5th Conference on Asian Studies

Biennial conference of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Asienkunde (DGA)
9–11 September 2025, Bonn (Germany)

The 5th Conference on Asian Studies will take place in Bonn, Germany, from 9 to 11 September 2025. With over 20 panels, this conference, as in previous years, provides a framework for interdisciplinary exchange between Asian studies scholars working on Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam, among others.

Registration and conference fees

To register for the conference, please send an email with the following information to 2025@dga-conference.de:

- your full name
- your institutional affiliation
- the address to appear on the conference fee receipt
- if you are a DGA member

Once we have received your email, we will send you the account details to which the conference fee (see table below) should be transferred.

Please note:

- After 31 July 2025, the conference fee will increase by 15 euros.
- If you wish to take advantage of a reduced conference fee, please enclose current proof of enrolment with your registration.

Conference fees

Early bird registration (until 31 July 2025)*

DGA members	50 euros
DGA members reduced	25 euros
non-DGA members	100 euros
non-DGA members reduced	50 euros

*From 31 July 2025, the conference fees will increase by 15 euros.

Conference venue

The conference venue is located in the main building of the University of Bonn at Regina-Pacis-Weg 3. The conference will be held exclusively in person. Furthermore, no travel expenses can be reimbursed by the DGA or the University of Bonn.

All information about DGA membership can be found here:
https://asienforschung.de/membership-application/

Panel 1:
Youth Movements against Authoritarianism in Asia: Tracing the Transformations

Panel organisers:
Teresa Jopson (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)
Anas Ansar (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)

The frequency with which the youth have been at the forefront of recent political and social movements across Asia has captured the world's attention. Movements such as the pan-Asian "Milk Tea Alliance", the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, Myanmar's spring revolution against the military dictatorship, and the July 2024 student uprising in Bangladesh signal a new wave of youth activism. These movements are characterized by novel patterns, innovative strategies, solidarity dynamics, and transnational digital networks, revealing a unique transformation in both scale and scope. Youth movements in Asia have a long legacy of challenging authoritarian regimes and pushing for societal change. Alongside resistance, movements like Taiwan's 2014 Sunflower protests and Thailand's Move Forward party (2023) highlight youth-driven efforts to mainstream progressive issues like same-sex marriage and democratic reform. The digital space has reshaped how young generations have used informational, transnational, visual, and emotional tools via social media to create new forms of domestic and cross-border mobilization and collaboration. At the same time, these movements continue to face significant challenges, as they confront deeply rooted political, economic, and social institutions that resist the changes they seek.

Studying youth movements in Asia against authoritarianism is crucial, given the region's unique characteristics: a significant youth population, ethnic and religious diversity, varied regime types, political parties, authoritarian resilience, stagnating democracies, and a political culture that is often intolerant of dissent. Understanding these movements provides valuable insights into youth participation and resistance, particularly in the context of post-colonial nation-building struggles. This panel expects to offer transferable lessons with global implications, highlighting the universal fight for democracy and social justice across the world. This panel aims to explore the new wave of youth activism against authoritarian regimes in Asia, focusing on the diverse forms of protest and the violent repression these movements face. We ask, *how have recent youth protest cultures evolved in response to political, economic, and social changes in Asia?* The panel brings together scholars, particularly early career researchers from the Global South to critically examine the contexts, demands, strategies, and outcomes of these movements. Drawing on various disciplinary perspectives and case studies, the panel addresses youth and student political movements across South and Southeast Asia. By doing so, we seek to trace the transformation of these movements and develop a nuanced understanding of resistance from below.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Lying Flat: Redefining Success and Resistance Among China's Youth
Sarah Köksal (Ludwig Maximilian University Munich)

Marxism Haunting Marxism: Tangpingism as the Revival of China's Marxist Resistance Tradition in Digital Space
Cheng Ma (Free University of Berlin)

Scripts of Dissent: Theorizing Study Circles and Intellectual Resistance in Indian Universities

Vidyasagar Sharma (Bielefeld University)

Graffiti as the Manifesto for the Future: (Re)Imagining Bangladesh through Revolutionary Street Art

Anas Ansar (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)
Abu Faisal Md Khaled (Ruhr University Bochum)

Why Solidarity Fades: The Decline of the Milk Tea Alliance

Tuwanont Phattharathanasut (Humboldt University of Berlin)

Panel 2:
Resisting the Violence of Development: Stories from Indonesia

Panel organisers:
Venansius Haryanto (University of Bonn)
Ignasius Juru (Floresa.co)
Tamara Soukotta (Erasmus University Rotterdam & Radboud University)

During the two rounds of leadership of the Indonesian president Joko Widodo (Jokowi), several parts of Indonesia experienced the violent cost of the Indonesian government's ambitions for their Mega Development Projects. These projects were promoted as the government's good intentions-deeds to further develop and modernize the country, particularly in the eastern part, assumed to be less developed, to bring Indonesia to the same level as the so-called developed countries. In reality, more often than not these projects were experienced by the communities they aimed to develop as violence that brought suffering to the people in the form of land dispossession, displacements, uprootedness, even natural disaster. In the face of the development projects imposed on them and the violent consequences of those projects, the people show resistance in various forms: protests, dialogues, using their bodies to stop the projects, even co-creating alternatives for the government's plan. Many of these are still ongoing.

One of the examples of the resistance to the violence of those development projects under Jokowi's administration is the resistance of Indigenous Manggaraian communities in and around Labuan Bajo, Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Labuan Bajo itself is one of the so-called "Ten New Balis" in Indonesia, and it is part of the national investment project in the tourism sector. This has been documented in a series of documentaries released in 2023, titled "Dragon for Sale" by Ekspedisi Indonesia Baru. Following the release of this documentary, two of this panel's convenors have argued in our recent article, "The Indonesian (Modern/Colonial) Dream of Development" that development projects imposed on the Indigenous Manggaraian communities are in fact manifestations of Anibal Quijano's coloniality of power, and therefore inherently racist.
In this panel, from our starting point in Indonesia, we aim to shed light on the stories that speak of the violence brought by development projects in the context of Indonesia.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

The Green Coloniality and the Pacification of Indigenous Resistance in Flores Island, Eastern Indonesia

Venansius Haryanto (University of Bonn)

Beyond Conventional Journalism: Local Media and Radical Democracy

Adolfus Frederik (University of Ghent)

Resisting Being a Sacrifice Zone: A Counter Discourse of Indigenous Movement Against the Green Energy Enthusiasm in Flores Island.
Ignasius Jaques Juru (University of Bonn)

Lambo-Mbay Dam: Space, Place and Violence
Muntaza (University of Bonn)

Development and Racism in Indonesia: In between Coloniality and Resistance/(Re)-existence
Tamara Soukotta (Erasmus University Rotterdam & Radboud University)

Panel 3:
Popular Confucianism: Exploring the Confucian Revival in China and Beyond through the Lenses of Social Science

Panel organisers:
Sandra Gilgan (University of Bonn)
Canglong Wang (University of Brighton)

The Confucian revival in China on academic and political levels since the 1980s has received important scholarly attention in Asian and Chinese studies. Yet there is limited awareness of the grass-roots developments in popular Confucianism that have grown in the 2000s, especially when explored through evidence-based research and social science approaches. Ordinary people—technicians, employees, workers, or peasants—have transgressed boundaries towards an area that used to be accessible only to the scholar-literati with an official position, such as Confucian temples and education based on the Confucian classics.

The most visible educational initiative is classics-reading education for children in so-called 'study halls' and 'academies'. People aim to cultivate modern 'virtuous persons', hoping that they will change China for the better (Billioud & Thoraval 2015; Gilgan 2022). Moral education through reading the classics also fuels self-cultivation in the sense of Confucian individuality and citizenship (Wang 2023). 'Confucian entrepreneurs' use educational measures to expose their employees to Confucian classics and ritual, reflecting their contribution to the making of the modern citizen of high moral quality that the state desires, and to the construction of a Chinese capitalist ethic (Lan Jiang Fu 2022). Social science approaches to Confucian studies has already been recognized as one of the top ten academic highlights of 2023 in China, while this new trend is still gaining momentum in Europe. Therefore, we bring researchers together to critically discuss the variety of popular references to Confucianism—such as education, spirituality, business, and local politics. We welcome contributions from area, heritage, citizenship and religious studies, from anthropology, sociology, and other fields of study that use evidence-based research on popular Confucianism in China and beyond.

In a workshop, we invite scholars to prepare small inputs on their specific research topics and address questions such as:
- What are the roles and functions of 'revived' Confucianism? What do people need or use it for?
- Which ideas about 'tradition', 'history', 'heritage' and other 'pasts' prevail in the field?
- What tensions can be identified between the past, present and future? Between ideals and reality?
- How do the actors in the field relate to family, society and politics?

Along all cases, we will discuss and reflect on methodological opportunities and challenges:
- What are the (methodological) challenges and opportunities of applying social science approaches to Confucian studies?
- How can interdisciplinary approaches to Confucian studies be achieved by integrating humanities and social sciences?

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Confucian Practices: Towards a Sociological Concept for Understanding the Confucian Revival
WANG Canglong (University of Brighton)

Confucian Practice as Societal Utopianism
Sandra Gilgan (University of Bonn)

Guoxue and the Confucian Revival in China
Philip Scherer (University of Tübingen)

Visions of Redemption for Uncertain Times: Grassroots Neo-traditional Confucian Teaching in China today
Gil Hizi (University of Cologne) & SHI Ziyuan (University of Cologne)

Lineage Power and Confucian Revival in Shenzhen, China
Ling Li (University of Erfurt)

Confucianism at the Nexus of Business Practices, Academic Research, and Political Instrumentalisation in Contemporary China
Matthias Niedenführ (Zeppelin University)

Constructing discursive assemblages and infrastructures of memory (IoMs) in the actualisation of Hanfu discourse, narratives, and practices
Andrew M Law (Newcastle University)

"Shendu慎獨" and (Re)construction of Chinese Elites: Past and Future
FANG Zhaohui (Tsinghua University)

Confucianism as a Cultural Subsystem in Today's China: Symbols and Action, Imagination and Time
Sébastien Billioud (University of Paris Cité)

From Empty Good Words to Situational Wisdom: The Ethnographic Relevance of Confucianism
ZENG Yukun (University of Michigan)

Panel 4:
Urban Infrastructural Expansion in East and Southeast Asia: Actors, Access, and the Unseen

Panel organisers:
Friederike Trotier (University of Passau)
Yueran Tian (Bielefeld University)
An Huy Tran (Bielefeld University)

For decades, cities in East and Southeast Asia have been undergoing rapid urbanization boosted by the process of infrastructure expansion. Such a process includes not only physical networks of transport, housing, and digital connectivity but also entangled networks of actors, knowledge (know-how), and governing practices. Looking at different kinds of infrastructure in the urban landscape sheds light on their crucial role in shaping economic developments, mobility, and how people live and work. Moreover, access to infrastructures in urban cities is not always universal. Studies have shown that different social groups and communities are hindered from having full access to

certain infrastructures due to factors such as locations, financial disadvantages, political influences, gender, race and ethnicity, etc. As a result, infrastructural development and access have far-reaching impacts on social inequality and stability.

This panel examines such an uneven landscape of urban infrastructure in cities across East and Southeast Asia. Integrating perspectives from urban studies, sociology, social anthropology, political geography, and area studies, the panel aims to explore the emergence and development of different infrastructures as part of the process of urban expansion through different case studies including digital infrastructure for works and services, urban heritage, migration and arrival infrastructure, etc. Such a focus on urban infrastructures sheds light on: (1) what infrastructure developments tell us about the shaping of inclusion and exclusion in urban spaces in regions where urban expansion has been happening at a rapid speed, (2) the contrary between heavily-concentrate/prioritized and overlooked spaces and communities, (3) how different actors and communities navigate the shifting urban landscapes and the process of infrastructural expansion, and (4) the broader and multifaceted political and public discourses and political economies surrounding infrastructural expansion in the cities.

By bridging discussions on infrastructure, labor, digitalization, and urban knowledge production, this panel highlights the uneven geographies of urban transformation in East and Southeast Asia and aims to potentially develop a collaborative publication project. We invite contributions to this panel that explore the following aspects:

- The emergence and development of new and unconventional infrastructures as a result of the expansion and development of cities and urban spaces
- Unseen and overlooked aspects of urban growth and infrastructure development (including but not limited to marginalized spaces, communities, and social groups)
- Which sites/ spaces are revitalized or turned into heritage while others remain neglected?
- The intersection of urban infrastructural expansion (e.g. housing, transportation, digital networks) with labor, labor conditions, cultural and community networks

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Looking beyond Spectacular Infrastructures: Overlooked, Unseen and Unspectacular Spaces in Southeast Asia
Friederike Trotier (University of Passau)

Real Estate Agencies as Arrival Infrastructure for Foreign Migrants in Urban Japanese City
An Huy Tran (Bielefeld University)

How to Urbanise a Chinese New Village in Kuala Lumpur? An Analysis of Infrastructure Discourses in Sin Chew Daily in the 1990s and Early 2000s
Ryanne Flock (University of Würzburg)

Bridging Aspirations: Urban Transformation and Adaptation in Thu Duc City's Residential Landscape
Franziska S. Nicolaisen (University of Halle–Wittenberg)

Uneven Terrain: Navigating Low-end Digitalization of the Logistic Industry in Vietnam
Jessica Steinman (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

Expanding Digital Public Infrastructure in China: Training Welfare Service Delivery Personnel through Mobile-App-Based Competitions
Yueran Tian (IT University of Copenhagen)

Educational Centralization and Familial Dispersion: Examining the Socio-Spatial Impacts of School Consolidation Policy in Rural China
Zhenwei Wang (Heidelberg Center for Ibero-American Studies)

Panel 5:
Migration in Contemporary South and Southeast Asia: Causes, Consequences, and Emerging Issues

Panel organisers:
Rohini Mitra (University of Bonn)
Antje Missbach (Bielefeld University)

South and Southeast Asia, home to nearly 20 countries and more than a third of the world's population, have historically been hotspots for highly diverse migrant and refugee movements. Over the past century, conflict, war, and (violent) political regime change in countries of the region, including Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh have led to large- scale displacements. The majority of these displaced populations are also hosted within the two regions, including in Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia, among others. For instance: the multiple armed rebellions and military coups in Myanmar over the latter half of the 20th century has created numerous refugee groups in other countries of the region including the Chin, Karen, Mon, and most recently, the Rohingya. Next to the forced migration movements in South and Southeast Asia (and beyond), there are also large-scale labour migration movements, with notable migration corridors emerging between and across various countries of the region including Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, among others. Over the past decades, labour migration in various sectors, and of varying skill-level has become an important part of countries' economic, socio-political, and cultural development. Last but not least, in recent years, long-term and periodic environmental factors that are instigated by climate change, such as rising sea levels, floods, and cyclones, have also started to shape patterns of temporary and long-term displacement within and beyond both regions.

This panel aims to explore causes and consequences of contemporary migration in the countries of South and Southeast Asia. We are particularly interested in contributions that address:
- Emerging patterns of migration within the region, and their socio-economic and political consequences for nations and the region as a whole
- Current developments in forced migration and displacement within specific countries, and the region as a whole
- National and regional governance, legal processes, and policies towards various migration movements
- Lived experiences of displacement and migration in contemporary South and Southeast Asia including particularities of gender, youth, elderly, disabled, and other marginalized groups
- Host-refugee relations and impact of forced migration movements on host societies, socio-cultural and religious solidarities
- Multinational/onward/transit mobilities of migrants and the consequences for migration governance
- Politics of resettlement, sponsorship, and return within and beyond the region

Accepted presentations for this panel:

The Regular Irregularity of Rohingya's Mobility and Everyday Life Making at the Bangladesh-Myanmar Borderlands
Benjamin Etzold (Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies)
Anas Ansar (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)

Transnational onward Migration and Rohingya Experiences in India and Malaysia
Rohini Mitra (University of Bonn)
Anas Ansar (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)

Caught between Borders: Afghan Migration Decisions Amid Humanitarian Crisis
Ayesha Qaisrani (ICMPD)
Marco Mogiani (ICMPD)

From the Indo-Gangetic Plains to the Persian Gulf: Navigating Bureaucracy and Uncertainty in Cross-border Labour Markets
Aamir Ali (Bielefeld University)

Locating Bangladeshi Migrants in the Feminization of Migration
Maruf Lutfur (Ruhr University Bochum)

Planned Relocation and its Adverse Ramifications: How Climate Refugee Rehabilitation Projects in Bangladesh Reinforce Marginalization
Ataur Rahman (Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences)

A Circular Move: Climate Change and Patterns of Labour Migration Journeys in Indian Sundarbans
Sourina Bej (University of Bonn)

Everyday Insecurity in the Life of Jumia in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), Bangladesh
UK Mong Marma (Ruhr University Bochum)

Panel 6:
China's Digital Infrastructural Power: Smart Governance and the Digital Silk Road

Panel organisers:
Ningje Zhu (University of Bonn)
Katrin Bonarens (University of Würzburg)
Sina Hardaker (University of Würzburg)

In an era of rapid digital transformation, China's evolving digital infrastructure—encompassing data-driven surveillance systems, e-commerce and fintech ecosystems, social media platforms, and e-government arrangements—plays a pivotal role in reshaping political authority, economic relations, and societal oversight both domestically and globally. At home, the Chinese Party-state integrates these socio-technical tools into everyday life, thereby reconfiguring boundaries between the public and private spheres and fostering new relationships between government agencies, corporate tech giants, and citizens. From the digitalization of public services to the incorporation of surveillance and memory-shaping mechanisms, these infrastructures expand and entrench the state's capacity for control while also creating spaces for negotiation, adaptation, and contestation among various social actors.

Beyond China's borders, initiatives such as the Digital Silk Road (DSR) exemplify how digital infrastructure investments—involving major technology players like Huawei, Alibaba, Tencent, ByteDance, and others—are impacting economic growth, geopolitical alignments, and development paradigms across Asia. By exporting technological models, e-commerce platforms, and digital standards, China extends its influence over local markets and governance structures, raising critical questions about digital sovereignty, economic dependencies, and the emerging architecture of international relations. Governments in Asia are increasingly entering strategic partnerships to adopt Chinese digital platforms and infrastructure, influencing sectors from retail to education and shaping the future of regional platform economies.

This panel seeks to integrate these domestic and transnational dimensions, offering interdisciplinary perspectives on the interplay between technology, ideology, power, and economic activity. We invite presentations that explore how China's digital governance model not only redefines state-society relationships at home but also reconfigures power dynamics and development trajectories

regionally and globally. Through case studies and policy-oriented research, participants will help deepen our understanding of how digital transformations simultaneously enable new forms of authority and avenues of resistance.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

The Rise of the Semiperiphery? China's Digital Expansion and Malaysia's Digital Dependency in the Age of Techno-Geopolitics
Yen-Chi Lu (University of Bonn)

Fragmentation in Global AI Governance: A Comparative Analysis of China and Germany
Xin Jin (University of Bonn)

A Grassroots Perspective on China's Global Digital Power: Using WeChat and WhatsApp in the Chinese-Mozambican Fashion Trade
Johanna von Pezold (University of Amsterdam)

Fighting the Japanese Invaders - Emotional Legitimacy through Making the CCP's History Experienceable
Frederik Schmitz (University of Bonn)

China's State Gig Economy and the Hidden Work behind the Smart Authoritarian State in Shenzhen's Grid Governance
Ningjie Zhu (University of Bonn)

Panel 7:
Learning Empire? Exploring Chinese International Practices within a Changing Global Order

Panel organiser:
Tobias ten Brink (Constructor University)

China's transformation from a poor, peripheral country to a major global power has been unprecedented in its scale and speed. Like other major powers before it, China's ascent has placed it at the center of global economic, social and political processes. Trying to understand the implications of China's rise, this panel explores whether China is emerging as an empire and whether it adapts amidst a global order that is increasingly informed by geopolitics. While empire-building in the Chinese case appears to be predominantly economic in nature, rather than through military coercion and conquest, this panel examines two sets of processes that we argue are central to the emergence of a novel form of empire: (a) multiple forms of *autonomy* building to minimize dependencies from incumbent powers or external critical infrastructure and knowledge; and (b) processes that intentionally or unintentionally increase *dependence* of others, thereby creating conditions for the establishment of exercising authority abroad. Moreover, by examining preference formation and policy learning under authoritarianism, the papers in this panel aim to identify the domestic mechanisms through which Chinese international practices are adapted and how these shape empire building and processes of peripheralization. In short, this panel investigates whether and how China is learning to become an empire under the conditions of a global order in transition.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Learning Empire: Conceptualizing China's Emerging International Practices
Tobias ten Brink (Presenting author, Constructor University)
Anna Ahlers, Daniel Fuchs, Nadine Godehardt, Maximilian Mayer, Johannes Petry, Wiebke Rabe, Gunter Schubert, Matthew D. Stephen

China's Big Science Infrastructure Building: The Peripheralization of Global Knowledge Production?
Anna Ahlers (University of Oslo)

Learning and Local Intermediaries: Explaining the Successes of China's Global Solar Industry
Wiebke Rabe (University of Bremen)

Infrastructure Empire: China's Global Infrastructural Push between Western Autonomy and Southern Dependency
Johannes Petry (University of Frankfurt) & Maximilian Mayer (University of Bonn)

Building Empire through Narratives: China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Quest for Global Discourse Power
Carsten Schäfer (University of Cologne)

Panel 8:
Japan in Germany: Japanese Migration Patterns, Economic Impact, and Binational Initiatives

Panel organiser:
Vanessa Tkotzyk (University of Frankfurt)

Since the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, Japanese outbound migration finds itself on a downward trend. As a result, the number of Japanese nationals residing abroad dropped from 1,410,356 in 2019 to 1,293,565 in 2023 (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2024). However, statistics show that some migration destinations were so predominantly desirable in the last couple of decades that large Japanese communities formed in certain places in the world – one of which being Germany. In 2024, Germany is still the main destination for Japanese nationals in the EU with a history of great Japanese investment, especially in the Rhine-Ruhr Area. As a result, the impact of the Japanese expansion on the local socio-economic landscape is clearly visible to this day. However, there is hardly any scientific literature or previous research on the Japanese presence in Germany as a whole, let alone on the driving factors of Japanese nationals and companies and their migration or relocation choices. This is mostly because the assumed homogeneous Japanese community in Germany consisting of expatriates and their families was perceived as an unproblematic model minority with little scientific significance and their numbers were relatively small in comparison to other migrants (Tkotzyk 2024). In a time in which Germany continuously struggles to encourage new foreign investment and attract foreign skilled workers, those who shaped geographic parts of Germany's main industrial area need to be considered. Thus, this panel sheds light on what Japanese (highly skilled) individuals and companies find desirable about Germany as a potential destination for their settlement.

This panel follows the Japanese diaspora's path in Germany from its beginnings in line with the economic investments in the Rhine-Ruhr Area over the diversification of the community. It combines micro-, meso-, and macro-level approaches, taking the economic perspective and the personal perspective of individuals into account while also considering facilitating factors such as state programs or local initiatives. On the whole, the panel aims to lay the groundwork for three main insights for policymakers and economic actors. 1) It sheds light on business locations in Germany as Japanese business hubs and thus provides insights into the branch strategies of Japanese companies. 2) It analyses the growing heterogeneous community, thus illuminating the needs of highly skilled Japanese migrants and Germany's desirability as a potential migration destination. 3) It considers binational programs and initiatives, thus giving insights into possible facilitating factors.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Between "Little Tokyo" and Being on their Own: Germany's Desirability for Japanese Migrants
Vanessa Tkotzyk (University of Frankfurt)

Binational Programs and Initiatives in Education and Science: Facilitating Factors in Municipal Exchange Through City Twinning Between Germany and Japan
Antonela Mihaljevic (University of Cologne)

Panel 9:
Intersecting Feminisms: Cultural and Social Realities of Chinese Women

Panel organisers:
Chen Qi (University of Freiburg)
Anastasia Kostromina (University of Würzburg)
Leshan Li (University of Heidelberg)

Chinese feminism has developed through complex historical trajectories, influenced by transnational ideas and shifting socio-political conditions. In the Late Qing Dynasty, male intellectuals framed women's liberation as part of a nation-saving agenda, drawing on Japanese and Anglo-American feminist thought. Since the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1920s, feminist concerns were often subordinated to revolutionary goals and class struggles. The reform era of the 1980s brought neoliberalism and Western feminist theories to China, sparking critical reflection on the socialist feminist legacies of the Mao era. Today, grassroots activists and ordinary women, empowered by the Internet and an increasing awareness of regional and national identities, continue to reshape "Chinese feminism".

This panel examines the intersections of feminism, marginalization, and identity in Chinese and global contexts through an interdisciplinary lens. By analyzing cultural representations and social dynamics, it explores how Chinese women across diverse settings resist traditional gender norms, navigate complex power structures, and redefine spaces of empowerment. Aligning with the conference's focus on interdisciplinary exchange, this panel situates "Chinese feminism" within its historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts. It explores how Chinese women navigate broader systemic changes and transformations, inviting critical reflections on modernity, cultural identity, and power dynamics.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Representation of Marginalized Identities in Chinese Women's Poetry from the 21st Century: "The Flâneuses" Poetry Collective as a Case Study
Martina Benigni (University of Rome)

Conquering Death: Female Death, Tragedy, and Emotions in New Opera during the Mao Era (1949–1966)
Leshan Li (University of Heidelberg)

Feminist Analysis of the Leftover Women in Contemporary Chinese Film
Lingping Guo (University of Southampton)

Reflections on Gender Roles in Late Imperial Chinese Women's Writings
Joshua Puttkamer (University of Freiburg)

Reconstructing Chinese Womanhood in UK Higher Education
Qiao Dai (University of Glasgow)

Ways out: Migrant Domestic Workers Finding Their Community
Chen Qi (University of Freiburg)

Reproductive Rights and Pronatalism: A Comparative Analysis of Russia and China through the Lens of Biopolitics
Anastasia Kostromina (University of Würzburg)

Love Under Global Capitalism: A Preliminary Online Ethnography of Chinese Women Abroad
Zhang Yunjia (University of Heidelberg)

Empowerment and Resistance: Negotiating Chinese Female Migrants' Digital Dating Experience in Europe
Zixuan Zhang (Free University of Berlin)

Performing Confucian Scholar-Officials: How Three Courtesans Empowered Themselves by Redefining the Confucian Human Dignity
EnDe Tang (Humboldt University of Berlin)

Panel 10:
Exploring Highland-Lowland Dynamics in Asia: Agency, Diversity, and Governance

Panel organisers:
Nguyễn Hoàng Duy (University of Hamburg)
Melina Kaiser (University of Hamburg)

The diverse topography of much of mainland South and Southeast Asia reflects the broader dynamics of majority and minority populations in the regions: On the one hand, fertile lowland areas sustain large populations and economic development with their accessible terrain, which facilitates agriculture, trade, and transportation. In contrast, vast highland regions, characterized by rugged and elevated terrain, have historically enabled its populations to elude centralized governmental control by creating natural barriers against lowland forces. Consequently, the social structures of these regions differ significantly. Lowland areas tend to accommodate more sizeable settlements and facilitate government intervention through taxes or policy enforcement, contributing to these regions' dominance in administrative and economic activities. Conversely, the relative isolation of highland areas results in smaller communities that tend to prioritize subsistence living and cultural autonomy, reflecting a deeply rooted resistance to external influence. As a result, significant power hierarchies exist within South and Southeast Asia, often privileging majority groups across various spheres, including society, culture, and politics.

However, while many prevailing narratives tend to depict highland groups as homogeneous entities, historical realities are far more nuanced. Nowadays referred to as ethnic minorities, these groups comprise highly diverse peoples with distinct histories and cultural identities. Furthermore, these groups possess strong agency, proactively shaping their historical trajectories rather than remaining passive subjects of dominant narratives. They actively participate in negotiating the relationship with what is nowadays regarded as the majority population. In fact, numerous historical examples illustrate highland communities asserting their power and challenging lowland authorities, emerging as formidable adversaries capable of challenging or resisting central lowland rule. Consequently, lowland governments frequently sought to extend their influence into highland areas, driven both by the desire to extract resources and by strategic considerations, as securing control over these often-unruly regions served to bolster the lowlands' overall security and stability.

This panel invites contributions that examine the relationship between flatlands and highlands, represented by different actors in various parts of mainland South and Southeast Asia and at different points in time. In particular, it welcomes analyses of the numerous attempts made over time to

leverage the relationship between highland and lowland populations, along with the various strategies employed to govern them. These contributions collectively provide a multi-faceted picture that represents some of the diverse realities and histories that have, over time, intertwined to create a complex trajectory of flatland-highland interaction and majority-minority dynamics across mainland Asia.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

The King Resides in Flat Land: Correlation between Mountains and Plains during the 15th Century Lê Dynasty
Nguyễn Hoàng Duy (University of Hamburg)

Ecologies of Power: Forest Conservation and Highland-lowland Relations in Vietnam's Central Highlands
Melina Kaiser (University of Hamburg)

Panel 11:
Erinnerungskulturen in audio-visuellen Medien in asiatischen Ländern

Panel organiser:
Ümmü Zor (Universität Bonn)

Die zweite Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts war von kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen geprägt. Ehemalige Kolonialmächte und neue *Global Player* versuchten, durch militärische Interventionen ihren Einfluss in verschiedenen Gebieten zu erhalten bzw. auszuweiten, und stießen auf den Widerstand der lokalen Bevölkerung. Der Vietnam- und auch der Korea-Krieg stellen beispielhafte Konflikte dar, welche über einen langen Zeitraum hinweg nachwirkten. Aber auch die ethnischen Konflikte auf Zypern beschäftigten die internationale Politik, bevor eine für die Konfliktparteien (un)befriedigende Lösung ausgearbeitet werden konnte.

Wie geht man heute in den jeweiligen Regionen bzw. Ländern mit diesen Ereignissen um? Auf welche Weise erinnert man an diese? Welche Gründe stehen hinter diesen Erinnerungspraktiken? Solche und ähnliche Fragen bieten spannende Ausgangspunkte, um zum Beispiel Spielfilme einer genaueren Analyse zu unterziehen. Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) ist einer der wichtigsten Pioniere, die sich mit Erinnerungskulturen beschäftigten. Seine Arbeiten legten im westeuropäischen Raum den Grundstein für die Wissenschaft zur kollektiven Erinnerung, welche insbesondere in den 1980er Jahren florierte. Ein weiteres zentrales Werk ist auch *Lieux de Mémoire* von Pierre Nora, welches angesichts des damaligen Trends der Musealisierung eine breite Rezeption erfuhr. In den folgenden Jahrzehnten erlebten die *Memory Studies* theoretische Erweiterungen, zum Beispiel durch die Arbeiten von Aleida und Jan Assmann.

Wie sieht jedoch die mediale Geschichtsaufarbeitung in den asiatischen Regionen/Ländern aus? Diese Panelsektion richtet sich insbesondere an Nachwuchswissenschaftler:innen, auch Studierende, die sich mit audio-visuellen Medien und ihrer Darstellung von Geschichte beschäftigen, um somit einen Beitrag zur Forschung im Bereich der Erinnerungskulturen in asiatischen Ländern leisten möchte.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Die Rezeption des Zypernkonflikts im türkischen Fernsehen am Beispiel der Serie Bir Zamanlar Kıbrıs/ Kıbrıs: Zafere Doğru
Ümmü Zor (University of Bonn)

The Kuomintang and Republican China in PRC War Films and Historical Dramas: Shifting Narratives of Memory and Ideology
Lala Samedova (University of Cologne)

Panel 12:
Cultural Narratives and Symbolism in Heritage Practices Across Asia and the Middle East

Panel organisers:
Désirée Kaiser (University of Bonn)
Julita Oetojo (University of Bonn)
Yusheng Bai (University of Bonn)

This panel explores the intricate ways in which cultural narratives and symbolism shape heritage practices across diverse regions of Asia and the Middle East. By examining specific case studies from Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and China, the panel investigates the interplay between socio-cultural resilience, identity formation, and memory preservation in the context of heritage.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Ritual and Resilience: Socio-Cultural Narratives in Saudi Arabia's Heritage Practices
Désirée Kaiser (University of Bonn)

Woven Symbols: Cultural Narratives in the Ikat Textile Traditions of Eastern Indonesia
Julia Oetojo (University of Bonn)

Memory of Sage King: Worshipping Shun as Intangible Cultural Heritage in Jiuyi Mountains, South China
Yusheng Bai (University of Bonn)

Panel 13:
Crossing Borders: Asian Nurses in the German Health Care System

Panel organisers:
Retno Widyastuti (HVF Ludwigsburg)
Alexander Loch (HVF Ludwigsburg)

The migration of professional health workers, particularly nurses and caregivers, is a critical global issue as healthcare systems struggle to meet rising demands. There are 29 million nurses globally. Yet, the World Health Organization (WHO) projects a shortage of 4.8 million nurses and midwives by 2030, with the most severe gaps in developing countries, where health systems are already under-resourced and overburdened (WHO 2024). Asia, especially the Philippines, India, Vietnam, and Indonesia, have become prominent suppliers of nurses and caregivers to countries facing healthcare workforce shortages due to demographic change—including Japan, Germany, and the United States (De Lorenzo 2024, Bludau 2024). For example, the Philippines provided approximately 240,000 nurses to OECD countries, with an annual outflow of 15,000–20,000 nurses (Buchand & Catton 2020), while India and Indonesia are rapidly emerging as key partners in bilateral agreements to address labor shortages.

This interdisciplinary panel will examine the Asian nurses' migration dynamics; areas include the migration drivers, expectation management, healthcare demands, alongside challenges like brain drain and remittances in origin countries, also acculturation, integration, and discrimination issues in destination countries. Case studies from Germany, such as trainee recruitment from Vietnam (2019), placement agreements for nurses from Indonesia (2021), the German-Indian Migration and Mobility Agreement (2024), also prominent examples from Asian countries, such as the Japan Economic Partnership Agreements (JEPA), illustrate the interplay of policies, recruitment practices, and worker experiences. The panel invites comparison and critical reflection of efficiency and cross-cultural compatibilities, e.g. from 2022 to August 2024, 187 Indonesian nurses came to Germany through the Indonesia-Germany Triple Win Program, while, in comparison, 875 Indonesian caregivers and 47 nurses have been placed through the JEPA (BP2MI, 2024).

While destination countries gain skilled workers, origin countries face care gaps that strain fragile health systems. By addressing ethical recruitment, gender dimensions, and (re)integration obstacles of health workers crossing borders, the panel also will highlight pathways to mitigate global health workforce shortages and ensure sustainable health systems. These discussions align with achieving SDG 3 (good health and well-being) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). Shared responsibility and ethical policies are critical to mitigating shortages and building resilient healthcare systems globally. The comparative analysis of the experiences of Asian Nurses in the German Health Care System may provide social scientists, migration researchers and decision-makers in the medical sector an evidence-based understanding of potentials and challenges in German-Asian co-operation.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Acculturation Dynamics of Indonesian Nurses in Germany
Alexander Loch (HVF Ludwigsburg)
Retno Widyastuti (HVF Ludwigsburg)

Indian Nurses in the German Healthcare System: Historical Context and Contemporary Perspectives
Tobias Santosh Großmann

Policy Failures and Opportunities: Reassessing the Indonesia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement for Sustainable Health Worker Migration
Nawawi (BRIN)

Hiring and Support Structures for Indonesian Health Care Migrant Workers to Germany and Japan – From Pre-Departure to Post-Arrival
Andi Holik Ramdani (Hashimoto Foundation Societas Institute)

The Nurses' Situation in Indonesia and Binawan's Initiatives for Nurse Placement in Germany
Said Saleh Alwaini, MM., MIM (Binawan Group)
Erika Lubis, S.Kp, MN (Binawan University)

Panel 14:
Contemporary Embodied Practices in Asia: Case Studies & Issues on Art, Performance, Space & Place

Panel organiser:
Renée L. Ford (Aarhus University)

This topic aims to share current international, interdisciplinary research on embodied contemplative practices in Asia and explore the practical components and the larger impact these practices have on the social and environmental communities affected by individual contemplative activities. One might define these practices as "contemplative" in the same vein that Richard Davidson defines "contemplative practices are practices that involve some form of mental training and may also involve physical movement or dialogue-based exercises. Although contextualized differently among the traditions that use them, contemplative practices are typically viewed as practical methods to bring about a state of enduring well-being or inner flourishing." Much research on contemplative practices investigates the mental engagement of the process.

The presenters, here, extend what contemplative practices include by focusing on the performative, embodied components of *doing* in activities that are frequently understood to be contemplative in nature or at least hold some meaning like pilgrimage to a holy site or making offerings to a temple. This perspective opens contemplative studies research to also investigate the intersections between the physical body, environment, and extended communities who also participate in the same

activities. What are the social, political, and environmental implications for embodied contemplative practices in Asia? How are practices performed by contemporary Asians and how does this impact the spaces around them? By looking at embodied contemplative practices on a broader scale, we re-imagine what it means to perform these acts and thereby, address new perspectives on how contemplative practices affect not only the individual but also the environment and communities that are affiliated with these actions.

One session focuses on art and performance in contemporary Asian research. Two papers explore different dance forms in Nepal and India, and the third paper addresses an art form called *maṇi* carving. These three papers are inter-disciplinary through incorporating methods such as ethnography, artistic, and philosophical that include emic perspectives and presentations alongside embodiment theories.

The second session emphasizes space and place, in which the presenters approach embodied contemplative practices. One presentation is on the Chinese view of *ganying*, stimulus-resonance, and agency of Chinese Buddhists. The other two presenters raise questions on how western theories on embodiment and contemplative practice do or do not fit indigenous understandings of Buddhist practice in South India or how asymmetrical power between space and individuals may arise. Together, they present a wide conversation on how contemplative practices might function for communities and their spaces.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Carving "Om Mani Padme Hung" in Stone: Emic Reflections on Cultivating Compassion
Peter Makela

Nurturing Well-being through Contemplative Embodiment Practices Shreeti Pradhan
Caryā Nṛtya

Thira Dance as Strengthening Social Collectives
Athira Vysakham

Practice in Perspective- Contemporary Western and Indigenous Tibetan Buddhist Discourses
Chandra Chiara Ehm (EFEO)

Ganying (感應): The Bridge Between the Sacred and the Profane in a Chinese Buddhist Devotional Context
Limei Teo

Contemplation in Action: The Power Dynamics Inherent within Perceptual Identification and Embodied Negotiation of Sacred Sites in Kathmandu and Lumbini, Nepal
Lewis Doney (University of Bonn)

Panel 15:
Beyond Chinatown: Chinese (Hi)stories from Europe

Panel organiser:
Helen Hess (University of Zurich)

This panel shall focus on the histories of Chinese/Sinophone (i.e. Chinese-speaking) communities and stories told by Chinese/Sinophone individuals in a selection of European cities. Amsterdam, for instance, is home to an 'old' Chinese diasporic community with one of the very earliest Chinatowns in Europe, and mainly populated by Cantonese speakers from Southern China, but also from Indonesia, as it was a Dutch colony. Prato, on the other hand, with allegedly the highest rate of registered

residents of Chinese nationality in Europe, is home to more recent, but very large Chinese/Sinophone communities, mainly from Wenzhou. Paris is home to different Chinese/Sinophone communities, including early migrants from Southern China, refugees from the former French colonies in Southeast Asia, as well as more recent communities, for instance, those from Northeast China. As recent research has shown, there is not one Chinese/Sinophone community in Europe, but many different ones. By focusing on specific cities rather than countries, we apply a sub-national framework, paying tribute to the diverse situations across Chinese/Sinophone communities in Europe. The situation of individuals of Chinese descent living in Europe varies strongly, depending on different factors and conditions that intersect with each other, such as their city of origin and/or of arrival, the time of migration, their class background, their age/generation, their gender, their mother tongue, etc.

Against this background, this panel opts to critically reflect on concepts such as Chinese diaspora, Overseas Chinese, and Sinophony, discussing their respective potentials and limits. Methodologically, we mainly draw from the anthropological concept of storytelling, creating a transdisciplinary dialogue between oral, visual, and text-based analysis. Combining individual stories with discourse and media analysis, we aim to think beyond juxtaposing official history versus individual experiences, trying to find new ways of framing the kaleidoscopic narrative(s) of Chinese/Sinophone individuals and communities in Europe. Such an endeavor is particularly important at a time when political fronts are hardening between global players—with Chinese living abroad being caught in the middle—media reporting is one-dimensional to a large extent, and hostility towards people of Chinese descent is on the rise.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Life Stories of Diasporic Chinese Women in Switzerland: Migration, Professional Trajectories, Networks
Helen Hess (University of Zurich)

'Chinese Migrants' Children in Prato: Migrant Children, Double-Migrants, and their not-so-Chinese Dream
Giovanni Giamello (University of Aalborg)

Invisibility of Chinese-ness as a Business Strategy in Korean Chinese Entrepreneurship within Paris's Homestay Industry
Xiaoying Jin (University of Heidelberg)

Panel 16:
(Im)printing the Nation: Print as Global Process and its Movements in Asia from late 18th to early 20th Century

Panel organiser:
Christian Lemuel Magaling (University of Bonn)

This panel enjoins scholars working on/in Asia using different materials from printed texts, material culture, processes of printing, modes of distribution, and social movements circulating within and through Asia. The discussion aims to cover different aspects of print-making from industrial, indigenous, textual, and visual at the turn of the century during the period late modernity from a wider lens between the late 18th to the early 20th century by looking at printmaking as a global process. By treating it as a process aside from being an output that needs interpretation, the discussion aims to involve various aspects of creation, and distribution through intraregional publication from original to translated texts, and to the unraveling of archival sources on the lives of people who worked in print shops, and publishing houses organized in cooperatives and trade unions, to highlight human aspects and artistic output of print in Asian society. In exploring aspects of translation, materiality, productivity, and social aspects of print, this panel aims to widen the

scope of the discussion of print and to investigate its process and its implication on late modernities in Asia before the advent and rise of digital media.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Marca Demonio de las Comparaciones: The Anachronic Substitution of the Kris Joloano in Rizal and Amorsolo
Geronimo Cristobal (Cornell University)

The Genesis of Translated Southeast Asian Literature through Publishing Networks in Maritime Southeast Asia
Eliezar Lim Iñigo

Isabelo & La Redención del Obrero: Studies in Workers Imagination and Labor enlightenment
Christian Lemuel Magaling (University of Bonn)

Panel 17:
Creating Perspectives: Exchange and Networking for Asia Researchers

Panel organisers:
Alessandro Gullo (University of Bonn)
Yasmin Koppen (University of Leipzig)

What is it about?
This open workshop invites early-career as well as experienced researchers in Asian studies to come together, share experiences and connect with others. The aim is a simple one: to create a welcoming space where challenges can be discussed openly, knowledge exchanged freely, and new perspectives developed—across institutions, disciplines, and regions.

Why it matters: Early-career researchers in Asian studies are currently navigating different challenges, including:
• Limited access to sources and field sites due to geopolitical tensions
• Growing bureaucratic and administrative barriers
• Shifting academic landscapes in Asian and regional studies
• Power imbalances and structural inequalities, particularly in collaborations between European and Asian institutions

These issues are particularly pressing for those still finding their footing—whether in the early stages of their academic careers or in the middle of a PhD project. This workshop creates a space to reflect on a selection of these realities, exchange practical advice and support one another in navigating the field. It also contributes to strengthening the **DGA Young Scholars Network on Asian Studies** by encouraging the formation of peer groups and long-term academic connections.

What to expect: The workshop will take the form of a **World Café**: an open and informal format designed to encourage lively, meaningful discussions. Two themed tables will be available:
• **Administrative Obstacles and Processes** (e.g., visa issues, institutional hurdles)
• **Access to the Field and Organizing Fieldwork** (e.g., permits, logistics and safety)

Participants can move freely between tables, ask questions, exchange strategies, and discover others who may be facing similar challenges. Whether you're looking for quick advice or hoping to connect with peers working in the same region, this is your space to learn, contribute and grow.

Open to all – no registration required:
This is an **open workshop and not a typical panel**: no application, no registration. Feel free to join the conversation, and to contribute—whether by asking questions, sharing experiences, or simply listening in. Everyone is welcome, and every voice matters. Let's create perspectives – together!

Panel 18:
Academic Freedom and Its Implementation in Germany and Asia

Panel organisers:
Conrad Schetter (BICC Bonn)
Claudia Derichs (HU Berlin)
Andrea Fleschenberg (HU Berlin)
Ann Philipp (ABI Freiburg)

The year 2024 was designated to the theme of "academic freedom" in Germany. A huge number of academic institutions, organizations, foundations, think tanks and the like devoted events and debates to this topic. Questions that were raised touched upon the commitment to academic freedom, on developments that—de facto or potentially—endanger this commitment, and the limitations of actually implementing it. Critical perspectives related to empirical findings that reveal the difficulties of this implementation with regard to the diversity of scholars working in Germany, many of whom hail from Asian countries. A roundtable at the DGA conference in Rostock already addressed the challenges that several of these scholars have to face, and that render the notion of "freedom" a bit doubtful. The panel proposed for the DGA conference in Bonn is meant to follow up on the previous one and asks: What are the take aways from the "academic freedom year" for our work with and work on Asia? What are the lessons learned and who has learned from whom—or who can and should learn from whom? How do restrictions of free research affect our work as Asia scholars?

Since the attacks of Hamas on Israelian civilians on 7 October 2024 in the German public discourse the fine line between a pro-Palestine-partisanship and "being antisemitic" became politicised. Examples are the attempts of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to interfere into academic freedom in spring 2024, or the recent resolution against antisemitism by the German Bundestag. The latter disclosed that an applicable definition of antisemitism is still missing. This is why the accusation of antisemitism becomes an ill-defined entry point for interfering into academic freedom and freedom of speech. In addition, the question arises to what extend universities should offer arenas for political contestations and what are the limits of the expression of political opinions? This contribution aims to ask if – from the perspective of Asian academia – this debate is rather seen as a specific German one, or as an overall structural change of academic freedom.

Panel 19:
The Adoption and Dynamics of AI in Asia

Panel organisers:
Wolfram Schaffar (University of Passau)
Min Htin Kaw Lat (University of Passau)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has played an important role in public discourse worldwide for several years now. AI is perceived as a key technology that is expected to profoundly change and revolutionize not only the economy but also society. In many regions of Asia, the adaptation of AI is characterized by several dynamics: On the one hand, the decisive steps in the research and development of AI are being taken by the two leading industrialized nations—the USA and China. Most other countries in Asia (as well as Europe) are only contributors to larger development projects, as suppliers of data and as markets. On the other hand, many Asian regions play a very important role in this peripheral position: South and Southeast Asia, for example, are leading the world in terms of social and economic penetration with digital technologies and social media. This makes them a very lucrative market and an interesting laboratory for various AI applications. Against the backdrop of increasing US-Chinese competition, different regions in Asia are becoming the arena of geostrategic rivalry between the two technology superpowers, where the integration of countries into one sphere or the other has far-reaching consequences.

Apart from the often utopian future scenarios, researchers have pointed out that AI also bears traits of an extractivist industry due to its resource-intensive and labour-intensive foundations. In addition to the raw materials required for the technical devices and infrastructure, and in addition to the enormous energy consumption of the servers, many applications such as image recognition or large language models depend on massive input of human labour (e.g. tagging images and entering data), which is increasingly being outsourced to low-wage countries or performed via platformized work. In these areas, global inequality is reproduced and reinforced.

The panel will provide a forum to discuss the dynamics of adaptation and the role of AI in Asia at different levels, which include but are not limited to questions such as:

- What economic dynamics can be observed?
- What geostrategic developments are associated with the adaptation of AI in the different Asian regions?
- Which players can be identified—investment funds, companies, users?
- What regulatory initiatives are being undertaken by governments?

Accepted presentations for this panel:

AI as Extractive Industry – Transformations in Southeast Asia against the Backdrop of a Multiple Crisis and Shifting Global World Order
Wolfram Schaffar (University of Passau)

Digital Content Production in Myanmar
Min Htin Kyaw Lat (University of Passau)

Panel 20:
Raum und Ordnung in Transformation

Panel organisers:
Anno Dederichs (University of Guangzhou)
Ruirui Zhou (University of Hamburg)

In den Sozialwissenschaften leitete die Auflösung der Blockbildung des Kalten Krieges in den 1980er Jahren einen spatial turn ein, und die Veräumlichung löste als Methode der Postmoderne den dominanten Fokus auf die Zeitperspektive der Moderne ab. Unter anderem betrachteten postmoderne Ansätze Raum als von Macht und Herrschaft durchzogene soziale Konstrukte. Die Rückbesinnung auf Raum wurde begleitet von der Feststellung von Globalisierung und einer durch Kommunikationstechnologien und Mobilität verursachten Ortlosigkeit.

Spätestens mit dem Beginn der Coronapandemie in 2020 wurde ein Trend neueren Territorialstrebens sichtbar, der mit dem russischen Angriffskrieg auf die Ukraine 2022 noch einmal an Fahrt aufnahm und auch in Deutschland zu einer neuen Geopolitisierung beitrug. Die Wahrnehmung einer darin enthaltenen „Zeitenwende" selbst weist aber eurozentristische Züge auf – und Staaten des so genannten Globalen Südens stimmen mit dieser Einschätzung nicht immer überein.

Gleichzeitig scheinen sich einigen „Permanenzen des Raumes" zu bestätigen: Erneute Blockbildung zwischen Ost und West (etwa in dem unter Trump 2017 begonnenen Wirtschaftskrieg zwischen USA und China), Abgrenzung von Nord und Süd (etwa während der Coronapandemie), aufkommender Nationalismus und Streben nach hegemonialer Kontrolle des Raumes und über verbleibende Ressourcen. Die Konstruktion neuer Räume und neuer Raumdifferenzen treten dabei als synchrone Phänomene auf.

Diese geopolitischen Diskurse haben nicht nur Auswirkungen auf die Konstruktion von Räumen, sondern auch auf die Bedeutung der mit räumlicher Herkunft verbundenen Kategorien von Zugehörigkeit. Wirtschaftliche Räume erfahren eine geopolitische Umdeutung, so das bereits von De-Globalisierung die Rede ist; die Freiheit und Diversität wissenschaftlichen Austauschs wird unter terri-

toriale Vorbehalte gestellt; technologisch ermöglichte transkulturelle Räume sollen territorial wieder entflochten werden und lösen digitale Migrationsbewegungen aus (Tiktok; Xiaohongshu); und die Gestaltung sozialer Räume wird von den Global Playern – allen voran USA, China und Europa – unterschiedlich interpretiert und erlebt.

Das Panel geht über die Diagnose gegenwärtiger politischer Raumverhältnisse hinaus und strebt eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Transformation von Raumkonstruktionen an. Das Panel ist offen für eine breite Palette von Beiträgen aus den Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften, Politik-, Wirtschafts-, Regional- und Sprachwissenschaften.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Germanistik im Umbruch: Sprache, Raum und akademische Zukunft in China
Anno Dederichs (University of Guangzhou)

Deutschlandbild und mediales Deutschland-Framing in China
Ruirui Zhou (University of Hamburg)

From Island to Network: Spatialising Taiwan through Cultural Institutions
Freda Fiala (University of the Arts Linz)

The Spatial Relationships of Guoxue
Philip Scherer (University of Tübingen)

Panel 21:
Mehr Perspektiven wagen! Chinabilder in (Bildungs-)Medien

Panel organisers:
Jonas Schmid (University of Heidelberg)
Stefanie Elbern (University of Heidelberg)

Mit dem Aufstieg Chinas zur Weltmacht rückt China zunehmend in den Fokus gesellschaftlicher und politischer Diskurse und medialer Berichterstattung. Dabei werden einer breiten Öffentlichkeit Chinabilder vermittelt, die teils stark von aktuellen Emotionalitäten und Interessenslagen geprägt sind und nicht selten fernab wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse liegen.

In diesem Panel sollen mediale Chinabilder analysiert werden. Inwiefern haben diese sich in verschiedenen Medien entwickelt? Welche historischen Kontinuitäten und gegenwärtigen Besonderheiten lassen sich beobachten? Inwiefern unterscheiden sich Chinabilder in verschiedenen Medien, etwa in der medialen Berichterstattung herkömmlicher Tageszeitungen, in den sozialen Medien und in Schulbüchern? Welche Unterschiede lassen sich eventuell auch zwischen Chinabildern in unterschiedlichen Ländern und Kontinenten beobachten?

Ausgerichtet wird dieses Panel von Mitarbeiter:innen des BMBF-Projektes „China-Schul-Akademie": Trotz der gesteigerten medialen Aufmerksamkeit bleibt China zufolge einer Merics-Studie von 2018 „für den Großteil der rund elf Millionen Schüler in Deutschland [...] ein Randthema." In ihren Vorträgen stellen die Mitarbeiter:innen der China-Schul-Akademie die Ergebnisse einer systematischen Erhebung und umfassenden quantitativen und qualitativen Analyse von China-Bezügen in den bundesweit aktuell gültigen Lehrplänen der Fächer Geschichte, Geografie/Erdkunde, Sozialkunde und Ethik/Religion vor. Zudem wurde ein repräsentatives Korpus von Schulbüchern der genannten Fächer aus den letzten 10 Jahren (2013–2023) zusammengestellt und die Auswahl von Fallbeispielen, das Quellenangebot und die Bildsprache untersucht. Basierend auf den Ergebnissen der Studie und dem im Projektverlauf gesammelten Erfahrungen werden Empfehlungen für Lehrplankommissionen, Schulbuchredaktionen und -autor:innen, Fachdidaktiker:innen, Lehrer:innen und nicht zuletzt für die Chinawissenschaften formuliert.

Weitere Beiträge zu Chinabildern (nicht nur in deutschsprachigen) Medien sind willkommen und sollen zur breiteren Diskussion der Frage beitragen, inwiefern und wie „mehr Perspektiven" auf China gewagt und „mehr Perspektiven" aus China präsentiert werden können.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

China im Geschichtsunterricht: Mehr und verschiedene chinesische Stimmen hörbar machen

Jonas Schmid (University of Heidelberg)

Religion und Ethik in China im Spiegel von Lehrplan und Schulbuch

Stefanie Elbern (University of Heidelberg)

Blickt über den Tellerrand! Aber bloß nicht zu weit? Fachübergreifende Ansätze am Beispiel von möglichen Chinabezügen im Deutsch-Unterricht und in fachbergreifenden Kursen

Marjolijn Kaiser (University of Heidelberg)

Panel 22:
Sprachvermittlung in den Regionalwissenschaften: Status Quo und Zukunftsperspektiven

Panel organisers:
Andriani Nangoy (University of Bonn) & Xuan Hang Nguyen (University of Bonn)

Die Vermittlung von Sprachen ist ein Kern der Regionalwissenschaften. Die sichere Beherrschung einer Sprache ist zentrale Voraussetzung, um eine Region und ihre gesellschaftlichen, kulturellen und politischen Verhältnisse zu verstehen und zu erforschen. In den letzten Jahren hat sich die Sprachvermittlung – wie im Grunde genommen alle Bereiche der universitären Lehre und Forschung – jedoch stark verändert. Sinkende Studierendenzahlen und kleinere Sprachkurse erfordern Flexibilität. Für anwendungsbezogenen Sprachunterricht müssen oftmals neue didaktische Konzepte und Materialien erarbeitet werden. Durch die Digitalisierung hat sich der Methodenkasten im Sprachunterricht erheblich erweitert, etwa durch ein großes Angebot an Video- und Audioelementen, durch interaktive Übungen und Vokabeltrainer. Auch können trotz räumlicher Trennung und über Zeitzonen hinweg Sprach-Tandems gebildet werden und Inhalte in einer fremden Sprache und Kultur sind oft nur einen Klick weit entfernt. In dem Workshop wollen wir uns über aktuelle Situationen des Sprachunterrichts in den Regionalwissenschaften austauschen, Schwierigkeiten diskutieren und Lösungsmöglichkeiten vorstellen. Bei Interesse können die Lektorinnen Andriani Nangoy und Xuan Hang Nguyen die Möglichkeiten und Schwierigkeiten des digitalen Spracherwerbs am Beispiel des Vietnamesischen und Indonesischen vorstellen. Darüber hinaus dient der Workshop auch zur zukünftigen Vernetzung.

Panel 23:
The Indo-Pacific's Contested Future: Identity Formation, Domestic Politics and Conflict Prevention Amid China-US Strategic Competition

Panel organisers:
Igor Severnad (University of Duisburg-Essen)
Mark Philip Stadler (University of Bonn)
Annika Clasen (University of Düsseldorf)
David Adebahr (Kobe University)

This panel assembles diverse perspectives and case studies to critically assess how the Indo-Pacific is navigating transformative changes amid the on-going China-US strategic competition. As China has been evolving from a rising power to a great power, its influence continues to grow, while US presence appears increasingly uncertain. This panel therefore grapples with the capacities and

strategies of Indo-Pacific nations, as they confront contemporary challenges in an increasing multipolar world. Particularly, China in the wake of its self-proclaimed "peaceful rise" is of notable significance, as it has developed a governance model centralized on power and entrenched in authoritarian structures while too emphasizing its commitment to good governance and cooperation. These internal designs shape the country's international posture, influencing both its Indo-Pacific diplomacy and Beijing's strategic behaviour amid the increasing great power competition. These internal designs also shape the country's international posture through externalization, from great power diplomacy and periphery diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific, to Beijing's strategic behavior amid intensifying great power competition in the region and globally.

Simultaneously, the Indo-Pacific nations are facing an increasingly unstable environment. Intensifying territorial and maritime disputes have led to closer regional cooperation and the development of alternative structures to respond to this unstable environment. But how effective will these be in mitigating China's assertiveness and an unreliable US partner in the future? While realist studies tend to focus on great power competition, they often neglect the strategies of middle and small powers. For this reason, this panel pays closer attention to such approaches as ASEAN centrality, AUKUS, the East Asian Community, and other forms of cooperation between Indo-Pacific states such as Indonesia and Japan.

The panel addresses questions central to current Asian and security studies: How does great power competition inform domestic politics and regional cooperation? How do narratives of legitimacy, status, modernity, and development shape the regional and global order? How do the Indo-Pacific states engage with institutional frameworks beyond or within either the US-led or China-led international order? Are there viable alternatives to the US-led framework, and if so, how are these alternatives being conceptualized and implemented? By integrating conceptual and methodological approaches from various fields, this panel promises a nuanced examination of a contested order in the Indo-Pacific and the respective reactions of regional actors. Through roundtable discussions, paper presentations, and interactive exchanges, the panel seeks to foster robust academic dialogue aligned with the conference's goal of advancing innovative scholarship and enhancing interdisciplinary collaborative networks.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Shaping the Future: The Global Community of Shared Future as Identity-Forming Construct or Sloganistic Narrative Strategy?
Igor Severnad (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Indonesia @ Indo-Pacific: 'Bebas Aktif' towards a Global Middle Power?
Mark Philipp Stadler (University of Bonn)

From Petals to Protocols: Japan-ASEAN cooperation under JASMINE
Annika Clasen (University of Düsseldorf) & David Adebahr (Kobe University)

The Will to Lead and the Demand for Leadership: Beijing's and Washington's Contested Leadership in the Indo-Pacific
Richard J. Cook (Nankai University)

Authoritarianism Goes Global? Decoding Chinese Communist Party's Narrative on the Whole-Process People's democracy
Li Rongxin (Jinan University)

China's Peripheral Terraformation and Order-Building through Coordinated Economic Corridors in Pakistan and Myanmar
Maximilian Ohle (University of Tübingen)

Challenges in the Neighborhood: China's Periphery Diplomacy towards Myanmar
Mateus Bilhar (Nankai University)

Panel 24:
Labour and Global Production Networks in Asia

Panel organisers:
Michaela Doutch (University of Bonn)
Oliver Pye (University of Bonn)
Kartika Manurung (University of Bonn)

The central role of Asia in the Global Production Networks (GPNs) that now dominate the global economy is well established. Asian countries are not only starting or central processing points for many GPNs such as the garment industry, palm oil, or electronics. East Asian and Chinese capital increasingly shapes downstream further processing, high-tech production, and research and development. This is connected to an ongoing and radical transformation of the built environment—the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative is the best example. Asian-centred GPNs are thus transforming Asian societies—economically, socially, politically and culturally. However, mainstream economic geography, with its focus on lead firms, suppliers, value capture and managerial perspectives often neglect or erase from the picture the lives and experiences of the workers who re/produce them.

This panel aims to unpack the black box of the businesses along the supply chains to look at the new proletariats across Asia. Which groups of workers are involved at different production stages and locations of different GPNs? What different labour regimes characterize the supply chain in different locations? How is social reproduction spatially different and linked to spaces of production? What crises and conflicts arise around the re/production of labour? What socio-ecological problems become visible in GPNs? What organizing initiatives and collective struggles can be observed? What transnational organizing strategies and Asian-wide networking are emerging?

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Labour Geographies of Global Production Networks
Michaela Doutch (Presenting author, University of Bonn)
Oliver Pye (Presenting author, University of Bonn)
Anne Engelhardt, Tatiana Lopez

Intersectional Grassroots Organizing Strategies for Just Transition: Lessons Learned from Indonesian and Malaysian Palm Oil Plantations
Kartika Manurung (University of Bonn)

Layered Labor Regimes in the Philippine Oil Palm Frontier
Caroline Hambloch (Presenting author, University of Bonn)
Helena Perez Nino, Carlo Arceo

Panel 25:
Daten, Deutungen, Decisions: Die Magie der Zahlen und das Primat des Politischen

Panel organiser:
Wiegand Körber (University Halle–Wittenberg)

Im Oktober des vergangenen Jahres war es dann endlich so weit: Übereinstimmend berichteten Medien, dass die Neuauflage des indischen Zensus für das Jahr 2025 geplant sei; 2026 rechne man mit Ergebnissen. Weiterhin unklar ist jedoch, ob im Zensus die Kategorie *caste* erhoben wird, die Frage ist umstritten. Befürworter:innen weisen darauf hin, dass solche Daten notwendig sind, um soziale Gerechtigkeit gezielt umzusetzen und Diskriminierung sichtbar zu machen. Gegner:innen argumentieren, dass die Offenlegung von *caste* gesellschaftliche Spaltungen vertiefe und Begehrlichkeiten nach zusätzlichen Quotierungen befördere. Der Zensus ist der Klassiker der Auseinandersetzung um einen Datensatz mit enormer politischer Bedeutung, insbesondere in den hochgradig stratifizierten Gesellschaften Südasiens. Doch auch darüber hinaus ist eine Zunahme von Diskursen um

und mit Zahlen in vielen Politikfeldern zu beobachten, was vor dem Hintergrund eines immer größer werdenden Volumens an verfügbaren Daten nur konsequent ist. In dem Maße aber, in dem Daten als Grundlage von politischen Entscheidungen und zum Argument für Machtverhältnisse Prävalenz erfahren, steigt die Bedeutung der Daten selbst – und auch die Bedeutung derer, die sie sammeln, kompilieren und in Zahlen verwandeln.

Accepted presentations for this panel:

Quantifying the Population's Scientific Quality: The Evolution of China's Scientific Literacy Survey
Franziska Marliese Fröhlich (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

Von Daten zu Identitäten: Die indische Diaspora und die Macht der Zahlen
Pierre Gottschlich (University of Rostock)

Die Verwendung von SDG-Indikatoren im indischen Föderalismus: Aus der UN vor Modis Karren
Wiegand Körber (Universität Halle-Wittenberg)

Der Süden als Retter in der Not? Die Position der BJP in Südindien bei der letzten Lok-Sabha-Wahl 2024
Clemens Jürgenmeyer (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Freiburg)

Panel 26:
Open Panel

Accepted presentations for this panel:

The Essay Poetry Generation: The Birth of a Literary Movement in Modern Indonesian Literature
Agus R. Sarjono (Indonesian Arts and Culture Institute in Bandung)

Gendered Urban Speech: A Study of the Bambaiyā-speaking Woman
Hridaya Ajgaonkar (University of Bonn)

Intercultural Exchange between Japan and Germany: Toshio Hosokawa and the Role of Japanese Musicians at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music
Joevan de Mattos Caitano

Resilience and Resistance: Examining the Exclusion of Sea-Oriented Indigenous Community in Disaster Recovery Management
Gretchen Gonzoga (University of Bonn)

ASEAN – A Central Actor in Global Services Trade?
Daniel Köllner (Ruhr University Bochum)

Sven Hedin: „Entdecken" heißt „Erobern"
Bernhard Hertlein

How Equitable and Inclusive? Southeast Asia and the Geo-economics of Competitive High-Speed Railway Projects
Lunting Wu (Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen)
Jürgen Rüland (University of Freiburg)

The Chilling Effect, Geopolitics, and Self-Censorship: Chinese Academic Response to the Russia-Ukraine War
Xiaojuan Yang (Free University of Berlin)

Panel 27 (Roundtable):
Talking Regions and Relations: Dialogues on Palestine/Israel with/in Asia

Moderation:
Christoph Antweiler (University of Bonn)

Discussants:
Claudia Derichs (Humboldt University of Berlin)
Timo Duile (University of Bonn)
Stephan Milich (University of Cologne)
Miriam Lücking (Ludwig Maximilian University Munich)
Max Kramer (Ludwig Maximilian University Munich)

The war in Gaza and the preceding Hamas attacks on October 7, 2023 have been discussed in different contexts in Europe and Asia. The situation in the Middle East is accompanied by strong emotional reactions across the globe. While the discussions in Europe – and especially Germany – often stress the 7th October attack as the main cause of the current war and emphasize the Holocaust and antisemitism as reasons for Israel's right to exist and legitimizing Israel's warfare in the Middle East as self-defense, many debates in Asian countries rely on a different historical perspective and perceive of the conflict as an issue of settler colonialism. The suffering of victims of the war evokes solidarity and compassion, particularly in post-colonial societies of the region. The contrasting comprehensions of the conflict in Asia and Europe are often portrayed as mutually exclusive; legacies such as the Holocaust in Germany, for instance, are positioned against the experience of apartheid, which informed South Africa's interference at the United Nations. Does this seemingly oppositional stance affect scholars' cooperation and collaboration across regions? How can dialogue be facilitated and by whom? What are the merits for Asia scholars in Germany in gaining access to local sources of information in societies across the region? In our roundtable discussion, we investigate the (im)possibilities of dialogue with and in different Asian societies, and the ways the current geopolitical affairs are conceptualized. We ask how scholars in Germany and in Asia can facilitate controversial but fruitful debates, what they can learn from each other, and how mutual exchange helps in shaping our perspectives.