

Programme and book of abstracts: ASIANET 2022: Asia and Fragmented Globalisations

Dates: June 16-17

Place: Adolf Øien Bygget (NTNU Trondheim Business School), Klæbuveien 72, NTNU,
Trondheim

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Programme overview

Thursday, June 16			
08.45-09.00	Coffee / tea / mingling		
09.00-09.05	Welcome, Dr. Marius Korsnes, on behalf of KULT, NTNU		
09.05-09.15	Opening remarks from Network for Asian Studies, Dr. Arve Hansen		
09.15-10.45	Session 1 : China as Development Actor in the Global South		
10.45-11.00	Break		
11.00-12.30	Parallel sessions		
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12.30-13.30	Lunch, served in the cafeteria		
13.30-14.30	<p>Keynote: China's (Re)turn to Eurasia: The Drive Toward Regional Development Pathways, Professor Xiangming Chen</p> <p>Discussants: Heidi Østbø Haugen, UiO and Hans Jørgen Gåsemyr, NUPI</p>		
14.30-14.45	Break		
14.45-16.00	Session 4 : Meat consumption and meat avoidance in China, India and Vietnam		
18.00-19.30	<p>Roundtable: Asian academic culture and tradition interacting with Norwegian academic culture, led by dr. Wang Yu, NTNU</p> <p>Victoriasalen Ringve, Lade alle 60, 7041 Trondheim</p>		
19.30	Conference Dinner, Victoriasalen Ringve, Lade alle 60, 7041 Trondheim		
Friday, June 17			
08.45-09.00	Coffee / tea / mingling		
09.00-10.30	Session 5 : New Dynamics of Popular Contention across East and Southeast Asia		
10.30-10.45	Break		
10.45-12.15	Parallel sessions		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Session 6a: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices</td> <td>Session 7: China: Regional politics, regional studies and multilateralism</td> </tr> </table>	Session 6a : Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices	Session 7 : China: Regional politics, regional studies and multilateralism
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12.15-13.00	Lunch, served in the cafeteria		
	Parallel sessions		
13.00-14.30	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Session 6b: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices</td> <td>Session 8: Socio-political transformation, work, and automation</td> </tr> </table>	Session 6b : Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices	Session 8 : Socio-political transformation, work, and automation
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14.30-14.45	Concluding remarks		

Detailed programme

Thursday, June 16

08.45-09.00 Coffee / tea / mingling

09.00-09.05 Welcome, Dr. Marius Korsnes, on behalf of KULT, NTNU

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

09.05-09.15 Opening remarks from Network for Asian Studies, Dr. Arve Hansen, University of Oslo

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

09.15-10.45 Session 1

Session 1: China as Development Actor in the Global South

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

Chair: Elling Tjønnnesland, CMI

- Chinese development assistance in a comparative perspective
- Explaining the relations between commercial expansion, economic diplomacy and development aid in China's development support
- Chinese assistance to African industrialisation: the case of Ethiopia
- Mozambique's huge debt to China: Still win-win?
- China in South Sudan: How does US-China relations affect peace diplomacy?

10.45-11.00 Break

11.00-12.30 Parallel sessions 2&3

Session 2: The Ecology of Place-Making

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

Chair: Aase J. Kvanneid, University of Oslo

- Towards zero plastic waste in the Mekong Delta: the contribution of Hòa Hảo Buddhism
- Disaster Citizenship in Rural China: a case study in disaster affected villages in eastern China
- Lucid Dreaming? Reconfiguring Place and Prospects during the 'Everything Change'
- Shifting Relations, Shifting Terrain. Reconfigurations of Place in the Zomian Highlands
- Religious Ecology: Rights of the Ganga river and the spectre of Anthropocene

Session 3: Repressive governance, environmental protection, and political legitimacy

[A31](#)
[\(3078\)](#)

Chair: Hedda Flatø, Fafo

- The Autocratization of Environmental Governance in India
- China's Regulatory Response to Plastic Pollution: Trends and Trajectories
- Citizen perceptions and environmental risk reduction
- Perceived risk acuteness and political support in an authoritarian state
- A search for soft or hard Chinese legal enforcement mechanisms in building ecological civilization: A legal study of Chinese Communist Party Regulations

12.30-13.30 Lunch
Served in the cafeteria

13.30-14.30 Keynote: [A32 \(3080\)](#)
China's (Re)turn to Eurasia: The Drive Toward Regional Development Pathways, Professor Xiangming Chen

Discussants: Heidi Østbø Haugen, University of Oslo, and Hans Jørgen Gåsemyr, NUPI

Xiangming Chen is the founding Dean and director of the Center for Urban and Global Studies, Trinity College and the Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Global Urban Studies and Sociology, as well as a distinguished guest professor at Fudan University in Shanghai.

14.30-14.45 Break

14.45-16.00 Session 4

[Session 4: Meat consumption and meat avoidance in China, India and Vietnam](#) [A32 \(3080\)](#)

Chair: Arve Hansen, University of Oslo

- Probing the concept of Sufficiency through studying Meat and Milk in China
- Bovine Contradictions: The Politics of (de)meatification and Hindutva Hegemony in Neoliberal India
- Contested meatification: Food cultures and meat-reducing practices in Vietnam

18.00-19.30 [Roundtable:](#) Asian academic culture and tradition interacting with Norwegian academic culture, led by dr. Wang Yu, NTNU
Victoriasalen Ringve, [Lade alle 60, 7041 Trondheim](#)

19.30 Conference Dinner,
Victoriasalen Ringve, [Lade alle 60, 7041 Trondheim](#)

Friday, June 17

08.45-09.00 Coffee / tea / mingling

09.00-10.30 Session 5

[Session 5: New Dynamics of Popular Contention across East and Southeast Asia](#) [A32 \(3080\)](#)

Chair: Van Tran, NIAS, University of Copenhagen

- Social media as double-edged sword: The digital evolution of repression and contention in post-coup Myanmar
- Anti-Democratic Protests in Thailand and South Korea
- Online media coverage of the 2020 Thai Youth Protests
- Images of the Frontliner –The 2019 Hong Kong Protests

10.30-10.45 Break

10.45-12.15 Parallel sessions 6a & 7

[Session 6a: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices](#)

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

Chair: Shuhua Chen, NTNU

- Tracing the boundaries of the home through the material and sociocultural framework of the domestic window: Reflections on Japan and Norway
- Promoting new urbanism in Gulf cooperation council States (GCCs) urban region
- Same but different? Transnational research and educational collaboration in gender equality and diversity education

[Session 7: China: Regional politics, regional studies and multilateralism](#)

[A31](#)
[\(3078\)](#)

Chair: Marius Korsnes, NTNU

- Changes in Central-Local Relations in Xi's China
- Managing Narrative Contestation: The Case of China's Regional Engagement in Europe
- Chinese academic resources in regional studies: The case of the Greater Bay Area initiative
- Chinese Multilateralism and its Impact on Environmental and Democratic Governance in Africa and Latin America (MultiChina)

12.15-13.00 Lunch

Served in the cafeteria

13.00-14.30 Parallel sessions 6b & 8

[Session 6b: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices](#)

[A32](#)
[\(3080\)](#)

Chair: Shuhua Chen, NTNU

- Queer Cinemas of the Sinosphere: Queer China Goes Out
- Journeying toward home? Everyday life experience of homeawayness among rural migrants in urban China
- Evolving Identities: South Asian Zoroastrian Migration Stories
- New Updated Renewable Energy in Cambodia: Challenges, Opportunities and Relations Recommendations

[Session 8: Socio-political transformation, work, and automation](#)

[A31](#)
[\(3078\)](#)

Chair: Thea M. Valler, NTNU

- Conceptualising Social Movements of Bangladesh Post-2013: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Movements
- Coffee robots in Korea: from sociotechnical imaginaries to localised practices
- Industrial work and the sustainability of the social security system in Vietnam
- The Last of Frontline Workers: The Growing Precarity among sanitation and Waste Workers during Covid-19

14.30-14.45 Concluding remarks

[A31](#)
[\(3078\)](#)

Abstracts:

Session 1: China as Development Actor in the Global South

Session abstract:

Since 2000 China has become a major development actor in many parts of the developing world. It is major trade partner for many least developed countries, a significant investor in several and a dominant provider of finance for construction of infrastructure. It has also emerged as a significant provider of development aid challenging Western norms and approaches. Several of these trends have been reinforced by the Belt and Road Initiative, cementing further links and relations between China and other developing regions. China has also playing an increasing role in conflict management and peace building through participation in UN peacekeeping operations and bilateral initiatives.

The session will address these issues through several papers analysing the drivers of China's expansion and assess this in relations to global contexts and its manifestations in local contexts in Africa.

Chinese development assistance in a comparative perspective

Elling Tjønneland, senior researcher – Chr. Michelsen Institute

China has since provided small scale development assistance to other developing countries since the 1950s. The African continent has been a main recipient of this support through a number of interest free loans (typically converted to loans at a later stage) and a number of Chinese experts deployed through medical and agricultural team. Chinese development aid has expanded exponentially over the last 20 years. This is partly through an expansion of traditional aid mechanisms (deployment and interest free loans), but primarily through a new mechanism accounting for half of the aid budget: concessional finance through a lowering of the rate of interests on loans from the Chinese Export-Import Bank. In addition, China is emerging as a new contributor to certain multilateral institutions, primarily the World Bank. In 2018 China established its first aid directorate (CIDCA) – charged with the task of facilitating, coordinating and monitoring Chinese aid.

This paper will analyse the Chinese aid flows to Africa – the region receiving most such aid from China. What are the characteristics of the Chinese aid flow? How significant are they? What are the main recipients? And what are the impacts of the total aid flows to Africa and the Western approach to aid?

Explaining the relations between commercial expansion, economic diplomacy and development aid in China's development support

Hans Jørgen Gåsemyr, senior researcher, Norwegian Institute of International affairs (NUPI)

How and why does China's development aid evolve in gradual steps amidst rapidly spiraling economic engagements? What are main incentives to extend, change or maintain aid practices? Are the drivers mainly internal Chinese pressures, demands from partners, or international influences? This paper will analyse the relations between China's rapid global economic expansion through trade and investment and its expanding role as provider of development aid and finance. Furthermore, it will examine the relations between the moderate and gradual changes in channels and types of Chinese aid and the more far reaching change in Chinese economic instruments for global engagement.

Chinese assistance to African industrialisation: the case of Ethiopia

Lovise Aalen, Chr. Michelsen Institute and Gedion Jalata, Forum for Social Studies, Ethiopia

Ethiopia has been the second largest recipient of Chinese aid from 2000 to 2014, and China is the largest foreign investor in Ethiopia. A majority of the Chinese-aided projects are found in the manufacturing sector and in the construction of industrial parks. In this paper, we explore whether Chinese development assistance has been used to promote certain policies on the organization and structuring of Ethiopian industries, and the possible role of the political leadership in the two countries in exchanging and building competence on industry development, job creation and skills development. We look at how Ethiopians have been trained and educated in China, and the way they have implemented the knowledge gained from this in the industry building in their home country.

The analysis of the Ethiopian case is important for understanding China's evolving role in development in Africa. Ethiopia has since the late 1990s had strong political relations with China, following a Chinese developmental state model. While it lacks the raw materials and access to the sea that normally attracts Chinese investment, it is strategically located by being the capital of the African Union, has abundant and low-cost labour, and has up until recently been a stable country with low-tariff access to American and European markets. With the eruption of the civil war in the north of the country in 2020, and the lifting of the US trade agreement as a reaction to the war, Ethiopia has lost some of its attractiveness for investment. The question is how China will react to these changes: will they upscale their assistance as a way of filling the gap from the loss of Western market access, or will they withdraw, as Ethiopia is unstable and is no longer a base for cheap access to the American and European consumers?

Mozambique's huge debt to China: Still win-win?

Sérgio Chichava (IESE) and Aslak Orre (CMI)

Since 2017 China has become Mozambique's largest bilateral creditor. In the same years, Mozambique defaulted on its sovereign debt obligations, and levels of public debt have once again become unsustainable – despite the major debt cancellation in 2005. China is also increasing its importance as a donor. China has been active in infrastructure construction, agriculture, forestry and other sectors, providing concessional and non-concessional loans and credits to finance it. China has also pardoned some debt, which may classify as development aid.

How will China – carrying a major responsibility as the country's biggest bilateral creditor – confront and deal with Mozambique's threatening debt? Well-placed sources in Maputo inform us that Chinese authorities are very concerned about Mozambique's unsustainable debt. Not least are they concerned about the situation emanating from the major "hidden debt"-scandal that erupted in 2016, a huge corruption scandal that resulted in the country that alone increased its debt burden by around 20 per cent and pushed the debt into unsustainable territory. Nevertheless, preliminary findings indicate China intends to continue aiding Mozambique, as long as it does not add pressure to the debt burden. Yet Mozambican civil society groups and opposition parties have criticised the debt to China, fearing it will seize Mozambican resources or assets as a collateral.

Debt management – both financially and politically – will increasingly become the focus in and of itself for China's Mozambique policies, as well providing the limits to China's development aid (and non-aid activities) in other sectors in Mozambique. China now faces the same dilemmas and political hazards as other creditors. Has it taken its own path or align with other creditors?

This paper will analyse China's aid and debt portfolio in the context of the Mozambican political economy. It will draw on interviews with key actors in Mozambique (Chinese, Mozambican and other international actors), as well as media narratives. It will contribute to an understanding both of Chinese policies as a creditor and aid actor, as well as to further understanding of the Mozambican position as a highly indebted country.

China in South Sudan: How does US-China relations affect peace diplomacy?

Siril Kobbeltvedt Herseth, Doctoral researcher, CMI

China has emerged as a significant economic and political actor in South Sudan. It is also a contributor to the UN peacekeeping mission in the country. This paper will contribute to our understanding of China's role in stabilisation and peacebuilding in the country.

This paper explores how and to what extent the rivalry between the US and China shapes China's approach to peace diplomacy, through the case of South Sudan. It analyses debates at the UN Security Council and the approach to sanctions and arms embargo. Furthermore, it assesses how disagreements between the US and China has affected the situation on the ground.

Session 2: The Ecology of Place-Making: Reconfigurations of Asian place-making processes and practices in the face of global environmental change

Session abstract:

This session aims to explore how communities in Asia mobilize and recalibrate place-making practices in the face of environmental change. Contemporary ethnography from Asia shows a richness in the diverse and complex ways that communities reconfigure their relationship with place. Rapid changes to both structural and material conditions due to climate and environmental change, demands rapid reconfigurations in the most mundane daily practices to the abstractness of worldviews and discursive power relations. Starting out from the premise that places are localities in which humans and non-humans not merely exist, but ‘dwell’ (Ingold 2000) and ‘live in’ (Yi-Fu Tuan, 1977), this session invites contributions that touch upon this diversity of how large-scale global changes reconfigure the ‘ecology of placemaking’ in Asia, as well as their societal relevance or impact. Contributions could centre around concepts like agency, power-struggles, identity, value, or place-making practices in the face of uncertainty or disaster. Both empirical and theoretical contributions are welcomed.

Lu Chen will explore notions of citizenship under disaster governance through the relocation practices of flood-hit villages in China. Daniel K. B. Bäckström will share a paper on changes to the agencies involved in space making practices change the relationship between humans and their environment in the Zomian highlands of Southwest China. Aase Kvanneid contributes with a paper on future and present place-making practices in a context of rapid societal, climatic, and environmental change in rural North India. Rahul Ranjan will present material from an on-going fieldwork in Uttarakhand, India, where he looks at aspects of legal personhood in the context of the river Ganges, as well as the role of religious ecology in maintaining the life of river. Nhung Lu Rots will explore the reproduction of religious space through volunteer and humanitarian works on waste management in the Buddhist Hoa Hao Tradition in Vietnam.

Towards zero plastic waste in the Mekong Delta: the contribution of Hòa Hảo Buddhism

[Nhung Lu Rots, Doctoral Research Fellow. IKOS, University of Oslo](#)

Hòa Hảo Buddhism (Phật Giáo Hòa Hảo) is a religious tradition based in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam that blends nationalism, ancestor worship, and Buddhism. After a long time of being marginalized in the Vietnamese religious landscape, the Hòa Hảo religion is now seeking opportunities for revival. They have embraced environmentalism and developed a new waste management model. As they witnessed the birthplace of their religion choking with plastic and other waste, various Hòa Hảo communities have joined forces with local and national communist Party and state bodies to clean up the area. In this paper, I will analyze the interplay between religious practices and environmental activism in the Mekong Delta, using the concepts of “spatial practice” (Lefebvre), “tactics of everyday life” (De Certeau), and environmental “activism under authoritarian rule” (Hansen & Liu). The paper will explain how and why Hòa Hảo Buddhism has changed course and teamed up with its previous enemy, the communist regime, to promote and carry out the waste management model. This model may carry potential for political influence and social reforms in the Mekong Delta. And such social engagement may well secure the religion’s continuation, even though its focus has changed.

Disaster Citizenship in Rural China: a case study in disaster affected villages in eastern China

Lu Chen. Doctoral Research Fellow. IKOS, UiO (lu.chen@ikos.uio.no)

Disaster struck the affected population not only through its direct forceful impact but also corresponding state interventions as part of disaster governance. In the close interactions between survivors and authorities, the idea of disaster citizenship have been introduced in citizenship studies. This article will explore the citizenship under disaster governance in the context of China. In 2019, in responding to the devastating landslide and flash flood, the local government devised a relocation scheme for the village suffering from over 30 casualties. Based upon ethnographic fieldwork in the aftermath of the disaster in two flood affected villages including the one under relocation, I argue that villagers are cultivating disaster citizenship by articulating their expectations of the state and negotiating their autonomy in disaster governance on public opinion, mobility and space for reconstruction. These village residents appropriate existing social relations and authorized political discourses and participation means to seek solidarity, redress and the calculated optimal post-disaster life.

Lucid Dreaming? Reconfiguring Place and Prospects during the ‘Everything Change’

Aase J. Kvanneid, Postdoctoral Fellow. IKOS, UiO (aase.kvanneid@ikos.uio.no)

The global impact on local lives in the Shivalik Hills of North India are numerous and complex. Many are structural, such as changes in global and national policies and methods of governance, intended to both develop the population and conserve the ecology of rural hill environments. Others relate to changes in the market, brought about by a liberalization of the local and national economy, demanding an increase in purchasing power and diversification of income and labouring practices from stratified communities where many already struggle for self-sustenance. Yet other changes are environmental, relating to changes in the earth’s atmospheric temperature that affect the rate and strength of extreme weather events, seasonal temperatures, rainfall etc. As adaptation and mitigation practices are increasingly documented by scientists, less attention has been given to changes in worldviews, identity, or place-making practices. In this paper, I will share some of the changes I recorded in the village of Rani Mājri back in 2013-2016. I will then draw upon these findings to discuss the potential of addressing the less tangible stuff of ‘lucid dreaming’ – those semi-conscious imaginations of ourselves in different places, different times that, more concrete than airy dreams - are bound by our expectations of what appears ‘realistic’. Can documenting ‘lucid dreams’ deepen our understanding of contemporary issues, as well as give indications of the ‘sustainability’ of the future that may lie ahead for communities like these?

Shifting Relations, Shifting Terrain. Reconfigurations of Place in the Zomian Highlands

Daniel K. B. Bäckström, Doctoral Research Fellow IKOS, UiO (d.m.k.backstrom@ikos.uio.no)

How do changes to the agencies involved in space making practices change the relationship between humans and their environment? As the state began to enter the Zomian highlands of Southwest China, so did the relationship between local people and the forest. For the Blang living along the China-Myanmar border, the difference between forest and field was temporal. Shifting swidden agriculture

involved the periodic clearing of forest into fields, which were then laid fallow to become forest again. Clearing of land involved negotiations with fellow villagers, other villages, and the spirits who also dwell in the area. Since the latter half of the twentieth century, the Chinese state has introduced a number of new ways of relating to the environment. First, Communist Party cadres introduced the concept of private property, so that they could conduct land redistribution which resulted in economic inequality. Later as China was going through marketization, logging companies began deforesting first the valleys and then entering the foothills of the highlands. As a response the government decided to set up a nature reserve. This introduced a new form of forest: one which was never to be a field. Likewise, protection of the forest was moved from the work of spirits to the work of forest rangers. How is place reconfigured when fields are no longer sometimes forests and forests sometimes fields? When are negotiations replaced by resistance in the form of illegal logging and poaching? When are spirits replaced by rangers?

Religious Ecology: Rights of the Ganga river and the spectre of Anthropocene

[Rahul Ranjan, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo \(Norway\)](#)

In the recent year, the idea of rights of nature has gained traction within the academic literature. Several countries have now granted legal personhood to the rivers – recognising them as the living beings. Drawing upon the idea of legal personhood, this paper examines the case of the river, Ganges, and its tributaries, in India, which was granted the status of a living entity in 2017. In doing so, the paper explores two strands: what is socio-legal impact of the judgment on the public order and legislation that already exists on the river. Secondly, it explores the role of religious ecology – specifically, the Ashrams (spiritual spaces of congregation) and the Sadhus (priests). It outlines their roles in maintaining the life of river by invoking spiritual significance combined by the material efforts of pollution control. The paper is developed through an on-going field-based study in India located in the upper Himalayan region. It combines ethnographic interviews with legal framework, which empowers the notion of legal personhood. Keyword: Religion, ecology, Ganga, pollution, India, law

Session 3: Repressive governance, environmental protection and political legitimacy

Session abstract:

As two of the world's three biggest polluters, China and India are indispensable for addressing global environmental threats. While there are vast differences between the two countries' political systems, both have seen a move towards more repressive governance – including in the environmental sphere. With research on diverse environmental challenges and localities as a starting point, this panel will discuss authoritarian environmental governance and its implications for the natural environment and citizen attitudes. What characterizes environmental governance in the world's most populous countries? What are the prospects for improving environmental protection? What do citizens think about environmental risk and political legitimacy in an authoritarian context? Kenneth Bo Nielsen and Anwesha Dutta will talk about the turn towards more repressive environmental governance in India. They argue that this has detrimental consequences for the bio-physical environment, and for marginalised tribal and local communities. By contrast, Fürst, Feng and Luo describe a surge in political attention to and regulation of plastic pollution coinciding with increasingly centralized and repressive governance in China during the 2000s. Flatø, Zhang and Dalen explore the importance of citizen perceptions for environmental governance and political legitimacy, based on data from representative surveys in Sichuan province, China.

The Autocratization of Environmental Governance in India

[Kenneth Bo Nielsen \(UiO\) and Anwesha Dutta \(CMI\) k.b.nielsen@sai.uio.no](#)

In this paper, we analyze changes to environmental governance and policy in India under Narendra Modi's authoritarian populist regime. On the one hand, this regime prioritises economic growth over other possible goals in the political economy, often with severe negative environmental consequences. On the other, it generally adopts a repressive approach towards dissenters in general, including environmental activists and movements. This, we argue, has registered as an autocratic turn in environmental governance, with detrimental consequences for the bio-physical environment, and for marginalised tribal and local communities whose rights have been greatly eroded, and whose access to deliberative and consultative spaces has narrowed. We substantiate this argument by analysing two specific domains of environmental governance that we are particularly familiar with, namely forests and land. We also analyse the crackdown on environmental activism and what this may mean for the future of environmental governance in India.

China's Regulatory Response to Plastic Pollution: Trends and Trajectories

[Kathinka Fürst \(Niva\), Kathinka.Furst@niva.no, Yidi Feng and Zhixian Luo](#)

As one of the world's largest plastic polluting nations, China plays an important role in addressing ongoing challenges pertaining to insufficient management and reduction of global plastic pollution. In this paper we present a comprehensive mapping of 231 policies, focusing on all aspects of plastic management in China dating two decades back in time. We find that policies focusing on plastic issues are fragmented and diversified, with more than thirty different government agencies and party organs issuing policies which in one way or the other regulates plastics. Up until 2008 few policies in China had an explicit focus on plastics. In the period of 2016-2021 however, there was a surge in such policies covering wide aspects of the plastic management processes. Furthermore, we find that a diverse set of regulatory instruments have been utilized by Chinese policymakers in designing policies with the

aim of regulating plastics. Overall, our analysis shows that that plastic pollution has become a growing concern for the Chinese government at both a national and subnational level since the early 2000, and especially after 2016. Our analysis also reflects an increased acknowledgment of the complexities of governing plastics, as such policies have evolved significantly in terms of the type of plastic governed by such policies and the stage of its life cycle targeted, as well as a more diversified utilization of more comprehensive regulatory instruments.

Citizen perceptions and environmental risk reduction

Hedda Flatø and Zhang Huafeng, Fafo, hef@fafo.no, zhu@fafo.no

Crisis literature suggests that the prospects for addressing environmental and other threats improve if they generate a sense of urgency among the wider public. However, existing literature on the role of public risk perceptions in crisis management is rooted in experiences from democratic, rational-legal Weberian systems. Do public perceptions matter to environmental risk reduction in a non-democratic setting? What does it take for citizens to perceive environmental risks as urgent in an authoritarian context? This paper engages with existing literature to assess the potential role of citizen risk perceptions in Chinese environmental governance. It outlines preliminary results on developments in and distribution of various risk perceptions in a population affected by various natural and environmental crises, based on a representative large-scale dataset from Sichuan province.

Perceived risk acuteness and political support in an authoritarian state

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People's perceptions of social and environmental risks are assumed to shape individual preferences towards government and – ultimately - regime legitimacy. Chinese authorities pay attention to citizens reactions and perceptions in their development of policies and have aimed to manage acute crises and long-term threats in way that rally popular political support. Do risk perceptions really matter to political support in an authoritarian system? In this paper I examine associations between a diverse set of risk perceptions (on environmental pollution, natural disasters and social unrest) and support for government in China. Using a high-quality and large-scale dataset (4000 respondents) from Sichuan province in China, the paper examines how risk perceptions relate to political support towards different levels of government in China. Controlling for the influence of socio-demographic variables as well as exposure to disasters and pollution, the paper aims to detangle the relationship between specific risk perceptions and political support towards different levels of government in an authoritarian regime. Understanding how individual perceptions of risk relates to political support and satisfaction with government is of importance to policymakers and researchers alike. By focusing on perceptions on three specific risks (natural disasters, environmental pollution and social unrest) the paper aims to contribute to research on risk perceptions and political support by providing analysis beyond general risk perceptions.

A search for soft or hard Chinese legal enforcement mechanisms in building ecological civilization: A legal study of Chinese Communist Party Regulations

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Ecological Civilization is China's reconceptualization of sustainable development for the 21st century. This paper will discuss how China is creating new ways of thinking about environmental authoritarianism and sustainability. By engaging in a legal mapping of the relevant CCP ideological rhetoric, state law and party regulations this paper will seek to show how China defines sustainability

through its socialist rule of law system. The paper will track the presence of ‘green principles’ in the Chinese socialist legal system. This system includes ideological rhetoric, state law, party regulations and the role of party organizations in enterprises, public institutions and NGO’s.

The paper will illustrate how this system has created an ideological tension between human rights and sustainability within the domestic Chinese context. This tension impacts sustainability as a justiciable concept but without ‘western’ formulations of human rights. The paper will describe why this may be the case.

Over the last four years, researchers have been focusing on the development of green principles in the new Chinese Civil Code, the new Chinese Criminal Code (Zhai & Chang 2019), as well as research in the Chinese international soft law and policy (Nedopil 2020) and Party Ideology (Creemers 2020). However, to my knowledge legal scholarship still needs to bring together these various perspectives to shed light on the extent the legal-political framework imposes duties on Chinese actors to build ecological civilization at home. This cannot be done without analyzing the evolution of Party regulations. This paper seeks to contribute to this research gap. The Xi administration has been seeking to harmonize state law and internal party regulations. This paper will search for Party regulations that reflect ‘the green principle’ found in Article 9 of the new Civil Code and the commitment to build Ecological Civilization found in the state constitution and the party constitution.

The Xi administration has emphasized that rather than having a separation of powers, strict self-discipline through the internal Party supervision and disciplinary mechanisms like the National Supervisory Commission will create an accountable and ethical outbound investment system, which will jointly promote an ecologically minded civilization. As expressed in the Kunming Declaration, the goal is to build a ‘shared future for all life on Earth’. This research, aims to assess if CCP ideological rhetoric reflects the legal reality of Chinese enterprises and institutions. This paper will construct a ‘substantive’ picture of the evolution of the legal framework for ecological civilization in China. The aim here is to establish a party-state legal framework so that all codified domestic structures are identified. After which, research on China’s extraterritorial enforcement for greening the BRI could be done.

Research Question: ‘To what extent are there legal enforcement mechanisms for building ecological civilization in Communist Party Regulations?’

Hypothesis: If Party regulations specifically emphasize aspects of state law and CCP ideological rhetoric, the Party will seek to enforce these aspects more actively.

Session 4: Meat consumption and meat avoidance in China, India and Vietnam

Probing the concept of Sufficiency through studying Meat and Milk in China

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About one-fifth of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture. Much of this relates to livestock used for animal-based foods. Rather than arguing for increased efficiency, this paper probes the concept of sufficiency to explore its potential for reducing human impacts on Earth's biosphere while preserving overall welfare, i.e., its potential for defining a 'middle way' between 'too little' and 'too much'. To do this, the paper looks at the cases of meat and milk in China. While meat was always a high-status product, milk was historically considered a 'barbarian' food, and most Chinese were intolerant to it. Both products were scarcely consumed in Chinese history but have boomed in popularity over the past 40 years. While often thought about as a change of consumer preferences, it has taken a concerted effort by the Chinese government and domestic and international actors to make both products integral to Chinese food practices.

Seeing China as a strategic research site to ask questions about the supply and demand of animal foods, I hypothesise that what has made meat and milk integral to Chinese food practices might also be 'otherwise', i.e., opening up a possibility for a future disembedding of meat and milk from food practices. Thus, using a constructivist inspired lens, the paper makes use of practice theory and 'systems of provision' to study the normalisation of animal foods in China, particularly since 1978, with China's 'opening up'. The ultimate objective of this paper is conceptual: to probe the concept of sufficiency as a useful organising principle to achieve reduced consumption – highlighted through an understanding how meat and milk have been rendered desirable in China.

Bovine Contradictions: The Politics of (de)meatification and Hindutva Hegemony in Neoliberal India

Jostein Jakobsen and Kenneth Bo Nielsen, University of Oslo.

The focal point of this paper is India's apparently paradoxical relationship with beef. In the stereotypical popular perception, India is the land of holy cows, revered by the nation's vegetarian Hindu majority. At the same time, India is also a world-leading exporter of beef – overwhelmingly in the form of buffalo meat, commonly known as carabeef – accounting for as much as 20 percent of global exports. In this paper, we seek to move beyond the mere recognition of this as an apparent paradox to argue that while the co-existence of these two trends may indeed appear paradoxical, they are conjoined in uneasy tension within the broader hegemonic project of India's Hindu nationalist government. This hegemonic project is centred on the twin ideological agenda of Hindu nationalism that seeks to turn India into a Hindu majoritarian state, and neoliberal economic policies that seek to create new spaces for capitalist accumulation. Meat and bovine bodies are, we argue, crucial sites where this contradictory hegemonic project plays out. On the one hand, promoting cow protectionism and vegetarianism furthers the Hindu nationalist project by consolidating the image of India as a Hindu nation, relegating non-Hindus to the status of denizens. On the other hand, the meatification of Indian agricultural exports and their integration into global value chains and regional "meat complexes" furthers the opening of the Indian agrarian economy, spurring capitalist accumulation by integration with growing transnational markets.

Contested meatification: Food cultures and meat-reducing practices in Vietnam

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Diets in Vietnam have been undergoing a rapid process of ‘meatification’ in recent decades. Through changes in everyday food practices and in systems of provision for food, the average Vietnamese consumer eats dramatically more meat than in the past. While these processes have been well documented, little attention has been given to its counterpart. In the middle of the meat boom, a trend of cutting back on meat consumption has emerged among both young and old Hanoians, and many young, middle-class urbanites have even adopted vegetarian diets, often to the dismay of their families. These meat-reducing trends were in turn strengthened by two recent crises. First, the African swine fever led to the death and culling of one quarter of all pigs in the country and an increased skepticism towards many animal-sourced products, then the Covid-19 pandemic led to a drastic decrease in the prevalence of eating out. Based on food ethnography and household interviews before and during the pandemic, this paper analyses gastronomic practices in Hanoi, giving particular attention to the role of food cultures and everyday geographies of consumption in shaping meat practices.

Session 5: New Dynamics of Popular Contention across East and Southeast Asia

Session abstract:

From pro-democracy to anti-democratic mobilizations, East and Southeast Asia have witnessed a sharp rise in popular protests in recent years. These campaigns experimented with novel frames and repertoires to attract an unprecedented level of public participation and forge intergroup solidarity. They also managed to expand contentious spaces in the digital realm, challenging the state through both online media and social media. By leveraging a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches across disciplines, this session will dissect new dynamics of mass contention across Myanmar, Thailand, South Korea, and Hong Kong.

Megan Ryan and Van Tran highlight the evolving limitations and affordances social media provides to anti-authoritarian resistance in post-coup Myanmar. Kyungmee Kim unpacks the sources of solidarity across resistance groups during Myanmar’s Spring Revolution. Myunghye Lee and Duncan McCargo then assess the role of protesters’ perceptions of democracy in driving illiberal movements in Thailand and South Korea. Duncan McCargo also explores the emergence of new online media during the 2020 Thai Youth Protests. Finally, Mai Corlin Frederiksen investigates the image politics of the 2019 protest movement in Hong Kong.

Social media as double-edged sword: The digital evolution of repression and contention in post-coup Myanmar

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To what extent has the role of social media in anti-authoritarian contention evolved? Existing literature has highlighted moments of digital platforms' vulnerability to authoritarian abuse as well as their facilitation of pro-democracy political dissent. Yet, there lacks systematic research that examines changes in the limitations and affordances these platforms provide to either side. We fill this gap in the literature by testing social media's effect on contentious politics in the context of Myanmar's 2021 military coup. By integrating qualitative content analysis with statistical analysis over a randomly sampled dataset of 5,200 public Facebook posts during March -May 2021, we find that social media does not give one side a definite competitive advantage. Targeted repression is enhanced for the military, but its propaganda efforts are effectively limited because of Facebook's content moderation. On the other hand, although anti-coup activists become more vulnerable to repression due to increased online visibility, Facebook enables them to coordinate activism and promote digitally secure approaches for future resistance. Our novel findings serve to advance understanding of contentious dynamics under digital authoritarianism

United in victimhood? – Explaining inter-ethnic solidarity during the post-coup resistance

Kyungmee Kim, Researcher, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Can collective victimhood unite different social groups? 'Self-identifying victim consciousness' or victimhood has become a major research theme in social psychology of inter-group conflict that primarily focused on its role in conflict escalation or drivers of protracted conflict. Victimization based on ethnic, religious, and class identities has significant effects on the psychology of individuals and identity conflicting groups. In this paper I explore the victimization of unarmed protestors and random targeting of civilians by the military regime in Myanmar during the aftermath of the 2021 military coup and its effect on inter-group solidarity in the anti-coup movement. Brutal crackdowns by the military invoked widespread moral outrage and led to a nation-wide movement. Drawing on interviews and social media data, the paper analyzes the linkages between exposure to victimization and solidarity that has been empowered by information and communication technology and bridging social capital. Finally it also discusses the role of state violence and its implications on civil resistance.

Anti-Democratic Protests in Thailand and South Korea

Myunghee Lee, Korea Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen; Duncan McCargo, Director of Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen

Why do people engage in anti-democratic protests? The democratization literature treats civil societies as democratic actors that push democratization. However, recent protest episodes suggest that protests are not always conducive to democracy. Protesters' demands often do not align with strengthening democratic institutions. This study examines two anti-democratic movements in Asia: Thailand's People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) protests and South Korea's *Taegeukgi* rallies. Protesters in both movements argue that their goal is to promote democracy. However, their demands undermine democratic institutions, including electoral institutions, and impair democratic norms. To understand these discrepancies, we assess protesters' perceptions of democracy by using the Asian Barometer dataset, an Asia Foundation survey, and in-depth interviews with protesters. We

find that participants have precarious conceptualizations about democracy. In the case of South Korea, democracy is a counterpart concept to communism. In Thailand, protestors who rejected the outcomes of electoral politics argued that genuine democracy was not created by popular voting processes, and instead turn to ideas of benevolent rule exercised by the monarchy, the military, or other virtuous people. Ultimately, the PDRC protests helped precipitate the 2014 coup d'état. This study speaks to the growing literature on the democratic breakdown, suggesting that citizens' misperceptions and subjective understandings of democracy can create anti-democratic movements

Online media coverage of the 2020 Thai Youth Protests

Duncan McCargo, Director of Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen

In October 2020, the Thai authorities briefly banned four online media outlets which had been carrying detailed coverage of the student-led anti-government protests. The ban on the four outlets – Prachathai, Voice TV, The Standard and The Reporters –was quickly overturned by the courts, but revealed the extent to which new modes of online media challenged existing political norms and mores, in ways that the conservative Thai establishment found deeply threatening. Drawing on interviews with Thai journalists and media practitioners, the paper explores the emergence of new curated critical spaces between mainstream and social media, spaces that defy ready classification and have the potential to foster progressive political agendas.

Images of the Frontliner –The 2019 Hong Kong Protests

Mai Corlin Frederiksen, Carlsberg Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, China Studies, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen

The 2019 protests in Hong Kong were remarkably visual, with hundreds of protest wall complexes across the territory and massive amounts of visual material spread on digital platforms. The protest posters produced by the movement ranged from hand-drawn slogans calling for rebellion, drawings of protesters as manga cartoon characters and superheroes, memes ridiculing the government, ironic Mao-quotes, prints with graphic depictions of police violence, popular culture references, educational pamphlets, infographics and so much more. The explicit use of visual protest material as an intrinsic part of the protest movement in Hong Kong, has (once again) shown us just how central the visual is to the formation of political imaginaries –thus making it all the more important to analyze these images to understand the imaginaries at play. In this talk, I will show how the image of the frontline protester was used actively by the protesters to at once imagine and enact their Hong Kong. Here I am thinking the image in terms of “doing,” as something that not only reflects and represents a particular political standpoint, but that images, as Callahan suggests “provoke new and different social, political and economic dynamics” (Callahan 2020, 19).

Session 6a: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices

Tracing the boundaries of the home through the material and sociocultural framework of the domestic window: Reflections on Japan and Norway

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Leika Reh Aruga, PhD-candidate, NTNU

The domestic window has traditionally been understood as a gendered boundary between a private female-oriented sphere and a public male-oriented sphere. This paper will use the domestic window as a material and symbolic medium to reflect on differences and similarities of the home, gender identity and notions of belonging in Norway and Japan. The stark material contrast between the traditional Japanese window as a layered membrane, and the traditional Norwegian window as a puncture in a solid wall, calls for comparative perspectives on the meanings of gendered spaces. What sociocultural narratives emerge from tracing the physical framework of the window? In reflecting on these material and symbolic dimensions, we draw on Tim Ingold's (2015) anthropological understanding of the world, where knotting is the fundamental principle of coherence. Instead of reading the home as a container for domestic life where gender roles unfold, the home is understood as a world of interwoven relations between materials, gestures, sense, and sentiment (2015, *The Life of Lines*.) We ask: In what ways do windows shed light on the boundaries of the Norwegian and Japanese home in a world of interwoven relations, where the social and material are increasingly entangled with the digital? To what extent are these shifting boundaries producing new reconfigurations of gendered spaces? Comparing examples from Norway and Japan will allow us to look at the commonplace symbol of the window through defamiliarized perspectives, opening a new curtain into Japanese and Norwegian homes.

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Promoting new urbanism in Gulf cooperation council States (GCCs) urban region

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Cities represent immense drivers of world's economies and wealth generation, thus they are supporting and are influenced by globalization. Urban region worldwide are taking advantage of urbanization and globalization to build steady and sustainable economic growth. Pathways to sustainable urban development are incessantly designated as crucial policy questions for achieving sustainable cities. Building cities that are green, inclusive, and sustainable and people centered have been the concern of new urbanism in the last decades. New urbanism and sustainable development have become influential concepts in planning oratory. Oil and gas revenues of the Gulf cooperation council states (GCCs) of west Asia have enabled exceptional and accelerated development in all aspects of life. These countries have high global urbanization rates; they become a hub of intense

activity in many spheres—geopolitical, military, economic, industrial, construction, and tourism. During the past few years, sustainable urban development have risen as a strategic concern in addition to a set of other environmental challenges , especially those related to desertification, water scarcity, and many other ecological disasters. The overall aim of this study is to investigate and explore the potentials of new urbanism principles and its application in cities of the Gulf States and examine the possibilities to promote people-centered cities through appropriate policies and planning approaches to incorporate new planning principles that enhance urbanity and sustainability.

Same but different? Transnational research and educational collaboration in gender equality and diversity education

Jennifer Branlat & Priscilla Ringrose , Department of Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture (KULT)

Higher education has an important role to play in contributing to the SDGs by preparing students for the distinct challenges of the 21st century. Transnational collaboration in research and education are viewed as key elements to this preparation: exchanging knowledge and experience across borders, engaging in collaborative research that brings the local into global knowledge production, and students being given the opportunity to see how social phenomena and societal solutions can be 'otherwise'.

In this paper, we discuss our experience (2017-2022) with gender equality and diversity education and research in a cross-national comparative perspective between Norway and Japan. We draw from two projects underway with Ochanomizu University (Tokyo, Japan) to discuss the risks and benefits of transnational research and education. Our aim in the research collaboration was to adopt a localized and historicized perspective that interrogated universalist assumptions of gender equality and diversity. In doing this, the risks identified were wide contextualization, convenient synchronization, and most seriously, relying on polar explanatory opposites. Our research confirmed the impossibility of disengaging the linguistic dimensions of research from its cultural context and from the specific way the discipline(s) have evolved within each national context. Second, we turn to transnational education to look at what factors are critical for success, specifically an examination of Norway and Japan's respective understandings of what constitutes 'excellence' in higher education.

Session 6b: Home and away: Diverging Cross-Cultural Practices

Queer Cinemas of the Sinosphere: Queer China Goes Out

Zoran Lee Pecic, NTNU

In his article on the current state of transnational Chinese cinema, Chris Berry notes that the growth of 'culturally Chinese' films in non-Sinitic languages poses a challenge to the long-established notions and definitions of the Sinophone. Simultaneously, China's globalisation project of 'going out', complemented by the Belt and Road Initiative, has created a situation where the idea of being Chinese is ever more complex and open to interpretation. Despite their 'Chineseness', films by non-Chinese people living in Chinese-majority territories such as Tibet challenge the monolingual practices that have dominated the filmic production set in the area for decades. These 'cinemas of the Sinosphere' (Berry 2021: 2) urge us to reconsider transnational Chinese cinema and the impact of its global circulation.

Similarly, the studies of queer Chinese/Sinophone cinemas have highlighted both the use of and challenge to Euro-American discourses of a gay/lesbian identity found in the cinematic productions in the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Chinese diaspora (Chiang & Heinrich 2014, Pecic 2016, Bao 2020). They show that queer Chinese/Sinophone cinema as a transnational practice is both Chinese and foreign, local and global. If Chinese cinema has gone through significant changes during the last decade, where and how do we place queer cinema in this transnational constellation? In other words, what happens when queer China 'goes out'?

This paper takes a close look at Wang Chao's 2018 feature film *Looking for Rohmer* (aka *Seeking McCartney*) as a cultural product that utilises and breaks with the existing notions of queer Sinophone cinema. More precisely, the film forms part of a new queer cinema of the Sinosphere which imagines China as an active participant in a global queer culture, where tourism, consumption and free distribution are part and parcel of a new ethnonationalist imaginary of global Chineseness.

Journeying toward home? Everyday life experience of homeawayness among rural migrants in urban China

Dr Shuhua Chen, Research Fellow, Temporalities of Mobility and Migration Research Group, Department of Social Anthropology, NTNU

Lives within the 'transitional spaces' are filled with hope and aspiration as well as uncertainties, contingencies, and dilemmas. How do people encounter, negotiate, suffer, or imagine circumstances that are individual and situational but also social and structural in origin? How do the different forms of structural inequality place the migrants in vulnerable positions related to home and homemaking? These questions, I argue, should motivate anthropological studies of migration and homemaking as an individual, existential phenomenon as well one operating on a global and political scale. This talk considers the everyday life experience of homeawayness for rural migrants in urban China and both the capacity and vulnerability entailed in the process of homemaking. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork in the southern Chinese city of Shantou—working and living together with migrant factory workers for 14 months, this talk explores the migrants' inner struggles between their search for a home and their uncertain status in the absence of established social support structures. The notion of homeawayness introduced in this talk will contribute to a better understanding of the rural migrant workers' lack of emplacement in urban China and the struggles they experience in creating a future-oriented home. Arguing that the capacity and vulnerability entailed in homemaking is at once

individually experienced and socially produced, the talk reveals migrants' inner struggles that are often ignored in studies of migration and homemaking.

Evolving Identities: South Asian Zoroastrian Migration Stories

Sharmeen Mehri, English Department, University at Buffalo, State University of New York, Ph.D. Student

As an Archival Creators 2021-2022 fellow for the South Asian American Digital Archive, I would like to present my oral history project on collecting ten audio interviews from the Zoroastrian American community who've migrated from South Asia. The Zoroastrian community is a minority ethno-religious group, who reside primarily in India, Pakistan, Iran, and North America. My objective is to conduct oral history interviews and identify, digitize, describe, and provide online access to new archival materials from the community. This archival project will provide future generations of Zoroastrians with audio recordings about Zoroastrian South Asian migrants, their experiences of leaving home, challenges of immigration, and creating a sense of belonging in the United States. In particular, the purpose of my project is to seek a variety of voices with an emphasis on women, sexual orientation, the Irani-Parsi divide, and to bring out both the tensions and unifying themes that color the Zoroastrian experience of migration to America. What have they left behind and what do they miss? What are their experiences of assimilating into the dominant culture? How is the Zoroastrian identity helped shape their lives in creating a strong sense of community? As an always migrating group, it is important to address how Zoroastrians influence and are influenced by the new homes they inhabit. How does this new home challenge old forms of tradition or belief? How they preserve those parts of their culture they deem significant? And how do the struggles and successes, in the process of migration, shape how they view themselves?

New Updated Renewable Energy in Cambodia: Challenges, Opportunities and Relations Recommendations

Panhaping Theang^{1,2} and Nimol Thuon² ¹Novosibirsk State University ²One to Many Cambodia

The emerging challenge of Cambodia lies critically in the uneven expanse of electricity consumption versus the income of the people in the local community as the country is known to have the highest price of electricity in ASEAN. Given the potential of being the chairman of ASEAN in 2022, another point of discussion arises upon the progress of renewable energy development in the country, which is significant to boost income growth and bring about modernization 4.0. The rising challenges lie critically on the feasibility of the progress toward renewable energy development despite the lack of techniques and resources. The purpose of this paper aims at investigating the potential area for developing renewable energy and approaches toward its utilization through the study of (1) existing types of energy in specific location and the given potential; (2) current challenges and future concerns; and (3) possibility of international energy cooperation between countries. Even though many global powers are leading in terms of renewable energy development, cooperation with Cambodia on that particular area is feasible only with a similar context of policies, technical suitability and political willingness to cooperate and shared partnerships. Therefore, critical analysis of the current challenges and existing potential are essential in the analysis of international cooperation for developing countries as well as Cambodia. The conclusion of the paper would further elaborate the possibility of cooperation with relevant countries that could efficiently foster growth in the respective areas based on suitability and utilization of resources and partnerships.

Session 7: China: Regional politics, regional studies and multilateralism

Changes in Central-Local Relations in Xi's China

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A core element of economic reform in China was to allow a radical shift in the central-local power balance through decentralisation. However, gradual recentralisation soon became a tool to avoid overheating and other side effects of China's rapid growth. Since Xi Jinping we can see something completely different: continued recentralisation juxtaposed with a new push for growth and a renewed urbanisation. What is the new political logic behind Xi's regional politics? This paper uses the Greater Bay Area policy plan as a case study of the centralised politics behind local development in contemporary China.

Managing Narrative Contestation: The Case of China's Regional Engagement in Europe

Chunong Liu, Fudan-European Centre for China Studies, University of Oslo

The practice of strategic narratives, which is built upon actor-specific structures of norms, values and experiences, can significantly shape the world order by creating mutually incompatible interpretations or some degree of cognitive alignment. In the case of China's regional approach of engaging Europe, which has evolved phenomenally over the last decade, two diverging lines of strategic narrative have emerged. The EU has maintained its sensitivity over geopolitical influence in its peripheries. It has increasingly portrayed China's regional interconnectivity as a project that undermines the European unity and solidarity. In contrast, China views its decentralized approach of globalization as a pragmatic response to regional development disparity, a functional need to serve its domestic development, and a constitutive element of a multilateral order. This paper analyses the dynamics of this narrative contestation and draws their implications to the future of China-EU relations. It also considers the possibility of managing narrative divergence, i.e., whether and how a common frame on China-EU relations can be negotiated and positively contribute to the solution of common global challenges.

Chinese academic resources in regional studies: The case of the Greater Bay Area initiative

Heidi Østbø Haugen, Professor of China Studies, IKOS, UiO

Regional studies research is commonly informed by academic literature produced mainly for local audiences. In this presentation, we argue for a more analytical approach integrating academic literature produced under different traditions. While scholarship conforming to dissimilar academic conventions may appear seamlessly incorporated in the write-up of regional research, considerable groundwork is often required to fit studies with different objectives and conventions into the same framework. This paper explores the challenges and opportunities of literature integration through the case of Chinese academic literature on the Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area Initiative, a national policy strategy for the Pearl River Delta region in South China. Analysis of this body of research and the specific set of academic conventions it was produced under shows that its focus and orientation differ from internationally oriented scholarship. Acknowledging and discussing the

challenges of integrating different literature makes for more reflective research practices in regional studies.

Chinese Multilateralism and its Impact on Environmental and Democratic Governance in Africa and Latin America (MultiChina)

Wei (Vivian) Guo, Center for Development and the Environment (SUM), University of Oslo

The rise of China continues to shape the global order in many ways. One way is by changing the conditions of democratic and environmental governance, particularly in low-income countries. This project studies how the scaling up of Chinese economic engagement influences democratic and natural resources governance in Africa and Latin America. How are the principles of cooperation between China and individual countries shaped and influenced? And how and to what extent are the principles of international organization and cooperation between groups of countries affected? In order to respond to these questions, our focus is to study Chinese influence in Chile, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Kenya. These cases have been selected based on differences in state capacity and the strength of democratic institutions. In addition, we will study the effects of Chinese engagement in four very different international organizational contexts. While two of these have been key institutions for international cooperation for several decades (the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, UNDESA), CELAC-China Forum and Forum for China and Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) are newer organizations established to strengthen the relationship between China and Latin America and Africa, respectively. We study Chinese influence through in-depth interviews with elites in China and in case countries and organizations, and by tracing the processes of Chinese engagement from initiation of cooperation projects to final completion. The results of this project will contribute to finding answers to pressing issues in global governance in the field of environment and development.

Session 8: Socio-political transformation, work and automation

Conceptualising Social Movements of Bangladesh Post-2013: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Movements

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Despite mass discontents, the social movements in Bangladesh in the last decade, albeit popularly supported, have failed to succeed and bring forth any significant systemic socio-political transformation. Paradoxically enough, the country has not seen that many movements notwithstanding serious mass grievances on social, political and economic issues. I study two significant social movements' cases, the 2013 Shahbag protests and the student protests against VAT on education 2015, to conceptualise those movements by using a theoretical framework derived from Resource Mobilisation theory and New Social Movement theory. I contend that those movements need to be perceived both as political phenomena and as cultural rather than psychological; therefore to understand the phenomena we need to analyze the structural aspects of those movements from a critical realist stand, which deploys both institutional and discursive dimensions in its analysis. My research will try to provide a genealogy of the movement's development, prominence and decline. The limited successes of the movements can be explained, mainly, by the lack of indigenous organizational strength, limited political opportunities due to the increasing centralization of the state power and authority. My theoretical framework will be supported by an exhaustive study and comparison through the collections of secondary qualitative data mainly from three major national newspapers of Bangladesh: *The Daily Star*, *Prothom Alo* and *bdnews24.com*.

Coffee robots in Korea: from sociotechnical imaginaries to localised practices

Dr. Roger A. Søråa (researcher) & Halvard Moe Krogstad (MA student), NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture, NO-7491, Trondheim, Norway

How are South Korean youth at coffee shops increasingly interacting with novel technology such as robots and what implications does this have? In this talk we explore this topic through a case study of Korean coffee cultures among students in Seoul, exploring different situated practices at local coffee shops that in different manners extend the use of robots in businesses. Through a qualitative case study of how Korean youth experience interacting with robot technologies in their daily lives as coffee shop patrons, connected to busy and demanding lives as students with deadlines and expectations hanging over them, we see novel ways of sociotechnical material configurations at coffee shops. We thematize this larger sociotechnical imaginary of a Korean robot nation, where technology is the backbone in the tale spun on Korean advancement in the world as one of the Four Asian Tiger economies, to see where embodied Artificial intelligence such as robots fit within this larger narrative of a nation hooked on digitalization advancement. However, through our empirical findings, we see how on a localized and individual coffee consumer level, that the practice of having one's coffee served by a robot is enacted quite differently than at societal level. Our informants divide between the "efficiency" group that want their coffee as fast and efficient as possible, and the "care" group, which cares for employers risking losing their jobs, care for coffee being brewed with passion and taking time, and care for themselves as busy-bodies taking time off relaxing at cafés.

Industrial work and the sustainability of the social security system in Vietnam

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Since the Doi moi, launched in 1986, Vietnam has seen a rapid industrialization backed by the waves of foreign direct investment, which significantly contributed to the shift from a low-income country to a medium-income one. Millions of young people have migrated from the rural areas to urbanised or industrialized areas, mainly in the deltas in the North and the South, to work as industrial workers. They become formal workers as they enrolled the social security system by contributing to the social insurance (pension insurance), health insurance and unemployment insurance and receiving benefits from these contributions correspondingly. However, facts show that workers tend to stop contributing to the social security system and withdraw their accumulated contribution as a kind of saving once they quit their industrial jobs. The paper will examine the current movement of this trend through a review of recent researches and stories reflected on media as well as the first-hand data gained from a field-research on industrial workers working in industrial parks in Vietnam under a project funded by the European Union. It aims to reveal, on the one hand, the trajectory of options chosen by industrial workers regarding their participation in the social security system and, on the other hand, the implications for the sustainability of the social security system that has been regarded as a crucial pillar for the construction of socialism in Vietnam.

The Last of Frontline Workers: The Growing Precarity among sanitation and Waste Workers during Covid-19

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The pandemic has jolted the lives of urban poor across the world in varied ways. This article looks at the intricate connection between Covid-19 and the state of sanitation workers and waste workers in Delhi, India. Historically speaking, epidemics have marked a turning point in terms of sanitary and urban reforms (Chandavarkar, 2009), albeit, primarily for the ruling elites and soldiers in the colonial times. With the coming of Covid-19 pandemic, there was an 'apparent' change in the way sanitation workers and waste workers were perceived. Many of them were greeted by applause and garlands. This palpable change in the societal attitude and them being referred as 'frontline workers' gave a ray of hope, that the pandemic might prove to be crucial in catalysing the reforms long needed in the realm of sanitation and waste management crisis (Swaroop and Lee, 2021). However, looking at the precarious conditions of the workers in the two last years, there is a little that has changed. The age old relation of caste and sanitation and waste work continues to 'plague' the present day situation. If anything at all, the pandemic has further exposed the apathy of government institution and casteist societal attitude towards the workers. The complexities of 'social' and 'physical' distancing¹ are further compounded by the issues of on-going privatisation of sanitation and waste management services, lack of health care facilities, death by covid-19, delay in salaries, and differential treatment at work place. Demands of sanitation and waste workers remain a far cry. This paper primarily seeks to argue that even though the pandemic has brought issues of public health to the forefront but the issues surrounding sanitation and waste work are still pre-dominantly shaped by caste hierarchies and practices of stigmatization. The reflections in this paper are primarily based on my own observations and interviews conducted with sanitation workers, waste workers and activists in Delhi.

Roundtable discussion: Change and adaption: Asian academic culture and tradition interacting with Norwegian academic culture

Yu Wang, PhD, senior researcher, Deputy head for research, Department of Architecture and Planning, NTNU

Abstract:

Foreign scholars are playing an important role in the research and higher education in Norway in recent years. More and more Asian researchers, who have finished their academic training in their home country, work as academics at Norwegian universities. In the meantime, the cooperation between Norwegian and Asian universities are enhanced by those Asian scholars. Most of the Asian scholars have been experiencing a transition from Asian academic culture into Norwegian academic culture. A culture is featured as a decentralized and flat management structure and a trust society. In the meantime, Asian employees at Norwegian universities have been playing intermediaries to build academic cooperation between Norway and Asia. That let Norwegian academics closely observe the Asian academic culture. This roundtable invites four Asian academics who work at NTNU for sharing their insights of walking in between two academic cultures.

Program

Chairperson: Yu Wang, PhD, senior researcher, deputy head for research, Department of Architecture and Planning, NTNU

Panelists:

Jianying He, Department of Structural Engineering, NTNU

Albert Lau, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, NTNU

Bunji Izumi, Department of Architecture and Technology, NTNU

Time: 1.5 hours

Agenda:

- **General introduction: Asian scholars at NTNU** by Wang Yu (15 mins)
- **Panel-introduction by panelists** (5 mins/person)
- **Roundtable discussion 1: As Asian scholars who work in Norway, what do you need to change to adapt into the Norwegian academic culture?** (30 mins)
- **Roundtable discussion 2: The role of the Asian scholars, who work in Norway in cooperation between Norwegian and Asian universities?** (30 mins)
- **Q&A** (15 mins)