

## Transnational Research in a Multipolar World

International Conference of the Max Weber Foundation

### Parallel Session

### 'The Indo-Pacific – Mobilities and Connectivities'

May 9, 9:00 – 12:00am

#### 9:00 – 9:40 Migrant worlds

##### **Chinese Migration and the Imagination of Pacific Worlds**

Simone Lässig and Nino Vallén, GHI Washington/Berkeley

##### **Prewar Japanese Communities in Southeast Asia**

Naoko Shimazu, NUS, and David M. Malitz, DIJ Tokyo

Chair: Edward Boyle (Nichibunken)

#### 9:40 – 10:40 Infrastructures

##### **Japan's infrastructural investment in NE India**

Edward Boyle, Nichibunken

##### **New cities and infrastructural frontiers in Southeast Asia**

Tim Bunnell, NUS

##### **Financial entanglements between agrarian South India and Southeast Asia**

Poorva Rajaram, MWF Delhi

Chair: Franz Waldenberger (DIJ Tokyo)

#### 10:40 – 11:20 Knowledge circulation

##### **Indigenous ecologies: Nation-making, biodiversity and the global food system.**

Sujeet George, MWF Delhi

##### **Global China's knowledge infrastructure: The (re)emergence of area and development studies**

Han Cheng, NUS

Chair: Sebastian Schwecke (MWF Delhi)

#### 11:20 – 12:00 Infrastructural pasts and futures of the Indo-Pacific idea

##### **Presenting NIHU Global Area Studies Program and the Maritime Asian and Pacific Studies**

Minoru Mio and Rintaro Ono, National Museum of Ethnology

General discussion and preparation of the presentation of the afternoon panel

Chair: James Sidaway (NUS)

## CVs

**Edward Boyle** is Associate Professor at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), Kyoto, and editor of *Japan Review*. He researches boundaries and borderland spaces in Japan and its neighbourhood, the Asia-Pacific, and Northeast India. Recent publications include *Geo-Politics in Northeast Asia* (with Iwashita Akihiro and Yong-Chool Ha, Routledge 2022) and *Japan's Borders: Between state and people* (in Japanese with Naomi Chi, Hokkaido University Press 2022). Ongoing projects include research into the role and significance of borders of memory in Asia (see [www.bordersofmemory.com](http://www.bordersofmemory.com)), and a long-term collaborative interdisciplinary investigation entitled "Imagining Islands in Japan".

**Tim Bunnell** is Professor in the Department of Geography and Director of the Asia Research Institute (ARI), at the National University of Singapore. At ARI, he leads a transdisciplinary research cluster on Asian Urbanisms. The primary focus of Tim's research is urban development in Southeast Asia, examining both the transformation of cities in that region and inter-urban connections with other parts of the world. His first book *Malaysia, Modernity and the Multimedia Super Corridor* (Routledge, 2004) analysed high-tech infrastructural expansion in Malaysia's largest urban region, around Kuala Lumpur. He is also author of *From World City to the World in One City: Liverpool through Malay Lives* (Wiley, 2016). In 2023, Tim will commence a new Singapore Ministry of Education-funded research project on the design, development and future imaginaries associated with built-from-scratch cities, focusing in particular on Putrajaya and Nusantara.

**Han Cheng** recently joined the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, on a Max Weber Foundation Research Fellowship on Asian Infrastructures. His current research examines 'the rise of China' as a critical intellectual project, with a particular focus on China's (re)emerging knowledge production of world regions, foreign areas, and overseas development. He also works on collaborative projects that explore the spatial politics of China's international cooperation, including the Belt and Road Initiative and China-Africa relations. Han holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge, and was previously a visiting scholar at Yale University's MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies. Before joining the academia, he worked at policy think tanks in China, India, and South Africa.

**Sujeet George** is a Research Fellow at the Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies, New Delhi. He is trained in South Asian history and cultural studies from Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Kolkata. He earned his PhD in History from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich in 2022. His research interests include global histories of science and colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He is currently developing a new project on the overlapping histories of indigeneity, ecology, and the global food system.

**Simone Lässig** is director of the German Historical Institute Washington DC and professor of Modern History at Braunschweig University (on leave). She has been a visiting professor at St Antony's College, Oxford (2009/10) and a Remarque Visiting Fellow at New York University (2022). For her book on the embourgeoisement of German Jewry she was awarded the 2004 German Historical Association's biennial prize. Her main fields of research are modern Jewish history, the history of knowledge and migration, digital history, and biography as a historical genre. Her last book *Refugee Crises, 1945–2000. Political and Societal Responses in International Comparison*, ed. with Jan Jansen, was published with Cambridge UP in 2020.

**David M. Malitz** is a Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo, where he works on the past and present of Japanese-Southeast Asian relations with a focus on Thailand. He received his doctoral degree in Japanese studies from the University of Munich. Prior to joining the DIJ, David taught at the Faculty of Arts of Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. He is also a non-resident Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University and a member of the Modern Monarchy in Global Perspective Research Hub at the University of Sydney.

**Minoru Mio** is a Professor at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan. He is also the Program Coordinator of National Institute of Humanities (NIHU) Global Area Studies Program, as well as the Project Coordinator of NIHU Indian Ocean World Studies Project. He has been interested in cultural anthropological studies on popular religious practice and social change in western India for more than thirty years. He is also a series editor of "Routledge New Horizons in South Asian Studies" and has edited a few titles of the series.

**Rintaro Ono** is professor at Minpaku National Museum of Ethnology. He conducts research on Maritime Archaeology and Anthropology, specifically on human maritime adaptation processes, human migration to Southeast Asian and Pacific Islands, and the history of human maritime exploitation and maritime trade. He has been involved in research projects in Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, Palau, Vanuatu, Tokelau, Federated States of Micronesia, and Okinawa. He is author of more than 60 academic papers and books, and editor of several books both in Japanese and English. Recent co-published books include *Pleistocene Archaeology: Migration, Technology and Adaptation*, 2020 (Open Access) and *Maritime People in Asia and Oceania*, 2018 (in Japanese).

**Poorva Rajaram** is a Research Fellow at the Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies, New Delhi. Her PhD thesis from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi was on pensions and life insurance in colonial India. She specialises in economic history, gender history and biopolitics. Her most recent project is on agrarian banking in colonial Southern India.

**Sebastian Schwecke** is director, Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies (MWF), Delhi. His research combines economic history and economic anthropology, focusing on market grammars in modern South Asia, credit, trust and risk, reputational economies, property constructions, and labor in commercial settings. Recent publications include the monograph *Debt, Trust, and Reputation. Extra-legal Finance in Northern India* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), the co-edited volume *Rethinking Markets in Modern India. Embedded Exchange and Contested Jurisdiction* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), and the forthcoming co-authored article 'Translating Transactions. Markets as Epistemic and Moral Spheres' (*Modern Asian Studies*).

**Naoko Shimazu** is the Research Cluster Leader of Inter-Asia Engagements at the Asia Research Institute, and Professor of Humanities (History) at Yale-NUS College, National University of Singapore. She is a global historian of Asia, with research interests in global diplomacy, social and cultural history of modern societies at war, and new approaches to the study of empire. Her current work includes the Editor (with Christian Goeschel) of the *Oxford Handbook of the Cultural History of Global Diplomacy, c.1750-2000*, and a monograph on *Diplomacy as Theatre: The Bandung Conference of 1955*. Her major recent publications include *Cold War Asia: A Visual History of Global Diplomacy* (with Matthew Phillips, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2023), and *The Russian Revolution in Asia* (co-editor, Routledge, 2022). She was awarded the Heritage Research Grant from the National Heritage Board of Singapore, to map the prewar Japanese community in Singapore.

**James D Sidaway** has served as Professor of Political Geography at National University of Singapore (NUS) since 2012. Previously he was Professor of Political and Cultural Geography at the University of Amsterdam and prior to that Professor of Human Geography at Plymouth University, UK. During the mid-late 1990s, James was a lecturer at the University of Birmingham, UK. His main research interests are political geography and geopolitics, especially of cities, states and conflicts and the history and philosophy of geography. Following prior work on Portuguese geopolitics and cross-border dynamics in Iberia, Southern Africa and Southeast Asia, James has worked (with Robina Mohammad) on labour, power and space in Abu Dhabi and Doha. His most recent book is Till F. Paasche and James D. Sidaway (2021) *Transecting Securityscapes: Dispatches from Cambodia, Iraq, and Mozambique* (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press). For further details, please see: <https://profile.nus.edu.sg/fass/geojds/>.

**Nino Vallen** is research fellow in Latin America history at the GHI's Pacific Office at UC Berkeley. A colonial historian by training, his first monograph *Being the Heart of the World: The Pacific and the Fashioning of the Self in New Spain, 1513–1641* (Forthcoming from Cambridge University Press, 2023) studies mobilities in the early modern Spanish Pacific and their impact on new notions of self and other in New Spain. In his current research project, he explores the role of the Chinese migrant worker in the stories that people in South America told in disputes about the exploitation of natural resources during the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries.

**Franz Waldenberger** is director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo. He is on leave from Munich University where he holds a professorship for Japanese Economy. His research focuses on the Japanese Economy, Corporate Governance and International Management. He is editor-in-chief of the international peer reviewed journal *Contemporary Japan*. His recent publications include *The Future of Financial Systems in the Digital Age* (co-edited with M. Heckel). As member of the Japanese German Forum and the board of the Japanese German Business Association, he has for many years been working for the betterment of German-Japanese relations.