertions claim that the issue is of limited and fading relevance. How, I ask, is this official count far more about dictating the manner in which broader issues related to poverty and vulnerability are addressed in order to perpetuate dysfunctional approaches instead of meaningful and emancipatory alternatives.

2) Keiko Yamaguchi, Tokyo Gakugei University

Informalization of Labor in Tokyo

Tokyo's labor market has always required an enormous labor force. During the period of rapid economic growth that began in the 1950s, the around formal employment centering Japanese-style employment system emerged as mainstream. However, like in many other cities of the Global North, recently, in Tokyo, a shift to informal employment occurred to increase labor flexibility. The boundary between this formal and informal employment is continuously under construction as laws and institutions redefine it. However, even when regulations apparently formalize employment, informal aspects remain in recruitment practices and the labor processes. How does such a redefined boundary affect workers? This presentation focuses on the labor processes of the poor in Tokyo, analyzing the impact of multiple legal and institutional reforms and critically examining poverty management. The results highlight the collusion between the (strongly neoliberal-oriented) state, urban policies, and capitalism. Despite the exploitation of resources such as youth, physical strength, sexuality, qualifications, and skills, the livelihood of workers is not sufficiently secured. While the trend toward favoring qualifications and skills has increased, the workers themselves remain in unstable employment and lives, sometimes leading to homelessness. This exploitation of on-the-moment focused resources is conducive to the capitalism supported by Tokyo's growth strategies.

3) Magokoro Yoshihira, The University of Tokyo

Sense of Belonging in Homeless Support: The Role of Single Room Occupancies in Sanya

This presentation examines residential support for homeless people, focusing on the crucial role of belonging in recovery and reintegration. In Tokyo, homeless people often rely on Free and Low-cost Accommodations or Daily Life Support Residential Facilities. However, these facilities are recognized as part of a homeless industry and many are criticized as poverty businesses due to their restrictive support methods that increase dissatisfaction and undermine people's dignity, as well as adverse living conditions caused by their poor management. Against this backdrop, this presentation highlights the function of Single-Room Occupancies (SROs) in Tokyo's day laborer district Sanya. This is achieved through a long-term action research project that involves managing SROs, employment for people that had experienced homelessness, a community cafe, and voluntary activities such as neighborhood cleaning; all focused on building a sense of belonging. This neighborhood-centered approach aims to restore individual dignity, foster self-reliance, and help residents avoid the compulsory, controlling environments that can drive them back to the streets. The findings demonstrate that the sense of belonging, and community contribution realized through this project is key to both physical and mental recovery and successful transition to stable housing and community integration.

4) Johannes Kiener, Saitama University

The Yoseba Restructured: Welfare Policies and Market Forces in Kamagasaki

Support for homeless people often concentrates in inner cities, forming “service hubs” that facilitate welfare provision. In postwar Japan this took the form of the *yoseba*, which were reinforced by policies to serve the needs of day laborers, becoming an agglomeration of public and private welfare institutions and Single-Room Occupancies (SROs). This presentation analyses the consequences that the gradual reorganization of homeless support had on Japan’s largest *yoseba*, Kamagasaki. It shows how the active use of livelihood protection and the introduction of new support systems for homeless and impoverished people, channeled many people away from the neighborhood. Meanwhile, Kamagasaki experienced the dismantling of several of its welfare institutions, while others were preserved or newly created under the Osaka City-initiated Nishinari Special Ward Initiative. Although welfare organizations continue to cater to homeless and impoverished people, these changes spurred a restructuring of Kamagasaki. SROs shifted to serving new clientele or were replaced by modern hotels, while others that were converted to apartments for livelihood protection recipients, face competition from outside the *yoseba*. In addition, welfare organizations as well expanded their reach to new groups, such as the immigrant community. These changes reveal that reforms of welfare policies weakened the service hub institutions of Japan’s *yoseba* which invited their restructuring along market forces.

Session Code: 8-K

Room: 2-401

Individual Session: Religion and Spirituality in the Making of Modern Japan

Chair: Yen-Yi Chan, Sophia University

1) (i-060) Jaime Gonzáles-Bolado, Kyushu University

Constructing the Ideal Japanese: Public and Private Voices in Jesuit Writings on Early Modern Japan (16th–17th Centuries)

This paper examines how members of the Society of Jesus constructed and circulated an idealized image of the Japanese during the late sixteenth century. Under the guidance of Alessandro Valignano, Jesuit writers consistently portrayed Japan as a land of rational, disciplined, and morally upright people—an image that made the Japanese appear uniquely suited for conversion to Christianity. This portrayal, rooted in a comparative framework that positioned Japan above other Asian nations and sometimes even Europe, played a key role in shaping early European perceptions of Japan. Yet, private letters and internal communications among missionaries reveal a more critical and ambivalent assessment, exposing tensions between the Jesuits’ public narratives and their private opinions. By juxtaposing printed and manuscript sources—public accounts and confidential correspondence—this study reveals the rhetorical strategies behind Jesuit ethnographic discourse and the ideological purposes it served. In doing so, it reassesses the Jesuits’ contribution to the early modern European construction of “Japan” as both a spiritual frontier and a mirror of Christian civility.

2) (i-197) John Breen, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Shinto, Spirituality and the Problem of Suzuki Daisetsu

Either side of Japan’s defeat in the Pacific War, Suzuki Daisetsu wrote a trilogy of books on *reisei* or “spirituality.” They are *Nihonteki reisei* (1944), *Reiseiteki Nihon no kensetsu* (1946), and *Nihon no reiseika* (1947). In these books, Suzuki makes the case that Pure Land Buddhism alone can effect the spiritual rebirth of postwar Japan. But in so doing, he launches what is arguably the most unforgiving, relentless assault on Shinto ever written by a Japanese. In this paper, I explore the fraught relationship between Suzuki Daisetsu (1870-1966) and Shinto. First, I identify the coordinates of the Shinto problem as Suzuki articulated it in his *reisei* trilogy of the 1940s. I then step back to consider his prewar writings, where I uncover a genealogy of anti-Shinto writing. It becomes evident that Suzuki’s problem with Shinto did not begin of a sudden at war’s end, but can in fact be traced back to the late Meiji period. Finally, I cast forward beyond the 1940s to suggest that Suzuki’s anti-Shinto writing set off a reverberation that coursed through the Shinto world well beyond the Occupation. Suzuki, I argue, proved an enduring problem for post-war Shinto.

- 3) (i-180) Mark Mullins, University of Auckland

Shinto and Politics in the Post-Abe World

Prime Minister Abe Shinzō was a leading figure promoting Shinto nationalism and a political agenda to restore patriotic education, support Yasukuni Shrine, and revise the Constitution. Following his assassination on 8 July 2022, the influence of the Unification Church on Abe and many other LDP politicians was exposed. This paper identifies the tensions and fundamental contradictions in the core values of Shinto nationalism and those promoted by the UC. It also reviews some of the representative political and religious responses to the assassination and the LDP's opportunistic coalitions. Abe's legacy was further tarnished when PM Kishida dissolved the Abe faction in January 2024 due to their violation of fundraising laws. In spite of this recent history, the nationalists have made a comeback. In the July 2025 Upper House Elections, Sanseito secured 15 seats, and Takaichi Sanae, a core member of the discredited Abe faction, was elected as the next president of the LDP on October 4. She remains a defender of Abe's restorationist agenda and is a staunch supporter of Yasukuni Shrine. Sanseito is also known for its strong support of Yasukuni and has already proposed that Shinto shrines be renationalized. Given these political actors, we should expect "official visits" to Yasukuni and discussions about constitutional revision to regularly appear in political discourse and debate.

- 4) (i-356) Julio Nascimento, University of Pennsylvania

Buddhist Moral Discourse in Buddhist Magazines: The Case of the "Lady's Magazine" (1888–1919)

The Meiji Period was marked by a rapid expansion of the editorial market, as several groups utilized journals and magazines to disseminate their ideas and promote various forms of knowledge. The Buddhist community was also engaging in modernizing its language and practice to reach broader audiences, and The Lady's Assembly, an organization composed of members and people affiliated with the Buddhist sect Higashi Honganji, decided to publish the monthly magazine *Lady's Magazine* (*Fujin kyōkai zasshi*). This paper will analyze how Buddhist thinkers produced a discourse that connected Buddhist principles to the government's goal of creating "Good Wives, Wise Mothers." The magazine aimed at cultivating moral values that could foster women's independence within a Buddhist framework while making them efficient supporters of the state. This magazine was a pioneering force among Buddhist female magazines of its time, and it was also a driving force against rival publications like the *Jogaku zasshi*, an important exponent of notions of womanhood grounded in Christian principles. This paper argues that, through its publication, Buddhists were actively shaping concepts such as hygiene and home education as instruments to foster female participation in a modern nation. This discussion contributed to the understanding of public and private spheres and constituted a significant expression of Buddhist epistemological innovation within the framework of a modern imperialist state.

Session Code: 8-L

Room: 2-407

Individual Session 7: Literary Tradition, Authorship, and Reception

Chair: Irina Holca, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

- 1) (i-116) Beth M. Carter, Case Western Reserve University

Early-Stage Results of Using Digital Humanities Projects to Enhance Student Comprehension of "utamakura," Allusion, and Intertextuality in Premodern Japanese Poetry

To complement the *Tale of Genji* poetry database held at Boston University, I created digital content specific to the study of *utamakura* (famous place names) and their related *engo* (allusions) in the tale's poems. Although *utamakura* are useful conventions to convey emotion within the strict confines of *waka* poetry's 31-syllable format, most modern readers do not register the emotive associations intertwined with these (once) famous places. In my (work-in-progress) database, each *utamakura* and *engo* is uniquely linked by URL to a describing video or annotated picture, becoming a searchable dictionary of premodern allusive terms. I am using the prototype database in two fall 2025 courses, in which students interact with the database to write papers on poetic imagery. This paper shares the results of using this digital humanities tool in my classroom, which yielded more coherent papers on Japanese poetry (including Japanese homonyms), and a dramatic increase in student engagement with poetry during in-class discussion.

2) (i-152) Kateryna Shabelnyk, Nagoya University

Rethinking “Junbungaku” in the Age of AI

When Rie Qudan’s *Sympathy Tower Tokyo* won the 2024 Akutagawa Prize, her remark that “approximately 5%” of the novel was written with ChatGPT triggered intense debate about the boundaries of authorship in contemporary Japanese literature. This paper examines how Qudan’s public framing of that collaboration mobilizes the discourse of *junbungaku* (“pure literature”) to stabilize the idea of the human author at a moment of technological uncertainty. Her attempts to regain control over her authorial persona rely on a narrowly defined conception of *junbungaku* as a self-evident, unchangeable category that is both nationalistic and human-centered. However, this perception contradicts her other remarks on the contribution of ChatGPT to her own writing process as both an active participant and a muse. Combining critical discourse analysis with authorship theory, I show how Qudan minimizes the impact of her collaboration with AI to fit *Sympathy Tower* within the definition of *junbungaku* that she constructs. While doing so, she excludes not only ChatGPT but also her non-Japanese audience. In this way, when protecting her image as the sole author of the text, she also polices who can or cannot be her reader. By examining how the rhetoric of exclusion in her remarks overlaps with the rhetoric of control, I highlight the importance of reevaluating the definition of authorship in the age of AI.

3) (i-153) Justyna Weronika Kasza, Seinan Gakuin University

“No Other Writer Suits the Japanese Taste”: Reading François Mauriac in Postwar Japan

The paper traces the phenomenon and popularity of French writer, François Mauriac in postwar Japan. Inspired by the comment made by Mishima Yukio in *Sengo nikki*, “No other writer suits the Japanese taste,” I examine how the Japanese academics and translators (Katō Shūichi, Nakamura Shin’ichirō, Fukunaga Takehiko) and some leading writers (Hori Tatsuo, Endō Shūsaku, Mishima Yukio, Takahashi Takako) engage with the reading and reinterpretation of Mauriac, and, not infrequently, they make the motifs known from his novels as salient themes of their fiction. The objective is to recreate the intellectual, literary, as well as spiritual scene of postwar Japan by closely examining how Mauriac’s deeply religious literature was widely translated and, to a certain degree, shaped the literary tastes of the Japanese readers. Referring to original sources that attest to Mauriac’s impact on the Japanese literary scene from the late 1930s throughout the 1950s and 1960s, I discuss not only some distinctively Japanese features in “Mauriac’s reception” but also visibly common aspects in appropriating the works of Mauriac, despite different aesthetic backgrounds or ideological affiliations of the Japanese authors. Methodologically, the paper implements selected ideas from Wolfgang Iser’s “reader’s reception theory” and Roman Ingarden’s “phenomenology of reading” that reveal the ontological dimension of Japan’s literary, intellectual and spiritual encounters with François Mauriac.

4) (i-222) Victor Jonathan Fink, University of Heidelberg

A Poets’ Controversy: Banzuke Scandal of 1813 and its Reception

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, a movement for the renewal of Classical Chinese poetry in Japan developed from the school of Yamamoto Hokuzan and the members of the poets’ society Kōko Shisha. Their aim was to do away with the epigonism they perceived as the dominant style of their time. Their model was an aesthetics of authenticity. Ōkubo Shibutsu was one of the foremost poets of this movement who found growing commercial success with his works during the first years of the nineteenth century. The wider reception of Classical Chinese poetry across boundaries of social class and its concurrent commercialization led to questions about the status of the poet in Tokugawa society. In 1813, latent tensions exploded into controversy when Ōta Kinjō condemned Shibutsu and his circle for their pridefulness and greed. The occasion was trivial, a one-page print showing poets of the new school dominating the literary *dohyō* in the rank of Sumō champions (*banzuke*) gave the pretext to an attack that led to Shibutsu being censored and temporarily leaving Edo. This talk will analyze the satirical reception of this event in a print titled *Myōmyō kidan* and subsequent responses. These texts reveal the conflicting values underlying the controversy over the new poetry and the rhetorical strategies of its enemies and its defenders. The presentation builds on the results of my dissertation on the œuvre of Ōkubo Shibutsu, which I submitted and successfully defended in October 2025.

Session Code: 8-M

Room: 2-410

Panel Code: p-087

Title: Ghosts in the Machine: Negotiating Memory, Technology, and Identity in Japanese and South Korean Popular Culture

Abstract:

Popular culture is a key arena where nations negotiate their past and future. This panel explores how Japanese and South Korean cinema, animation, and popular music reimagine identity, memory, and otherness. Drawing on cultural studies and posthuman theory, our papers examine these media as sites where collective anxieties and national identities are contested in transnational contexts. Hyangjin Lee analyzes posthuman horror and science fiction films such as *Ring* and *After Yang*, showing how archival footage, photographs, and digital imagery blur the boundaries between memory and simulation, human and artificial. Doobo Shim traces K-pop's collective performance culture to Cold War-era media policies, using Foucault's concept of the "disciplinary society" to reveal how audiovisual technologies synchronized bodies for nation-building and diplomacy. Kwang Woo Noh examines contemporary Korean action and crime films—including *The Thieves*, *The Taste of Money*, and *The Roundup*—to show how they construct "Asian others" in a globalized regional cinema. Inkyu Kang investigates Japan's postwar mecha anime, from *Astro Boy* to *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, revealing how these works express Japan's ambivalence toward technology shaped by wartime trauma and industrial modernity. Taken together, these studies illuminate how Japanese and Korean media negotiate the tensions between past and future, humans and machines, and self and other.

Organizer: Inkyu Kang, Pennsylvania State University, Behrend College

Chair: Hyangjin Lee, Rikkyo University

- 1) Hyangjin Lee, Rikkyo University

Cinematic Memory and Identity in Posthuman Horror and Science Fiction Drama

As Walter Benjamin observed, film emerged as a new art form in the age of technological reproduction, where mechanically replicated images blur the boundary between reality and simulation. Stripped of aura and originality, these images challenge conventional distinctions between the authentic and the artificial. In this context, Freud's concept of "screen memory"—subjectively distorted childhood recollections—offers valuable insight into how memory and identity are reimagined through cinematic representation. Posthuman horror and science fiction dramas frequently depict AI beings endowed with memory and emotion, or ghosts materializing through screens, thereby unsettling the boundaries between animate and inanimate, self and other. Through the use of embedded images—old photographs, archival footage, digital interfaces—these narratives intensify emotional ambiguity and provoke existential unease. They ask: Can artificial beings elicit authentic emotional responses? What does it mean when a "soul" appears on a screen? This study examines how technologically generated Others affect human subjectivity and emotion in works such as Kogonada's *After Yang* (2021), Kurosawa Kiyoshi's psychological horror films such as *Cure* (1997) and *Pulse* (2001), and the Japanese horror classic, Nakata Hideo's *Ring* (1998). Drawing on posthumanism, memory theory, and psychoanalysis, this research explores how cinema reframes our understanding of memory, identity, and fear in the digital age.

- 2) Doobo Shim, Sungshin Women's University

K-Pop before K-Pop

This study challenges the view that K-pop's choreographic precision is a recent phenomenon, arguing instead that its roots lie in South Korea's Cold War era. Through an analysis of 1960s–70s cultural policies, televised performances, and state disciplinary practices, the paper demonstrates that the synchronized performing body central to K-pop was cultivated for nation-building. The intersection of state-led modernization, new audiovisual technology, and Cold War ideology fostered collective performances that prioritized harmony, uniformity, and visual impact through meticulous bodily training. Drawing on existing scholarship and Michel Foucault's concept of the "disciplinary society," the research posits that the state disciplined and arranged performing bodies to project an image of national unity and modernity. This was evident in gendered performances during the Vietnam era, which served as cultural diplomacy. The study concludes that contemporary K-pop aesthetics are not merely a product of recent globalization or technology but are a direct legacy of the corporeal and disciplinary grammar established during this formative period. The performing body on screen became a microcosm of broader societal mechanisms, embedding aesthetic preferences that persist today and prefiguring the spectacular synchronization that defines modern K-pop.

3) Kwang Woo Noh, Korea University

Representation of Asia in Contemporary Korean Cinema

Following the industrialization of the 1970s and democratization of the 1980s, the leading trend in Korea in the 1990s and 2000s was globalization. Whereas international businesses entered the Korean market, Koreans also expanded their sphere of activity beyond the domestic area: Korean companies launched local branches in many countries. As Korean migration increased, Korean residences were established in many countries, especially in Asian countries other than Japan and China. With the increase in migration, tourism to these countries also increased. With international investment, migration, and tourism, the boundary of Koreans has expanded beyond the Korean peninsula to other Asian regions and countries such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand. This is reflected in contemporary Korean popular films and TV shows. Korean films and TV shows used Asian countries for location shootings and set them as the background of their stories. In this paper, I examine how some Korean popular films, especially recent action-adventure and crime films, represent Asian countries. Exemplar texts are *The Thieves* (2012), *The Taste of Money* (2012), *The Roundup* series, and *Deliver Us from Evil* (2020). In these Korean films and TV shows, Asian characters appear in Korean domestic settings, or Koreans are involved in crimes or mysteries that happen in Asian countries. Through this examination, the mode of Koreans' imagination of other cultures will be revealed.

4) Inkyu Kang, Pennsylvania State University, Behrend College

The Iron Heart and the Japanese Spirit: Cultural Memory, Control, and the Human-Technological Imagination

Japan's relationship with technology is defined by deep ambivalence. Despite its leadership in electronics and robotics, the nation has often hesitated to embrace transformative technologies such as digitalization, electric vehicles, and artificial intelligence. These contradictions are deeply rooted in Japan's modern historical experience. Since the Meiji Restoration, Japan's modernization has followed the concept of *Wakon yōsai* (Japanese spirit, Western technology). Technology was adopted to counter Western dominance while preserving the Japanese spirit, making innovation both a symbol of progress and a source of anxiety. This tension is vividly reflected in postwar popular culture, particularly in mecha anime. *Astro Boy*, featuring the nuclear-powered robot Atom, embodies both futuristic optimism and unease. The mecha genre evolved from remotely controlled machines to human-integrated systems, where tighter control brought greater psychological and emotional strain, revealing the struggle between control and agency. Later works such as *Neon Genesis Evangelion* further explore identity and human-machine fusion. By analyzing mecha anime, this study illustrates how history, memory, and imagination shape Japan's technological culture, uncovering cultural narratives and collective memories that both reflect and influence its unique relationship with technology.



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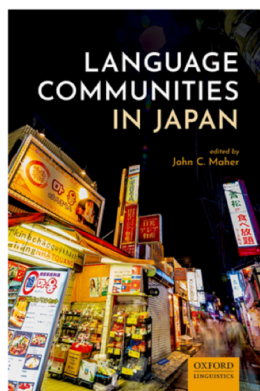
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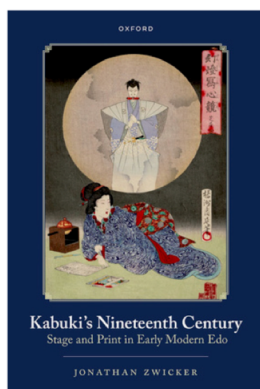


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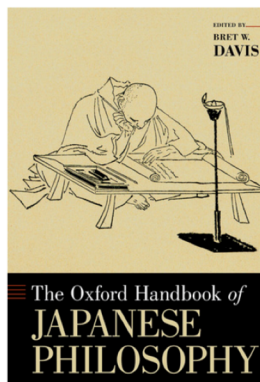


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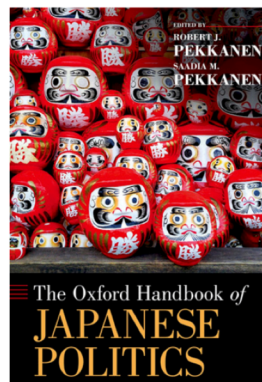


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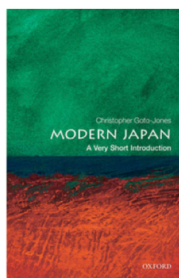
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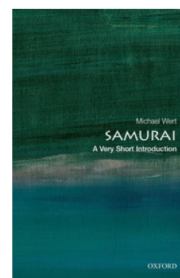
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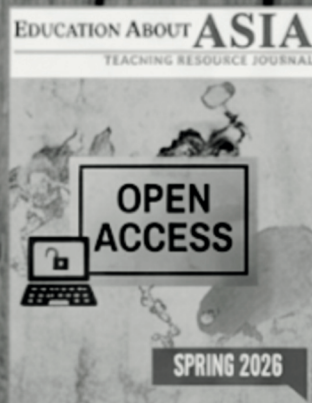


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- 祈りの部屋
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- 託児室
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- 自動販売機
Vending Machine(Universal Design)
- コピー機
Copier(Universal Design)

- AED(自動体外式除細動器)
Automated External Defibrillator
- みんなのトイレ
Restroom for Everyone
- オムツ替え対応トイレ
Restroom with diaper changing table
- オストメイト対応トイレ
Ostomate Restroom
- みんなのトイレ
Restroom for Everyone

- 優先駐車場
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