



Australian
National
University

Living Politics: Self Help and Autonomous Action in East Asia and Beyond

Dates and Time:	Wednesday	14 March 2018	09:00 – 17:00
	Thursday	15 March 2018	09:00 – 17:00
	Friday	16 March 2018	09:00 – 17:00

Venue: Seminar Room, Australian Center on China in the World
Building 118, Fellows Lane, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia



Presented by
ARC Laureate Project-
*Informal Life Politics in the Making of Northeast Asia:
From Cold War to Post-Cold War*
ANU College of
Asia & the Pacific



COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Important Information

Venue

The Conference ‘Living Politics : Self Help and Autonomous Action in East Asia and Beyond’ will take place in the Australian Center on China in the World (Building 118, Fellows Lane, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia).

The conference will take place in the Seminar Room. All meals (morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea) will be held in the Tea House and are available free of charge to all participants.



About the Conference

How can we bring politics back to life in the age of Trump, Putin, Brexit and post-truth?

This conference is the culmination of the ARC Laureate Project *Informal Life Politics in Northeast Asia: From Cold War to Post-Cold War*. Its purpose is to rethink the boundaries of the 'political', exploring innovative autonomous ways in which people in East Asia and beyond are collaborating to solve challenges which conventional political systems fail to address.

The conference brings together practitioners in grassroots alternatives as well as academic researchers, and seeks to encourage debate and inspire new ways of looking at politics in our region.

Day 1 Program: Wednesday 14 March 2018

09:00 – 09:15	Registration
09:15 – 09:45	Opening <i>Introductory Remarks – Living Politics</i> Tessa MORRIS-SUZUKI , The Australian National University
09:45 – 10:45	Presentation 1 <i>Playing as a State</i> Davina COOPER , King’s College London (Chair – Tessa MORRIS-SUZUKI)
10:45 – 11:00	Morning tea
11:00 – 12:00	Presentation 2 <i>Micro-scale Self-Help Activities from Below</i> TANAKA Natsuko , Small-scale farmer and Researcher, Japan (Chair – Yasuko Hassall KOBAYASHI)
12:00 – 12:30	Book Launch and Launch of Photo Exhibition (Chair – Hyaeweol CHOI)
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	Presentation 3 <i>Residents’ Autonomy as a Means to Overcome the Fukushima Disaster: The Case of the Tōwa Region of Fukushima Prefecture</i> MUTŌ Ichio , Organic Village Tōwa (Chair – Simon AVENELL; Interpretation – Keiko TAMURA)
15:00 – 15:15	Afternoon tea
15.15 – 17:00	Presentations 4 and 5 <i>Seeking Intergroup Empathy in a Living Community</i> KIM Yu-ik , Activist and Researcher, Korea <i>Informal Life Politics in Rural Communities: National vs. Communal: The History of the Organic Farming Movement in South Korea</i> Yon Jae PAIK , The Australian National University (Chair: Shuge WEI)

Day 2 Program: Thursday 15 March 2018

09:00 – 09:15	Registration
09:15 – 10:15	Presentation 6 <i>Migrant workers, Ghost Stories and Self-Help activities in a Factory without a Union</i> I-Chieh FANG , Institute of Anthropology, National Tsing Hua University (Chair – Yoshikazu SHIOBARA)
10:15 – 10:30	Morning tea
10:30 – 11:30	Presentation 7 <i>Cooperation, Kinship, and the Boundaries of ‘The Political’</i> Charles STAFFORD , Professor of Anthropology, London School of Economics (Chair – Tom CLIFF)
11:30 – 12:15	Presentation 8 <i>Community Science as a Form of Informal Life Politics: A Case Study of a Well Water Testing Project in Inner Mongolia</i> Uchralt OTEDE , The Australian National University (Chair – Benjamin PENNY)
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	Presentation 9 <i>Creating an Environmentally Friendly Community in Rural Mongolia: A Report from NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt</i> Odonchimeg RENTSENDORJ , Founder of NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt, Mongolia (Chair – Li NARANGOYA; Interpretation – Uchralt OTEDE)
15:00 – 15:20	Afternoon tea
15:20 – 16:40	Presentations 10 and 11 <i>One Township, Two Moral Economies: The Role of National Industrial Policy in Shaping Local Non-State Welfare in China</i> Tom CLIFF , Research Fellow, The Australian National University <i>Beyond the Line: Non-legal Economic Activity in Australian History</i> Rod CLIFF , Independent Researcher of Archaeology and Economic History (Chair – Masato KARASHIMA)

Day 3 Program: Friday 16 March 2018

09:00 – 09:15	Registration
09:15 – 10:00	Presentation 12 <i>North Korean Watery Matters, Living Politics and their Dispossessions: Grabbing the Great Fish Hauls</i> Robert WINSTANLEY-CHESTERS , Research Fellow, The Australian National University (Chair –Yon Jae PAIK)
10:00 – 10:15	Morning tea
10:15 – 11:15	PhD Bursary Award Presentation 1 <i>Grassroots movements for LGBT rights in Vietnam: The Strategies of Vietnamese Non-Governmental Organisations under the Constraints of the Vietnamese State</i> Linh NGUYEN , PhD Candidate, University of Wollongong (Chair – Tessa MORRIS-SUZUKI)
11:15 – 12:15	PhD Bursary Award Presentation 2 <i>At the Crossroads of Art and Applied Anthropology: Collaboration and Activism through Social Art Practice</i> Michal GLIKSON , Researcher, The Australian National University (Chair – Tom CLIFF)
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch
13:15 – 14:00	Presentation 13 <i>The Return of Memory: Self-organized Social Care for the Nationalist Veterans of the Sino-Japanese War</i> Shuge WEI , Research Fellow, The Australian National University (Chair: Kohei KAWABATA)
14:00 – 15:00	Presentation 14 <i>Destiny: An Independent Documentary Maker’s Journey to Record the Lived Experience of Sino-Japanese War Veterans</i> Endian LAI , Documentary film-maker, China (Chair: Shuge WEI)
15:00 – 15:20	Tea break
15.20 – 16:45	General Discussion Commentators: Paul D’ARCY, HYUN Mooam, Benjamin HABIB

DAY 1

Introduction: Living politics

Prof Tessa MORRIS-SUZUKI

(Professor, The Australian National University)

These introductory remarks will include an outline of the five-year Australian Research Council Laureate Project 'Informal Life Politics in East Asia', of which this is the concluding event, and seek to highlight some of the key themes of the conference. Building on the work of the Laureate project, this conference aims to explore alternative ways of practicing politics in twenty-first century everyday life. In an age where traditional political ideologies have lost much of their hold on the public imagination and personality / image-based populism is increasingly influential worldwide, our research seeks to explore alternative notions and practices of the political. By sharing and exchanging experiences and visions with other scholars and practitioners of alternative politics in this conference, we hope to encourage ongoing debate on new ways to 'live politics' in a rapidly changing world.

Tessa Morris-Suzuki is Professor of Japanese History and Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow at the Australian National University. She researches modern Japanese and East Asian regional history. Her books include *East Asia Beyond the History Wars*, co-authored with Morris Low, Leonid Petrov and Timothy Y. Tsu (2013); *Borderline Japan: Foreigners and Frontier Controls in the Postwar Era* (2010); and *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War* (2007).

Playing as a state

Prof Davina COOPER

(Professor, Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London)

When it comes to the state, play often functions as a pedagogic device; children learn about parliamentary processes in idealised ways through role-playing its parts. But play also offers a critical quotidian register for experimenting with what states could be like, particularly in conditions where other forms of realisation do not appear possible. As such, play constitutes a kind of prefigurative practice, a way of acting *as if* things were otherwise (while knowing or at least believing that they are not). Through a series of examples, from street squats declaring new nation-states to international people's tribunals, local currency networks, and the globe-crossing feminist judgment project, my talk addresses two questions: what value does play have as a way of enacting other kinds of states or state institutions; and, what can playing at statehood or its parts do? In other words, how successful are unsuccessful performatives?

Davina Cooper is professor of law & political theory at the Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London. Her interdisciplinary research approaches questions of transformative politics – their possibilities, limits, and conflicts – as these take shape in relation to law, the state, experiments in living, gender and sexuality, and cultural diversity, and her publications include *Everyday Utopias: The Conceptual Life of Promising Spaces* (2013).

Micro-scale self-help activities from below: Citizens' cultures of questioning in the local community

Natsuko TANAKA

(Small-scale farmer and Researcher, Japan)

Small scale grass roots movements in Japan have gone through ups and downs since the 1960s. After the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear power plant accident of 2011, citizens' movements have grown deeper and more extensive. Citizens have confronted many questions, starting with existential questions about living and dying, as well as questions of food, environment, energy, welfare, child-care, housing, work, community etc. I will examine the way that citizens confront these questions through micro activities, focusing on five points: 1. How are citizens' micro-activities created? (Case Study -the 'Living Together in the Community' cooperative for the elderly in Nagano Prefecture); 2. How are small-scale networks formed? (Case Studies – workers' collectives and their network functions); 3. Relationships between formal cooperative activities and small-scale citizens' actions; 4. Absorption/reconstruction of citizens' activities from above – coexistence or takeover? 5. Citizens' micro-activities as a place to cultivate a 'culture of questioning'.

Natsuko Tanaka is a professor of Tsuru Bunka University. She is a leading Japanese expert on women's cooperatives and other alternative economic movements in Japan and elsewhere. Her publications include *The Regional Development of the Social Economy in Italy* (in Japanese, 2005).

Residents' autonomy as a means to overcome the Fukushima disaster: The case of the Tōwa region of Fukushima Prefecture

MUTŌ Ichio

(Organic Village Tōwa)

The Tōwa region is an area of Fukushima Prefecture which was incorporated into Nihonmatsu City in 2005, as part of a process of local government amalgamations. The region lies to the north of the Prefecture, on the slopes of Mount Abukuma. It is a typical mountain-valley region, dotted by small villages, meadows and terraced rice fields, with its cultivated area lying at between 200 and 600 metres above sea level. It was once the Prefecture's leading silk growing area, and at its peak in the 1970s produced as much as 1.7 billion yen (about US\$15 million) worth of silk a year, with abundant mulberry trees also being grown in forest clearings. But because of cheap silk imports, local production suffered a drastic drop, and the area experienced a drift away from agriculture and economic decline. This reflects major problems which assail Japan today. In order to respond positively to the problem of depopulation which their region faced, the residents of Tōwa created a non-profit organization called the Organic Village Tōwa Hometown-Building Council. By reviving the farmland, forests and community which had been nurtured by earlier generations, in place of declining sericulture, they created a small scale regional economy centred on the organic production of vegetables and rice, making the most of the local climate and environment. But at that point, on 11 March 2011, the unprecedented nuclear disaster which accompanied the Great East Japan Earthquake cast a dark shadow over this regional revival.

Nevertheless, with a forward-looking approach to the disaster, it was possible to restore the local economy, and not merely to recover, but to create new forms of production for the region. The starting point of this recovery was to pose the questions: 'How can we increase the number of people who want to live in this area?'; 'What sort of projects can we carry out here?'; 'What sort of values do we want to create? 'What kinds of production can give new life to the special characteristics and the history of our region?'

Mutō Ichio is Director of the NPO 'Yūki no Sato Tōwa' (Tōwa Organic Village) and runs an organic restaurant, Tōwa no Kinoko Kōbō, in Tōwa, Fukushima Prefecture.

Seeking intergroup empathy in a living community

KIM Yu-ik

(Activist and Researcher, Korea)

'East Asian initiative', 'sustainability' and 'transition' are the three keywords of my endeavour. For the comparatively short period of six years, I have managed to explore and experience a range of communities, groups and individuals seeking alternative life styles and values such as natural/ organic farming, intentional communities/ ecovillages, alternative/ free education and social innovation in the broad sense, mostly in East Asia including Japan, South Korea and mainland China. My exposure to this culture and these phenomena is based on my role as a learner, a practitioner and a 'culture broker' to bridge two or more different worlds in this domain. The three most recent years of my experience have focused on mainland China, since I migrated there. For an intensive period, I was trying to build my own community with group of Chinese friends and a couple of Korean nationals in a rural village near to the metropolitan area of Shanghai. This project unfortunately in effect came to an end, or at least, I myself withdrew from it due to internal conflicts. However, it left me and other participants with many lessons. Since then, I have spent time brokering part of my project, and also becoming more involved with the urban community in Shanghai, which has given me other insights into the evolution of Chinese society.

Yuik Kim is a culture broker who bridges people across different languages, cultures and lifestyles based on his deep understanding of regional (East Asia) in the global context, as well as his dramatic career transition. From being an IT consultant at an international consultancy, and a project manager in a financial software company, he became an activist and researcher in the domain of social innovation, promotion of sustainable lifestyle, alternative education and community building.

National vs. Communal: The history of the organic farming movement in South Korea

Yon Jae PAIK

(The Australian National University)

Chemical farming has been the essential element in transforming agriculture and rural society in East Asia. This presentation focuses on the historical context of the organic farming movement as an effort to create an autonomous space distinct from state-led rural transformation. As in other East Asian countries, the transformation of rural society in South Korea was subordinated to the state-led industrialisation. Cold-War politics in Korean peninsula intensified the state's use of chemical farming as a tool for controlling rural society and inculcating national spirit. The organic farming movement started in response to the state's rural control and pursued an ideal of a decentralised agrarian society. The government discouraged organic farming until the mid-1990s, and religion played an important role for the early organic farmers to find alternative identity and morality to the national ones. Through the cases of Jeongnonghoe in the 1970s and Hansalim Movement in the 1980s, I demonstrate how South Korean farmers and rural elites chose organic farming as a political practice against the state-led industrialisation.

Yon Jae Paik has academic backgrounds in Chemistry (BA), Environmental Studies (MA), Business (MSc), and Asian Studies (MA), and a professional background in commercial banking. He enrolled as a PhD candidate in College of History and Language in January 2014 to join Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki's ARC Laureate Project 'Informal Life Politics in the Remaking of Northeast Asia: From Cold War to Post-Cold War'. Currently, his research interest lies in the contemporary history of rural autonomy in East Asia.

DAY 2

Migrant workers, ghost stories and self-help activities in a factory without union

Dr I-Chieh FANG

(Institute of Anthropology, National Tsing Hua University)

This paper uses ethnographic studies of migrant workers in post-Mao China as a way to investigate the concept of 'agency' as it applies to factory setting. Agency, I argue, is to be found neither in opposition to obedience nor solely in the form of public objection/resistances, but in mobilizing a set of encompassing relations among migrant workers and supervisors/managers that amounts to a shared traditions and working ethics.

The data for this paper was collected in an electronic factory, THS, in Shenzhen. There is no union and no violent resistance. The workers generally behave docilely. At the first glance, politics seems irrelevant here, if 'politics' refers to collective resistance, strikes or workers' revolutions. However, if we consider migrant workers' structural disadvantages and all the policies against them, self-help activities and implicit resistance should surely be happening all the time, as this is the only possible ways they could adapt to and cope with their situation.

This paper aims to display and analyze the strategies/decisions migrant workers incline to adopt/make when they try to sort out their everyday problems or to improve their well-being without right of permanent residence, protection of contract and union. I pay special attention to so called 'rightful negotiation' and the spreading ghost stories during the financial crisis because, here as in many other places, spirit possession, nightmares or hauntings become locations where anger, resistance and also fears tend to crystallize, be expressed and be used to relieve the imbalanced relationship between power-holders and subordinates. Meanwhile, 'rightful negotiation' makes latent resistance look more like 'investment' in terms of the existing power structure.

I-Chieh Fang (PhD London School of Economics), specializes in the anthropology of economy, migration, gender, morality, learning/education and youth. Her doctoral research focused on young migrant workers in south China. To date her work has explored the young migrants and their practice learning in two different migration trajectories: urbanization and counter-urbanization. She is currently an assistant Professor at the Institute of Anthropology, National Tsing Hua University.

Cooperation, kinship, and the boundaries of 'the political'

Prof Charles STAFFORD

(Professor of Anthropology, London School of Economics)

In this lecture I will be making two basic points: (1) that political activity – including of the 'informal life' kind we are exploring in this conference – is always premised on cooperation; (2) that political cooperation of any kind – and *especially* of the 'informal life' kind we are exploring in this conference – is always linked to family life and kinship in a deep sense. In short, to cooperate, including in political action, is a prototypically human activity; but human cooperation itself will be inexplicable unless we account for the role that family life and kinship play in it. This holds, by the way, not only for so-called traditional societies but also for those we think of us as beacons of modernity and individualism. I will illustrate these points with examples drawn from research I have carried out in Taiwan, China and the USA.

Charles Stafford is a specialist in the anthropology of China and Taiwan, and in the anthropology of learning and cognition. His research has focused primarily on child development, kinship and religion, morality and ethics, and economic psychology. His publications include *Separation and Reunion in Modern China* (2000) and *Ordinary Ethics in China* (edited, 2013)

Community science as a form of informal life politics: A case study of a well water testing project in Inner Mongolia

Dr Uchralt OTEDE

(The Australian National University)

Community science as a form of Informal Life Politics has been observed widely in Northeast Asia and beyond. In a community science project, members of the community come up with a question or issue such as environmental pollution, and work with scientists to answer the question and find solutions. Between 2015 and 2017, as part of my PhD research, I participated in a series of community science projects in Inner Mongolia where herders were working with water scientists, environmental NGO personnel and university students to test their well water quality. This presentation summarizes the design and implementation of the well water testing project, which consists of several sub-projects for the purpose of creating knowledge and finding solutions. It further discusses the benefits of collaboration in knowledge creation in community science projects. Finally the article reveals the challenges of turning knowledge into action to improve the quality of life.

Uchralt Otede is a PhD Candidate in the School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. His research is focused on issues of environmental pollution and grassroots actions in Mongolia, China and Japan.

Creating an environmentally friendly community in rural Mongolia: A report from NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt

Odonchimeng RENTSENDORJ

(NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt, Mongolia)

There is a place named Shar-hoolai, located about sixty kilometers northwest to Ulanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia. The word Shar-hoolai in Mongolia literally means a yellow corridor leading to the mountains. Shar-hoolai used to be a beautiful place where both sides of the corridor were covered by forest, and a spring provided drinking water for local herders and their livestock. However, after the collapse of the socialist planned economic system in the early 1990s, many people came to the corridor and started logging trees illegally. As a result, the forest disappeared rapidly and eventually the spring dried up within a decade. Under these circumstances, five families joined together to organize an NPO, named Yih-Oboo Nuramt in 2012. The NPO's aim was to create an environmentally friendly community and achieve a sustainable lifestyle. 'We want to get the spring water back again!' is their motto. In this presentation, Odonchimeg Rentsendorji, the founder of NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt, will report on their activities, their achievements and the challenges they have faced.

Odonchimeg RENTSENDORJ is the founder of NPO Yih-Oboo Nuramt, Mongolia.

One township, two moral economies: The role of national industrial policy in shaping local non-state welfare in China

Dr Tom CLIFF

(Research Fellow, The Australian National University)

In a township in rural China, local bank lending practices and endogenous industrial development over the past two decades have created two quite distinct political and moral economies. On the heavy manufacturing East, factory owners drive new Maseratis, Land Rovers, and Mercedes, and worry about the coming crackdown on polluting industries that threatens to shut most of their factories down. There are no non-state social supports for the less well-off on this side of the township. On the West, furniture-producing factory owners are also suffering from economic contraction but, in contrast to the doom and gloom of the heavy industrialists, these entrepreneurs are dreaming big and considering their legacy. A grand new logistics hub aims to make this township the furniture centre of China, and they are rapidly promoting and propagating village-level welfare systems. This paper explains how these two projects— industrial expansion and socio-moral consolidation—are intimately linked, and reflects on the possible motives of the entrepreneur-philanthropist in contemporary China.

Tom Cliff is an ARC-funded Research Fellow based at ANU's School of Culture, History, and Language. Tom won the Association for Asian Studies' 2018 E Gene Smith Prize for his recent book *Oil and Water: Being Han in Xinjiang*. Tom is now working on non-state welfare and informal finance in the Chinese heartland, and in late 2017 was awarded a Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) for his project 'Welfare Entrepreneurs and Paradoxes of Social Control in Rural China.'

Beyond the line: Non-legal economic activity in Australian History

Dr Rod CLIFF

(Independent Researcher of Archaeology and Economic History)

Modern economic and social systems rely on a multitude of individual actions to create an aggregate of income and wealth. In Australia these systems have been in operation for two centuries. There are circumstances where non-legal activity contributed to economic development in Australia. I give three examples from small-scale societies in Australia covering the earliest times to the present day. Firstly, the presence and activity of Europeans in early 19th Century New South Wales living and pasturing cattle and sheep across the boundary of settlement line, known as the Limits of Location. Secondly, the tobacco growing industry of the early 20th Century in favoured parts of east Australia. Thirdly, the cultivation of marijuana in small communities in the late 20th Century along the coastal escarpment of the Dividing Range.

These exemplify some of the characteristics of non-legal activities as economic behaviour. The circumstances of each are demand driven with supply influenced by institutional factors and by authority as intervention devices. All three activities made a positive contribution to economic growth in Australia at the time of their activity. The small multiplying effect of the income generated fed into the developing mainstream economy and sustained small marginal communities.

Rod Cliff is an independent researcher of archaeology and economic history.

DAY 3

North Korean watery matters, living politics and their dispossessions: Grabbing the great fish hauls

Dr Robert WINSTANLEY-CHESTERS

(Research Fellow, The Australian National University)

The waters of North East Asia have long been sites of exploration, appropriation and extraction. Initial cartographic assessment and review was followed by the infrastructures and energies of Japanese colonialism; Korean and Chinese coastal communities finding themselves technologically displaced by new developmental realities. No longer would the foreshore and shallows be the site of amateur subsistence and informal politics; boats from Chosen (Korea) would seek their quarry in the deep oceans far beyond national boundaries, utilising extractive techniques acquired in the territories of Japan's South Pacific Mandate. Following liberation from Japan in 1945 and the Korean War in 1953, North Korea would apply new politics and ideology to similar developmental imperatives. Seeking to extract as much productive capacity from the waters under its control as from its territory on land, Pyongyang would theorise a locally 'Socialist' frame through which fish and maritime resource could be grabbed in much the same manner as under past Capitalist logics.

Considering fish, crustaceans, seaweed and other matters of the sea and the coast as vibrant and lively (following Jane Bennett, 2010), in their absence as much as their presence, and important in the context of North Korea, this paper tracks the appropriations and dispossessions at sea of that nation and its communities. The paper follows present North Korean institutional efforts to grab 'great fish hauls,' away from fishing communities and cooperatives at national and maritime borders. Pyongyang instead has sought to place infrastructure and maritime and aquacultural rights in the possession of the Korean People's Army. The paper reviews the impact of these unexpected dispossession on these communities and the re-bordering of national maritime enterprise as a result. Finally in light of UNSC2371 and the sanctioning of North Korea's entire maritime resource the paper considers this rare and comprehensive watery dispossession at the hands of geopolitics.

Robert Winstanley is a geographer and research fellow in the ARC Laureate Fellowship project 'Informal Life Politics in North East Asia' at the Australian National University. Within the project he is tasked with researching the topography and history of fishing and fishing infrastructures in North Korea and the communities which form part of those landscapes and topographies. Robert is the author of *'Environment, Politics and Ideology in North Korea: Landscape as Political Project'* (Lexington), *'New Goddesses on Mt Paektu: Gender, Myth, Violence and Transformation in Korean Landscape'* (forthcoming, Lexington) and *'Vibrant Matter (s): Fish, Fishing and Community in North Korea and her Neighbours'* (Forthcoming, Springer).

Grassroots movements for LGBT rights in Vietnam: The strategies of Vietnamese non-governmental organisations under the constraints of the Vietnamese State

NGUYEN Thi Huyen Linh

(PhD Candidate, University of Wollongong)

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations are two agents of Vietnamese civil society that drive political change with grassroots movements. In Vietnam, civil society does not stand outside the State as a stable entity but operates under the constraints of the one-party rule State on legislation and the media. Thus, changes in the LGBT human rights politics in Vietnam are carried out at the grassroots level driven by networks of NGOs with the cooperation of the Vietnamese government. Vietnamese NGOs have politicised LGBT identity through the media and have put political pressure on the Vietnamese government to enhance LGBT rights. These political movements by grassroots LGBT organisations facilitated by Vietnamese NGOs have increased the visibility of the LGBT community in Vietnam. In this paper, I will discuss the bottom-up strategies that Vietnamese NGOs and local LGBT communities have developed to promote dialogue between LGBT people and the public. There are several approaches that I would like to study such as mainstream media advocacy, online independent LGBT films and series, the formation of LGBT advocacy community groups, and participation in global LGBT events. These activities have opened up an LGBT public sphere, redefined LGBT social norms and resulted in social changes for LGBT community in Vietnam.

Thi Huyen Linh Nguyen is a PhD candidate based at the University of Wollongong. Her research focuses on the representation of LGBT characters in contemporary movies and resulting social debates. She is also engaged in LGBT movements in Vietnam. Her most recent article is 'New Zealand same-sex marriage legislation in the Australian media' (Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies).

At the crossroads of art and applied anthropology: collaboration and activism through social art practice

Dr Michal GLIKSON

(Researcher, The Australian National University)

The idea that collaboration and activism can arise through social art practice is opened up in this presentation. The conditions for the project in discussion arose in 2011 as I conducted background research for my PhD Research project with nomadic art practice. During that time, I met and got to know a family living on the streets of Lahore. As we became friends I began making drawings whilst spending time with them, and taking film footage of their life as I saw it unfolding. This was the beginning of a six-year project and collaboration which, using painting and film, has allowed for documenting of the community's story and experiences of severe marginalization and prejudice which provided material for a film and work in progress, *The Tessellated Quilt*.

Self-sufficiency through a contemporary arts project was at the heart of Giorgio Battistelli's *Experimentum Mundi*, where he created a music theatre project using the noises and actions of traditional craftsmen from his native village. At a time when such crafts were in decline, *Experimentum Mundi* and its worldwide tours afforded the village craftsmen much needed financial support and media attention. Whilst field footage taken for *The Tessellated Quilt* attests to the informal way in which relationships formed and continue forming between members of the family and the artist, some of the films document the recycling culture by which the family survives, and also acts of exploitation and oppression enacted by the wider community and the Lahore City Council. Drawing on the vision underpinning projects such as *Experimenta Mundi*, *The Tessellated Quilt* thus represents an example whereby collaboration through an informally generated and unfunded art project has become a way for the family to talk about their way of life amidst struggles with ongoing systemic prejudice and oppression. When complete, *The Tessellated Quilt* will be exhibited with the aim of creating awareness about the particular ethnic prejudice faced by this family and many like them in Pakistan, and to campaign for social justice. As it is hoped that the project will raise the profile of the community's cultural and artistic practices in the form of their recycling activities, and their quilt tradition, thus it is hoped also that this will bring the family respect, and potential economic opportunities. As the sufficiency of intentions with regard to living politics at times comes into question, so my presentation will speak about the process whereby moments of realization, that are revealed in the films, precipitated and/or served as motivation for participants, particularly in view of the lack of formal sources of support - moments as I will show, that have been significant to inspiring and sustaining the project towards aims with grass-roots activism.

Michal Glikson has been exploring peripatetic painting since 2006. Using an immersive social/anthropological approach, she finds her subjects in situ, by sketching from life, into scrolls of paper which she carries. She draws on her training in Persian miniature to deliver stories of people and environments she encounters. Michal studied her degree in Visual Art at the ANU, and holds degrees in Theatre, Political Science, and a Master's degree in Fine Art from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India. She continues to practice across cultures and has taught at the National College of Art, Lahore, Viswa Bharati University of Santiniketan, and ANU. Her scrolls have been exhibited in multiple countries and her virtual tour, the *Australindopak Archive* integrates outcomes of her practice-led PhD research project that was conducted through the School of Art and Design, *Towards a peripatetic practice: negotiating journey through painting*.

The return of memory: Self-organized social care for the nationalist veterans of the Sino-Japanese War

Dr Shuge WEI

(Research Fellow, The Australian National University)

This paper provides an overview of grassroots efforts in China to provide social care for the long neglected Nationalist veterans who fought in the Sino-Japanese War. For decades, the Sino-Japanese War in China was depicted in a single narrative centred on the contribution of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to China's national survival. In this version of history, one crucial group of people were left out: the Nationalist soldiers of the Nationalist (also Guomindang, GMD) government, who fought major battles against the Japanese. Before the nation could reflect on the experience of the war, a civil war broke out between the GMD and CCP (1946–1949). The defeat of the Guomindang erased the contribution of its soldiers from official recollections of the Sino-Japanese War. The political campaigns in the ensuing decades during the Mao era suppressed their account of the war and denied them social welfare. The end of the Mao era and the rise of nationalism opened a space for society to reconsider the role GMD soldiers played in national survival. Self-organized activists and volunteers supported by entrepreneurs also developed a nation-wide scheme to locate and provide help to the GMD veterans. By tracing the development of the Care for Old Soldiers network, this paper discusses the underlying critical attitude towards the official nationalism discourse, and demonstrates the power of the grassroots in healing the social wounds left by wars and political turbulences.

Shuge Wei is a postdoctoral fellow in the School of Culture, History and Language, Australian National University. Her research interests include China's media history, Sino-Japanese War and memory, political culture of the Guomindang government, and grassroots movements in Taiwan and China. She is published in distinguished journals including *Modern Asian Studies* and *Twentieth-Century China*. She is the author of *News under Fire: China's Propaganda against Japan in the English-Language Press, 1928–1941*. She is also a research associate of Heidelberg University and Shih Hsin University in Taiwan.

Destiny: An independent documentary maker's journey to record the lived experience of Sino-Japanese War veterans

Endian LAI

(Documentary Film Maker, China)

Endian Lai is a self-funded documentary maker in China. A trip to Yunnan in 2004 incidentally led him to engage with veterans of the Sino-Japanese War. Their accounts deeply challenged his understanding of the war and the negative image of the non-CCP soldiers he had been taught in school. He has since visited over a hundred veterans across the country and recorded their recollections.

This session will start with Lai's award-winning documentary (with English subtitles). He will then share with us his own experiences of more than a decade of looking for veterans of the Sino-Japanese war and collecting their recollections. What motivated him to embark on this journey? What difficulties did he experience? In what way is he connected to the broader volunteer campaign to collect veterans' recollections of the war? This session invites you to see through his lens and gain insight into a lively grassroots movement that redefines history and collective memory in China.

Endian Lai is a documentary filmmaker based in Beijing. He retraced the route traveled by the Chinese Expeditionary Forces, under the then Chinese Nationalist Government, from the border province of Yunnan to Burma during WWII.