

Academic Research Projects On Asia in Finland 2024

Finnish University Network for Asian Studies



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Published in October 2024

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Introduction

This catalogue contains information about on-going or recently completed academic research projects on Asia in Finnish universities and research institutes. The data was collected with an e-mail form that circulated among Asia researchers in Finland during the autumn of 2024. Forthcoming academic publications as well as publications between 2022 and 2023 are also included, while Master's theses and audio publications are omitted.

An electronic version of the catalogue is available on the website of the Finnish University Network for Asian Studies at www.asianet.fi/research-catalogue/.

Bangladesh

*Abdul Kadir Khan, PhD Candidate (Development Studies), University of Jyväskylä, Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy
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Keywords: Rohingya, Localization, triple nexus, refugee, displaced person

My PhD project "From Humanitarian response to Development: Exploring the dynamics of localizing humanitarian action and development in protracted Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh" is determined to address three main issues that remain contested on the ground of Rohingya response in Bangladesh. First, the impediments to the realization of the localization agenda in the Rohingya response. Second, to explore the humanitarian space in constrained settings of the Rohingya response, from the perspective of Bangladeshi NGOs. Third, to understand perspectives and the impact on host -communities due to the massive refugee settlement that precipitated a heavy toll on the host communities in Cox`'s Bazar. To address these challenges, the humanitarian-development nexus should be considered. This project is, therefore, determined to analyze the dynamics of the localization agenda from the humanitarian response to development with special reference to the Rohingya response.

Publications:

- Khan, A.K. (2023). Constrained Humanitarian Space in Rohingya Response: Views from Bangladeshi NGOs. In: Biekart, K., Kontinen, T., Millstein, M. (eds) Civil Society Responses to Changing Civic Spaces. EADI Global Development Series. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Khan, A.K. & Kontinen, T. (2022) Impediments to localization agenda: humanitarian space in the Rohingya response in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Humanitarian Action* 7, 14.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-022-00122-1>

China

*Tiina Airaksinen, Senior Lecturer, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultural Studies
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Keywords: China, Kiinan sensuuri/ censorship in China, suomalaiset Kiinassa/Finnish in China

Research projects:

- * Asian Women's Migration to Finland and Japan
- * Pedagogical Leadership

Publications:

- 2023, "Kiinan sydämessä nationalismi ja kansallinen turvallisuus" 2023, kirjassa Epävarmuuksien aika - Kuinka Venäjän hyökkäyssota muuttaa maailmaa? Gaudeamus.
- 2023, "Kungfutselaisuus perinteiden vaalijana nyky-Kiinassa", Synsygus.
- 2022, "Forming of Anti-Imperialist National Identity in Republican China: The Finnish Interpretation", Nations and Nationalism, 11/2022..

*Hermann Aubié, Senior Researcher, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies
beraub@utu.fi*

Keywords: Chinese Politics, History and Society; Human Rights; Environmental Policy; Taiwan; EU-China Relations

Recent Publications (co-authored):

- CEIAS (2022). Trans-Atlantic public opinion on China Great power competition amidst Russian invasion of Ukraine.

*Albion M. Butters, Research Fellow/PhD, University of Turku, John Morton Center
albion.butters@utu.fi*

Keywords: Tibet, Buddhism

Current work:

- Independently researching and writing on Longchenpa (14th c. Tibet) and Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (19th c. Tibet)
- Editor at Studia Orientalia Electronica
- Editor at Khyentse Vision Project (<https://www.khyentsevision.org/>).

*Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
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Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, globalization, Russia, local agency Recent publications:

Publications:

- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen (2023) China's Changing Image in Central Asia: Exercising Soft and Hard Power, in Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Benjamin Houghton, and Jia Liu (eds.) China Moves West: The Evolving Strategies of the Belt and Road Initiative. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Lavička, Martin; Chen, Julie Yu-Wen (2023) New Measures for Governing Religions in Xi's China. China Report.
- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen (2022) Implementation of the HSK and Its Home Edition during the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Survey of European Test Centres. International Journal of Chinese Education.
- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen (2022) Reconciling Different Approaches to Conceptualizing the Globalization of the Belt and Road Initiative Projects. Globalizations.

- Ekaterina, Nekhay; Chen, Yu-Wen (2022) Russian Federation and China: Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. Issue & Policy Briefs. Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy. 1-8.
- Chen, Yu-Wen (2022) Glocalization of Belt and Road Initiatives: The Importance of Local Agency, in Paulo Afonso Brardo Duarte, Francisco Leandro and Enrique Martínez Galán (eds.) Palgrave Handbook of Globalization with Chinese Characteristics. Singapore: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Pia Eskelinen, University of Turku, Faculty of Law

Keywords: China, women, gender, Xi Jinping, political discourse

Back to Family Values: Xi Jinping's Embrace of Confucianism and its Effect on Chinese Women

This research examines Chinese gender policies since 2016 when president Xi Jinping held his famous speech on family values. The particular focus of this study is on the role of the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), the most important women's organization in China, in representing women's interests. The research addresses the organization's role as balancing between the state, the Chinese Communist Party, and the women it seeks to support and represent. Using feminist intersectional methods, an analysis on the policy changes and their effect on Chinese women and the ACWF in particular is presented. The research methods facilitate the understanding of Chinese society as including a variety of perspectives and voices, the study of which calls for attentive observation and collection of diverse evidence.

Eskelinen, P., Verdu Sanmartin, A., & Niemi, J. (2022). Back to Family Values: Xi Jinping's Embrace of Confucianism and its Effect on Chinese Women. *Retfærd : nordisk juridisk tidsskrift*, 45, 27-41. <http://www.retfaerd.se/year/2022>

Chinese Rural Women and their land rights

Land is a powerful asset, but it also has a social function. Its economic and social aspects are central in advancing gender equality. Legal control of land as well as legal and social recognition of women's uses of and rights to land, can also have catalytic effects of empowerment, increasing women's influence and status in their homes and communities. This research focuses on Chinese rural women and their land rights. It also looks at President Xi Jinping's political discourse and how it effects the All China Women Federation's position in the Chinese society.

Eskelinen, P. (2022). Rural Women's Land Use Rights in China: Acceptance and Enforceability. In: Guney, G., Davies, D., Lee, PH. (eds) *Towards Gender Equality in Law*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98072-6_6

Karoliina Hurri, PhD Candidate, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland & Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki

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Keywords: Climate leadership, China, COPs, UNFCCC, Global South, climate responsibility

- **Climate responsibility as a normative cornerstone of multilateral cooperation?** (Kone Foundation, 2022-2025, led by Sanna Kopra)
- PhD "**Climate leadership beyond the Global North: The construction of China's international climate-leader role during the post-Paris era**" completed in 2023.

Publications:

- (2023, with Sanna Kopra) "Applicability of Leadership Modes outside the Negotiation Framework: Insights from China." *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change*.
- (2023) "Climate Leadership Through Storylines: A Comparison of Developed and Emerging Countries in the Post-Paris Era." *Global Society*.
- (2023) "The roles they play: change in China's climate leadership role during the post-Paris era." *Globalizations*.

*Anni Kajanus, Assistant Professor, University of Helsinki, Social and Cultural Anthropology
anni.kajanus@helsinki.fi*

Keywords: Child development, culture and cognition, education, cooperation, competition, hierarchy

Chinese children's social and cognitive development in comparative perspective

Broadly, this research investigates human cooperation, and the competitive and conflict behaviours that revolve around cooperation. Babies are born with basic cognitive capacities and psychological motivations to cooperate with others. As children grow up in an environment of particular social norms and cultural values, the development of their cooperative behaviours is shaped by them. This project has investigated different mechanisms of cooperation, e.g. fairness norms, competitive motivation, punishment, mutualism, and prestigious and dominant leadership, from a comparative perspective in Chinese communities, and in the UK.

Publications:

- Kajanus, A. and Stafford, (2023). Cooperation and punishment, in *Cambridge Handbook of the Anthropology of Ethics and Morality*, ed. J. Laidlaw. Cambridge University Press.

*Jyrki Kallio, Senior Research Fellow, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Centre for Global Orders and China
jyrki.kallio@fia.fi*

Keywords: China, soft power, Confucianism, IR theory

Title: Probing the "Confucian" Core of Chinese Soft Power

Description: Ongoing research on China's soft power dissemination efforts and the rhetorical uses of traditional values as the core of China's soft power, especially in formulating China's foreign policy goals and ambitions as a global power. Discussion on a "Chinese (Confucian) IR theory". Analysis of the roots of Confucianism and its "original" nature with regard on the development of Contemporary New Confucianism.

Publications (monographs and edited volumes only):

- 2028 (est.) forthcoming. *Mestari Kongin kadonneet sanonnat*. Gaudeamus.
- 2025 forthcoming (transl. & ed.). *Xunzi: Kiinalainen politiikan teoria*. Gaudeamus.
- 2023 *The Chinese worldview in flux*. (Chapter in an edited volume on the impact of the May 4th Movement.) Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien.
- 2022 (transl. & ed.). *Avain kungfutselaisuuteen*. Gaudeamus..

Sanna Kopra, Senior Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland
sanna.kopra@ulapland.fi
Keywords: China, Arctic, climate policy, responsibility, security

Recently completed projects:

China's Arctic Policy and the Changing Arctic Security Dynamics (the Support Foundation for National Defence, 11/2021-10/2022)

The Rise of China and Normative Transformation in the Arctic Region
(Academy of Finland, 9/2018-8/2021)

Publications:

- (forthcoming, with Liisa Kauppila) "China in the Arctic Governance System in the New Cold War Era." In: Matthias Finger & Gunnar Rekvig (Eds.) *Global Arctic. The New Dynamics of Arctic Governance*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- (forthcoming with Karoliina Hurri) "The futures of Sino-Russian cooperation: Implications for climate (ir)responsibility in the Arctic." In: Iselin Stansdal & Gørild Heggelund (Eds.) *China-Russia Relations in the Arctic: Friends in the Cold?* Cham: Springer.
- (2023, with Matti Puranen) "China's Arctic Strategy – a Comprehensive Approach in Times of Great Power Rivalry." *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies* 6(1).
- (2023, with Karoliina Hurri) "Applicability of leadership modes outside the negotiation framework: insights from China." *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 28(6).
- (2023, with Nengye Liu & Jiliang Chen) "China and the Polar Regions." In: Yoshifumi Tanaka, Rachael Johnstone & Vibe Ulfbeck (Eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Polar Law*. Abington: Routledge.
- (2023, with Matti Puranen & Ville Tiuraniemi) *Arktinen harppaus. Kiinan turvallisuusstrategia ja arktisen alueen geopolitiikka [Arctic leap. China's security strategy and geopolitics of the Arctic region]* Helsinki: National Defence University.
- (2022, with Liisa Kauppila) "China's Rise and the Arctic Region up to 2049 – Three Scenarios for Regional Futures in an Era of Climate Change and Power Transition." *The Polar Journal*.
- (2022, with Liisa Kauppila) "The War in Ukraine as a Critical Juncture: China, Russia, and Arctic Collaboration up to 2035." *Arctic Yearbook* 2022.
- (2022) "China and a New Order in the Arctic." In: Cornelia Navari & Tonny Brems Knudsen (eds.) *Power Transition, Fundamental Institutions and the New World Order*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- (2022) "Kiinan geopolittiset tavoitteet ja toiminta arktisella alueella" [China's geopolitical goals and activities in the Arctic region]. In: Ossi Kettunen (ed.) *Arktisen alueen geopolitiikka 2000-luvulla [Arctic geopolitics in the 21st century]*. Helsinki: National Defence University.

Tatu-Ilari Laukkanen, Affiliated Researcher, Tampere University, Communication Sciences
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Keywords: Greater Chinese Cinema, Documentary, Sino-Russian screen culture, BRICS Cinema, Nationalist Blockbusters, Asian Cinema, Propaganda, Hong Kong, The BRICS countries, Arctic, China-Russia, Geopolitics, Jia Zhangke

Right now I research a variety of topics on Chinese cinema: War and action films that I call nationalist blockbusters, Greater Chinese documentary film, crime/gangster film, Sino-Russian cinematic connections, and thinking film through the BRICS formation.

Publications:

- Forthcoming book chapter: "A Double-edged Sword? The Nationalist Blockbusters of China and Russia" in: *The Geopolitics of Culture in Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, edited by Sanna Tuoma, Saara Ratilainen ja Sigrid Kaasik Krogerus (Bloomsbury Academic 2023-24)

- Co-authored book chapter: Tatu Laukkanen and Arja Rosenholm "The Ambiguity of the Arctic Littoral: Changing Perspectives of Chukchi Communities" In Two Russian Films" in: Cold Waters: Flows of Knowledge and Means of Thinking, edited by Elena Trubina, Arja Rosenholm and Markku Lehtimäki, (Springer Nature 2022)

Outi Luova, University Lecturer, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies

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Keywords: Cities, environment, science, AI, governance, China's regional economies

EU Horizon project "ReConnect China" (consortium led by Ghent University). Co-leader of WP6. Project funding period: 11/2022–10/2026.

Publications:

- Luova (2023) Shifting Sustainable Mobility Agendas in Graz (Austria) and Hangzhou (China): The Multi-Level Process from Livable to Smart Cities. CSID Journal of Infrastructure Development 6:1, <https://doi.org/10.7454/jid.v6.i1.1077>
- Book review: Luova (2023) Governing the urban in China and India: land grabs, slum clearance, and the war on air pollution, Eurasian Geography and Economics, DOI: 10.1080/15387216.2023.2237038
- Luova Outi (2022) Kiina johtaa Yhdysvaltaa tiedekamppailussa määrällä - mutta ei laadulla. Poliitikasta. <https://politiikasta.fi/kiina-johtaa-yhdysvaltaa-tiedekamppailussa-maaralla-mutta-ei-laadulla/>
- Luova Outi (2022) Kiina tanssii ja futaa. Liikunta & tiede 1. <https://www.lts.fi/liikunta-tiede/artikkelit/kiina-tanssii-ja-futaa.html>

Book editors: Outi Luova and Juuso Kaaresvirta

Kiinan talous. 2024, vastapaino.

1. Johdanto. Juuso Kaaresvirta ja Outi Luova
2. Avoimuus ja muutoskyky Kiinan taloushistoriassa. Lauri Paltemaa
3. Pääpiirteitä Kiinan taloudesta ja sen rakenteista. Juuso Kaaresvirta, Eeva Kerola ja Riikka Nuutilainen
4. Kiinan aluetaloudet – kasvua kaupungeista ja innovaatioista? Outi Luova
5. Kiinan julkinen talous haasteiden edessä. Juuso Kaaresvirta
6. Kiinan monimutkaiset rahoitusmarkkinat. Riikka Nuutilainen
7. Kiinan ulkomaankauppa. Eeva Kerola
8. Kiinan hiilineutraali talous. Lauri Myllyvirta
9. Kiinan liiketoimintaympäristö – sumea ja riskien värjittämä tulevaisuus. Sari Arho-Havrén

Mikael Mattlin, Research Professor, Finnish Institute of International Affairs
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Keywords: China, investments, political system, Taiwan, games, simulations, international relations, EU, economic statecraft, pedagogy, AI, technical standards

Ongoing and completed research projects:

1. Academy of Finland research project ForAc, "Foreign acquisitions and political retaliation as threats to supply security in an era of strategic decoupling", <https://sites.utu.fi/forac/en/>. (project director and PI). Project funding period: 8/2020–11/2023.
2. EU Horizon 2021 research project ReConnect China. Consortium led by Ghent University (member of the UTU research team). Project funding period: 11/2022–10/2026.
3. Business Finland research project StandardEdge, "Technical standards as critical intangible capital for Finnish companies in an era of strategic competition" (PI for FIIA sub-project). Consortium led by Prof. Tuomas Mylly (Hanken/IPR UC). Other institutional collaborator: LUT. Project funding period: 9/2023–8/2025..
4. Use of negotiation games as pedagogical platforms (project lead). Collaborators: post-doc, Dr Elina Ketonen (UH) and Milla Kruskopf (UH). Ongoing long-term research collaboration.
5. Kiinan poliittinen järjestelmä –Finnish language textbook project supported by the Joel Toivola Foundation (project lead). Collaborators: Prof. Lauri Paltemaa (UTU) and Prof. Juha Vuori (TUNI). Project completed in 2022.

Publications:

- Mattlin, Mikael & Mikko Rajavuori (2023) "Changing causal narratives and risk perceptions on foreign investment: The riskification of Chinese investments in the Nordic region," *East Asia* 40 (3), 243–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-023-09397-6>
- Ferchen, Matt & Mikael Mattlin (2023) "Five modes of China's economic statecraft: Rethinking Chinese economic statecraft," *Pacific Review* 36 (5): 978–1004. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2023.2200029>
- Mattlin, Mikael, Lauri Paltemaa & Juha A. Vuori (2022) *Kiinan poliittinen järjestelmä*. Tampere: Vastapaino, 388 p. <https://vastapaino.fi/sivu/tuote/kiinan-poliittinen-jarjestelma/3858480>
- Poutala, Tero, Elina Sinkkonen & Mikael Mattlin (2022) "EU strategic autonomy and the perceived challenge of China: Can critical hubs be de-weaponised?" *European Foreign Affairs Review* 27: 79–98.

Alicia Ng, PhD Candidate, University of Helsinki
alicia.ng@helsinki.fi

Keywords: Electronic waste, soil pollution, bioremediation, waste, technology, microbes, nature-based solutions, multispecies, circular economy of China, ecological civilization

Doctoral degree (ongoing): Expected date of completion Jan 2025

Publications:

- Ng, A. (2023) "Polluted Histories, Clean Futures? Opposing Scenarios for an Electronic Waste Circular Economy in China" book chapter in *Waste and Discards in the Asia Pacific Region* by Pál, V. and Borowy, I. Routledge: London

Lauri Paltemaa, Professor, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies

Keywords: China, political history, internet, technology, disaster management

EU Horizon project "ReConnect China" (consortium led by Ghent University). Co-leader of WP6. Project funding period: 11/2022–10/2026.

Research Interests:

**The Internet and the politics of technology in contemporary China
Disaster management**

Publications:

- Book chapter (2024) Avoimuus ja muutoskyky Kiinan taloushistoriassa. Teoksessa: Kiinan talous, toim Juuso Kaaresvirta ja Outi Luova
- Book chapter (2023). "14. Itä-Aasian uusin historia ja nykypäivä". In Opus 6 Maailman kulttuurit kohtaavat. Edita Publishing Oy: Helsinki.
- Book chapter (2023). "Varhaisista korkeakulttuureista kolonialismin aikaan". In Opus 6 HI6 Maailman kulttuurit kohtaavat. Edita Publishing Oy: Helsinki.
- Mattlin, Mikael, Lauri Paltemaa & Juha A. Vuori (2022) Kiinan poliittinen järjestelmä. Tampere: Vastapaino, 388 p. <https://vastapaino.fi/sivu/tuote/kiinan-poliittinen-jarjestelma/3858480>

Marko Pihl, Doctoral Researcher, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies

marpih@utu.fi

Keywords: China, party-to-party diplomacy, strategic narratives, public diplomacy, overt influence

Current work:

- Party-to-party diplomacy of the Communist Party of China in Africa. Expected time of completion 2025

Suvi Rautio, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Helsinki, Social & Cultural Anthropology

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Keywords: China, Anthropology, Collective Memory, Place-Making, Sino-African relations, Rural Development, Heritage, Intelligentsia in Maoist era

I am a Social and Cultural Anthropology Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Helsinki. I study how collective memory shapes the social and political landscapes and livelihoods of marginalized populations living in the People's Republic of China with an emphasis on ethnicity, gender and nationality.

RESEARCH

In my previous work for my Doctoral Studies, I conducted long-term research in a Dong ethnic minority village nestled along the margins of the People's Republic of China that — owing to its architectural allure and indigenous customs — has been designated and transformed into a heritage “Traditional Village” (chuantong cunluo) site.

In my current Postdoctoral project, I draw on the histories of social mobility among Chinese intellectuals in the 1950's who returned to China at the dawn of the Mao Zedong era. The project is an intimate ethnography that starts with my own family history.

I have also conducted extensive research on how African dancers teaching “popular African dance” (liuxing feizhouwu) in Guangzhou are generating a market of Black creative labor in urban China. Working with dancers, I studied how cultural encounter within dance in a Chinese context both undoes African essentialisms and upholds them at the same time.

- (2024) Book monograph “The Invention of Tradition in China: The Story of a Village and a Nation Remade”. Palgrave McMillan

Peer Reviewed Publications:

- Rautio, S. (2023). On Self-Reliant Masculinities and Rural Returnees in Ethnic China, *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, <https://doi.org/10.3167/fcl.2022.081802>

Dusica Ristivojevic, Senior Researcher, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
dusica.ristivojevic@helsinki.fi

Keywords: China, global politics, social activism, transnational support networks, Anglophone media, post-socialist and post-decolonial histories and theories, China in Serbia, SEE

Research projects:

- 1 - Decolonizing non-Western social transformation: The case of social activism in China, its representations and transnational support (2019-2022)
- 2 - Iron-clad friendship and its discontents: China's presence in Serbia (Working title, ongoing)

Publications:

- Chen, J. Y-W., & Ristivojevic, D. (2023). Global-Local Dynamics in the Belt and Road Initiative Projects. *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, 21(4), 1-11. [5769].
<https://apjif.org/2023/4/Chen-Ristivojevic.html>

Haoxuan Sa, Researcher/PhD, University of Helsinki, Social Research
haoxuan.sa@helsinki.fi

Keywords: Land and Housing Policy, China

Publications:

Sa, H. (2022). Land Transformations, Urbanized Actors, and Collective Values in Urban Villages in China. Doctoral Thesis (Article Based). University of Helsinki. (Pass with Distinction).

Sa, H. & Fabinyi, M. (2022). From A Fishing Village to Tourists' Destination—Hongjia Village in Northeastern China. *Shima*. <https://www.shimajournal.org/article/10.21463/shima.173>

Sa, H. & Vuolteenaho, J. (2022). Land relations and rural migrants' translocal lives in Xiamen, China. Book Chapter. *The Political Economy of Land*. New York: Taylor and Francis

Hui Shi, Assistant professor, PhD, University of Turku, Department of Chinese
hui.shi@utu.fi

Keywords: Chinese language, Linguistics, Digital language, Communication, Corpus linguistics, Language Teaching, Second Language Acquisition

1. Shi, H. (2023) Gender Socialization of Chinese Children: Empirical Evidence from School, Family, and Media. *Proceedings of Language, gender and sexuality: theoretical and methodological perspectives*, Helsinki, Finland (p.33-34). <https://www.helsinki.fi/assets/drupal/2023-10/LangGeSex2023%20Book%20of%20Abstracts.pdf>
2. Shi, H. (2023). Digital disinformation and rumor-busting: Diverse interpretations of ‘beiou feng’ (Nordic style) on Chinese social media. *Proceedings of the 18th International Pragmatics Conference*, Brussels, Belgium (p.1188)
https://cdn.ymaws.com/pragmatics.international/resource/collection/C57D1855-A3BB-40D8-A977-4732784F7B21/Abstracts_book.pdf

3. Shi, H. (2022). Méi: An innovative human classifier and its social indexicality in Chinese digital culture. Suomen Soveltavan Kielitieteen Yhdistyksen AFinlan Julkaisuja, Helsinki, Finland (p.81). https://www.helsinki.fi/assets/drupal/2022-10/AFinLA_2022_abstracts_251027.pdf
4. Jing-Schmidt, Z., Lang, J., Shi, H. H., Hung, S. H., & Zhu, L. (2022). Aspect construal in Mandarin: A usage-based constructionist perspective on LE. *Linguistics*, 60(2), 541-577. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ling-2020-0198>
5. Holttinen, H., Shi, H. (2022) Qinhuai-joelta aurajoelle: Näkökulmia kiinan kielen opettamiseen Turun Yliopistossa. *Kiina sanoin ja kuvin, Suomi–Kiina-seura* (p.6-10). <https://kiinaseura.fi/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Kiina-sanoin-ja-kuvin-2022-03-sahkoinen-versio.pdf>

*Eero Suoranta, Doctoral Researcher University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
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Keywords: Chinese literature, science fiction, speculative fiction, alienation, estrangement

A PhD. dissertation titled “Estranging Illusions: Alienation in Contemporary Chinese Science Fiction” (ongoing, expected time of completion 2025)

In the words of science fiction author Chen Qiufan, “Contemporary China is a society in the transition stage when old illusions have collapsed but new illusions have not taken their place.” One symptom of this collapse has been wide-spread social alienation, or disconnect between individuals and the values and norms of wider society. This has also been a frequent topic of social commentary, criticism and literary exploration from the end of the Mao era onwards. In my project, I will analyze how these Chinese discourses on alienation are exemplified and possibly challenged by contemporary Chinese science fiction works (by pioneering and often under-researched authors such as Chen, Han Song, and Xia Jia), and how their use of the techniques of science fiction can make visible aspects of alienation that might otherwise remain hidden.

Publications:

- Suoranta, Eero. 2023. “I hope they really evolve into a different species from us”: Human-Nature Disconnection, Eeriness, and Social Class in Han Song’s “Submarines.” *Fafnir: Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*, Volume 10, Issue 2, pages 51–65.

<http://journal.finfar.org/articles/i-hope-they-really-evolve-into-a-different-species-from-us/>

- Suoranta, Eero. 2023. Book review of Hua Li's "Chinese Science Fiction during the Post-Mao Cultural Thaw." *Fafnir – Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*, Volume 10, Issue 1, pages 33–36. <http://journal.finfar.org/articles/book-review-chinese-science-fiction/>

- Suoranta, Eero. 2022. "Mikä tekee ”kiinalaisesta scifistä” scifiä?" *Aasian tutkimus -blogi*.

<https://blogs.helsinki.fi/aasiantutkimus/2022/04/04/mika-tekee-kiinalaisesta-scifista-scifia/>

*Kaisa Tolvanen, Doctoral Student, Tampere University, Department of History
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Keywords: Tibetan buddhism, Tibet, mission work, Himalayans, lived

Destination Tibet - Finnish mission work at the Himalayas 1895-1950 (ongoing PhD research)

Marco Volpe, PhD Candidate, University of Lapland, Faculty of Social Science
mvolpe@ulapland.fi

Keywords: China's Arctic policy, science diplomacy, Central Arctic Ocean, ungoverned space

Title of the Ph.D. research project: Chinese scholars in Science Diplomacy: how global challenges and global interests may lessen the confrontational perception of China's presence in the Arctic. (2021-2025)

The research looks at Chinese language-based debate among Chinese scholars. Through thematic analysis of Chinese language-based literature paired with semi-structured interviews with Chinese experts, I analyze Chinese language-based knowledge production pertaining to areas identified by Gluckman's scholarship of Science Diplomacy (e.g. transboundary resources and ungoverned spaces). The project aims at, firstly, framing Chinese scholars' perspectives in the cited areas and, in a second stance, at enlarging Science Diplomacy scholarship in international relations as a tool to dismantle the power transition mean of China's presence in the Arctic. My analysis will increase the knowledge of region-wide and inter-governmental politics employed by non-Arctic actors, stake, and shareholders involved in the resource development that come from outside the Arctic region. The proposed in depth-analysis of Chinese scholars' perspectives not only will shed more light on the overlapping role of academics and government officials but will also contribute to figuring China's future posture to the upcoming issues in the Arctic region at the institutional and local levels that may be relevant to Arctic stakeholders and decision-makers.

Publications:

-Volpe, M. (2022). Different scenarios, different policies China's engagement in the South China Sea and in the Central Arctic Ocean, *Current Developments in Arctic Law*, 140-159.

Yan Wang, PhD, University of Jyväskylä, Department of Education
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Keywords: China, teacher education

Publications:

- Wang, Y., Nokkala, T., & Moate, J. (2024). Comparing Finnish and Chinese national teacher education frameworks from the teacher competency perspective. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2024.2361108>
- Wang, Y., Nokkala, T., & Moate, J. (Under review). Exploring Teacher-Educator Beliefs about Teacher Education: A Comparative Study of Case Programmes in Finland and China, *Teachers and teaching: Theory and practice*.

Weiqing Wang, Doctoral Student, Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Turku
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Keywords: China-Russia relations, Ukraine War, grand strategy, foreign policy analysis, action and inaction

Title of the Ph.D. research project: The Durability of China's Grand Strategy Amid the Ukraine War

This research plan was prompted by Russia's full invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the ambiguous stance taken by the Chinese government. China remains an inactive actor since the outbreak of the Ukraine War. The inaction and ambiguous attitude of China on this issue has aroused concerns at home and abroad, as such inaction seems contradictory to the Grand Strategy of China in which territorial integrity and sovereignty are the fundamental norms to be obeyed in the international

community. This research explores the Chinese official speech acts concerning the Ukraine War through the lens of neorealist international relations theory and foreign policy analysis theory. Additionally, this research enquires into the consistency and contradictions embedded in the Chinese Grand Strategy amid the Ukraine War and tracks the reshaping of China's national security and its Grand Strategy in changing international relations. This research will provide valuable insight by making an up-to-date analysis of China's security situation and its Grand Strategy and by discussing whether China's action and/or inaction in an international war in which it plays no direct role serves or undermines its national interests.

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Keywords: China, AI, policy, AI ethics, AI governance

Current projects:

1. AI Ethics with Chinese Characteristics: Concerns and Preferred Solutions

This doctoral research will include three separate articles about (1) discourses on the ethics of AI in Chinese academia, (2) the Chinese approach to AI governance, and (3) the empirical case study on how Chinese AI companies address ethical concerns. The final dissertation will combine these three articles and can be expected to come out in 2025.

2. Business Finland project, Technical standards as critical intangible capital for Finnish companies in an era of strategic competition (StandardEdge). Member of Team FIIA, work time 7.2024-12.2024. <https://standard-edge.com/>

Previous projects:

1. Academy of Finland research project, "Foreign acquisitions and political retaliation as threats to supply security in an era of strategic decoupling" (ForAc). Team Member.

<https://sites.utu.fi/forac/en/>

2. EU Horizon project "ReConnect China" (consortium led by Ghent University). Research Member. WP1. Project funding period: 11/2022–10/2026.

Publications:

Zhu, Junhua (2024) China's Approach to AI Standardisation: State-guided but Enterprise-led, FIIA Briefing Paper 391. <https://www.fia.fi/en/publication/chinas-approach-to-ai-standardisation>

Zhu, Junhua & Mattlin, Mikael (2024) The Chinese AI Innovation Ecosystem: Spurring Innovation or Consolidating Monopolies, ReConnect China Policy Brief,

https://www.reconnect-china.ugent.be/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/ReConnect-China_Policy-Brief-11_The-Chinese-AI-Innovation-Ecosystem.pdf

Xu, Wenqian, Zhu, Junhua, Xi, Wanyu & Cui, Jian (2023) Creating Age-Friendly Environments in a Smart Society in China: A Policy Review, Journal of Aging & Social Policy,

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08959420.2023.2284058>

Zhu, Junhua (2022) AI ethics with Chinese characteristics? Concerns and preferred solutions in Chinese academia. AI & Society. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-022-01578-w>

Zhu, Junhua (2022) CHERN Blogs, An Introduction to Digital Materials Emerged for Contemporary China Studies.

Zhu, Junhua (2022) CHERN Blogs, Is AI in Worse or Better Hands in China?

Hong Kong S.A.R

Josephine Lau, Doctoral Researcher, University of Jyväskylä, Adult Education

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Keywords: teacher identity tensions, teacher professional agency, qualitative longitudinal research, teacher career, Hong Kong

Title: In search for a meaningful and sustainable teacher career: teacher Identity tensions and professional agency in the Hong Kong context

This is a doctoral research project that commenced in the fall of 2017 and is completed in 2024.

The doctoral thesis investigated teacher identity tensions and professional agency issues in Hong Kong. The region, which was a former British colony and a current special administrative region of China, features a centralised-decentralisation education governance system. Also, it represents a societal-cultural context with Confucian heritage, which was underrepresented in the teacher identity tensions and professional agency studies.

The thesis adopted the qualitative longitudinal framework in the investigation Interview data was collected from 21 teachers in the year 2018. 14 teachers were followed up in the year 2020.

The thesis sheds light on understanding professional agency as a temporal phenomenon and underscores the close relationship between professional identity tensions issues. Also, it points out the importance of differentiated support for teachers at different career stages, recommends practical measures for teacher development specific to the Hong Kong context, and emphasizes identity and agency on teacher retention issues.

Publications:

- Lau, J., Vähäsantanen, K., & Collin, K. (2023). The Change and Continuity of Teachers' Professional Agency: A Two-Year Longitudinal Study in the Case of Hong Kong. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Education*.

- Lau, J. (2024) Thesis summary - Teacher Identity tensions and professional agency in the Hong Kong context

- Lau, J., Vähäsantanen, K., & Collin, K. (2022). Teachers' Identity Tensions and Related Coping Strategies: Interaction with the Career Stages and Socio-Political Context. *Professions and Professionalism*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.7577/pp.4562>

- Lau, J., Vähäsantanen, K., & Collin, K. (2022). Teachers' Professional Agency in a Centralisation-decentralisation System and a Hierarchical Cultural Context: The Case of Hong Kong. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. Early online: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2022.2086606>

India

Mikko Autere, Doctoral researcher & university lecturer in South Asian Studies, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures & Department of Languages

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Keywords: South Asia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, modern history, contemporary society

Mikko Autere & Hanna Mannila (eds.):

Etelä-Aasian yhteiskunta, kulttuuri ja politiikka. Intia, Pakistan ja Bangladesh. (Studies in Contemporary Asia; University of Turku: Centre for East Asian Studies CEAS, December 2022)

Sisältö:

1. Johdanto *Mikko Autere & Hanna Mannila*
2. Siirtomaahallinnosta itsenäisiin kansallisvaltioihin *Mikko Autere*
3. Kieli, etnisyyt, kasti ja uskonto kansallisvaltioissa *Mikko Autere*
4. Kuka kuuluu? Muukalaisuus, murros ja menneisyys nykypäivän Intian ja Pakistanin populismissa *Alana Saul*
5. Kieli ja uskonto Bangladeshin nationalismissa *Jafrin Rezwana*
6. Intia muuttuvassa maailmanpolitiikassa *Jyrki Käkönen*
7. Intian köyhä mutta kehittynyt talous *Jørgen Dige Pedersen*
8. Kohti kestävä kehitystä? Intian, Bangladeshin ja Pakistanin kamppailu ympäristöongelmien kanssa *Sirpa Tenhunen*
9. Media, kulttuuri ja sukupuoli Intiassa: naiset ja tytöt TV-sarjoissa ja videopeleissä *Xenia Zeiler*
10. Etelä-Aasian klassiset tanssit - ikivanhoja traditioita vai uusperinteitä? *Hanna Mannila*
11. Vapauden valtakunta vai mystisen viisauden koti? Elämäntapamuuttajat ihmeellisessä Intiassa *Mari Korpela*

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Keywords: Mediatization, Democracy, Political Communication, Communal Violence, Hate Speech, Disinformation, Misinformation, Factcheck, Islamophobia

Unending Everyday Violence: Communal Riots, Rumours and Memories in the Digital Age.

At a time when online spaces, earlier perceived as free forums for digital publics to interact and socialize, are becoming increasingly corporatized, India has emerged as the biggest source of disinformation across the globe. In the last few years, scholars have argued how online hate speech and targeting have bled into the offline world, forcing platform accountability. Meanwhile, India slipped from being the largest, emergent democracy to an electoral autocracy and the digital repression tactics by formal and informal government agents have emerged as a prominent strain of discussions. Taking Delhi riots 2020 as a model, my research employs sensory ethnography to attempt the first-ever academic exploration into why and how the digital public is trapped in a perpetual cycle of political violence which does not let fissures of caste, religion and politics heal. From Myanmar to Brazil, Social media's role as an enabler and narrator of communal and political conflict is being debated repeatedly. Many academic studies on communal riots focus on how a conflict starts and then moves on to the process of normalization after spectacular violence. My doctoral research, for the first time, questions the ending of violent conflicts and proposes that in the age of social media, such violence never ends. Instead, they play on in a loop

on our mobile handsets, in digital memories, in imaginations and sutures of everyday life and the sociality of message sharing. Using Delhi riots 2020 as a case study, my doctoral research explores the role of digital rumours in memory formation and creating a base for violent collective action in the future.

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Keywords: Global Health, gender studies, health equity, occupational health

Doctoral research 2023-2027: Managing Problematic menstruation among policewomen in India:
A sociological inquiry.

Hanna Mannila, PhD Candidate, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures

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Keywords: Guru, dance gurus, kathak, Indian classical dance, social media, mediatisation

Indian Dance Gurus and Their Authority in Transformation: Changes and continuities in the perceptions of the gurus' status, role and function from text to digital media

My PhD research project explores the transformations in the figure of guru and his authority in Indian society from classical Sanskrit texts to the contemporary mediatized contexts, focusing on the gurus of Indian classical kathak dance. Gurus traditionally have a specific and highly revered position in Indian society – they can be seen as an embodiment of authority. Gurus and guru-like figures can be found everywhere in Indian society, from religions and arts to politics and business. This research focuses on kathak dance as the base of exploration, examining the changes and continuities in the authority ascribed to the guru in the transmission of dance heritage from one generation to the next. The approach is multi-disciplinary, combining methodological and theoretical elements from South Asian Studies, Religious Studies, Ethnology, and Communication and Media Studies.

Publications:

- Autere, Mikko and Hanna Mannila, eds. (2022). *Nykypäivän Etelä-Aasia – yhteiskunta, kulttuuri ja politiikka*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Mannila, Hanna. (2022). "Etelä-Aasian klassiset tanssit – ikivanhoja traditioita vai uusperinteitä?" In *Nykypäivän Etelä-Aasia: yhteiskunta, kulttuuri ja politiikka*, edited by M. Autere and H. Mannila. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Xenia Zeiler, Prof. Dr. University of Helsinki, Faculty of Arts

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Keywords: India, digital culture India, video games, cultural heritage India, Indian festival cultures, Durgapuja

Indian Video Games and Cultural Heritage, ongoing research

Publications:

- Zeiler, X., & Mukherjee, S. (2024). New Books Network podcast: Videogames in the Indian Subcontinent. Development, Culture(s) and Representations by Souvik Mukherjee, hosted by Xenia Zeiler. <https://newbooksnetwork.com/videogames-in-the-indian-subcontinent-2>.
- Zeiler, X. (2024). *The Avatar Faculty: Ecstatic Transformations in Religion and Video Games* [Book Review]. *Reading religion: RR : a publication of the American Academy of Religion*.
- Zeiler, X (2023). This is her game. Video games and gender. *Digital Asia, Asiascape 1-2*, p. 96-107, 2023 anniversary special issue, "The Shape of the Asiascape: Ten Years of Digital Asia Research.

- Zeiler, X. (2023). Climate Change, Environmental Awareness and Asian Videogaming. In Conference Proceedings, 7th World Humanities Forum 2023, Busan Korea.
- Zeiler, X. (2022). Gamified embodiment experiences in Indian video games. In *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media*. Campbell, H. A. & Tsuria, R. (eds.). Abingdon: Routledge, p. 213-220.
- Zeiler, X., & Mukherjee, S. (2022). Video Game Development in India: A Cultural and Creative Industry Embracing Regional Cultural Heritage(s). *Games and Culture*, 17(4), 509-527.
- Zeiler, X., & Mannila, H. (TRANS.) (2022). Media, kulttuuri ja sukupuoli Intiassa: naiset ja tytöt TV-sarjoissa ja videopeleissä. In M. Autere, & H. Mannila (Eds.), *Etelä-Aasian yhteiskunta, kulttuuri ja politiikka. Intia, Pakistan, Bangladesh* (pp. 200-215). (Studies in Contemporary Asia; Vol. 2022, No. 1). University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies.

Mediatized Festival Cultures - Durgapuja in India and in the Indian Diaspora, ongoing research

- Zeiler, X. (2024 forthcoming). Cultural Festival Heritage, Diaspora Communities, and Urban Peripheries: Durgāpūjā in Finland. In Garcia Hernandez, M. and Gravari-Barbas, M. (Eds.), Routledge.
- Zeiler, X. (2024 forthcoming). Communication, Social Media Use and Selfie Sharing of Durgapuja Festival Visitors in India and in the Indian diaspora context of Finland. In *A Media Anthropology of India*, Raghunath, P. and Narasimhan, H. (Eds.), Routledge.
- Zeiler, X. (2024 forthcoming). Festliche Photos. Selfie- und Social-Media-Praktiken bei Besuchern des Festes Durgapuja. In *Photographic Practices and the Making of Religion*, Lampe, M. (Ed.), De Gruyter.
- Zeiler, X., & Chakraborti, S. (2024). Durga Puja -opetuspelit: kehitysprosessi ja jälkipelit (post mortem). *Uskonnotutkija*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.24291/uskonnotutkija.145044>.
- Zeiler, X. (2022). Festivals on the move: Cultural heritage, Indian migrant communities and Durgāpūjā in Helsinki. *Heritage on the Move* (Blog of the UNA Europa transnational research team "Heritage, Global Migration and Mobility"). <https://herblog.hypotheses.org/139>

Digital Culture and Religion, ongoing research

- Grieve, G. P., Radde-Antweiler, K., & Zeiler, X. (2023). Value Formations through Digital Gaming. In H. A. Campbell, & P. H. Cheong (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Digital Religion* (pp. C20.S1–C20.N1). Oxford University Press.
- Zeiler, X. (2022). Past, Present and Potential Futures of Digital Hinduism Research. In *The Oxford Handbook of Digital Religion*. Campbell, H. A. & Cheong, P. H. (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zeiler, X. & Borkatoky-Varma, S., (2022), Digital Tantra: Introducing a New Research Field, In *International Journal of Hindu Studies*. 26, 2, p. 155–159.
- Zeiler, X., & Borkatoky-Varma, S. (Eds.) (2022). Special Issue: Digital Tantra. *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, 26(2). Springer.

Sweetening and Intensification: Processes and Currents Shaping Hindu Practices in Contemporary South Asia and its Diasporas,

01/01/2020 → 31/12/2023

Prof. Xenia Zeiler (UH, Finland) and Prof. Amy Allocco (Elon University, USA)*

This collaborative research project analyzes two converging and diverging currents associated with Hindu deities, beliefs, and ritual practices in contemporary South Asian communities, namely “sweetening” and “intensification.” It examines the move to, on the one hand, standardized practices alongside efforts to, on the other hand, insist on the continuing relevance of more rigorous (and frequently marginalized) ritual practices and beliefs. While we have historically seen and continue to witness movements to soften or mute the fiercer aspects of some Hindu goddesses’ representations, iconography and ritual practices, we also see contemporary assertions of these representations and practices as intrinsic and an insistence on continuing them. This project takes a more inclusive approach as it brings these two threads – sweetening and

intensification – into sustained conversation with the aim of enriching our collective scholarly understanding of the diverse ways that Hindu beliefs and practices are negotiated and contested in contemporary contexts.

Indonesia

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Keywords: Southeast Asia, Indonesia, multilateralism, UN, palm oil, parliament, SDGs, education, development, policy process, politics

I am now postdoctoral researcher in 2 research project:

1. United Nations Legitimacy and Transnational Challenges 1990-2019” funded by the Kone Foundation (2023-2025), Dept. History and Ethnology, University of Jyväskylä
<https://www.jyu.fi/en/projects/legitimacy-of-the-united-nations-and-transnational-challenges-1990-2019#toc--project-team>
2. "Palm Oil and paradigm shift in Indonesia and EU", funded by the Kone Foundation (2024-2027), University of Turku <https://sites.utu.fi/palmoil/>

Publications (see www.ratihadiputri.com for complete list):

Books:

-Adiputri, Ratih D (2023) Sistem Pendidikan Finlandia: Belajar Cara Mengajar ["Learning how to Teach: Teacher's Competencies in Digital Era"]. Jakarta: KPG

Journal Articles:

- Adiputri, Ratih D. (2023). "The influence of global education in Indonesia: PISA tests, different conceptions of national assessment, and the policymaking process", in *Education and Power in Contemporary Southeast Asia*, edited by Azmil Tayeb, Rosalie Metro, and Will Brehm. London and New York: Routledge Contemporary Southeast Asia Series, pp. 31-44.

- Adiputri, Ratih (2023) "Memahami Keterwakilan Politik". Kompas 12.4.2023

- Adiputri, Ratih (2023) "Multilateralism in Southeast Asia. Politikasta, 4.4. 2023 Multilateralism from Southeast Asia –<https://politiikasta.fi/en/multilateralism-from-southeast-asia/>

- Adiputri, Ratih (2023) "Mengurangi Kesenjangan Pendidikan". Kompas 11.1.2023.
<https://www.kompas.id/baca/opini/2023/01/10/mengurangi-kesenjangan-pendidikan>

- Adiputri, Ratih (2022) "G20 and Indonesian Presidency" Politikasta, 3.11.2022
<https://politiikasta.fi/en/g20-and-indonesian-presidency/>

- Adiputri, Ratih (2022) "Ilusi Media Sosial" in Kompas 31.7.2022
<https://www.kompas.id/baca/opini/2022/07/30/ilusi-media-sosial>

- Adiputri, Ratih (2022) "Leaning Loss di Masa Pandemi" in Kompas on 21.3.2022
www.kompas.id/baca/artikel-opini/2022/03/20/learning-loss-di-masa-pandemi

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Keywords: trade, Japan, EPA, transport, China, EU, Indonesia, palm oil

Good and bad palm oil. Food security, paradigm shift and stakeholder negotiations in Indonesia and the EU, funded by KONE Foundation for the period 2023-2027.

This multidisciplinary project takes a broader approach going beyond existing standalone case studies to examine palm oil negotiations and policies from the perspective of small producers in Indonesia, and policymakers and NGOs in the EU and Indonesia. Some of the underlying questions are: What kinds of views do different stakeholders have on palm oil, and how are the views negotiated and narrated? How do the arguments and narratives reflect the stakeholders'

values, the "good and bad" and the ethics of palm oil cultivation and use? Who influences whom and what power relations can we discern in the multi-level palm oil negotiations and debates? How can disputes be resolved to ensure food security and find a solution in line with the 2030 Agenda? By exploring these questions, this research aims to: (1) Contextualize the paradigm shift in the palm oil narrative, (2) Understand its effects on the power relations and negotiations among palm oil stakeholders, (3) Analyze the effects on primary producers in Indonesia and more broadly on global food security.

Team members: Erja Kettunen-Matilainen (UTU), Ratih Adiputri (JYU), Ayu Pratiwi (UTU).

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Keywords: Teacher education, teacher identity, international teacher programme, positioning, narrative

Doctoral Dissertation Tentative Title: **Dynamics of Teacher Identity Reconstruction: Indonesian Teachers' Experience in Finnish International Teacher Programme**

The aim of the study is to explore teacher identity reconstruction process during learning and after graduation that reflect negotiation process through identity positioning. The findings highlights the significance of teacher identity work that support negotiation between diverse contexts in ITP. Furthermore, the findings also describe temporal and spatial dynamics of this process. The study is conducted in an international Teacher Programme (ITP) between Indonesia and Finland from 2015-2017. The site of this study is located in Aceh, Indonesia and Tampere, Finland. Aceh as a post-conflict and post-tsunami area provide additional dimension to the learning and post-graduation experience. The study use participants' narratives as data which describe the subjective impacts of participating in ITP. The study may support contextual understanding about learning in ITP and how individual teachers make sense and integrate insights from their learning in ITP that may influence future practices. Furthermore, the study also highlights the negotiation process after graduation and challenges in implementing different practices in the local context.

Publications:

- Zen, S., Ropo, E., & Kupila, P. (2022). International teacher education programme as a narrative space for teacher identity reconstruction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 109.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103527>

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Keywords: Japan, Zainichi Koreans, diversity, sustainability, community, gender, civil society, vaccine hesitancy, spirituality, digital vigilantism, YouTuber, attention economy, technologies of the self, masculinity, Japan, conspiracy theories, QAnon, anti-vaccination activism, YamatoQ-kai, COVID-19, authenticity, far-right movement, hate speech, Ikigai, Japan, psychosocial studies

Conspiracy theories and the COVID-19 pandemic in Japan: The rise, radicalization, and fall (?) of YamatoQ-kai

Project conducted with Dr. Kamila Szczepanska (UTU, Centre for East Asian Studies)

This article investigates how conspiracy theories, spirituality, and resistance against pandemic-mitigation measures became intertwined during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis in Japan. Utilizing selected concepts from social movement theories (SMT), this case study-driven exploratory analysis focuses on the activities of YamatoQ-kai, a civil society organization that originated in a group of conspiracy-theory influencers and whose activities included the dissemination of an anti-immunization agenda. By analysing online posts on the organization's homepage and journalistic reports on the organization, the article illuminates the underlying implications of the conspiracy theorists' activism and demonstrates how the group adopted QAnon's conspiracy rhetoric whilst taking a Japanized form. Second, it explains YamatoQ's pivotal place amongst the Japanese societal actors espousing vaccine-hesitant attitudes. Finally, it shows how the group—as an unconventional case of conspirituality—created tangible experiences for followers and demonstrates the affective impact of group solidarity. In this way, the article's findings contribute to closing the research gaps in scholarship on conspiracy theories, vaccine scepticism, and conspirituality.

Social Science Japan Journal, jyae003, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ssj/jyae003>

Seduction of far-right actions: A pathway to an authentic self?

Far-right civil movements have emerged as a significant predicament in numerous regions worldwide. Despite abundant research on the tactics employed by far-right groups to instil ideologies, behaviours and sentiments in their followers, such as street demonstrations, investigations into the meaning-making of far-right actions in relation to the trajectories of the participants' lives remain scarce. The present study uses the analytical tool proposed by Katz to explore how far-right activists obtain a sense of moral transcendence through their activism, including participating in the liminal moments of far-right rallies, revelling in unrestricted speech, discovering new abilities, acquiring knowledge and engaging in self-expression. We contend that these experiences engender in participants the sense that they are acquiring that which is absent from their lives and recovering their 'true selves'. The study maintains that to comprehend the allure of the far right, it is essential to contextualise far-right actions within the participants' lives, the societies that they inhabit, and the circumstances that surround them. In short, the sensation that one is rediscovering one's 'true self' may encourage activists to pursue the more remote objective of reclaiming what they perceive as their nations' lost ideals.

Crime, Media, Culture

<https://doi.org/10.1177/17416590241245380>

(Projected conducted with Dr. Yutaka Yoshida, Cardiff University, UK)

Technologies of the YouTuber Self: Digital Vigilantism, Masculinities and Attention Economy in Neoliberal Japan

Completed projects:

- "The Presentation of the Korean Self with Everyday Food: Negotiating "Koreanness" through Kimchi Diplomacy in Contemporary Japan." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies*, vol. 36 no. 1, 2023, p. 87-116. Project MUSE, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sej.2023.a902135>.
- "Healing through Shared Tasks: Honoring Elderly Zainichi Korean Women and Crossing Unspoken Boundaries in Japan" NAJAKS 2022, *Studia Orientalia*.
- "COVID-19 and Vaccine Hesitancy in Japan" with Kamila Szczepanska (2022)

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Keywords: Media and consumer culture in Japan, Japanese language education, language and identity, collaborative learning

Publications:

- Costantini, H., Costantini, R., & Fuse, R. (2024). Changing Health Information on COVID-19 Vaccination in Asia. *Journalism and Media*, 5(2), 526-536.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia5020035>
- Hata, Y. & Fuse, R. (2023). 日本とフィンランドの異分野協働によるくずし字セミナーの実践. *新潟大学高等教育研究* 10, 16–21.
- Constantini, H., & Fuse, R. (2022). Health Information on COVID-19 Vaccination: Readability of Online Sources and Newspapers in Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. *Journalism and Media*, 3(1), 228-237. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia3010017>
- Fuse, R. (2022, Feb). ライフワークバランスを図る意味. Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). <https://cheers.jsps.go.jp/report/report13/>
- Fuse, R. (2022). Kultuurienvälinen kokemukseni Suomessa ja Japanissa. In L. Aunio, & R. Länsisalmi (Eds.), *Miten minusta tuli tohtori 2. Itämaiden tutkijat kertovat* (pp. 117–120). (Suomen Itämaisen Seuran suomenkielisiä julkaisuja; No. 48). Suomen itämainen seura.
- Fuse, R., & Sosa, S. (2022). ”Edistetään oppimista yhdessä” – Opetusavustajaohjelma Helsingin yliopiston japanin kielen kursseilla. *Kieli, koulutus ja yhteiskunta: Kieliverkoston verkkolehti*, 13(6).

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Keywords: The West, Japan, interaction, globalization, interdependence, transcultural information, image

The West and Japan: interaction, globalization and transcultural information, image

Publications:

- Japan on the Opening up of Korea in 1876. Proceedings from NAJAKS 2022. Edited by Leong-Young Kim & Lasse Lehtonen. *Studia Orientalia* 124. The Finnish Oriental Society, Helsinki 2023, 21–33.
- A Message From 1870s Japan: The Education of Women Is Important. Faravid. *Historian ja arkeologian tutkimuksen aikakauskirja* 54/2023. Pohjois-Suomen Historiallinen Yhdistys: Rovaniemi 2023, 69–75.
- How Global Was Global? The Regional Prevalence of the Corona Pandemic in the Spring of 2020 – Perspectives on Finland and Japan. *Transcultural Encounters III. Debate! Language, Culture and Information in Interaction*. Pekka Kuusisto, Kari Alenius & Maria Julku (eds.) *Studia Historica Septentrionalia* 90. Pohjois-Suomen Historiallinen Yhdistys, Rovaniemi 2024, 253–262.
- (2023) Views of the Western Newspapers Published in Japan on the Opening up of Korea in 1876. Proceedings from NAJAKS 2022. Edited by Leong-Young Kim & Lasse Lehtonen. *Studia Orientalia* 124. The Finnish Oriental Society, Helsinki 2023, 21–33.

- (2022) Tutkijan tie: aktivismista globalisaatioon – Japani toiseuden peilinä (The Path of the Researcher: from Activism to Globalization – Japan as a Mirror of Otherness). *Faravid. Historian ja arkeologian tutkimuksen aikakauskirja* 53/2022. Pohjois-Suomen Historiallinen Yhdistys: Rovaniemi 2022, 117–135.

Silja Keva, Dr. Soc. Sci (Asian Studies), University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies

silja.keva@utu.fi

Keywords: Japan's foreign policy, Diet of Japan, parliamentary diplomacy, norms, norm diffusion in international relations

Publications:

- Kähkönen, T. and Keva, S. (2024) Developing a sustainable campus in international collaboration. *CEAS Insights* 2/2024. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-29-9791-6>.
- Keva, S. Remembering the war in Japan's political rhetoric - focus on contemporary parliamentary narratives during war anniversaries (ongoing research).
- Keva, S. (2023). Parliamentarians and Normative Power Diffusion: A Case Study of Japan. *International Journal of Parliamentary Studies*, 3(2), 284-308. <https://doi.org/10.1163/26668912-bja10065>
- Kansanedustajat normien ja demokratian edistäjinä kansainvälisellä kentällä. *Aasian ja Euroopan kansainvälinen kumppanuus (ASEP)*. *Kosmopolis* 2/2022.

Lasse Lehtonen, PhD, Academy of Finland Research Fellow, University of Helsinki

lehtonen.lasse@gmail.com

Keywords: Japanese culture, Japanese society, music in Japan, nationalism, modernism, gender, game music, Finnish-Japanese cultural exchange

Peer reviewed monographs:

- 2023 (forthcoming): 『「荒井由実」の時代——「14番目の月」を中心に』 ["Arai Yumi's" Era: With a Focus on The 14th Moon] (tentative title; a Japanese-language translation of Yuming's *The 14th Moon*). Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- 2022: *Yuming's The 14th Moon*. Bloomsbury Academic, 33 1/3 Japan Series.

Edited peer-reviewed anthologies and journal issues:

- 2023: Kim, Jeong-Young and Lasse Lehtonen (eds.). *Proceedings from NAJAKS 2022*. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society.
- 2022: Lehtonen, Lasse and Kai Tuuri (eds.). *Musiikki 52 (4): Pelimusiikin tutkimus Suomessa [Game music scholarship in Finland]*.

Peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters:

- 2024: "Early discourse about video game music in Japan: Children's music, electronic bleeps, and the legitimization of a genre." *Journal of Sound and Music in Games* 5 (2): 86–111.
- 2023: "Sibelius in Japan: Cultural Domestication and Images of Sameness." *Journal of Musicology* 40 (4).
- 2023: "Conflict and Synthesis of Traditional and Modern Japan in Hashimoto Kunihiko's Art Songs." In *The Art Song and Lyrical Modernity in East Asia and Australia*, ed. Joys H.K. Cheung and Alison Tokita. London and New York: Routledge, 56–72.
- 2023: "'My music cannot be compared to anything done in the past': Female singer-songwriters and the 'new' in New Music in 1970s Japan." In *Proceedings from NAJAKS 2022*, edited by Kim Jeong-Young and Lasse Lehtonen. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 163–176.

- 2022: "Pelimusiikin tutkimus Japanissa ja muualla: Eroja ja yhtäläisyyksiä, kuiluja ja siltoja" [Research of Game Music in Japan and Elsewhere: Differences and Similarities, Gaps and Bridges]. *Musiikki* 52 (4) (2022): 114–141.
- 2022: "Jean Sibelius Japanissa: Toiseus, samuus ja globaalit musiikinhistoriat." *Synteesi* 41 (1-2): 14-32.

More information: <http://lasseajlehtonen.wordpress.com/>

Riikka Länsisalmi, Senior University Lecturer, University of Helsinki, Department of Languages

Keywords: Japanese language, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis

Länsisalmi, Riikka (toim.), 2022. **Tankasta mangaan – Miten suomentaa japanin kieltä ja kulttuuria**, Tampere: Vastapaino.

<https://vastapaino.fi/sivu/tuote/tankasta-mangaan/4048065>

(From tanka to manga – How to translate Japanese language and culture into Finnish)

Teos valottaa japanin kääntämisen ja tulkkauksen erityispiirteitä useasta eri näkökulmasta 16 kirjoittajan voimin. Artikkeleissa tarkastellaan mm. japanin kirjoitusjärjestelmää, japanin kielen tyylillisiä piirteitä, japanista suomennettua kirjallisuutta, eri tekstilajien suomentamista (ja japanintamamista) asiategsteistä mangaan, tulkkaamista, kielityöläisten arkea ja japanin kääntäjien urapolkua.

Sisältää kirjoituksen:

Länsisalmi, Riikka, 2022. Merkkien matkassa, sanomattoman syleilyssä – johdantoa japanin kieleen. *Tankasta mangaan – Miten suomentaa japanin kieltä ja kulttuuria*, Tampere: Vastapaino, 17–51.

Aunio, Lotta & Riikka Länsisalmi (toim.), tulossa 2022. **Miten minusta tuli tohtori. Itämaiden tutkijat kertovat, osa 2**. Helsinki: Suomen Itämainen Seura.

Kirjoituskokoelma täydentää kymmenen vuoden takaisen, samoin nimetyn ensimmäisen osan piirtämää kuvaa suomalaisten ja Suomeen asettuneiden ”itämaiden” tutkijoiden akateemisen meritoitumisen polveilevista poluista. Helsingin yliopiston laaja kielten ja kulttuurien opiskelun ja tutkimuksen kirjo heijastuu tarinoissa, sillä se yhdistää jollain lailla kaikkia kirjoittajia, joiden tutkimusalat ulottuvat Kaukoidästä Afrikkaan. Itämaiden tutkimus eli orientalistiikka on aina ollut monitieteistä, ja tutkimusalueita tarkastellaan esimerkiksi kielen, historian, kirjallisuuden tai taiteen kautta.

Sisältää kirjoituksen: Länsisalmi, Riikka, 2022. Kissa kuussa ja muita sattumuksia. *Miten minusta tuli tohtori. Itämaiden tutkijat kertovat, osa 2*. Helsinki: Suomen Itämainen Seura, 1–16.

Autere (ent. Viitamäki) Mikko & Riikka Länsisalmi (toim.) *Nationalismin muokkaama kieli* (kirjaprojekti).

Teos käsittelee kieltä, kielipolitiikkaa ja kielikoulutusta suhteessa nationalismiin. Se pureutuu kotimaisten asiantuntijoiden kirjoitusten kautta siihen, miten nationalismi on muokannut ja muokkaa kieltä sekä havaintoamme kielestä erilaisissa konteksteissa poliittisesta ideologiasta lainsäädäntöön ja valtion kielipolitiikasta kielten opetukseen. Kysymys on taas noussut ajankohtaiseksi nationalismin uuden globaalin nousun myötä. Kielen roolia 1800- ja 1900-luvun eurooppalaisessa nationalistisessa liikehdinnässä on tutkittu laajalti, mutta mikä on kielen merkitys nykyisissä nationalistisissa diskursseissa ja agendoissa? Entä miten nationalismi on vaikuttanut kieleen Afrikassa, Lähi-idässä ja Aasiassa?

Teos valottaa sitä, miten voimakkaasti yhteiskunnalliset ja poliittiset päätökset ja agendat ovat vaikuttaneet ja vaikuttavat kieleen, kielipolitiikkaan ja kielikoulutukseen. Kieli ei ole muusta yhteiskunnasta erillinen ilmiö, joka kehittyy omien, luonnonlakeja muistuttavien lainalaisuuksiensa mukaan. Päinvastoin, kieltä on muokattu ja muutettu hyvin aktiivisesti. Teos sisältää kirjoituksia mm. japanin kielen opettamisesta ja Singaporen ja Filippiinien kielipolitiikasta.

Länsisalmi, Riikka: **Japanese legal culture and language practices in the lay jury (saiban'in) courtroom (work in progress)**

The continuation of this project addresses questions related to the introduction of a “quasi-lay” juror (saibain'in) system in Japan in 2009, partially inspired by a “Western” legal model. The introduction of this system is part of a process of reforms aimed at bringing the legal system into closer touch with the general public, and strengthening the rule of law.

The questions that accordingly present themselves concern both procedural and linguistic dimensions. This type of research requires a multi-dimensional comparative approach, a combination of analysis of structural and institutional aspects of the Japanese legal system as reflected in “handbooks for jury trials” and of language practices situated in a specific legal context, the courtroom.

Länsisalmi, Riikka & Sachiko Sōsa, **Pääkaupunkiseudun kielivarannon kirjoja: japani äidin-, koti- ja perintökielenä (Japanese as Mother Tongue and Home & Heritage Language in the Metropolitan Area Language Reserve, work in progress)**

Aasialaisten kielten opetuksesta ja ylläpidosta osana Suomen kielivarantoa muina kuin vieraina kielinä ei juuri ole tarjolla tietoa. Projektissamme keskitymme japaniin, jota opetetaan äidin- ja kotikielenä muutamien kaupunkien kouluissa sekä kouluyhdistyksen ylläpitämässä lauantaikoulussa. Japaninkielisessä terminologiassa kokugo (国語) 'kansalliskieli' linkittää opetuksen ”viralliseen” äidinkielen opetukseen Japanissa. Japanin kieleen yleensä ja erotuksena muista kielistä viitataan sen sijaan termillä nihongo (日本). Japani kielipääomana on täten nihongo, oppiaineena koulutuksen järjestäjästä riippuen myös ensikielen veroinen ”virallinen” kokugo. Projektimme paitsi kartoittaa ja selvittää japanin opetuksen ja oppimisen nykytilaa äidin-, koti- ja perintökielenä myös analysoi opettamiseen linkittyviä kielellisiä ideologioita ja asenteita ja perintökielijapanin puhujien kielenkäyttöä konkreettisissa vuorovaikutustilanteissa.

For other publications and projects, see:

<https://researchportal.helsinki.fi/en/persons/riikka-lansisalmi>

Oshie Nishimura-Sahi, PhD Candidate, Tampere University, Faculty of Education and Culture

oshie.nishimura-sahi@tuni.fi

Keywords: Comparative and international education; policy transfer; global education policy; Actor-Network Theory (ANT); Japan; CEFR; foreign language education: postcolonialism; decolonial thinking; decolonialism; actor-network theory; autoethnography; Japan

Doctoral dissertation

Nishimura-Sahi, O. (2024). Reimagining global education policy research: The case of the European language framework (CEFR) transfer to Japan [Doctoral dissertation, Tampere University]. Trepo.

Education policies and policy ideas which circulate around the world are termed global education policy, constituting a major area of interest within the field of comparative and international education. My dissertation is concerned with one global education policy, namely, the Common

European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The case I explore is the recent Japanese educational reforms in which the CEFR was referred to: Particularly, the revision of the national curricular guidelines for foreign language education and the introduction of private-sector English proficiency test as part of the national standardised university entrance exams. Drawing primarily upon documentary materials and conducting in-depth interviews, I analyse what political circumstance gave rise to Japanese interest in the CEFR, how Japanese actors (such as academics and teachers) modified or “borrowed” the CEFR ideas and incorporated the modified CEFR into the Japanese education system, and how the CEFR itself has been developed into global education policy in the course of policy transfer. In so doing, I attempt to shed light on the collective nature of global education policies, challenging the binary conceptions of lender/borrower of global education policies.

Peer-reviewed journal articles and chapters in research books:

- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (forthcoming). Ethnophilosophy as intellectual resources: Self-reflective inquiry into the onto-epistemic foundations of global education policy research. *Comparative Education: Special issue ‘The global education policy field: Theorization and problematization’*
- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (forthcoming). フィンランドの教育輸出戦略—モデル化・ブランド化・商品化 [Strategy of Finnish education export—Modeling, branding and commodifying]. In K. Takayama & T. Okitsu (Eds.), *教育輸出を問う: 「日本型教育の海外展開 (EDU-Port)」の政治と倫理* [Exploring education exports: Politics and ethics of Japan’s EDU-Port] (pp. 263–286). Akashi Shoten.
- Nishimura-Sahi, O. & Piattoeva, N. (2024). ‘Global’ as co-construction: Socio-material analysis of global education policy. In D. B. Edwards, T. Verger, K. Takayama and M. McKenzie (Eds.), *Researching global education policy: Diverse approaches to policy movement* (pp. 232–252). Policy Press.
- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (2023). Assembling educational standards: Following the actors of the CEFR-J project. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*. DOI: 10.1080/14767724.2022.2037071 (open access)
- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (2023). Fūdo in foreign language learning in Japan and Finland: An autoethnographic study of a PhD Journey. *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 41(1), 62–83. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22439/cjas.v41i1.6886>
- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (2022). Policy borrowing of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) in Japan: An analysis of the interplay between global education trends and national policymaking. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 42(3), 574–587. DOI: 10.1080/02188791.2020.1844145

Non-refereed scientific articles:

- Nishimura-Sahi, O. (2024). Travelling stones. In Z. Millei, N. Piattoeva, & I. Silova (Mnemo ZIN) (Eds.), *(An)Archive childhood, memory, and the Cold War* (p. 370). Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers.

Eija Niskanen, Doctoral Researcher, University of Helsinki, East Asian Studies & Film and Television Studies
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Keywords: anime, Moomin, Japan, Tove Jansson, nationality

PhD thesis on Moomin animations animated in Japanese anime studios, 1969–72 Moomin and Shin-Moomin, and 1990–92 Tales from the Moomin Valley/Tanoshii Moomin ikka

Publications:

- (forthcoming article 2024) Soundtrack in Moomin animations, Sound in Japanese Anime.

Sara Park, Lecturer/PHD, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures, Asian Studies.
sara.park@helsinki.fi
Keywords: nationalism, racism, migration policy

Publications:

Monograph: Kioku wo kataru, Rekishi wo kaku: oraru hisutori to shakai chosa (Between Telling the Past and Writing History: Methodology of Oral History on Sociology), Yuhikaku, March 2023.

Chapter Contribution: "Questioning Xenophobia in Japan: Racism, Decolonization, and Human Rights", Pp.327-342, in Sustainability, Diversity, and Equality: Key Challenges for Japan

Pilvi Posio, PhD Candidate, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies
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Keywords: Community, disaster recovery, reconstruction, the Great East Japan Earthquake, collective aspiring, future orientation, sustainability, social practices, policy transfer

My research focus is the dynamics of community, social practices, sustainability and future. Currently, I'm preparing a research project on inter-city climate collaboration of the city of Turku and its Japanese partner cities.

Past projects:

- Doctoral dissertation Aspired communities: The communities of long-term recovery after the 3.11 disaster in the town of Yamamoto completed in 2022.

Publications:

- Posio, Pilvi. (2024). Aspired communities: Reconsidering community in light of the temporal dimensionality of social life. *Anthropological Theory*. Online first.
- Posio, Pilvi. (2023). Theme issue editorial: How to Align Global Concerns and Local Issues?. *The Journal of Management for Global Sustainability*. 11(2).
- Posio, P. (2023). Lectio Praecursoria: Aspired Communities—The communities of long-term recovery after the 3.11 disaster in the town of Yamamoto. *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society*, 47(2), 86–89. <https://doi.org/10.30676/jfas.121411>
- Posio, P. (2022). Japani ja (katastrofin)kestävä kehitys. *The Ulkopolitist*

Stephen Ranger, PhD Student, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies
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Keywords: Anglo-Japanese alliance, Sino-Japanese War, Russo-Japanese War, Korea, Manchuria, Weibaiwei, Warlord period

Current doctoral research (5th year): "Understanding the process of British foreign policy toward Korea and China during the period of Japan's Rise (1894 to 1931)"

Publications:

- (forthcoming, 2026) "Turning to a 'new chapter'? The challenges of redefining UK-China relations in the post-handover period, 1997-1999," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*.
- (2023) "Are We Under Siege? US Popular Perceptions of Japan and China in the Post-Cold War" *Asia in Focus* 9 (9), pp. 4-13. <https://journals.lub.lu.se/asiainfocus/article/view/25427/22379>

*Ville Sava, Doctoral Researcher, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies
vikasar@utu.fi*

Keywords: Asian studies; Japanese studies; contemporary history; politics of memory; politics of history.

Commemorating Defeat: Remembering the Boshin War in Aizuwakamatsu City in Japan -
Doctoral degree, ongoing, estimated time of completion: 2027.

*Sayuri Suwa, Professor, Chiba University, Graduate School of Nursing, Division of Visiting Nursing; Helli Kitinoja, Jaakko Hallila
and Marika Toivonen, Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences*

helli.kitinoja@gmail.com

Keywords: Ageing society, health care technology, home care robots, international joint research, social implementation

Title of the research project: Exploring perceptions toward home-care robots for older people in Finland, Ireland, and Japan: A comparative questionnaire study

Partners:

Chiba University, Japan (1); University College Dublin, Ireland (2); Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, Finland (3); University of Tokyo, Japan (4); City of Pargas, Finland (5); Toho University, Japan (6).

Sayuri Suwa (1), Mayuko Tsujimura (1), Naonori Kodate (2), Sarah Donnelly (2), Helli Kitinoja (3), Jaakko Hallila (3), Marika Toivonen (3), Hiroo Ide (4), Camilla Bergman-Kärpijoki (5), Erika Takahashi (1), Mina Ishimaru (1), Atsuko Shimamura (6), Wenwei Yui (1).

Purpose:

To clarify potential users' perceptions toward the development and social implementation of home-care robots in Japan, Ireland, and Finland.

Methods:

Unsigned, self-administered questionnaires were distributed to adults aged 65 or older, family caregivers, and home care/health and social care professionals (HSCPs). A total of 1004 responses were collected.

Conclusions:

Devising optimal strategies for the development and social implementation of home-care robots by incorporating various perspectives while valuing human dignity will require examination of each country's characteristics with respect to history, culture, policies, and values related to robots.

Kamila Szczygowska, University Lecturer, PhD, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies

kamila.szczygowska@utu.fi

Keywords: Japanese NGOs in regional and global governance, development assistance and Japanese NGOs, disaster risk management and Japanese NGOs, Japanese civil society, Japanese social movements, war memory and commemoration in Japan and East Asia, reconciliation processes in East Asia

Japanese Civil Society in Global Governance: Focus on International Cooperation, Development and Humanitarian Assistance (ongoing)

My research explores experiences of Japanese NGOs/NPOs working in the international cooperation, development, and humanitarian assistance sectors. In my research I focus on identifying their involvement and participation in global governance processes and examining their roles in global politics and addressing trans-boundary challenges. Furthermore, I investigate

domestic determinants of Japanese NGOs/NPOs' participation in processes intended to tackle trans-boundary problems and challenges.

Publications:

- Szczepanska, K. (2022). "Contesting Japan's International Roles: The Responses of Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations to Transformation of Japan's ODA Policy", chapter in the book *National Role Conceptions in a New Millennium : Defining a Place in a Changing World*. Routledge: New York.
- Szczepanska, K. (2022). The Challenge of Societal Recognition of Humanitarian and Development NGO Practitioners in Japan: A Volunteer or a Professional? *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*

Korea (North Korea and South Korea)

Sabine Burghart, University Lecturer and Academic Director of the EAST Programme, PhD, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies, Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History and Political Science

Keywords: South Korea, North Korea, foreign aid, ODA, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, Saemaül Undong, Africa, Nordic countries-DPRK relations; Finland-Korea relations

Projects:

South Korea's official development assistance in East Africa (2018-)

This project concerns South Korea's role in its recent development partnership with Tanzania with a focus on the Global Saemaül Undong (New Village Movement, SMU) programme. South Korea claims to pursue a new way of providing development assistance characterized by its own experience as a former aid recipient. The official donor rhetoric points towards more symmetric aid relationships: emphasis on national ownership, request-based approach, notions of self-reliance and non-hierarchical relationships. Tanzania's experience with the SMU programme has been selected for an in-depth case study (Collaboration with the Korean Studies unit / Goethe University Frankfurt: AKS-2018-INC-2230006).

Engagement and Encounters with the Global South through *Saemaül Undong*, In YS. Ahn (Eds) *Korea and the Global Society: Engagement, Reciprocity, and Tension*. Routledge: London. 2023. 37-58.

South Korea's Engagement with Africa: A History of the Relationship in Multiple Aspects Ed. Y. Chang, Singapore, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, xviii + 196 pp., eBook: €74,89 (hardcover: €98,99), ISBN: 978-981-32-9013-6, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9013-6_1. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 40(1), 147–149. DOI: 10.1080/02589001.2021.1931057.

North Korea: Socioeconomic transformation and the role of external actors (2008-)

This research concerns the socioeconomic transformation in North Korea with a focus on the role of external actors. Since the 1990s and spurred by an economic crisis, the country has experienced a 'dramatic transformation' (Kim BY 2017). During this time period that also saw humanitarian emergencies, various international aid actors – multilateral, bilateral, international and non-governmental – entered the country resulting in new arrangements, structures and policies (Collaboration with California State University: AKS-2020-C11; Northeast Asia Council Project).

- (with L. Zakharova) 'Russia – A Re-emerging Donor in North Korea: Aid Volumes, Allocation Patterns and Interests', *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 22 (2023) 1–29. doi:10.1163/15700615-02202001.

- Understanding North Korea [book review], *North Korean Review* 21:1 (forthcoming 2025)

The Nordic Countries' Relations with North Korea

This research project concerns the Nordic countries' relations with North Korea and is a collaboration with colleagues in other Nordic countries. A first webinar 'Exploring the Nordic Countries' Relations with the DPRK' was organized by CEAS in 24 November 2023. Compared to other Nordic countries, Finland is considered a special case due to its neutrality policy and its doctrine of non-recognition of divided states. To Finland, relations with divided Korea during the Cold War and the Korea question were a politically sensitive issue. The study on Finland is based on an analysis of archival material from e.g. the Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland / Ulkoministeriön arkisto.

(with Ville Sava) 'We are realists': Finland's national role conceptions, neutrality policy and North Korea, In S. Kumar (Eds.) *Bridging Asia-Europe Relations - Exploring Shared Challenges and Opportunities*. Singapore: Springer Nature (accepted for publication, forthcoming 2025).

Young Joo Hong, Doctoral Researcher, University of Turku, Cultural History and European World History

yjhhong@utu.fi

Keywords: Cultural history, South Korea, depression, history of emotions, emotional culture

Current doctoral research (to be completed in 2024): "Emotions and Depression Discourses in Modern South Korea (1980s-2010s)"

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Keywords: North Korean refugees, social integration, social capital, South Korea

Title: Integration of North Koreans in South Korea: The Role of Social Capital in North Korean Refugees' Employment Outcomes and Mental Health

This doctoral project explores the association of social capital with North Korean refugees' employment outcomes and mental health. The number of North Korean refugees has dramatically increased in South Korea since the mid-1990s. Along with the increase, it was reported that many of the refugees failed to adapt to South Korean society. This failed integration has posed a serious social problem in recent years. Early studies of North Korean refugees discovered that poor employment outcomes and mental health were the main obstacles to the North Koreans' successful integration. Some studies showed that social capital plays a crucial role in the integration processes of refugees. Therefore, this project attempts to investigate the detailed information about North Korean refugees' social capital and its relationships with employment and health. Ultimately, the project would contribute to the better integration of North Korean refugees into South Korea.

Jingoo Kang, Researcher, Assistant Professor, University of Eastern Finland, School of Applied Educational Science and Teacher Education

jjink@uef.fi

Keywords: science education, teacher education, gender equity

Kang, J., Kim, H., Lee, B., Tolppanen, S., Viljaranta, J., & George, S. (in revision). Career entry motivations and teaching perceptions of science preservice teachers: A comparison of trends between Finland and South Korea.

The aim of this research is to explore and compare science pre-service teachers' motivations and perceptions about the teaching profession across different contexts, specifically in Finland and South Korea. Additionally, the study seeks to investigate the influence of gender and study subjects on motivation. By examining these factors, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of motivation within the teaching profession.

Veli-Matti Karhulahti, PhD / Title of Docent, University of Jyväskylä, Department of Music, Art and Culture Studies

Keywords: history, games, technology, media, qualitative research

From Claw Crane to Toy Crane: Catching, Courting, and Gambling in South Korea
Authors: Veli-Matti Karhulahti, Katriina Heljakka, and Dongwon Jo. 2023

The claw crane—an arcade game that invites its players to remotely grab a prize with a “claw”—has undergone a long process of development from an eye-catching “steam shovel” to a calculated gambling machine across amusement arcades, train stations, and traveling carnivals.

Recently, the claw crane has become a common transmedia object in various consumer outlets around the world, serving today's "kidults" who are willing to play and be playful with toys as grownups. Especially in South Korea, the claw crane now rewards its players with cutified character plushies, which arguably reflects and resonates with the local sociocultural conventions. In this mixed-methods study, we deconstruct the claw crane as a historical artifact that promotes diverse forms of human interaction and engagement in the techno-cultural and social context of South Korea. The claw crane (or in South Korea, rather the "toy crane") is investigated by means of historical design analysis, a review of contemporary South Korean media texts, and field observations in Seoul. We suggest the claw crane to serve as a multipurpose medium for playful interactions beyond the act of play itself—and in South Korea, having become a means for playful courting and emotional support, which at times of anxiety, stress, and uncertainty may contribute to one's confidence and belief in the future.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/ks.2018.0037>

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katri.kaubanen@gmail.com*

Keywords: South Korea, history, women's movement, equality, feminism, authoritarian regime

Women's Movement Re-examined: the Korean National Council of Women in the Cold War South Korea and beyond

This doctoral dissertation studies the mobilization, networks and activities of the Korean National Council of Women, a South Korean women's organization established in 1959 and affiliated to the International Council of Woman a year later. By discussing what Cold War feminism stands for the study reveals an organizational history of the Korean National Council of Women during the Cold War intertwined in the larger narrative of Korean history, Korean women's movements and transnational feminisms of the 20th century. I argue that the dynamism of women's activism through women's organizations in the authoritarian era South Korea, largely overlooked in the previous research, signals a bridge, not a gap, in Korean women's movements. The study is based on Korean and international archival records, publications of the women's organizations and other contemporary print media.

Jeong-Young Kim, University Lecturer, PhD, University of Helsinki

Keywords: Korean speech styles, Korean Linguistics, Korean Grammar Proceedings from NAJAKS 2022, Teaching Korean, Korea Alku, Korean Perusteet, hearer-honorifics, hapsyo-choy and hayyo-choy, Korean as a foreign language (KFL), Finnish terms of address

"Korean speech styles and Finnish terms of address from the perspective of KFL learners", Korean Linguistics 19:1 (2023), pp. 31-58

Korean speech styles (hapsyo-choy and hayyo-choy in particular) are compared with Finnish terms of address from the perspective of KFL learners, focusing on three variables, namely "power", "distance", and "imposition" (Brown and Levinson 1987). The comparison is based on Peterson (2010), which the current study replicates. The data was collected during a Discourse Completion Task: seventy-eight native speakers of Korean were provided with seven scenarios depicting everyday situations. The results underpin the common belief that hayyo-choy is the most common speech style in Korean society. On the pedagogical level, therefore, it should be considered unmarked, meaning that no explication such as "informal polite" is required. However, hapsyo-choy should be introduced as a speech style that may be mixed with hayyo-choy, but also as the norm exclusively used in some restricted formal and writing contexts. Other speech styles may be explained in a similar manner in the KFL classroom.

"Demonstration of Korean Grammar in Finnish" *Studia Orientalia* 124 (2023), pp.137-244

Using the learners' native language in a foreign language classroom may be a controversial issue. Nevertheless, it is typical for the learner to study a new foreign language with materials written in a language he or she understands. The Korean language has been taught using textbooks produced in English for classes in Finland. Even the first book on the Korean language published in Finland was written in English, the title of which is *A Korean Grammar*. After the book written by G.J. Ramstedt in 1939, a Korean learner's book '*Korea Alku! Korean Perusteet*' was subsequently published in Finnish, in 2022. This paper describes how Korean verbs and adjectives, including the copula, are presented to Finnish-speaking learners in particular. *Korea Alku! Korean Perusteet* takes radical approaches in order to simplify the descriptive explanation of conjugation rules for the two word classes (i.e. adjectives and verbs), abandoning the traditional view of them. Instead of obeying the conventional perspective, it introduces grammatical terms tailored for the new approaches, which are examined in the following sections.

Publications:

- 2023 "Preface." With Lehtonen, Lasse. In *Studia Orientalia Special Issue: proceedings from NAJAKS 2022*. Kim, Jeong-Young and Lehtonen, Lasse (Eds.) Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society.
- 2023 *Studia Orientalia Special Issue: proceedings from NAJAKS 2022*. Kim, Jeong-Young and Lehtonen, Lasse (Eds.) Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society.
- 2022 "Fascinated by grammar and inspired by teaching Korean." In *Miten minusta tuli tohtori 2*. Aunio, Lotta and Länsisalmi, Riikka (Eds.) Helsinki: Suomen Itämaisen Seura.
- 2022 *Korea Alku! Korean Perusteet*. With Holopainen, E., Marjala, M., Rähkä, S. and Räisänen, V. Seoul: Publisher Hawoo

*Solip Park, Doctoral Researcher, Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Department of Art and Media
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Key: Immigration, expatriation, video game industry, specialists in Finland, South Korea, Korean games, Finnish games, game design praxeology, game production, game development culture, work transition, qualitative research, longitudinal research, interview study.

My doctoral dissertation (Ph.D. thesis) project, expected to complete in 2024, reports the migration experiences of immigrant and expatriate game development workers (henceforth "game expats") in the Finnish game industry using multi-model Qualitative Longitudinal Research ("QLR") 2020-2024. I have traced nine South Korean game expats in Finland, spanning years of semi-structured interviews from 2020 until 2023, regularly twice a year, which were transcribed and anonymized (n=44). The participants reported their cultural encounters, similarities or differences in game development practices, communication style, aesthetics, and design preferences between Finland and South Korea, and their integration experience into the Finnish organization culture. My cultural background — also being a South Korean migrant in Finland, allowed engaging with the participants acknowledging their native language, cultural background, and the exact immigration procedures that they face. The similarities in game platforms (e.g., Mobile games) between the Finnish and Korean game industries also enabled rich data that pinpoints distinctive cultural localities within Finnish and South Korean game studios besides similar technicalities (e.g., Google Play, Unity). Game expats from various regions (e.g., America, Middle East, Asia-Pacific, etc) were also interviewed (n=22) as supplementary data.

Park, S., Denoo, M., Grosemans, E., Petrovskaya, E., Jin, Y., & Xiao, L. Y. (2023). **Learnings From The Case of Maple Refugees: A Story of Loot Boxes, Probability Disclosures, and Gamer Consumer Activism.**

The article synthesises what we learned from reviewing the player activism of the “Maple refugee” incident and applies the insights to the European video game industry and commercial context. The Maple Refugee incident was perhaps one of the most disruptive video game incidents that occurred in South Korea in recent years. It saw tens of thousands of Korean players from the game Maple Story (Nexon, 2003) mobilised in unprecedented online and offline protests in Spring 2021. Together with players from other free-to-play (F2P) games, Maple Story players rallied against the industry norms of monetising with loot boxes and the industry self-regulatory approach to probability disclosures to address potential harms. This culminated in the social phenomenon of the proxy activism method of ‘truck protests,’ rallies of crowd-funded rented trucks displaying protest messages instead of people mass-gathering in public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the English timeline of the incident collated by Park et al. (2023), we dive deeper into the case with a multidisciplinary group of experts from game studies, law, and human-computer interaction and highlight various issues present in this case: the regulation of loot boxes and probability disclosures, the social pillars of player activism, player trust and theorycrafting, and game production. The paper contributes to the deepening of the industry’s understanding of F2P game business while diversifying the Western-centric discourse of the game research landscape by calling for further cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary inquiries into current video game issues.

Publications:

- Park, S., Kultima, A., Lehtonen, M. J., & Krath, J. (2022). Everywhere but Nowhere: Development Experiences of the International Game Developers in Finland during the Covid-19 Pandemic and Remote Work. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 6(CHI PLAY), 233:1-233:14. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3549496>
- Park, S., Denoo, M., Grosemans, E., Petrovskaya, E., Jin, Y., & Xiao, L. Y. (2023). Learnings From The Case of Maple Refugees: A Story of Loot Boxes, Probability Disclosures, and Gamer Consumer Activism. *Proceeding of the 26th International Academic Mindtrek Conference*. Mindtrek '23, Tampere, Finland. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3616961.3616963>

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Keywords: Korea, security, narrative, gender, methodology, international relations, transitional justice

Research interests: international relations, narrative, security, gender, methodology, transitional justice, Korea

Publications:

- Park-Kang, Sungju (2024) “Neighbours under the North Star: Civil wars in Finland and Korea”, *Asia Europe Journal*, 22(2), 185-200.
- Park-Kang, Sungju (2023) “A (Voluntary) Prisoner of Research: Mystery, Destiny and Narrative” in: Masters, Cristina et al (eds) *Writing Saved Me*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 79-86.
- Park-Kang, Sungju (2022) “Contested Victimhood of a ‘Virgin Terrorist’”, *Polity*, 54(4), 890-897.
- Park-Kang, Sungju (2022) *Tears of Theory: International Relations as Storytelling*, Rowman & Littlefield.

*Bokyong Shin, Postdoctoral researcher, University of Helsinki, Centre for Consumer Society Research
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Keywords: e-participation, e-government, democratic innovation, social innovation, Big Data, Artificial intelligence

Projects:

- Collective Intelligence through Digital Tools (COLDIGIT; 2020-2023) funded by NordForsk: <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/collective-intelligence-through-digital-tools-coldigit/>
- Co-creation Radar Research to Business project (2023-2024) funded by Business Finland
- Understanding the voice of residents in digital participatory platforms (2024-2025) funded by Finnish Foundation for Economic Education

Publications:

- Shin, B. (2023). Residents' voices on proposals: Analysing a participatory budgeting project in Seoul using topic modelling. In IFIP EGOV 2023, Budapest, Hungary, September 5-7, 2023, Springer Nature.
- Shin, B., Rask, M., & Kahma, N. (2023). Measuring the Quadruple Helix in social media: A case study of university–industry collaboration. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 194, 122711.
- Shin, B. (2022). Determinants of social capital from a network perspective: A case of Sinchon regeneration project using exponential random graph models. *Cities*, 103419.
- Shin, B., Rask, M., & Tuominen, P. (2022). Learning through online participation: A longitudinal analysis of participatory budgeting using Big Data indicators. *Information Polity*, 27, 517–538.

Nepal

Jagannath Kafle, Doctoral Researcher, University of Turku, Turku School of Economics, Marketing and International Business (Economic Geography Unit)

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Keywords: Official Development Assistance (ODA), Policy Intervention, Commercialization of Local Resources, Agriculture Productivities Udayapur, Enhancing Local Livelihoods, Trade Linkage

Ongoing research project: "Impacts of Official Development Assistance on Sustainable Management and Commercialization of Local Resources in the Udayapur District of Nepal"

The research examines the mechanism of ODA and corresponding appropriate policy measures in developing countries that can improve commercial agriculture farming and local livelihoods through an improved value chain and trade linkages to local, national, and international markets. The study empirically explores the impacts of the agriculture and trade policies on sustainable management and commercialization of local and indigenous products, thus enhancing the local livelihoods in recipient countries. An empirical case study will be conducted within the Udayapur district of Nepal as a representative community of ODA recipients. A mixed-method approach will be applied to the analysis. Agricultural productivity, trade linkages/facilitation, and welfare impacts are examined as outcome variables.

The research adds novelty value to the sustainable utilization of resources, commercialization of local and indigenous products, international trade relations, and aid-development literature. I am working to produce a monograph for my Ph.D. and expect to complete it by the end of 2025.

Publications:

1. Kafle, J. (2023). Nepal, India and China Economic Diplomatic (NICED) Relationship, NECS Publication, <https://necs.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/014.pdf>. (Seminar Paper)
2. Kafle, J. (2023). Does foreign aid work for economic development or not? ClickNepal, <https://clicknepal.com/2023/02/1765/> (Blog Article)
3. Kafle, J. (2022). A NICE Model: Immediate neighborhood policy of Nepal from the lens of 'Economic Geography', ClickNepal, <https://clicknepal.com/2022/12/729/>
4. Kafle, J. (2022). Transforming Agriculture from Subsistence to Sustainable, HimalPress, <https://en.himalpress.com/news/768> (Blog Article)

Pakistan

*Muhammad Hassan Qadeer Butt, Doctoral Researcher, Abo Akademy University, Department of English Language and Literature
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Keywords: South Asian Literature, Literary Urban Studies, Postcolonial Literature.

PhD English Language and Literature (2023-27): The Politics of Safety and Trauma in Post 9/11 Pakistani Urban Fiction.

Singapore

*Erkki Viitasaari, PhD Candidate, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
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Keywords: Southeast Asia, Nationalism, Museology, Brunei, Singapore, Taiwan, Palau

PhD thesis "Legitimizing an Existence among Giants: National Museums in Singapore, Brunei, Taiwan, and Palau". Defended in 2023.

Taiwan

*Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
julie.chen@helsinki.fi*

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, globalization, Russia, local agency

Publications:

- Julie Yu-Wen Chen and Torbjörn Lodén (eds.) (2023) *Slowly Taking Off: Nordic-Taiwan Relations*, p. 27-45. Stockholm: Institute for Security & Development Policy.
- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen; Kallio, Jyrki (2022) *Finland-Taiwan Relations: An Overview and Changes after Covid-19 Pandemic*. Focus Asia. Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy. 1-8.

*Ari-Joonas Pitkänen, PhD Candidate, University of Turku, Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History and Political Science
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Keywords: Taiwan, national identity, nationalism, identity, geography

Doctoral dissertation project: "Performing the Pacific Island: Place, Practice, and Matter in the Making of Oceanic Taiwan" (planned completion 2025)

The project examines the role of ecological interaction between the people and the island environment in the process of Taiwanisation and the formation of collective consciousness in Taiwan.

Publications:

- Pitkänen, Ari-Joonas (2024). Is Taiwan a Small Island? Relational and Representational Perceptions. *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*, etukäteisjulkaisu verkossa. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.utu.fi/10.1163/24688800-20241353>

Vietnam

Tomi Särkiöja, PhD Candidate, Tampere University, Faculty of Management and Business

Tomi.Sarkioja@tuni.fi

Keywords: Innovative entrepreneurship, institutional change, Vietnam

A study on the development of innovative entrepreneurship and institutional change in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Regional Issues and Comparisons within Asia

*Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor, University of Helsinki, Department of Cultures
julie.chen@helsinki.fi*

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, globalization, Russia, local agency

Publications:

- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen; Ristivojević, Dušica (2023) Global-Local Dynamics in the Belt and Road Initiative Projects. *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 21 (4): 1-11.
- Chen, Yu-Wen (2023) Glocalization of Belt and Road Initiatives: The Importance of Local Agency, in Paulo Afonso B. Duarte, Francisco B.S. José Leandro and Enrique Martínez Galán (eds.) *Palgrave Handbook of Globalization with Chinese Characteristics: The Case of the Belt and Road Initiative*, p.125-137. Singapore: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Chen, Yu-Wen (2023) A Transnational Approach to Understanding Japanese Colonial Influence on Taiwan: Manifestations in Taiwan's Cinema and Popular Music, in Kevin Cawley and Julia Schneider (eds.) *Transnational East Asian Studies*, p. 199-213. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Chen, Julie Yu-Wen (2022) Reconciling Different Approaches to Conceptualizing the Gocalization of the Belt and Road Initiative Projects. *Globalizations*. Forthcoming.
- Chen, Yu-Wen (2022) Glocalization of Belt and Road Initiatives: The Importance of Local Agency, in Paulo Afonso Brardo Duarte, Francisco Leandro and Enrique Martínez Galán (eds.) *Palgrave Handbook of Globalization with Chinese Characteristics*. Singapore: Palgrave-Macmillan.

*Bart Gaens, Leading Research Fellow (PhD), Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), Global Security Research program
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Keywords: Connectivity, great-power competition, infrastructure development, Indo-Pacific

Title: “Superregionalism and Contentious Connectivity in Asia”

Duration: May 2021-April 2023

This research project examined connectivity as a key area of global power competition. The focus was on Asia, broadly the Indo-Pacific, as a superregion, i.e., a region defined by various functional and connective links rather than by geographical borders. The project explored linkages between connectivity and security, economy and (sustainable) development, and contrasted and compared connectivity strategies of key actors including China, the US, Japan, Russia, and the EU. The project was premised on the idea that the infrastructures of connectivity do not only serve as a major site of contestation, but also provide opportunities for cooperation in the decades to come.

Team members: Bart Gaens, Ville Sinkkonen, Katja Creutz, Kristiina Silvan, Anu Ruokamo, Tyyne Karjalainen, Jyrki Kallio

Publications:

- Gaens, B., Sinkkonen, V. & Ruokamo, A. Introduction to the Special Issue: Theory and Practice of Connectivity in the Indo-Pacific—Spheres, Logics, and Regional Dynamics. *East Asia* 40, 195–207 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-023-09411-x>
- Gaens, B., Sinkkonen, V. & Vogt, H. Connectivity and Order: an Analytical Framework. *East Asia* 40, 209–228 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-023-09401-z>
- Gaens, B., Sinkkonen, V. Contentious Connectivity—the USA, Japan, and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific. *East Asia* 40, 265–291 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-023-09407-7>

- Special Issue: Theory and Practice of Connectivity in the Indo-Pacific: Spheres, Logics, and Regional Dynamics. *East Asia*, Vol. 40, issue 3, September 2023. Issue Editors: Gaens, Bart and Sinkkonen, Ville. <https://link.springer.com/journal/12140/volumes-and-issues/40-3>
- Silvan, Kristiina and Kaczmariski, Marcin. "Russia's connectivity strategies in Eurasia: Politics over economy" FIIA Briefing Paper 343, June 2022.
- Karjalainen, Tyne. "The EU's Global Gateway: Building connectivity as a policy". FIIA Working Paper 127, February 2022.

Karoliina Hurri, PhD Candidate, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland & Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki
karoliina.hurri@helsinki.fi

Keywords: Climate leadership, China, COPs, UNFCCC, Global South, climate responsibility

Ongoing project:

Climate responsibility as a normative cornerstone of multilateral cooperation? (Kone Foundation, 2022-2025, led by Sanna Kopra)

Erja Kettunen-Matilainen, Adjunct Professor, Turku School of Economics, University of Turku, Economic Geography; Dept. of Marketing and International Business
erja.kettunen-matilainen@utu.fi

Keywords: trade, trade policy, FTAs, business, transportations, diversity and inclusion, Innovation Districts

Free Trade Agreements and Sustainable Development

This research explores the EU's free trade agreements (FTA) in Asia and focuses on the inclusion of sustainable development issues in FTAs. Discussing the concept of 'multilateralizing regionalism', the research covers the EU's recent FTAs with Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, and Japan.

Kettunen, Erja & Claes G. Alvstam (2023) The EU-Japan EPA and the question of formal and informal trade barriers for European businesses in Japan. *TRAMES Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Special Issue "The multifaceted relations between Europe and Japan – taking stock and building the future" 27: 3, 219-242. DOI: 10.3176/tr.2023.3.03.

Title: China's New Silk Road: trade governance and Finland-China railway transportations

This research project explores the current changes in China's trade policies, manifest in the push for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or the 'New Silk Road' and the development of trade routes through the Eurasian continent.

Kettunen, Erja & Claes G. Alvstam (2022) The New Silk Road, EU-China Connectivity and Global Logistics Crisis: Nordic Perspective to the Eurasian Land Bridge Rail Routes. In: *Asia-Europe Industrial Connectivity in Times of Crisis*, eds. Morales, Lucía, Sam Dzever & Robert Taylor. ISTE Wiley, London, pp. 239-261. ISBN 9781786308627.

Title: The participation of Finns in the 18th Century Swedish East India Company's trade voyages

This research focuses on the previously unstudied role of Finnish seafarers in the China trade of the Swedish East India Company whole fleet sailed to Canton to buy tea, silk, and porcelain. Drawing from archive materials and museum collections in Sweden and Finland, the study finds that Finns brought both material and immaterial influences from China to peripheral Finland.

Publications:

- Kettunen, E. & C.G. Alvstam (2022) China's New Silk Road in a Nordic Perspective: The Origins and Development of the Finland-China Rail Routes. ICAS Conference Proceedings. The 12th International Convention of Asia Scholars, 24-28 August 2021, Kyoto, Japan. Amsterdam University Press.

Title: Employment and human resource development in Japan and Finland. A comparative study from the perspective of diversity, inclusion and decent work.

By analyzing the best practices in Japan and Finland, this study addresses the current state of diversity and inclusion in the employment of e.g. female workers and disabled persons in the two countries, as well as the measures and actions taken for enhancing the inclusion of disabled people in working life. The findings indicate differences, future challenges and possibilities, and provide policy implications.

Publications:

- Futagami, Shiho & Erja Kettunen (2022) Employment and Human Resource Development of Disabled Workers in Japan and Finland: A Comparative Study from the Perspective of Diversity, Inclusion, and Decent Work. In: Sustainable Development in Asia: Socio-economic, Financial, and Economic Perspectives, eds. Andreosso-O'Callaghan, Bernadette, Serge Rey & Robert Taylor. Springer Nature, Cham.

The internationalization of Finnish architectural and urban planning offices in Asia

This research project focuses on the impact of professional ethos of architects in their internationalization motives as to the locations and types of architecture and urban planning they carry out. We find that Finnish architectural offices have been active in designing cultural buildings, eco-cities, and commercial buildings in different parts of China, as well as humanitarian architecture projects e.g. in Cambodia and India in the Global South. These choices emphasize their value-based choices that balance between the responsibility, aesthetics, and business elements in their professional ethos.

Sina Krämer, Doctoral Researcher, Tampere University, Tampere Peace Research Institute

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Keywords: Conflict trauma, gender, Southeast Asia

Gendered conflict trauma and transgenerational transmission in post-conflict societies/protracted conflicts in Southeast Asia.

This doctoral research will explore the gendered dimension of transgenerational conflict trauma and its transmission in a case study context of Southeast Asia. The final dissertation will be a monograph and can be expected to be completed in 2027.

Mikael Mattlin, Research Professor, Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Keywords: China, investments, political system, jüli, games, simulations, international relations, EU, economic statecraft, pedagogy

Projects:

1. Academy of Finland research project "Foreign acquisitions and political retaliation as threats to supply security in an era of strategic decoupling" (ForAc), <https://sites.utu.fi/forac/en/>. (project director and PI). Research team members: Prof. Shaun Breslin (University of Warwick), Doc. Outi Luova (UTU), Dr Elina Sinkkonen (FIIA), Liisa Kauppila (UTU), Ines Söderström (UTU) and Tero Poutala (UTU). Collaborators: Dr Matt Ferchen (Leiden University), Dr Björn Jerdén (UI)

and Dr Mikko Rajavuori (UEF). Project funding period: 8/2020–11/2023.

2. Use of negotiation games as pedagogical platforms (project lead). Collaborators: post-doc, Dr Elina Ketonen (UH), Milla Kruskopf (UH) and Johanna Ketola (UTU). Ongoing project.

Selected recent publications:

1. Mattlin, Mikael, Shaun Breslin, Elina Sinkkonen, Liisa Kauppila, Björn Cappelin, Ines Söderström & Matt Ferchen (2023) "Enhancing small state preparedness: Risks of foreign ownership, supply disruptions and technological dependencies," FIIA Report 74. Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 206 p.
<https://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/enhancing-small-state-preparedness>

*Aleksandra Sharapova, Doctoral Student, University of Turku, Faculty of Social Sciences
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Keywords: South Asian Studies, India, India & China, contemporary foreign policy, history

On-going research project (doctoral dissertation):

INDIA AND CHINA: FOCUS AFRICA

Indian foreign policy towards Africa in comparison to China (est. duration 2021- 2025)

Supervisor: professor Lauri Paltemaa, Centre for East Asian Studies

The research focuses on India's foreign policy towards Africa. Africa has always caught attention of developed and developing countries as the continent possesses abundant resources and has connections to commercial maritime routes – the Red sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean. Today India spares no efforts not only to become a trusted trade and political partner for African states, but to win their heartfelt sympathies. For example, Indian leaders never tire of reminding that India – just like Africa – fought against colonialism, thereby opposing itself to the former colonial empires and emphasizing its common historical and cultural background with Africa. The paper will review the institutions of Indian and Chinese foreign policy, diaspora influence and military presence on the continent. Meanwhile many countries remain wary of the widespread influence of China, especially in Africa, where a new Chinese military base has been recently built. Accordingly, new alliances are forming and the balance of power is shifting.

Recent publications:

- Sharapova A.V. India: Focus Africa? Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Asian and African Studies, 2022, vol. 14, issue 2, pp. 366–380. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu13.2022.213> (In Russian)

*Elina Sinkkonen, Senior Research Fellow, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Global Security Research Programme
elina.sinkkonen@fii.fi*

Keywords: China, Russia, North Korea, authoritarianism, comparative research

Title: Chinese Authoritarianism in Flux. A Comparative Analysis with Russia and North Korea

Funded by the Kone Foundation

Description: As its main research questions this project investigates a) which combination of factors best explains changes in the level of political repression and b) how (if at all) the level of domestic repression is related to realpolitik behaviour. This analysis aims to produce a middle-range theory about the relationship between domestic repression and international factors, in order to

overcome artificial distinction between domestic and external realms in the scholarship of policy-making.

Project publications:

- Sinkkonen, Elina & Jussi Lassila. 2022. Digital authoritarianism in China and Russia: Common goals and diverging standpoints in the era of great-power rivalry. In Kirchberger, Sarah, Sinjen, Svenja and Wömer, Nils (eds.) *Russia-China Relations: Emerging Alliance or Eternal Rivals?*, Springer. (open access)

Mary Song, PhD Candidate, University of Turku, Centre for East Asian Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences
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Keywords: culinary identity, local identity, national identity, cultural institutions, museum, culture centre, UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy, creative city, culinary nationalism, gastronomic tradition, Chengdu, China, Tsuruoka, Japan, Jeonju, South Korea, Chinese food, Japanese food, Korean food

Gastronomy tourism has grown rapidly in East Asia. Destination cities introduce their gastronomic compositions not only in restaurants but also in museums and culture centres. Although these cultural institutions represent gastronomic traditions as authentic, they are intently planned cultural policies. My doctoral research will study this relation between representations of gastronomic tradition in cultural institutions and actual culinary practice at the street-level consumption of food through case studies in three UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy in East Asia: Chengdu, mainland China, Jeonju, South Korea, and Tsuruoka, Japan. Through ethnographic interviews with informants related in museums and culture centres and participant observations in these cultural institutions, I will discuss culinary identities created by cultural organisations as a heritage building on food and culinary nationalism in the name of a global UNESCO project. Furthermore, this study will contribute to shed light on how socially constructed authenticity of gastronomic tradition plays a role through institutions. This study will endeavour to reconsider roles of local cultural institutions and global policy implementing organisations by dissecting East Asian societies through food.

Minna Valjakka, Senior Researcher, Associate Professor, University of Helsinki, Art History, Department of Cultures
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Keywords: contemporary art, environmentally engaged art, art-science collaborations, civil society formation, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia

Ecological Conjunctions: Contemporary Arts and Natural Science Collaborations for Civil Society Formation (EcoConjunctions), funded by the Research Council of Finland (9/2024-8/2028)

EcoConjunctions is an innovative project that explores the dynamic relationship between contemporary arts, natural sciences, sustainability and civil society from an ecocritical perspective. Its interdisciplinary approach draws on art history, sociology of art and civil society studies. Through selected case studies from Finland, Singapore, Indonesia and Japan, it aims to contribute and to decolonise research on art-science collaborations by formulating non-Euro-American-centric frameworks. The main objectives include: tracing local and transcultural genealogies of art-science collaborations, identifying their strategies for translating, producing and contributing to scientific knowledge, and critically analysing the possible societal impacts. With national and international collaborators from the arts, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, the project aims to establish a new field of interdisciplinary research in Finland and offer new perspectives for international research.

Publications:

- Valjakka, M. 2023. "Transcribed Flows and Arrhythmias: 'Graffiti' in Relation to Epigraphic and Artistic Trajectories in Today's Mainland China." In *Graffiti Scratched, Scrawled, Sprayed. Towards a Cross-Cultural Understanding*, eds. by Ondřej Škrabal, Leah Mascia, Ann Lauren Osthof and Malena Ratzke. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023, 233–63. DOI: <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783111326306-008/html> [open access].
- Valjakka, M. 2023. "Contemporary Arts in and for Civil Society." In *Routledge Handbook of Civil and Uncivil Society in Southeast Asia*, eds. Eva Hansson and Meredith L. Weiss. London: Routledge, 45–64. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367422080> [open access].
- Valjakka, M. 2022. "Layers of (In)Visible Resilience: Art, Women, and Homelessness in Japan." *Critical Asian Studies* 54 (3): 348-373. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2022.2079540>. [open access]
- Valjakka, M. (guest editor). 2022. "Gender Borders: Contemporary Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Resistance and Resilience in Asian Cities" [Special Section]. *Critical Asian Studies*, 54 (3).
- Valjakka, M. 2022. "Gendered Tonalities: Urban Publicness through Street Art and Murals by and for Women in East Asian Cities." In *Socially Engaged Public Art in East Asia: Space, Place, and Community in Action*, ed. Meiqin Wang. Wilmington: Vernon Press. 23–56