



# Complex Legacies & Imagined Futures of East Asia

## Knots





结・結び・매듭



27th Annual Harvard  
East Asia Society  
Conference

Feb 16-17, 2024  
CGIS South Building  
Harvard Cambridge Campus





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Graphics | Logo & poster design,  
HEAS seal carving & booklet compilation:  
Marissa Hauser & Wei Lin Tan



H E A S  
哈 佛 東 亞 學 會  
HARVARD EAST ASIA SOCIETY

## WELCOME NOTE

Welcome to the 27th annual Harvard East Asia Society Conference! It is our privilege to host graduate students working across all disciplines to exchange ideas and discuss their research related to Asia. In addition to receiving feedback from their peers and leading academics, participants have the opportunity to meet others doing similar research and forge new professional relationships.

The theme of this year's conference is: Knots: Complex Legacies & Imagined Futures of East Asia. The knot is a traditional form of art that can be found throughout China, Korea, and Japan, made from the orderly connection of different individual threads. The committee chose the figure of the knot to represent the intertwined memories, legacies, and histories of interaction between and throughout the different parts of the region we now call East Asia. That being said, the papers were not limited to explicit studies of knots as an object or concept. We welcomed scholarship that contemplates Asia from fresh perspectives while also reflecting upon conventional frameworks and methodologies from various perspectives and disciplines.

While you are here, please refer to the conference schedule and abstract booklet to decide which presentations pique your interest. Please note that at any given time, two to three panels will be hosted concurrently, their respective locations are listed in the schedule. HEAS committee members will be wearing name tags and will be available at any time if you have questions or require any help.

With that, we wish you all a wonderful and engaging time at this conference!

With warm wishes,  
The 2024 HEAS Conference Committee

Co-chairs: Ava Bush & Wendy Wu

Treasurer: Chaoliang (Leo) Liu

Secretaries: Marissa Hauser & Wei Lin Tan

Reviewers: Han Na (Hannah) Jun, Zelin (Jacob) Wang, Yunzhi Liu, Shuhuai (Albert) Zhang, Lanna S. J. Gao, Xiaolong Yang, & Jingyi (Jacqueline) Yu



### **The 27th Harvard East Asia Society Conference**

is made possible due to the generous support from the Harvard University Asia Center, the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, the GSAS Graduate Student Council, the Korea Institute, the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

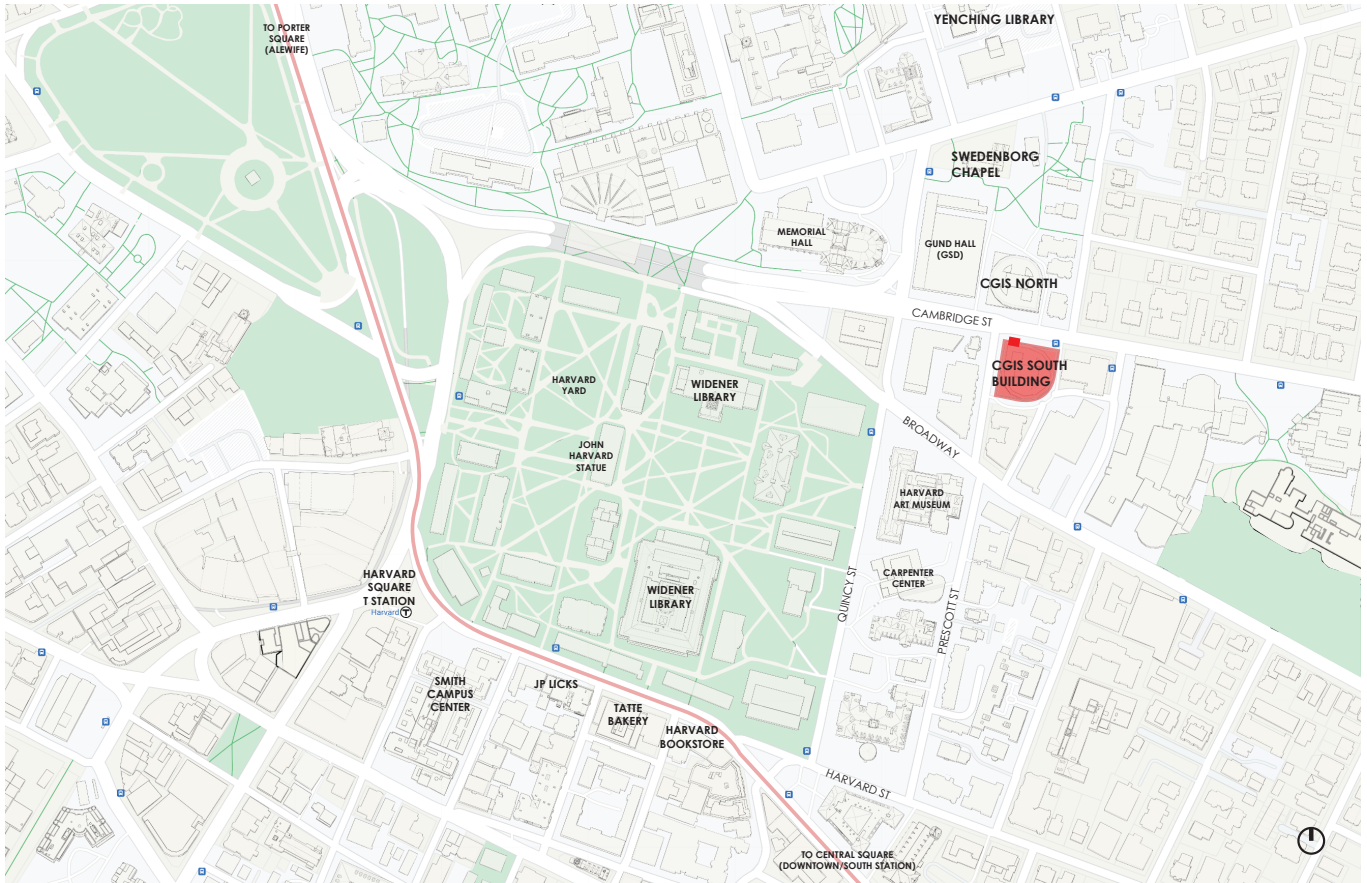
The HEAS committee would like to further extend thanks to the Regional Studies East Asia Program, Prof. Alexander Zahlten our Chair, Prof. Jie Li our Director of Graduate Studies, and our administrators, Rosie Cortese and Kerry Tanwar.

### **Acknowledgement of Land and People**

Harvard University is located on the traditional and ancestral land of the Massachusett, the original inhabitants of what is now known as Boston and Cambridge. We pay respect to the people of the Massachusett Tribe, past and present, and honor the land itself which remains sacred to the Massachusett People.







## Access

CGIS South, Basement Level,  
1730 Cambridge St, Cambridge, MA 02138

10 Minutes walking from the Harvard Square T Station.  
Entrance at the intersection between Prescott and  
Cambridge Streets.

## RSVP Information

RSVP required for dinner (\$10) on Friday the 16th.  
Payment to be collected during registration.

<https://forms.gle/mfUM6R45tuJNuxYp7>

or scan below:  
INSERT QR CODE HERE

## Wifi Access

Connect your computer to the Harvard  
University wireless network.

Go to <https://getonline.harvard.edu/>  
in your web browser and click I am a  
Guest.

Click Register for Guest Access.

Fill out your Name, Phone Number, and  
Email Address, and select the box to  
agree to the terms of use. Click Login to  
receive your credentials.

Your Guest Credentials will now be  
shown and you can click login to gain  
network access. Once logged in you will  
be online and can browse the internet.



## THE 27TH ANNUAL HARVARD EAST ASIA SOCIETY GRADUATE CONFERENCE (2024)

### Schedule

#### FRIDAY, Feb 16

**1:15-1:30pm**

Tsai Auditorium

**1:30-2:30pm**

Tsai Auditorium

**2:45-4:15pm**

Tsai Auditorium

Belfer Case Study Room

Doris Gathering Room

**4:30-5:30**

Tsai Auditorium

**5:30-7:00pm**

Tsai Auditorium

Belfer Case Study Room

Doris Gathering Room

**7:00-9:00pm**

Doris Gathering Room

#### SATURDAY, Feb 17

Concourse

**10:00-11:45am**

Tsai Auditorium

Belfer Case Study Room

**12:00-1:00pm**

Concourse

**1:15-2:45pm**

Tsai Auditorium

Belfer Case Study Room

**3:00-4:30pm**

Tsai Auditorium

Doris Gathering Room

**4:45-5:00pm**

Tsai Auditorium

**5:00pm**

### AT A GLANCE

**Registration & Reception** (Noon-1pm)

#### Opening Remarks

Professor Alexander Zahlten

#### Keynote Address

Professor Karen Thornber

#### Session 1

Panel A: Contemporary Challenges... (Prof. Ya-Wen Lei)

Panel B: Visions of Tomorrow... (Prof. David Wang)

Panel C: Historical Legacy and State... (Prof. Daniel Koss)

#### Keynote Address

Professor James Robson

#### Session 2

Panel D: Writing and Weaving... (Prof. David Atherton)

Panel E: Weaving and Unraveling... (Prof. Charles Hallisey)

Workshop: Contemporary Music... (Prof. Cecilia Kim)

**Dinner** (\$10 RSVP required)

**Breakfast** (9:00-10:00am)

Catered, free of charge

#### Session 3

Panel F: The Texture of Border Crossing... (Prof. Kuriyama)

Panel G: Across and Within Borders... (Prof. Chan Yong Bu)

**Lunch** (RSVP required)

Catered for conference participants.

#### Session 4

Panel H: Seeing and Imagining... (Prof. Eugene Wang)

Panel I: Silk Road and Textiles... (Prof. Klimburg-Salter)

#### Session 5

Panel J: Perceiving Gender in East Asia (Prof. Wai-yee Li)

Panel K: Knot of Memories... (Prof. Alexander Zahlten)

#### Closing Remarks

Professor Alexander Zahlten

#### Camlab Tour

RSVP required INSERT ENTIRE BOOKLET QR CODE LEFT COLUMN

## DETAILED SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

February 16

12:00-1:00

### Registration\*

Location: CGIS South, Friends of Japan Concourse

1:15-1:30

### Opening Remarks

Professor Alexander Zahlten (Harvard University)  
Chair of the Committee on Regional Studies: East Asia

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

1:30-2:30

### Keynote Address

Professor Karen Thornber (Harvard University)  
Harry Tuchmin Levin Professor in Literature

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

2:30 - 4:15

### Session 1

#### PANEL A | Contemporary Challenges and Innovations in East Asian Societies

Discussant: Professor Ya-Wen Lei (Harvard University)  
Moderator: ?????

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

Jocelyn He, Columbia University: "Young Adults Find Resonance with Rural Youths: A Community-based Cross-strata Support Scheme"

Yanping Ni, Princeton University: "New Fibers, New Knots? Navigating a Precarious Home Textile Economy in China"

Jiyeon Lee, Harvard University: "Sex Work or Sexual Exploitation?: An Analysis of the Discourse behind the Politics and Regulation of Prostitution in Japan and Korea"

Dawon Oh, Harvard University: "Uneven Spatial Distribution of the Impact of COVID-19: Focusing on the Changes in Women's Employment"

***\*10 fee to be collected at registration time for dinner on Friday 16 should you wish to join***

## **PANEL B | Visions of Tomorrow: East Asian Techno-Futurism**

Discussant: Professor David Wang (Harvard University)

Moderator: ?????

Location: CGIS South, S020 Belfer Case Study Room

Nijun Zhang, University of Pittsburgh: "Cyberpunk Buddhism: The Spirit of Post-humanism"

Yueming Li, University of California, San Diego: "Reinvigorating Reality through Materiality and Theatricality: A Rethinking of Science Fiction through Li Jianjun's World on a Wire (2021)"

Zerui Pan, University of Southern California: "The Body and the Song: East Asian Women Writers Experimenting with a Feminine Mode of Science Fiction Writing"

Siqi Li, University of California, San Diego: "Biopolitical Ecologies: Technological Transcorporeality in Chen Qiufan's Waste Tide"

## **PANEL C | Historical Legacy and State Governance**

Discussant: Dr. Daniel Koss (Harvard University)

Moderator: Shuhuai Zhang

Location: CGIS South, S030 Doris Gathering Room

Elizabeth Jae, University of London: "The Collapse of Public Education System and the Rise of Unregistered, Unaccredited International Schools in South Korea"

Yongkang Tai, Harvard University: "Long-lasting Loyalists: The Historical legacy of Pre-regime Communist Rule in China"

Leo You Li, Stanford University: "Escaping from Underground: Private Moneylenders in Chinese Courts"

## DETAILED SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

5:30 - 7:00

February 16

Session 2

### **PANEL D | Writing and Weaving: Between and Beyond Texts**

Discussant: Professor David Atherton (Harvard University)

Moderator: Wei Lin Tan

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

Heng Xie, University of Edinburgh: "Unraveling the Knots of Identity: Intermedia Narration and Cultural Boundaries in Yoko Tawada's "The Bath""

Yuhan Zhang, Renmin University-University of California, Davis: "The East Asian Circulation of the "Butterfly Dream" Stories and the Formation of an Oriental Symbol"

Shuting Lu, Korea University: "Comparison of Chinese Opera Records by Envoys from Choseon, Vietnam, and England"

Selina Wang, Columbia University: "The Multitude of Friendship: Poems for Silla Envoys at Prince Nagaya's Banquet(s)"

### **PANEL E | Weaving and Unraveling Religious Tapestries**

Discussant: Professor Charles Hallisey (Harvard University)

Moderator: Marissa Hauser

Location: CGIS South, S020 Belfer Case Study Room

Jusung Lee, Yale University: "Evolution of Social Engagement: Unveiling the Dynamics of Modern Korean Buddhism from the Japanese Colonia Period to Democratization"

Hongmin Ahn, Harvard University: "The War on Marriage: The Issue of Clerical Marriage in Post-Colonial Korea and its Military"

Axl Cheng, Harvard University: "Instantiation Rather than Syncretism: the Making of Sino-Islam by Muslim Literati in Imperial China"

Youheng Wong, University of Illinois Chicago: "Neural Machine Translation of Voluminous Buddhist Scriptures"

### **WORKSHOP | Contemporary Music and Theater in East Asia**

Discussant: Professor Cecilia Kim (Sangmyung University)

Moderator: Chaoliang (Leo) Liu

Location: CGIS South, S030 Doris Gathering Room

7:00-9:00

**Dinner**

Location: CGIS South, S030 Doris & Ted Lee Gathering Room  
RSVP required.



## DETAILED SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY

February 17

9:00-10:00

#### **Catered Breakfast**

Location: CGIS South, Friends of Japan Concourse  
RSVP not required.

10:00 - 11:30

#### **Session 3**

#### **PANEL F | The Texture of Border Crossing: Medium, Message, Methodology**

Discussant: Professor Shigehisa Kuriyama (Harvard University)  
Moderator: Lanna Gao

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

Honggui Zhu, Trinity College: "Transnational Universities, Language Conflict, and Liberal Nationalism"

Chang Liu, Nanyang Technological University: "Tradition and Innovation: Navigating Contemporary Challenges in Calligraphy Preservation across China, Japan, and Korea"

Shweta Arora, National University of Singapore: "Bridging East and South Asia: Knots of Media, Empowerment, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Contemporary Japan"

#### **PANEL G | Across and Within Borders: Politics of Identity and Nationhood**

Discussant: Professor Chan Yong Bu (Harvard University)  
Moderator: Zelin Wang

Location: CGIS South, S020 Belfer Case Study Room

Shunsuke Tanaka, University of Tokyo: "Intersectionality in the Indigenous Rights and Struggle of Ainu: Focusing on the Historical Education of a Junior High School in Asahikawa, Hokkaido"

Joshua Fernandez, Harvard University: "The Power of Anchors and Flows: The Historical Impact of Mao-Era PRC Migration Law on its Multiethnic Inner Asian Frontiers"

Su Hyon Bae, Arizona State University: "'So You Know Why I Have to Kill You': The Non-Restorative Justice of Park Chan-wook"

Shuhao Liang, University of Pennsylvania: "Mongolian Sheep, Japanese Horses, and Korean Cows: Animal Industry in Khinggan Manchukuo"

12:00-1:00

**Lunch Break**

Location:CGIS South, Friends of Japan Concourse  
Catered for conference participants.

1:15 - 2:45

**Session 4**

**PANEL H | Seeing and Imagining: The Visual Arts of East Asia**

Discussant: Professor Eugene Wang (Harvard University)  
Moderator: Ava Bush

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

Boxi Liu, Bard Graduate Center: "Shennong or Maonü? Re-considering the Painting of Gathering Herbs Discovered from the Yingxian Timber Pagoda"

Jiayin Yuan, University of Pennsylvania: "Goddess, General, or Chimera: The Knotted Legacy of The Amakusa-ban Heike's Title Page Engraving"

Ye Zhu, Harvard University-Peking University: "Images in Currency: Exploring Global Image Circulation Centered around Portraits of Li Hung-chang"

Jiahn Jeong, Fudan University: ""A Study on the Knotted Burial Objects of the Lady Seongsan Yi's Tomb in the Choson Korea in the 17th Century""

## DETAILED SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY

February 17

#### **PANEL I | Silk Road and Textiles: Interconnected Histories and Materiality**

Discussant: Professor Deborah Klimburg-Salter (Harvard University)

Moderator: Wendy Wu

Location: CGIS South, S020 Belfer Case Study Room

Xiao Liu, Yale University: "Painting Piety, Unraveling Bonds: New Interpretations of a Dunhuang Silk Banner in the Freer Gallery of Art"

Xiyao Zhang, Donghua University: "Silk-ma Mixed Woven Textiles in East Asian History"

Chenyang Li, Harvard University: "Tokharistan in the Mid-7th Century under the Competition among Rulers: The Rise of Nezak Tarkhans"

Yan Yan, Hong Kong Polytechnic University: "Li brocade, a temporal media on Hainan island"

**3:00 - 4:30**

#### **Session 5**

#### **PANEL J | Perceiving Gender in East Asia**

Discussant: Professor Thomas Kelly (Harvard University)

Moderator: Kent Bowen Zheng

Location: CGIS South, S030 Doris and Ted Lee Gathering Room

Doris Tang, University of California: "The Burden of Female Talent and Feminine Beauty: Kiyohara Yukinobu and Her Portrayal of Femmes Fatales"

Xi He, Stanford University: "The Literata in Exile: The Life, Writings, and Social Network of Huang Yuanjie (1610-1668)"

Yinghua Luo, Harvard University: "'Feeding on the Blood of My Children': A Cultural Analysis of the Rumor about Female Students Selling Blood at Peking Union Medical College Hospital"

Junho Yoon, New York University: "Plants and their Discontents: Envisioning Divergent Ways of Being in Han Kang's *The Fruit of My Woman* and Ito Hiromi's *Wildgrass on the Riverbank*"

**PANEL K | Knot of Memories: Reimagining the East Asian Past**

Discussant: Professor Alexander Zahlten (Harvard University)

Moderator: Yunzhi Liu

Location: CGIS South, S020 Belfer Case Study Room

Youyun Ye, University of Tokyo: "Imagining Taiwan's Cultural Identity through Japanese Colonial Legacy: A Study on the Reconstruction of Shinto Shrines in Taiwan"

Hechen Liu, Duke University: "Tragic Bonds Through Cemetery: Evolution of the Sino-Japan Friendship Garden in Fangzheng County and its Commemorative Initiatives"

Yongkang Chen, Duke University: "A Rhizomic Okinawa: Reimagining Regional Complexity in the Roots of Heterogeneity"

Weiyu Yang, Shanghai Jiao Tong University: "Aliud Miraculum: 1922 in East Asian Literature"

**4:45-5:00**

**Closing Remarks**

Professor Alexander Zahlten (Harvard University)

Chair of the Committee on Regional Studies: East Asia

Location: CGIS South, S010 Tsai Auditorium

**5:00**

**Camlab Tour**

RSVP only

Location: Basement of the Arthur M. Sackler Building

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

## KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

### **Karen Thornber**

Harry Tuchmin Levin Professor in Literature at Harvard University

Karen Thornber's research focuses on the medical/health humanities, the environmental humanities, gender, empire, inequality, indigeneities, transculturation, and trauma, as these relate to world literatures and the literatures and cultures of East Asia, as well as the literatures and cultures of the Indian Ocean Rim and more recently the Pacific Rim. In addition, Professor Thornber is the award-winning translator of Japanese writer Toge Sankichi's *Poems of the Atomic Bomb*, excerpts of which she read for Empress Michiko of Japan in 2015. Thornber is currently researching for future projects including books on *Climate Justice and Inequality: Comparative Asian and Global Perspectives on Pasts, Presents, and Futures*; and on *Sustainability and Global Mental Health*

### **James Robson**

James C. Kralik and Yunli Lou Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations & William Fung Director of the Harvard University Asia Center

James Robson specializes in the history of medieval Chinese Buddhism and Daoism and is particularly interested in issues of sacred geography, local religious history, talismans, and Chan/Zen Buddhism. He has been engaged in a long-term collaborative research project with the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* studying local religious statuary from Hunan province. He is the author of *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak [Nanyue 南岳] in Medieval China* (Harvard, 2009), which was awarded the Stanislas Julien Prize for 2010 by the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres and the 2010 Toshihide Numata Book Prize in Buddhism. Currently, Robson is researching for a long term project on the history of the confluence of Buddhist monasteries and mental hospitals in Japan.

## PANEL A

### **Contemporary Challenges and Innovations in East Asian Societies**

### **YA-WEN LEI | 雷雅雯**

*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

Ya-Wen Lei is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at Harvard University, and is affiliated with the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard. Trained in both law and sociology, she holds a LL.M. and a J.S.D. from Yale Law School and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Michigan. After graduating from Michigan in 2013, she was a Junior Fellow at the Society of Fellows at Harvard University (2013–2016). She was a visiting professor at Sciences Po in France from 2018–2019, and is the author of *The Contentious Public Sphere: Law, Media, and Authoritarian Rule in China* and *The Gilded Cage: Techno-State Capitalism in China*.

She has published in general sociological journals (Annual Review of Sociology, American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, and Socius), specialized social science journals (Law and Society Review, Work, Employment and Society, and Political Communication), and a China studies journal (The China Quarterly). Her publications have received various awards from the American Sociological Association, the Law and Society Association, and The China Quarterly—the leading interdisciplinary journal in China studies.

**JOCELYN HE**  
PANELIST

An ex-banker/consultant who reconnect with her true self through interdisciplinary studies on human development and educational policies. Currently a social entrepreneur dedicated to foster cross-strata interaction. Passionate about studying how traditional East Asian cultural values shape the motivations of youths.

**Young Adults Find Resonance with Rural Youths: A Community-based Cross-strata Support Scheme**

This report explores the potential of tackling information deficiencies for rural adolescents through a community-based social program. The program's core objective is to address educational inequality in rural areas by integrating informational guidance with sustained emotional support and fostering informal, lifelong mentorships between facilitators (young adults) and participants (adolescents in targeted rural regions). A successful pilot run, conducted in July 2023 in Xinan Village, China, laid the groundwork for this initiative and will continue to serve as a field base for long-term intervention and social studies. The village is characterized by a close-knit clannism culture that mirrors conservativeness and isolation within rural communities in China, along with skewed demographic characteristics that highlight inherent disadvantages within the societal structures of rural areas. Utilizing the triangulation method and drawing from qualitative data (N = 18), the pilot study employed content analysis and typology to uncover patterns in two key dimensions. Information deficiency emerged as a pivotal factor shaping the motivational tendencies of adolescents, especially within the tight-knit fabric of a Chinese rural society, where peer interdependence plays a significant role and have caused "path dependency." Equally crucial was the recognition of the profound absence of sufficient parental backing for adolescents under the influence of "authoritative parenting" under the Confucian culture. Notably, adolescents tended to seek emotional support from peers, even though its effectiveness might be limited. The forthcoming research initiative aims to unravel how the motivations of rural adolescents are influenced by factors such as peer interactions and rippling effects of social network expansion.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL A

#### Contemporary Challenges and Innovations in East Asian Societies

**YANPING NI** | 倪燕萍  
PANELIST

Yanping Ni is a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology at Princeton University. She holds a master's degree in East Asian Studies from Duke University, a master's degree in Film and Television Studies from the University of Warwick, and a bachelor's degree in Journalism from Sichuan University. Her research interests sit at the intersection of material culture, political economy, environmental humanities, and historical anthropology. Ni has published in the peer-reviewed journals *China Information* and *Asian Bioethics Review*, contributed to the volumes *The Coronavirus: Human, Social and Political Implications* (Springer Nature) and *Proletarian China: A Century of Chinese Labour* (Verso), and recently appeared in the public-facing forum *Anthropology News*.

#### **New Fibers, New Knots? Navigating a Precarious Home Textile Economy in China**

This project examines the emergence of experiments in fiber and textiles among young entrepreneurs in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, China. Facing challenges posed by post-pandemic economic anxieties, international trade wars, and re-spatialized global supply chains, young generations of businesspeople in China's largest domestic textile center have lately resorted to new fibers, technologies, and connotations of "homeyness" as solutions. My fieldwork encountered, for example, bean-based fibers (marketed as an alternative to cotton) that cater to rising eco-friendly preferences among homeowners, as well as lightweight synthetically made blankets with the name of "cool bean" referring to their bean-like shape and texture. This ethnography study unpacks such experiments by learning from various actors (e.g., entrepreneurs, factory workers, designers) through different spaces of the textile economic chain (e.g., factory floors, studios, showrooms). In doing so, it investigates the following questions: 1) What motivates such experiments? Are they driven by peer pressure, market competition, or the state's slogan "created in China" (i.e., beyond "made in China")? 2) What kinds of new connections, movements, economies, or experiences can be generated? Could they lead to robust and sustainable "knots" that offer the practitioners a sense of hope and futurity? 3) What can these new fibers illuminate about one of China's oldest and still signature industries? Pertaining to the conference theme, this paper's approach addresses both the material and symbolic properties of knots. It attends to new fibers' rich materiality, configurations for different textile producers, and implications for understanding today's China in the global economy.

**JIYEON LEE** | 이지연 李知燕  
PANELIST

The debate on prostitution often simplifies into 'sexual exploitation' versus 'sex work,' but critics argue this oversimplification obscures the complexities of sex workers' lives. Despite these criticisms, questions remain about why certain perspectives gain public traction, how majority views evolve, and their impact on the power dynamics of commercial sex. Analyzing media representation of different actors in South Korea during a contentious period in 2004, this project unveils how the change is made to the state regulation of sex work. Rather than questioning the nature of prostitution, it shifts focus to public perception, revealing the dynamics that influenced legal reforms.

**Sex Work or Sexual Exploitation?: An Analysis of the Discourse behind the Politics and Regulation of Prostitution in Japan and Korea**

Debates about prostitution often revolve around a fundamental divide between "sexual exploitation" and "sex work" perspectives. Rejecting generalization or a dualistic approach, this paper focuses instead on how perceptions of prostitution are constructed and reflected differently onto the regulations and politics behind them, using the case of Korea and Japan. It achieves this by analyzing shifts in state regulations influenced by historical discourses and each nation's socio-economic context, with a particular emphasis on national-level discourse and historical transitions. Despite their shared historical origins of commercial sex regulated by Imperial Japan, Japan and Korea have developed somewhat distinct narratives in the regulation of prostitution since World War II. This paper argues that Korea's colonial past and the persisting lopsided relationships with surrounding major powers have fostered the widespread perception of sex workers as victims of colonial and postcolonial oppression. This perception has laid the groundwork for changes in legal enforcement, exempting sex workers recognized as "victims" from punishment. In Japan, on the other hand, the paper emphasizes that the sex industry has been widely understood in an economic context, as an integral part of the nation's industrial system and corporate culture, disseminating the media-circulated image of "ordinary women" engaging in sex work to supplement their income.

## PANEL A

### Contemporary Challenges and Innovations in East Asian Societies

**DAWON OH** | 오다원  
PANELIST

Dawon Oh is a second-year doctoral student at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD). Her specialty is quantitative data analysis, such as processing big data using programming languages, statistical analysis, and machine learning to solve diverse urban issues. Her research interest focus on human behavior generated through land use and transportation interaction, including floating population and mobility dynamics in metropolitan areas. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and Urban Studies (BE) from Chung Ang University in Seoul, South Korea, and a Master's degree in Urban Planning (MUP) from Seoul National University in Seoul, South Korea.

#### **Uneven Spatial Distribution of the Impact of COVID-19: Focusing on the Changes in Women's Employment**

As the global market fell due to COVID-19, regional employment and consumption were affected differently by gender. Although male employment typically experiences greater vulnerability during economic downturns compared to female employment, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a disproportionate impact on women in the labor market. These are mostly related to women's distinct traits in the labor market. The quarantine disproportionately affected industries with a large proportion of female workers, particularly those in service industries. Furthermore, the closure of schools and daycare centers had a substantial impact on the labor market engagement of married women. The study reveals a significant decrease in the employment of women aged 30-45 during the first year following the pandemic. Particularly, married women accounted for 95.4% of this decline, while unmarried women constituted only 4.6% of the decrease.

The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of the women's employment crisis on regional disparities and investigate how the uneven distribution of these factors contributes to variations in women's employment across different regions. The variable under investigation in this research is the percentage point variation in the rate of female employment across different regions during the year 2020, as compared to the preceding year 2019. The explanatory variables include the profiles for relevant data on women's employment rate and local industries, such as the share of retail, F&B, and other service industries. The regional shock indicator will be derived from the cumulative count of confirmed COVID-19 cases in each region. The findings indicate a significant decrease in female labor force participation across various sectors, particularly in regions where the service industry plays a significant role in the overall economy.

**DAVID WANG** | 王德威  
*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

David Der-wei Wang holds a joint appointment in Comparative Literature. He is Director of CCK Foundation Inter-University Center for Sinological Studies, and Academician, Academia Sinica. His research interests include modern and contemporary Chinese literature, late Qing fiction and drama; comparative literary theory; colonial and modern Taiwanese fiction, and Asian American and diasporic literature; plus Chinese intellectuals and artists in the mid-20th century.

Wang took his B.A. in foreign languages and literature from National Taiwan University, and his M.A. (1978) and Ph.D. (1982) in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Wang taught at National Taiwan University (1982-1986) and Columbia University (1990-2004). He first came to Harvard in 1986, serving as Assistant Professor of Chinese for four years. He rejoined the Harvard faculty in 2004, when he was named Edward C. Henderson Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures. Wang's recent publications include *Taiwan under Japanese Colonial Rule* (co-ed. with Ping-hui Liao, 2007), *Globalizing Chinese Literature* (co-ed. with Jin Tsu, 2010), and *The Lyrical in Epic Time: Modern Chinese Intellectuals and Artists through the 1949 Crisis* (2014). He is Editor of *Harvard New Literary History of Modern China* (forthcoming, 2015). Wang received the Changjiang Scholar Award in the PRC in 2008. He was the 2013-14 Humanitas Visiting Professor of Chinese Studies at CRASSH, the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, at Cambridge University (U.K.), where he gave a series of three public lectures on the 'Chineseness' of Chinese literature.

## PANEL B

**Visions of Tomorrow: East  
Asian Techno-Futurism**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL B

#### **Visions of Tomorrow: East Asian Techno-Fu- turism**

**NIJUN ZHANG** | 张霓君  
PANELIST

Nijun Zhang is currently a first-year master's student in East Asian Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. She holds a bachelor's degree in Sanskrit and Pali from Beijing Foreign Studies University. Her research focuses on religious topics such as Buddhism, divination, and astrology. She enjoys conducting cross-regional comparative studies to discover cultural commonalities across different areas. With a keen interest in integrating theoretical knowledge with practical situations, she is dedicated to continuous reflection on humanism.

#### **Cyberpunk Buddhism: The Spirit of Post-humanism**

Over the last several years in East Asia, a striking phenomenon has arisen that combines cyberpunk style with Buddhist elements. With the surge in popularity of the game *Cyberpunk 2077*, the word "cyberpunk" has gone viral on Chinese social media and has given birth to several hot internet memes, such as "cyber Buddha" and "electronic lotus." Whereas images such as the Buddha and lotus have traditionally been depicted according to rigid stylized rules, cyberpunk Buddhist artists have taken a grassroots approach to incorporating Buddhist elements into their art. Since cyberpunk was first referred to by Bruce Bethke in 1980, cyberpunk has gradually become an anti-utopian term for a "high-tech, low-life" aesthetic in movies, comic books, and other media. The frequent use of East Asian cities, such as Tokyo and Hong Kong, as backdrops in much cyberpunk art have become classic cyberpunk scenes. In addition to the fact that the characteristics of East Asian cities fit with the setting of a cyberpunk future world, the mysterious aura of the Orient also appeals to creators of cyberpunk aesthetics. Integrating Buddhism into cyberpunk art has also become inevitable because it is the dominant religion in East Asia. As the economy and society put more and more pressure on life, more young East Asians turned to Buddhism as a spiritual outlet. Even though Buddhism is an old religion, it has somehow connected deeply to the post-humanism concept of cyberpunk, representing an imagined future. This presentation will explore why this connection occurs.

**YUEMING LI | 李悦铭**  
PANELIST

Yueming Li is a PhD student in the Literature Department at University of California, San Diego. Her research interests focus on Sinophone science fiction novels and theater works. Her broader interests include contemporary Sinophone literature and media studies.

**Reinvigorating Reality through Materiality and Theatricality: A Rethinking of Science Fiction through Li Jianjun's *World on a Wire* (2021)**

This paper examines Chinese theater director Li Jianjun's play, *World on a Wire* (2021), to explore the knotted relationship between SF and theater. My main argument is that in reenacting Fassbinder's TV production *World on a Wire* (1973), Li's play not only bridges the past Cold War moment and the present crisis of the pandemic but also connects SF and theater due to their shared basis of materiality. It thus suggests a broader cultural movement in contemporary China and calls forth conversations across genres and mediums of representation. In the paper, I first analyze Fassbinder's *World on a Wire*. I examine how this TV production challenges the separation of materiality and information in the Euro-American intellectual tradition yet obscures the materiality of reality through elusive aesthetics. As SF is entangled with mimetic logic and material objects, I propose to add a material dimension to this elusive narrative. Then, I analyze Li Jianjun's *World on a Wire* under Rebecca Schneider's theorization of "reenactment." I examine how the play stages similar tension during the Cold War and the present crisis of the COVID pandemic. I also highlight how it brings onstage the labor of repetition and reinstates the materiality of SF. In the last section, I challenge the overlooked connection between theater and SF. I argue that SF and theater intertwine because they are both rooted in materiality, which, as I theorize, indicates a deep entanglement with material objects and physical bodies and an eradicable position of the mode of representation. I conclude that this lens of materiality treats SF and theater as material practices with transgressive potential, which also updates the New Wave of Chinese SF.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL B

#### **Visions of Tomorrow: East Asian Techno-Fu- turism**

**ZERUI PAN** | 潘澤瑞  
PANELIST

My name is Zerui Pan and I am a first-year graduate student at the University of Southern California. My research interest lies in modern Japanese/Chinese literature and films, particularly the portrayal of children in contemporary literary and cinematic works. I graduated from the University of California, San Diego in 2023 with a bachelor's degree in world literature and culture. While in college, I won the Burckhardt Honors Award in Literary/Cultural Criticism for writing the best senior essay. Besides academics, I enjoy playing the bass guitar in my rock band and carving through Hokkaido's snow-capped landscapes on a snowboard.

#### **The Body and the Song: East Asian Women Writers Experimenting with a Feminine Mode of Science Fiction Writing**

How have East Asian women writers articulated their unique voices within the predominantly white, male-dominated realm of science fiction (SF)? Previous scholarly works pointed out that women writers historically often encountered skepticism regarding their ability to create "authentic" SF works, making the incorporation of genuine women's experiences an arduous and contentious task. This article examines Japanese writer Suzuki Izumi's SF novella "Women and Women" (1977) alongside Chinese writer Zhao Haihong's short story "1923: A Fantasy" (2007) to argue that they present a viable path diverging from masculine generic conventions. These narratives challenge the conventional prioritization of historical narratives, strictly scientific elements, and an impartial tone prevalent in mainstream SF. Both stories employ elaborate bodily imagery in their descriptions of scientific elements, emphasizing the inseparable connection between the female body and women's experiences. While Suzuki adopts an intimate diaristic form to echo an individual feminine voice, Zhao goes a step further by integrating the song—a crucial form of expression for women—into the core of her historical narrative. Drawing from the French feminist concept of *écriture féminine*, this comparative analysis contends that these two stories experiment with a fresh approach in SF writing that centers the female body and the feminine voice in futuristic imaginations. Ultimately, this paper demonstrates Suzuki and Zhao's pivotal role in broadening the horizons of East Asian SF tradition, which may help inspire future generations of women writers in East Asia to claim their place in the genre's pantheon.

**SIQI LI | 李思齐**  
PANELIST

Siqi Li (she/her/hers) is currently a Ph.D. student in the Department of Literature at the University of California, San Diego. Her area of expertise lies in the study of environmental humanities, science and technology studies, and political philosophy. In addition to her academic pursuits, she is a proficient bilingual translator (English/Chinese), having translated books and articles for publishers in China and the United Kingdom.

**Biopolitical Ecologies: Technological Transcorporeality in Chen Qiufan's Waste Tide**

This paper presents an interdisciplinary analysis of Chen Qiufan's *Waste Tide*, exploring the complex interplay of biopolitics, ecology, and transcorporeality within East Asia's sociopolitical and environmental evolution amidst the larger framework of globalization. The novel utilizes speculative fiction as a medium to reflect on the historical continuities and speculative trajectories, highlighting the dynamic cross-racial inter-specific entanglement of human and more-than-human entities within post-socialist China's neoliberal landscape.

Central to this examination is Chen's nuanced depiction of biotechnological impacts on both natural and human transcorporealities. Chen's narrative navigates the intricate transformations of nature, femininity, and cyborg identities, contextualized within neoliberal and technocratic ideologies. Drawing on ecocriticism, new materialism, and biopolitical theory, this paper advocates a dialectical approach to these transformations. This perspective illuminates how biopolitical forces exert simultaneous degradation and empowerment upon nature and marginalized sectors, notably the subaltern communities, mirroring broader regional and global challenges. Furthermore, Chen's integration of scientific discourse with mythological elements reflects the complex challenges of China's post-reform era. This multifaceted narrative approach links historical, contemporary, and speculative dimensions, evoking the experiences of cultural luminaries such as Lu Xun. Positioned at the nexus of speculative fiction and critical discourse, *Waste Tide* emerges as a crucial text that casts light on the technological and ecological shifts not only in China and East Asia but as a microcosm of global neoliberal dynamics.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL C

#### Historical Legacy and State Governance

#### DANIEL KOSS

*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

Daniel Koss studies political parties in East Asian politics. His first book, published in 2018, investigates the role of political parties under authoritarianism through the case of the Chinese Communist Party. Asking why the Chinese state is "stronger" in some areas of its realm than in others, his research demonstrates the importance of the party's rank and file for effective local governance. His second book manuscript studies East Asia's other super-resilient ruling party, namely the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan.

Approaching contemporary outcomes from a long historical perspective, his field of research covers the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961), the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), and even the governance reforms of the Yongzheng Emperor (r. 1722-1735). Koss's research on Japanese parties adopts a similarly long-term perspective, with one of his ongoing projects studying the emergence of political parties in the early Meiji era.

Koss has spent years doing research in mainland China (Beijing, Hubei, Shandong, Zhejiang), Taiwan and Japan (Miyagi, Nagano, Shiga, Tokyo, Toyama). He holds a PhD in political science from Harvard University, worked as an Assistant Research Fellow at the Institute of Political Science at Academia Sinica (Taipei), and since January 2019 serves as a lecturer at the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations.

## **ELIZABETH JAE**

PANELIST

Elizabeth Hyelee Jae is a postgraduate student in the Department of Law at the University of London. She was previously a principal at an international preschool in Tokyo, Japan. She's currently on the Advisory Committee for South Korean President Yoon Seok-Yeol. She's recently worked on a report on the Korean education system directly for the National Office of Investigation which is South Korea's equivalent of FBI.

### **The Collapse of Public Education System and the Rise of Un-registered, Unaccredited International Schools in South Korea**

When a number of elementary school teachers in their 20's and 30's across South Korea took their own lives due to the extreme stress caused by Parent Bullying, it unleashed a wave of anger from elementary school teachers all over South Korea. The tragedies of elementary school teachers who took their own lives because they couldn't deal with the harassment and bullying from the parents made the headlines of national TV news for weeks in Korea. At the same time, a huge wave of parents are pulling their children out of public schools and signing them up for non-registered International schools across South Korea. Whilst a number of public schools are closing down due to the fastly diminishing enrolled students, non-registered international schools are spreading across South Korea at a faster pace than ever before. Nearly 99% of these non-registered international schools are not recognized as schools by the Korean government and the Ministry of Education of Korea. As well, over 90% of teachers hired by such non-registered international schools are not qualified teachers and do not hold a degree in education. As this author works with the Korean National Office of Investigation which is Korea's equivalent to FBI on a report related to the non-registered international schools, this paper will aim to analyze the causes of the collapse of public education in Korea and the Korean government's education policy on the rise of non-registered international schools in Korea.

## PANEL C

### Historical Legacy and State Governance

**YONGKANG TAI** | 台永康  
PANELIST

Yongkang Tai completed his B.A. in Politics and Public Administration at Peking University in 2023. He is interested in comparative political economy, historical political economy, institution & development, and public debt, state & society.

#### **Long-lasting Loyalists: The Historical Legacy of Pre-regime Communist Rule in China**

The paper investigates the long-lasting effects of pre-regime communist rule on citizens' political attitudes and behavior. Examining the long-term impact of CCP's rule in its old revolutionary base areas, the article shows that individuals who grew up in counties exposed to more communist rule before 1949 exhibit more regime support, while the party's rule has also increased citizens' contentious behavior. The author argues that both the positive effects on pro-regime attitudes and contentious behavior result from the party's pre-regime mobilization effort, for which the purpose was to support the party but, by nature, was anti-regime and rebellious. Mechanism tests suggest that the propaganda of local governments on their revolutionary traditions contributes to the persistence of these effects. The paper is the first to document the legacy of pre-regime communist rule on political attitudes and behavior and furnish valuable perspectives for the broader authoritarian resilience discourse.

**LEO YOU LI | 李有**  
PANELIST

Leo You Li is a J.S.D. candidate at Stanford Law School. His research interests include comparative judicial systems, financial regulation, law and development, and empirical legal studies. Currently, he is conducting comparative studies between the U.S. and China on the institutional designs of courts and regulatory agencies, under the digital transformation, to promote access to justice in high-volume financial disputes. He obtained a J.S.M. from Stanford University, an LL.M. from University of Pennsylvania, and an LL.B. from Shanghai Jiao Tong University. He is a registered attorney in New York State and holds the Legal Professional Qualification Certificate of China.

**Escaping from Underground: Private Moneylenders in Chinese Courts**

Debt collection lawsuits in many societies are signifying an access to justice crisis, marked by disparities in litigation capabilities and deeper structural inequalities. Reform dilemmas often revolve around the extent to which judges should be more inquisitorial and whether courts should transition towards a problem-solving model. This study investigates China's situation by combining an original dataset with 71,624 court decisions in Shanghai from 2014 to 2019 and in-depth interviews with judges and lawyers. I find, on the problem side, vulnerable debtors suffer from scarce legal services, low trial activeness, and predatory exploitation by sophisticated creditors. The unique financial market in China further complicates the access to justice concern, as individual and business debts exhibit different dynamics. On the solution side, judges tend to be more inquisitorial than what the law in books guides. Using a difference-in-differences approach, I show that courts proactively defer to a policy change unfavorable to predatory lending by mediating cases that could be otherwise decided on their merits. This study not only suggests further protection of vulnerable debtors in China, but also shows how access to justice crisis in high-volume adjudications might be tackled in societies with less adversarial judicial systems and weaker separation-of-power constraints.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL D

#### **Writing and Weaving: Between and Beyond Texts**

#### **DAVID ATHERTON**

*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

David C. Atherton is a scholar of literature, focusing primarily on Japan's early modern period (also known as the Edo or Tokugawa period, ca. 1600-1867). He is concerned with understanding how the intrinsic, literary dynamics of early modern texts interacted with and shaped the social, cultural, and political worlds beyond the page. His first book, *Writing Violence: The Politics of Form in Early Modern Japanese Literature* (Columbia University Press, 2023) offers a new approach to understanding the challenging formal features of Edo-period popular literature. Focusing on depictions of violence—one of the most fraught topics for a peaceful polity ruled over by warriors—he connects concepts of form and formalization across the aesthetic and social spheres, revealing how the seemingly formulaic dynamics of early modern literature had the potential to alter the perception of time and space, make social and economic forces visible, defamiliarize conventions, give voice to the socially peripheral, and reshape the contours of community.

Atherton received his Ph.D. in Japanese literature from Columbia University in 2013. He holds an M.A. in classical Thai literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2006) and an A.B. from Harvard, where he focused on Chinese literature and film (2000). Prior to joining EALC, Professor Atherton taught at the University of Colorado, Boulder. He teaches a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses in Japanese literature and culture, as well as the Gen Ed course "Creativity." He is a recipient of the Rosalyn Abramson Award for "outstanding undergraduate teaching."

**HENG XIE | 谢恒**  
PANELIST

Heng (Theo) Xie is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Comparative Literature at the University of Edinburgh. His primary research interests lie in intermedia studies and transnational cultures, with a special emphasis on how photography, as a medium, conveys authenticity and translatability in literary works. He is particularly focused on the role of visual culture in documenting and shaping new forms of human civilization during the exchanges between Eastern and Western cultures in the 20th century.

**Unraveling the Knots of Identity: Intermedia Narration and Cultural Boundaries in Yoko Tawada's "The Bath"**

Yoko Tawada's "The Bath" offers a profound exploration of identity's complex interplay and fragmentation among East Asian immigrants. As a translingual Japanese author based in Germany, Tawada intricately portrays a Japanese woman's post-relocation identity struggle in Germany, juxtaposing her inner conflict with external cultural influences. This novel not only represents the personal transformation of immigrants but also prompts a reevaluation of East Asian culture from a Eurocentric standpoint, highlighting the intense interweaving and tearing of identity in a transnational context.

Tawada skillfully employs surrealism through three pivotal devices—photography, mirrors, and bodily transformations—to navigate the protagonist's identity crisis. The novel reinterprets photography, traditionally seen as a mark of authenticity, as the external forces shaping and confining identity. This is particularly evident in the portrayal of female manipulation and objectification, where the protagonist's photographic image, influenced by her German lover, becomes a metaphor for suppressed self-expression. Mirrors serve as tools for introspection, simultaneously reflecting the protagonist's external appearance and internal struggles. This duality accentuates her battle against self-image issues and the oppressive norms of her native Japanese patriarchal culture, underscoring a complex journey of self-discovery. Additionally, Tawada illustrates the protagonist's identity fluidity and defiance of cultural stereotypes through bodily transformations, culminating metaphorically in a transparent coffin. This representation goes beyond physical change, symbolizing a profound psychological quest for self-realization.

This paper aims to explore how Tawada transcends cultural boundaries through these narrative elements, expressing a pursuit of identity beyond cultural limits and the protection of the core self against external influences.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL D

#### **Writing and Weaving: Between and Beyond Texts**

**YUHAN ZHANG** | 张宇涵  
PANELIST

Zhang Yuhan is a MA student in Classical Chinese Literature at the School of Liberal Arts, Renmin University of China. Now, he is studying in UC Davis as an exchange student. He received his undergraduate degree in Chinese language and literature from Renmin University of China in 2022. His main research interests are ancient Chinese fictions in Ming and Qing Dynasty, the history of books and literary storytelling. His selected article is "A New Study of Jing Shi Qi Guan Which Had Been Stored by Japanese scholar Nagazawa Kikuya".

#### **The East Asian Circulation of the "Butterfly Dream" Stories and the Formation of an Oriental Symbol**

There is a rich storehouse of stories based on the theme of "butterfly dream" in East Asia. The root of this is the story of "Zhuangzi's Dream of the Butterfly". The ancient Chinese captured the philosophical ideas in the story and linked them to the biological qualities of the butterfly, thus turning the butterfly into a key image for describing brokenness and love, forming a narrative represented by "Butterfly Lovers". In addition, there are many other texts that combine "Zhuangzi's Dream of the Butterfly" with other Zhuangzi stories, forming a number of Zhuangzi narratives under the title of "Butterfly Dream". This paper finds that in the late Chinese Empire, there was an unprecedented increase in texts on the theme of "butterfly dream". At that time, the Chinese opera performance and popularity of the imitation huaben played key roles in the wide acceptance of "butterfly dream" theme stories in East Asia, and East Asian countries participated in the construction of this theme through reading and accepting "butterfly dream" stories in Chinese according to their own demands. Finally they formed a relatively unified East Asian "butterfly dream". When westerners deeply contacted East Asia in the 19th century, they saw the narrative content and media form of "butterfly dream", thus connecting "Butterfly" with "Orient" and "Female", producing texts such as "M. Butterfly", and "Butterfly" became a symbol belonging to East Asia. The connotation behind it has even influenced the worldwide cognition of butterfly, and still has an impact around the world today.

**SHUTING LU | 陆淑婷**  
PANELIST

Shuting Lu, from Shanghai China, completed the degree of master of arts in Korean Language and Literature at Korea University, and she is now pursuing a PH.D. degree at Korea University. She studied poetry and Yeonhangrok with Dr. Jun-chul Lim and she is interested in Yeonhangrok and civil service examination of Choson.

**Comparison of Chinese Opera Records by Envoys from Choson, Vietnam, and England**

This article analyzes the records of Chinese operas in the imperial court written by envoys from Choson, Britain, and Vietnam during their visits to China in the Qing Dynasty. This article begins by comparing the similarities and differences not only in their observations of the time, place, and member, but also in the language, length, and style of their writing. Secondly, centering around the records of envoys from Choson, Britain, the article examines the records of these envoys on the racial and gender characteristics of actors and audience members, actor costumes and props, and types of performances. Finally, drawing on relevant theories of comparative literature and image studies, the article explores the impact of their pre-existing understandings on their ways of watching, such as the level of knowledge and their attitudes towards watching operas, and further points out the value of these literary records. By studying these literary records, the article contributes to using travelogue to supplement the shortcomings of Chinese historical materials and reflect the cultural traditions of various countries, including their political ideas towards China.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL D

#### Writing and Weaving: Between and Beyond Texts

**SELINA WANG** | 王和  
PANELIST

Selina is a PhD student in premodern Japanese literature. She focuses on the literary construction and development of humor in premodern East Asia, specifically how people invent, record, and perform humor through different linguistic registers. She treats humor as a creative crossover point between performance and reality, power hierarchies, and boundaries between wit and emotions. She is also interested in literary theory and the epistemological relationship between writing system and language in East Asia and is pursuing a graduate certificate in the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society

#### **The Multitude of Friendship: Poems for Silla Envoys at Prince Nagaya's Banquet(s)**

Looking through the ten poems composed at the banquet(s) for the Silla envoys at the mansion of Prince Nagaya collected in *Kaifūsō* 万葉集 (Florilegium of Cherished Airs), the oldest extant Literary Sinitic poetry or kanshi collection in Japan compiled in 751, this paper proposes to analyze the literary manifestations of the individual and collective cross-cultural imaginations through the notion of friendship in the poetic discourse. While existing scholarship emphasizes the diplomatic functions of the poems with the implicit assumption that these poems themselves lack literary value, this paper intends to engage with the non-diplomatic aspects of banquet poetry. I argue that using the rhetoric of friendship, the poems at Prince Nagaya's court served diplomatic functions as well as presented new literary forms with complex layers of emotionality shared by the Sinographic sphere. In addition, diplomacy was also not the only mode of politics at these banquets. Even though the banquet was a place to meet with foreign envoys, these banquet(s) still engaged with domestic politics and community formation. Using the language of friendship in an intimate space of the banquet, the poets at Prince Nagaya's court performed both individual voices longing for a cross-cultural friendship and the imagined official voices representing and delineating the community that they belong to. Finally, looking at some dictions in the poems, this paper argues how *washō* or the "Japanese smell" in Literary Sinitic poetry might present a playful attempt of the Sino-Japanese comparative by showcasing a doubling or syncretism of meanings.

**CHARLES HALLISEY**

*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

Charles Hallisey joined the Faculty of Divinity in 2007–08 after teaching at the University of Wisconsin as Associate Professor in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia and the Religious Studies Program since 2001. Earlier, he taught in the Department of Theology at Loyola University in Chicago, and at Harvard University, where he was John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Humanities in the Committee on the Study of Religion and the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies from 1996 to 2001.

Charles Hallisey served on the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard from 1991 to 2000, and then again in 2007 when he joined the Faculty of Divinity. Since January 2005, he had also been director of Wisconsin's Religious Studies Program. His research centers on Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, Pali language and literature, Buddhist ethics, literature in Buddhist culture.

His most recent book is *Therigatha: Poems of the First Buddhist Women* (Harvard University Press, 2015). He is currently working on a book project entitled "Flowers on the Tree of Poetry: The Moral Economy of Literature in Buddhist Sri Lanka."

**PANEL E**

**Weaving and Unraveling  
Religious Tapestries**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL E

#### **Weaving and Unraveling Religious Tapestries**

**JUSUNG LEE** | 이주성  
PANELIST

Jusung Lee, a Ph.D. student at Yale University's Religious Studies Department, holds a profound understanding of Buddhism from both Eastern and Western perspectives. At Dongguk University, a leading Buddhist Studies institution in Korea, he gained extensive knowledge by delving into Buddhist scriptures, philosophy, and the history of Indian, Chinese, and Korean Buddhism. A summa cum laude graduate, Lee pursued the MTS program at Harvard Divinity School, immersing himself in Western scholarly approaches to Korean Buddhism. His current focus at Yale is investigating how Korean Buddhists perceived Japanese Buddhism during the colonial era and its impact on their views and activities.

#### **Evolution of Social Engagement: Unveiling the Dynamics of Modern Korean Buddhism from the Japanese Colonial Period to Democratization**

Against the backdrop of this year's conference theme, this paper explores the intricate social engagement of modern Korean Buddhism, navigating the historical tapestry of the region. Examining pivotal moments, we unravel the threads that weave through different eras, capturing the nuanced evolution of Buddhism's role in shaping the sociopolitical landscape.

During the Japanese colonial period, Han Yongun emerged as a central figure, leveraging Buddhism in the anti-Japanese movement. While marking a peaceful stride forward, it was limited by its reliance on individual efforts, exposing the need for organized activities within the Buddhist society.

Transitioning to the era of South Korean military dictatorship, the Minjung Buddhism Movement brought about a more structured approach to social engagement. Yet, limitations persisted, with a noticeable lack of engagement until the early 1980s and a struggle to articulate Buddhism's identity within societal contexts.

The narrative takes a turn as modern Korean Buddhism embraces environmental movements following democratization. This shift not only aligns with the theme of interconnectedness but also signifies the restoration of religious identity and leadership. By participating in environmental causes, Buddhism intertwines with broader social concerns, reflecting a maturation in its engagement strategies.

In essence, this paper illustrates the metamorphosis of modern Korean Buddhism, overcoming limitations and solidifying its achievements within the larger context of East Asia's complex legacies and imagined futures. As we untangle the threads, we discern the evolving role of Buddhism in bridging spaces, times, and disciplines, contributing to the rich tapestry of East Asian history, philosophy, and social dynamics.

**HONGMIN AHN | 안홍민**  
PANELIST

Hongmin Ahn(안홍민), is a Scholar of Ahnkook Endowment Fund for Buddhist Studies at Harvard Divinity School. His research interests are Korean/Japanese Buddhism, military chaplaincy, militant Buddhism, and Buddhist nationalism, among many other things. Outside of his research interests, Hongmin is really passionate about North Korea, particularly its human rights issues. Before coming to Harvard Divinity School, he was a student intern at Bard Chaplaincy Office and served as a Buddhist chaplain's assistant at the Republic of Korea Air Force.

**The War on Marriage: The Issue of Clerical Marriage in Post-Colonial Korea and Its Military**

This paper examines the relationship between Korean Buddhism and the enduring impact of colonialism in South Korean society through the issue of clerical marriage. Primarily introduced by Japanese Buddhists during the colonial period, clerical marriage quickly gained prominence among Korean clerics, celebrated by many as a symbol of Buddhist modernity. However, in post-colonial Korea, it transformed into one of the most condemned legacies left by the Japanese Empire, accused of tarnishing and japanizing Korean Buddhism. Seizing political and public support, the pro-celibate Chogye Order waged the so-called "Purification Movement" to drive all married monks out of the Korean Buddhist traditions, solidifying its position as the guardian of true Korean Dharma. However, when the Order dispatched its monks to the newly established Buddhist military chaplaincy in 1968, it condoned their marriage and even granted them special permission to marry in 1981. This paper reveals the Mass Military Faith Promotion Movement and the liminality of Buddhist chaplains - neither fully monks nor military officers - as explanations for the Chogye Order's seemingly paradoxical decision. It argues that military chaplaincy became a "battlefield" where the Chogye Order contested and negotiated its sectarian identity and institutional interests. The case of clerical marriage complicates the discourse on decolonizing the Japanese legacy in post-colonial Korea. It demonstrates how a practice once heralded as modernity can be politically redefined, utilized, purified as a colonial legacy, and yet restored to serve the purifier's interest, thus revealing the complex and contradictory journey towards modernity in South Korea.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL E

#### **Weaving and Unraveling Religious Tapestries**

**AXL CHENG** | 程可欣  
PANELIST

Axl Cheng joins the AM program in regional studies of the Middle East in 2023. She holds a BA from New York University in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Computer Science. At Harvard, she is studying Islam and Muslim communities in China at the intersection of religiosity and ethnicity. She is interested in Islamic history in late imperial China especially in the Qing period. She is also passionate about conducting anthropological work and oral history with Hui and Uyghur Muslims. Additionally, she is interested in the contemporary China-ME relations.

#### **Instantiation Rather Than Syncretism: the Making of Sino-Islam by Muslim Literati in Imperial China**

Since the transmission of Islam to China in the eighth century, the construction and negotiations of a Sino-Muslim identity had been underway, not only in the everyday lives and interactions between Chinese Muslims and native Chinese but also and arguably more importantly, through literary works and narratives of Chinese Muslim scholars in the imperial and late imperial China. A Muslim of Arab or Persian descent in Tang was propped to take office in the state bureaucracy by virtue of his heart of Hua despite his looks of Yi, speaking to assimilation and Sinicization as the principle of dealing with these Yi Muslims in the early years of Islam in China. Departing from this starting point, however, a group of Muslim literati in the Qing took upon themselves to rephrase Islamic traditions and beliefs and articulate them in not only the Chinese language but also the Chinese thinking and philosophical – namely Confucian and Daoist – terms throughout the composing of the Han Kitab. By such an active process of writing Islam into the literary corpus of China, I argue that these Muslim literati portrayed and perceived Islam as “a body of knowledge” and a discursive tradition that is contingent. Discussions about Islam in China are routinely encumbered by frameworks of syncretism hinging on the compartmentalization of “Islam” and “China”. Rather than yet another syncretic articulation of Islam, I propose that the Sino-Islam as a discursive tradition created by Muslim literati is an instantiation of Islam contingent on the sociopolitical milieu of Qing.

**YOUHENG WONG | 釋有恆**  
PANELIST

Youheng Wong (aka Venerable Youheng) is a Ph.D. candidate in Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois Chicago. Her research focuses on neural machine translation of Chinese Buddhist scriptures. She received her M.S. in Electrical Engineering from Washington University and worked as a Senior Firmware engineer for seven years. After ordination, she served as a translator, researcher, editorial director, and chief editor for the English edition of the highly praised "Encyclopedia of Buddhist Arts," which contains 10,000 entries in 20 volumes, covering 8 categories from 46 countries. She is currently the Superintendent at Fo Guang Shan Chicago Buddhist Temple.

**Neural Machine Translation of Voluminous Buddhist Scriptures**

Effective communication and cross-cultural understanding are essential parts of our daily lives in this globalized world, with translation being crucial and in high demand. High-quality and specialized machine translation using AI is an inevitable trend. This research provides solutions to efficiently translate large volumes of Buddhist scriptures from Chinese to English. Buddhism is the fourth-largest religion in the world, with over 500 million followers, and its influences are deeply ingrained in many Asian cultures. Unlike other religions where there is only one major scripture, a typical collection of Chinese Buddhist scriptures contains more than 70 million Chinese characters from over 5,000 texts. These scriptures are written in ancient Chinese styles that span over 1,300 years, and they contain various transliterations from their original Sanskrit or Pali text, which made translation even more challenging. Using neural machine translation, this research applies efficient methods to train an innovative Buddhist parallel corpus. Then, combined with a neural network model trained on large non-Buddhist datasets, the model provides translations comparable to human translators. This research attempts to solve a significant gap in the translation industry where qualified human translators are scarce and universal machine translators are not specialized in any particular domain. This research is precious for the Buddhist community, as currently, only 10% of the Buddhist scriptures are translated into English after 150 years of effort from scholarly human translators. When these scriptures are properly translated, they can help bridge the gap and foster future researches between Asian and Western cultures.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

## WORKSHOP

### Contemporary Music and Theater in East Asia

**CECILIA KIM** | 김희정

2023-24 Kim Koo Visiting Professor, Harvard University  
PRESENTER

Recognized by the Asia Society in the U.S. as one of the 'Asia 21 Young Leaders Initiative' and through the Minister of Culture Award in Korea, Dr. Cecilia Heejeong Kim is one of most innovative composers, stage directors and production artists in Korea. Dr. Kim's work, cross-genre music and multimedia theater, has been performed in over 20 different countries, including Switzerland, Hungary, New Zealand, Germany, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Paraguay. Her work was also aired on WNYC in New York, BBC, CBS in Canada, and CCTV in China. In particular, her solo program with Singapore Chinese Orchestra in 2016 was received highly and praised as "exotic, spiritual, vigorous Korean music" by the well-renowned Straits Times.

While serving as a chief director of prestigious Asia Culture Center, a national center for arts & culture, from 2016 to 2018, Kim produced over 80 different projects in theatres, musicals, plays and animations, which were also distributed to countries such as Iran, the UK and Japan. She also was a director for opening and closing acts of the Delphic Games, known as the Olympics of arts and cultures, and about 30 other major events.

Dr. Kim received her undergraduate in composition at Yonsei University. She received her M.M. and Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania and post-doctoral at Harvard University. She served as a visiting researcher at London University. Kim is currently a professor at the College of Culture and Arts in Sangmyung University.

Her major works includes : Madam Suro (2004) / The Great Operation Planet Earth & Gayageum (2007) / Music-danze Theatre Earth Songs (2009) / Muga (2010) / 100 Hamlets (2013) / Chasing Five Ghosts (2013)

**SHIGEHISA KURIYAMA**

*Harvard University*

DISCUSSANT

Researcher Coordinator at China Observer – Brazil, and Shigehisa Kuriyama received his A.B. degree from Harvard's Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations in 1977 and an A.M. degree in 1978. After completing acupuncture studies in Tokyo, he entered Harvard's Department of the History of Science, which awarded him a Ph.D. in 1986. He joined the Harvard faculty as Reischauer Professor in 2005 after previously working at the University of New Hampshire, Emory University, and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto, Japan. Kuriyama's research explores broad philosophical issues (being and time, representations and reality, knowing and feeling) through the lens of specific topics in comparative medical history (Japan, China, and Europe). His book, *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* (Zone, 1999), received the 2001 William H. Welch Medal of the American Association for the History of Medicine, and has been translated into Chinese, Greek, Spanish, and Korean. His recent work includes studies on the history of distraction, the imagination of strings in the experience of presence, the transformation of money into a palpable humor in Edo Japan, the nature of hiddenness in traditional Chinese medicine, and the web of connections binding ginseng, opium, tea, silver, and MSG. Kuriyama has also been actively engaged in expanding the horizons of teaching and scholarly communication through the creative use of digital technologies both at Harvard and at other universities in the US and abroad.

**PANEL F**

**The Texture of Border Crossing:  
Medium, Message, Methodology**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL F

#### **The Texture of Border Crossing: Medium, Message, Methodology**

**HONGHUI ZHU** | 朱洪慧  
PANELIST

Honghui Zhu (Rita) is an early-career research fellow and doctoral candidate in the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. She is researching multilingualism and language policy in transnational universities for her PhD thesis. She also teaches modules in Chinese language and culture at the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies. She holds a master's degree in advanced studies in Applied Linguistics from KU Leuven, Belgium. As well as speaking Mandarin, English and some Flemish, Honghui speaks Wu Chinese as her first language and enjoys creative writing in her spare time.

#### **Transnational Universities, Language Conflict, and Liberal Nationalism**

Among various kinds of education, transnational education has this salient feature – a multilingual and multicultural learning atmosphere. Transnational universities in the current globalised world have commonly adopted English as a medium of instruction. However, with transnational or cross-border mobility, speakers of various kinds bring their own languages to transnational universities, including English-dominated transnational classrooms, which brings tension and conflict regarding language in practice and language ideology. This paper scans some current transnational institutions and programmes in the People's Republic of China (China hereafter), focusing on their main agendas and formats. Compared with historical transnational universities in the Middle East and East Asia by American Protestant and French Catholic missionaries in the late 1800s and early 1900s, new transnational universities are more profit-driven and undermine academic credibility compared with the historical transnational universities students (Bertelsen, 2020). Besides, transnational universities face more challenges regarding ideals about national universities, especially in collaboration with other nation-states. Liberalism and nationalism were introduced to China almost simultaneously at the turn of the twentieth century by Chinese intellectuals seeking political and social reform (Zhao, 2004). Transnational university, a new format of 21st-century education, is a combination of economic development, liberal awareness, nation-state building, and global migration, and a lens to unveil nationalism in current China. Using public discourses about transnational universities such as government documents, websites, social media publications etc., this paper examines the liberal nationalism in Chinese transnational universities that mitigates the conflicts between language ideology and language practices.

**CHANG LIU | 刘畅**  
PANELIST

I am Liu Chang. I earned my bachelor's degree in Chinese calligraphy from Nanjing University of the Arts in China from 2017 to 2021. Subsequently, I pursued a research master's degree at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Currently, I am a first-year research student, dedicated to exploring innovative methods for preserving calligraphy in contemporary society. Meanwhile, I am an honorary member of the Seal Carving Society of Jiangsu Province, China. My research interests focus on Chinese calligraphy and contemporary Chinese art.

**Tradition and Innovation: Navigating Contemporary Challenges in Calligraphy Preservation across China, Japan, and Korea**

Chinese characters have played a crucial role in the historical exchanges between China, Japan, and Korea. Chinese calligraphy, serving as a medium for these characters, has been integral to this cultural interplay. Japanese and Korean calligraphy, initially rooted in China, evolved to emphasize distinct national characteristics. China terms it "Shufa," focusing on the rules of writing; Japan refers to it as "Shodo," emphasizing emotional expression, while Korea designates it as "Seoye," prioritizing artistic expression. In contemporary times, all three countries face a common challenge: a diminishing need for calligraphy in transcribing words and conveying messages. This decline in practicality has resulted in a dwindling interest and understanding of calligraphy. Consequently, efforts in education, innovative artistic expression, and interdisciplinary collaboration have been initiated to attract a broader audience. This study commences with a literature review examining the reasons behind the significant decline in calligraphy participation. Factors include technological advancements and shifts in character usage compared to the past. A comparative analysis will assess each region's approach based on their respective calligraphic focuses, evaluating the effectiveness of these measures. In addition, the numerous calligraphic exchanges between the three countries and the analysis of artworks will provide insight into their current calligraphic trajectories. Thus, this study could offer possible guidance for the future development of calligraphy in China, Japan, and Korea.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL F

#### **The Texture of Border Crossing: Medium, Message, Methodology**

#### **SHWETA ARORA** PANELIST

Shweta Arora, a PhD candidate at the National University of Singapore [NUS], specializes in gender studies with a focus on early twentieth-century Japanese literature and the contemporary reception of Indian media in Japan. Before joining NUS, she taught Japanese language at Delhi University, India, earning her master's there. Arora has a research background at Osaka University, Japan, supported by the MEXT, and as a research fellow at Kyoto University, Japan, through the Japan Foundation fellowship.

#### **Bridging East and South Asia: Knots of Media, Empowerment, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Contemporary Japan**

Contemporary media landscapes are woven from diverse cultural threads interconnected in a network of influence. This study explores one such intricate weave: the burgeoning impact of South Asian, particularly Indian media in Japan. Globally acknowledged for its captivating blend of music, dance, and narrative, Indian media are a beacon of cultural soft power. This research focuses on Japanese women's innovative reinterpretation and embrace of these media, employing them as a conduit for self-expression and socio-economic empowerment.

Drawing insights from Japanese digital content creators across varying influence scales - from mega to nano - this study delves into the weaving of Indian cultural motifs into Japan's media fabric. A detailed examination of their brand-building narratives, underpinned by Social Blade's YouTube analytics, reveals patterns in viewership, content themes, and user interactions, signifying their pivotal roles as cultural bridges between India and Japan.

Amidst a plethora of studies on Indian media and Japanese popular culture, the intertwining of these two remains an under-explored niche, especially in the narratives of contemporary Japanese women. This research adopts an interdisciplinary lens, bridging gender studies and media analyses from diverse linguistic sources and platforms. As these Japanese content creators champion Indian culture, they not only emerge as modern-day role models but also foster a deeper understanding and bond between East and South Asia.

**Chan Yong Bu** | 부찬용  
*Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

Chan Yong Bu's research focuses on the entanglements of the body, science, and technology within media culture as crucial sites for human-nonhuman relations. In particular, Chan Yong works on industrial media in South and North Korea, media spectacles in the form of science-themed megaevents in East Asia, and contemporary Korean media depictions of industrial ruins and waste. His current book project casts light on the steel manufacturing industry's place in South and North Korea's media culture from the 1950s to the present, crossing the boundaries of Cold War ideologies as well as of industrialist and post-industrialist societies. He received his A.B. in Korean Language and Literature (2016, *summa cum laude*) at Yonsei University and Ph.D. in East Asian Studies (2022) at Princeton University.

## PANEL G

**Across and Within Borders: Politics of Identity and Nationhood**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL G

#### **Across and Within Borders: Politics of Identity and Nationhood**

**SHUNSUKE TANAKA** | 田中 駿介  
PANELIST

I am a PhD candidate at the Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Information Studies at the University of Tokyo. My research reinterprets the history of post-war Japanese political thought through the lens of varying social movements. I am particularly focused on examining the 1960s anti-Vietnam War movement, centering on the historical contributions of the political scientist Michitoshi TAKABATAKE, who played a pivotal role in the movement. Additionally, I also have an interest in the general New Left movement of the 1960s. I conduct oral history interviews with individuals who were active in these movements to capture their firsthand experiences.

#### **Intersectionality in the Indigenous Rights and Struggle of Ainu: Focusing on the Historical Education of a Junior High School in Asahikawa, Hokkaido**

In my previous research on post-war East Asian social movements, I've uncovered a significant issue: minority representation in Japan's societal discourse. The 1960s, a period of vibrant student activism and debates over Japan's imperial past and the U.S.-Japan alliance, largely ignored topics like WWII responsibilities and indigenous rights, particularly for the Okinawans and Ainu. This reflects a broader systemic problem in how these groups are perceived and included in Japanese policies and movements.

This presentation delves into the portrayal of minority histories in Japan, with a particular focus on the unique role of grassroots museums in narrating the stories of the Ainu and other communities. Recent government initiatives, like the 'Upopoy' National Ainu Museum, have been criticized for treating Ainu culture as merely a tourist attraction. This stands in stark contrast to grassroots museums, which are deeply embedded in communities and offer a more authentic understanding of Ainu heritage and struggles. A poignant example is a grassroots history museum located in a junior high school in Asahikawa city, which sheds light on the often-overlooked aspects of Ainu education and rights.

Moreover, this presentation aims to reinterpret grassroots museums from a public history perspective. Museums within schools serve as conduits connecting children, local communities, and specialized academic disciplines, advocating for history as a practical and engaging subject beyond academic confines. Furthermore, this research will discuss indigenous rights in the context of critiquing Japan's monoethnic myths from a postcolonial theory perspective, while maintaining a cross-cutting view encompassing including Okinawa, Amami, and Kore.

## **JOSHUA FERNANDEZ**

PANELIST

Joshua Fernandez is a second-year RSEA AM student at Harvard University. With an undergraduate degree in Arab and Asian history from the University of Ottawa, he spent time studying history, religion, cultures and humanities across the Arab World and China. Previously serving as a Designated Migration Officer for the Canadian Consulate in Guangzhou, Joshua's interests encompass migration policy, PRC's non-Han cultures, languages, and histories (especially those on the PRC borderlands). With knowledge of both Chinese and Uyghur, his research focuses on Chinese and Inner Asian history, migration and citizenship studies, legal and social histories, and ethnic studies of early-modern/modern era.

### **The Power of Anchors and Flows: The Historical Impact of Mao-Era PRC Migration Law on its Multiethnic Inner Asian Frontiers**

This paper proposes an investigation about the PRC household registration and passport systems as part of a larger toolkit of ethnic control in modern China. I demonstrate that domestic (hukou) and international (passport) migration policies from the late-1950s constituted a form of state control that transformed the cultures, social hierarchies, and economics of borderland ethnic communities during the Mao era (1949-1976).

While ample scholarship has broached the topics of Chinese frontier history and ethnic policy, those that mention regulation of migration as an aspect of ethnic control do not consider the tenets of the law and its historic evolution as a tool that coincided with other policies and forms of borderland ethnic control in the PRC's history. Thus, the central question I pose is: "How has migration policy been deployed as a tool by the PRC state to shape the social, economic and political lives of non-Han ethnic groups, specifically those of Inner Asia's Turkic Uyghur, Tibetan, and Mongol peoples, and how do they relate to other state control mechanisms during Mao-era PRC?"

Utilizing English-, Chinese-, Russian- and Uyghur-language primary and secondary sources, I contribute a migratory lens to the overall discussion of borderland ethnic control in the PRC's modern history. My primary sources include original texts of PRC passport and hukou law, 1950s/1960s missives between Tibetan and Indian government authorities, PRC government white papers and internal memos, Soviet-PRC diplomatic cables in the original Chinese texts, Kazakh SSR presidential archives in the original Russian text, and first-hand accounts from Uyghur, Tibetan, and Mongol individuals from the PRC provided by ethnographers of Central/Inner Asia and China proper.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL G

#### **Across and Within Borders: Politics of Identity and Nationhood**

**SUE HYON BAE** | 배수현  
PANELIST

Sue Hyon Bae is a PhD candidate in the Comparative Culture and Languages program at Arizona State University with a focus on the intersection of Korean studies and health humanities. Her dissertation is on contemporary South Korean cancer narratives. She holds an MFA in creative writing from Arizona State University and has published original poetry and translations from Korean poetry, including the works of Kim Hyesoon and Ha Jayoun.

#### **“So You Know Why I Have to Kill You”: The Non-Restorative Justice of Park Chan-wook**

Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance (2002), directed by Park Chan-wook, is the first part of Park's Vengeance trilogy, which explores the theme of revenge and its futility. Two male protagonists, both of whom could be the titular Mr. Vengeance, seek revenge against each other in a complicated plot involving organ trafficking, kidnap, and torture. In this paper, I use a companion analysis of a Park Chan-wook short film, Judgement (1999), and the metaphor of the Judgement of Solomon to argue that both films reflect anxieties about the state of Korea around the millennium and the impossibility of true knowledge and justice in such a state. As a shorter and simpler story about conflicting ownership claims over a corpse, Judgement shares similar themes of commodification and also sheds light on how Park Chan-wook's films use empathy and alienation to form ambiguous moral judgements. Both films demonstrate non-restorative, emotional justice, in which actions are justified not by truth but the emotional sincerity of the victims and wrongdoers, none of whom are wholly vindicated nor made whole. The chiasmus of who is judged and judge and the impossibility of true restorative justice confirms the brutality of the neoliberal economy and society in which the films are set.

**SHUHAO LIANG | 梁书豪**  
PANELIST

Shuhao Liang is currently a first-year master's student in the University of Pennsylvania's East Asian Languages and Civilizations program. He received a history degree from Vassar College and a master's degree from Georgetown University. His research interests include the history of the Japanese empire, Inner Mongolia, food history, animal history, and environmental history.

**Mongolian Sheep, Japanese Horses, and Korean Cows: Animal Industry in Kvingan Manchukuo**

This paper analyzes Japanese plans for the animal industries in Manchuria particularly as seen in the writing of the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR). In the 1930s after Manchukuo was established Japanese technocrats in this sector faced a large area of Mongol territories in the demarcated boundary of Manchukuo; in this respect, unlike in other sectors of the SMR investigation bureau. Perceiving pastoralism as the sole, traditional lifestyle of the indigenous Mongols, the SMR officials advocated developing the "semi-feudal" society and preserving the "tribal tradition" of the Mongols. New methods of raising sheep and horses were created in the knowledge system of the Japanese empire based on hybrid breeding, disease control, fodder, and flora security to ensure the supply of animals and byproducts. Japanese settler communities transformed the Chinese knowledge of raising pigs and utilized the Mongolian knowledge of raising cows and horses.

Using Japanese, Chinese, and English sources, this paper challenges regional-based environmental histories in East Asia. Despite cartographical efforts to demarcate the line between Mongols, Chinese, and Japanese, animals and the knowledge of how to raise them transcended such boundaries. These Japanese plans and practices challenged the binary between pastoralism and agriculturalist practices by bringing both together to increase production from the region for imperial needs. This story contributes to elucidating the position of the understudied Mongolian territories in the literature on Japanese imperialism in Northeast Asia.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL H

#### **Seeing and Imagining: The Visual Arts of East Asia**

**EUGENE WANG** | 汪悅進

*Harvard University*

DISCUSSANT

Eugene Y. Wang is the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art at Harvard University. A Guggenheim Fellow (2005), he is the art history editor of the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (2004). His extensive publications range from early Chinese art and archeology to modern and contemporary Chinese art and cinema. His book, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (2005), explores Buddhist worldmaking; it received the Sakamoto Nichijin Academic Award from Japan. His current research focuses on cognitive study of art and consciousness as well as biocentric art that integrates visual, biological, and ecological systems.

He is also the founding director of Harvard CAMLab that explores the nexus of cognition, aesthetics, and mindscape. The CAMLab projects he heads explore multimedia storytelling and immersive artistic-cum-spiritual experience, integrating humanistic research and sensorial media practice. CAMLab's current projects include Digital Gandhara, a massive mapping of Buddhist sites in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Shadow Cave which probes the enduring cognitive model behind Asian Buddhist caves.

## **BOXI LIU**

PANELIST

Boxi Liu is a PhD candidate from the Bard Graduate Center, New York. He works on ceramics, metalworks, tomb murals, and funerary cultures of Northern China from the seventh through the fourteenth century. His dissertation investigates the funerary goods, practices, and systems of the elite burials of the middle and late Liao periods, as well as the morphology and material cultures of Liao's northern frontier.

### **Shennong or Maonü? Reconsidering the Painting of Gathering Herbs Discovered from the Yingxian Timber Pagoda**

In 1974, a sensational hoard of Liao Dynasty treasures was discovered inside the Sakyamuni statue on the fourth story of Yingxian Timber Pagoda (Yingxian muta). This sacred assemblage contains forty-seven scrolls of woodblock-printed Buddhist scriptures, six colored prints, one hanging scroll, and twenty-eight assorted printed books. Notably, amidst these predominantly Buddhist-associated prints and books, a hanging scroll depicting the alleged scene of "Shennong Gathering Herbs," imbued with conspicuous Daoist symbols, stands alone from its companions. The present study aims to afford a comprehensive interpretation of the central figure in the Shennong Gathering Herbs retrieved from the Yingxian Timber Pagoda, reconsider the identity of the central figure, and further propose the source of its composition. Based on the textual, iconographical, and stylistic analyses of the painting, I argue that the central figure depicted in the Shennong Gathering Herbs is, in fact, the Daoist fairy, Maonü. Furthermore, a detailed examination of the painting's composition and the physiognomic features of the central figure, coupled with the discovery of the Faxiang sect's canon in the muta, reveals a perspicuous association of this hanging scroll with the Faxiang sect and its venerated founder, the Tang Dynasty monk Xuanzang.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL H

#### **Seeing and Imagining: The Visual Arts of East Asia**

**JIAYIN YUAN** | 袁嘉寅  
PANELIST

Jiayin is a first year PhD student at the University of Pennsylvania with interests in medieval Japanese literature, cultural memories, book history, character theory, and narratology. Prior to joining Penn, she received her MA in East Asian Studies from the University of California-Los Angeles and her BA in Asian Studies, International Studies, and Psychology from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Her research centers on *The Tale of the Heike*, a fourteenth-century Japanese war tale. Jiayin is intrigued by the interplay between war tales, cultural memory, and trauma, as well as how texts and narratives establish order by narrating disorders.

#### **Goddess, General, or Chimera: The Knotted Legacy of The Amakusa-ban Heike's Title Page Engraving**

A unique specimen among publications by Jesuit missionaries in the late 16th century, the Amakusa variant of *The Tale of the Heike* has garnered considerable scholarly attention within and outside Japan for its printing in romanized colloquial Japanese. Despite extensive efforts by scholars to unravel its colloquial elements and analyze its adaptation of earlier variants, one aspect of the Amakusa-ban Heike seems to have gone unnoticed: its title page engraving. Embodying a classical European style, the engraving features a regal figure riding a chariot drawn by two lions, raising questions about this perplexing, knotted legacy of the Amakusa-ban: Who is the individual featured? Why the choice of a European style for a Japanese narrative? And, furthermore, how does the engraving relate to the Heike, and for what purpose? By examining the visual elements in the engraving, this study suggests that the seemingly unusual illustration draws inspiration from two prevalent motifs in European art—the Roman goddess Cybele and the Roman general Mark Antony. Contextualizing this synthesis within its historical milieu, I argue that the title page engraving of the Amakusa-ban reflects the Jesuits' decision to shift from Christian to classical iconography, a change aiming at aligning the illustration with the theme and content of the Heike. Such a choice demonstrates the Jesuits' commitment to engage with Japanese language and culture while simultaneously revealing their reluctance to employ explicit Christian iconography for a non-Christian, Japanese text—both influenced by the challenging ecclesiastical environment of missionary work in late 16th century Japan.

**YE ZHU | 朱也**  
PANELIST

Ye Zhu is a doctoral student in Art Theory at Peking University and is currently a visiting student at Harvard University. Her primary research intends to explore the visual culture and aesthetic thinking of intellectuals in Late Qing and early Republic China. Ye's other research interests revolve around image theories and the functionality of visual frames, ranging from picture frames to screens.

**Images in Currency: Exploring Global Image Circulation Centered around Portraits of Li Hung-chang**

Within the late Qing Dynasty's ruling class, diplomatic officials were the first to encounter photography as a modern visual medium. The images of these officials not only convey the political contexts of the early production and circulation of photographs in China but also highlight the media dimension of diplomatic modernization. The case of Li Hung-chang, a prominent statesman of his time, whose images were globally produced, reproduced, circulated, appreciated, and collected alongside his diplomatic activities starting in the 1870s, provides a lens to explore the modernity of photography diplomacy in late Qing. The actor network of modern photography diplomacy includes the subjects themselves, commercial photographers at home and abroad, correspondents, image production companies, journals, newspapers, collaborative illustrators, readers, collectors, and appreciators. Li's engagement with this network was neither accidental nor passive. He consciously exploited the image-diplomacy network to directly or indirectly manage diplomatic affairs, enhancing his influence as leverage in diplomatic negotiations. Photography, as a diplomatic strategy, is not a tradition in China. Despite seemingly adopting and catering to this Western approach, those employing the strategy aimed to make it work for their benefit. In this sense, Li Hung-chang was undeniably the most successful case. What makes Li's case more distinctive is that, whether in photography or diplomacy, he appeared to be the one in control of the power structure while his country had actually lost control of everything. This ironic illusion is not merely a form of "self-deception" but a trap of modernity, driven by capital expansion.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL H

#### **Seeing and Imagining: The Visual Arts of East Asia**

**JIAHN JEONG | 鄭智安**  
PANELIST

Jeong Jiahn is a Ph.D. student in Eastern Asian art history, currently pursuing her degree at the National Institute of Advanced Humanistic Studies at Fudan University. She has a diverse educational background, having completed her MA degree at Fudan University in 2023, where she researched Korean Choson dynasty burial art. She also holds a BA in English-Korean translation from Hankook University of Foreign Studies. She is fluent in Korean, Chinese, and English. Her research interests focus on the funerary art and religions of the Choson Dynasty, particularly emphasizing how people produced, used, and understood material objects within different contexts.

#### **A Study on the Knotted Burial Objects of the Lady Seongsan Yi's Tomb in the Choson Korea in the 17th Century**

Knot culture in Choson Korea is largely represented by chest or waist ornaments, known as Norigae.

An archaeological excavation conducted by the Gyeonggi-do Museum in 2008 unearthed a range of typical ornaments belonging to the tomb of the lady Seongsan Yi (1651-1671) from a lineage cemetery, a seventeenth-century noblewoman. The beautiful grave goods included knotted pendants and pouches, a very rare find for the Choson Dynasty.

This article is to discuss the materiality and cultural exchange behind the Norigae discovered in Yi's burial. After the Imjin War, economic development and the pursuit of luxury goods in Choson society facilitated trade, giving rise to the development of Gyubang(구방)culture.

From the perspective of material remains, the burial objects of the Seongsan Yi Clan are particularly similar to the knot-type burial objects unearthed at the tombs of the high-ranking officials of Ming and Qing. The ceremonial dress of the Ming and Qing envoys also influenced local culture in Seongsan's home region. Another aspect of material and cultural exchange was the private activities of envoys. In the 17th Choson Korean miscellany, the records contain the story of a Choson envoy visiting a brothel, numerous descriptions of Ming prostitutes, fabulous clothes, silver bags, and other adornments.

This paper attempts to explore the aspects of Choson's decorative cultural, diplomatic, and trade-based interaction with China and the private activities of envoys from the burial objects of the lady Seongsan Yi, in an attempt to reveal the cultural exchange factors behind these tiny knots.

**DEBORAH KLIMBURG-SALTER**

*Emerita, University of Vienna, and Associate, South Asian Studies,  
Harvard University*  
DISCUSSANT

Deborah Klimburg-Salter is an art historian and emeritus professor for non-European art history at the Department of Art History of the University of Vienna. She is also director of the research platform "Center for Research and Documentation of Inner and South Asia (CIRDIS)" director of the National Research Network (NFN) "The Cultural History of the Western Himalaya (CHWH)" financed by the Austrian Science Fund and dedicated to transdisciplinary research on the Western Himalayan region. Klimburg-Salter received her PhD from Harvard University in 1976 and her Habilitation from the University of Vienna in 1989.

She has been Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Princeton, at the Institute for Advanced Study, Berlin and at Magdalen College, Oxford University. She has served as visiting professor in various institutes: in 2003 at the University of Pennsylvania, in 2007 at the Oriental Institute at the University of Oxford (where she has been visiting associate since 2006), and also in 2007 at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris. She was the 2009–2010 Mary L. Cornille Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Humanities at Wellesley College. Since 1996, she is professor for non-European art history at the Department of Art History of the University of Vienna.

She has been a member of the UNESCO's International Coordinating Committee for Cultural Heritage Afghanistan since 2003, and furthermore in the framework of the NFN she directs a joint program between the Kabul Museum and University of Vienna and has been member of the Executive Committee of the Nako Preservation Project. Furthermore, she is Research Director for the Giuseppe Tucci Photographic Archive and is guest curator for the Tucci Tibetan collections (MNAO).

Her work has involved extensive field work and writing on the art and archaeology of Afghanistan, of Northern India and of Tibet. In 2007 she was awarded the "Austrian of the Year 2007 – Science" Award for her extraordinary achievements.

**PANEL I****Silk Road and Textiles:  
Interconnected Histories  
and Materiality**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL I

#### **Silk Road and Textiles: Interconnected Histories and Materiality**

**XIAO LIU** | 刘笑  
PANELIST

Xiao (Anne) Liu specializes in the history and material culture of the middle-period Silk Road, with a focus on transregional exchanges. Her previous research investigated the role of Buddhist monk-envoys, texts, and art in constructing the Khotan kingship domestically and spreading the kings' prestige abroad from the 6th to the 10th century CE. Xiao is currently an MA student at Yale University, and she earned her bachelor's degree in Art History from Duke Kunshan University and Duke University.

#### **Painting Piety, Unraveling Bonds: New Interpretations of a Dunhuang Silk Banner in the Freer Gallery of Art**

The Freer Gallery of Art preserves the exquisite silk banner "Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara of the Water Moon" (F1930.36) commissioned in 968 CE in Dunhuang, a pivotal Silk-Road oasis in northwestern China. It portrays Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara in the upper section with four pious patrons from the ruling Cao clan below. Previous scholarship has largely focused on its iconography, with limited attention to artistic style, religious background, and historical implications. This paper situates the banner in broader religio-political contexts, reexamines its artistic style and patrons' identities, and illustrates underlying transregional interactions. Firstly, I focus on Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and scrutinize votive texts on the banner and the Sutra of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara (Dunhuang manuscript No.4532). I argue that in tenth-century Dunhuang, believers valued this Bodhisattva for its power of bringing blessings to family members. Secondly, I reconstruct the map of the Cao family's extensive intermarriage networks and offer clues for deciphering patrons' identities. I argue that the patrons reveal the intricate intermarriage relations of the Cao clan, where female family members played an important role in visualizing and reinforcing the Cao clan's political alliances. The paper employs both visual and textual sources, including contemporaneous silk banners from the Library Cave, tenth-century Dunhuang cave murals, primarily from Mogao Caves 61 and 98, Dunhuang manuscripts, and Chinese art historical records. Disentangling the religious and political dynamics of this banner allows us to understand the evolving Buddhist practices on the Silk Roads, transregional cultural and diplomatic exchanges, and the consolidation of the ruling class's power in tenth-century Dunhuang.

**XIYAO ZHANG** | 张曦瑶  
PANELIST

I am Xiyao Zhang, a PhD student at the College of Textiles, Donghua University in China. My research field is textile history and archaeology, with a special interest in the history of using fibre materials. My doctoral research topic is On the Origin of Silk-ma Combined Textiles (under the East Asian context). In 2021, I conducted a half-year research at the Korea National University of Cultural Heritage to investigate historical materials in the Korean Peninsula. In 2023, I worked one year at the Centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen as a visiting PhD student.

### **Silk-ma Mixed Woven Textiles in East Asian History**

Mixed woven textile (混织) is a textile woven with yarns of two or more different fibers, in which each yarn contains only one type of fiber. Silk and ma (麻, a Chinese character used to name mainly bast and leaf fibers) are two kinds of the earliest fiber materials used in East Asia. They were opposite in properties, usage and social status in ancient East Asian society where cultures shared the same origin and social hierarchy was extremely rigid under the influence of Confucianism. However, they were woven together into silk-ma mixed woven textiles as early as 2355±45 BP in China, as attested by the discovery of archaeological fabric fragments mixed woven with silk and ramie-hemp threads.

Archaeological artefacts and ancient documents of silk-ma mixed woven textiles are seldom discovered or recognized, most probably not because of their rare existence in history but because of the lack of precise identification. This paper will share historical evidence of silk-ma mixed woven textiles in the Chinese mainland, the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, summarize their features and reveal the possible reasons for their elusive presence. It will also go through the early history of using silk and ma fibers in the three areas and conclude by discussing the possible origins of their mixed weaving in the East Asian historical context.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL I

#### **Silk Road and Textiles: Interconnected Histories and Materiality**

**CHENYANG LI** | 李晨阳  
PANELIST

Chenyang Li is currently an M.A. student in the RSEA program at Harvard. She received her B.A. in Peking University, majoring in Foreign Language and World History. Her research interests include Medieval Chinese, pre-Islamic Central Asia, and multi-lingual documents.

#### **Tokharistan in the Mid-7th Century under the Competition among Rulers: The Rise of Nezak Tarkhans**

This paper delves into the complex political landscape of Central Asia during the mid-7th century, with a focus on the ascendance of the local lords Nezak Tarkhans in Tokharistan—the crucial yet often overlooked figures in the historiography of the region. The study presents an analysis of the transformative era in Central Asia and Northwestern India, highlighting the power shifts from the Western Turkic Khaganate ultimately to the Arabs.

Commencing with a clarification of the two Nezak entities, the paper illustrates their distinct political trajectories. Rather than limiting the discussion to the etymology and ethnic identity of 'Nezak,' the analysis contextualizes it within broader historical settings. A notable dispute over the conversion to Islam in Balkh, under pressure from Arabic troops, underscores the intricate choices faced by major local forces. The narrative then shifts to the 'Great Game' in Merw and the assassination of the last Sasanian king, scrutinizing Nezak Tarkhan's role in the broader context of Central Asian politics. Of particular interest is the response of the Turks, given that Tokharistan was one of its centers before the collapse of the Western Turkic Khaganate.

In essence, this paper provides a nuanced understanding of the mid-7th century Central Asian political landscape, underscoring the significance of local rulers like Nezak Tarkhan in shaping regional history. It contributes to a more comprehensive and inclusive narrative of Central Asian history, moving beyond the dominion of major empires to recognize the agency and influence of smaller, often marginalized powers.

**YAN YAN | 闫夔**  
PANELIST

I am a PhD candidate at Hong Kong Polytechnic University. By studying textiles as a temporal medium, my research explores how Li brocade in Hainan connects island cultures across national borders, transcending linear time and emphasizing shared cosmological beliefs, particularly with the Austronesia groups in the Pacific.

### **Li Brocade, a Temporal Media on Hainan island**

Li brocade is a textile, originated from Austronesia (from Taiwan or southern China) during the Neolithic age, arrived in Hainan with migration of Li ethnic 3000 years ago. Through the use and practice of Li brocade created by Li women, the cosmology and transformation of Li culture has been sustained, even since 1) Han dynasty BC110, when Chinese emperor invaded Hainan with the cultural politics of Tianxia and Huayi and controlled through tribute system until Qing dynasty (1911), and 2) 1911-1949, when Hainan showing military value, attracted gazes from Japan and the West. However, with Hainan was "liberated" by PRC (1950) and became SZE(1988), Li became minority (1958), cultural revolution(1966), Li brocade is seen as heritage in the museum or commodify in the market, which devalues the creativity of Li women and subjectivity of Li culture. Moreover, since Belt and Road (2013), Pacific islands are also encountering Chinese modernity. I will take Li brocade as temporal-object by uncovering its history from everyday life, which 1) culturally reflect Li's everyday perception, collective memory and future imagination. 2) connects the cultures in other Austronesia islands 3) reflect the tension between the cultural hegemony from Han since BC110 and the resistance from Li brocade. I argue that it is significant to transform intrinsic resistance into consciousness so that the subjectivity of Li culture can be taken back to Li women's creativity. This claims for a future across border of modern nation-state or Tianxia, but build culture dialogue from history and everyday life.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL J

#### Perceiving Gender in East Asia

#### WAI-YEE LI

*Harvard University*

#### DISCUSSANT

Wai-yee Li is the 1879 Professor of Chinese Literature at Harvard, so named to commemorate the year that Harvard began teaching Chinese as a foreign language. She joined the department in 2000 and is currently serving as Director of Graduate Studies. Li earned her B.A. from the University of Hong Kong (1982) and her Ph.D. from Princeton University (1988), where she was associate professor from 1996 to 2000. She also taught at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Li's research spans topics ranging from early Chinese thought and narrative to late imperial Chinese literature and culture. She is interested in early Chinese historical writings, Ming-Qing fiction, drama, and poetry, and the relationship between literature and history. Her new book, *The Promise and Perils of Things: Literature and Material Culture in Late Imperial China*, will be published by Columbia University Press. She is also editing a book on gender and friendship in China and co-editing an anthology of Ming-Qing plays with Wilt Idema and Stephen West.

Li has received fellowships or grants from the Harvard Society of Fellows, the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation, ACLS, Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, the American Academy in Berlin, and the Guggenheim Foundation. She has taught courses on Ming-Qing culture and literature, early Chinese thought and historiography, gender and sexuality, and pre-modern fiction and drama. In July 2014, Li was elected by Academia Sinica to its List of Academicians.

**DORIS TANG | 唐藝璇**  
PANELIST

I am a first-year PhD student in Art History at UCLA. My research primarily focuses on representations of women and femininity in late imperial Chinese paintings. My scholarly interests also include women artists' re-presentation of Chinese visual language in Edo Japan and Choson Korea.

**The Burden of Female Talent and Feminine Beauty: Kiyohara Yukinobu and Her Portrayal of Femmes Fatales**

By analyzing paintings of Chinese beauty (*kara bijin e*) against the backdrop of women's history in Tokugawa Japan, this study seeks to investigate how the modes of representation employed by seventeenth-century Japanese professional women artists connote gender-specific realities—that is, the burden of female talent and feminine beauty.

In early modern Japan, artistic reinterpretations of China extended beyond simply borrowing motifs. The imperative to shape one's self-image through comparative terms resonated among female professional painters who faced systematic marginalization.

Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682), one of the few women whose names appeared among the lists of hundreds of Kanō school painters, remains overlooked in the English-speaking world. Throughout her career, she grappled with the challenge of adhering to the established principles of the Kanō school in her artistic pursuits while also seeking to distinguish herself from her contemporaries. The Kanō workshop favored the imitation of past models, whereas recognition in a male-dominated art world was only attainable for women with exceptional talent, whose artworks were novel and interesting. Although the subject matters of Yukinobu's paintings were much the same as those of her male counterparts, in order to attain acclaim, she necessarily obfuscated the boundary between the standard Kanō repertoires and constructing her own modes of representation.

Giving heed to tragic historical female personae, such as Yang Guifei and Xishi, Yukinobu's artworks re-present the societal views of beautiful women as causing socio-political destruction. Yukinobu's portrayal of *kara bijin* delivered particular sensibility and sympathy to women's imposed destinies, suggesting both the artist's mastery of the Kanō repertoire and intentional allusions to the cultural myths of womanhood.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL J

#### Perceiving Gender in East Asia

**XI HE | 和西**  
PANELIST

He Xi (和西) is a second-year master's student in the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department at Stanford University. His research fields generally include literary, cultural, and gender history in late imperial China, with a special focus on women's writings in the seventeenth-century Jiangnan region. He is also working on a project analyzing representations of frustrated masculinities in Ming-Qing novels and personal writings.

#### **The Literata in Exile: The life, writings, and social network of Huang Yuanjie (1610-1668)**

The seventeenth-century Jiangnan Region was split into fractions, not only geographically by the invasion of Manchu troops but also socially by the competition for cultural distinction and intellectual debates on moral values. However, I demonstrate how the female artist Huang Yuanjie, navigating an impoverished life with a suspect moral identity, emerged as a knot connecting fragmented spaces, communities, and ideas. In the first section, I focus on Huang's long poem "Song of Reclusion" 空山行, a detailed and vivid description of Huang's journey in exile and other writings reflecting her treacherous flight from calamity. I argue that this "female exile literature" constructs a unique "psychogeographical" map, threading geographical sites by two intertwined themes. As a monument of friendship, it documents the acquaintances from whom Huang received aid; as a map of traumatic public memories, it records the Manchu's conquest of Jiangnan cities. In the subsequent section, I illustrate Huang's central role in connecting isolated female talents, encompassing gentry women, famous courtesans, and professional artists, by examining her poetic communication and personal interactions with other female writers. While Huang benefited from her heterogeneous social network, her boundary-crossing actions also elicited suspicions regarding her moral identity. The final section of my paper delves into male literati's conflicting attitudes toward Huang's problematic reputation, further reflecting the complexity of Confucian regulations on women. I also discuss how Huang defended herself by creatively employing Chan-Buddhist thoughts.

**YINGHUA LUO | 罗英华**  
PANELIST

Ph.D.candidate from Nankai University, specializing in the Social and Cultural History of Medicine in China, currently serving as a visiting scholar at the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. My research interests focus on the evolution of medical education in modern China within a global context. My ongoing dissertation is a study on the localization and professionalization of the Peking Union Medical College in China.

**“Feeding on the Blood of My Children”: A Cultural Analysis of the Rumor about Female Students Selling Blood at Peking Union Medical College Hospital**

In 1921, the establishment of the Peking Union Medical College, funded by the American Rockefeller Foundation, marked a significant moment in Beijing's history. This American-style medical institution's integration into the culturally diverse tapestry of Chinese society revealed profound discrepancies in behaviors and values, catalyzing several pivotal societal events. A particularly illustrative incident occurred in 1930, involving the alleged death of a female student purportedly due to selling blood to the college hospital. Initially reported by the Shi Bao (Truth Daily 日日真), this story ignited widespread public discourse and controversy. Although later identified as a mere misinformation, the narrative found its way into literature and was broadly embraced by society.

This paper traces the trajectory of this event, examining its genesis, escalation, and the broader societal implications it engendered. It investigates the societal perceptions of gender and national crises, the reception of modern medical technologies, and the underlying issues of wealth disparity that fueled the rumor's spread. This analysis contributes to a better understanding of the complex interplay between science, technology, and socio-cultural dynamics. The study underscores the intricate and nuanced impacts and perceptions of medical and scientific advancements within societal frameworks, offering an understanding of their role in shaping and reflecting societal norms and tensions.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL J

#### Perceiving Gender in East Asia

**JUNHO YOON** | 윤준호  
PANELIST

Junho Peter Yoon is a fifth-year Ph.D. student in the East Asian Studies Department at New York University. His research mainly focuses on the question of how to rethink ethics in the age of Anthropocene beyond the categorical confines of the human by contextualizing this inquiry through modern and contemporary Korean history, literature, and cinema. While still in the works, he is following a thread that weaves together different nervous nodes like plants, memory, aporia, eros, anarchy, global capitalism, and the (post-) Cold War histories.

#### **Plants and their Discontents: Envisioning Divergent Ways of Being in Han Kang's *The Fruit of My Woman* and Itō Hiromi's *Wildgrass on the Riverbank***

Despite its ostensibly self-evident and universal status since the European Enlightenment, the idea of the human still proves to be an exclusive condition for many across the world. What is clear, especially in light of the anthropogenic climate crisis, is that the bourgeois genre of the human and its decadent "lifestyles" that necessitate destruction is no longer tenable. Drawing from discourses on "vegetal metaphysics" by Michael Marder et al, this essay situates two literary works by Han Kang and Itō Hiromi, both of whose female protagonists live precariously on the margins of the urban mainstream society, yearning for something absent in the contemporary techno-capitalist world but do not yet have the language for. I focus my critical attention on their desiring for and transfiguration into plants, and how such movement of becoming towards vegetal otherness articulates a radical refusal of the social and political processes that "naturalize" or assimilate their others while inducing a sense of nihilistic withdrawal or impotence. Plants do not merely adjust to their given environments but are active expressions of their forces. That is, they embrace as much as they reveal the violent conditions of the world they inhabit. Therefore, this essay seeks to argue that to become like plants is also to desire and harness an ethico-political agency that does not simply reject but breaks through the violent representational structures of liberal humanism that bind us to a particularly narrow understanding of what it means to be human.

## **ALEXANDER ZAHLTEN**

*Harvard University*

DISCUSSANT

Alexander Zahlten's research interests center on film and audiovisual culture in East Asia, with a focus on Japan. His work explores fundamental shifts in how we engage with media through the connections between larger economic, social, and institutional structures and media aesthetics. Zahlten is especially interested in the experience of media ecologies, and his recent work touches on topics such as film's connections to other media, 'amateur' production, or the history of the connection of electricity and the film industry in Japan.

Zahlten's publications have examined the role of postcolonial fantasy in Korean "remakes" of Japanese films, the role of a character such as Doraemon as shared media memory in East Asia, the metaphors of world in the media mix environment of Japan, the history of German sexploitation cinema, or poststructuralist media theory in 1980s Japan. Recently, Zahlten has co-edited the volume *Media Theory in Japan* (Duke University Press, 2017). His monograph *The End of Japanese Cinema: Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies* (Duke University Press, 2017) maps developments in film and media culture in Japan from the 1960s - 2000s as a whole through the genres of pink film, Kadokawa film, and V-Cinema. He has curated film programs for the German Film Museum, the Athénée Français Cultural Center, Tokyo, Parasophia Festival of Contemporary Culture (Kyoto), or the AAS in Asia Conference in Kyoto and was Program Director for the Nippon Connection Film Festival, the largest festival for film from Japan, from 2002 to 2010.

Alexander Zahlten received his Ph.D. in Film Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany in 2007. He conducted dissertation research at Nihon University (2003-2005) and postdoctoral research at Meiji Gakuin University (2009-2011). Zahlten was Assistant Professor in the Department of Film & Digital Media of Dongguk University in Seoul, South Korea for one and a half years before joining Harvard in 2012.

## **PANEL I**

### **Knot of Memories: Reimagining the East Asian Past**

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL I

#### **Knot of Memories: Reimagining the East Asian Past**

**YOUYUN YE** | 叶有韞  
PANELIST

Youyun Ye is a first-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Area Studies at the University of Tokyo. Currently, his academic interests lie in the cultural and religious policies during the Japanese colonial period in Taiwan, with a particular focus on the Kominka (Imperialization) Movement, as well as postwar Taiwan's decolonization process. His future plan is to explore the interactions between Chinese diasporas and Taiwanese in Southeast Asia during the Japanese occupation period (1941-1945). Before joining the University of Tokyo, Ye studied East Asian Confucianism at Nanjing University and researched Taiwanese Imperial Japan servicemen at Waseda University.

#### **Imagining Taiwan's Cultural Identity through Japanese Colonial Legacy: A Study on the Reconstruction of Shinto Shrines in Taiwan**

Since the late 1990s, a substantial number (1710) of legacies from the Japanese colonial period in Taiwan have been officially recognized by the ROC government as "cultural assets," including 31 Shinto shrine remains. Some scholars contend that the revival of these shrines, strongly associated with the Japanese Empire's assimilation efforts, reflects a colonial "nostalgia" (怀旧). However, a close examination of all Shinto shrine remains' preservation status reveals that only 4 reconstructed main shrines, and all deviate from the original design (e.g., Tongxiao Shrine's eaves changed to the Minnan-style swallowtail ridge, and Yanshui Elementary School Shrine transformed into a fusion of Shinto shrine and Confucian temple). This study employs Assmann's Theory of Cultural Memory to elucidate this "combined" (混合) architecture style, demonstrating that (1) its essence is not pro-colonial (otherwise, shrines should be faithfully reconstructed), but rather reflects the integration of Japanese elements into Taiwan's cultural identity. (2) Behind this is also a "connection" (连结) of multiple interests—the DPP central government shaping Taiwan-centered historical perspective; local governments promoting tourism with "Taiwanese-characteristic Shinto shrines;" and local residents seeking to preserve memory continuity. The negotiation process of Tongxiao shrine's reconstruction plan serves as an example. Finally, incidents such as the forced repatriation of Japanese deities at Taoyuan Shrine in 2022 underscore the ongoing resistance from the Kuomintang against "constructing Taiwan's local imagination through Japan," highlighting a "dead knot" (死结) related to post-colonial issues and bipartisan struggle within the revival of Shinto shrines in Taiwan.

**HECHEN LIU | 刘鹤晨**  
PANELIST

Liu Hechen is an anthropologist and photographer whose research and photographic portfolio center on the symbiotic connections between urban development, renewal, and human experiences. His academic inquiries delve into the interplay among memories associated with colonization, socialism, and post-socialism within the urban landscape. Over the last four years, he has extensively documented worker dormitories in Beijing's Dongdaqiao area, staff residences at Shanghai's 17th Cotton Mill, and the post-industrial landscapes in Missouri, United States.

**Tracing Bonds Through Cemetery: Evolution of the Sino-Japan Friendship Garden in Fangzheng County and Its Commemorative Initiatives**

This study examines the Sino-Japanese Friendship Garden in Fangzheng County, China's sole authorized cemetery for deceased Japanese settlers. It serves as a case study to analyze the Garden's construction from a moral economic perspective. The Garden symbolizes collaborative efforts between the county government and Japanese friendship associations organized by former settlers to promote historical memory preservation and economic ties. In particular, analyzing the removal of a memorial wall within the Garden, this research explores controversies and potentials, revealing the Garden as tangible evidence of Japan's colonial history in the postwar landscape of memorialization. Additionally, this study examines the role of members of friendship associations in fostering an alternative understanding of wartime history, facilitating a transition in historical consciousness from perceiving themselves solely as victims to acknowledging their role as perpetrators. This shift in perspective underscores the necessity for achieving redemption, wherein their contribution to the construction of the Garden becomes a means of reconciliation. However, complexities surface. The Garden encountered anti-Japan sentiments during political tensions, highlighting ongoing challenges in collaboration between the county government and friendship associations. This study cautions against overly optimistic perceptions of the Garden as drivers of transnational interactions, recognizing evolving significance within shifting political contexts. It emphasizes the need for deeper societal reevaluation within both nations and the friendship associations. Moreover, it calls for a critical awareness of the processes of memory representation and reproduction, which tend to prioritize narratives beneficial to Sino-Japanese relations while simultaneously silencing other significant historical perspectives.

## BIOS & ABSTRACTS

### PANEL I

#### **Knot of Memories: Reimagining the East Asian Past**

**YONGKANG CHEN** | 陈永康  
PANELIST

Yongkang graduated from Duke Kunshan University with a bachelor's degree in Global Cultural Studies, in the World Literature track, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in the program of Critical Asian Humanities at Duke University. His research background focuses on the representation of traumatic memories in postwar literature and cinema. He works in four languages, including Chinese, English, German, and Japanese, and is determined to explore postwar Okinawan literature and cinema in the paradigm of East Asia. In terms of the Okinawan context, he is interested in the Okinawan writer Medoruma Shun and director Takamine G.

#### **A Rhizomic Okinawa: Reimagining Regional Complexity in the Roots of Heterogeneity**

This paper reimagines a complex vision of East Asia in the paradigm of the rhizome, which was initially suggested by Deleuze and Guattari and rhetorically draws an analogy to the semi-tropical banyan tree, or gajumaru tree in Okinawa. In terms of its raucously entangled roots and growing patterns, it imitates Okinawa's inherently heterogeneous cultural vestige in the face of Japan's hypocritical multiculturalism. This paper proceeds to excavate the traces of the Battle of Okinawa and Japanese colonialism from postwar literary texts and cinematic artworks. Focusing on two prominent Okinawan writers and directors, Medoruma Shun and Takamine G, this paper examines how linguistic discrepancy, wartime traumatic memories, and ambivalent cohabitation with military bases are discursively portrayed in their magical realistic approaches. Represented by Medoruma's war fiction "Droplets" (Suiteki, 1997) and Takamine's film Untamagir (1989), the superimposition of fiction and nonfiction is discernible in their strategies. Combining fictional hallucinations and nonfictional realistic images, including, the presence of U.S. military bases and Japanese ideological intervention, I shall argue that these works attempt to estrange the audience and engender an exclusive sphere that is explicable only to those beleaguered. In this case, a rhizomic Okinawa that is inscribed in its unique legacies is reframed and reconfigured. Simultaneously, this paper will suggest that the predicament of Okinawa confronted with the enforced assimilation of cultural homogeneity is universal within East Asia, and correspondingly, the paper contends that the notion of East Asia is embedded in the roots of shared heterogeneity.

## **WEIYU YANG**

PANELIST

Weiyu Yang is a graduate student from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Department of Japanese Language and Literature. In the Master's program, Yang's research interests center around Modern Japanese Literature and comparative studies of China-Japan literature. Yang is also interested in comparative literature and world literature studies and seeks to use them as a theoretical method or critical approach to analyze East Asia from a global perspective, hoping that by creating such a discussion space, a new dynamic of literary power relations will become visible and East Asian literature can better exercise its agency in the global discourse.

### **Aliud Miraculum: 1922 in East Asian literature**

The year 1922 has been widely acknowledged as the *annus mirabilis* of modern Western literature due to the emergence of significant works such as James Joyce's *Ulysses* and T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land*. Across the Pacific, the 1920s of East Asia witnessed a vicissitude of literary revolutions in which the year 1922 acted as a crucial turning point. This pivotal year was marked by both "continuous quasi-parallel" and "unintentional divergence" in relevance to Western literary modernism. This article provides an overview of representative literary events that occurred in East Asia in 1922 (primarily focusing on China, Japan, and Korea), ranging from prototypical modern writers and symbolic literary works to literature-related political movements and the establishment of civil literary societies in history. This analysis includes an examination of the literary contribution of 1922 to the modernization of East Asian temporality as well as an exploration of psychological interaction of literary discourses between East Asian countries. Furthermore, this article reveals a self-evident succession and deviation from the Western narrative, regarding close-reading texts around 1922, which ultimately indicates a micro panorama of inter-construction between East and West.

# KNOTS | COMPLEX LEGACIES AND IMAGINED FUTURES OF EAST ASIA

The 27th Harvard East Asia Society Conference  
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