

2025
Conference on Asian Studies
MEGA-ASIA
A New Perspective on Asia

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2025

Conference on Asian Studies

MEGA-ASIA

A New Perspective on Asia

Dates | Venue

25–26 November, 2025
Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) #101

Hosted by: Seoul National University Asia Center
Co-organized by: SNUAC's HK* Mega-Asia Research Group
Sponsored by: Youngone Corporation



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Programs

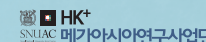
25 November

- 09:30-10:30 • Opening Ceremony and Keynote Speech
- 10:30-12:30 • **Session 1** Re-imagining Asia:
“Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives
- 13:45-15:45 • **Session 2** Comparative Approaches in Asian Studies
- **Session 3** Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges
to Civil Society in Asia
- **Session 4** Migration and Changing Dynamics in Asia
- 16:05-18:00 • **Special Session** Charting New Pathways:
The Future of Asian Studies in a Shifting World

26 November

- 10:00-12:00 • **Session 5** Approaching Asia through Data
- **Session 6** Asia in Focus: Politics and Society
- **Session 7** Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions
- **Session 8** Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

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2025 Conference on Asian Studies **MEGA-ASIA** A New Perspective on Asia

SNUAC, Seoul National University, South Korea, Nov. 24-27, 2025

Venue SNUAC, Seoul National University, South Korea

Dates Nov. 24-27, 2025

Conference Room Youngone Hall, Samik Hall, Room # 303, #406

Organizing Committee Office Room #304

Participants' Lounge #Room 417

Hosted by SNUAC

Organized by the HK⁺ Mega-Asia Research Group

Supported by the National Research Foundation (NRF),

Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea, Youngone Cooperation

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Welcome Message from the Conference Organizing Committee



Beom-Shik Shin
Organizing Committee Co-Chair

Since its establishment in 2009, the Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) has strived to explore the multifaceted social and cultural transformations of the Asian world and to define the identity of Asian Studies from an Asian perspective. With the dual aim of expanding both “knowledge on Asia” and “Asian knowledge,” SNUAC has promoted interdisciplinary collaboration and international academic exchange. Through these continued efforts, SNUAC has sought to realize the core values of coexistence with nature, tolerance toward others, and the alleviation of unequal development, thereby contributing to envisioning a sustainable future for Asia.

Over the past sixteen years, SNUAC has hosted numerous international academic conferences, providing a forum for scholars from around the world to discuss and debate key issues in Asian Studies. Beginning in 2025, SNUAC launches the SNUAC Conference on Asian Studies, an annual platform designed to foster continuous dialogue and collaboration on Asia in transformation. The theme of the inaugural conference, “Mega-Asia: A New Perspective on Asia,” represents an innovative attempt to reconceptualize, analyze, and imagine the Asian world.

“Mega-Asia” offers an innovative framework for understanding, analyzing, and envisioning the Asian continent in its full complexity. Conceptually, it encapsulates the dynamic processes and outcomes arising from interactions among Asia’s diverse regions—each defined by distinct spatial and temporal identities—that together generate new regional orders and phenomena. Methodologically, Mega-Asia emphasizes a multi-scalar approach that combines comparative regional analysis with data-driven research across a wide spectrum of sources. Beyond methodology, it also serves as a conceptual lens for imagining Asia as an interconnected whole. By providing a shared intellectual foundation, Mega-Asia seeks to foster collective responses to the multifaceted challenges facing Asia’s sub-regions and nations today, while opening new pathways for collaboration, understanding, and the co-creation of knowledge across the continent.

Supported by the Humanities Korea Plus (HK+) program of the Ministry of Education and the National Research Foundation of Korea, SNUAC has, since 2020, accumulated significant achievements in developing new paradigms for regional studies in Asia. The 2025 conference brings together over thirty-seven scholars from fifteen countries: Korea, China, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Mongolia, India, Bangladesh, Türkiye, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Through this event, SNUAC reaffirms its commitment to advancing a new vision of regional studies and to leading global dialogues in Asian Studies.

Welcome Message from the Director of the Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC)



Suhong Chae 
Director of SNUAC

The world is changing with unprecedented speed and complexity. Amid rising uncertainty, Asia finds itself at the crossroads of transformation, confronting challenges that span the environmental, political, economic, social, and cultural realms. Since its founding in 2009, the Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) has sought to respond to these changes through rigorous scholarship and cross-cultural dialogue. Our mission has been to deepen understanding across boundaries, reduce inequality and conflict, and build a more cooperative and inclusive future for the region.

Regional Studies as an academic discipline has historically evolved in tandem with the political and economic structures of imperialism and the Cold War. Yet long before the modern era, societies across Asia flourished through exchanges of goods, ideas, and cultural practices. The world’s interconnectedness and its diversity stem from this long history of inter-regional engagement. In today’s age of globalization and digital acceleration, such interconnectedness has become both more intense and more fragile. As communication and transportation technologies compress time and space, human mobility and cultural interdependence expand, generating new possibilities as well as new tensions.

Within this context, the role of Regional Studies is more vital than ever. To coexist with nature, embrace cultural diversity, and mitigate inequality, we must strengthen our shared capacity for understanding and cooperation. Over the past sixteen years, SNUAC has grown into one of Asia’s leading research institutions, operating seven regional research centers, eight thematic programs, and the HK+ Mega-Asia Research Project, supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea. Each year, we host more than 300 academic events that bring together scholars from around the world, fostering vibrant dialogue across disciplines and borders.

The 2025 SNUAC Conference on Asian Studies, inaugurated under the theme “Mega-Asia: A New Perspective on Asia,” reflects our continuing commitment to this mission. It invites us to reimagine Asia not as a collection of fragmented regions, but as a dynamic and interconnected system. I hope this conference will serve as a catalyst for creative collaboration and that SNUAC will continue to stand at the forefront of efforts to build a shared and sustainable future for Asia and the world.



Introducing the Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC)

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Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC), established in 2009, is a global research institute based in Seoul, South Korea, dedicated to advancing the field of Asian studies. SNUAC was founded in response to the growing need for deeper understanding of Asia in the so-called “Asian Era,” and has since served as a hub for the production of new knowledge on the region. Integrating regional and thematic research, the Center strives to construct the fundamental basis of Asian studies, foster next-generation scholars, and promote active international exchange.

Building on over a decade of achievement, SNUAC now envisions itself as a global platform for Asian studies, connecting Asia and the world while shaping a shared future. Its structure includes the HK+ Mega-Asia Research Project Group, seven regional research centers, and eight thematic programs, as well as the Asia Regional Information Center. Through innovative research, conferences, workshops, and scholarly networks, SNUAC continues to strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing across Asia and beyond.

Overview of the 2025 SNUAC Conference on Asian Studies

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The theme of the 2025 SNUAC Conference on Asian Studies, “Mega-Asia: A New Perspective on Asia,” represents an ambitious effort to reconceptualize, analyze, and reimagine the Asian world. The idea of “Mega-Asia” captures the dynamic interactions among the continent’s diverse regions—each with distinct spatial and temporal identities—that give rise to new regional orders and evolving phenomena. Methodologically, it promotes comparative regional research grounded in multi-scalar analysis and data-driven inquiry, while conceptually aspiring to establish a shared intellectual foundation that enables collective responses to the challenges confronting Asia today.

The “Mega-Asia” initiative emerged from a growing need for a broader and more integrative framework capable of reflecting Asia’s complexity and transformation. The pandemic experience underscored the importance of combining global and local perspectives, leading to what might be termed a “glocal” approach, one that recognizes both Asia’s shared characteristics and its unique, localized distinctions.

Although “Mega-Asia” is a relatively recent concept, the perspectives it embodies resonate deeply with long-standing debates within Asian Studies. By convening over thirty-seven scholars from fifteen countries, the 2025 SNUAC Conference aims to facilitate dialogue on the “New Asia” of the twenty-first century, a megaregion conceived as one space of multiple spaces, shaped by overlapping histories and interconnected transformations.

The conference will open with a keynote lecture titled “The Revitalization of Area Studies and the Role of Comparative Area Studies,” followed by eight thematic sessions that explore diverse dimensions of Asia’s past, present, and future:

- 1 | Reimagining Asia: “Mega-Asia” and Other Perspective
- 2 | Comparative Approaches in Asian Studies
- 3 | Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges to Civil Society in Asia
- 4 | Migration and Changing Dynamics in Asia
- 5 | Approaching Asia Through Data
- 6 | Asia in Focus: Politics and Society
- 7 | Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions
- 8 | Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

A special session, “Charting New Pathways: The Future of Asian Studies in a Changing World” will also be held, highlighting SNUAC’s vision of connecting Asia and the world through collaboration, reflection, and innovation.



Organizing
Committee



Co-Chairs



Suhong Chae | 채수홍

- Professor, Dept. of Anthropology, SNU
- Director, Seoul National University Asia Center
- Director, Southeast Asian Center at SNUAC
- Head of Research, HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group



Beom-Shik Shin | 신범식

- Professor, Dept. of Political Science and International Relations, SNU
- Deputy Director, Seoul National University Asia Center
- Director, Center for Eurasian & Central Asian Studies at SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member

Honorary Chairs



Hyun-Chin Lim | 임현진

- Founding Director, Seoul National University Asia Center
- Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Sociology, SNU
- Director, Civil Society & NGOs Program at SNUAC



Myung-seok Oh | 오명석

- Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Anthropology, SNU
- Editor-in-Chief, Asia Review

Members



Ilhong Ko | 고일홍

- Assistant Professor (Archaeology), SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member



Heonik Kwon | 권혁익

- Professor (Anthropology), SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member



Ho Kim | 김 호

- Professor (History), SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member



Gi Yeon Koo | 구기연

- Assistant Professor (Anthropology), SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member



Suk-Ki Kong | 공석기

- Research Fellow (Sociology), SNUAC



Jong-Cheol Kim | 김종철

- Research Fellow (Sociology), SNUAC



So-Yeon Ahn | 안소연

- Co-Research Fellow (International Relations), SNUAC



Hyunjoo Jung | 정현주

- Associate Professor, Graduate School of Environmental Studies, SNU
- Director, Center for Asian Migration Studies at SNUAC



Baek Yung Kim | 김백영

- Professor, Dept. of Sociology, SNU
- Director, Northeast Asia Center at SNUAC
- HK* Mega-Asia Research Project Group Member

Graduate
Staff



Minki Jung | 정민기

- PH. D. Candidate (International Relations), SNU
- Research Assistant, Center for Eurasian & Central Asian Studies at SNUAC



MyungHye Cho | 조명혜

- MA Student (International Relations), SNU
- Research Assistant, Center for Eurasian & Central Asian Studies at SNUAC

Nov. 25
Tuesday

Conference Day 1

Time	Schedule	Venue
9:00-9:30	Registration	In front of Samik Hall, 2 nd Floor
9:30-10:30	Opening Ceremony & Keynote Speech	Samik Hall, 2 nd Floor
10:30-12:30	[Session 1] Re-imagining Asia: “Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives	Samik Hall, 2 nd Floor
12:30-13:45	Lunch	6 th Floor Lounge & Room # 304
13:45-15:45 [3 Parallel Sessions]	[Session 2] Comparative Approaches in Asian Studies	Samik Hall, 2 nd Floor
	[Session 3] Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges to Civil Society in Asia	Room # 303
	[Session 4] Migration and Changing Dynamics in Asia	Room # 406
15:45-16:05	Coffee Break	2 nd Floor Foyer
16:05-18:00	[Special Session] “Charting New Pathways: The Future of Asian Studies in a Shifting World”	Youngone Hall, 2 nd Floor
18:00-20:00	Dinner	2 nd Floor Foyer & Samik Hall

Nov. 26
Wednesday

Conference Day 2

Time	Information	Venue
10:00-12:00 [4 Parallel Sessions]	[Session 5] Approaching Asia through Data	Room # 303
	[Session 6] Asia in Focus: Politics and Society	Youngone Hall, 2 nd Floor
	[Session 7] Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions	Samik Hall, 2 nd Floor
	[Session 8] Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge	Room # 406
12:30-13:30	Lunch	6 th Floor Lounge & Room # 304
13:30-15:00	Business Meeting (for publications, future conferences, etc.)	Room # 304, 406, Youngone Hall, Samik Hall
18:00-20:00	Dinner (provided for participants on demand)	Off SNU Campus

2025
Conference on Asian Studies
MEGA-ASIA
A New Perspective on Asia

SNUAC, Seoul National University, South Korea, Nov. 24-27, 2025

Detailed Conference Schedule

[Session 1] Re-imagining Asia: “Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives

[Session 2] Comparative Approaches in Asian Studies

[Session 3] Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges to Civil Society in Asia

[Session 4] Migration and Changing Dynamics in Asia

[Session 5] Approaching Asia through Data

[Session 6] Asia in Focus: Politics and Society

[Session 7] Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions

[Session 8] Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
10:30-12:30
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 1

Re-imagining Asia:
“Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Heonik Kwon (SNUAC)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Bahar Gürsel	Dept. of History, Middle East Technical University (METU)	Frank G. Carpenter’s Asia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: Textual Geographies as Precursors to the Mega-Asia Perspective
2	Mikiya Koyagi	Dept. of Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Texas at Austin	From Barbarians to Brothers: Islamic Pan-Asianism in Imperial Japan
3	Oleg Pakhomov	Center for Northeast Asian Studies Tohoku University	From Universal Empire to Techno-Economic System: Revisiting the West Asian “Circle of Justice” and the East Asian “All Under Heaven”
4	Mohor Chakraborty	Dept. of Political Science, South Calcutta Girls’ College	India as a Critical Node in Envisioning ‘Mega Asia’: Perspectives on Connectivity and Shared Progress
5	Badamdash Dashdavaa	National University of Mongolia	Mongolia as a Bridge in Mega-Asia: Toward a Central–Northeast Asian Dialogue Architecture

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 2

Comparative Approaches in
Asian Studies

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Suhong Chae (Dept. of Anthropology, SNU)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Beom-Shik Shin & Ilhong Ko	Dept. of Political Science and International Relations, SNU / SNUAC	Transforming Comparative Area Studies, “Comparative Regional Studies (CRS)”
2	Kota Suechika	College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University	Sectarian Identity and Public Support for Armed Non-State Actors: Evidence from Survey Experiments in Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen
3	Wonjung Min	SNUAC	Transpacific Chinoism: From Manila’s Chinatown to Yucatán’s Coolie Imaginary
4	Richard T. Griffiths	International Studies Programme, Leiden University	Reimagining Comparison: The Silk Road Virtual Museum and the Spatial Logic of Connection
5	Maitrii Aung-Thwin	Asia Research Institute/ Comparative Asian Studies PhD Program, National University of Singapore.	Transcending Boundaries, Pursuing Connections: Developing a PhD Program in Comparative Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 303

Session 3

Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges
to Civil Society in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Hyun-Chin Lim (SNUAC)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Michael Hsiao & Alan Hao Yang	Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation/Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies, National Chengchi University	Decoding Civil Society’s Efforts to Defend Democracy in Taiwan and Beyond
2	Turtogtokh Janar	National University of Mongolia	Representative democracy and its challenges and prospects in Mongolia
3	Asis Mistry	Department of Political Science, University of Calcutta	Quiet Democracies: Memory, Movement, and the Politics of the Margins in Asia
4	Tetsuo Mizukami	Rikkyo University and Vice President of Rikkyo Second Stage College	Development of Local Government Activities and Cross-Border Collaboration

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 406

Session 4

Migration and Changing
Dynamics in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator HaeRan Shin (Dept. of Geography, SNU)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Adrian Favell	University College Cork (Ireland)	Immigration, Migration and Free Movement: Comparative Europe - Asia Perspectives
2	Brenda S.A. Yeoh	National University of Singapore	Migration-led Diversification in Singapore: Opportunities and Challenges in the Context of Globalisation and Rapid Ageing
3	Kidjie Ian Saguin	University of Melbourne	Understanding different logics of reintegration governance in the Philippines
4	Yuko Tsujita	Saitama University, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences.	Diverging Gateways: A Comparative Study of Migration Schemes for Indonesian Long-term Care Workers in Japan

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 303

Session 5

Approaching Asia Through Data

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Dong-Kyun Im (Dept. of Sociology, SNU)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	So Yeon Ahn	SNUAC	Social Capital Reconsidered: Civic Engagement and Political Development in the Middle East and North Africa
2	Mari Adachi	Kinugasa Research Organization Ritsumeikan University/ Kyoto University	Faith and Charity in Jakarta’s Societal Organizations: A Study of Three Major Orma
3	Shim Woojin & Jungwon Huh	SNUAC	Mapping Family and Marriage Values in Asia: A Comparative Study of Value Proximity Across Cities
4	Joan P. Yoo & Jungwon Huh	Dept. of Social Welfare, SNU/SNUAC	Linking Adult Social Values to Children’s Subjective Well-Being : Evidence from Asian Countries

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 6

Asia in Focus: Politics and Society

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Beom-Shik Shin (Dept. of Political Science and
International Relations, SNU)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Dmitry Shlapentokh	Dept. of History, Indiana University	Russo-Chinese gas deal and current geopolitical framework
2	Yesukhei Tumurbaatar	Department of Political Science, National University of Mongolia	Beyond Kinship: Rethinking Civil Society Formation in Mongolia’s Nomadic Context
3	Deepanjali Mishra	School of Liberal Studies, KIIT University	Analysing Soft Power and Diplomacy between India and South Korea with reference to Buddhism
4	Sayaka Yoshii	Free University Berlin, Department of History and Cultural Studies, MA Global East Asia	Reimagining Nationalism: The Case of Chōsen Schools and Zainichi Koreans’ Community Pride in Contemporary Japan
5	Yun CHEN	School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, China	The United States and East Asia in the Infinite Game Perspective: The Implications of Trade Frictions and Distributive Justice

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 7

Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Gi Yeon Koo (SNUAC)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Fukiko Ikehata	Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences Hiroshima University	International Politics of Islamic Values: Analysis of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation
2	Hisaya ODA	College of Policy Science Ritsumeikan University	Resilience and Vulnerability: The Impact of COVID-19 on Remittance-Receiving Rural Households in Pakistan
3	Sanae ITO	Graduate School of Human Sciences Osaka University	Separated Yet Connected: ICT and the (Re)formation of Nepali Family Relationships in the Era of Emigration
4	Diah Ayu Wulandari & Wiji Agustin	Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Jawa Timur / Learning Resources Center and Al Muslim Jawa Timur Foundation	Interconnected Rivalries: Mobile Phone Industry and the Making of a Techno-Regional Order in East Asia

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 406

Session 8

Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator Ilhong Ko (SNUAC)

	Name	Affiliation	Title
1	Gazi Mizanur Rahman	Department of English and Humanities BRAC University	Textual Flows and Mobility during the Colonial Period across Bengal and the Malay World
2	Hafis Chalthodi	Dept. of History University of Hyderabad	Medieval Malabar and the Making of Connected Asia: Regional Rhythms, Maritime Networks, and the Indian Ocean World
3	Sumin Myung	Cultural Anthropology Programme, Victoria University of Wellington	Tropicalizing Temperate Sensibilities: Hayata Bunzō and the Making of Tropical Botany Through Inter-Asian Connections

Opening Remarks

Suhong Chae
Director of Seoul National University Asia Center

Welcoming Remarks

Hong Lim Ryu
President of Seoul National University

Congratulatory Remarks

Minsuhk Lee
President of Youngone Corporation

Day 1 Nov. 25 (Tue.)
9:30-10:30,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Keynote Speech

“The Revitalization of Area Studies and
the Role of Comparative Area Studies”

One aspect of the pragmatic turn supporting the recent revitalization of area studies (including Asian studies) is the increased compatibility of area-focused qualitative inquiry and comparative analyses within, between and across world regions. Comparative area studies (CAS) plays a crucial role here. As a self-conscious effort, CAS does two things at the same time. First, it balances deep sensitivity to context in each of the locales being examined with the use of some variant of the comparative method. The aim here is to surface causal linkages that are portable across world regions. Second, CAS has dialogical benefits by engaging research and scholarly discourse in two or more area studies communities against the backdrop of more general concepts and theoretical debates within a social science discipline.

Keynote Speaker

Prof. Dr. Patrick Köllner
Director of the GIGA Institute for Asian Studies,
GIGA Vice President



- Short CV
- 2017- : Vice President of the GIGA
 - 2011- Director of the GIGA Institute for Asian Studies and Professor in political science (with a particular focus on Asia) at the University of Hamburg
 - 2015-2016: Acting Lead Research Fellow of GIGA Research Programme 4 “Global Orders and Foreign Policies”
 - 2010-2011: Academic Director (ad interim) Hamburg International Graduate School for the Study of Regional Powers
 - 2007-2011: Acting Director, GIGA Institute for Asian Studies
 - 2005-2009: Head of GIGA Research Programme 1
 - 2000-2007: Senior Research Fellow at the GIGA Institute for Asian Studies, areas of research: Japanese domestic politics, politics and economy in North and South Korea

Day 1 Nov. 25 (Tue.)
9:30-10:30,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

01

[Session 1]

Re-imagining Asia: “Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives

The “Mega-Asia” perspective emerged from the recognition that a new way of perceiving Asia is required for the 21st century. Developed out of this need was a research framework that supported the investigation of Asia at multiple scales, including the adoption of Asia itself as the unit of analysis. Such a multi-scaler approach allowed previously unrecognized connections between distant regions and countries within Asia to be explored and the reality and dynamics of an interconnected Asia to be revealed. This, in turn, allowed new sub-regions within Asia to be considered. Ultimately, this new way of approaching the region made it possible for Asia to be defined not by its otherness to the West but as an ever-changing concept, transformed and reconstituted by the dynamics of its respective (variously scaled) parts.

In this session, the core concepts of the “Mega-Asia” perspective will be introduced, along with a critical assessment of its possibilities and shortcomings. However, as the “Mega-Asia” perspective represents merely one of many ways of re-imagining Asia, we invite researchers to participate in this session to talk about other ways of approaching and perceiving Asia or its sub-regions. We welcome contributions from both the humanities and social sciences, including historical analysis of past and present imaginations of Asia or its sub-regions (e.g. the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Indo-Pacific, BRI, Zomia, etc.) or studies tracing how imaginations of Asia are constructed through discourse.

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
10:30-12:30
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 1

Re-imagining Asia:
“Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Heonik Kwon (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Frank G. Carpenter's Asia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: Textual Geographies as Precursors to the Mega-Asia Perspective	Frank George Carpenter (1855–1924), a prolific American author, journalist, photographer, and traveler, was among the leading contributors to popular geographic knowledge in the United States, with his influence remaining prominent into the 1930s. His extensive global travels resulted in a substantial corpus of work, including detailed narratives depicting Asia as a mosaic of interconnected yet distinct societies. This paper examines how Carpenter constructed his representations of Asia, drawing from his books—Travels through Asia with the Children (1897 and 1898), Carpenter’s Geographical Reader: Asia (1897), and Japan and Korea (1925)—alongside a selection of his newspaper articles and photographs. These sources, which primarily cover Japan, Korea, China, Siam, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, India, Tibet, Persia, Arabia, Turkey, and partly Siberia, offer tangible evidence of significant cultural, economic, physical and political interconnections across Asia at the turn of the twentieth century. Far from standalone documents defining “Mega-Asia,” his works serve as preliminary and popular precursors to the concept’s foundational tenets. Generated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, his narratives reveal both the potentials and limitations of Western imaginings of Asia during that period. While deeply shaped by the colonial and imperial discourses of his time, Carpenter’s portrayals extended beyond echoes of contemporary ethnic stereotypes and exoticism; they also acknowledged the continent’s agency, complexity, and dynamism. His multi-scalar exploration, encompassing cities, regions, and cultural zones, anticipated several key themes like mobility, entanglement, and transformation which are now central to the “Mega-Asia” perspective. Through this lens, Carpenter treated Asia as unified yet internally heterogeneous spatial entity, revealing an early awareness of the continent’s complex interconnectedness. His observations implicitly framed Asia as “one space of multiple spaces,” rather than a mere assemblage of isolated nations.
Bahar Gürsel - Dept. of History, Middle East Technical University (METU)	Scholarship on Pan-Asianism has expanded its spatial scope in recent years. Moving beyond the traditional focus on East Asia, scholars have examined the connected histories of the globally circulating ideas of “Asia.” In doing so, they have paid due attention to a wide range of actors such as artists, religious figures, revolutionaries, and feminists from Japan and China to the Philippines, Vietnam, and India. Building on this emerging body of scholarship, this paper explores what I call “Islamic Pan-Asianism,” a particular strand of Pan-Asianism that imagined Asia as a contiguous civilizational space from Japan to Muslim-majority parts of Asia, including West and Central Asia. Emerging in Japan at the turn of the twentieth century, this imagination transformed West Asians from “barbaric,” “cruel,” and “filthy” Arabs, Turks, and Iranians into “fellow Asians” with shared civilizational essence. How and why did this form of Pan-Asianism emerge and continue to thrive in twentieth-century Japan?
Mikiya Koyagi - Dept. of Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Texas at Austin	Using Japanese Pan-Asianist publications supplemented with Persian and Arabic press sources, this paper situates the emergence of Islamic Pan-Asianism in the global discourses of civilization, race, and religion as well as direct encounters between the Japanese and West and Central Asian Muslims. In doing so, it argues that Islamic Pan-Asianism shaped because of the convergence between Muslim fascinations with Meiji Japan’s progress and knowledge production about West and Central Asia by a wide range of Japanese actors who held little political clout until the 1930s such as bureaucrats, business professionals, religious universalists, and itinerary revolutionaries. It was their decades of intellectual endeavors since the turn of the century that established Japan’s civilizational, racial, and religious sameness with West and Central Asia as a “fact” to be repeated in Japanese Pan-Asianist circles once coopting Muslims became an imperial strategic matter in the 1930s.
From Universal Empire to Techno-Economic System: Revisiting the West Asian “Circle of Justice” and the East Asian “All Under Heaven”	The crisis and disintegration of neoliberal globalization have intensified interest in alternative models of large-scale economic and political integration. In this context, revisiting the historical experience of the West Asian Circle of Justice (dayere-ye edalat) and the East Asian All Under Heaven (tianxia) is especially productive. These two models can be understood as distinct versions of a single Mega-Asian tradition of universal empire, grounded in shared organizational principles of harmony, justice, and systemic unity. Historically, universal empires sought internal stability and equilibrium. This orientation often resulted in the slow adoption of technological innovation and a preference for harmonious balance over dynamic technological advance. By contrast, the contemporary world is characterized by the accelerated turnover of techno-economic paradigms. Adapting these imperial traditions to present conditions therefore requires combining them with capitalism’s systemic drive toward continuous technological upgrading. On this basis, the paper develops the concept of the Techno-Economic System (TES): a large-scale, self-sustaining, institutionally coordinated division of labor capable not only of collectively mastering existing technological paradigms but also of managing controlled transitions from one paradigm to the next. The study analyzes the organizational principles articulated in the Circle of Justice and All Under Heaven traditions and considers how these principles can inform the design of contemporary macro-regional formations able to secure technological sovereignty, sustainable development, and coordinated innovation transitions in a post-globalization world.
Oleg Pakhomov - Center for Northeast Asian Studies Tohoku University	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
10:30-12:30
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 1

Re-imagining Asia:
“Mega-Asia” and Other Perspectives

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Heonik Kwon (SNUAC)

Abstract	
India as a Critical Node in Envisioning 'Mega Asia': Perspectives on Connectivity and Shared Progress	India’s geo-strategic location and emergence as a responsible actor in Asia substantiate its role of safeguarding the regional order, while adhering to and promoting the universal values of peace, stability, security and maintaining the Grotian principles of ‘freedom of the seas.’ India’s Indo-Pacific policy seeks to maintain the status quo by deterring regional hegemony and guaranteeing balance of power. Simultaneously, it envisages inclusive, development-based cooperative linkages with partners at the bilateral, regional and/or multilateral levels. As a critical node in the Asian region, India’s focus on trans-regional connectivity has been demonstrated by its launch of the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi (September 2023). It not only envisages multimodal connectivity through terrestrial, littoral and undersea modes of communication, but also provides a new perspective and an alternative constructive, development-oriented and cooperative trajectory, by fostering multilateral cooperation and economic integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf/West Asia and Europe. Hailed by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, as an “important and historic partnership”, heralding the future trans-regional economic integration, the IMEC is poised to evolve as a geostrategic game-changer, with the potential of boosting digital and physical connectivity; trade and investment; human resources and address issues pertaining to Asian maritime and energy security. Furthermore, the Corridor envisages reliable, cost-effective and sustainable cross-border ship to rail transit networks, high-speed cables and shipping lanes to supplement existing maritime routes, in addition to securing regional supply chains, boosting employment prospects, public-private partnerships, trade accessibility and green and sustainable development, thereby scripting a transformative future for Asia, facilitating its transition to a ‘Mega Asia’. In this backdrop, the abstract attempts to situate the rationale and India’s role in guiding the IMEC initiative; identify the principal areas of cooperation within the IMEC framework; evaluate the potential of IMEC as a viable alternative to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); and analyse the challenges and opportunities.
Mohor Chakraborty - Dept. of Political Science, South Calcutta Girls’ College	As geopolitical rivalries intensify across Eurasia, the concept of “Mega-Asia” calls for new perspectives on regional integration that transcend rigid subregional boundaries. This paper argues that Mongolia, uniquely situated both geographically and diplomatically, is well-positioned to serve as a functional bridge between Central Asia and Northeast Asia. Drawing on its long-standing policy of neutrality, shared historical legacies with Central Asian republics, and its democratic credentials, Mongolia can play a catalytic role in initiating a multilateral dialogue mechanism that promotes peace, resilience, and cooperative development. Building on recent suggestions—including Prof. Christopher Atwood’s proposal for Mongolia to spearhead an ASEAN-like institution in Central Asia—this paper explores the potential for a new regional platform centered in Ulaanbaatar. It examines the feasibility of a “Central–Northeast Asia Dialogue” (CNAD), an inclusive forum linking Mongolia, the five Central Asian states, Japan, South Korea, and other willing partners. The CNAD would focus on soft security issues such as climate resilience, infrastructure connectivity, cultural exchange, and non-traditional security cooperation, while deliberately avoiding great power entanglements. This proposal is grounded in Mongolia’s evolving foreign policy strategy, particularly its “Third Neighbor” approach and active diplomatic engagement through the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue. By analyzing lessons from ASEAN, APEC, and the Helsinki process, the paper outlines a roadmap for how Mongolia can translate its neutrality and convening power into a durable institutional framework. In an era of geopolitical fragmentation, Mongolia’s leadership in fostering regional cohesion across Mega-Asia can offer a model of pragmatic, middle-power diplomacy rooted in inclusivity, sovereignty, and mutual respect.
Mongolia as a Bridge in Mega-Asia: Toward a Central–Northeast Asian Dialogue Architecture	
Badamdash Dashdavaa - National University of Mongolia	

02

[Session 2]

Comparative Approaches in Asian Studies

Of the many ways of approaching Asia, researchers of the “Mega-Asia” project have actively undertaken comparative studies on various regions at multiple scales to obtain a better understanding of the patterns and variations demonstrating the reality of Asia in the present day. Undertaking regional comparison and combining this with area-specific expertise is not a novel approach. However, the “Mega-Asia” research framework also combines the explicit use of comparative methods with a multi-scaler approach towards regions. This is why the comparative research methodology of the “Mega-Asia” project is referred to as “Comparative Regional Studies (CRS)”, vis-à-vis “Comparative Area Studies (CAS).”

In this session, the core concepts of “Comparative Regional Studies (CRS)” will be introduced, along with a critical assessment of its possibilities and shortcomings. In addition, the way in which “Comparative Regional Studies (CRS)” differs from “Comparative Area Studies (CAS)” will be examined. We invite researchers who have applied the CAS methodology to Asian studies to participate in this session to present the results of their research and provide insights on the differences between CRS and CAS. There are, of course, other various ways of carrying out comparative research on Asia that do not fall under the category of CAS or CRS. Therefore, we also invite Asian Studies researchers who have utilized other methods of comparative analysis to present their work at this session and demonstrate how their respective comparative approaches have been useful in identifying and tracing the drivers and dynamics of the relationships between Asia’s composite parts, ultimately facilitating the investigation of Asia’s identities diachronically, synchronically, and at multiple scales.

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 2

Comparative Approaches in
Asian Studies

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Suhong Chae (Dept. of Anthropology, SNU)

Abstract	
Transforming Comparative Area Studies, “Comparative Regional Studies (CRS)”	Comparative Regional Studies (CRS) acts as an alternative research methodology designed to overcome the “crisis” of traditional Area Studies, which has often been criticized for its descriptive orientation, case-bound particularism, and lack of theoretical and methodological rigor. CRS actively incorporates comparative methodologies into Area Studies, internalizing an academic orientation that seeks universal understanding by moving beyond narrow, region-specific analyses toward broader, interconnected perspectives. Specifically, CRS pursues a balanced methodological duality between achieving deep contextual understanding of multiple regions and identifying causal linkages applicable across different world regions. It employs contextualized comparisons and qualitative comparisons as key strategies for bridging localized insight with generalizable theory. It also redefines the analytical unit of the “region” as a socially constructed, multilayered, and dynamic space shaped by discourse, interaction, and institutionalization. By situating regional comparison across multiple scales—from intra-regional to trans-regional—the CRS approach not only revitalizes qualitative inquiry but also expands the epistemological reach of Area Studies toward globally relevant theory-building. Ultimately, CRS envisions a methodological synthesis that enables scholars to move beyond region-bound description toward a genuinely comparative understanding of how regions function as both subjects and agents in an interconnected world.
Beom-Shik Shin & Ilhong Ko - Dept. of Political Science and International Relations, SNU / SNUAC	
Sectarian Identity and Public Support for Armed Non-State Actors: Evidence from Survey Experiments in Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen	Sectarian cleavages have long been central to understanding political conflict in the Middle East. Since the Iraq War, many violent confrontations have been framed as sectarian conflicts, particularly between actors aligned with Shi’a-majority Iran and those backed by Sunni-majority Saudi Arabia. Among them, Iran-supported armed non-state actors (ANSAs) such as Hezbollah, the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), and the Houthis have emerged as powerful players, contributing to the intensification and prolongation of regional conflicts. Despite the acknowledged importance of both sectarian identity and ANSAs in shaping Middle Eastern politics, little empirical evidence exists on whether support for such actors varies systematically across sectarian groups. Moreover, it remains unclear whether members of different sectarian communities evaluate the goals and actions of ANSAs differently. To address these questions, we conducted original survey experiments in early 2025 in three key countries—Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen—each home to a prominent Iran-backed ANSA: Hezbollah, the PMU, and the Houthis, respectively. Our survey experiments measured levels of support for these actors and examined how such support varies by sectarian affiliation. This study contributes to a growing body of research that seeks to move beyond elite-centric or geopolitical accounts by systematically analyzing the micro-level foundations of support for armed actors. By introducing experimental methods in three conflict-affected settings, the findings of this study offer new insights into the relationship between communal identity, perceived legitimacy, and political violence. The results have implications for understanding the durability of armed movements, the prospects for conflict resolution, and the nature of sectarian politics in the region.
Kota Suechika - College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University	
Transpacific Chinoism: From Manila's Chinatown to Yucatán's Coolie Imaginary	This research investigates the shifting meanings of East Asian identity across the transpacific routes that link Southeast Asia and Latin America. Beginning with the establishment of Manila's Chinatown—the oldest in the world—and moving to the arrival of Chinese indentured laborers (coolies) in 19th-century Yucatán, the presentation explores how early Asian migrants were racialized and absorbed into colonial hierarchies. Drawing on the concept of Chinoism—a framework that emerges from interdisciplinary work on race, migration, and cultural consumption in postcolonial Latin America—I analyze how the figure of the Chinese coolie has been reimagined in contemporary fan cultures, particularly in relation to K-pop and Japanese pop media. Young Latin American audiences do not merely consume East Asian pop culture; they actively co-produce meanings through digital platforms, oscillating between exotic desire, emotional intimacy, and inherited colonial memory. By tracing these historical and cultural continuities, this talk highlights the long-standing transpacific entanglements that have shaped Latin American perceptions of ‘Asia’ In particular, I call attention to the shared colonial histories of the Philippines and Latin American countries—both once part of the Spanish Empire—to explore how media, migration, and memory converge in the making of racial imaginaries and affective cultural affinities.
Wonjung Min - SNUAC	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 2

Comparative Approaches in
Asian Studies

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Suhong Chae (Dept. of Anthropology, SNU)

Abstract	
Reimagining Comparison: The Silk Road Virtual Museum and the Spatial Logic of Connection	This presentation draws on the creation of the Silk Road Virtual Museum, a digital exhibition project that reinterprets material, visual, and maritime histories of Asia through a comparative, transregional lens. Moving beyond conventional area-based boundaries, the museum reconstructs layered exchanges across East, Southeast, and South Asia—from the spread of silk production, to the development of music and musical instruments to shipwreck cargoes and regional ceramic production. Rather than presenting discrete civilizational zones, the project emphasizes points of contact—ports, markets, migration corridors, and artistic idioms—as interpretive anchors. It also demonstrates how digital curation can visualize multi-scalar comparison, connecting the local and the global, the tactile and the conceptual. In doing so, it reflects and tests the broader ambitions of the Mega-Asia framework: to approach Asia not as a collection of bounded regions but as a dynamically entangled space. The presentation will also reflect on the museum’s pedagogical function, building on my experience in establishing the BA in International Studies at Leiden University. It offers both a case study in applied comparative regional studies and a model for integrating scholarship, teaching, and public engagement in rethinking Asia.
Richard T. Griffiths - International Studies Programme, Leiden University	
Transcending Boundaries, Pursuing Connections: Developing a PhD Program in Comparative Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore	In 2013, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the National University of Singapore launched the Comparative Asian Studies (CAS) PhD Program. Structurally, the new program complemented an existing institutional commitment to the study of Asia via departments defined by national, regional, or cultural zones. Where students might dig deeply into “Southeast Asian”, “South Asian”, “Malay”, or “Chinese Studies”, the CAS program was established to promote research across these areally defined regions via a more connected, relational, “trans-Asian” and “Inter-Asian” curriculum that reconceptualized how Asia might be studied, constructed, and understood. A core challenge was to develop a distinctive PhD curriculum that reflected these intellectual priorities while aligning the program with existing curricula, systems, and resources. This paper provides a recollection of the context and process through which the CAS program was conceptualized and operationalized, focusing on the conversations, challenges and dynamics behind the scenes that led to the establishment of the program. It reflects primarily the perspective of the founding academic convener who, with the support of colleagues in the Asian Studies Division, developed the conceptual and operational framework for the degree program. The presentation suggests that the CAS emerged at a particular time and place by scholars within NUS and Singapore's tertiary networks who anticipated that reimagining how the study of Asia might look from Asia was potentially strategic and intellectually innovative, especially at a time when ongoing calls to decolonize Asian Studies—and area studies more generally—was still the dominant starting point for students and researchers within the region.
Maitrii Aung-Thwin - Asia Research Institute/ Comparative Asian Studies PhD Program, National University of Singapore.	

03

[Session 3]

Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges to Civil Society in Asia

This session examines the evolving landscape of pro-democracy movements across the region. Through comparative case studies and discussions, it aims to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of grassroots mobilization and the potential for regional cooperation in navigating the challenges of contemporary democracy.

This session features papers that address the resurgence of democratic activism, the transformative impact of the digital revolution, and the active engagement of the MZ generation in political and social movements.

Additionally, the contributions provide insights into the rise of counter-movements that seek to undermine democratic efforts and offer analyses of how these opposing forces shape the trajectory of civil society in Asia.

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 303

Session 3

Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges
to Civil Society in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Hyun-Chin Lim (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Decoding Civil Society's Efforts to Defend Democracy in Taiwan and Beyond	In recent years, global democracy has faced mounting threats from the expansion of authoritarianism. This trend is particularly evident in Asia, where some countries have experienced military coups or are grappling with serious democratic backsliding. Confronted by both external authoritarian pressure and the rise of internal populism, maintaining a healthy democratic system has become increasingly challenging for many nations. Nevertheless, in 2024, seventy democratic countries around the world successfully held elections and formed new governments. These political transitions underscore the continued resilience of democratic institutions and reaffirm democracy as the preferred choice for the majority of global citizens. Taiwan was among the nations that held successful elections in 2024. This study examines Taiwan's democratic development in the face of global democratic challenges, and analyzes both the parallels and distinctions between Taiwan's experience and that of other democracies. It seeks to decode the key factors shaping Taiwan's democratic trajectory. More specifically, the study explores the evolution from the 2024 Bluebird Movement to the large-scale recall campaign of 2025, with a particular focus on the role of civil society in defending democracy and safeguarding national sovereignty. We argue that Taiwan's democratic development is unique. It is neither a mere replication of colonial political models nor a product of romanticized political idealism, nor has it been free of crises. Taiwan's democracy is the result of a long and complex process of multiple transformations, frequently shadowed by crises. The country's transition from a Cold War-era authoritarian regime to an open and liberal democracy has been continuously challenged by both internal and external threats. Externally, Taiwan faces persistent coercion and the threat of annexation by China. Internally, authoritarian tendencies and pro-China political forces have, for various reasons, aligned with Beijing's divide-and-conquer strategy toward Taiwan. This dynamic has endured for decades and remains present even after three peaceful transitions of political power. In light of these developments, this study is organized into four parts. Part I offers an introduction, emphasizing the unique features of Taiwan's democratic evolution. Part II deconstructs the key factors influencing Taiwan's democracy. Part III analyzes recent democratic developments, particularly the progression from the 2024 Bluebird Movement to the 2025 large-scale recall campaign, highlighting how the strength and leadership of civil society have underpinned Taiwan's resilient democracy. Part IV concludes with a reflection on the lessons Taiwan's experience may offer for other Indo-Pacific democracies and the potential for deepening democratic linkages in the region.
Representative democracy and its challenges and prospects in Mongolia	The 1992 democratic constitution of Mongolia declares that the State Great Khural (parliament with permanent legislative power) is the supreme representative body of the Mongolian people. Since 1992, the Parliament, which is the main institution for implementing representative democracy, has been elected 9 times up to now through general elections. The Mongolian public is increasingly losing faith in the Parliament, which is a main institution of representative democracy. The number of people participating in the elections to elect the parliament has been decreasing as well since the 2000s. In this situation, the fear that the reputation of representative democracy will fall due to the bad reputation of the parliament, and a possible authoritarian regime will return, is becoming a stressful issue in discussions among academic scholars. There are several real, practical questions in our parliament regarding the neutralization or inefficiency of representative democracy. For example, discriminating and bullying the newly elected members by joining the leadership (speaker) with the old chronic members. This is rude and embarrassing. Also, due to the mixed election system, since the last 2024, 78 out of 126 members of parliament were elected from constituencies, and 48 were elected from proportional lists. It is observed that members elected from constituencies take more interest in discussing and approving the public budget, influence the distribution of marginal budgets in their electoral constituencies, and then discriminate against members elected by party name list. The biggest problem in representative democracy is that the ruling political party tries to make the parliament dependent on the political party by politically pressuring and pressuring the members elected to the parliament, preventing them from representing the views and interests of the voters in making parliamentary decisions, and reflecting the party's interests. How is the Mongolian Parliament fulfilling its role as a representative democratic institution? What difficulties may the Parliament face in performing its role as an institution of representative democracy in the future? Parliamentary elections: election system changes and party influences on it. Party dominance over the state and parliament. MP's political reputation and its downfall. Why do Mongolians increasingly distrust the institution of representative democracy? Public trust in parliament, political parties, and MPs. Representative democracy institutions' future. These are some issues and questions I wish to share my ideas and opinions on their reasons and results via the theory of representative democracy and its practice in Mongolia.
Turtogtokh Janar - National University of Mongolia	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 303

Session 3

Re-Democracy and Urgent Challenges
to Civil Society in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Hyun-Chin Lim (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Quiet Democracies: Memory, Movement, and the Politics of the Margins in Asia	What happens to the idea of democracy when it is decentred from parliaments, elections, and state-led reforms? This paper explores the concept of “quiet democracies”—practices of political engagement rooted in memory, movement, and minoritarian resistance. Rather than focusing on formal institutions, it foregrounds the everyday struggles of marginalised communities across Asia who contest historical erasure, authoritarian resurgence, and developmentalist state agendas through subtle yet profound acts of remembrance and collective mobilisation. Focusing primarily on two cases—the commemorative practices of Tamil survivors in post-war Sri Lanka and the land and labour struggles of Indigenous communities in the Philippines—the paper examines how subaltern groups forge alternative democratic imaginaries. These practices include vigils, oral history projects, environmental protests, and embodied acts of refusal. They challenge dominant narratives of national unity and progress, sustaining claims to dignity, justice, and belonging from the margins. By reading memory and movement together, this paper rethinks democracy as an ongoing, plural process rather than a fixed institutional form. In doing so, it offers a new lens for understanding political life in South and Southeast Asia—one that takes seriously the quiet but enduring practices of subaltern resistance.
Asis Mistry - Department of Political Science, University of Calcutta	
Development of Local Government Activities and Cross-Border Collaboration	The term Mega-Asia refers to the expansive economic and cultural sphere encompassing the wider Asian region, urbanization, and the clusters of megacities. It may also include networks among global cities and international population movements within the region. In this context, for a megacity to be established, it will likely need to function as a hub for information and collaboration networks. The Japanese government established a Committee for Regional Independence and Growth Policy. Their report indicated, mega-regions are precisely the entities that prevail in global competition, and the competitiveness is strengthened when multiple metropolitan areas collaborate for leveraging local strengths to become global centers of innovation in specific fields. In terms of regional collaboration, economic zones and industrial sectors are likely to be central, international cooperation can take many forms. However, various developments in international collaboration are also possible, including cross-border collaboration among civil society through nonprofit organizations and citizen groups. In this paper, I would like to examine collaboration among Japanese cities, focusing particularly on the international activities of local actors, and collaborative actions by people from diverse backgrounds.
Tetsuo Mizukami - Rikkyo University and Vice President of Rikkyo Second Stage College	

04

[Session 4]

Migration and Changing Dynamics in Asia

This session examines the ways in which migration practices contribute to shaping a more interconnected and networked Asia, with emphasis on the social, economic, and political implications of human mobility across the region. Ultimately, it aims to provide a nuanced understanding of migration as both a structural phenomenon and an agent-driven process that continuously redefines Asia's interconnected landscape.

We invite papers that explore how migration practices can actively foster transnational connections, economic opportunities, cultural exchanges, and social networks, which reinforce regional integration. We also welcome contributions with a particular focus on issues of immigration governance in the context of neoliberal transitions and global inequality, which assess how state policies, labor markets, and international frameworks influence migration flows and the lived experiences of migrants.

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 406

Session 4

Migration and Changing
Dynamics in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator HaeRan Shin (Dept. of Geography, SNU)

Abstract	
Immigration, Migration and Free Movement: Comparative Europe - Asia Perspectives	Europe is a continent of complex migration — and mobilities. My presentation will offer a historical reflection on how European experiences may be compared to Asia, in relation to current theoretical and empirical developments, revisiting and updating a work previously published in 2009 ('Immigration, migration and free movement in the making of Europe', in Checkel/Katzenstein [eds.] European Identity), to reflect ongoing developments in European politics — notably restrictive EU laws and policies, regional inequalities, anti-immigration movements, and controversies over European colonialism.
Adrian Favell - University College Cork (Ireland)	
Migration-led Diversification in Singapore: Opportunities and Challenges in the Context of Globalisation and Rapid Ageing	Contemporary migration is a compelling force increasing diversity in globalising cities. In the postcolonial nation-city-state of Singapore, migration-led diversification driven by both globalization processes and rapid demographic ageing is transforming the multiracial nation-state. This presentation gives attention to the selective incorporation of a wide range of non-citizens of different skill levels, occupation, ethnicity, and nationality. While talent migrants (i.e. highly skilled professionals and entrepreneurs) are incentivized to take up permanent residency or citizenship and lay down roots (however, many choose to remain highly mobile and “flexible” in their citizenship options), labour migrants, particularly those considered low-skilled or performing 3D jobs, are locked into a “revolving-door” regime that enforces transience through the twin processes of enclavisation and enclosure. Within the intimate sphere of the family, diversification is driven by growing care deficits and the turning to global householding strategies from recruiting live-in domestic workers to transnational marriage migration. Migration is hence rapidly transforming the ‘multiracial template’ that has formed the basis of the imagined community of Singaporeans since independence. The ensuing identity politics of difference and sameness organized around ethnicity and nationality require more flexible management of race and migration while still capitalizing on the intrinsic strengths of a cosmopolitan society.
Brenda S.A. Yeoh - National University of Singapore	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
13:45-15:45
Room # 406

Session 4

Migration and Changing
Dynamics in Asia

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator HaeRan Shin (Dept. of Geography, SNU)

Abstract	
Understanding different logics of reintegration governance in the Philippines	Reintegration governance has always been viewed from a Eurocentric perspective. Such view engenders a multi-level approach to reintegration that involves both state and non-state actors at different scales of governance – transnational, national, regional and local levels – particularly, as implementers of state-sanctioned deportation programs (Kuschminder and Saguin 2025, Geddes 2022). They are often dominated by large international organisations who extract much of the funding by the EU with often smaller involvement of local NGOs in the origin countries (Vollmer and Sahin-Mencutek 2023). This reinforces the logic that migration is inherently problematic and that migration actors should ensure migration flows are kept in check (Castles, Triandafyllidou 2022). This paper follows Triandafyllidou's (2022) call to decenter migration governance studies by shedding light on the pluralistic understanding of reintegration by different actors in a context outside Europe. It draws on an on-going the project on reintegration governance in the Philippines. The Philippines represents an exemplary case – as a leading labour sending country – that demonstrates multiple logics of reintegration governance within a single migration policy regime. Despite the remarkable degree of institutional stability of migration governance in the country (Asor and Cases 2024), reintegration governance can be differentiated into three different types: hierarchical, network and market. Strong state presence through hierarchical governance in reintegrating returnees manifest in high capacity local government units and national programs catered particularly to distressed migrant workers. Network governance manifest through the brokerage role of civil society organisations in not only coordinating how reintegration services are delivered but also by experimenting on innovative practices that the state can later on adopt. Market reintegration governance occurs when the state leaves the household and the community to reintegrate the often ‘economically-successful’ returnee. These different logics co-exists in Philippine reintegration governance but each reflects different dimension of the socio-economic conditions that shape migration in the country.
Kidjie Ian Saguin - University of Melbourne	
Diverging Gateways: A Comparative Study of Migration Schemes for Indonesian Long-term Care Workers in Japan	Japan has the highest proportion of elderly people in Asia, and a growing shortage of long-term care (LTC) workers has prompted the country to increasingly rely on foreign labor. Initially, the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was the sole official pathway for foreigners to enter Japan as LTC workers. However, since the late 2010s, several new migration schemes—such as the Technical Intern Training Program, Specified Skilled Worker visa, and student-based routes—have emerged. These non-EPA channels are perceived as more accessible for care facilities due to simplified recruitment processes, lower associated costs, and the potential for retaining workers over longer periods. This presentation offers a comparative analysis of these migration pathways, drawing on original questionnaire data and in-depth interviews with Indonesian LTC workers in Japan. It explores differences and similarities in migrants’ socio-economic backgrounds, financial costs of migration, employment conditions, workplace satisfaction, and return intentions. The findings highlight notable changes brought about by the diversification of entry routes. Non-EPA schemes have led to the recruitment of more individuals without prior healthcare or nursing education. Moreover, Japan’s national care certificate can be obtained without a formal examination under some schemes, raising concerns about the quality of care provided. The presentation argues that to ensure the sustainability and integrity of LTC in Japan, systemic improvements in working conditions and professional development opportunities across the sector are essential. It also calls for a broader public dialogue to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes “good” long-term care in an increasingly multicultural caregiving environment.
Yuko Tsujita - Saitama University, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences.	

2025
Conference on Asian Studies
MEGA-ASIA
A New Perspective on Asia

SNUAC, Seoul National University, South Korea, Nov. 24-27, 2025



[Special Session]

***“Charting New Pathways:
The Future of Asian Studies
in a Shifting World”***

Moderated by Philippe Peycam
(Director of IIAS, Univ. of Leiden)

Participants:

Suhong Chae, Beom-Shik Shin, Patrick Köllner,
Maitrii Aung-Thwin, Michael Hsiao, Tetsuo Mizukami
and all other conference participants

This session will bring together institutional leaders and senior scholars to reflect on the evolving landscape of Asian Studies and to discuss new strategies for collaboration across disciplines and regions. In particular, it will convene conference participants who are responsible for leading and managing Asian Studies research institutes and programs to exchange views on practical issues central to sustaining the field, such as identifying and excavating niche research agendas, mobilizing funding opportunities, and strengthening international and inter-institutional networks. Through this dialogue, the session aims to foster new partnerships and actionable strategies for the advancement of Asian Studies in a rapidly changing academic and global environment.

**Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor**

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special Session

Shining Literature of Asia

<http://snuachklhc.snu.ac.kr/>

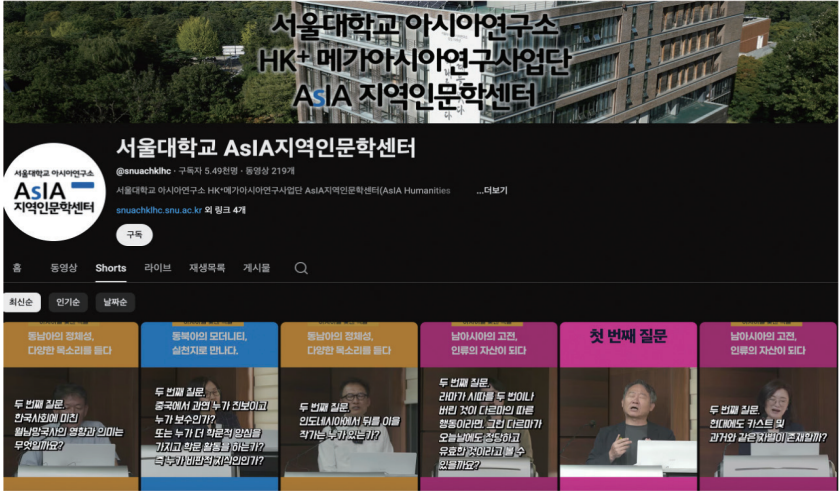
SNUAC AsIA Humanities Dissemination Center

Aims and Agendas

Director
Ho Kim
(SNUAC)

Seoul National University Asia Center's AsIA Humanities Dissemination Center serves as a hub dedicated to sharing both "Asian knowledge" and "knowledge on Asia" with wider audiences. In today's increasingly interconnected world, where cultural diversity and global exchange continue to expand, one essential question arises: How can we better understand and appreciate other cultures? Motivated by this question, the Center launched the "Shining Literature of Asia" lecture series, inviting participants—from scholars and specialists to the general public—to explore the histories and cultures of Asia through the lens of literature. The purpose of this series is to share the wisdom and creativity of Asia with broader audiences by introducing literary works that have shaped and illuminated the region, thereby bridging academic research and public engagement. The program also features a YouTube Shorts series inspired by the Shining Literature of Asia lectures, presented alongside the civic initiative "West Asia: Blossoming through Literature." Moving beyond the conventional lecture format, this program encourages participants to experience Asia's diverse cultures, ideas, and philosophies through literature as a living and evolving medium of connection. The <Shining Literature of Asia> YouTube Shorts channel, managed by SNUAC's AsIA Humanities Dissemination Center, can be accessed via the following link: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBzC_yGwE_NGMgAdNehryaWDMwnXTOQ1kC&si=uCwXd1I6JDMqvAuM

"Encountering books, understanding Asia"



The SNUAC AsIA Humanities Dissemination Center's YouTube Channel

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special Session

Cross-Broder Migration in Eurasia

<http://cecas.snuac.ac.kr/>
<http://mrdrc.snuac.ac.kr/>

Center for Eurasian and Central Asian Studies, SNUAC
Migration•Refugees•Diaspora Resaerch Center

Aims and Agendas

Director
Beom-Shik Shin
(Dept. of Political Science
and International
Relations, SNU)

This research project aims to examine, from multiple perspectives, how cross-border movements of large-scale refugee populations—generated by the war in Ukraine, the civil wars in Afghanistan and Syria, and environmental disasters—have reshaped migration dynamics across the Eurasian region.

The war in Ukraine and the civil wars in Afghanistan and Syria have become watershed events that have fundamentally altered global migration landscapes. The massive refugee flows have diversified migration routes: some refugees have expanded existing pathways established by earlier migrants; others have forged entirely new routes into areas previously not considered destinations; still others have reversed prior migration flows. These developments highlight the need to analyze the newly transformed and multifaceted migration dynamics generated by refugees in the twenty-first century.

To this end, the research project undertakes the following tasks:

- First, it investigates the policies and institutional frameworks of refugee-receiving countries that have enabled the expansion, return, and reversal of migration routes among Ukrainian war refugees, as well as the economic effects arising from refugee inflows and the social and cultural changes generated by the arrival of relatively welcomed refugees.
- Second, it traces the policies and institutional drivers that have facilitated the formation of new migration routes among refugees originating from Afghanistan and West Asia, examines both the negative and positive economic impacts of their movement, and analyzes the social and cultural effects brought about by the influx of Muslim refugees.
- Third, it examines the policies and institutions that make possible the migration and settlement of refugees displaced by climate change across Eurasia, analyzes the economic implications associated with settlement costs arising from changes in livelihood, and explores the socio-cultural interactions between migrants and host communities.
- Fourth, it follows the entry pathways of Korean diaspora refugees, who have been relatively welcomed in Korean society, and Afghan "special contributors," while examining the phenomena arising during their economic, social, and cultural integration.
- Fifth, it identifies the policy and institutional contexts shaping the arrival of Muslim refugees and Russian asylum seekers, who face exclusion and discrimination in Korean society, and analyzes their employment patterns, as well as the social perceptions and cultural barriers that constrain their integration.
- Sixth, by comprehensively analyzing the dynamics of refugee outflows across Eurasia and refugee inflows into Korea, the study offers policy implications for a Korean society moving toward a multicultural model that integrates migrants, refugees, and diasporic communities.

"Eurasian Refugees as Cross-Border Migrants: the Multifaceted Changes and Impacts of Migration Dynamics"

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special
Session

Youth Mobility in Northeast Asia

http://neacenter.snuac.ac.kr/

Northeast Asia Center, SNUAC

Aims and Agendas	
Director Baek Yung Kim (Dept. of Sociology, SNU)	In the era of planetary urbanization in the 21st century, Northeast Asian youth have emerged as key drivers of translocal and transnational mobility that transcends regional and national boundaries. This research project analyzes the existential crisis facing Northeast Asian youth and their mobility practices through Heidegger's phenomenological concepts of 'thrownness (<i>Geworfenheit</i>)' and 'projection (<i>Entwurf</i>)'. Thrownness refers to the given socio-historical conditions—the spatiotemporal constraints—into which early 21st-century Northeast Asian youth are born. Projection signifies their agential life practices in response to these structural conditions. The research project employs mobility theory combined with multi-scalar analytical methods to examine youth practices across local, national, and regional dimensions. Youth mobility practices are typified from three-dimensions: fluidity (degree of spatial movement), agency (active vs. passive), and multi-channel directions (real and virtual spaces). In addition, a complementary four-dimensional framework is used to capture individual case complexity through spatial (settlement-migration), temporal (past-future orientation), social (isolation-solidarity), and attitudinal (conformity-resistance) axes. The research integrates multiple methods: historical sociology, media discourse analysis, life history analysis, and social network analysis, combined with literature review, fieldwork, in-depth interviews, participant observation, and digital archive construction. The research project will unfold over two phases. Phase 1 provides diachronic analyses of 'thrownness' structures through comparative studies of compressed growth trajectories in Korea, China, and Japan. This phase examines regime transitions and rising inequality, demographic and generational shifts alongside evolving youth discourses, and youth life course transformations.
	Phase 2 offers synchronic analysis of youth mobility ('projection') practices, distinguishing between passive mobility (survivalism, solipsism) and proactive mobility (co-existentialism, counter-existentialism). This phase explores diverse variations within each category and ultimately seeks pathways for reconstructing Northeast Asian regional communities in light of youth mobility phenomena. Through this, we aim to pioneer new directions in Northeast Asian youth and regional studies by establishing youth mobility as a vital research agenda, thereby proposing a new paradigm for understanding 21st-century social transformation in Northeast Asia.
A Study on Youth Mobility in Northeast Asia: Multi-scalar Analyses of Transversal Practices of <i>Entwurf</i> Challenging the Social Structures of <i>Geworfenheit</i>	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special
Session

Focusing on the MENA Region

http://sub.snuac.ac.kr/wac/

West Asia Center, SNUAC

Aims and Agendas	
Director Gi Yeon Koo (SNUAC)	Since June 1, 2023, the West Asia Center at the Seoul National University Asia Center has been conducting a research project titled "MENA in an Era of Global Polycrisis: Emerging Security, Alternative Orders, and Civil Society." Focusing on five countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)—Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, and Türkiye—the project examines the development of civil society and the relationship between civil society and authoritarian regimes, with the aim of establishing new theoretical foundations for understanding civil society in West Asia. To this end, the research project undertakes the following tasks: First, it theorizes the movements and transformations of civil society. Second, it analyzes contentious politics between regimes and civil society. Third, it explores the new political orders and potential influences that civil society actors are seeking to create. This research project pays particular attention to the dynamism of civil society in the region, exploring how citizens who experienced the power of spontaneous civic mobilization during the Arab Spring continue to form new types of civil society and challenge authoritarian governments even after the failure to achieve democratic consolidation. By analyzing political and social change in relation to global trends—specifically the resurgence of authoritarianism and the resistance of civil society—the project seeks to move beyond the limitations of exceptionalism, which presumes the uniqueness or singularity of West Asia, and instead offers a renewed understanding of the region's dynamism and transformation.
	Building on these insights, an edited volume titled A New Perspective on the Middle East: The Power of Civil Society and the Future will be published by the SNU Press in December 2025.
"MENA in an Era of Global Polycrisis: Emerging Security, Alternative Orders, and Civil Society"  "Quiz on Arab" event co-hosted by SNUAC's West Asia Center and the Korea-Arab Society (May 2024)	

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special
Session

Social Networks of Indian Youths

http://csas.snu.ac.kr/

Center for South Asian Studies, SNUAC

Aims and Agendas

Director
Sung Yong Kang
(Inst. of Humanities, SNU)

This research project aims to examine how multiplayer mobile-gaming experiences among Indian youth, facilitated by the strengthening of mobile networks and the rapid spread of smartphones, are transforming patterns of social-network formation and social consciousness in India.

In order to investigate whether Indian youth, who are embedded in a highly diverse society characterized by multiple religions, ethnicities, gender and regional disparities, and the persistent boundaries of traditional caste groups increasingly operating as interest-based communities, may come to experience change in openness toward members of other social groups in online environments, Focus Group Interviews (FGIs) were conducted with professional E-Sports players and general users, followed by an online survey of 534 Indian university students in 2024. The results have been analyzed, and academic publication is currently under press.

- While the competitive and meritocratic nature of mobile games strongly influences the formation of personal networks, the research confirms that Indian youth actively seek interaction, communication, and co-operation across socially fragmented groups in online spaces.
- The research also suggests that the equal starting conditions of cyber environments, the reward structures based purely on individual achievement, and the anonymity afforded to players together create collaborative experiences that contribute to the emergence of new forms of social consciousness.

“The Impact of E-Sports Experience on Social Perception: A Study on the Changing Patterns of Social-Network Formation among Indian Youth Using Battlegrounds Mobile India (BGMI)”



Center for South Asian Studies Website

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special
Session

Asia's Cities

https://snuac.snu.ac.kr/cities/

Seoul National University Center for Asian Urban Societies (SNU CAUS)

Aims and Agendas

Director
Bae-Gyoon Park
(Dept. of Geography Education, SNU)

The SNU Center for Asian Urban Societies (CAUS) was established to examine Asia from an urban perspective and understand cities within the political, economic, cultural, social, and historical contexts of Asia. The center focuses particularly on East Asian cities and aims to become a frontier in Asian urban studies that combines academic excellence with practical problem-solving capabilities.

The center proposes an alternative post-developmental urban paradigm to help East Asian cities overcome the limitations of developmentalist urbanization and establish themselves as human-centered urban communities. Based on “post-territorialism” and “de-growth” perspectives, we explore post-developmental urbanity through four core agendas:

1. Inclusive, Commoning Cities: Creating open urban spaces that are not exclusive
2. De-growth Resilient Cities: Focusing on sustainable resilience instead of reckless growth
3. Sustainable Cities for Transition: Pursuing urban transformation with environmental sustainability
4. Post-Cold War Cities of Peace: Creating peaceful cities that transcending the geopolitical tensions unique to East Asia

Since 2021, to produce more concrete and practice-oriented results, the center has been conducting research on commoning urban transition strategies to overcome speculative urbanization. Specifically, we intensively address the problem of Korean-style speculative urbanization symbolized by “Gangnam-ization” to critically understand Korea’s speculative urbanization process and explore concrete solutions. In particular, we focus on exploring socio-cultural-spatial strategies for commoning urban transition as an alternative to overcome speculative urbanization.

Expanding this research, we have recently concentrated on finding concrete practical strategies to overcome the unprecedented polycrisis facing humanity through urban-level solidarity and cooperation. Specifically, based on the concept of “enabling infrastructure,” we explore ways for urban infrastructure to be reconstructed based on reciprocal relationships among people rather than economic efficiency and technical rationality, thereby forming the foundation for commoning urban transition.

We are currently planning research projects to materialize this within the context of disaster, care, and urban resilience. In this era of polycrisis, when disasters have become routine, what we need is not higher seawalls or larger disaster budgets, but communities with the capacity to care for one another, enabling infrastructure of mutual care that functions in the face of crisis, and the expansion of urban commons that makes this possible.

Viewing Asia through the
Lens of its Cities,
Understanding Cities within
an Asian Context

Nov. 25 (Tue.)
16:05-18:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Special
Session

Asia-in-the-World

<https://www.iias.asia/>

International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS)

Aims and Agendas

Director Philippe Peycam	The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden University, functions as a facilitating lab that aims to build intersectoral knowledge communities, with ‘Asia-in-the-World’ as the catalyzing framework of a new South-South-North collaborative approach. We connect dots between people and experiences from different geographies and cultures to build the conditions for concrete new social, economic and civic opportunities. We boast a 33-year track-record of activities supporting a circulatory knowledge exchange system, embracing the architecture of an emerging-multi-centered world order. IIAS does that through innovative interventions facilitating research, education, knowledge dissemination, policy impact, capacity & institution building, and multi nodal local-global networks. These interventions take the form of: - A Leiden-based platform bringing together research fellows alongside program staff within the academic contexts represented by Leiden University, the Dutch and European landscapes - A multi-centered itinerant ‘Asia-in-the-World’ fellowship international program - Locally-embedded large-scale Conference-Festivals or ‘ConFest’ events such as the International Convention for Asia Scholars (ICAS) and Africa-Asia (A-A) series - Community-based local-global policy and educational interventions, under the ‘Humanities Across Borders’ and ‘River Cities Network initiatives’ - Interactive open-access dissemination outlets such as The Newsletter, book series, podcasts and a resource website
“Promoting critical, humanistic, and collaborative work on, with, in, and beyond Asia”	 International Institute for Asian Studies with support of Universiteit Leiden Member of the European Research Area for Asian Studies  Representatives during CASAP(Collective Africa-Southeast Asia Platform)’s second founding meeting at Kasetsart University, Thailand, February 2023 (Image from the IIAS website, used with permission of Director Peycam)



05

[Session 5]

Approaching Asia through Data

The “Mega-Asia” research team has actively utilized the vast amounts of data generated since the advent of the digital era to quantitatively analyze the regional dynamics and interconnectivity of Asia. Integrated with qualitative approaches, the data-driven research has enabled the visualization of newly emerging networks within Asia, the identification of interaction patterns across regions, and a multi-dimensional exploration of Asian identities.

This session aims to demonstrate how data should not be regarded merely as a supplementary tool for research but rather as an analytical instrument that gives empirical substance to various imaginations of Asia or its sub-regions, such as “Mega-Asia.” We invite researchers working with data to participate in this session and demonstrate the way in which data can be used in various ways to illustrate how Asia is not a singular, fixed entity but rather a dynamic space shaped by overlapping and evolving historical experiences, economic interactions, cultural diffusion, and social mobility will be examined as part of this theme. Papers addressing the challenges related to the application of data-driven research in Asian studies, including issues such as data bias, uneven data accessibility, the balance between quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the need for co-work to facilitate context-sensitive interpretations of data-driven research results, are also welcomed.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 303

Session 5

Approaching Asia Through Data

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Dong-Kyun Im (Dept. of Sociology, SNU)

Abstract	
Social Capital Reconsidered: Civic Engagement and Political Development in the Middle East and North Africa	The study of social capital has long been central to debates on democracy and political change, yet its application to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has been limited. Conventional accounts often attribute this neglect to the region's persistent authoritarianism and repeated failures of democratization. However, the Arab Spring revealed that mass mobilization and civic demands for reform were possible, suggesting that social capital—conceived as networks of trust, civic engagement, and collective action—operates in important and understudied ways. Despite the subsequent entrenchment of authoritarian politics, the persistence of civic activism and associational life indicates that social capital cannot be dismissed as irrelevant to political development. This study further integrates religion into the analysis, recognizing that religious beliefs, practices, and institutions often serve as critical sites of social capital formation in MENA societies. Mosques, religious charities, and faith-based networks not only shape norms of trust and reciprocity but also provide organizational infrastructures for both civic engagement and political mobilization. Drawing on Arab Barometer survey data, this study examines how religiosity interacts with social capital to influence political behavior and attitudes toward change. By situating the MENA case within broader comparative debates, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how social capital mediated through both secular and religious channels can simultaneously support democratic aspirations and reinforce authoritarian resilience.
So Yeon Ahn - SNUAC	
Faith and Charity in Jakarta's Societal Organizations: A Study of Three Major Orma	This paper examines the beliefs and charitable behavior of three societal organizations (Ormas) in Jakarta: Pemuda Pancasila (PP), GP Ansor (NU-affiliated), and Forum Betawi Rempug (FBR). Based on our surveys with about 100 members each, findings show that members are mostly low-income, moderately to highly religious young and middle-aged men who join Ormas for ideological alignment and social security. They perform obligatory prayers and fasting, especially among Ansor members, and are generally tolerant of other religions. While practicing both mandatory almsgiving zakat and arbitrary charity sadaqah, they prefer direct donations over formal institutions, reflecting trust in local ties. Despite masculine norms (supporting gender equality with role distinctions and rejecting LGBT rights), members meet frequently (FBR > Ansor > PP), and some are exposed to smoking and drugs. Notably, many express concern for social inequality and engage actively in charitable giving—highlighting a critical but overlooked aspect of Ormas culture.
Mari Adachi - Kinugasa Research Organization Ritsumeikan University/ Kyoto University	

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 303

Session 5

Approaching Asia Through Data

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 303

Moderator Dong-Kyun Im (Dept. of Sociology, SNU)

Abstract	
Mapping Family and Marriage Values in Asia: A Comparative Study of Value Proximity Across Cities	This study examines the dynamics of family and marriage values in contemporary Asia through the lens of “value proximity,” a concept that captures attitudinal convergence and divergence across social groups beyond geographic boundaries. Drawing on original data from the 2022 Social Values Survey in Asian Cities (SVSAC), which surveyed 10,500 respondents in 15 major Asian and Western metropolitan areas, the study's researchers conducted a hierarchical clustering analysis on 120 population groups defined by city, gender, and age. The analysis yielded a six-cluster typology of value orientations, ranging from the “Lowest Low Egalitarian” to the “Big Family Traditionalist.” Each cluster reflects distinct configurations of attitudes toward childbearing, gender roles, and intergenerational support. The findings demonstrate that value proximities are shaped not only by regional legacies, such as Confucian or Islamic norms, but also by global forces, including digital connectivity and migration. It is noteworthy that clusters frequently transcend national boundaries, with specific age-gender groups in distant cities demonstrating a stronger value alignment with each other than with counterparts in their own locales. These findings are then contextualized within the framework of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, showing that shifts in values in Asia follow both unique and hybridized trajectories. The study makes a significant contribution to the field by offering a more nuanced understanding of demographic and cultural change in Asia, highlighting the interplay of structural, cultural, and transnational forces that shape evolving family and gender norms.
Shim Woojin & Jungwon Huh - SNUAC	
Linking Adult Social Values to Children's Subjective Well-Being : Evidence from Asian Countries	This study undertakes an innovative attempt to examine how the broader social value context shaped by adults is related to children's subjective well-being in Asia. While previous research has often treated children's well-being as a function of individual or family-level factors, much less attention has been paid to the societal environments in which children grow up. To address this gap, we combine two large-scale surveys: the Social Values Survey in Asian Cities (SVSAC), which collected data from representative samples of adults in 15 major Asian cities, and the International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB), a cross-national study of children conducted in 35 countries worldwide. For the purposes of this project, we restrict our analysis to Asian countries covered in both datasets, thereby enabling a unique opportunity to connect adult value orientations with child outcomes in the same cultural contexts. We focus on four central dimensions of adult social values: attitudes toward gender roles, family and intergenerational relationships, meritocratic beliefs, and generalized social trust. Country-level averages of these orientations are constructed from SVSAC data and subsequently linked with children's self-reported life satisfaction and happiness from ISCWeB. By situating children's subjective well-being within the larger value climates of their societies, this study highlights the potential pathways through which social norms and adult beliefs shape young people's perceptions of their lives. This study represents a novel effort to bridge adult-centered and child-centered research traditions. By integrating data across two distinct but complementary surveys, it offers a fresh perspective on the intergenerational transmission of values and the societal determinants of child well-being in diverse Asian settings. The study thus aims to broaden the scope of well-being research by emphasizing the significance of cultural and normative contexts in shaping children's lived experiences.
Joan P. Yoo & Jungwon Huh - Dept. of Social Welfare, SNU/SNUAC	

06

[Session 6]

Asia in Focus: Politics and Society

This session explores the shifting political landscapes and social transformations that are redefining Asia's position within the global order. By examining the intersections of geopolitics, civil society, cultural diplomacy, identity formation, and economic governance, the presentations collectively highlight how local experiences and transnational dynamics intertwine to shape contemporary Asia. The discussions move beyond state-centered narratives to consider how power, ideology, and community are negotiated across national, cultural, and economic boundaries. Together, the papers reveal Asia as a space of fluid alliances and evolving social imaginaries—where pragmatic cooperation, alternative civic forms, and cross-border solidarities coexist with persistent inequalities and contestations. In doing so, this session invites reflection on the resilience and adaptability of Asian societies amid the pressures of globalization, populism, and rapid structural change, offering fresh insights into how politics and society in Asia continue to reconfigure the meaning of connectedness in the twenty-first century.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 6

Asia in Focus: Politics and Society

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Beom-Shik Shin (Dept. of Political Science and
International Relations, SNU)

Abstract	
Russo-Chinese gas deal and current geopolitical framework	China-Rusia rapprochement has been started some time ago, soon after the collapse of the USSR, and since approximately 2014 Russia emerged as one of the major gas suppliers to China. All of this had led to a convenient cliché reemerging: China moves closer to Russia because both autocracies have common values or lack of any. Consequently, Western powers shall close their ranks to defend “democracy”/” rule of law” from the encroaching authoritarian International. These explanations were quite popular, at least until Trump’s advent. Still, it is hardly the workable explanation. Moscow had tried to be incorporated into the West for a long time, where Russian elites anticipated profitable deals. Its gas lines were aimed originally at the West. China direction emerged only because of problems with the West. The same is the case with China. Its turn to Moscow is due to common geopolitical interests. China also took advantage of Russia’s economic predicament: Western markets almost disappeared for Russian gas. Still, this rapprochement is a marriage of convenience. Beijing is fully aware that Russia still dreams to turn to the West or at least the USA. Consequently, China wants the most favorable conditions for itself. It demands heavy discounts and financing of the new gas line.
Dmitry Shlapentokh - Dept. of History, Indiana University	
Beyond Kinship: Rethinking Civil Society Formation in Mongolia’s Nomadic Context	This paper explores the structural and cultural barriers to building sustainable civil society in Mongolia’s nomadic communities. While kinship-based networks and mutual aid have long underpinned nomadic resilience, these traditional forms of social organization often lack the institutional continuity and scale required for modern civic engagement. Drawing on qualitative fieldwork, historical analysis, and sociocultural theory, the study examines how mobility, seasonal dispersal, and a cultural ethos of individual autonomy constrain the emergence of enduring grassroots organizations. A key structural factor is Mongolia’s vast and predominantly unowned land, which has historically enabled families to live far apart with minimal social dependence. This geographic separation is not only a physical reality but also shapes a distinct sense of property and responsibility. High social mobility and non-territorial concepts of ownership foster a worldview where issues are often managed by avoidance or relocation rather than collective resolution. As a result, nomadic societies tend to prioritize flexibility and disengagement over the formation of institutions to tackle shared problems. In contrast to settled societies, where fixed residence and territorial permanence nurture “sense of place” and stable “trust networks,” Mongolia’s nomadic patterns disperse social capital and weaken mechanisms for collective accountability. Moreover, state-driven development initiatives often fail to align with these cultural dynamics, leading to institutional distrust and disengagement. By comparing Mongolia’s case to civil society development in more sedentary contexts, the paper highlights the limitations of universalist civic models. It calls for a culturally grounded rethinking of what community and cooperation mean in structurally fluid societies. Rather than viewing nomadic societies as lacking, this research reveals alternate logics of social organization and contributes to broader debates on civil society in diverse cultural and spatial environments.
Yesukhei Tumurbaatar - Department of Political Science, National University of Mongolia	
Analysing Soft Power and Diplomacy between India and South Korea with reference to Buddhism	The connection between India and Korea dates back to 48 century AD when the princess of Ayodhya (India) Suriratna went to Korea in a boat and married the King Soro of Gaya dynasty. However the formal bilateral diplomatic ties was established in the year 1973 which emphasized on trade Promotion and Economic and Technological Co-operation between the two countries. It has continued to rise since then in the field of technology, automobile and education to name a few. As per Observer of Economic Complexity, South Korea’s exports to India were \$1.61 billion, while imports were \$628 million, resulting in a trade surplus of \$985 million for South Korea in May 2025. However very few people would know that apart from Samsung, LG, Hyundai KIA, khimchi and K-pop being a household name among the Indians and Indian movies being watched by the Koreans, there is something else which connects both the countries which is Buddhism. In fact Buddhism originated in India and was founded by Lord Buddha. It travelled to South Korea through the silk route in the first century via Tibet. The three monks who are considered to bring Buddhism to Korea are Malanta, who was an Indian monk, Sundo and Ado who were Chinese monks and propagated the teachings of Lord Buddha. As per records, approximately 40 percent of Koreans follow Buddhism as their way of life. Cultural and visits continued to take place by the monks to India and from Korea. In 526 CE, Korea monk Gyeomik went to India to learn Sanskrit and study the monastic discipline Vinaya, and founded the Gyeyuljong) branch of Buddhism that specializes in the study of Vinaya which derives directly from the Indian Vinaya School of Buddhism. Therefore, the basic objective of this panel is to make an analysis of the cultural diplomatic relations between India and Korea with reference to Buddhism as the connecting link between the two countries.
Deepanjali Mishra - School of Liberal Studies, KIIT University	

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 6

Asia in Focus: Politics and Society

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Youngone Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Beom-Shik Shin (Dept. of Political Science and
International Relations, SNU)

Abstract	
Reimagining Nationalism: The Case of Chōsen Schools and Zainichi Koreans’ Community Pride in Contemporary Japan	This study focuses on the unique form of Chōsen school nationalism fostered by Chōsen schools in Japan, aiming to reconsider the diversity of nationalism that cannot be contained within the framework of the nation-state, as well as the mechanisms of its formation as a representative example. Chōsen schools are often highlighted for their loyalty to North Korea or their perceived distinctiveness within Japanese society, and their connection to Chongryon (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) is indeed a fact. However, in actual educational settings, these schools also function as sites for ethnic education and as spaces for identity formation for Zainichi Koreans living in Japanese society. According to Han (2008), the nationalism nurtured in Chōsen schools is not that of the North or South Korean state, but rather an “abstracted nationalism” that is symbolic and cultural. This kind of nationalism serves to reproduce a stable sense of community pride, removing the need for individuals to constantly search for their identity amidst instability. Despite the continued presence of institutional discrimination and social exclusion, the reason why Zainichi Koreans continue to choose Chōsen schools cannot be explained solely by external pressures. Instead, it reflects the historical reality that the Japanese nation-state has never fully incorporated Zainichi Koreans, as well as the internal merits provided by these schools such as a sense of ethnic pride and self-affirmation. Traditionally, nationalism has often been described as an exclusive, state-centric political ideology, but this paper aims to return to nationalism as an inherently diverse and dynamic cultural construct. Furthermore, it draws attention to the fact that contemporary nationalism does not always take the nation as its sole unit, but can also be oriented towards smaller units such as ethnicity or religion, or towards larger units such as universal values. Through interviews with alumni, this study clarifies the values, pride, sense of distance from the state, and the concrete content and processes of nationalism as experienced in school life. By considering the cross-border norms that emerge from the abstracted nationalism of Zainichi Koreans, this study responds to the theme of the conference by reimagining Asia as a multilayered, transnational, and dynamic community.
Sayaka Yoshii - Free University Berlin, Department of History and Cultural Studies, MA Global East Asia	
The United States and East Asia in the Infinite Game Perspective: The Implications of Trade Frictions and Distributive Justice	Before 2016, populism was largely seen as a phenomenon of developing countries, but its spread to developed nations after 2016 marked a turning point in globalization, exposing deep challenges in both national and global governance. In Europe, populism stems from the influx of Middle Eastern immigrants, while in the United States it is closely tied to economic interdependence with East Asia, particularly China. Since World War II, East Asia and the U.S. have formed a cooperative model grounded in comparative advantage, free trade, and national credit. This “geese formation” industrial structure—beginning with Japan and followed by the NIES, ASEAN, China, and India—enabled mutual development through export-oriented growth toward the U.S. market. However, the “Trump phenomenon” in 2016 revealed critical flaws in this model, especially the absence of distributive justice. Inequality within and between major economies, particularly the U.S. and China, became the root cause of rising tensions and the trade conflict. While Japan and the NIES achieved relatively equitable “shared growth,” China and Southeast Asian countries exhibit significant internal disparities, undermining sustainable development. This paper argues that to restore balance, both China and the U.S. must pursue domestic reforms that enhance distributive justice and rebuild fairer economic structures. The ongoing U.S.–China trade confrontation reflects a finite, zero-sum game logic. Moving forward, global relations should evolve into an “infinite game” focused on long-term cooperation and mutual benefit. In this new paradigm, the goal is not to determine a single winner but to ensure the sustainability of interaction, allowing all participants to achieve shared prosperity through repeated cooperation.
Yun CHEN - School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, China	

07

[Session 7]

Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions

This session explores how values, beliefs, and perceptions shape the ways Asian societies negotiate identity, resilience, and modernization amid shifting global and regional contexts. Across diverse case studies—from religious and moral frameworks to migration, technology, and industry—the papers collectively interrogate how normative systems and social imaginaries evolve in response to historical legacies and contemporary pressures. The discussions illuminate how “values” function not merely as inherited traditions or political rhetoric, but as dynamic tools for adaptation, contestation, and renewal. Whether manifested in transnational moral discourse, household coping strategies, digital communication across borders, or the interplay of competition and cooperation in Asia’s technology sector, values and perceptions emerge as the connective tissue linking individuals, institutions, and regions. Together, the presentations underscore the need to understand Asia not as a fixed cultural entity but as a living mosaic of ethical practices and worldviews, constantly redefined through exchange, interdependence, and the pursuit of meaning in an interconnected world.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 7

Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Gi Yeon Koo (SNUAC)

Abstract	
International Politics of Islamic Values: Analysis of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation	The rise of the ‘Asian values’ discourse, particularly among ASEAN political leaders, has been interpreted as a response to a shared anxiety that the transplantation of Western political culture and institutions might undermine social cohesion. Similar concerns have been observed in Africa and the Middle East, both of which experienced colonial domination. However, the political implications of values-based discourses in these regions—particularly in relation to Islamic norms—have not been fully explored. This study focuses on the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), a regional body that promotes Islamic values across its 57 member states, including Palestine (with Syria’s membership suspended since 2011). Despite various intra-regional conflicts, the OIC has continuously pursued consensus- building around Islamic values and has actively disseminated them internationally. A notable example is its restrictive interpretation of freedom of expression, asserting that religious insults fall outside the legitimate bounds of that right. In a global context increasingly marked by divisions over values and the politicization of human rights discourse, it is important to investigate how ‘Islamic values’ are being constructed, legitimized, and contested in multilateral settings. This presentation examines how Islamic values have been articulated in regional and international politics through an in-depth analysis of OIC resolutions and related documents. It explores the processes through which consensus has (or has not) been achieved, and whether internal contradictions or conflicts have emerged among member states. By doing so, the study sheds light on the normative dynamics within the OIC and contributes to a broader understanding of how value-based politics unfold in non-Western regional organizations.
Resilience and Vulnerability: The Impact of COVID-19 on Remittance-Receiving Rural Households in Pakistan	This study investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on remittance-receiving households in two migrant-sending villages in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, a region with a high rate of labor migration to Gulf countries. While macroeconomic data suggested resilience in remittance flows during the pandemic, this micro-level analysis reveals a contrasting reality. Based on household surveys and interviews, the study finds that most migrant households experienced a significant decline in remittances due to job losses, salary cuts, and mobility restrictions in host countries. Migrants and their families adopted various coping strategies, including borrowing from relatives and reducing consumption, to mitigate the economic shock. The findings highlight the dual nature of migration as both a structural economic necessity and a deeply personal, agent-driven process. The pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of transnational labor networks, particularly under the constraints of systems like the Gulf’s kafala sponsorship regime. Despite these challenges, the study also underscores the resilience of migrant households and the importance of remittances in sustaining livelihoods, education, and social mobility. This research contributes to a nuanced understanding of migration in Asia by illustrating how global crises reshape transnational connections and household strategies. It also raises critical questions about the inclusivity of state welfare programs, as none of the surveyed households received government assistance during the pandemic. The study calls for more responsive immigration governance and social protection mechanisms that account for the lived experiences of migrants and their families in times of global disruption.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Session 7

Asia in Focus: Values and Perceptions

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Samik Hall, 2nd Floor

Moderator Gi Yeon Koo (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Separated Yet Connected: ICT and the (Re)formation of Nepali Family Relationships in the Era of Emigration	In Nepal, the number of people emigrating has increased rapidly over the past 20 years. Consequently, many Nepali families have dispersed worldwide. To cope with this sudden change, these families have leveraged Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which has become widespread over the past decade. This study aims to clarify the changes in family structure due to emigration and how ICT bridges those families, based on anthropological research conducted with families remaining in Nepal and young people of Nepali origin living in abroad. Close family relationships that have been built over time through daily life have been physically altered by increased emigration. However, family members who are physically far apart keep in touch with each other daily via digital communication platforms and share information and emotions. ICT functions to connect and re-establish family ties. However, in some cases, ICT fosters entirely new family relationships, distinct from previous forms. There are also limitations, such as the fact that the conversation can be suddenly cut off depending on the network situation and communication through a small screen. Based on these examples, this study considers the impact and potential of ICT technology on Nepali families who have migrated abroad and those who have remained in Nepal.
Interconnected Rivalries: Mobile Phone Industry and the Making of a Techno-Regional Order in East Asia	This study examines the mobile phone industry as a crucial sector where the dynamics of competition and cooperation among East Asian economies are shaping a new techno-regional order. A qualitative method is used, with data collected through a literature review. This study uses the “Mega-Asia” framework to highlight the interconnections and rivalries shaping the region’s industrial landscape. It focuses on key players such as China, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan to demonstrate how competitive and collaborative relationships shape the sector’s progress. China’s strong manufacturing capabilities and rapidly growing brands coexist and compete with South Korea’s Samsung, Japanese component manufacturers, and Taiwan’s leading semiconductor companies, creating a complex web of interdependencies and competition. These interconnections are evident in the highly interdependent manufacturing chain, including semiconductor production largely carried out by TSMC in Taiwan, camera components by Japanese companies, and final assembly and brand development primarily in China, South Korea, and Taiwan. Companies leverage cross-border capabilities to build complementary global value chains. For example, Samsung manufactures processors and display panels in Korea but assembles devices in Vietnam and China, working with global partners for production and distribution. Companies and governments continue to struggle for market dominance, technological leadership, and position themselves in the value chain. In domestic and global markets, Chinese brands such as Xiaomi, OPPO, and Vivo compete directly with Samsung and Japanese and Taiwanese high-tech manufacturers. Geopolitical tensions, such as trade disputes and technological competition between China, the United States, and East Asian countries, are increasing competitiveness and influencing national industrial policies. Finally, these findings highlight the complexity of East Asian mobile phone industry integration, where cooperation and competition coexist while redefining regional economic geography. This research contributes to understanding the development of Asian regionalism by situating technological competition within a broader socio-political and economic context.

08

[Session 8]

Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

This session investigates the historical and epistemic networks that have shaped Asia's interconnected worlds of exchange, mobility, and knowledge production. Spanning maritime corridors, colonial administrations, and scientific frontiers, the papers collectively explore how flows of people, materials, and ideas have forged enduring transregional linkages across the Indian Ocean and beyond. Together, they trace the formation of knowledge through movement, whether through the circulation of texts and labor between Bengal and the Malay world, the maritime ecology and trade routes of the Malabar Coast, or the adaptation of imperial science to tropical environments. By examining these diverse yet overlapping forms of connectivity, the session highlights Asia as a dynamic space where networks serve as both infrastructures of power and sites of intellectual encounter. In doing so, it reconsiders the production of "Asian knowledge" not as a byproduct of empire or globalization, but as an ongoing process of negotiation among local practices, global systems, and the natural environment, revealing the continent's historical depth as a laboratory of exchange, adaptation, and innovation.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 406

Session 8

Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator Ilhong Ko (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Textual Flows and Mobility during the Colonial Period across Bengal and the Malay World	Bengal and the Malay world are situated at the northeastern frontier of the Indian Ocean rim, and the Bay of Bengal is a key player in establishing maritime connectivity between the two regions. Besides, Bengal created a land bridge between South and Southeast Asia through the Myanmar-Thailand border. Historians and archaeologists have suggested that there was a transregional exchange of commodities and culture between Bengal and the Malay Peninsula during the ancient and medieval periods. Such transregional connectivity underwent a significant shift with the advent of British colonialism, a development that remains an issue yet to be addressed. The British colonial authority unified Bengal and the Malay world under a single administration based in Calcutta. Administrative linkages created opportunities in various capacities for jobs and networks. Besides, literary works documented colonial environment and culture across the British Empire in Bengal and British Malaya. This paper aims to examine textual flows, transregional connectivity, and mobility between the two coastal regions during the colonial period. In doing so, this paper interrogates three interrelated issues. First, it presents a detailed narrative of Bengal in Malay literature and Malay society through the lens of Bengali migrants. Second, it relates to the administrative linkages and the inland and maritime networks between Bengal and mainland Southeast Asia. These connections facilitated the Bengali mobility and space-making in port cities of the Malay world. Therefore, the third set of issues highlights the Bengali migration and social spaces within Malay society. By employing a historical methodology that relies on a range of archival and secondary sources, this paper demonstrates that transregional networks facilitated Bengali migration and diaspora during the colonial period, a phenomenon that continues to date. Broadly, this research might lead to a deeper understanding of transregional connectivity and human mobility in the Indian Ocean world.
Medieval Malabar and the Making of Connected Asia: Regional Rhythms, Maritime Networks, and the Indian Ocean World	This paper reconsiders the medieval Malabar Coast—today’s southwestern coast of India and a key region of South Asia—as a critical maritime node in the historical geography of pre-modern Asia. It highlights how regional spaces like Malabar shaped broader interregional structures that connected South Asia, West Asia, Southeast Asia, and beyond. Long portrayed in colonial historiography as a passive site of spice extraction, Malabar gained scholarly prominence through the Indian Ocean-focused works of K.N. Chaudhuri, M.N. Pearson, and Ashin Das Gupta. Their emphasis on maritime connectivity inspired a wider rethinking of oceanic linkages and the spatial dynamics of Asian civilization. Building on this scholarship, the paper argues that Malabar functioned as an active mediating space for interregional exchanges well before European arrival. Central to this reconceptualization is the monsoon system—not merely as an environmental backdrop, but as a structuring force that shaped sailing schedules, port rhythms, and commodity flows. Prior to the steamship era, monsoon-driven navigation necessitated long layovers and staggered voyages, making Malabar a crucial entrepôt connecting the Red Sea and Persian Gulf regions with Southeast Asia and China. Challenging Eurocentric narratives that portray Asian trade as oriented solely around elite luxuries, this study highlights the circulation of everyday commodities—rice, cloth, coconut, timber—alongside high-value spices. By situating Malabar within transregional monsoon rhythms and multi-commodity circuits, the paper contributes to a decolonized understanding of South Asia’s role in constructing the broader Asian maritime world. It illuminates how regional nodes like Malabar underpinned the connectivity of Asia centuries before the advent of Europeans in Asia.

Nov. 26 (Wed.)
10:00-12:00
Room # 406

Session 8

Asia in Focus: Networks and Knowledge

Venue Seoul National University Asia Center,
Room # 406

Moderator Ilhong Ko (SNUAC)

Abstract	
Tropicalizing Temperate Sensibilities: Hayata Bunzō and the Making of Tropical Botany Through Inter-Asian Connections	This paper explores how imperial botany adapted to tropical climates and flora across Asia through the case of Hayata Bunzō (早田 文藏, 1874–1934), an eminent plant taxonomist in the Empire of Japan. Considered as one of the founding figures of modern botany in Taiwan, Hayata named about 1,600 plant species in colonial Taiwan (Formosa) and published widely with the support of the Government-General of Taiwan. However, Hayata’s contribution extended beyond simply cataloguing “discovered” plants in Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Based on his extensive, long-term fieldwork across tropical Asia, he also developed unique ideas and scientific theories about plant identification, classification, and evolutionism that I analyze through the concept of “tropicalization.” As a field botanist trained in temperate and sub-tropical climates of the Japanese Archipelago, he was first awed by vibrant plant worlds in tropical Asia. Over decades of work in Taiwan and Southeast Asia under the auspice of Japanese Empire, Hayata worked closely with local plants, climatic conditions, and informants to re-train—or “tropicalize”—his scientific sensibilities toward tropical ecologies in Asia. This process involved adapting his observational practices and analytical frameworks to tropical climates and flora, fundamentally reshaping his scientific expertise and identity. Through analysis of his biographies, publications, unpublished materials, specimens, and botanical illustrations, I examine how tropicalization became integral to knowledge production about tropical Asia. The paper highlights the role of affective encounters in shaping scientific expertise and imperial authority, while tracing Hayata’s transformative itineraries across tropical Asia. I suggest that his fraught legacy provides a critical vantage point on shifting environmental, scientific, and political connections between East Asia and Southeast Asia within the framework of Mega-Asia. By showing how the temperate engaged with the tropical across Asia, the paper also contributes to recontextualizing inter-Asian connections in a rapidly warming world.
Sumin Myung - Cultural Anthropology Programme, Victoria University of Wellington	

Business Meeting

For publications, future conferences, etc.



Nov. 26 (Wed.)
13:30-15:00
Room # 304, #406, Youngone Hall, Samik Hall

DMZ Conference
Trip Information

Schedule	Information
08:00	• Meet in front of Hoam Faculty House • Depart for Paju (approx. 1 hour 30 minutes) • Imjingak Park (Mangbaedan Altar, Freedom Bridge, “The Train That Never Returned”) • Unification Bridge (proceed after passport and ID check) • DMZ Theater & Exhibition Hall • The 3rd Infiltration Tunnel • Dora Observatory, Unification Village • Return via Unification Bridge (ID check and headcount)
16:00	• Lunch • Depart for Seoul (approx. 1 hour 30 minutes) • Arrive at Hoam Faculty House

Nov. 27 (Thu.)
08:00
Hoam Faculty House

Venue Map
and
Floor Plan



SNUAC

- Building #101

Main Venue (2nd Floor)

- Youngone Hall (Room 210)

- Samik Hall (Room 220)

Session (3th Floor & 4th Floor)

#101 Seoul National University Asia Center, Gwanak-ro 1 Gwanak-gu, Seoul 08826, Korea



GWANAK CAMPUS MAP

HOW TO USE

SNU Gwanak campus has more than 200 buildings, all of which have their own numbers. The map is divided into 11 zones, using area codes A-K.

Note that some buildings are not listed below:

BUILDINGS

H 1-6, 14	College of Humanities
H 4	Shinyang Humanities Hall
H 9-13	College of Education
H 15, 15-1, 17	School of Law
B 16	College of Social Sciences
B 16-1	Shinyang Social Sciences Hall
G 18-19	College of Natural Sciences
C 22-28	College of Pharmacy
C 29-21	College of Pharmacy
C 29	Engineer House
E 30-43-1	College of Engineering
G 44-1	Shinyang Engineering Hall
G 45-46, 48, 48-1	Observatories
F 47	Design Center & Concert Hall
I 49	College of Fine Arts
I 50-52	College of Music
I 53-55	College of Music
C 56	College of Natural Sciences
I 57, 57-1	Graduate School of Public Administration
I 58	College of Business Administration
I 59	Graduate School of Business
C 60	Administration Building
H 61	Center for Teaching and Learning
C 62, 62-1	University Library
C 63	Student Center
B 64	IBK Communication Center
G 65	Faculty Club
B 67	Dane Cultural Center
G 69	Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources
I 70	University Museum
A 71	Gymnasium
A 71-1	Sports Education and Research Building
A 71-2	POSCO Sports Complex
B 72	Law Library
C 73	University Cultural Center
I 74	Arts Education & Research Building
D 75	University Newspaper
D 75-1	Cafeteria
H 76	Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital
I 82	Graduate School of Environmental Studies
B 83	Multimedia Lecture Building II
B 84	Centennial Building, College of Law
A 85	College of Veterinary Medicine
A 86	SNU Dental Hospital in Gwanak
A 97-98	Institute of Environmental Protection and Safety
G 100	Poongsan Outdoor Theater
B 101	Asia Center
C 102	Office of Information Systems and Technology
C 103	Kyunggak Archives
G 104	Inter-University Semiconductor Research Center
G 105	Institute for Molecular Biology & Design
H 109	Cafeteria Jahayon
H 111	Café
I 113	Dongwon Dining Hall
K 122	Faculty Apartments A-I
K 125-127	Hoam Faculty House
C 129	Sangnam Mathematical Sciences Building
E 130-131, 132, 133, 135, 138-139	College of Engineering

A 137, 137-1	Language Education Institute
A 137-2	Daelim International House
I 140-140-2	Graduate School of International Studies
G 141-143	College of Pharmacy
A 150	Office of Admissions
A 151	Museum of Art (MOA)
A 152	Office of International Affairs
A 152-1	Lotte International Hall
A 153	Woogyeongwon
D 200	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
I 220	College of Liberal Studies
I 221	Graduate School of Public Health
I 222	College of Human Ecology
F 300	● RPU Hui Jin Library
F 301-302	College of Engineering
F 310	Engineer House
F 311-314	College of Engineering
D 500	College of Natural Sciences
J 900-906, 918-928	Student Residence
K 931-939	● Global Student Residence
K 936	Staff Apartments
K 940	Research Park Building
K 941	Child Education Center
K 942-945	R&D Centers
K 946	● BK International House
K 950	International Vaccine Institute
●	Under Construction

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

Gate to parking area

Open parking area

Bus stops

Airport Limousine

Roadway

Health care

Dining

Cafés



Transportation
and
Logistical
Information



From Incheon International Airport to SNUAC

Airport Shuttle

Airport Shuttle 6003 available at Gates 4A, 5B, 6A and 6B. Tickets may be purchased next to Gates 4 and 9 (indoor booth) or Gates 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 13 (outdoor booth). The ride from Incheon International Airport to SNUAC takes about 70-80 minutes and costs around 9,000 won by cash (about 9.00 USD). The bus will depart every 20 minutes. More information on Airport Shuttles can be found at <https://www.airport.kr/ap/en/index.do>

Airport Taxi

Airport taxi available outside all terminals. Depending on traffic, a taxi ride to SNUAC takes a little over an hour and costs around 70,000 won (about \$70.00 USD). The fare may change upon traffic situation.

Subway

Take Airport Railroad train at Inchoen International Airport station and transfer to Line 2 at Hongik University station. Then get off at Seoul National University subway station. Take Exit 3, then board bus 5516, 5513, 6511, or 651. Get off at the Seoul National University stop. The total trip will take about 2 hours and cost about 4,300 won (about \$4.30 USD).

From Gimpo International Airport to SNUAC

Taxi

A taxi ride from Gimpo International Airport to SNUAC takes about 30 minutes depending on traffic and costs about 30,000 won (about \$30.00 USD). The fare may change upon traffic situation.

Subway

Take Airport Railroad train at Gimpo International Airport station and transfer to Line 2 at Hongik University station. Then get off at Seoul National University subway station (12 stops). Take Exit 3, then board bus 5516, 5513, 6511, or 651. Get off at the Seoul National University stop. The total trip will take about 2 hours.

