



February 2020

**Committee on Regional Studies—East Asia
Newsletter**

Letter from the Chair

Dear Alumni of the RSEA Program,

Happy New Year of the Rat! We hope that everyone has had a wonderful start to the new year.

RSEA is off to an active Spring term with the annual **Harvard East Asia Society (HEAS) Conference** which was organized by a committee of first-year students. Meanwhile the second-year students are hard at work on their theses. As those students prepare to graduate, the RSEA Standing Committee, including Professors Thomas P. Kelly (EALC), Ya-Wen Lei (Sociology), Melissa McCormick (EALC), Si Nae Park (EALC), and Alex Zahlten (RSEA DGS and EALC), is working on selecting next year's incoming class of RSEA students.

From March 19-22nd, 2020, Boston will be the host of the annual national meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS). We would love to hear from any RSEA alumni who plan to attend. RSEA students enjoy meeting our diverse group of RSEA alumni. Please let us know if you plan to be in the Cambridge area and would like us to set up a meeting with our students.

The new year has brought a new set of challenges related to the rapid spread of the coronavirus. Harvard University has been closely monitoring the evolving outbreak and RSEA has been considering how this situation may impact students planning to do research in affected areas. We know that many RSEA affiliates (or their family and friends) are in impacted areas and we hope that everyone will remain out of harm's way during these trying times.

Sincerely,

James Robson

RSEA Committee Chair

James C. Kralik and Yunli Lou Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations

RSEA Students News

A committee of RSEA students convened the 23rd Annual **Harvard East Asia Society (HEAS) Conference**. The two-day conference held February 8-9 featured presentations of graduate student research on the theme [Life on the Edge: Borders and Boundaries in East Asia](https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/heasconference), with keynotes by Harvard Professors Mark Elliott and Karen Thornber.

See the HEAS website for more details:

<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/heasconference>

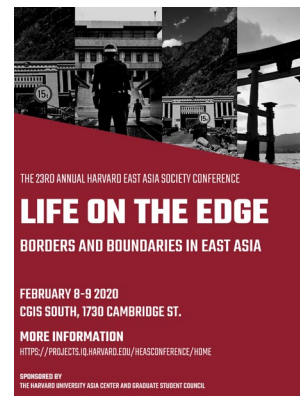
Second-year RSEA student **James Evans** is helping to launch a new blog on the Taiwanese elections for Harvard's Fairbank Center, where he works as Publications Coordinator. The [Fairbank Center's Taiwan Votes blog](#) will feature additional contributions by James Evans and RSEA alum **Kevin Luo** (AM '15).

RSEA G2 **Junchao Tang** co-authored a paper that was recently published in Chinese: Li, Xuefeng, **Junchao Tang**, Xin Liu. 2019. "An Evaluation on Urban Cultural Heritage: Empirical Evidence from Shanghai." ("城市地区文化遗产价值评估：来自上海的经验研究") *Sociological Journal* (2): 153-171.

RSEA Events

The **2019 RSEA Alumni Panel** held on October 24 provided an opportunity for reflection and reconnection, enabling current students to engage with alumni as they consider possible career directions after completing their Master's degree.

We are very grateful to the six RSEA alumni panelists who came back to Harvard to speak about their experiences since RSEA and to share tips for career discernment and job hunting in academic and non-academic fields.



The 2019 RSEA Alumni Panelists were:

Esther Hyun (AM '16), Program Officer for Strategy Integration and Execution at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation;

John Kamm (AM '75), founding chairman of The Dui Hua Foundation and campaigner for human rights in China;

Michael Kim (AM '92, PhD '04), Professor of Korean History at Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies;

Greer Meisels (AM '12), Chief of Staff to the President and CEO at the Institute of International Finance;

Akiko Walley (AM '04, PhD '09), Associate Professor of Japanese Art at the University of Oregon; and

Don Wyatt (AM '78, PhD '84), Distinguished Professor of History at Middlebury College.

Read more about the 2019 RSEA Alumni Panel event at <https://rsea.fas.harvard.edu/news>. The annual event is made possible by the GSAS Gochman Dean's Fund for Innovation and Development.

Please watch for a "save the date" announcement of the 2020 RSEA Alumni Panel and Dinner. We hope you will consider attending to reconnect with the RSEA community.

Alumni Mentoring Opportunity

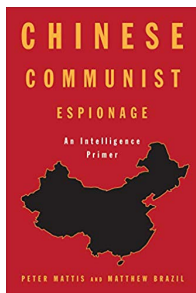
Harvard's Office of Career Services invites recent RSEA Alumni (who graduated after 2005) to serve as "micro-mentors" for current students. Students value advice on navigating the job market, leveraging the skills learned through a regional studies master's program, and crafting a resume that showcases their talents and achievements. Interested alumni are encouraged to sign up with "[Firsthand Advisers](#)", a platform that makes it easy to arrange phone calls with students while keeping your personal information confidential. Joining this platform only takes a moment at <https://harvardocs.firsthand.co/>. For further information go to <https://ocs.fas.harvard.edu/alumni>.

Thank you for considering being a mentor to help current RSEA students!

Alumni News in Brief

Two RSEA Alums have been collaborating on research interests dating back to their time in the program 25+ years ago. **Karl Ryavec** (AM '89) at UC Merced, and **Mark Henderson** (AM '94) at Mills College, have worked together on several papers and a series of lab exercise applying spatial analysis techniques to data on China's society and economy. Their work makes use of the China Historical Geographic Information System (CHGIS) materials hosted at Harvard, where Henderson was a visiting scholar in the Center for Geographic Analysis and served on the CHGIS management committee. Karl Ryavec previously published *A Historical Atlas of Tibet* (Chicago, 2015). They would be happy to hear from RSEA students and fellow alumni interested in these topics and techniques.

Carroll Bogert (AM '86) president of The Marshall Project, was quoted in a Harvard Magazine (Jan-Feb 2020) article about collaborative efforts to revive local journalism in the US, "*Renewing the News: Supporting journalism—and democracy—after the Internet eviscerated American newspapers*" by Mark Travis <https://harvardmagazine.com/2020/01/new-journalism-newspapers>



Matthew Brazil (AM '87) and co-author Peter Mattis celebrated the launch of their new book [Chinese Communist Espionage: An Intelligence Primer](#) with a moderated discussion of Chinese espionage held at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC, on December 5, 2019.

Sarah Bregman (AM '16) started a position in October 2019 as Director of The Asia Institute's office in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nam Hoang (AM '19) is working in New York City as an Analyst for Third Bridge Group, an international information service company.

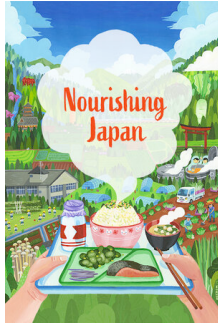
Ben Jacobs (AM '19) is in Washington DC working at the China Center of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Ben would be happy to hear from any RSEA students or alumni looking to do China-related policy work, particularly pertaining to trade/businesses/bilateral economic relations.

Iacob Koch-Weser (AM '11) is living again in Cambridge, MA, and working on geopolitics/trade issues at the consulting firm BCG after several years working for the US government in Washington (Congress, USTR).

Anka Lee (AM '07) just joined the global policy team at WhatsApp, based in Menlo Park, CA. Previously Anka worked for the California State Assembly in Sacramento.

Jessica J. Lee (AM '08) joined the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, a new think tank in Washington focused on foreign policy solutions centered on diplomacy and military restraint. Please visit quincyst.org for more information. Jessica recently wrote an [analysis](#) on the National Interest regarding North Korea, and an article for the [Quincy Institute](#) on US-North Korea talks. This [link](#) points to a recent interview she gave on CNN's Situation Room.

David McCann (AM '71) gave a poetry reading at Harvard on December 3, 2019, hosted by the Korea Institute. Prof. McCann is Korea Foundation Professor of Korean Literature, Emeritus, Harvard University. His work in the field of Korean literature has been recognized by the Manhae Prize (2004), and the Korean Culture Order of Merit (2006). Prof. McCann read from his most recent book, titled *OUT OF WORDS* (2019), published by Moon Pie Press, the latest addition to his previously published books of poetry, *SAME BIRD* (2016) and *LOST AND FOUND* (2018).



Daisuke Tsuruga (AM '14) has a position at the UN as Political Affairs Officer working for the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, which involves working on Security Council issues such as counter-terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Alexis Agliano Sanborn (AM '13) completed her documentary film about school lunches and food education in Japan. [Nourishing Japan](#) will be screened on January 30, 2020, in cooperation with the Consul General of Japan in New York City.

Rebecca Victor (AM '17) is in New York working for TikTok where she does CSR, events, internal training, branding campaigns, and more, aiming to build a culture of appreciation, communication and collaboration.

Do you have news to share?

We love to hear from RSEA Alumni! Please write to us at rsea2@fas.harvard.edu.