

# The Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Tallinn University

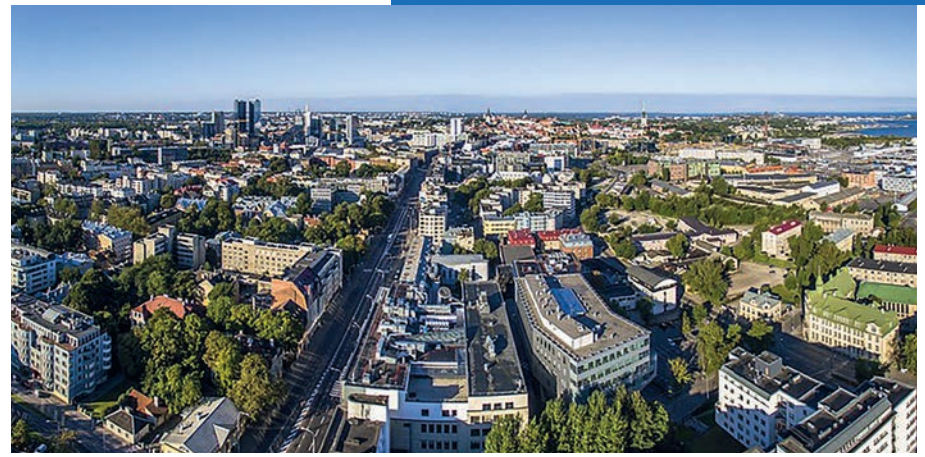
The Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Tallinn University is part of the School of Humanities and comprises four research units: Japanese Studies, Chinese Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and Border Studies. We currently offer three B.A. programmes in Japanese Studies, Chinese Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies; and two M.A. programmes in Japanese Studies and Asian Societies and Politics.

Always attuned to the interests of new generations of students, the educational needs of society, and the evolution of the job market, the university has now approved a quinquennial development plan that will allow us to further grow and expand our curricula through three brand new programmes: a B.A. in Korean Studies, an M.A. in Chinese Studies, and an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies.

In what follows, we are pleased to present our first contribution to The Region. Each of the essays introduces one of our four research units, and we look forward to deepening our

engagement with IAS and *The Newsletter* in future issues. We have a rich calendar of both online and onsite national and international events planned for the years to come. We hope to have the chance to welcome colleagues and friends in Tallinn soon and we would like to extend our warm invitation to join us at the upcoming conference of the Baltic Alliance for Asian Studies (BAAS) that we are hosting on 23-25 September 2022.

For more information, go to <https://balticasianstudies.wordpress.com/2021/09/29/5th-baas-in-tallinn-2022>



Tallinn panorama.



TALLINN UNIVERSITY

## Tallinn University

Tallinn University is a young and vibrant higher education institution that builds on the longstanding, solid academic tradition of the Estonian Institute of Humanities, which in 2005 was merged together with Tallinn Pedagogical University and other research institutes to establish this new modern comprehensive academic reality. With its 7000 students, 11% of whom are coming from outside the country every year to study in green "digital Estonia," the university has a multicultural student population and is a growing centre of knowledge in constant evolution.

## Japanese Studies at Tallinn University

Rein Raud, Maret Nukke, and Alari Allik

Although there have been many notable scholars working on various aspects of Asian Studies in Estonia since the 19th century, the discipline was first established as an academic programme only relatively late, when the hold of the Soviet regime on intellectual activity began to relax and the Estonian Institute of Humanities, the first officially recognized independent (non-state and non-church) university, was established in 1988. One of the Institute's founders, Professor Rein Raud, had a degree in Japanese Studies from St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) University and began to develop the discipline in Estonia as well. Thus, Japanese Studies became the core to which specializations in other regions of Asia and the Middle East were added in due course.

Japan had a particular allure among the Estonian reading public. Several translators, notably Agu Sisask and Ülle Udam, had translated works by Kawabata Yasunari, Abe Kōbō, and even Mishima Yukio into Estonian,

to great popular acclaim. There was also a boom of haiku poetry, and although no reliable translations of Japanese authors had been published to date, many Estonian poets began to experiment with the genre on their own. Another sphere of interest was classical aesthetics, and several people had studied the art of flower arrangement on their own. However, as there were virtually no opportunities to travel to Japan at the time, most of this interest was not backed up with serious study.

In 1989, a Japanese Studies programme was thus set up for the first time in Estonia at the newly established Estonian Institute of Humanities, and a small group of students began to study the language, history, literature, and religions of Japan. The Japanese language curriculum was developed in 1996, and courses in Japanese theatre, arts, society, folklore, and politics started to be taught in 1998. The beginnings were difficult, as there were virtually no study materials or dictionaries, and nearly all teaching had to

rely on Rein Raud alone. However, through his Finnish contacts, in the period between 1989-1996, he managed to invite several qualified native speakers from the University of Helsinki to teach courses. He also secured donations of second-hand dictionaries and study materials. The discipline began to grow and eventually reached the level to qualify for Japan Foundation support. Many among the students from the first cohorts have by now become the pillars of the discipline, which has been prospering especially after the Estonian Institute of Humanities merged with several other universities and research institutions into Tallinn University in 2005. When that occurred, the programme in Japanese Studies became part of the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Finally, in 2009, the M.A. programme in Japanese Studies was established with 12 enrolled students.

During its early years, the Institute of Humanities was known for its theoretical outlook and its effort to import into the country new forms of cultural theory and methods of research that had been banned under the Soviet regime. This meant that all teaching and research in regional studies had a strong theoretical orientation. Raud's own work is an example: in the early 1990s, he started using deconstructionist and Foucauldian methods on classical Japanese poetry, which was something not normally done anywhere else in the world at the time. His students followed suit – the problematizing of self-writing in Dr. Alari Allik's work on Heian (794-1185) recluses literature deserves special mention. Allik works on Japanese Medieval writings, and his research focuses especially on how translators have constructed the image of authors through commentaries and rhetorical stylistic devices. He has also produced several Estonian translations of Japanese texts, spanning from the Heian period to contemporary times. This includes his two latest publications, a translation of Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* and of Yōko Ogawa's *Memory police*, both released in December 2021. He has also been especially active in the field of translation studies and is currently a team member working on the prestigious interdisciplinary research project "Translation in History – Estonia 1850–2010: Texts, Agents, Institutions and Practices,"<sup>1</sup> sponsored by the Estonian Research Council.

Another fundamental figure of the department – and a former student of Raud who has been a part of the team since its beginning – is Dr. Maret Nukke, Associate Professor of Japanese Studies. Nukke gives lectures on Japanese culture, society, and politics. She was the coordinator of the Japanese language program in the years 1996-2017, and she has been teaching Japanese language at the university since 1994. Her research interests involve new developments in Japanese classical *nō* theatre, especially contemporary plays (*shinsaku*) as adaptations that expand the traditional canon of the art. Since 2000, the Department avails itself also of the linguistic competence and expertise of Akiko Masaki-Kadarik, who is Lecturer in Japanese Language.

The input of the department into the development of the image of Japan in Estonia, as well as for the development of the discipline in the country and the region, has been considerable. Many of the department's graduates now work in various areas, from foreign relations to private business. Quite a few have made a name for themselves as translators of Japanese literature: thanks to their efforts, Japanese literature remains one of the best-covered non-Western literatures in the Estonian cultural scene. Several of the department's graduates have even advanced to academic positions in Japan. In 2011, the European Association of Japanese Studies held its triennial meeting in Tallinn University, and Rein Raud was elected the president of the association for the following three-year period. He has also been awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, for his research and work in promoting Japanese culture in Europe.

Rein Raud, Tallinn University, Estonia.  
Email: [rraud@tlu.ee](mailto:rraud@tlu.ee)

Maret Nukke, Tallinn University, Estonia.  
Email: [maret.nukke@tlu.ee](mailto:maret.nukke@tlu.ee)

Alari Allik, Tallinn University, Estonia.  
Email: [alari.allik@tlu.ee](mailto:alari.allik@tlu.ee)

### Notes

1 <https://translationinhistory.tlu.ee>



Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion) temple in Kyoto, lake and garden. Photo downloaded from [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com).

## Chinese Studies at Tallinn University

Lisa Indraccolo, Jekaterina Koort, and Margus Ott

Chinese Studies in Tallinn dates back to 1992, when the first systematic Mandarin language teaching program was established as a part of the already existing major in Asian Studies at the Estonian Institute of Humanities, the first private higher education institution founded in Eastern Europe (1988). Chinese Studies as an independent major was opened in 2005, after several academic and research institutions in Tallinn, including the Estonian Institute of Humanities, were merged into Tallinn University (TLU). Today, the Chinese Studies programme at Tallinn University is a part of the Asian Studies academic unit under the School of Humanities, while the Mandarin language teaching is provided by the Confucius Institute (founded in 2010), a separate non-academic unit administered by the TLU Rector's office. Tallinn University's partner university in the People's Republic of China is Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, which provides us with highly qualified Mandarin teachers. The Confucius Institute is currently headed by our graduate Anete Elken, who, after spending several years working and perfecting her knowledge of the Chinese language in the People's Republic of China, is currently about to graduate our M.A. programme in Asian Societies and Politics. The Chinese language program at the TLU Confucius Institute includes three proficiency levels (A, B, and C), and is supervised by the Estonian-based Chinese language teacher Wu Zhuoya, who, besides being a refined tea expert and a tea ceremony practitioner, has actively participated in the development of our programme in Chinese Studies since she moved to Estonia from the People's Republic of China in 2000.

At the moment, Tallinn University offers a B.A. programme in Chinese Studies, which is solidly based on an interdisciplinary Area Studies approach, with strong focus on Chinese philosophy and its political, social, and cultural developments and outputs. We employ most recent teaching methods that integrate digital resources into our classes to offer our students a lively and stimulating learning experience. The current portfolio of courses on premodern and modern China includes lecture and seminar series on a wide variety of topics. These range from contemporary society and politics to urban life; from religions and intellectual history to culture and philosophical thought, just

to quote a few examples. Students are writing their final dissertations on topics as diverse as Chinese investments in African infrastructure development, women's condition and female education in contemporary rural China, and the intricacies of poetic language in Classical Chinese texts. We are also in the process of developing an M.A. programme in Chinese Studies that is expected to be active in less than two years as part of TLU's quinquennial development plan.

The long-term Chinese Studies Lecturer, Dr. Jekaterina Koort, defended her PhD thesis at TLU in 2016. Her dissertation is a good example of the interdisciplinary approach that characterizes our programme, as it examines the impact of revived Confucianism on the perception of the environment and on the evolution of the representation of landscape during the rule of the Song dynasty (960-1279). As a lecturer, Koort teaches a wide range of courses on China, including the history of Chinese culture and Chinese philosophy and religions. Koort has also translated several Classical Chinese texts into Estonian, the most recent of which is Gan Bao's (fl. 315, d. 336) *Soushen ji* (*Anecdotes About Spirits and Immortals*), a Chinese Medieval collection of supernatural short stories and anecdotes about ghosts, spirits, and immortals. The translation has just been published in December 2021 by the Estonian publishing house Ema & Isa. In recent years, Koort has also developed an interest and expertise in contemporary Chinese politics with a focus on its ideological aspect, and is often invited to comment on crucial political issues in the Estonian media.

The interest of the Chinese Studies unit at TLU in the exploration of the Chinese world of thought and its intellectual history is also witnessed by the research of other members. In 2020, Dr. Lisa Indraccolo joined the team at Tallinn University as Associate Professor of Chinese Studies. Indraccolo has several years of research experience and a solid background in Classical Chinese thought, literature, and intellectual history of premodern China, with a focus on the Warring States and early Han periods (ca. 5th century B.C.-2nd century A.D.). Her research brings together and combines a rigorous philologico-hermeneutic analysis of early Chinese texts with a philosophical approach to describing their content, using an interpretive framework informed by the categories of thought and

the methodology of conceptual history. She is interested also in the analysis of textual patterns and text-structuring devices in early Chinese texts, an approach promoted by most recent trends in textual studies in the field of Sinology. Her main research interests include the early Chinese "Masters" of thought, in particular the Logicians (the so-called "School of Names"), Confucian moral and political philosophy, and Classical Chinese rhetoric. Indraccolo earned her PhD from Ca' Foscari University of Venice in 2010 with a dissertation on the early Chinese "sophistic" text *Gongsun Longzi*. She has been invited to provide contributions and encyclopedia entries on the *Gongsun Longzi*, on early Chinese paradoxes and language jokes, and on Chinese legalistic thought. Her most recent publications include, among others, the invited contribution "Argumentation (*bian* 辯)" in *Dao Companion to Chinese Philosophy of Logic*<sup>1</sup> and the chapter "Argumentation and Persuasion in Classical Chinese Literature" in the edited volume *Essays on Argumentation in Antiquity*,<sup>2</sup> which is an extensive study of the two early Chinese rhetorical techniques of argumentation and persuasion. Indraccolo is currently a board member of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy (EACP) and a board member and the Vice-Secretary General of the European Association for Chinese Studies (EACS). In 2021, Indraccolo and Dr. Alessandro Rippa, Associate Professor of Chinese Studies at TLU who works across Chinese Studies and Border Studies,<sup>3</sup> submitted a successful bid proposal to host the 25th European Association for Chinese Studies Biennial Conference 2024 at Tallinn University. This will be one of the largest gatherings of Chinese Studies scholars organised by an Estonian University, and a major milestone in the development of Chinese Studies at TLU.

Finally, Dr. Margus Ott, who has extensive expertise in philosophy, has also been actively contributing to the programme in Chinese Studies for many years. He has been teaching courses on Classical Chinese thought and the history of Chinese philosophy through the ages, providing a complete overview that goes beyond the traditional focus on the earlier periods of Chinese civilization to also include the Medieval and mid- to late imperial thinkers and trends of thought in a more comprehensive, overarching perspective. Dr. Ott earned his PhD in Philosophy from Tallinn University in 2014 and is currently working as Research Fellow on the research project "Around the World and Back: Typology of the Reception of Estonian Semiotics in the World," sponsored by the Estonian Research Council.<sup>4</sup> He has a rich publication record and has published several research articles on Confucian, Neo-Confucian and Daoist



Jade Buddha Temple in Shanghai. Photo by Lisa Indraccolo, 2004.

philosophy, among other topics, also from a comparative perspective. His solid background in and broad knowledge of both Western and Chinese philosophy allow him to carry out research and work productively across different cultures and traditions. Dr. Ott has also produced several Estonian translations of Western philosophy (Bergson, Deleuze, Jullien, Spinoza, Leibniz) and Chinese philosophy (an anthology of texts on music and divination, including *Yueji* and *Xici*, among others).

Lisa Indraccolo, Tallinn University, Estonia. Email: [lisa.indraccolo@tlu.ee](mailto:lisa.indraccolo@tlu.ee)

Jekaterina Koort, Tallinn University, Estonia. Email: [geja@tlu.ee](mailto:geja@tlu.ee)

Margus Ott, Tallinn University, Estonia. Email: [margus.ott@tlu.ee](mailto:margus.ott@tlu.ee)

### Notes

- 1 Fung, Yiu-ming (ed.). 2020. *Dao Companion to Chinese Philosophy of Logic*. New York: Springer.
- 2 Bjelde, Joseph Andrew, David Merry, and Christopher Roser (eds.). 2021. *Essays on Argumentation in Antiquity*. New York: Springer.
- 3 For a detailed account of Dr. Rippa's background and research, please see the section on Border Studies.
- 4 <https://www.etis.ee/Portal/Projects/Display/d400a82f-ef3e-41fd-b723-7710a754bc86>

## Middle Eastern Studies at Tallinn University

Helen Geršman

Our B.A. programme in Middle Eastern Studies is grounded in two earlier disciplines: (1) Turkish studies, the beginning of which dates back to 1994 in Estonia; and (2) traditional Arabic studies, which was founded in Tallinn University by the renowned Semitist and dialectologist Dr. Otto Jastrow in 2007. The students' compulsory language is Arabic, while Turkish is optional. At the moment, the university is planning to further expand the programme and enrich its offerings by developing a dedicated M.A. programme in Middle Eastern Studies. Although we do not yet offer an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies, we enjoy the luxury of four students at the doctoral level.

Middle Eastern Studies relies on the dedicated work of three enthusiastic lecturers, whose primary research language is Arabic. The programme draws strength from the diversity and richness of the research topics in which the three of them are engaged. The



Mesmerizing muqarnas in Alhambra, Granada. Image courtesy of Tallinn University.

pool of subjects that are traditionally part of a Middle Eastern Studies programme – such as the history of the Middle East, its culture, and its religions – is covered by junior lecturer Üllar Peterson. With his knowledge of both Arabic and Persian, Peterson's research mainly concentrates on a critical study of the available collection of texts on Syrian Alawites and related topics, namely the varieties of Islam and the intricate history of the Islamic world. The two main umbrella topics that bring

together the research of the lecturers and the current pool of doctoral students are the study of Arabic or Persian orations and their consistent rhetorical analysis. This research direction is inspired by the PhD topic of our Lecturer in Middle Eastern Studies, Dr. Helen Geršman – that is, the rhetoric of Usāma ibn Lādin's speeches. Although Dr. Geršman started her career as a Turkologist, she chose to move forward in the field of Arabic rhetoric, motivated

by the possibility of building a programme in Arabic Studies at Tallinn University together with Dr. Otto Jastrow. It is well-known that parallelism is a pervasive rhetorical feature of the tradition of the Arabic oration. Dr. Geršman has been studying specific orations carrying out a systematic rhetorical analysis of their composition. This is an innovative approach that employs a hermeneutic methodology of textual analysis mutated from Biblical studies, which is founded on parallelisms and

concentric construction. This methodological approach has inspired Helen Geršman not only to analyse the traditionalists' orations, but to also go further back in time, to the roots of the genre of the Arabic oration, and to apply the same analysis to pre-Islamic prose literature as well. The fascinating poetics which arises from the clear concentric formula of Arabic prose texts motivated our teacher of Arabic, Alice Volkonski, whose secondary research language is Hebrew, to compare the language features of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and Old Testament Wisdom literature, basing her study also partly on a rhetorical analysis of the same type. Our doctoral students' research includes rhetorical and content analysis of either Arabic or Persian orations.

Apart from maintaining our unique Middle Eastern Studies programme in Estonia, we also consider it one of our primary responsibilities to reach out to the Estonian public. We do so by making available both academic and more popular translations of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature, where literature here is meant in the widest sense possible. We regularly contribute to the special translation series *Bibliotheca Asiatica* of Tallinn University Press. Also, Helen Geršman and Üllar Peterson are the cofounders of the "Islam in Context" Series at Tartu University Press.

Helen Geršman, Tallinn University, Estonia. Email: [helen.gersman@tlu.ee](mailto:helen.gersman@tlu.ee)



Fig. 1 (left): Kachin amber in Myitkyina. Virtually all of it is traded into China (Photo by Alessandro Rippa, 2015).

Fig. 2 (below): Kachin timber at the China-Myanmar borderlands (Photo by Alessandro Rippa, 2015).



## Border Studies and the China-Southeast Asia Interface

Karin Dean, Alessandro Rippa, John Buchanan

For well over a decade, Tallinn University has been spearheading research on Asian borderlands, attracting researchers through various funding initiatives, developing undergraduate and graduate courses, and hosting events on the topic. Most recently, this culminated in the establishment of the Asian Cluster on Bordering in 2021, a study group discussing the newest developments in Asian borderlands.<sup>1</sup> While rooted in Asian Studies, the Cluster on Bordering plans to include researchers from various departments at TLU to bring together scholars who are thinking with and through borders in order to unveil broader social, political, or environmental processes and phenomena, but also aspects of the everyday that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

Such inquiries are rooted in the growing field of border studies, and they germinate from broader inquiries into contemporary cultural, social, and political meaning-making processes at the School of Humanities. With the most prominent scholarship on borders originating from research on historico-political developments in Europe and North America, scholars at Tallinn University, while contributing to the emerging study of Asian borderlands, are further working to bring these two lines of inquiry into dialogue. Asian borderlands are places where an array of active and trend-setting political developments are underway (e.g., China's Belt and Road Initiative and the persistence of non-state spaces), potentially challenging normative understandings of sovereignty and governance.

This research is particularly relevant as national borders and identities, including religious ones, are by no means disappearing anywhere in the world. On the contrary, current developments clearly indicate that rather than fading away, borders have gained further prominence in how nation-states and individuals order, divide, and understand the world we live in. With new plans for border walls frequently generating news headlines, fears of migration "crises" echoing from places as distant as Mexico, the Mediterranean, and Myanmar, and the sword of Damocles of future exit referendums hanging over the EU's head, border studies is emerging as a crucial discipline to critically understand current times.

Within this broader aim to de-centre scholarship on borders and borderlands, Tallinn University has developed particular expertise in the study of the China-Southeast Asia interface, and particularly of the Yunnan-Myanmar borderlands. This effort has largely been led by the work of Dr. Karin Dean, who has worked on the Kachin-Yunnan borderlands for well over a decade. Her work, in particular, focused on contested territorialities in northern Myanmar, and contributes to our understanding of complex issues around ethnicity and armed conflict. Rooted in political geography, Dr. Dean's most recent interest revolves around the impact of Chinese-funded economic development zones on state-making processes in Kachin state's contested borderlands. Recently Dr. Dean joined Dan Smyer Yü to co-edit the book *Yunnan-Burma-Bengal Corridor Geographies: Protean Edging of Habitats and Empires*, a text which offers a wider perspective of the connected spaces stretching from Yunnan, Tibet, and northern Myanmar to northeast India and Bengal.<sup>2</sup>

Since 2020, Dr. John Buchanan, another scholar of Myanmar's ethnic politics, has been based at Tallinn University with support from the Mobilitas Pluss postdoctoral grant. Dr. Buchanan completed a PhD in Political Science at the University of Washington – Seattle in 2017, held postdoctoral positions at Yale University and Harvard University, and is a founding member and the Director of Research for the Institute for Strategy and Policy, a Myanmar-focused think tank. His publications include *Militias in Myanmar* (2016),<sup>3</sup> which provided the first comprehensive study of the country's system of militias. His current research examines the overlap of opium capital accumulation, militarized violence, and state formation in mainland Southeast Asia. His current book project, based on his doctoral research, looks at the history of opium farming in Southeast Asia's highlands. In November 2021, he organized a workshop at Tallinn University focused on the legacy of the US-led war on drugs that examined opium production in Burma's Shan State. The event featured the screening of rare documentary films by Adrian Cowell shot in the opium producing regions of Shan State followed up discussions led by Bertil Lintner.

Dr. Alessandro Rippa, Associate Professor of Chinese Studies at Tallinn University, has also been working at the China-Southeast Asia interface. Based on research carried out mostly on the Chinese side of the Myanmar-Yunnan borderlands, Dr. Rippa has been particularly interested in the nexus of infrastructure development, trade, and securitization. His most recent book, *Borderland Infrastructures: Trade, Development and Control in Western China*, shows how large-scale investment in transnational infrastructure led to small-scale traders losing their historic strategic advantages.<sup>4</sup> Concurrently, the volume shows how local ethnic minorities have become the target of radical resettlement projects, securitization, and tourism initiatives, and have in many cases grown increasingly dependent on state subsidies. At the juncture of anthropological explorations of the state, border studies, and research on transnational trade and infrastructure development, *Borderland Infrastructures* thus aims to provide new analytical tools to understand how state power is experienced, mediated, and enacted in Xinjiang and Yunnan. Additionally, Alessandro Rippa is also one of the editors of the *Routledge Handbook of Asian Borderlands*,<sup>5</sup> to which Dr. Karin Dean also contributed a chapter and curated a section.

This interest in Asian borderlands is reflected in both teaching and mentoring at Tallinn University's School of Humanities. Several courses at both the BA and MA level include sections on Asian borderlands and transnational dynamics within the region. At the same time, Dr. Dean and Dr. Rippa are actively seeking opportunities to involve more early career scholars through Estonian and EU-wide funding initiatives.

This approach, centered around borderlands, thus contributes to our programme's understanding of Asia as a region of study. First of all, it brings to the fore the constructed nature of scholarly areas and highlights the need to address transregional and transnational dynamics in the study of the region. In doing so, a borderlands approach helps us de-construct simplistic assumptions and views that are still common in mainstream representations of Asian communities and cultures. In our work at the China-Southeast Asia interface, we show that even the most

seemingly remote areas are part and parcel of global patterns and dynamics: from land dispossession to the global circulation of capital. Dr. Buchanan's research, for instance, shows how analyses of opium production and circulations need to move beyond its exceptional status as a valuable, illicit narcotic drug, and focus instead on opium as an agricultural commodity, subject to market forces of supply and demand as well as state regulation and agro-ecological conditions. This, in turn, can add nuance to our broader understanding of nation-building and ethnic separatism in northern Myanmar, further showing the importance of non-state spaces in the study of state-building processes and mechanisms. Lastly, Asian borderlands are a privileged place from which to observe the growing impact of China's economy across the world and how this materialises through particular infrastructure projects. "Global China," as this process is increasingly referred to, requires us to re-think both area studies and the ways in which global processes are approached and understood. A view from the borderlands might achieve just that.

Karin Dean, Tallinn University, Estonia.  
Email: dean@tlu.ee

Alessandro Rippa, Tallinn University,  
Estonia. Email: alessandro.rippa@tlu.ee

John Buchanan, Tallinn University,  
Estonia. Email: jbuca@tlu.ee

### Notes

- <https://www.tlu.ee/en/ht/mediahub/blogs/cluster-bordering-club>
- Yü, Dan Smyer and Karin Dean (eds.). 2021. *Yunnan-Burma-Bengal Corridor Geographies*. London: Routledge.
- Buchanan, John. 2016. *Militias in Myanmar*. San Francisco: The Asia Foundation. Available online at <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Militias-in-Myanmar.pdf>
- Rippa, Alessandro. 2020. *Borderland Infrastructures: Trade, Development and Control in Western China*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Horstmann, Alexander, Martin Saxer, and Alessandro Rippa (eds.). 2018. *Routledge Handbook of Asian Borderlands*. London: Routledge.