**CALL FOR PANELS AND PAPERS**

**International academic conference**

**“A century of connections: historical ties between the Baltic and East Asia regions”**

at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

**Date: March 4–5, 2022**

The conference is inspired by multiple anniversaries that mark bilateral relationships between East Asia and the Baltic states. 100-year anniversaries are related to the fact that Japan expressed de jure recognition of Estonia and Latvia in 1921, and of Lithuania in 1922. Similar China-related century-of-ties anniversaries will be marked in 2023. All this has led to many exchanges and state-to-state interactions that are worth examining. The Soviet occupation period has significantly changed the dynamics of bilateral affairs but still provides scholars with many opportunities for investigation. Finally, the interaction between East Asian countries and newly independent Baltic countries resumed after the end of the Cold War, and this marks yet another set of anniversaries – 30 years since the re-establishment of diplomatic affairs that took place in 1991.

Such anniversaries of bilateral affairs encourage historians and scholars in other fields to reflect on the past and provide insight that could help to build mutual understanding and stronger country-to-country cooperation in the future. The increasing number of books published in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia about Japan, China and Korea, and vice-versa – books in East Asia about the Baltic states, shows growing interest to reflect on the past and present and to reach better mutual understanding. Historical events such as opening Japan’s foreign office in Latvia in 1929 and its active use throughout the years, appointment of Honorary Consul Voldemar Puhk in Estonia in 1935, or Chiune Sugihara’s brave act of saving thousands of Jewish people in Lithuania by issuing transit visas in 1940 keep fascinating both researchers and the general public alike. The aforementioned examples cover only Japan, leaving many more intriguing stories that connect the Baltic states with China and Korea to be told, discovered and analyzed. Therefore, it clear that there is a rich ground for scholars to conduct further research and share knowledge.

The main objective of the conference is to explore the following three important periods of history:

1) First encounters between the East Asian and the Baltic states that finally led to high-level bilateral affairs developed during the interwar period.

2) Limited but nonetheless existing encounters between the two regions during the Soviet period.

3) Most recent interaction during the past three decades since the re-establishment of diplomatic affairs.

The organizers welcome participants from various academic disciplines of social sciences and humanities to present their original research. Both individual presentations and panel proposals are welcome. The working language of the conference is English.

**Panel proposals**

Panel proposals can be submitted by panel conveners after gathering no less than three presenters. The proposal form (Appendix 1) must be filled and sent by email to conference.asc@vdu.lt by January 10, 2022. The selection of panels will be announced to the conveners by January 17, 2022.

**Individual presentation proposals**

Individual presentation proposals can be submitted by individual presenters. The proposal form (Appendix 2) must be filled and sent by email to conference.asc@vdu.lt by January 10, 2022. The selection of proposals and their grouping into thematic sections will be announced by January 17, 2022. In case some proposals will be fitting one of the existing panels, the organizers may suggest some panel conveners include additional participants in their panel.

During the selection process, panel proposals are given priority over individual paper proposals. Therefore, we highly recommend individual presenters to convey a panel or join a panel conveyed by someone else.

**Full papers**

The organizers do not plan to publish conference proceedings; therefore, full papers of presentations are not required to be submitted. Instead, the organizers encourage participants to find suitable peer-reviewed journals for publication. In addition, the organizers are open for offers from existing peer-reviewed journals in case there would be willingness to prepare a special issue dedicated to the topic of the conference.

**Participation fee and support**

The participation fee is 30 Euro per person to cover coffee breaks and other organizational expenses. Limited financial support, including waiving the fee, will be provided to scholars in the early stages of their careers.

**Precautions related to COVID-19 pandemic**

Although the organizers expect the conference to take place in Kaunas, Lithuania, due to the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the format may be changed into an online event. The organizers will keep following the trends and will seek to inform the participants about the changes as early as possible.

*Appendix 1*

**Panel submission to**

**International academic conference “A century of connections: historical ties between the Baltic and East Asia regions”**

at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

**Date: March 4–5, 2022**

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| --- |
| **Information about the panel** |
| Title: |  |
| Abstract (up to 300 words): |
| **Convener** |
| Full name:Affiliation:Position:E-mail: |  |
| **List of panelists** (insert more if needed) |
| Full name:Affiliation:Position:E-mail:Title of paper: |  |
| Abstract (up to 300 words): |
| Full name:Affiliation:Position:E-mail:Title of paper: |  |
| Abstract (up to 300 words): |
| Full name:Affiliation:Position:E-mail:Title of paper: |  |
| Abstract (up to 300 words): |

*Appendix 2*

**Paper submission to**

**International academic conference “A century of connections: historical ties between the Baltic and East Asia regions”**

at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

**Date: March 4–5, 2022**

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| **Information about the paper** |
| Title: |  |
| Abstract (up to 300 words): |
| **Presenter** |
| Full name:Affiliation:Position:E-mail: |  |