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PAPERS' ABSTRACTS

Alexander Ivanov

**The underlying principles of the aristocratic Worldview in the Foreword of Shin Kokin
Wakashū composed in Classical Chinese**

This article aims at clarifying the nature of the Chinese influence and its interaction with the indigenous Japanese mindset in the Foreword to the “New Imperial Compilation of ancient and modern songs”, commissioned on the 300th anniversary (1205) of the completion of the Kokinshū (905).

This foreword stays together with its Japanese counterpart in certain conceptual relationship as well as they both present a variety of key metaphors and principles that are not always adequately transmittable or obvious at their true fictional scale. In spite of their elusiveness they have been a milestone of refined expression of an ancient and flourishing cultural tradition.

Aleksandra Lataria

**Comparative Analysis of Georgian and Chinese Families, Establishment and Development
of Relationships within one Belt and One Road Initiative**

The People’s Republic of China is the country which develops every day. Interest in this country never slow down, due to its colossal achievements. Specialists attract rich and unique Chinese culture, its historic and fabulous heritage, family cultures and traditions.

Relationship between the Chinese family and the officials was based on morality of Confucianism.

Actuality of this topic is determined by several factors: first of all, Georgian readers have leak of information about the Chinese families, secondly, within one belt and one rode initiative, relationship between Georgia and China is getting closer year by year.

“It is not possible for one to teach others who cannot teach his own family” – famous Confucius quote.

There are many years of economic, trade and political relations between the People's Republic of China and Georgia, which are growing and deepening day by day. Even in today's globalization, this multifaceted relationship can affect the change of the Georgian family.

The Chinese President's "One Belt – One Road” initiative is the beginning of a new phase in relations between the two countries, which means that the relations between Georgia and China will be even more deepened and shall encompass all areas.

More than 100 countries and international organizations have supported the "One Belt, One Road" initiative for three years. Georgia is the most active participant among them. The Chinese side recognizes Georgia's great potential in the construction process of the "One Belt, One Road". In recent years, China and Georgia have signed the Memorandum on Cooperation for the Development of the Silk Road Economic Zone; the Silk Road Forum was held a Tbilisi, the negotiations on free trade agreement have been successfully completed, and Georgia became a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. We can say that cooperation between the two countries is a good basis for the development of "One Belt, One Road".

Anabela Santiago

Chinese contribution to health global governance: analysis of the role of Health Silk Road

In a time of globalization, the awareness of the need of global responses to global issues becomes increasingly stronger. The health issues are not an exception. Global health governance is assuming a relevant role in international order, especially in this pandemic period and afterwards. People’s Republic of China (PRC) intends to position itself in global health governance, as part of a homogeneous development achieved in last 40 years, since its reform of opening up.

Effectively, Chinese health system has undergone several reforms mostly orientated to achieve a universal health coverage, the improvement of primary healthcare, the reduction of costs and a better medical personnel training. The plan “Healthy China 2030”, being implemented at national

level, was launched in 2015 with two guidelines aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: ‘Health for All’ and ‘Health in All Policies’. With a better health system internally, Chinese government can then aim for an outstanding position in global health.

In this context, it is important to go back to 2015 when Health Silk Road (HSR) was first referred in a document and then, in 2017, when it was mentioned by Xi Jinping during the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Forum through Beijing Communiqué of The Belt and Road Health Cooperation & Health Silk Road. This concept gained a prominent relevance with the disruption of pandemic Covid-19. Inserted into the broader Chinese project of BRI, as a way to build the ‘China Dream’, the HSR is intended to be part of the strategy supporting Xi Jinping’s narrative of building “a community of common health for mankind”.

This paper intends to analyze, through a (i) literature review and, (ii) a qualitative content analysis, both the internal plans and the Health Silk Road as tools for PRC to achieve a position of leadership in health global governance.

Antoaneta Velikova

Education for Sustainable Development in China

We can track the origin of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) from 1992, where on the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the member states decided to cooperate internationally on development issues. After the Rio Conference, the concept of ESD starts to penetrate China together with the idea of Environmental Education (EE), on the basis of which it was further developed. During the last more than 10 years, China has made significant progress in terms of ESD. After UNESCO adopted the “Incheon Declaration” and “Education 2030 Framework for Action”, Chinese authorities published two documents: “China's Education Modernization 2035” – a plan that sets the direction for the development of the education sector, and Implementation Plan for Accelerating Education Modernization (2018-2022). This paper reviews and summarizes China’s concept and progress in the sustainable education and its future targets.

Antonina Habova

The 17+1 format: Sunset or a New Dawn?

The 17+1 initiative will celebrate its 10th anniversary next year but the prospects for its development seem vague. The initial enthusiasm among the Central and East European countries is being replaced by some scepticism and disappointment with the slow progress and the unsatisfactory economic results. The first 17+1 summit that was chaired by the Chinese president Xi Jinping witnessed unprecedented underrepresentation – six of the CEE countries were represented by ministers instead of presidents and prime ministers. The growing Western geopolitical pressure on the CEE region creates further impediments to the development of the China-CEE cooperation format.

The paper is focused on briefly analysing key accomplishments as well as failures of the 17+1 format. It will also explore the prospects for cooperation between China and the CEE countries against the background of growing polarization and deepening divide in the international system.

Antonio De Caro

Jingjiao 景教 artifacts and images from Tang to Yuan dynasty. A status quaestionis on practicing Christianity along the Silk Roads from the 7th to the 15th century

Syriac Christian communities reached China since the seventh century and their presence has been widely documented by recent scholarship. Their cross-cultural interactions with Chinese elites and the presence of monasteries and Christian objects in the Tang empire attracted the attention of scholars as early as the 17th century, when the Xi'an stele was unearthed. This paper aims to reconstruct the recent debates on the objects, images and artifacts produced, or discovered, since the 7th century to the 15th century in China showing the cross-cultural and interreligious interactions between Christianity and Chinese culture along the Silk Roads. Given the substantial scholarship on the topic, this paper will take into consideration especially objects and images that are particularly relevant in reconstructing the daily life of Christians in China and their liturgical and religious innovations showing the active role of inculturation between Christianity and Chinese culture.

Banwo Adetoro Olaniyi

The Silk Road Dynamics in Africa: An Overview

The metamorphoses of the Silk Road into the One Belt One Road Initiative and then the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese government expresses the intent of successive Chinese administrations to carve out an economic super-power structure out for its home country. This policy changes also aligns with world trade dynamics in which actors keeping changing as they discover new areas for immerse finance and trade. Africa has numerous and untapped resources and still remains a fertile ground for potential investors or aggressive super powers. The Silk Road pushes for the promotion of certain economic terminologies or policies which might be detrimental to the development of African ailing economies. The notion of free trade which is one of the core tenets of globalization promotes the elimination of economic initiatives and incomes that African countries are in dire need of. This work examines the Silk Road Dynamics within certain African Countries. It argues that while free trade has its inherent benefits, it also exhibits a lot of negative tendencies for developing economies such as Nigeria. Data for this work was gathered through critical case sampling. It adopts the theoretical framework of globalization as propounded by Williams, I. Robinson who is a strong protagonist of this terminology and conceives that the movement of goods and services across national borders results in the fragmentation of the manufacturing and production sector. This paper argues that the Silk Road Initiative might offer infrastructural development for Africa but also cripple fragile economic African states.

Biserka Veleva

Azerbaijan as an intercultural unit in the South Caucasus on the Silk Road

The topic of this study is part of a project to study intercultural factors within different educational systems and to more closely analyze the effects of foreign language learning in a specific multicultural environment.

For the second year I am a visiting lecturer in Bulgarian language and literature at the Baku Slavic University (Republic of Azerbaijan) and during my work I observed several interesting features and trends as an example of sociolinguistic development of this nation from the South Caucasus. As main factors we can see its geopolitical position over the centuries - as a specific

section of the “Silk Road”, but there are many important factors that appear in the most recent period, when the independence of Azerbaijan was proclaimed and even during the last several years. We see that there is a specific development of the decision-making process in view of the rivalry between the great powers, combined with intelligent national attitudes. And what is fundamental is that these national policies have a direct impact on the shape of the education system related to foreign language teaching.

Bogdan Zemanek

Forgotten book, forgotten life: Polish officer-sinologist Paweł Alexandrowicz and his Land of the Dragon – a socio-historical analysis

Using archived documents and his own recollections, I reconstruct a life of colonel Paweł Alexandrowicz (1874-1965), and use it to frame a context for an analysis of his book *Land of the Dragon – the Character of a Chinaman, his habits and customs*. Polish-Lithuanian by birth, an officer in Russian Imperial Army by profession, Alexandrowicz participated in the Russo-Japanese War, in 1910 became an officer-student at the Sino-Japanese faculty of Far Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, to finally become the first military attaché of the newly established Polish Republic to Japan. Just before the outbreak of WW II he published his book, a kind of encyclopedic compendium for general public, covering topics from geography, through architecture to social mores and customs.

Land of the Dragon, although not written for scientists and sometimes “orientalising”, is a good reader for any anthropologist, reminding of all-important qualities in research: attention to detail and common sense. Alexandrowicz was not a theoretician of inter-cultural contacts, but as a Pole in Russia, he lived a life of a member of minority; and during service was immersed in many different multi-cultural environments. This explains why he always treats people from “Far-Far Away” as fellow humans, and not as the “Others”. A very keen observer, as befits a reconnaissance specialist, he puts down his observations clearly and straightforwardly. When he speaks of dirty houses or lack of empathy among the Chinese – he is politically incorrect in strikingly 19th-century style. At the same time he is very modern in his lack of racist overtones – he is particular to explain his observations in terms of historical, social and economical conditions. His book is therefore an

excellent document of particular times and of particular experience, that of life “on the Silk Road”, between Asia and Europe.

Bogdana Todorova

China & Iran – new dynamics within the strategic cooperation

China has been rising steadily diplomatically. The signing of a 25-year cooperation document between Iran and China has become the subject of debate by many political and economic experts. The agreement covers cooperation in a variety of areas including politics, economic, security, defense, culture, science. The accord brings Iran into China’s Belt and Road Initiative, intended to stretch from East Asia to Europe.

The article is an attempt to present this strategic cooperation as a roadmap for future cooperation and prosperity for both countries. The Belt and Road Initiative, can only be pursued in a stable region and under the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Undoubtedly, stability would be a prerequisite to regional development in West Asia. Global dynamics indicate a smooth change in the international order, in which Asian players, specifically China, will play a significant role. Therefore, global and regional dynamics address the emergence of a new regional order in West Asia and a multipolar order in the global arena.

In conclusion, Western powers' foreign policy has always been based on interfering in the internal affairs of West Asian countries. In addition, their purposes have been shaped based on unilateral rather than multilateral benefits. But based on China's approach to international relations, China's foreign policy in West Asia requires that China defines its interests in regional stability rather than instability in the region. Therefore, unlike Western powers, China pursues its national interests along with interests of West Asian nations.

Christopher Lewis

Health Silk Road

Fortunately, the world has become multipolar, bringing the unprecedented possibility of win-win cooperation among all nations. Dozens of countries have joined the One Belt, One Road (New Silk Road) project, the greatest infrastructure project in the history of mankind. In the midst of the

COVID-19 crisis, the pandemic can only be defeated through cooperation, instead provocation and saber rattling, which can lead to the destruction of mankind. According to the World Food Program, “more than 31 million people in [western Africa] are expected to [become] food insecure and unable to feed themselves during the coming June-August lean season – the period when food is scarce before the next harvest. That number is more than 30 percent higher than last year and is the highest level in the best part of a decade.” Food prices have increased by more than 40%, in some cases 200%.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently delivered a grim review of the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related hunger, poverty, and unemployment crises, telling a gathering of the UN Economic and Social Council’s Forum on Financing for Development that “no element of our multilateral response has gone as it should.” A new documentary was released online today on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, titled “Hunger Ward,” after which release World Food Program Director David Beasley and filmmaker Skye Fitzgerald, held a live discussion (see hungerward.org). He said that when he came into office in 2017, there were 700 million hungry globally, and 80 million on the brink of starvation. That number on the brink increased to 135 million just before COVID-19 began. Today, that number is 270 million.

A major expansion of COVID-19 vaccine production is underway in China, now surpassing 3.5 billion doses in 2021. Further, China has decided to vaccinate 560 million of its citizens by June 30, an average of about five million/day. The U.S. is just now arriving at the capacity for 2.5 million/day, on its way to a 3-4 million/day level.

What China has been able to achieve in the last forty years, can be replicated through the cooperation of the great nations of the United States, China, Russia and India.

Denka Marinova

Ancient Wisdom in Chinese Traditional Medicine: The New Face from Modern Science

Discovering the essence of Chinese Traditional Medicine shows how the richness of her methods of treatment reflects the millenniums experience in the tradition medical knowledge. This knowledge deserves attention and in-depth understanding. Hence the guidelines for studying the theoretical, philosophical and methodological principles of Chinese Traditional Medicine. Unfortunately, when it is accepted as a fact and as a practical knowledge, it comes to the formal

recognition of its methods, so the experience of putting it into practice not only can not solve the curative process with great effect but in some cases also cause their elimination.

In order to master the theoretical knowledge, the direct consequence of which is the practical results, it is necessary to publish translations of original Chinese Traditional Medicine publications, accompanied by comprehensive scientific comments. This will ensure a correct understanding of its theoretical system and purposeful use of its methods in practice to achieve and maintain homeostasis in the body. Today's tendency to apply Chinese Traditional Medicine methods, especially acupuncture, massage and gymnastics, there is a growing perception of the acute need for such scientific literature in practice. This will not only be promoted and disseminated but will also fine-tune the level of their implementation according to the classical principles.

Desislava Damyanova

Natural Philosophy in Daoism

In the DDJ and the “Zhuangzi” both nature and the Dao have the characteristics and virtues of spontaneity, naturalness and self-sufficiency which can be reflected in the Chinese word ‘ziran’ (自然) which connects exactly these three meanings. This linguistic phenomenon, that the term ziran is used for describing the Dao and the nature could be a sign for Daoism’s closeness to nature. Also, in the “Daodejing” it is stated that a natural state can be achieved through ‘action as non-action’ which is described by the Chinese word ‘wu wei’ (无为). It encourages the self-cultivation of the humans themselves and the nature around them with the help of spiritual techniques which they apply to nature while being in nature.

Eliya Alichkova

The doctrine of ālayavijñāna in early Buddhist texts

This paper deals with the idea of ālayavijñāna as it is presented in the early Buddhist texts. The aim of the study is to establish the meanings and different connotations of the term ālayavijñāna. Ālayavijñāna is an invention of the Yogācāra Buddhist school (founded in the IV-V century), one of the most important schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Consciousness is divided into two main

entities: *pravṛttivijñāna* – the functioning consciousness, and *ālayavijñāna* – the store (or storehouse) consciousness, the eighth consciousness. *Ālayavijñāna* performs two main functions – it is the „place“ where the impressions of previous knowledge are stored and in turn, when the „maturation“ of these impressions occurs, gives as a result a new knowledge. *Ālayavijñāna* is a momentary, arising from moment to moment. It is based on the cognitive input, on the information from the functioning consciousness, on the *saṃskārā* (impressions) and *bīja* (seeds). It forms the memories, which in turn are becoming new seeds for next cognitive experiences.

Elizabeth Yoneva

Greening the Dragon: Trends in China's Renewable Energy Revolution

In the last decades, the subject of renewable energy provokes special attention on a global level in view of the climate change concerns and the call for sustainable development. China is also facing the challenge to adapt to new realities in the energy field and the measures undertaken and planned to improve the domestic energy situation transform the country's foreign image. In the light of these new developments, the paper explores the principal dimensions of China's renewable energy revolution and its repercussions for boosting energy security and green growth. Especially interesting are not only the ecological but also the geopolitical reasons for China's leadership in renewable energy as the green reforms can mitigate international tensions by making the country less reliant on unstable regions or transit choke points in energy transportation routes. The research showcases the main vectors in the Chinese renewable energy sector with emphasis on recent transformations in the context of the impact of the 2020 pandemic crises. The author discusses different aspects of the Chinese renewable energy policy from the perspective of the evolutions in the last years, outlining the conceptual frame of the diversification efforts of the country and its attempts to resolve the national energy dilemmas. Special attention is paid to the significant focus on global plans, launched with the goal of achieving "sustainable recovery", so as to take advantage of the opportunities generated by the current crisis to switch to a new energy model. In view of these trends, the aim of the study is to discuss the main dimensions of the green energy transformations in China and its potential to embark on an energy transition in line with worldwide ambitions in this area.

Evelina Hein

Traditional Chinese festival Qingming (Tomb Sweeping) as a resource for dealing with the existential crisis between life and death under the non-traditional conditions of the COVID pandemic

The present paper traces the roots of the Qingming festival (清明节) in ancient Chinese culture and philosophy, analyses the multifaceted meaning of the festival ritual complex, and presents its significance as a traditional community resource for dealing with the existential crisis arising from the psychological need to make death meaningful and accepted as an element of the natural cycle. The paper reviews in detail the forms that the celebration of the Chinese Tomb Sweeping assumes during the COVID pandemic, based on materials from the Chinese media from 2020 and 2021.

The current situation is presented as a factor enhancing the traditional function of the Qingming festival as a key social practice for marking life and death as a mutually defining dichotomy, as well as an effective tool for ensuring social order in times of crisis. The paper raises several questions: will the "digital" commemoration of the ancestors become a lasting tradition; how does society view this newly emerging phenomenon; and is it acceptable for the state to intervene in some of the most intimate existential experiences of the individual and the community.

Evgenia Mitkina

Chinese Olympiads for schoolchildren as an important element of the linguocultural space

In recent years, friendly contacts between Russia and China have been strengthening in various fields - economic, commercial, cultural, etc. At the same time, interest in the Chinese language is growing. Its popularity is steadily increasing. In addition to schools in which the Chinese language has been taught for many years and even decades, in many schools specialized classes with the study of the Chinese language are being opened, the Unified State Exam in the Chinese language is held. Naturally, senior students of such schools would like, first of all, use their knowledge to get the opportunity to study in various institutions and universities.

It is for this purpose that Olympiads (Intellectual contest) for schoolchildren have been created in various prestigious universities in the country, including St. Petersburg State University. Participation in such Olympiads provides benefits for admission to universities. Since 2017, SPbU

has hosted the Chinese language Olympiad. It is worth noting the rapid growth in the importance of the Olympiad. Every year more than three hundred people took part in the qualifying round of the Olympiad in the Chinese language. Geographically, it covers the whole country, schoolchildren not only from St. Petersburg but also more than 30 cities of Russia and the CIS countries participating in the "One Belt - One Road" program took part in the Olympiad. Such Olympiads are not just a test for knowledge of grammar or realities. The luggage of knowledge necessary for a student to successfully complete the tasks of any Olympiad should be greater than that provided by the school curriculum.

Thus, when developing the tasks for the Olympiad, we are guided by the main goal - to identify talented Russian schoolchildren who are seriously studying the Chinese language, to awaken their interest in studying at one of the leading higher educational institutions in the country.

Evgeniy Kandilarov

The “Three Seas Initiative” vs. Initiative „16/17 + 1“ – CEEC as an area of Geopolitical Confrontation between the US and China

In recent years, the region of Central and Eastern Europe has gradually but increasingly become part of the tangled geopolitical tension between the United States and China. In this part of the world, the opposition of the two global centers of power in international relations is expressed in the development of the Chinese Initiative "16/17 + 1" and the American Initiative "Three Seas". From the very beginning, the countries of the region have been gradually involved in the initiative launched in 2012 by Beijing, announced as a Cooperation Mechanism between China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the US political as well as economic presence in the region is also growing, especially after the US launch of the so called “Three Seas” Initiative. It includes 12 European countries located between the Adriatic, Black and Baltic Seas. Although the two Initiatives seem to pursue similar goals in the field of infrastructure and socio-economic cooperation in the Eastern European region, it is clear that these are projects with clear strategic, geopolitical dimensions, which are a function of the global confrontation between China and USA.

Gergana Ruseva

Momentariness and personal experience

“You are dying from moment to moment and living from moment to moment and you're different each time... I am undergoing a transformation and myself is beginning to disappear.” This account of a contemporary personal experience is very similar to the accounts we find in some of the ancient texts of the Buddhist *yogāchāra* teaching of momentariness. The view that most of the basic ideas in the various Indian teachings, and in Buddhism in particular, are based on personal experience of the adepts, researchers of human nature and psyche, is not new. Probably, for the followers of the respective teachings this view is quite obvious - the belief in one's own experience of reality is the basis for starting a specific path, for following specific practices, teachings, and ideas. However, to make a coherent and consistent system of knowledge it is necessary to structure and adjust personal experience to everyday reality, and to create a consistent and logical description compatible, at least partially, with everyday experience. The question to what extent certain ideas, such as that of momentariness, perceived as reality, do not determine the experiences of neophytes remains open. Here we will examine, on the basis of the original texts of *yogāchāra* teaching of momentariness, the meditation practices and experience as a fundament of the idea of momentariness and as a techniques especially invented to view, to realize, even to create, momentariness.

Hang Lin

Technique Adoption and Artistic Adaption: Silk Weavings of the Khitan Liao (907-1125)

The Khitan, a people of proto-Mongol stock, began to rise in the beginning of the ninth century and were active with their Liao state (907-1125) in northern China and inner Asia between the 10th and 13th centuries. After conquering part of north China where there was a tradition of sericulture and fine weaving, the Khitan could command their own production of silks. Nevertheless, even if the fabrics were designed and woven to suit the Khitan's own sartorial and furnishing requirements, the patterns and weaving and embroidery techniques were largely determined by the traditions carried by Chinese craftsmen. This paper endeavors to cast an insight into the unique craftsmanship of Liao silk weavings and to discuss the cultural interactions

between the Khitan and Chinese as reflected on these textiles. To explore the technique and cultural characteristics of Liao silks, the main focus is paid to selected silk textiles excavated from eminent Liao tombs in present Inner Mongolia and Liaoning. Among all extant Liao weavings, most types had been known in China since early historical times, with the exceptions of kesi-tapestry and samit, both of which made their first appearance in the seventh century. Both types have strong Central Asian connections and they became major type of weavings in the Liao. Next to a comprehensive analysis of the materials and weaving techniques, particular concentration is laid on the specific motifs and patterns on these textiles. In addition, historical records are extensively consulted to establish a link between written source and tangible artifacts. Through an analysis of the weaving techniques and artistic expressions, this paper aims at a more nuanced comprehension of Liao textile craftsmanship and a more grounded understanding of the cultural identity of the Khitan.

Hristina Teodosieva

The Bulgarian Language from Chinese Students Perspective

This report will present the topic about the experience of Chinese students who: studied or are studying Bulgarian language and culture as a major in Chinese universities; have come to Bulgaria as exchange students; have visited the country during summer school education programs. The purpose of the research is to be analyzed the current state of the studying of Bulgarian language and literature in China, the reasons for the growing interest in this major, as well as the prospects for its development. In the current part of the research, the main focus is on the motivation of students for choosing to study the Bulgarian language, the difficulties they face during their course of education, and the goals for a future realization that they set. The basic information was collected through surveys conducted with Chinese students who are studying Bulgarian language or have graduated related majors. The article will present summary data from this research.

This report is the first part of a larger research that I am preparing as part of my postdoctoral project under the Ministry of Education and Science program for young scientists (2021 year).

Part of the recent article is focused on the existing teaching materials available for Chinese students, as well as whether new teaching aids are needed. Also will be included a section on the history of this major at Beijing University for Foreign Languages. It has been exactly 60 years

since its founding this year. This anniversary could also be considered as a kind of occasion for such a research.

Hussein Suleiman Mohammed Ahmed

The Silk Roads: Multi-parties Involved; What Benefit and Future Perspectives for Each?

The paper will cover China, Europe, Middle East and Central Asia countries, as part of the 70 countries already involved in the Silk Road Project up to now. Beside the role of the United State of America as proponent to the idea of the Silk Road.

To trace the route of the silk road; in one hand the ancient silk road which back – dated 2000 years ago, and in the other hand to study the future perspectives of the new initiative of new one which emerged to the surface of life in 2013 and actually formed in action plan in 2015, and their economic impacts on China, Europe, Middle East and Central Asia countries, multi-research-methods (historic, descriptive, analytical, comparative and cases study), will be conducted.

Far more than a history of the Silk Roads, its new version (\$900 billion, cost of the first-year plan), promising to destabilize notions of where we come from and where we are headed next. From the Middle East and its political instability to China and its economic rise, the vast region stretching eastward from the Balkans across the steppe and South Asia has been thrust into the global spotlight in recent years. (Peter F. 2015) to understand what is at stake for the cities and nations built on these intricate trade routes, their astounding pasts, will be examined.

In China, according to the Belt and Road Action Plan released in 2015, the initiative will encompass land routes (the “Belt”) and maritime routes (the “Road”) with the goal of improving trade relationships in the region primarily through infrastructure investments. The aim of the \$8 trillion scheme that adds up to as much as 65%, of the global population and third of the global GDP, as China explained recently, is to kindle a “new era of globalization”, a golden age of commerce that will benefit all, will be tested.

Indisputably, Europe and China are the two main economic poles on the Afro-Eurasia supercontinent, and trade between them dwarfs any other bilateral exchange in the region (Andrew C., 2019), What benefit from the silk road for both party and the division in the European side will be examined.

The case study will be Italy; March 23, 2021 – on March 2019, Italy officially became part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in a move that signaled geopolitical shifts from West to East, Italy broke with its European and American allies during visit by President Xi Jinping of China in March 2019, and became the first member of the Group of 7 major economies to officially sign up to China's vast new One Belt One Road global infrastructure project (John T. 2019). The United States of America argues poses a threat to the financial and political future of the West. The future economic relation of Italy to the Silk Road, influence of the United States of America and the division of the European towards Italy step, accompanied with the covid-19 pandemic economic impacts, early recovery of China from pandemic and idea of pandemic aim to decrease the world's population will be analyzed.

Ioana Clara Enescu

Let the rain and the fire listen to my tale – an econarratological reading of *The Last Quarter of the Moon*, by Chi Zijian

The relationship between man and nature has always been a major theme in Chinese literature. Be it a sacred mountain or the almighty Yangzi River, a green pasture or a desert, a deep forest or a tea plantation, images from nature enter fictional texts for different purposes. Creating the background for the main events in a novel, symbolizing a character's deep emotions or even being the main character, nature impresses the reader through its diversity and richness. The continuous changes in the Chinese society affected deeply the way man and nature interact and literature is one of the main fields in which those changes can be tracked.

In my paper, I will analyze the role played by nature in one of Chi Zijian's novels, *The Last Quarter of the Moon*. I will read the text from an econarratological point of view, enquiring discourse strategies and ecological reflections. Written as a confession of an old Evenki woman that does not want to abandon her traditional way of life, the novel can be considered both a metaphor about the beauty that can be saved through art and a powerful reminder that humans' actions can affect nature forever. Chi Zijian, as one of China's famous contemporary writers, makes an important contribution to the creation of a green literature, one of the artistic expressions of the green civilization China is trying to build.

Iulia Elena Cîndea

Chinese Literature in Romania in the Context of Sino-Romanian Economic and Political Relations

Literature transfer is the focal point of several areas of research, including literary studies, cultural studies, sociology, political studies, and economics. Thus, the process of cultural transfer through literature and translation is vivid and abundant, changing its influences and valences, open to the construction of new ramifications in areas such as economy, politics, and international relations. The literary relations between Romania and China have been heavily influenced by the international exchange between the countries; therefore publishing activity and translation policies have been the result of the interpretation given by social agents in different spatial and temporal contexts.

The overall objective of the present research is to analyse literary translations from China to Romania from the point of view of cultural reception and to explore what this strategy involves at a larger scale. The paper proposes, thus, an extended approach to cultural transfer, an approach to the sociology of translations, to their cultural, literary, political and economic reception. In achieving the proposed objectives, we conducted a series of structured, in-depth interviews with Romanian translators of Chinese literary works, investigating the role of translators in the cultural exchange between China and Romania and their influence on cultural, political and economic relations between the two countries. The interviews investigate through a qualitative exploratory research, the role of the translators in the cultural exchange between China and Romania and their influence on cultural, political and economic relations between the two countries.

Ivelina Dimitrova

Facing culture shock

Culture shock is an experience, which a person might get through when one moves to another country. Culture shock can have different forms, but most common is the form of depression and anxiety. It is a feeling, which creates disorientation when someone meets another and different culture and way of living. This feeling can appear from different aspects, which can be either small

or big. For example, it can appear due to unknown greetings and hand gestures, different and strange food, difficult language barriers, getting lost in the city. The aspects can lead to symptoms such as confusion, anxiety, frustration, loneliness and homesickness. It can also cause some difficulties with getting good sleep due to the time zone difference and some stomach issues, because of the unfamiliar food and bacteria.

Joanna Wardęga

China's cultural heritage politics in a historical perspective

The aim of the paper is to show the process of changing the Chinese approach to its own cultural heritage, the appreciation of its value both in itself and as a component of the image of the state, as well as an element of domestic and international politics.

In contemporary China, its cultural heritage is a phenomenon of both domestic and international significance. In the internal dimension it is used for strengthening the national identity and patriotic attitudes, while on the international arena it has become a useful tool, applied in moral or symbolic contexts. It may be observed in the process of recovering some Chinese antiques from abroad at the beginning of the 21st century. The Chinese heritage policy has been, to some extent, forged by the West. The discussion on own cultural heritage started to emerge in China as a result of Western attitude to the significance of historical objects, as well as after numerous cases of looting Chinese cultural, religious and archeological sites by foreigners in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Communist Revolution classified cultural heritage sites as remnants of feudalism, and therefore many of them were either neglected or destroyed, particularly during the Cultural Revolution. Nowadays, however, the Communist Party of China has assumed the role of a main defender of the Chinese heritage, trying to recover Chinese historical artefacts from abroad, and protect historical monuments in the country.

João Marcelo Martins

**The Dawn of Heaven: An Intercultural Approach on the Mythical Founder Pangu
Through René Girard's Scapegoat Mechanism**

This paper can be divided into two parts, both of which intend to present the narrative of Pangu as one of many Chinese mythic episodes that can be studied through Girard's theory. Firstly, it will be discussed how Pangu's story is the most well-known Chinese narrative that hypothesises the world as being the ultimate creation of a sole character. In addition to the mythography surrounding the topic itself, since Pangu's narrative is not, effectively, the only Chinese proposal for the formation of the organised universe, its study should be addressed as an intercultural link for it is probably the result of intense cultural exchanges among different people along the Ancient Silk Road.

Secondly, Pangu seems to be able to reveal an unprecedented importance for the field of comparative mythology (and intercultural studies) as it can also be studied through Girard's mimetic theory and scapegoat mechanism. Girard theorises that only one sacred victim can stop all the uncontrolled violence that arises when everyone desires the same object. This French-American author has proved his arguments by analysing dissimilar narratives, but seems to have neglected the Chinese ones, even though these can be studied by his patterns. For this reason, it is our intention to demonstrate that Pangu is not only the father of the Chinese universe, but can also be considered as a mirrored figure, and the victim, of a previous mimetic triangulation.

Jood Sharaf

Chinese pop-culture: the soft power tool for cultural diplomacy in China's international relations

Cultural diplomacy has, since Joseph Nye coined the term 'soft power', been at the forefront of nation's policies when projecting soft power. In recent decades, China has also embraced soft power and cultural diplomacy. Insofar, Chinese cultural diplomacy has generally focused on China's rich cultural heritage as well as the study of Chinese language and culture through Confucius Institutes, Conventions, and International events. Yet, China has a further opportunity to ameliorate its cultural exchange with the world.

With the rise of technology and mass media entertainment, China is presented with a soft power tool in the form of its pop-culture which can serve to ameliorate the international community's understanding of Chinese culture and society. Chinese popular culture, notably Chinese animations, TV dramas, music and the promotion of domestic artists abroad presents an immense opportunity for China to be understood in a different light by the international community. The case is especially relevant for the younger generations – “millennials” – which can be introduced to modern-day China through technology and mass media.

Thus, this article argues that China could employ popular culture on a large scale as a tool of cultural diplomacy to further deepen the international community's understanding of its culture, which would prove beneficial for its international relations. Further, pop-culture's vast reach to many audiences, especially to the younger generations, can not only improve understanding for Chinese culture and society but also alleviate China's status on the world stage, making it a modern cultural powerhouse.

Katina Yoneva

China's Arctic dreams – projects, partners and realities

In 2014, China announced the new “One Belt, One Road” initiative, which was focused on cooperation with the rest of Eurasia and development of The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road. In 2017, the project was extended with another Arctic component - the ‘Blue Economic Passage’ (lanse jingji tongdao 蓝色经济通道) as an important element of the future Chinese economic interests. In the following year, the Asian country released its official White Paper on Arctic policy.

In the past few months with the “2021 Suez Canal obstruction”, the Arctic region and its shipping routes and traffic opportunities are back on focus. In this regard, the paper describes the main Chinese projects and partners in the North. With the growing relationship between the Asian country and its new European friends, the ambitious Arctic projects seem even more achievable than before. This new collaboration, however, affects directly the old Sino-Russian relations and changes the Arctic geopolitical situation. On the other hand, an eventual comeback for America in the region is also possible. Correspondingly, the study looks not only at the challenges such as the harsh conditions of the Arctic and the projects, which require a lot of funds, but also at the political

partnerships in the region. There is good reason to discuss in more depth, how The High North development affects the global international relations. The Arctic has the power to reunite the countries of interest, divide them in new coalition clusters or separate them on the basis of their personal interest alone. However, China is still learning how to be a true “Arctic power”, which understands the importance of cooperation and partnership for sustainable use and exploration of the region.

Kolpachkova Elena

Clausal and Nominal Constructions with Causal Meaning in Chinese

This talk will discuss the causal constructions in Chinese, with special attention to their morphosyntactic, semantics and pragmatic features, taking into account the linguistic material obtained from corpus data and informants.

The Chinese language has several grammatical means to encode causal meaning both at the adnominal and clausal level. There are three strategies for expressing the reason /cause in Chinese polypredicative constructions: simple juxtaposition of clauses, use of conjunctions, and use of a specialized frame construction.

The basic way to convey the reason / cause meaning in a polypredicative sentence is simple juxtaposition of clauses, however, when two clauses are chained by just placing one after another without using an overt conjunction the semantic relations between them remain ambiguous and permit various interpretations (coordinate, comparative, causal, temporal etc). Due to this fact conjunctive strategy is predominantly used. There are some special conjunctions which introduce a clause of reason (因为 yīnwèi, 由于 yóuyú) and a number of polysemantic conjunctions that combine causal meaning with purpose, instrument, condition and other meaning (为 wèi ‘for’, 以 yǐ ‘using’, 既然 jìrán ‘since’). Another polypredicative constructions that has been attested is frame constructions (由于...的原因 yóuyú...de yuányīn ‘because’, 以...为借口 yǐ...wèi jièkǒu ‘on the pretext of’) with different degree of grammaticalization.

The first and most commonly used strategy at the adnominal level is a prepositional phrase with 因为 yīnwèi and 由于 yóuyú ‘because of’. Such use naturally gives rise to the question whether these two markers are conjunctions or prepositions, so we further discuss the distinction of

different types of connectors in Chinese. Another way to express the causal meaning is the use of an applicative marker 于 yú.

Kuratchenko Marina

The Concept of Time in Traditional and Modern Chinese Culture

In archaic tradition the notion of time played a fundamental role. In mythology time is qualitatively heterogeneous and steadily "deteriorates" as it develops. The initial period is the time of maximum creative possibilities, interaction of different spheres of Cosmos and close contact between people and deities.

When China embarked on the path of modernization transformation, the traditional temporal sweep inevitably underwent transformation. The idea of one's own future begins to be represented by the idea of "someone else's present," and, accordingly, one's own past can no longer be perceived as unequivocally positive, acting as an axiological paradigm and capable of determining all social processes. The general orientation of activity also changes - now it is not the reproduction of tradition, but overcoming lagging behind the model society. The general scheme is overturned, and it can only be a question of the possibility of approaching one's own mythological, Chinese future by technical means.

Currently, the communist rhetoric in China retains its relevance, but already in a form that is more relevant for an economically strong and successfully developing state. Xi Jinping's speech, written after visiting the "Road to Revival" exhibition in November 2012, highlights the main temporal constants (past, present and future). The past, according to him, may well be described as "an impregnable pass akin to an iron wall"; the present is "the right human path that brings great change"; and the future, of course, will be "a time to bravely face the wind and sail on the waves. In doing so, the goal of the "Chinese dream" policy is seen as the great rebirth of the Chinese nation. In Chinese ideology, on the contrary, the ancestors (cf. the role of the ancestors in Confucianism and Taoism) have laid the foundation for transforming the future into a dream by their aspirations, and have pointed the way for modern Chinese to realize their desires.

Lanlan Kuang

Imaging the Silk Road: A Semiological Approach of Dunhuang Dance

In semiological studies of dance, as Keir Elam points out, everything that is put up on a stage is a sign. Erika Fischer-Litche argues that since humans live in a signifying world, everything produced by humans is significant for themselves and for one another.

This paper examining the semiotics in the present-day imagination of the Silk Road – specifically, staged performances of the Dunhuang dance as an embodied re-interpretation and re-creating of the arts from the Dunhuang. Historically a frontier metropolis, Dunhuang was a strategic site along the Silk Road in northwestern China, a crossroads of trade, and a locus for religious, cultural, and intellectual influences since the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.). The 492 caves at the Mogao cliff near the modern town of Dunhuang have served as temples, sites for performative events, and an archive that consisted of medieval Chinese paintings and Buddhist sutras. Today, the Dunhuang Mogao Caves is among one of the most well-known UNESCO heritage sites along the ancient Silk Road.

The paper examines that the creation Dunhuang dance as a sociocultural phenomenon that emerges through interactions and negotiations among multiple actors and institutions to envision and enact a Chinese vision as well as China’s imaginations of “journeying abroad” from and to the country.

Lara Colangelo

Li Er’s Early Narrative Works and His Relation to the “Belated Generation” Fiction

An author still relatively little known outside China, albeit highly successful in some foreign countries, Li Er 李洱 was in the ‘90s one of the most eminent representatives of the current commonly referred to as “belated generation” (wanshengdai 晚生代) and has been gaining increasing success in recent years. Nonetheless, few in-depth studies on his literary production have been carried out, especially with regard to his first short-novels. This paper will therefore focus on the early production of this author, investigating his relation and contribution to the “belated generation” fiction, both in terms of the peculiarity of themes and characters and in terms of stylistic and linguistic features. More specifically, by making constant reference to the passages

in his works that are particularly significant and emblematic in these regards, special attention will be paid to the figure of the Chinese intellectual emerging from his writings and to the use of external intertextuality, which are two of the main traits distinguishing Li Er from the other writers of the “belated generation” current.

Latchezara Pravtcheva

Wedding after death

In Chinese religion the belief is that there are good and evil spirits and the human soul is actually divided into two – po (魄) and hun (魂), which must be cared for even after death, otherwise they can become angry and cause harm. The belief in the afterlife requires that the family of the deceased provide him with all the necessary materials and emotional goods so that he can "live" well in the other world. A strong belief among the Chinese people is that life, whether in the real world or the afterlife, without marriage, is incomplete. For this reason, there is a custom in Chinese culture called "wedding after death", or minghun (冥婚). It is a ritual in which one finds a partner for the deceased and the marriage of souls is performed in order for them to be happy in the other world. To "summon" the soul of the deceased, some relatives use the help of priests or fortune tellers. Others believe that the spirit will come alone and will signal who he wants to marry.

Lin Lingmei

Bronze Age remains of Lower Keriya valley in Yutian County, Xinjiang

Keriya valley, located in Yutian County, Xinjiang, is one of the main rivers in Tarim Basin. It originates from Kunlun Mountains, and gives birth to Yutian oasis, and keeps flowing deep into Taklamagan Desert. In the history, Keriya valley once flowed all the way northwards into Tarim River, developing the green passway for ancient people. Later, since the aridification and decrease of amount of water from upstream, the end of lower reach kept holding back southwards, gradually forming the historical change of tail oasis. The tail oasis got to Yuansha Ancient City and nearby in about Han Dynasty, in Kaladun Site in Wei-Jin periods, in Dandanwulik in Tang Dynasty, and today in Dariya Village. With the archaeological works of the past years, rich Bronze Age remains have been found in Lower Keriya valley, which can help illustrate the cultural sequence of Bronze

Age in Lower Keriya valley, and show their strong cultural connections with other area in the basin and the neighboring regions.

Lyu Yuan

Socio-Economic Dynamics of the “New Silk Road”: The China–Europe Block Train and the Belt and Road Initiative

Ever since the proposal of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is also known as the Chinese New Silk Road, the grand initiative has received extensive global attention and interpretation. A particularly popular approach to this issue so far has been the traditional geopolitical one, with a central focus on the geographical situation and power structure of the region. Given the plurality of ideas for a New Silk Road in the contemporary world, the geopolitical approach is, nevertheless, weak to explain the prosperity of ongoing international cooperation under the BRI among other Silk Road-related development proposals. Against this background, this paper explores inner dynamics of the BRI and focuses on the launch and development of China–Europe Block Train (or China Railway Express 中欧班列), which started actually before the proposal of BRI but is currently often deemed as a signature project of it. By case studies of YXE trains (义新欧班列) from Yiwu and Yuxinou trains (渝新欧班列) from Chongqing, this paper illustrates the key role of contemporary international development of the supply chain in China in actualizing the BRI. By boosting the Eurasian connectivity, the international development of the Chinese supply chain has substantially facilitated the BRI, especially the Silk Road Economic Belt. It is argued that this process is credited to inclusive development of Chinese regional business circles, constructive central–local interaction in China, and effective international coordination among different sectors, which have been unleashing socio-economic dynamics of the “New Silk Road” linking China and the world.

Magdalena Łągiewska

Cultural Heritage in China: Protection and Restitution of Chinese Cultural Goods

China is one of the most ancient civilizations in the world. As a result, the Middle Kingdom is widely recognized by many cultural sites and goods. The aim of this paper is to outline the legal measures to protect cultural heritage within the territory of the People's Republic of China and to present some famous case studies concerning the restitution of Chinese cultural goods. One of the most prominent case studies concern two 18th-century bronze animal fountainheads stolen from the Old Summer Palace in Beijing during the Second Opium War in 1860. The entire world heard about these cultural relics again during the Christie's auction in February 2009. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning the case of 1000-year-old Buddha statue including a mummified monk who was stolen from the Yangchun's temple in December 1995. The above-mentioned statue was recognized at the Mummy World exhibition held at the Hungarian Natural History Museum in Budapest in 2015. Cultural heritage must be considered as a heritage belonging to humanity and must therefore be the subject of particular protection.

Marco Lovisetto

China's 14th Five-Year Plan and Italian G20 Presidency: Bases for Sino-European Dialogue

The Chinese model of socio-economic development presents in a very limited chronotopical scenario consumer-generated revenue, high-tech and digital payment primacy, the most rapid economic growth in world history, and domestic migration. These features condensed in a single country may suggest that China is turning to an autosufficient model; however, as proven by China's 14th Five-Year Plan, the Italian G20 Presidency's priorities—People, Planet, Prosperity—and the re-establishment of the G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group, both sides show that a path filled with opportunities for cooperation, exchanges, and mutual growth is ahead. Taking into account the post-pandemic “new normal,” this paper analyzes the latest orientations and possibilities for Sino-European relations in terms of Chinese domestic consumption, technological innovation, and gradual international opening-up.

I will attempt to compose a Sino-European dialogue based on priorities indicated in the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and the agenda of the Italian Presidency of G20. Focal points of the dialogue will be the Dual Circulation Strategy, new energies and new-energy vehicles, major industrial sectors (primarily ships and railways), and the Belt and Road Initiative, which are linked

with the priorities of G20's agenda: sustainable finance, including circular economy, new energies, new technologies, and bilateral circulation of goods.

The paper will follow the central thread of DCS and focus on two major themes: G20 SFWG, as the opportunity for China (co-chair of the Group) and Europe to develop a climate-focused sustainable finance G20 roadmap in specific priority areas; and the BRI, as a crucial linkage between domestic and outer DCS and a driver of bilateral circulation of goods for a global circular economy.

Maria Istvanova

Creation of first Slovak learner corpus of Chinese

The emergence of the Chinese learner corpora facilitates to great extent the research embedded in the field of teaching Chinese as a second language and processes related to Chinese language acquisition. There are numerous existing Chinese learner corpora created at various Chinese institutions up to two decades ago that are composed of texts mainly written by learners originating from Asian countries. The small-scale Chinese learner corpus enables the research focused on mapping the interlanguage development of a particular group of learners. The creation of the first Chinese learner corpus composed of texts written by Slovak students allows us to convey an error analysis that is helpful for the determination of the learner's main difficulties. The Slovak learner corpus of Chinese enriches the research devoted to the methodology of teaching Chinese as a second language taking into consideration the needs of Slovak students. Due to the limited availability of the teaching materials in the language combination Chinese – Slovak, it is necessary to devote sufficient attention to the research embedded in this field.

Maria Marinova

Typological Characteristics of Prehistoric Burials in Xinjiang

The funerary practices of the ancient societies flourishing on the territory of Xinjiang during the prehistoric era reveal abundant information about the material culture, the social organization,

the ecological environment and the beliefs of the first inhabitants of these inhospitable lands. The earliest burials in the region discovered so far date back to Eneolithic times, but the Bronze Age, comprising the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, reveals to the fullest extent the elaborate burial culture of the first Indo-Europeans and their interrelations with other nomadic and oasis societies at a very early stage of human history. By adducing contemporary data from archeological and scientific research, the present study provides an overview of the geographical and temporal distribution of prehistoric burials on the territory of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, briefly introduces some of their typological features and discusses other related issues.

Mario Appen

Parallels between Present-Day Iran and Sassanian Iran from 7th century: Power projection on the Silk Road

This article draws some self-imposed parallels between Present-Day Iran and the 7th century Sassanian Iran on the Silk Road. Because of the war with Byzantium that broke out in 602, Iran conquered a significant part of Anatolia, as well as Syria, Palestine, and even the granary of the Byzantine Empire, Egypt. By 620, Sassanian Iran also controlled the shores of the Persian Gulf and Yemen. There is an interesting parallel with the policies of the Islamic Republics of Iran in the first decades of the 21st century. Iran is again spreading its influence across the whole region—in Iraq, where it supports the Shiite majority, in Lebanon, in Syria with tens of thousands of troops, supporting Alawite-backed regime of Bashar al-Assad, and in Yemen, where it supports Yemeni Hussite rebels.

The power projection is in a westerly direction along the axis of the Silk Road, and the acquisition of resources, political and military support—in Central Asia and China. In 651, twenty years after the 602-628 war, Iran fell to the Arabs, Yazdegerd III perished and his son Peroz fled to China seeking help from the Tang dynasty.

Today, Iran, under strong American pressure, oil and arms embargo, seeks and finds support in the People's Republic of China. The press recently announced \$400 billion China-Iran deal.

Iran is once again seeking political, military and financial resources in the Eastern part of the New Silk Road (PRC and North Korea, whose technologies are the basis for success in Iran's ballistic missile program).

Martin Lukanov

Ambivalent Hybridity: Ancient and Contemporary China in Xuanhuan Web Novels and Comics

This study examines the ways one of the newest and most influential phenomena of Chinese popular culture, the fantasy genre xuanhuan, reflects the changing perceptions of the younger generations in China about post-modernity, globalisation, and the position of the young readers as members of one of the most rapidly developing societies in the world. Consumed predominantly online in the form of web novels and webcomics, this genre is characterised by a bricolage of influences, coming both from ancient Chinese philosophy and modern literature in the form of wuxia, xianxia, BL, and science fiction, and abroad, in the form of Western high fantasy and Japanese isekai. The analysis of some of the most famous titles from the genre such as the web comics Master of Gu and Feng Shen Ji and the web novels Against the Gods and Renegade Immortal carried in this research shows that the xianhuan a post-modern product of hybridity whose products occupy a somewhat ambivalent and unique position in East Asian popular culture. On the one hand, through their hybridity, the sprawlingly long xuanhuan web novels and comics both transcend and subvert the dominant Western cultural hegemony, creating "third worlds" of transnational co-existence, in a way functioning as a post-modern online pop cultural continuation of the values and practices espoused since the times of the Silk Road. On the other, deal with many of the issues faced by contemporary Chinese society such as hierarchization, alienation and loneliness, consumerism and societal pressure, and present ways to overcome them which are grounded in Chinese philosophy. This makes the hybrid post-modern genre of xuanhuan a fertile ground for contrasting and opposing nationalist and internationalist discourses.

Michael Kozarski

The Iranian detonator in the Geostrategic project of China "One Belt, One Road"

The newest Chinese international initiative 'One Belt One Road', also referred as 'The New Silk Road', and its implications on the Middle East and most of all Iran. Also the benefit for the

ever growing Chinese-Iranian relations is an accompanying unit on a bigger scale for the Belt and Road initiative.

Moreover, the ongoing Chinese initiative reaches the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its neighbors, which are keen on redirecting the Chinese funding and infrastructure projects towards them instead of the Iranians. This also causes the opposition from Israel and subsequently help sparkle the proxy war between Iran and Israel on the Syrian territory and that of the Middle East as a whole. All of that combined help trigger an indirect proxy conflict of unknown scale, at this point, between China and Israel.

Israel`s gamble in preventing or sabotaging the main flow of trade and goods through Iran is the most important issue of the current entry. Also the issue with the ongoing US sanctions on Iran`s economy and population and the negative impact on US-Iranian relations are key component of the article.

Miglena Tzenova

Performances of the Traditional Sichuan Opera in Bulgaria in 1959 and Their Reception

The text has been conceived as a part of a larger research work aimed at evaluating the reception of traditional Chinese opera in Bulgaria. The present paper examines performances of Sichuan opera in Bulgaria (performed in 1959) and their public and critical reception. The text is based on: archives and publications in Bulgarian, Chinese and English, as well as on interdisciplinary approach, which combines historical, analytical, comparative, music-theoretical, social anthropological, etc. knowledge.

Mugur Zlotea

Chinese Cultural Terms in Morrison and Medhurst's Chinese – English Dictionaries

Inspired by the metaphor of the Silk Road as a cultural bridge between East and West, the present paper discusses the role of bilingual dictionaries to introducing new concepts and new images into the host culture. More specifically, the analysis focusses on the two most important Chinese - English dictionaries, Robert Morrison's A Dictionary of the Chinese Language in Three Parts (1815-1823) and Walter Henry Medhurst's Chinese and English Dictionary Containing All

the Words in the Chinese Imperial Dictionary Arranged According to the Radicals (1942), and the way Chinese cultural concepts were translated and explained to their Western users. Compiled as instruments to assist mainly the Christian missionaries in their work, during the first half of the 19th century, these two dictionaries reflect not only the encyclopedic knowledge of their compilers and the degree to which they had been exposed to the traditional Chinese culture, but also the increasing Western presence in China, and, in a very interesting way, a deepening understanding by the Western intellectuals of the traditional Chinese culture. Published less than three decades apart, the two dictionaries are quite different in the selection and explanation of the traditional Chinese concepts, ranging from ignoring the cultural or philosophical meaning of a word, to trying to find equivalents into the European culture. With selected examples, the paper intends to underline the contribution of these two dictionaries and their authors to introducing the Chinese culture to the English-speaking world.

Nadezhda Nikolova

Ethnocultural and linguistic aspects of some medicinal plants in Bulgaria and China

Medicinal plants occupy an important place in the ethnoculture and traditions of each nation. Their healing properties are an important element of human health. Herbs affect the body in unique ways and are widely used in folk medicine in the treatment of various diseases.

This report makes a linguocultural analysis of medicinal plants (astragalus, ginger, ephedra, licorice, jujube, etc.), which are used in herbal medicine in Bulgaria and China. The intercultural similarities and differences in the cognitive strategies in the naming of the medicinal plants are described, in comparative terms, as a fragment of the linguistic picture.

Nako Stefanov

People's Republic of China today - achievements, problems, trends and prospects

In the first decades of the 21st century, the People's Republic of China was formed first as a global manufacturing power, then as an economic one, and now as a technological power. For the period 1990-2020, China became the most dynamically developing country, increasing its gross domestic product (GDP), calculated at purchasing power parity (PPP) during this period 21.6 times.

China in the world's 6th largest economy in 1999 became the first power in the fall of 2014, according to PPP estimates. For comparison, the world economy in the same years grew 3.7 times, India's economy - 6.27 times, the United States - 2, 44 times, Russia - 2.37 times, Germany - 1.92 times, and Japan - 1.27 times.

Undoubtedly, another important indicator of the character and economic development of a country is its foreign trade. Undoubtedly the most important indicator of the nature and economic development of a country in its foreign trade is the relative share of the commodity group "machinery" in the volume of total exports. The comparative analysis in this area provides important information about the dynamics and place of China in the modern world. For example, in 2018, in the exports of Chinese product groups, "machinery" accounted for 48.5% of total exports. In the same period in the USA "machines" accounted only for 21.1% of the all volume of exports.

Particularly impressive are the achievements of the PRC in the field of technology, where in 2017 patent applications from China were 43.6% of all worldwide, while the share of the United States was 19.2% and Japan was 10.1%. In the sector of utility models in the same 2017-year China is again first with 95.8%, Germany is second with 0.8% and Russia is third with 0.6%.

Undoubtedly, these achievements also create problems, such as significant industrial pollution, where, despite the measures taken, it takes time to overcome the problems. The success of the PRC has provoked also an "external reaction" such as the trade war with the United States that began in 2018. In the following years it has gradually become a "hybrid war", today including not only purely trade and economic, but also technological, financial, informational and other aspects.

Against this background, such key trends emerge such as the expansion of domestic consumption as a basis for the stability of the national economy and independence from the external environment, on the one hand. On the other hand are the measures to stimulate "high technologies and innovations", to create the "innovative economy", i.e. the implementation of the so-called "4th Industrial Revolution", related to artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, industrial robots, etc. as a basic platform for China's economic dynamics, This will take the PRC, according to various estimates, from 10 to 15 years.

Roula Tsokalidou, Zhang Qun, Chen Sen

Confucius Institute at AUTH: Teaching Chinese Language during the pandemic & Social Media

During online teaching times, maintaining human contact, which is the basis for all teaching efforts, and further developing new teaching strategies is an especially interesting and challenging issue for all teachers. As 2020 was the first year of the Confucius Institute at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki which coincided with the COVID19 pandemic, the teacher and director of CI at AUTH who were present on CI's premises had to respond with innovative ways in order to keep the interest of the students and to further develop an interest in the Chinese language and culture for future students. In this effort, the use of technology and social media have played a very significant role. In this paper we will present some of the innovative ways that CI at AUTH has adopted in its effort to grow during these challenging times.

In more detail we will present some of the material that is uploaded on our social media page or is shared by the teacher and the director for students and friends in order to both encourage student participation and create grounds for further interest in the Chinese language on the whole.

Rumiana Budjeva

Qigong, Tao Practices and Tai Chi – The Chinese Approach to Health in Condition of COVID-19

Faced with the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, modern man has proved helpless, frightened and vulnerable. Looking for ways to preserve their lives (and those of their loved ones), health and mental balance, more and more people are turning to the ancient traditions of Chinese methods of good health, quality of life and longevity. There is a growing interest in the "Chinese approach to health". It is relied on by both healthy people - to prevent and maintain their vitality, and people suffering from certain diseases - such as rehabilitation after treatment, or in conditions where traditional medicine cannot help. This raised the question of the place of this cultural and spiritual heritage in the modern world - especially in the challenging conditions of total mental, economic and social collapse due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to explore the real benefits of these practices, as well as the interplay between tradition

and current challenges - especially in the context of health. Our research focus will be directed at clarifying the real value and benefits of practicing Qi Gong, Dao and practices Tai Chi, and some martial arts (examined more closely in their health aspect). We will pay attention and also analyze the mutual influence between traditions and modernity. Preserving the traditions in the teaching and practice of these methods, on the one hand, and the innovations that inevitably occur when they are used by modern Western man, on the other - with the emphasis on the benefits and practical applicability. For the purpose of the article, a series of in-depth interviews will be conducted with people practicing various Chinese techniques and methods for maintaining health, including martial arts, as well as in-depth interviews with instructors and teachers from different schools.

Serhii Kozlovskiy

Children and Childhood in The System of Gender Relations in The Traditional Chinese Clerk Family of The Tang Dynasty Era (618-907)

An early medieval Chinese clerk family, as a part of the then-social society, was part of a large patriarchal family / clan (氏族 / chzunczu), a group of related families that had a common ancestor along the male line, a certain economic unity, and a single surname. A husband could have only one main wife (奶奶 / nǎinai) who enjoyed the important prerogatives: the only real housewife, she was the legitimate mother of all children, and was recognized as such by all the children of the family, others were or minor (二奶/ èrnǎi; in contemporary narratives, they are often referred to in the order of their entry into the family: the second wife, the third ... their children, according to ritual rules, were considered children of the owner of the house and the main wife), or cohabitants (妾 / qiè) whose social and gender status was approaching the servants; they could be banished or resold; their children, could be recognized and officially accepted into the family of the spouses of the owners, or they could remain in the position of servants in the house. The examples above illustrate the complex gender system within the bureaucratic family, and therefore, these topics require critical analysis through the prism of act and narrative material of the time.

Equally interesting is the status of adopted children, since the latter received all the rights of the birth son of the parents who adopted him and deprived him of the right to inherit from his native

(biological) parents. The adopted son should not be older than the adoptive parents, nor could he be the only son of the parents. In addition, it was forbidden to adopt an existing offspring of a male.

Tatiana Mishchenko, Nikita Pochtarev

The Bestiary's Code of Chinese Culture Through The Images of The Dragon, Tiger and Turtle

The culture of each country is a reflection of the entire path of development of its people, and it possesses cultural codes characteristic only of it, under the influence of which the self-consciousness of each individual member of society is formed, as well as the national consciousness as a whole. Since modern humanitarian science shows a fairly wide interest in the study of the "picture of the world", the most in-demand knowledge now is to reflect the image of the world, the national mentality through language and linguistic means, which open up the opportunity for researchers to turn to the study of the "bestiary's code" of culture.

Purpose: to reveal the features of the national consciousness of the Chinese people through the prism of the bestiary's cultural code.

Tasks:

1. to analyze the images of traditional characters of the folklore Chinese bestiary (Dragon, Tiger and Turtle);
2. to determine the specifics of the reflection of the traditional bestiary of China on the minds of its people.

Object: "bestiary's code" in the national consciousness of the Chinese people

Subject: images of the dragon, tiger and turtle as elements of the "bestiary's code" of China.

In this article, several elements of the bestiary's code were analyzed: dragon, tiger, turtle. "Dragon" – one of the main symbols of China, is reflected in Chinese architecture and literature. Whereas "Tiger" had the glory of a devourer of demons. "Turtle" also had its origins in Chinese mythology, with a feature of legendary longevity.

Ancient people believed that animals are the gods who created the world. The modern Chinese people value their traditions and the thoughts of their ancestors very much, therefore now it would not be difficult to identify the features of the Chinese inhabitant's worldview through the prism of the bestiary's cultural code.

Tjaša Vilotič

Teaching methods for teaching Chinese in tourism

Teaching Chinese at the university level has been taking place within the Confucius Classroom University of Primorska in Koper since 2014. In recent years, we have perceived the need to introduce Chinese as a professional language in tourism due to the constant increase in the number of Chinese tourists in the pre-Covid 19 periods (World Tourism Organization – UNWTO and STO 2020). Therefore, in 2017 we first introduced professional Chinese at the Izola Secondary School in the departments focused on education for the tourism profession, and then at the Faculty of Tourism Studies at the University of Primorska (UP FTŠ) in 2018.

Our activities follow the good practices of tourist-developed areas, including Slovenia and especially Primorska, which respond to the increased number of tourists from a certain language area by language adaptation, by acquiring communication skills in the language of the guests.

Scholars of the Chinese language (Ye 2012, Yang and Medwell 2017) point out the specifics of this language, namely in phonetics, grammar, phraseology, and writing. However, we have not traced the extent to which we can adapt and use the models for teaching foreign languages from the Indo-European group to teach Chinese. Therefore, we have set up a multi-layered study that examines the specifics of teaching professional Chinese in the field of tourism in terms of topics, language functions, and cultural insights. The research is based on a comparison of existing textbooks for learning Chinese in the field of tourism with textbooks for tourism for other languages (like English, Italian). It further focuses on team teaching method, as a sinologist and a Chinese teacher lead our courses. To identify the most appropriate teaching methods, the research includes Chinese teachers and sinologists with whom we will conduct interviews and focus groups. In our research, we also include the opinions and views of students learning Chinese in tourism.

The common purpose of the research is to examine which thematic, linguistic and cultural contents should include teaching Chinese as the language of the profession in tourism and which teaching methods we should use. The findings of the research will be the basis for guidelines for learning approaches and a guide for the preparation of teaching materials for teaching Chinese in tourism.

Tsvetelina Nedyalkova

**The Ethnonyms Di 狄, Man 蛮 and Yi 夷 in the “Commentary of Zuo” (《左传》) :
A Quantitative Analysis**

The ethno-political situation in ancient China, especially during the Shang (16-11 century BCE) and the Zhou dynasty (11-3 century BCE), is one of the fields of contemporary Sinology, which need more extensive research. One of the most prominent records of the Eastern Zhou is “Commentary of Zuo” (《左传》) of the “Spring and Autumn Annals” (《春秋》). It provides valuable information not only about the events, related directly to the Zhou States, but also to the four main groups foreign peoples, namely Rong 戎, Di 狄, Man 蛮 and Yi 夷. The paper presents the results of the quantitative analysis of the ethnonyms Di, Man and Yi in the “Commentary of Zuo”, providing the chronological order of the appearance of these peoples in the text, which can bring more clarity about the periods when the contacts between the Zhou and the three peoples were most active. The aim of this research is to set a frame and hierarchy, according to which the information in the Commentary will be interpreted in future.

Valentin Katrandjiev

China’s Digital Silk Road: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategic Implications

The paper aims to analyse the key pillars of China’s Digital Silk Road (DSR) as part the Belt and Road Initiative. In view of that the concept, objectives and realisation of DSR will be reviewed from various perspectives (in particular, infrastructure, trade, finance, policy regulation, media and social networks). Special attention will be heeded to China’s concept of digital sovereignty and how it fits within the framework of global Internet/digital governance. Through DSR China make as a strong case to move from the position of rule-taker into the rule-maker in the global digital governance. It is in this context that the paper will also assess the strategic implications of DRS for the world (in particular for the European Union) in terms setting future digital connectivity standards, incl. global technological standards and cyber norms.

Valentin Petroussenko

Strait of Fokien as a Bridge towards One-Country Principle of China

Strait of Fokien (or Fujian) was historically borderline between continental China's Han population and the aboriginal tribes on the island of Taiwan. There have been established interesting mixture of ethnic groups from very early period and the remaining officially 16 indigenous tribes which still preserve their Austronesian background. Originally established there as Malayo-Polynesian culture they lived in area subject to imperial China ambitions, later on they were subject to European incursions - started by Portuguese Jesuit missionaries, later by Dutch and Spaniards. However by the end of XVII c. rivalling Chinese imperial factions managed to expel the European colonizers and almost two centuries Formosa became part of the Chinese civilization. But if the locals were successful drive out the Europeans, new invaders came from the rising regional power - the Japanese, who were masters for nearly half century but had brought modern industrialization.

Taiwan most contemporary history remains as a huge trauma of politically divided nation which came into force as consequence of the Civil War. Nevertheless, last few decades show growing new attitudes among the islanders towards the emotionally declined concept "One Nation, Two Lands". Continental China has also modified its politics towards smooth approachment. Last few years had increased the bets if the two Chinese states will bring together into one entity and the politics from the both sides are not yet enough clear. The paper will focus on the current political situation seen from the both perspectives.

Valentyn Velychko

Regarding the dialogue of two cultures in area of abstract painting

At a time when the artists of the world are in a common image space, in the art of abstract painting the means of expression are becoming increasingly important. It is generally recognized that not only academic but also modern, including abstract art is expressed and interpreted in different cultural environments of East and West.

The interaction and interpenetration of Ukrainian and Chinese abstract art in the framework of close academic exchanges between Ukraine and China is very representative.

Opinions about the difference and commonality between Eastern and Western art are very widespread and mutually recognized in Ukraine and China. However, artists from the two countries can create even better works of abstract art only in the context of their own national cultures.

Artists Ostap Kovalchuk (Ukraine) and Xu Shi (China) actually go beyond the traditions of their own cultures, moving from established, genre-limited principles to broader approaches (from the spatial interaction of white and black, from the prosodic relationship of calligraphy and music, from what role abstract art plays in artistic interpretation).

Xu Shi, being in the spiritual stream of Eastern culture, by "unearthly combination" radically transformed the forms of people's ideas about spirituality and being. In the common artistic space he formed a new visual communication, created the visual effects of the interaction of movement and statics that exist in the senses. The style of abstract art of the West is present in Ostap Kovalchuk's work. Against the background of elegant colors, his works are full of bold and fresh breath, and every movement of the brush is marked by passion.

Ostap Kovalchuk and Xu Shi have a common, great Teacher - Fan Dian. He equally deeply analyzes the art of his talented students, believing that during the development of contemporary European art Ostap Kovalchuk, and Eastern - Xu Shi, are very representative artists.

Through such a deep dialogue, the expression of abstract art will be promoted and enriched, and the communicative and emotional interaction between the artists of the two countries will only intensify.

Valeri Ivanov

Tao – way of the war and peace

Contemplating war has been an inevitable angle of every teaching and every wisdom tradition born in ancient times. It is unlikely that the essence of their expression has changed much in our current times. Maybe only the context has changed but once captured, the logic of the phenomenon remains - shaped, consciously or not, by our senses, thoughts, emotions, and vitality - and perceived, understood, accepted or not, put into practice or not, and used in the spiritual (virtual) or material (substantable) reality of our expression.

Similar to Yin and Yang, the civic and martial principle in governance can be distinguished from each other but also unified, regardless of the relationship to or from them, as well as regardless of the ability for their subjective perception or understanding of them. Ancient treatises are filled with openly declared postulates of truths that were the products of the experience and knowledge that was expressed in their wisdom. Strategic decisions of the martial (military) science and art from antiquity until today reveal their meaning and content for their correct application in the variety of everyday life dilemmas. Histories, full of examples of real people and events provide us with convincing pictures of reality.

Whether the possibly inevitable violence also holds the possibility to provoke spiritual catharsis and transformation is a question and maybe even a dream for most of humanity. The answer to this question is also an argument, possibly for or against violence, as and concerns development itself, as a basis for spiritual and/or material revolution or evolution.

Vivek Mani Tripathi

The Silk Route in Tang Dynasty and India- China Relation

India China are the oldest civilization in the world, they are having a golden history of more than two thousand years of exchange. In Chinese history, Tang period is considered as the golden period of China, at that time there was Gupta dynasty in India which is also considered as the golden period of India, This period has been proved not only a golden period for both countries but also a golden period for the Asian civilization and culture and the friendly relationship between India- china. The silk route brought the two ancient civilizations closer and intensifying the economic, cultural ties between them. There was a large scale of material and spiritual exchange between India and China, which laid the foundation of friendship between the two countries on which the India-China relations of friendship remained constant for the next several centuries. Through this paper a short study will be given to the impact of the Silk Road on the India-China relationship during the Tang dynasty and relevance in modern times.

Wenshuang Lin

Historical Contents in Teaching Bulgarian in China

The year of 2021 coincides with the 60th anniversary of the founding of Bulgarian Philology Major at Beijing Foreign Studies University. As a branch of Foreign Languages and Literature, the development of Bulgarian Major in China has mainly focused on the cultivation of language skills and the study of linguistics, literature and culture. As an important part of understanding Bulgarian culture, “Brief history of Bulgaria” has always been an indispensable course for undergraduates. With the deepening trend of “foreign language plus major”, courses such as History of Bulgaria, History of Bulgarian literature, Cultural History of Bulgaria, Diplomatic history of Bulgaria, China-Bulgaria relations history have been gradually integrated into the undergraduate curriculum. Postgraduate-level teaching has also included courses in Balkan history, China-Central and Eastern Europe Literary Relations History. The historical contents not only increases the background knowledge reserve of language learners to the target country, but also broadens the extension of the teaching of Bulgarian, deepening the connotation of course development, and laying the foundation for training cross-cultural-oriented talents and historical researchers as well.

Xueting Wang

The Influence of Buddhist Temples on Tang Dynasty Poetry

Buddhism is one of the three largest religions in the world. It was introduced to China around the time of Emperor Ming of the Eastern Han Dynasty but did not have much influence at that time. It did not spread widely and deeply until the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties. During the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Chinese Buddhism embarked on a path of independent development, formed numerous sects, and produced deep shadows in many aspects such as social economy, politics, and culture. The Sinicization of Buddhism's artistic conception at this time fully possessed the characteristics of China. Moreover, with the decline of Indian Buddhism, China became the center of Buddhism in the world at that time. As the most prosperous period of Chinese Buddhism, the Tang Dynasty was also the golden age of poetry development. The relationship between the two has long attracted the attention of academic circles. Buddhism is often discussed

as a factor affecting the development and prosperity of poetry. However, relevant research focuses on the changes in Tang Dynasty philosophy brought by Buddhism as a religious philosophy and then explores the influence of Buddhist teachings on Tang Dynasty poetry. This kind of research is hard to be called comprehensive, and it can be further explored.

Yevheniia Hobova

Hu Shi in Chinese intellectual discourse: hero or traitor?

A prominent figure of his time Hu Shi still remains an influential figure in China's recent history. His work and ideas shaped modern Chinese society in many ways that may not be instantly obvious. However, perception of this outstanding scholar has not always been positive. Not being a proponent of Marxism was the main reason why he is mostly known in China as one of the leaders of the language reform but not as a philosopher. In popular media he is sometimes portrayed as a national hero, and sometimes as a hanjian – traitor of the Chinese nation.

This research aims to show how the ideas of Hu Shi were represented in Chinese academia over the years. The hypothesis is that despite the heavy criticism of his political views, Hu Shi's part in the language reform was still praised by his peers and that his philosophical contributions became more prominently discussed in the Deng Xiaoping era. Our paper employs meta-analysis of research trends concerning Hu Shi and his legacy in science, culture and politics. Using quantitative and statistical methods we look at the role of Hu Shi in modern Chinese science and how it has changed over the decades after his death.

Zhiya Yang

From Shen Congwen in Xiangxi to Giovanni Verga in Sicily

Shen Congwen is a representative writer of Chinese Realism literature, and Giovanni Verga is a representative of Italian Verismo. Both Chinese Realism in the 1920s and Italian Verismo were influenced by French Naturalism, and this influence strengthened the connection between these two literary schools. Although Shen Congwen and Giovanni Verga lived in different eras and different countries, both of them created many local novels (xiangtu xiaoshuo). Both writers focus on their remote hometowns and on underclass of people who live there, respectively showing the

customs of the countryside in China in the 1930s and that in Italy at the end of the 19th century. Shen Congwen, with the background of Xiangxi, Hunan, uses lyric-like language in a series of works to depict the landscape of Xiangxi which is full of folk customs, showing the truth, goodness and beauty of the people living there. In the verist works set in Sicily of Giovanni Verga, he uses simple language to outline the poor Sicilian mountain village scenery. The author objectively shows how do local people fight for survival, hiding behind the works, and letting the characters do the talking. The paper will take the novels of Shen Congwen and Giovanni Verga as a reference, discuss both the growth background and the creation background, and analyse the connections and differences between the two writers in their respective works.

Zornica Grekova

The Maritime Silk Road under Xi

This report seeks to study the new level of political relations and interactions between China under Xi Jinping and Southeast Asia.

Xi Jinping's foreign policy in Southeast Asia could not be unambiguously assessed due to several important factors – the launch of the main initiative of Chinese economic diplomacy “One Road, One Belt” (including the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road project), confrontations in the South China Sea, enhanced political cooperation within ASEAN-led regional organizations. Despite that, the proposed presentation will seek to understand the new level of political interactions between China and Southeast Asia under the overall influence of the mainly economic 21st Century Maritime Silk Road project at bilateral level and at regional-wide level. Thus, the key elements of the Chinese role in shaping the East Asian regionalism will be also discussed, including through the prism of the bilateral relations and tensions (Malaysia-Singapore-PRC projects, Philippines, and other).