



VYTAUTAS  
MAGNUS  
UNIVERSITY  
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## “A century of connections: historical ties between the Baltic and East Asia regions”

March 4-5, 2022

Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania)

### CONFERENCE PROGRAM

(participation is possible both online and in-person;  
all presentations will be streamed online)

#### March 4

Location: Room 313, Putvinskio str. 23, Kaunas

Online room (MS Teams platform): <https://bit.ly/3rDKn5i>

9:00–9:30 Introduction and greetings

9:30–10:15 Keynote speech

**Ryo Nakai** (University of Kitakyushu) – *Expanding and Evolving Baltic Studies in Japan: A contents analysis of bibliographical databases*

10:15–10:30 Coffee break

10:30–12:00 Section I: Early ties with Japan

**Ene Selart** (University of Tartu) – *Soldiers and Doctors on the Battlefield: Different Perspectives of the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) based on the War Letters*

**Linas Didvalis** (Vytautas Magnus University) – *Lithuania–Japan diplomatic relations during the interwar period*

**Arvydas Kumpis** (Vytautas Magnus University) – *Early Showa Japan as seen by Lithuanian missionaries: case of Albinas Margevičius*

12:00–13:15 Lunch break

13:15–14:45 Section II: Japanese art in Poland – Collectors and collecting till 1920

**Ewa Kamińska** (Jagiellonian University in Krakow / Polish Institute of World Art Studies) – *Collections and Collectors of Japanese art in Central and Eastern Europe – a current stage of research*

**Aleksandra Görlich** (Polish Institute of World Art Studies) – *Feliks “Manggha” Jasieński and his cultural policy through collecting from a 21st century perspective*

**Beata Romanowicz** (National Museum in Krakow) – *Diversity of Collectors and ways of collecting Japanese art in Poland till 1920*

14:45–15:00 Coffee break

15:00–17:00 Section III: Contemporary ties with Japan

**Agnese Haijima** (University of Latvia) – *Latvia-Japan Relationship: Historical Background and Current Situation*

**Aya Kimura** (Ochanomizu University) – *Presentation of Lithuania-origin artists at Museums in Japan after the 1990s*

**Krzysztof Mędrzycki** (Fukuyama University) – *The Growth or Total Freeze? The economic relationship between Japan and Visegrad group, the United Kingdom*

**Sean O’Reilly** (Akita International University) – *A Mirror of (Japanese) Heroism: Depictions of Lithuania in Japanese Cinema*

### **March 5**

Location: Room 103, Putvinskio str. 23, Kaunas

Online room (MS Teams platform): <https://bit.ly/3rDKn5i>

9:00–10:30 Section IV: Ties with China

**Märt Läänemets** (Estonian Oriental Society) – *Alexander Staël von Holstein (1877-1937): From a Baltic Baron to the World-scale Buddhist Scholar in Peking*

**Laurynas Kudijanovas** (Lithuanian Institute of History) – *The importance of Lithuanian consulates in the Manchuria in the first half of 20th century*

**Mantas Macikas** (Vytautas Magnus University) – *Sino-Lithuanian diplomatic relations: History at the crossroads*

10:30–10:45 Coffee break

10:45–12:15 Section V: Ties with Taiwan

**Raigirdas Boruta** (Vilnius University) – *Baltic States as a PRC-ROC Diplomatic Battleground in the 1990s: Historical Developments and Parallels with the Present*

**Simona Kumpė** (Vytautas Magnus University) – *Opening of the Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania: representation in media*

**Thomas B. Gold** (University of California, Berkeley) – *Lithuania and Taiwan: Forging Post-Imperium Identity*

12:15–13:30 Lunch break

13:30–15:00 Section VI: Ties with South Korea

**Karole Mueller** (Vytautas Magnus University) – *Overview of the similarities of historic events of Lithuanian and Korean in the 19th–21st centuries*

**Lee Juneon** (Ewha Womans University) – *The role of KSI in Intercultural Education*

**Heejin Kang** (King Sejong Institute, Vilnius) – *The History of KSI's in the Baltics as a case study of Korea–Lithuania cooperation*

15:00–15:15 Coffee break

15:15–16:45 Section VII: Interregional connections in broader perspective

**David W. Kim** (Australian National University / Kookmin University) – *Norway and NORMASH: UN's Scandinavian Ally's Policy at the Korean War and Beyond (1950s-60s)*

**Georgijs Dunajevs** (National Library of Latvia / University of Würzburg) – *East Asia in Latvian Travel Writing from the Late 19th – Early 20th Century*

**Konstantinas Andrijauskas** (Vilnius University) – *East Asian Factor in the Development of Lithuania–Australia Relations*

16:45 Conclusion

## ABSTRACTS

(in chronological order according to the program)

**Ryo Nakai** (University of Kitakyushu)

### ***Expanding and Evolving Baltic Studies in Japan: A contents analysis of bibliographical databases***

Since the Baltic States restored their independence and the diplomatic relationship with Japan, mutual connections and interests have grown slowly but substantively, not only in the political and economic field but also academic field as well. Japanese intellectual and cultural interest toward the Baltic countries has boosted, especially after their accessions toward the European Union. This presentation reviews the expansion and evolution of academic and non-academic publications about the Baltic States in Japanese by conducting statistical trend and contents analysis onto some bibliographical databases in Japan. The analysis based on the CiNii article database and the National Diet Library monograph database revealed that publication trends toward the Baltic States in Japan have substantively expanded, evolved, and changed its topic. The analysis also demonstrates similarities and differences in Japanese interest toward Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

### **Section I: Early ties with Japan**

**Ene Selart** (University of Tartu)

### ***Soldiers and Doctors on the Battlefield: Different Perspectives of the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) based on the War Letters***

The Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) involved more than 9000 Estonian soldiers and about 30 Estonian doctors who were conscripted to the Tsarist Russian army and navy. As the literacy rate among the Estonians was considerably high, it enabled them to write letters to their families and newspaper editors back at home which formed a unique collection of the first-hand insight of the war activities and perspective acquired from the battlefield that was published in the Estonian newspapers. Respectively the war initiated a new journalistic genre in the Estonian media as the newspapers started to publish the war letters sent from the Russo-Japanese war. The majority of the war letters were written by the soldiers but ca 10% of the total amount were penned by the doctors. The current paper analyses by the thematic analysis method the war letters written by the soldiers (n=42) and the doctors (n=4) that were published in Estonian media covering the main themes in their content and also major differences and perspectives between the two groups.

**Linas Didvalis** (Vytautas Magnus University)

***Lithuania–Japan diplomatic relations during the interwar period***

The conditions for Lithuania and Japan to start bilateral relations arose only in the 1920s. This was primarily due to the proclamation of Lithuania's independence in 1918, but the incentive also came from Japan to expand its international relations and influence. Although the long geographical distance meant that bilateral affairs between Lithuania and Japan were not particularly close or active during the interwar period, it does nevertheless contain some interesting cases of interaction that are worth examining: signing of treaties, exchange of visits, appointment of representatives, etc. The presentation will use newly discovered archive materials to provide a more detailed account of Lithuania-Japan bilateral affairs and shed light on some previously little known facts.

**Arvydas Kumpis** (Vytautas Magnus University)

***Early Showa Japan as seen by Lithuanian missionaries: case of Albinas Margevičius***

As Lithuania became more open to the world after 1918, Lithuanian citizens spread all over the globe. The most active travelers were the missionaries who chose the exotic, distant corners of the world for their duties. To understand the formation of Japan's image in Lithuania in this early period, it is crucial to look at the most accessible sources – the periodicals.

In my presentation, I will take Albinas Margevičius (Arubino Jin) as an example. He was among the first Lithuanians to travel to Japan in early Showa period and for quite some time – the only known Lithuanian who remained there permanently. His written legacy albeit scarce in Lithuanian periodicals is still largely overlooked by researchers. To uncover the matter, I will present my recent research and share details about career of Margevičius, provide some insights regarding his attitude towards Japanese people, culture and history, and his criticism of self-proclaimed Japanese specialists.

**Section II: Japanese art in Poland – Collectors and collecting till 1920**

Convened by **Aleksandra Görlich** (Polish Institute of World Art Studies)

After a long period of non-existence, Poland reappeared on political maps of the world in 1918 and began to establish diplomatic relations with many countries, including Japan in 1919. It became an active partner in Central and Eastern Europe by making its own contribution to the development of cultural relations in this region, which are still ongoing to this day. These were not entirely new activities, however, as before 1919 the inhabitants of Polish territories participated in cultural exchange in various fields – including art – actively cooperating with collectors and artists from Europe and beyond. A good example was the creation of the collections of Japanese art.

In 2019 the three panelists: Ewa Kamińska, Beata Romanowicz and Aleksandra Görlich started a project entitled Collections – Encounters – Inspirations: Japanese Art in Central and Eastern Europe till 1919 and beyond. Until this moment it resulted in publication of a book showing the results of

research which were done by us and our colleagues representing the universities and museums from Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of our panel is to show a short survey of this research and point in detail the situation in Poland through concentrating our papers on Polish collectors of Japanese art, especially Feliks “Manggha” Jasiński and a process of collecting. We would like to present the establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan as a result of many activities taken among others by art critics, collectors, artists and craftsmen during the time preceding 1919. These activities constituted a base for the relationships development during the next 100 years.

**Ewa Kamińska** (Jagiellonian University in Krakow / Polish Institute of World Art Studies)

***Collections and Collectors of Japanese art in Central and Eastern Europe – a current stage of research***

The 100-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan, celebrated in 2019, marks an important point in the history of political bilateral partnership. However, encounters in other fields, especially those concerning culture, have lasted much longer, despite state borders and political connections. These encounters - mostly thanks to the individual engagement of artists, art collectors and art lovers - had been quite complex even before establishing official relations between both states in 1919. In case of Poland such a key person was a collector of Japanese art Feliks "Manggha" Jasiński.

This anniversary has become a reason for us to look at the situation in art not only in Poland, but also in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. On this occasion the Institute of Intercultural Studies of the Jagiellonian University, the National Museum in Krakow and the Polish Institute of World Art Studies organized a conference aimed at gaining insight into the current state of research in countries of Central and Eastern Europe including Baltic states and initiating cooperation between them. The result of this conference is a book which will be published this year, entitled *Cultural Bridges: Collections – Encounters – Inspirations. Japanese Art in Central and Eastern Europe till 1919 and beyond*.

This paper has two aims. Firstly, introducing the results of the recent research constituting a content of the publication and encourage participants present at today's conference to cooperation. Secondly, showing Feliks "Manggha" Jasiński being active at the turn of the 20th century, who encouraged his contemporaries to encounter and enjoy Japanese art as well inspired future generations to research Japanese art in Poland through the next 100 years.

**Aleksandra Görlich** (Polish Institute of World Art Studies)

***Feliks “Manggha” Jasiński and his cultural policy through collecting from a 21st century perspective***

Feliks “Manggha” Jasiński (1861–1929) was a well-known art critic and collector based in Warsaw and Krakow. He was famous for his unusual methods of promoting knowledge about Japanese art and culture, including maintaining a private museum in this apartment, open to everyone. His activities in terms of exhibitions, publications and discussions with people involved in Polish culture

were a kind of cultural policy of educating and inspiring the society towards self-development. This way might have been seen as non-related to European culture however the articles written by Jasiński explain clearly how the Japanese way of creating art and nature approach is worth following also in Poland-to-be. In my paper I would like to present examples of Jasiński's activities showing what role his Far-Eastern art collection played in the process of inspiring artists, craftsmen, and educators in Polish society. In the turn of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries an approach of taking inspiration from a Far Eastern country would have seemed unusual or exotic, however nowadays, in times of globalisation, it is easier to understand the example of Jasiński and therefore to interpret his activities from a modern perspective.

**Beata Romanowicz** (National Museum in Krakow)

***Diversity of Collectors and ways of collecting Japanese art in Poland till 1920***

While presenting Japonica in the Polish Museums until 1920, I would like to highlight several issues. The first is to outline the historical background and to point the reason why in this context presentation of gifts with Japanese provenance became of particular importance.

The profiles of the donors and diversity of their personalities are also presented – who they were and how were their relations with the country. The main core of the research are also the sources and circumstances of obtaining by them Japanese paintings, sculptures and crafts. Regarding the profile of the donations one can indicate whether they built their collections consciously or whether their choices were dictated by a need to surround themselves with beautiful objects or perhaps by trends? While regarding many points of view, we may realize that in some cases they gathered just souvenirs from the voyage. Did they share other – apart from their passion for Japanese art and culture – values and ideas?

The period of our interest is only the initial near 50 years of the existence of the first museum institution of a national character, The National Museum in Krakow, which is, together with other institutions – just like The National Museum in Warsaw - one of the crucial, fundamental matter of research.

### **Section III: Contemporary ties with Japan**

**Agnese Haijima** (University of Latvia)

***Latvia-Japan Relationship: Historical Background and Current Situation***

Latvia and Japan last year were celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the establishment of diplomatic ties. How was the formation process of this relationship, further development and current situation – these issues will be discussed in the presentation. The author will talk about history, politics, social issues, culture, art and sports in the interrelation between Japan and Latvia. Further the author will present new research data that have not yet been published.

**Aya Kimura** (Ochanomizu University)

***Presentation of Lithuania-origin artists at Museums in Japan after the 1990s***

Art exhibition of foreign artists represents bilateral cultural exchanges. After the re-establishment of diplomatic relationships between Japan and Lithuania in 1991, the first exhibition on a Lithuanian artist in Japan was “Čiurlionis: fantasist and mystic of fin-de-siecle Lithuania” at Saizon Museum of Art in 1992. In this exhibition, Čiurlionis’s works were loaned from M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art in Kaunas. However, Lithuanian-origin artists are often introduced in Japan without mentioning “Lithuania.” An example is Jonas Mekas, a filmmaker, a poet, and an artist. As 2022 is “The Year of Jonas Mekas” by the Lithuanian Parliament, Mekas is one of the most prominent Lithuania-origin artists. His works were introduced in several exhibitions in Japan, such as “Jonas Mekas: Frozen Film Frames” at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography in 1996. However, the word “Lithuania” rarely appears in the explanation of his exhibition. Another Lithuania-origin artist often presented in Japan is George Maciunas (Jurgis Mačiūnas). As Japanese artists (e.g., Yoko Ono and Ay-O) participated in FLUXUS, the main profile Japanese museums focus on is the FLUXUS leader. Moreover, Stasys Eidrigėvičius (born in Lithuania) formally represented Polish artists at an exhibition “Stasys Eidrigėvičius: Images: Representations of Memories” at Musashino Art University Museum in 2019. Not only exhibitions, but collections of some Lithuania-origin artists have been formed in Japan. For instance, Marunuma Art Park Museum (Saitama Prefecture) has a collection of Ben Shahn. Ben Shahn was born in Lithuania, but his main profile was explained as Jewish-American. Thus, in the last three decades, Lithuania-origin artists were often introduced at Museums in Japan, but in many cases, their roots “Lithuania” were not emphasized enough. Lithuania-origin artists were not mainly presented in the context of cultural exchanges between Lithuania and Japan.

**Krzysztof Mędrzycki** (Fukuyama University)

***The Growth or Total Freeze? The economic relationship between Japan and Visegrad group, the United Kingdom***

This presentation will examine the history of commerce between V4, also known as *Visegrad Group* (Czech, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary) and the United Kingdom, emphasising economic relations with Japan in the last decade. The changes within V4 and the UK economic activity can be observed by intensifying trade volumes with leading world economies. As one of the leading countries – Japan is a pivotal economy in the modern world. Japan and V4, the UK faced political and economic stagnation due to several factors.

In the 1990’s the burst of the Japanese asset price bubble or ‘Bubble Economy’ debilitated the Japanese nation; V4 faced a long path of transforming and modernising its own’s economy to participate more efficiently in the world market. The United Kingdom decided to withdraw in 2016 from European Union (*Brexit*), creating a new post-EU economic reality.

Although ‘Bubble Economy’, the post-soviet transformation and Brexit had harshly affected these countries, it provided the necessary time to readjust countries markets and policies.



Hence, analysing the patterns and history of commerce between Japan and the UK, V4, it is possible to notice signs of economic cooperation or a somewhat opposite - total freeze in the exchange. These signs explain why possible obstacles limit economic cooperation between Japan and V4, the UK.

**Sean O'Reilly** (Akita International University)

***A Mirror of (Japanese) Heroism: Depictions of Lithuania in Japanese Cinema***

Many people in Japan have heard of Lithuania and indeed have quite a positive impression of that country. Whence came this strongly favorable view? The answer is simple: most Japanese know of Lithuania only through the lens of the heroic Japanese figure Sugihara Chiune. Moreover, outside of relatively quick mention of Sugihara in their public education system, the biggest source of information on Sugihara's life and deeds, and thus on Japan-Lithuania relations, is commercial film. While Sugihara's legacy is undoubtedly impressive, movies (such as the 2015 biopic *Persona Non Grata*) whose primary raison d'être is to sell tickets—and specifically to sell tickets in Japan—may not be the most trustworthy teacher.

In this paper, I will analyze the depiction of Lithuania in films like *Persona Non Grata*, looking beyond the hero worship of Sugihara to see how the Lithuanians of the wartime era are actually depicted—and what effects this skewed representation may have had on Japan-Lithuania relations. What does it mean, for example, that despite purportedly showing Japanese viewers glimpses of historical Lithuania itself, the “Lithuania” scenes were shot in Poland? Or that, instead of highlighting the proactivity of Lithuanians in supporting Sugihara's salvific mission, Lithuanians in this film are generally presented as helpless victims simply waiting for Sugihara's heroic intervention? This certainly furthered the central aim of selling tickets in the home market of Japan: centering the story squarely on this irreproachable Japanese hero made commercial sense, though it elided some of the behind-the-scene heroism of many non-Japanese actors.

My purpose is not to criticize Sugihara personally, nor to complain about cinematic license. Instead, I wish to explore what a more balanced approach to the depiction of Lithuania in Japanese cinema might look like, and the benefits such an approach could bring in the future.

## **Section IV: Ties with China**

**Märt Läänemets** (Estonian Oriental Society)

### ***Alexander Staël von Holstein (1877-1937): From a Baltic Baron to the World-scale Buddhist Scholar in Peking***

In the paper, biographical sketch and overview of academic works of Alexander Staël von Holstein will be given focusing on exploring his Estonian Baltic German origin and background, in one side, and his later research work in Buddhist Studies at Peking University, in another. A.St.v.H. was born in the primeval Baltic German nobility family in the family Manor Tõstamaa (Testama) in Pärnu County of South-West Estonia. After studying comparative linguistics and Indian languages in Tartu and Berlin Universities, he gained PhD in 1900. In early 1900s, he travelled in India and continued his studies, then worked in Sankt Petersburg University as Privatdozent in Sanskrit and doing philological research in unknown before Central Asian Buddhist texts. In 1916 A.St.v.H. was sent to China for further study and research. After communist revolution in 1917 in Russia and establishing independent Republic of Estonia few years later, he lost his family property and decided to remain in Peking. Here he continued to conduct research work in Buddhist texts and art and established Sanskrit studies at Peking University. A.S.v.H. published widely and became one of the most renown buddhologists of the time. It is remarkable to note that in late 1920s he adopted Estonian citizenship, thus keeping connections with the land of his ancestors and respecting Republic of Estonia as his first homeland. In 2014, Chinese scholars Wang Qilong and Deng Xiaoyong published a voluminous book on his life and academic activities titled *The Academic Knight between East and West: A Biography of Alexander von Staël-Holstein*.

**Laurynas Kudijanovas** (Lithuanian Institute of History)

#### ***The importance of Lithuanian consulates in the Manchuria in the first half of 20th century***

The main objective of this paper is to introduce and describe the various activities of the consuls general and honorary consuls of Lithuania in the city of Harbin which became the main area of Lithuanian political and cultural relations with China and Japan in interwar period. It is aimed to show the historical importance of the consulates established here especially in two spheres: the meaning of constant endeavor to improve the diplomatic relations between countries and the diplomats struggle to preserve the Lithuanian culture in local communities in the Far East, mostly in Manchuria. Highly important personalities are brought to the attention: consuls general in Harbin A. Polišaitis, E. Jatulis, honorary consuls in Tokyo and Harbin M. Yasaka and J. Katilius. Much attention is paid to discuss about the alterations of the working possibilities and status of Lithuanian consulate after the change of government in Manchuria in 1932. Paper also brings back the attention to the diplomat not only as a profession or state trustee, but also as a person, who had his own daily life problems, and clashes with the Lithuanian communities when their areas of interests differed. Regarding to the preserved historical documents there will be possibility to see the government and unofficial evaluations of each consul who worked in Far East during this period.

Finally, this report, due to its complexity and Manchuria's historical geopolitical issues in the interwar period, will not only present the little-studied subtleties of Lithuanian political and cultural history in the Far East, but also present Lithuania's diplomatic relations with two Eastern countries in the first half of 20th century.

**Mantas Macikas** (Vytautas Magnus University)

***Sino-Lithuanian diplomatic relations: History at the crossroads***

After 30 years of expanding economic and political exchanges, Sino-Lithuanian diplomatic relations are at the crossroads. Sino-Lithuanian relations date back to 1921, when the Republic of China recognized independent Lithuania until the latter's occupation and subsequent annexation by the Soviet Union in 1940. Modern diplomatic relations between Lithuania and the People's Republic of China were officially established on 14 September 1991, following the official restoration of Lithuanian independence. In 1992, the PRC's embassy was established in Vilnius, and in 1995, the Lithuanian embassy was established in Beijing. However, in 2019, bilateral relations have become strained when the Department of Homeland Security has announced China's threat to the Lithuanian national security. There was also a conflict in Lithuania at a rally to support protests in Hong Kong. In 2021, Lithuania announced that withdraws from the 17+1 economic cooperation agreement and opened a Taiwanese representative office in Lithuania. Trade between the two countries seriously disrupted. China downgraded its diplomatic relations with Lithuania from ambassadorial to the level of charge d'affaires. For this reason, bilateral relations between China and Lithuania have reached the brink of confrontation.

## **Section V: Ties with Taiwan**

**Raigirdas Boruta** (Vilnius University)

***Baltic States as a PRC-ROC Diplomatic Battleground in the 1990s: Historical Developments and Parallels with the Present***

Historically, the Republic of China's (ROC, Taiwan) interactions with the Baltic States were negligible. During the states' short-lived independence after the World War I, some progress, although insignificant, has been made to improve state-to-state ties up until the 1940 Soviet occupation. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the three Baltic States re-established their statehood. They faced various internal challenges while, at the same time, actively seeking wider recognition within the international community and organisations. In the early 1990s, the region that was hardly known to the East Asian countries, became a rarely-known diplomatic battleground between the ROC and the PRC as a part of their broader competition for recognition in the world.

The Baltic States, unlike some countries in Central and Eastern Europe, did not have historical ties with the PRC. In the wake of a significantly decreased number of diplomatic allies, ROC's attention shifted towards these three countries which, given their bitter experience with communism, had the potential to switch towards relations with the ROC, instead of the PRC. This resulted in an intensive competition between the PRC and ROC based on an economic 'charm offensive' that had mixed results in the Baltic States. While ROC tested its "flexible diplomacy", China employed a "sticks and carrots" strategy. The intensity of such competition is evident: for a short time, Latvia even managed to

maintain official ties with both the PRC and the ROC at the same time. Ultimately, PRC proved successful in dissuading the states from closer ties with the ROC.

In my proposed work, I will discuss the historical background of the ROC's post-Soviet era diplomatic advances in the region with an emphasis on the identification of the main factors that led to the failure of ROC's strategy. At the same time, I will identify the reasons behind the region's ultimate shift towards the PRC. Then, I will discuss the parallels with the present situation in which the question of Taiwan is once again reappearing on the Baltic States' political agendas. In my view, the proposed paper effectively addresses the problem related to a clear lack of a deeper analysis of this particular topic. Furthermore, such research is relevant to the current situation as the Baltic States are one of the most active in their efforts to develop closer ties with the ROC. Unlike 30 years ago, this time the Baltic States, especially Lithuania, are led not only by economic considerations but also by their values-based foreign policy approach.

**Simona Kumpė** (Vytautas Magnus University)

***Opening of the Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania: representation in media***

This conference is dedicated to celebrate a century of ties between the Baltic region and East Asia. Interestingly, for the past year in Lithuania we have been witnessing another historical tie being made with one more actor in East Asia. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, the Taiwanese Representative Office was opened in Vilnius, and there are plans to open a Lithuanian representative office in Taipei this year as well. These events mark the strengthening of bilateral relations between Lithuania and Taiwan, but at the same time, they are adding a lot of fuel to the relations between Lithuania and the People's Republic of China. The major issue lies in the name of the Taiwanese Representational Office, where the name of the island is used instead of Taipei, which is used by analogical offices in other countries. The new Taiwanese Representative Office has become a very controversial topic in Lithuania and globally. It has been addressed numerous times in the Lithuanian media from different perspectives.

In this paper, I will analyze how the opening of Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania is represented in the major news websites in Lithuania, to see those different perspectives, attitudes and opinions on the topic.

**Thomas B. Gold** (University of California, Berkeley)

***Lithuania and Taiwan: Forging Post-Imperium Identity***

Lithuania and Taiwan have historically been part of larger empires with little say over their own identities. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and its declaration of independence in 1990, Lithuania's state and society took control of the country's own narrative and its recognized place in the global system, siding with the EU and other democracies. Taiwan, on the other hand, while *de facto* separate from the People's Republic of China, remains constrained by Beijing in its quest for space for activities with the rest of the world. Nonetheless, Taiwan is an economic powerhouse with business ties spanning the globe. It has transformed from an authoritarian dictatorship to a thriving democracy, and its strong civil society has made great efforts to promote a unique identity that draws

on its Chinese heritage but incorporates elements from its own unique historical experience. But outside of 14 nations that grant Taiwan formal diplomatic recognition, the best that Taiwan can manage as far as international identity is concerned, is economic and cultural offices whose name cannot suggest that they represent a *de jure* sovereign nation. Given this reality, Taiwan has become increasingly proactive in establishing substantive ties in areas where it previously had little presence, particularly Central and Eastern Europe. Since the fall of 2021, Lithuania's willingness to let Taiwan open a representative office under the name "Taiwan" rather than "Taipei" sent China into fits of anger, to the point of compelling Lithuania to evacuate its diplomatic corps from Beijing along with economic sanctions. This paper takes advantage of these events to compare the experiences of Lithuania and Taiwan in extricating themselves from imperial overlords, carving their own identities and paths on the global stage, and confronting hardball pressure from Beijing.

## **Section VI: Ties with South Korea**

**Karole Mueller** (Vytautas Magnus University)

***Overview of the similarities of historic events of Lithuanian and Korean in the 19th–21st centuries***

This study was conceived with the attempt to verify the idea of despite belonging to two significantly different regions, two countries can have very similar or same compatible points which can be used to fulfil later studies.

When discussing Korean and Lithuanian history (19th-21st centuries) a pattern of similarities appeared in the formation of contemporary statehood. These similarities inspired to conduct a study aimed to examine if these patterns actually exist and contribute to the formation of national identity. Reclaiming that both national identities show significant similarities thought the course of historical developments.

Globalization has led to the blurring of strictly defined borders and thus to a very important topic in international discourse. Nationalism is often the primary vehicle for building and shaping statehood, leading to a specific national identity and national feelings on which the state can be built and verified. National identity can be defined in many different ways, and for this study it was chosen to employ a mix of ideas that explain the formation of national identity through language and historical experience.

This study builds on the comparative analysis of the historical experiences of Korea and Lithuania, paying special attention to the national language, as in certain cases it plays a crucial role in the formation of one's identity. Despite belonging to two different regions and cultures, both countries share similar cultural experiences. In addition, they have experienced the influence of foreign powers throughout history - South Korea was under the influence of China, Japan and the USA, and Lithuania experienced the influence of the Russian Empire, Nazi Germany and the USSR.

**Lee Juneon** (Ewha Womans University)

***The role of KSI in Intercultural Education***

Korean language education started in the Baltic region, with Vilnius in 2014, through KSI. This study intends to discuss the future direction of Korean language education in Baltic region and the role of KSI, especially the direction of cultural education, through the disposition analysis of Lithuanian Vilnius King Sejong Institute students.

**Heejin Kang** (King Sejong Institute, Vilnius)

***The History of KSI's in the Baltics as a case study of Korea–Lithuania cooperation***

In order to reach better mutual understanding based on growing interest between Korean and Lithuania nowadays, and in the Baltic States in general, this study looks back upon the past almost one decade of the history of King Sejong Institutes in the Baltics. According to the history of KSIs this study aims at finding out the significant role of KSIs since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Baltic countries and KOR. Also, this study looks into Vilnius KSI as a case study and describes what KSI, Vilnius has done to improve the bilateral interaction between Korea and Lithuania.

**Section VII: Interregional connections in broader perspective**

**David W. Kim** (Australian National University / Kookmin University)

***Norway and NORMASH: UN's Scandinavian Ally's Policy at the Korean War and Beyond (1950s-60s)***

The Korean War (1950-1953) was one of the most calamitous and brutal wars in modern history. It was fought by the post-colonial people of the peninsula, and it culminated in the creation of two ideologically opposed states, but the three years' military clash in East Asia (or the Far East) is often labelled simply as a 'Forgotten War' in the West including North America. The ensuing ethnic division has been interpreted through the various geopolitical lenses of military strategy, politics, international relations, and power games. What about the situation of casualties? Which particular nations in the United Nations (UN) dispatched medical aid for the treatment of war victims? How did Norway among the Scandinavian allies participate the non-European war? What were their unique characteristics among non-military supporting nations? What legacy they left for the post-war Koreans? This paper explores the military-historical backgrounds by which the Northern European nation decided to send unarmed skilled personnel to aid South Korea. The paper argues the social voluntarism of the neutral group in the critical insight that the field activities of Norwegian NORMASH individually promoted the Red Cross spirit of advanced humanitarianism on the top of mandatory duty, in giving special attention on children (orphans), women, civilians, POWs, and medical education, as well as the post-war collaboration for the initial Korean public health system in the 1960s.

**Georgijs Dunajevs** (National Library of Latvia / University of Würzburg)

***East Asia in Latvian Travel Writing from the Late 19th – Early 20th Century***

Steamship and railway, two of the great drivers of globalization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, greatly enhanced the possibility to travel and explore new places. A natural extension of that was the explosion in popularity of the travel writing genre. Latvians were no strangers to these developments in travel trends, too. Although leisure travel was still uncommon and travel was often necessitated by work, travellers still typically found time to enjoy their journeys and record their experiences of scenery and cultural contact. While travellers to East Asia represented as diverse groups as scholars, maidservants, and clergy, the uniting factor was that many of them shared these experiences in Latvian newspapers. The benefit of such practice was twofold: travellers contributed to both the pool of knowledge on East Asia and the burgeoning national language tradition. In the virtual absence of any other credible information about East Asia, travel articles were essentially the only way of making the wider public acquainted with this “exotic” region.

In this paper, I will give an overview of the corpus of early travel writing on East Asia in Latvian, paying attention to the figures of the travellers, the routes taken, and the places visited, primarily concentrating on the things and topics that had caught the eye and ear of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Latvian traveller. While the accounts are few and far between, from our modern-day perspective, they possess valuable evidence of some of the earliest recorded cultural contacts between individuals from the Baltic states and East Asia. I will also examine several cases of translating famous travelogues into Latvian, evidencing the local public demand for knowledge of the outside world.

**Konstantinas Andrijauskas** (Vilnius University)

***East Asian Factor in the Development of Lithuania–Australia Relations***

Geographical distance and political vicissitudes postponed the official establishment of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Australia to 1991. It took an extra 30 years to upgrade this relationship by the long-awaited recent opening of the Lithuanian Embassy in Canberra. Prior to Lithuania’s return to the community of sovereign nations, its connections to the ‘lucky country’ were basically confined to the local diaspora, largely composed of more than a dozen thousand former refugees who fled the Soviet occupation in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Although Australia is located far away from conventional borders of East Asia, their steadily increasing bilateral political, economic and cultural links are well recognized. This paper attempts to address a much less understood and hardly ever studied phenomenon, namely the East Asian factor in the history and background of Lithuania–Australia relations. Roughly following a chronological and case-oriented order, the author argues that complex considerations about Asia, including its (North)eastern part, have at least indirectly underpinned all more prominent aspects of the bilateral relationship, both before and after its official establishment. In the former case, thousands of ‘displaced persons’ of Lithuanian descent were accepted by Canberra in the context of the notorious White Australia Policy, besides Pacific Islanders particularly targeted against Asians of all sorts.

On the other hand, Lithuania’s recent proactive turn towards Australia has also been heavily associated with East Asian factors. Besides addressing a long-time desire by Lithuanian Australians,

the new embassy signalled a key component of Vilnius' foreign policy diversification in the Asia-Pacific, including similar initiatives towards South Korea, Singapore and most contentiously Taiwan, that came largely in response to its steadily worsening relationship with China. Tellingly, the Canberra opening was coordinated from Lithuania's Embassy in Japan. Hence, it seems safe to conclude that Vilnius is reacting to Australia's prominent role in the emerging 'Indo-Pacific'.