9th Annual Conference on Cultural and Social Anthropology of East Asia

Book of Abstracts

Olomouc 2015
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Key-note Speeches

Jozsef Szakos
Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL MOBILITY "WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS"

There have appeared many particular studies on individual aspects of social mobility in China, in the context of historical, social and economic changes. In my presentation, I intend to build on these publications and re-examine their conclusions and expand it from an academic mobility perspective. Globalization and urbanization affects different societies in individually different ways. In China, a number of phenomena are similar to western societies (in the economic area), but the academic, student mobility (directions, intensity, purpose) are different from developments in EU or US. We would expect that student mobility could lead to social change, but the still conservative social structures and modes of thinking lead to an inertia and "immobility" in spite of all the surface actions.

Julie Yu-Wen Chen
Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN EAST ASIAN SOCIETIES: A REFLECTION ON ICT, MODERNITY, AND STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS

Information and communications technology (ICT) has dramatically transformed the modern part of East Asia, such as Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan. While ICT is equally vibrant in China, its development has demonstrated a unique Chinese characteristic, with market-driven initiatives set within stricter political and institutional frameworks than elsewhere in East Asia. Although cross-country differences do exist, what is common is that all of these countries have to re-examine and re-understand the contract between the state and the people in this age of ICT modernity. In my own research, I have theorized about the strategic interactions between the regime and netizens in different scenarios in China. The lure for netizens to push the boundary for freedom and the challenge for the state to (re-)consider its relationship with the people is not only evident in China, but also in democratic regimes in East Asia. In Taiwan, for instance, one of the relatively freer Asian societies for LGBT community, LGBT activities online are not entirely unregulated by the government. ICT has various impacts on different East Asian societies as well as various sectors within each East Asian society. While the digital divide and social gaps exist in each society, we see the rise of localized mobile technologies benefiting low-end working classes in South Korea and China. This keynote speech highlights some interesting cases in which we can reconsider the social contract between the state and the people, as well as between peoples in contemporary East Asia.
Panels

I. Identities and Ethnicities

Michal Kolmaš
Metropolitan University, Prague, Czech Republic

CONCEPTUALIZING NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY: INSIGHTS FROM JAPAN

Until the 4th great theoretical debate in the 1980s, cultural factors such as religion, language or identity were of no interest to foreign policy theorists. Nowadays, however, the situation is different and terms such as national identity are thoroughly researched. How has the IR scholarship on national identity developed in the last three decades? And how does that affect our current research on Japan? This article conceptualizes nowadays differing interpretation of identity (as a cultural and a discursive factor) and its role in foreign policy articulation and then applies these investigations on Japan-related policy research. Doing so, the article 1, pinpoints the lacks of current IR identity-theory, 2, shows how immaterial factors matter in Japan research.

Kamila Hladíková
Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

„CHINESE TIBET” ON EXPORT: SUBJUGATION OF TIBETAN CULTURAL SPACE BY CHINESE

This paper has focused on how Tibet is represented within contemporary Chinese mainstream cultural production, such as in film or popular music, the products that in this globalized world often reach well beyond the actual borders of the PRC, either through inbound tourism or through direct export of such cultural products. Chinese artists often appropriate and approximate selected aspects from Tibetan culture to show Tibet as a colorful and romantic place. I will show how certain common stereotypes about Tibet are turned into symbols that represent Tibet in the eyes of many Chinese as well as many foreign consumers of such cultural products, and how the outward image of Tibet is thus sinicized. One of the so far rarely examined consequences of such “subjugation of Tibetan cultural space by Chinese” is sinicization of Tibetan personal and place names, which, transformed into the Chinese system of writing, are not only misspelled and mispronounced, but often become unrecognizable. The problem becomes more serious, when such products are presented outside of the Sinpohone world.
Izabela Kujawa  
Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland

**CHINESE EMIGRATION FROM CHINA’S POINT OF VIEW: THE CASE OF KAIPING DIAOLOU**

This paper aims at analyzing the changing influence Chinese diaspora has had on its country of origin. At the same time it pays attention to the ways in which emigrants in China have been perceived and follows the shifts in their perception that seem to depend on the political and, most of all, economic projects implemented in the country.

To illustrate and analyze these aspects of the migration I use the case of the county of Kaiping and history of the unique buildings, that still can be found there – dialou, defensive towers that have been built thanks to the migrants' remittances with the oldest ones dating back to the 17th century. Their unique style (with architectural motives and construction techniques resembling the ones in the migrants' destination countries) shows that migration has contributed not only to the transfer of financial assets but also to the flow of ideas and knowledge.

At the same time diaolou and their usage can be seen as a symbol of the state's changing attitude towards emigrants' contributions and influences, that were encouraged at first, seen as a threat and treason after the establishment of the People's Republic of China and finally, with the opening of the country in the late 1970s, gradually acknowledged. As a result, dilapidated towers have been restored and preserved in form of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

II. **Arts and Fictions**

Zuzana Rozwalka  
Seminar of Japanese Studies, Center for Asian Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

**SPECIALIST IN CROSS-DRESSED ROLES IN MODERN JAPANESE THEATRE**

In most countries it has been a matter of course to see men on stage in female roles for a number of centuries. In Japan this practice has been preserved to this day, together with traditional noh and kabuki theatres. The emergence of the modern theatre however brought with it the need for actresses. Together with the appearance of these actresses on the Japanese stage there came a new phenomenon. The Takarazuka Revue was born, in which women appeared in male roles. These specialists in male roles are known as otokoyaku, and in Japan they enjoy the popularity of pop stars.

At present it is also possible to encounter men who specialise in female roles beyond the framework of the traditional theatre. These specialists, known as gendai onnagata in
Japanese, are individuals who perceived these roles as presenting a challenge to their acting abilities. My analysis focuses primarily on the manner of representing the opposite sex, and attempts to relate this both to the traditional theatre and to compare these representations between themselves.

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**Gabriela-Alexandra Banica**
University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania

**PANIC SITES' OF THE HEISEI PERIOD**

The paper is set to analyze the three main disasters of contemporary Japan, the Heisei period (1989 to present): the Great Hanshin Earthquake (January 1, 1995), the sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway led by Aum Shinrikyo religious sect (March 20, 1995) and the Great East Japan Earthquake (March 11, 2011) as ‘panic sites’, focusing on the impact the events had on individual Japanese people and the Japanese psyche.

The Great Hanshin Earthquake was considered at the time of its happening ‘the worst natural disaster in post World War II Japan’. In the same year Japan faced an act of domestic terrorism. Failure of the Japanese government to react effectively to these events led to the formation of non-governmental organizations in Japan. Sixteen years later, on March 2011, the country suffered the strongest recorded earthquake in its history, which was followed by a devastating tsunami and radioactive contamination.

Analyzing the three main disasters of the Heisei period as ‘panic sites’ refers to playing the real events against the Japanese imagination of disasters as portrayed in animated science fiction movies (from *Godzilla*, 1954, to *Akira*, 1988) released before 1989.

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**Alexandr Zimenko**
National Library of Belarus, Minsk, Republic of Belarus

**TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE FINE ART**

The basis for this study was the exhibition held at the National Library of Belarus in the world tour of works of the “12th China National Art Exhibition” that give an idea of the level of skill of the artists, as well as demonstrate the main trends in the fine arts in China over the past 5 years.

The 12th China National Art Exhibition”, organized by the Ministry of Culture of China in cooperation with the China Federation of Literature and Art and the China Association of Artists. Since its establishment in 1949 until today has been more than 60 years. The exhibition has been held 12 times in its history witnessed not only the process of historical change in the country, but also the development of Chinese fine arts from the second half of the twentieth century. One of the objectives is the establishment of young artists and
promotion of the transformation of Chinese fine arts from traditional to modern forms. Currently, the National Art Exhibition of China is leading in China in the number and the level of the presented works, the impact on the art world of the country and authority among the international art exhibitions. 23 works were presented in the National Library of Belarus in Minsk. Artworks for this exhibition were made in different techniques and relate to different styles. Such as Guohua (Chinese national painting) and oil paintings, engravings and watercolors and others. These works show the development of traditional Chinese fine art forms and genres, as well as the adaptation of European art and style. Special attention should be paid to the emergence of new subjects and themes that are developed from the discharge of the second half of the twentieth century, the system of socialist realism.

III. Contemporary Changes in China

Sascha Klotzbücher  
Department of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna, Austria

ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD WORK IN CHINA AND OTHER AUTHORITARIAN STATES: THE SEARCH FOR MORE PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACHES

In authoritarian states, official information and access to the field is highly controlled, selective and often inaccessible. This paper reflects my own endeavors to find less government-centered field approaches in two complete different projects without China-based institutional partners. First, I discuss my participative approach on the transmission of the sensitive history the Cultural Revolution in contemporary families beginning in 2005. I will argue that - like their China-affiliated partners – social research has reduced the role of the people as informants in scenarios of “data-grabbing”: After the researcher got his data, the perspective of their “informants”, understanding, and evaluation of the research about them does not play any role in the academic discussion. In contrast, in participative approaches, participants are unavoidable partners in all stages of the research process from data-gathering to analysis and evaluation of the research results. My second case study is the current policy for elderly people in urban China. I take a grassroots “user-approach”. Together with my retired Chinese mother-in-law, we took part in four daily excursions around Wuhan in August 2015 to visit ongoing projects of retirement homes, new villages for elderly people in the outskirts of Wuhan financed by local governments with heavy subsidies from the Central State. Elderly people are approached for membership in pension schemes that provide middle-term investment with attractive conditions (but high risks), reductions of rental fees and exclusive travel opportunities for elderly people. Trying to understand these policies from below in the role of the member/investor of these pension schemes without any authorized information and as a visitor, how can we research policy? How does the clear power and information asymmetry
between government and people is unfold in these interactions between the government as a presenter and the people as investor? Which research topics come up from this research position?

Martin Minost  
School For Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), Paris, France  

THE “GOOD LIFE” IN THAMES TOWN: ON THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHINESE RESIDENTIAL HABITS IN A WESTERN-STYLENEIGHBORHOOD

Contemporary China, since the beginning of the reforms in the late 1970’s, has experienced a wide range of transformations in every field of life. One of the most striking is the integration of China into the global flows of market exchanges, communications, ideas, etc., allowing the Chinese people to interact like never before with objects and images from Western countries. One of the results of the opening trends, in parallel with the booming urbanization process, is the multiplication, in every Chinese city, of neighborhoods imitating the architecture of European and North American countries. The neighborhood of Thames Town in the suburban district of Songjiang, Shanghai, with its different British architectural types is part of this new trend in China, yet with specificities due to its state-driven origins. Constructed between 2001 and 2006, it has been developing since its opening, and it has been even influencing the whole image of Songjiang.

The general view upon those Western-style neighborhoods and individuals living there, however, is too simplistic. Those are only seen and described as instances of the so-called extreme neo-liberalization of China and the Americanization of the Chinese way of living. Yet, a detailed ethnographical research on daily life in Thames Town and other communities allow us to get a better insight of the occurring hybridization process. Thus, through a study, led between 2011 and 2015, of the residential and living habits of families living in Thames Town, and also their aspirations and desires, I intend to draw a sketch of the new features of the Chinese daily life. Even if this part of the Chinese population remains small, the wealthy ones living in particular places, one characteristic is more generally shared: the new mobilities.
IV. Religions and Beliefs

Zuzana Kubovčáková
Seminar of Japanese Studies, Center for Asian Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

HEART SUTRA VARIATIONS

The presentation will introduce various translations of the Heart Sutra, a most fundamental Buddhist text within the Japanese religious context, into the English language, and its usage among the various Zen monastic traditions primarily in the United States. The aim of the presentation is to address a diversity of the translations of this religious text, for which there is only one widely known and used version in the Japanese setting. With the spread of Japanese Buddhism to the West, however, the teaching seems to have evolved into a variety of interpretations, which can be illustrated by the reading of the Heart Sutra itself. The current presentation will therefore attempt to shed light on a number of modifications within the wording of the Sutra, and thereby to illustrate some pivotal issues in the accommodation of the Japanese Buddhist tradition in the West.

Andreea Barbu
University of Bucharest, Romania

EXPLORING SECULARITY AND RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

In our contemporary society one can observe more significant phenomena and trends, by which one can create an image of that society. Secularization is one of these noticeable phenomena and one of the ingredients for a modern society - one which has stepped outside its European formation grounds and is now present in other areas, such as Japan.

In Japan, secularization is a process that began in the second half of the 19th century, alongside the start of the modernization process, and it became more apparent in recent statistics, such as World Values Survey, Japanese General Social Surveys, Global Index of Religion and Atheism Report, where it ranks as one of the most secular states. On the other hand, Japan offers a vivacious religious life, where the new religions and spiritual movements have a great number of followers. In this context we are going to focus on the paradox of the ascending trend of secularization, the new religion Sōka Gakkai (創価学会) and the spiritual movement lead by Funai Yukio.

From the many definitions of secularism and secularization, we will use the understanding of the concept as defined by Charles Taylor’s in “A Secular Age”, which states that today’s secular world is characterized not only by an absence of religion - but rather, by the continuing multiplication of new options regarding religion and spirituality.
This study aims to answer the following questions: what does it mean to be secular or religious in today’s Japan? How does this ambiguous relation lead us to redefine secularity? How religion and the new type of spirituality was shaped by secularization?

The present situation is relevant for the complexity of the empirical reality and of the relation between secularization, religion, democracy and public space and rises new questions for future research.

V. Social Changes

Miloš Procházka
Department of East Asian Studies, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN NORTH KOREAN SOCIETY SINCE FAMINE IN 1990S

Since famine in 1990s, North Korean society went through substantial structural changes, at the first sight invisible for external observers who are not well acquainted with the situation. Based on experiences that humanitarian and development workers, businessmen and others who were allowed to enter North Korea gathered over past 20 years and thanks to the testimonies of thousands of refugees, we can analyze the structural changes that society in North Korea went through during the past two decades. Before, ideology played primary role in everyday life of the whole population and thus became a tool of peoples’ mind subjugation. Description in George Orwell’s novel “1984” corresponded well to the real situation of North Koreans.

Famine (and other disasters) changed everything. The things that were essential for survival in Kim’s social experiment suddenly became obsolete. The structure that was carefully built during four decades, has crumbled like a house of cards, bringing erosion to the regime itself. Meanwhile, North Korea asked for humanitarian help from international community. Many countries, agencies, NGOs and individuals responded. Assistance to North Korea brought about many controversies and even after 20 years of its continuity it seems that aid has no end.

The other side, North Korean nuclear development, went secretly on angering superpowers (and many other nations). It didn’t help the situation to be resolved, rather on the contrary, it worsened North Korea’s negotiation position.

The purpose of this paper is to elucidate NGOs’ (or even wider – non-state actors’) role in the whole undertaking summarizing impacts (whether negative or positive) they had. Moreover, the aim is to outline future developments in North Korean society and consequences it can bring - not only for North Korea, but also for the region or the world.
THE RISE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN SOUTH KOREA: A NEW TREND IN THE ASIAN TIGER SOCIETY

South Korea went through rapid industrialization and exhibited spectacular growth of its economy between the early 1960s and 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century, South Korea became a high-income country and competes globally in several high-tech industries. However, South Korea’s environment suffered during the process of industrialisation and transport development, with negative consequences for human health and ecosystems. In the last two decades, both non-governmental organisations, and some government institutions pushed towards a more sustainable model of social development. Emerging problems of air pollution, water management and biodiversity conservation have prompted diverse reactions from scientists, environmental activists, and public officers. A significant number of environmental NGO’s originated since 1990’s. Multiple governmental institutions and research bodies were established to address environmental issues. The Korean government has proclaimed a „Green Economy“ as its aim in future development. Environmental awareness is supported both by government institutions, that introduce optional environmental education courses, and by NGO’s, such as the Korea Federation of Environmental Movements, that offer environmental programs to the public. All these activities attempt to promote environmentally-friendly lifestyles and to introduce value change towards a more environmentally-conscious society. While environmental awareness is on the rise, it is debatable to what extent this has been transformed into lifestyle changes of the general population, and reduced negative environmental impacts of economic pursuits. Furthermore, some initiatives of the government proclaimed to be in the interest of the environment, for example, water management projects, were criticized by civic groups as environmentally harmful. In any case, environmental thinking has emerged in the South Korean society from relative obscurity to a significant place on the current social agenda.

Jozef Mládek, Marcela Káčerová
J. Mádek, Department of Geography, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czech Republic; M. Káčerová, Department of Human Geography and Demography, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic

CHANGES OF FAMILY BEHAVIOUR IN JAPAN AND SLOVAKIA (SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT FEATURES)

Changes of family behaviour of population represent the important component of the population development in the period of the second demographic transition. It is the set of
changes concerning marriage rate, divorce and abortion rates, and the overall issue of family formation and disintegration. Forms of family or partner coexistence including extra-marital fertility are important parts of this set. Assessment of reproduction and family behaviour of inhabitants of Japan and Slovakia established many features very similar to the universal behaviour model or the tendency of some of them to convergence (Mládek 1998, Mládek, Širočková 2003, Atoh 2001). Some features of family behaviour are more conservative and the strong effect of traditions is obvious. This is especially true of cohabitation and extra-marital fertility developments in Japanese population. The effect of traditional family bonds, special position of woman and family, as well as the slower implementation of modern birth control methods manifest in these processes. Slovak population is characterised by a somewhat higher incidence of cohabitations and a fairly higher extra-marital fertility although compared to the advanced west or north European countries the tempo of both processes is slower. Analysis of selected population processes reveals that in spite of a strong influence of traditions family behaviour also changed in Slovakia. The identified changes are characterised by long-term trends, which were accelerated by social transformation processes. It is especially true of the striking changes of marriage rate, namely its decrease and subsequent increase of marriage age of both men and women. Divorce increases more slowly and the level of abortion has distinctly decreased. Informal partner bonds (cohabitations) spread slowly. The family in Japan had traditionally economic, cultural, reproducing and educational functions. In spite of certain changes of family behaviour, these functions are preserved. Changes concern the increasing marriage age, increasing share of “single” households or decrease of the share of married couples, accompanied by the fertility decrease. On the other hand, the low level of divorce rate, small number of cohabitations, low share of single-parent families, and low level of extra-marital fertility seem to confirm the stability of family. Function of women in family also changes above all in the consequence of their increased educational level and economic independence.

Marta Jaworska
University of Gdansk, Gdansk, Poland

TRADITIONAL CUSTOMS AS A TOOL TO CREATE SOCIAL RELATIONS IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

Social bonds in local communities (and eventually on national level) are the core of a strong, healthy society. People are social beings and as such they need something to relate to others in order to be able to live with them. In my paper I would like to present the example of traditional customs, especially funerals and celebrating matsuri, to show how these can be indicators to create strong local bonds in communities in Japan. As Steve Fenton pointed out: the best way to create relations in society (local or higher level) is to have something in common. Japanese history of culture and cultural changes show that even the most traditional customs (or the ones that are thought of
as traditional) can be fundamental tools for common bonds, ancestry and the idea of togetherness. Creating such bonds, build people’s ethnicity, identity and nationality. In my paper I will use the results from a field research, conducted in Japan in 2011 and 2014 in Kansai and Kanto region, as well as Gunma prefecture as well as from the literature on the subject.

VI. Languages

Ivona Barešová
Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

PLANT MOTIFS IN JAPANESE FEMALE NAMES IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT NAME-GIVING TRENDS

One of the most characteristic features of contemporary Japanese given names is the use of kanji related to the natural world. This paper looks into the frequent selection of plant motifs in current female names and, through a corpus of 4,278 names of girls born 2008–2014, examines the most frequent characters related to plants and the motivations for their selection, revealing the most common aspirations for the newborn girls expressed by plant motifs. The paper explains the involvement of the language of flowers, culturally specific symbolisms, and deference to the seasons of the year in the name selection process in the context of the current name-giving trends.

Jiří Matela
Seminar of Japanese Studies, Center for Asian Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

HERITAGE OF MIKAMI AKIRA – A NOTE ON LINGUISTIC TYPOLOGY

The diversity of linguistic reality has been a great challenge for the field of linguistic typology. In the area of the Japanese linguistics the reliance on supposedly universal notion of SUBJECT, as seen in the famous Greenberg’s (1996) or Li & Thompson’s (1976) typological suggestions, became an object of strong criticism lead by Mikami Akira (1903–1971) who proposed a “theory of abolition of the concept of subject” (shugo haishi-ron) for description of the Japanese language in a series of his works from 1960s. The main purpose of the present paper is to introduce Mikami’s theory as a theory that even nowadays features many progressive characteristics within the discourse of the Japanese “theories of subjecthood” (shugo ron). Mikami’s approach towards the sentence structure is based on a dichotomy of TOPIC and NOMINATIVE, without a need to refer to the category of SUBJECT. This approach is in many respects also applicable to the typological description of modern Chinese, as demonstrated by e.g. LaPolla (2009). Although not without its problems, Mikami’s theory with a focus on the
TOPIC-COMMENT (or THEME-RHEME) opposition in the description of a language’s sentence structure provides valuable hints for teaching Japanese or Chinese as second languages.

Vlastimil Dobečka
Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

NEW TRENDS IN STRUCTURE OF CHINESE DICTIONARIES

This paper deals with the development of approach to the sorting of headwords of Chinese dictionaries. There can be traced the tendency to shift from system solutions to user-friendly solutions. This can be demonstrated by two innovative ways of headword sorting of Chinese dictionaries, which were presented at ASIALEX2015 conference in Hong Kong. In connection with this process various questions about the relationship between the demand for knowledge input of dictionary users, advantages, disadvantages and potential benefits of use of a particular dictionary sorting arise. Sorting of Chinese dictionaries offers several basic options: a) according to the pronunciation - taking into account syllable boundaries / without taking into account borders of syllables; b) according to the characters - the number of strokes and the first stroke, by radicals, by stroke sequence, by character graphics (four corners method) or by etymology; c) the thematic sorting (for terminology). While choosing a way for headwords sorting of Chinese dictionary it’s therefore necessary to have in mind the above factors and treat them in accordance with the intended use of the dictionary.
Conference Proceedings

Proceedings of the 9th Annual Conference on Cultural and Social Anthropology of East Asia will be published in the Far East (Dálný Východ) journal, published by the Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Instructions for Authors

We welcome contributions based on independent research by scholars everywhere. Articles submitted to the journal should contain between 6,000–12,000 words, including notes, and should be accompanied by a 200-word abstract, and a list of keywords. Authors should submit their contributions as a file in MS Word 2000 or higher version. If the manuscript contains special glyphs or formatting, contributors are requested to attach a pdf file thereof, or one typed copy in a paper form, as the case may be.

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Text: Times New Roman 12, justified, single, indentation: 1.25 cm. Subchapters headings (bold) without numbering should be attached to the text without skipping a line. However, a line should be skipped between the last line of the subchapter and before the next heading. Please use footnotes not endnotes. Also, parenthetical text citations (e.g. VOCHALA 2009: 45) should be avoided. Article should be followed by a list of references. Standard English spelling and punctuation should be used. Deviations from this style should be discussed with the editorial office prior to the submission of a paper.

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Asian Ethnicity

We would like to draw your attention to scholarly journal Asian Ethnicity, which is newly affiliated with Department of Asian Studies, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic. We cordially welcome your future submissions to this journal published by Taylor&Francis.

In the twenty-first century ethnic issues have assumed importance in many parts of the world. Until recently, questions of Asian ethnicity and identity have been treated in a balkanized fashion, with anthropologists, economists, historians, political scientists, sociologists and others publishing their studies in single-discipline journals. Asian Ethnicity provides a cross-disciplinary, international venue for the publication of well-researched articles about ethnic groups and ethnic relations in the half of the world where questions of ethnicity now loom largest.

Asian Ethnicity covers any time period, although the greatest focus is expected to be on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In broad terms the geographical region of concern for the journal is bounded by Lake Baikal to the north, Japan to the east, Java to the south and the Caspian Sea to the west. The most populous, and probably most significant, contemporary political states to be included are China, India and Indonesia.

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All submitted manuscripts, review papers and research articles are subject to initial appraisal by the Editor, and, if found suitable for further consideration, to peer review by independent, anonymous expert referees. All peer review is double-blind and submission is online via ScholarOne Manuscripts.