

Asia Notes

2025-2026



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2025 GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM

On May 3, 2025, the Asian Languages & Literature Department hosted its annual graduate student colloquium, *Beyond Borders: Exploring Asia Through Multiple Lenses*, in Gowen Hall Room 201. The event brought together thirteen graduate students from AL&L and other UW departments engaged in related interdisciplinary fields, who shared their research on literature, linguistics, culture, history, and transnational perspectives. Throughout the day, presenters and attendees worked together to foster a dynamic and collegial environment, engaging in thoughtful discussion and lively intellectual exchange. The colloquium featured two distinguished keynote speakers. Dr. Heekyoung Cho delivered an insightful lecture titled *Webtoons and Digital Platform Cultures*. Dr. Jennifer Dubrow followed with a powerful keynote, *Why Manto Abandoned the Short Story: Partition Violence and a Formalist Approach to Leftist Urdu Literature*.

This meaningful and productive event was made possible with support from the Asian Languages & Literature Department and the AL&L Graduate Student Association. It was organized by graduate students Mahnoor Lali and myself, Xinyue Yu, and we are grateful for the encouragement and assistance we received throughout the planning process. We extend our sincere thanks to all presenters, attendees, faculty mentors, and supporters who contributed to a truly inspiring day of scholarship and connection.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am writing to you as the new chair of the Department of Asian Languages and Literature. I am also proudly serving as the first female chair and first chair of Asian descent in the history of the department. I am fully aware that this is a difficult time for anyone to be in a leadership position as higher education is facing multiple challenges on many fronts, but the department is in a strong position to confront these challenges.

We have recently grown from 31 permanent faculty to 33 — Dr. Ha Nguyen, assistant teaching professor of Vietnamese and Dr. Sravanthi Kollu, assistant professor and Hanuma and Anuradha Kodavalla Endowed Chair in Telugu, joined us in Autumn 2025. Dr. Nguyen is not only a specialist in Vietnamese language pedagogy but is also trained in sociolinguistics. Dr. Kollu is a scholar of literary culture, poetry, and public life. We are also fortunate to welcome Dr. Yunxiao Xiao, acting assistant professor in Chinese, a scholar of Chinese literature and cultural history specializing in late Warring States and Qin–Han paleographic texts.

At the beginning of this academic year, the department received a generous gift from Alex Hsu who established the Dau-Lin and Nancy Hsu Faculty Fellowship. Dr. Dau-Lin Hsu, a legal scholar specializing in Song Dynasty, taught at the University of Washington in the 1970's. This fellowship will support faculty research in Chinese language, linguistics, and literature. I am particularly grateful for this generous gift given to us at this time when the value of higher education, especially the study of the Humanities, is being questioned. I believe this support affirms for students and families the lasting significance and enduring value of the Humanities.

In Autumn 2025, eleven new graduate students joined our graduate programs in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Asian Languages and Cultures, and Buddhist Studies. The research interests of the new cohort of students range from comparative linguistics of Asian languages to studies of collective memory of indigenous communities in Indonesia. As you will read more about in this newsletter, graduate students in our department are actively co-creating social and intellectual lives. The annual Ping Pong Tournament is still underway as I finish this letter; it has become one of the most cherished community-building activities in the department. Our graduate students have been actively participating in various types of scholarly activities around the world, and we are tremendously proud of their work! At the same time, our undergraduate students are also thriving in various ways, whether



it is through undergraduate research or through an intensive study abroad program led by our faculty.

I am also fully aware of the challenges ahead of us. The University's budgetary situation is significantly impacted by the federal government's policies, and the College of Arts and Sciences is implementing a budget cut to address its huge deficits. As an academic department, we can only take this critical moment as an opportunity for self-improvement. The faculty as a whole is

engaging in department-wide discussions: In what areas have we been doing well, and in what areas can we improve? How can we serve our students better? Things will be tough for a while, but our mission remains unchanged. We hope you will continue to support us.

Chan Lü

Department Chair

Associate Professor of Chinese

November 10th, 2025

Chan Lü's four-year term as chair of AL&L began on July 1, 2025. She is Associate Professor of Chinese Language and Linguistics in the Department of Asian Languages and Literature, specialising in the study of bilingual and biliteracy acquisition in childhood. Professor Lü joined the department in 2016 after her first tenure in Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. She received her PhD from Carnegie Mellon University in 2009. A native of Hunan, China, she lives in Seattle with her husband and two bilingual sons.

2025 WASHIN KAI SPRING LECTURE



Dr. Davinder Bhowmik, Associate Professor of Japanese in the Department of Asian Languages & Literature, delivered the 2025 Washin Kai Spring Lecture to a packed auditorium on April 8, 2025.

Professor Bhowmik's lecture titled "Ryukyuan Landscapes and Identity in the *Omoro Sōshi* (1531-1623)" Explored The *Omoro Sōshi*, an indigenous compilation of 1500 songs, poems, and prayers that extoll the golden age of the Ryukyu Islands. It offers insights absent from official histories that focus on great heroes. The collection sheds light on the Ryukyu's semitropical flora and fauna, and by extension, the everyday life of the common people.

The presentation introduced the main features of the *Omoro Sōshi* and paid particular attention to key aspects of the landscape that shaped traditional communal formations. Its aim was to consider whether the compilation reflects a history of the region as top down (Yamato) or bottom up (Ryukyu).

A recording of the lecture can be viewed on the Department of Asian Languages & Literature's YouTube channel.

Washin Kai 和心会, also known as Friends of Classical Japanese at UW, was formed in 2018 with a mission of supporting the study of classical Japanese language, literature, and culture at UW. Since its inception, Washin Kai has organized a series of free public events covering a variety of topics related to classical Japanese, from medieval poets and poetry to performances of Rakugo and Noh drama. You can learn more about Washin Kai, as well as past and upcoming Washin Kai events, on the Department of Asian Languages and Literature's website.

2025 CONVOCATION AND AWARDS CEREMONY AND RECEPTION

The department of Asian Languages & Literature's 2025 Convocation and Awards Ceremony was held on Friday, June 13 in Kane Hall. The department awarded 64 Bachelor of Arts degrees, six Master of Arts degrees and three Doctor of Philosophy degrees, and recognized one student's progression to Candidate in Philosophy. Sirajummuneer Ahmad, a double major in Asian Languages & Cultures and Biology: Molecular & Cellular Development delivered the address to graduates. A lively reception followed the ceremony.

2025 GRADUATE DEGREES AND AWARDS

MASTER OF ARTS

Juan Felipe Arroyave
Gyeol Han
Raechel Alaina Kundert
Jordan Niver-Johnson
Haruki Shimonagane
Evangeline Zhang

CANDIDATE IN PHILOSOPHY

Han (Gloria) Lee

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Grainger Lanneau
Jieyu Zhou
Shiwei Zhou

SCOTT H. SWANER MEMORIAL BOOK AWARD

Alicia Lee Ing
Em Tyutyunnyk

DISTINGUISHED TEACHING ASSISTANT AWARD

Juan Felipe Arroyave
Will Gershman
Jiwon Song

HENRY S. TATSUMI SCHOLARSHIP

Tessa A. Hansman

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES GRADUATE MEDALIST IN THE HUMANITIES

Jieyu Zhou

TURRELL V. WYLIE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Jieyu Zhou

YEN FU ENDOWED FUND FOR STUDENTS

Dana Fried
Micah Sprouffske
Ben Zhang
Em Tyutyunnyk

PANG-HSIN & CHEN CHI TING GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

Han (Gloria) Lee





THE 42ND WASHINGTON STATE JAPANESE SPEECH CONTEST LECTURE

The 42nd annual Washington State Japanese Speech Contest was held this winter. The event was organized by the Washington Association of Teachers of Japanese (WATJ) and supported by local Japan-related organizations, including the University of Washington East Asia Center.

The contest featured two divisions: high school and college. In the college division, there were four levels—Level 1 (first-year Japanese learners) through Level 4 (fourth-year and heritage learners). While last year's contest had only the high school division, this year we were excited to expand the contest to include college students as well. We welcomed outstanding contestants from across Washington State.

Over a two-month period during the winter quarter, the contestants selected their own speech topics, wrote their speeches in Japanese, and submitted video recordings of their presentations. A panel of five judges carefully reviewed each video to determine the winners. Each speaker shared powerful and personal stories in Japanese, showcasing their hard work, creativity, and deep commitment to language and cultural learning.

From the University of Washington, several students from second- and third-year Japanese courses participated in the college division. The following are the award recipients from UW:

LEVEL 2

1st – Ayslin Constable – 私の未来の学生の手紙 (A Letter to My Future Student)

2nd – Sitian Li – 私の外国語の勉強 (My Foreign Language Learning)

3rd – Sharon Juge – ペットを飼うこと (Having a Pet)

LEVEL 3

1st – Allyson Martires – 幸せ (Happiness)

2nd – Maelyn Plessas – 難しくてもあきらめないで! (Don't Give Up, Even When It's Hard!)

On April 12, during the Seattle Cherry Blossom & Japanese Cultural Festival at Seattle Center, the first-place winners from each level had the opportunity to present their speeches in front of a large audience. Despite the crowd, they spoke confidently and beautifully and entirely in Japanese. Both Allyson and Ayslin vividly expressed their heartfelt thoughts.

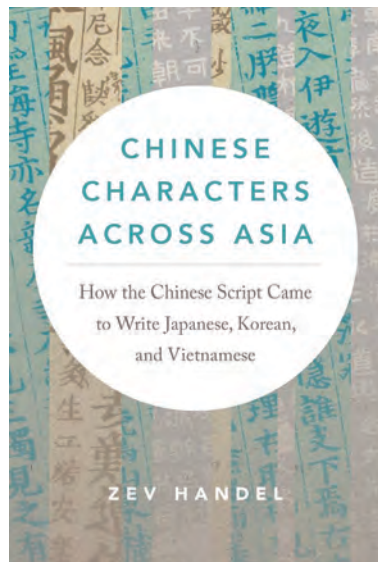
I have served as a committee member for the Washington State Japanese Speech Contest since 2021. Watching the students participate in this event has been truly inspiring, as they showcase remarkable talents that are often not visible in a regular classroom setting. Through this kind of experience, participants will also be able to gain confidence and a sense of accomplishment, and grow significantly as independent learners.

On behalf of the organizing team, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to making the Washington State Japanese Speech Contest for High School and College students a meaningful and memorable event.

FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

Ungsan Kim, Assistant Professor of Asian Cinema, received the 2024/25 Society of Scholars Faculty Fellowship from the Simpson Center for the Humanities. He was also awarded a First Book Fellowship for Summer 2025 also from the Simpson Center. On July 4, 2024, Prof. Kim was invited by the Korean Film Archive to give a public talk titled "Normativization of Representations and the Challenges of Queer Korean and Asian Cinema." On February 8, 2025, he participated as a faculty mentor at the USC Graduate Conference and joined the panel "Queer Representations and Politics in Contemporary Korea" as a discussant. On February 13, 2025, he invited South Korean filmmaker Soyoung Kim and moderated a screening and discussion titled "Harvesting Light and Liquid Hauntology: Films by Soyoung Kim." On April 4, 2025, Prof. Kim presented new research titled "Shapeshifting Media: Crisis, Resilience, and the Transnational Negotiation of Queer Asian Cinema" in a panel he organized at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference in Chicago. In Spring 2025, he virtually invited three Korean directors, Kim Dong-ryung, Park Kyoungtae, and Jung July, to his course "History of Korean Cinema." On May 11, 2025, he also organized a panel "Cinematic Returns: Affect, Language, and Sexuality in the 1990s and 2000s" and presented his research with two invited scholars as a part of his first book manuscript workshop.

Izumi Matsuda-Kiami, Teaching Professor of Japanese, hosted the 3rd UW Tadoku (Extensive Reading) Workshop on January 25. This online workshop titled "Tadoku no Kokoro" included two keynote speakers, Ms. Makiko Awano (Vice-President of the NPO Tadoku Supporters) and Prof. Noriko Hanabusa (University of Notre Dame), and attracted over 50 participants nationwide. The event was sponsored by UW Center for Japan Studies.



ics of Chinese characters and Chinese writing, and explores the spread and adaptation of the Chinese script to represent non-Chinese spoken languages in written form. The ideas are presented

in a clear and engaging style that does not presume any prior knowledge of Chinese language or writing on the part of the reader. At the same time, readers with an advanced knowledge of Chinese, Japanese, or other East Asian languages will find much that is new and engaging.

Reflecting its appeal to a general audience, Prof. Handel has been interviewed about the book on two general-interest podcasts: the New Books Network podcast on May 3, 2025 and the Asian Review of Books podcast on July 3, 2025. He also gave a public reading and book signing at Third Place Books in Ravenna on September 16, 2025. Prof. Handel says, "It's very exciting to introduce my research to a wider audience. The history of the spread and adaptation of Chinese characters across thousands of years and thousands of miles has always fascinated me, and now I have the opportunity to pass on that excitement to others. Not everyone knows that at one time both Vietnamese and Korean were written in Chinese characters, just as Japanese was and still is (to an extent). The way that speakers of these languages managed to repurpose the characters to represent such very different spoken languages is nothing short of ingenious. In the book I take readers step by step through how it was done. Thinking about how English might be written in Chinese



characters is one way that I make these concepts accessible. If you've ever been curious about the difference between Chinese and alphabetic writing, and how that difference has played out historically and might play out in the future, this book will tell you everything you need to know."

Bich-Ngoc Turner was promoted to Associate Teaching Professor of Vietnamese. In March, she organized the "Postwar Vietnam and Cambodia" conference to share personal stories, insights, and experiences that have shaped and sustained postwar Vietnam and Cambodia — from Southeast Asia to Seattle — over the past fifty years. This one-day conference successfully commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

Chan Lü, Associate Professor of Chinese, began her term as Chair of the Department of Asian Languages & Literature in July 2025.

She completed a project entitled "Parenting styles, family language policy and Children's Bilingual Outcomes". This project was funded by the Belgium-based Harmonious Bilingualism Network. Previous studies have confirmed the importance of parental beliefs about the importance of bilingualism and biliteracy, their actual practices of language usage at home, and their efforts in supporting their children's language and literacy learning. Building on this, Dr. Lü's project explored how parenting styles — authoritative or authoritarian — affected the effectiveness of parents' beliefs and effort on their children's self-assessed willingness to use English and Chinese, respectively, and explored the mediation effect of children's age.

Most interestingly, it was found that the two main parenting styles identified among the sample — authoritative and authoritarian parenting — had very different relationships with children's bilingual outcomes. Authoritative parenting exerted an indirect positive effect on children's self-assessment in Chinese via family language management effort (e.g., supporting children's extra-curricular classes in Chinese, library visits, participating in cultural events); authoritarian parenting also had an indirect but positive impact on children's self-assessment in Chinese through parents' language ideology (i.e., believing that learning and using Chinese is important). However, authoritarian parenting style also had a direct but negative impact on children's self-assessment in Chinese. Parenting styles also exerted a very different impact on the outcomes between the two groups of children in the sample. In June 2025, Dr. Lü shared the findings at the International Symposium of Bilingualism (ISB15) in Spain, and a manuscript based on the study is currently under review.

Paul Atkins, Professor of Japanese, together with his collaborators, Herman Chau and Michael R. Zeng, both doctoral students in Mathematics, held Digital Humanities Summer Fellowships from the Simpson Center for the Humanities for their project "Deriving Orthographic Data from Classical Japanese Texts with Machine-Learning Methods." The project also received \$10,000 in cloud computing credits from Amazon Web Services via the UW's e-Science Institute. Atkins and Chau gave the invited lecture "Statistics, Machine Learning, and Classical Japanese" for the UW Tateuchi East Asia Library Digital Scholarship Series in April, 2025. Atkins gave the invited lecture "Deriving Orthographic Data from Classical Japanese Manuscripts with Machine Learning" at a symposium on "AI in the Humanities & Social Sciences: Ethics, Practice, and Pedagogies" organized by the Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in April 2025.

Itsuko Nishikawa, Teaching Professor of Japanese, and **Yukiko Tsukada**, Lecturer of Japanese, collaborated with Hyogo Business and Cultural Center and Kobe University to arrange a presentation event on the last day of Summer 2025. The students of JAPAN 134, First-Year Intensive Japanese, gave presentations in Japanese about famous places in Seattle and beyond, while two students from Kobe University, who are interning at HBCC, gave a presentation in



English about their University's international interdisciplinary collaboration program. UW students impressed our guests with their Japanese language skills, which they had learned in just nine weeks. We look forward to more collaboration next year.

The Teaching Assistant Training Committee (**Akiko Iwata, Itsuko Nishikawa, SeaHee Choi, and Xi Ma**) established the Departmental Certificate of Recognition in Teacher Training. The purpose of this certificate is to encourage TAs to gain a deeper understanding of teaching. The committee hopes this certificate will attest to their experience and skills to enhance their CV and future careers. Interested TAs can begin working toward the certificate starting in Autumn 2025.

Jennifer Dubrow, Associate Professor of Urdu, along with Preetha Mani (Rutgers University) co-edited a special issue of the journal *Modernism/Modernity* on "The Language Challenge: Modernisms in Multilingual South Asia," forthcoming in September 2025. The special issue also contains her peer-reviewed article, "The Imagist Ghazal: Urdu Modernism and Japan," as well as an Introduction co-written with Professor Mani. The issue developed out of an online workshop generously supported by the Department and the South Asia Center at the UW, and by Rutgers University. Prof. Dubrow gave an invited lecture, "A Formalist Approach to Urdu Leftist Modernist Literature: Partition Violence and Dissolving Genre in Manto's *Black Margins* (1948)" at the University of Chicago, and delivered a keynote lecture at the Asian Languages and Literature Graduate Colloquium in May 2025.

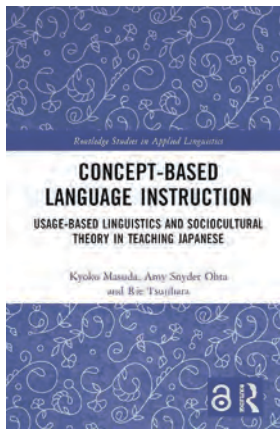
This is a second year that **Fumiko Takeda**, Assistant Teaching Professor of Japanese, coordinated with **Olena Vlasova**, Manager of Education Programs at Foundation for International Understanding Through Students (FIUTS) to host students from Ehime University, Japan to Third Year Conversation class (Japan 304) in the winter quarter of 2025. 10 students from Ehime University visited Japan 304 with 17 students. Ehime students introduced Ehime prefectures and students' life at Ehime University. They also prepared unique Haiku session in which UW students produced their own Haiku with the guidance of Ehime students, wrote it on the special strip of paper (Tanzaku) as you can see in the photo attached, and

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FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES CONTINUED

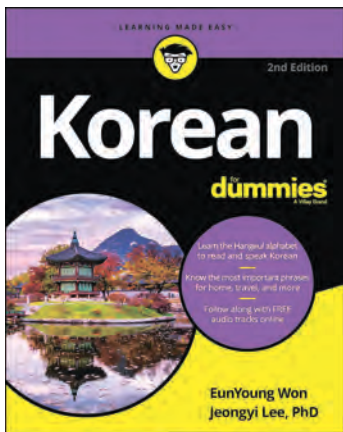
presented it in front of the class. Some Haiku were so creative and funny, and others were beautifully done. This valuable session created a rich and enjoyable environment for learning and exchange of culture. They look forward to more collaboration in the near future.

Collett Cox — Professor Emeritus of Sanskrit was presented with the Toshihide Numata Book Award on Friday, December 5, 2025.



Amy Snyder Ohta, UW professor of Asian languages and literature, **Rie Tsujihara**, UW lecturer of Japanese, and **Kyoko Masuda** of Georgia Tech published in January a book, "Concept-based Language Instruction: Usage-based Linguistics and Sociocultural Theory in Teaching Japanese" which showcases how concept-based language instruction can be effectively integrated into foreign language instruction. Concept-based language instruction is grounded in the relationship between theory, research and practice. The method uses visual

aids called SCOBAs – or schemas for a complete orientating basis of action – to teach accurate scientific concepts. "This is one of the first books in an emerging research area, and the first related to Japanese," Ohta said. "We are excited to see it in print, and hope that it provides inspiration for researchers and foreign language teachers."



EunYoung Won, UW teaching professor of Asian languages and literature served as the primary co-author for the second edition of "Korean for Dummies." The newly released edition features 20 thematically organized chapters that explore a wide range of everyday topics, including Hangeul, Korean grammar, travel, shopping, work and dining out. "This isn't a traditional language textbook filled with dense grammar explanations," Won

said. "Instead, it serves as a practical reference guide for learners who want to start conversing in Korean with ease." The book focuses on real-life scenarios, such as ordering food, shopping at local markets or making travel arrangements, while offering cultural notes that enhance understanding of Korean norms and etiquette.



Heidi Pauwels, UW professor of Asian languages and literature launched a Hindi Song Book project. This project is the result of a collaborative effort of UW Librarians Verletta Kern and Dylan Burns, Hindi Professor Heidi Pauwels, and graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Washington in Seattle, with the simple goal of sharing the work and the fun of taking Hindi songs seriously. While many people have a general sense of what Hindi songs are about, especially when performed with gestures and mime, it is not always easy to know precisely what is meant. Popular songs tend to be in registers different from standard modern Hindi, whether older or regionally diverse ones, which makes them harder to access for the average Hindi speaker. On top of that, songs in movies are often not subtitled, leaving room for misunderstandings. And yet there is so much to be gained by listening carefully. Besides acknowledging artists and working on a more precise understanding, we also aim for a better appreciation of the aesthetics and rhetorics behind the lyricists' craft. The project finds its origin in the class leadership and final presentations of students of Hindi 317 (Popular Hindi Song), 502 (Readings in Classical Hindi Literature: Avadhi) and 494 (Ramayana in Comparative Perspective) during Winter Quarter 2025, when the shared theme of these classes was the Ramayana. Several students voluntarily committed time and effort to convert their class projects into teaching material for their peers. It is intended as the first installment in a series on which to build in future years.

NEW FACULTY



Sravanthi Kollu | Assistant Professor and Hanuma and Anuradha Kodavalla Endowed Chair in Telugu

Sravanthi Kollu previously held postdoctoral appointments at Harvard University and at Boston University's Kilachand Honors College. She serves on *Maidanam's* editorial collective and is part of the Community Psychoanalysis Program at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute. She is currently working on a book on Telugu and other Indian romanticisms, titled *On Common Speech and Late Colonial Romanticisms*. Her other research interests include Dalit and feminist literatures, modern Telugu poetry, and the philosophy of language.



Ha Nguyen | Assistant Teaching Professor

The department welcomes Ha Nguyen as a Vietnamese teaching professor. She received her BA from Hanoi National University of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language; her MA in Linguistics from Vietnam National University; and her PhD in Second Language Studies, from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Some of her areas of interest are discourse analysis, linguistic landscape pedagogy, and task-based language teaching.



Yunxiao Xiao | Acting Assistant Professor

Yunxiao Xiao joins the department as an Acting Assistant Professor in Chinese. She received her PhD from Princeton University in 2024 and served as a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University. She has been a Fellow of the Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography since 2023. Yunxiao Xiao is currently working on a book project, *The Crafts of the Hidden Hands: Scribal Culture and the Making of Texts in Early China*. She has research interests in epistemological practices and information technologies before the age of paper, and is also exploring the interplay between knowledge, people, and ancient media.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS & UPDATES



RILEY HULL WINS 2025 LIBRARY RESEARCH AWARD FOR UNDERGRADUATES

Prof. Dubrow's student, Riley Hull, won the 2025 Library Research Award for Undergraduates for \$1000 as a Grand Prize in the upper division non-thesis category for their project titled *Scribes and Spatiality: A Comparative Study of Colophons in Gandhāran Buddhist and Arabic Manuscripts*, which was their final project for Prof. Dubrow's Winter 2025 seminar, "The History of the Book in South Asia."

Submitted by Jennifer Dubrow

2025 BEIJING SUMMER INTENSIVE

Over the course of summer Liping Yu and Xi Ma led a group of 2nd and 3rd year Chinese language students to Beijing Language and Culture University for an intensive language program. Aside from taking courses during the summer program the group also went on excursions to other parts of China, including a one-week cultural program in Xi'an.



GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS & UPDATES

Ying-Hsiu Chou (Chinese Program)'s paper titled "The Romantic Male: An Alternative Masculinity as an Aesthetic Mode of Resistance in Chinese Modern Literature" has been accepted for presentation at the 2026 Modern Language Association (MLA) Annual Convention in Toronto. As a core component of her dissertation, Chou's research explores how the romantic masculinity, refracted through Zhang Ziping's male protagonists and public persona, serves as an aesthetic resistance to the intellectual elite masculinity and its grand narrative. By revealing competing masculinities in Chinese modern literature, Chou's work challenges conventional narratives about masculinities and offers a non-normative account of gender dynamics. Her paper will be part of a special session titled "Weakening Masculinities in Modernist Contexts," through which she looks forward to engaging broader transnational and interdisciplinary debates on gender.

Xinyue Yu (Asian Languages & Cultures) received several scholarships this year, including the SNUAA WA Scholarship, Sochon Foundation Endowed Scholarship in Korea Studies, the 2025 Kyujanggak Summer Workshop Grant, and the 10th RIKS Young Scholar in Korean Studies Scholarship. She also co-founded the Digital Humanities Reading & Research Cluster (DHRR) with fellow graduate students, which was awarded a Graduate Research Cluster Grant from the Simpson Center for the Humanities. Xinyue presented her research, "Navigating Preconceptions and Reality: A Study on the Adaptation of Chinese and Korean Undergraduates in the U.S." at the 24th East-West Center International Graduate Student Conference in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and shared her research "Divorce Discourse in Gaebyeok, Donggwang, Byeolgeongon, and Samcheolli: Metadata Analysis of 1920s-40s Korea" at the 10th Minyeon Young Scholars Academy in Korean Studies. She extends her heartfelt gratitude to the institutions

and foundations that supported her work through these scholarships and grants. She also thanks the Department of Asian Languages & Literature for providing travel support, which made her participation in conference and workshops possible. Lastly, she expresses her deepest appreciation to her faculty advisor, Professor Heekyoung Cho, for her invaluable guidance and support throughout the year.

Jonathan Laiman (Buddhist Studies Program) recently participated in several academic events highlighting his ongoing research in Buddhist and South Asian narrative traditions. He presented a paper titled "Reclaiming Dharma: Śakuntalā's Story Across Epic, Jātaka, and Drama" at the Spring 2025 South Asia Center Graduate Student Workshop at the University of Washington, as part of the panel "South Asian History through Narratives, Chronicles, and Scriptures." His paper explored how dharma functions as a mechanism of narrative and social restoration across classical versions of the Śakuntalā narrative. In Summer 2025, he delivered a presentation titled "Sacred Journeys to the Underworld: Gendered Narratives of Hell in Early Indian and Medieval Chinese Buddhist Texts" at the Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRI), held at Elon University in Burlington, North Carolina. The paper examined Buddhist hell narratives as reflections of gendered assumptions within cosmological and ideological frameworks. In addition to his conference participation, he was invited to give a guest lecture in Spring quarter titled "Buddhism in Indonesia: Practices, People, and Places" in Prof. Joseph Marino's course "Introduction to World Religions: Eastern Traditions" (RELIG 202) at the University of Washington, offering students insights into contemporary and historical dimensions of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. Fellowship: Kyentse-Husky Buddhist Studies Fellowship 2025-2026.

Aidan Seipke underwent intensive Japanese language training at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies in Yokohama, Japan. During his time at the center, he led two presentation and Q&A sessions on manga related to memory of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima for the Nippon Foundation Fellowship's program, as well as a presentation about the genres of atomic bomb and disaster literature in Japan for the IUC's graduation project. Following his time in Japan, he studied abroad in Cheongju, South Korea for 8 weeks through American Councils' KISLP program and worked rigorously on further developing his Korean language abilities after a year break from formal study.

Weilin Kao presented at the 29th annual Comparative Literature Intra-Student Faculty Forum (CLIFF) at the University of Michigan.



Anjali Yadav was the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) Digital India Learning Fellow during the summer of 2024. For her project, she worked on Sunil Kothari, an eminent Indian dance scholar and critic's archival collection in Gurugram, India. Yadav's pre-dissertation archival work in India for the AY 2024-25 was generously supported by the 'Frank F. Conlon South Asia Fellowship' and 'S. Rao and Usha Varanasi Endowed Scholarship for Studies of India' from the South Asia Center at UW; and 'The Premchand Research Award in Hindi Studies', from the Institute for South Asia Studies at UC Berkeley. During her time in the archives, Yadav made discoveries, a

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GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS & UPDATES CONTINUED

portion of which she presented at the 15th International Conference of Early Modern Literature in North India (July 3-6, 2025) held at Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, Australia. Yadav also attended the Old Hindi Reading Workshop (July 7-11, 2025) at ANU, which provided an immersive experience of reading the Old Hindi texts. In addition, Yadav participated in the 3rd Rajasthani Summer School (July 16-22, 2025) organized by Rajasthani Bhasha Academy in Udaipur, India. There, she got an opportunity to closely engage with classical texts, poetry, and folk narratives in the Rajasthani language. Beyond her academic endeavors, Yadav's short story 'Chikli' was shortlisted for the 2025 Rama Mehta Writing Prize in English.

Milky Li (Japanese Program) completed the three-week Stanford Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies (IUC)'s Intensive Kambun Program in Yokohama from mid-June to July. This intensive course is designed to provide a comprehensive foundation in Kambun, which is essential for students pursuing research in various academic disciplines.

Tetiana Andriiuk During the past academic year, I completed an 18-month research program at Kyoto University, focusing on teaching Japanese as a foreign language. My research specifically explored sociocultural theory in the context of teaching Japanese vocabulary, and I conducted interviews with Japanese language learners to better understand their experiences with the vocabulary related to my research focus. Also, I published an article based on my previous work on the Japanese and Ukrainian translation of *gairaigo* (loanwords). The article, titled "Gairaigo Loanwords in Japanese Fashion Magazines (Translation Aspect)" (originally in Ukrainian), was published in Scientific Journal of Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University Series "Philology" (Linguistics), 22, 5-8 in 2024.

Vishnupriya Goswami is a first-year MA student in Asian Languages and Literature at the University of Washington. In September 2024, her research project *Rāsālīlā: The Eternal Play of Change* was published as a book by INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage). She was awarded the Joan Welk Fellowship in 2025 in recognition of her academic work. In February–March 2025, she curated the exhibition *Rāmālīlā: From Text to Stage* at the Allen Library, showcasing the performative and literary traditions of the *Rāmālīlā*. Alongside the exhibit, she also presented an Odissi lecture-demonstration on the *navarasa* (nine emotions) in the *Rāmāyana*, exploring emotional expression through classical dance (Odissi). Vishnupriya has delivered several guest lectures, including two on *Rāsālīlā* for Professor Heidi Pauwels' Hindi Drama course and one on *Rasa* and *Bhakti* (aesthetics and devotion) for Professor Joseph Marino's class. She performed at the 2025 cultural festival organized by FIUTS at Benaroya Hall and presented her paper titled "*Mudariyā-Corī Līlā: Disguise, Playful Mysticism, and the Literary Tapestry of Rāsālīlā*" at the 15th International Conference on the Early Modern Literatures of North India (ICEMLNI) in Canberra, Australia, in July 2025. She is also the recipient of the 2025 Varanasi Scholarship awarded by the Jackson School of International Studies. In the same year, she participated in the Advanced Sanskrit Summer Program conducted by the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in Pune.

Dana Fried spent two months in Tainan, Taiwan studying Mandarin with the Critical Language Scholarship. Highlights include going to the Huaqiao fish market in Donggang and doing a project on communications between Seattle startups and Taiwanese manufacturing companies.

Zhifan Sheng published an article titled "Tianyi and International Feminism in the Age of Early Globalization" in September 2024 in a special issue of *Transnational Asia* dedicated to the late Professor Nanxiu Qian, a prominent scholar of Chinese literature and gender studies. In June 2025, Zhifan delivered a presentation titled "Qiu Miaojin and the Remediation of Queer Letters in Sinophone New Media Art" at the AAS-in-Asia Conference in Kathmandu, Nepal. In the summer, Zhifan traveled to China, where he attended the international summer school "Frontiers of Modern Chinese Literary Studies" held by Fudan University and conducted archival research at several libraries and museums for his PhD dissertation on the media history of modern Chinese letter writing.



NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS



Renee Banks

MA student in Japanese linguistics

Research interests: Comparative Linguistics, Historical Linguistics, Japanese, Kanji Philology & Pictography, Language Pedagogy, Second Language Acquisition, Writing Systems



Ruikun (Ricky) Chen

PhD student in Japanese literature

B.A., Japanese, Beijing Language and Culture University

Research interests: 20th Century, 21st Century, Decolonization, East Asian Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies, Japanese, Literature, Okinawan Studies, Poetry and Poetics Postcolonial



Andri Fernanda

PhD student in Asian Languages and Cultures

B.Ed., English, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan

M.A., Literature, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Research interests: Collective Memory, Folklore and Mythology, Gender Studies, Indigenous Indonesian Oral Tradition, Postmemory Studies, Southeast Asian



Jeremy Browning

MA student in Japanese literature

B.A., Japanese and International Studies, University of Washington, 2024

Research interests: Buddhist Studies, Classical Japanese, Japanese, Literature, Medieval, Nō Theater, Religion, Textual Studies, Translation and Interpretation



Eli Drake

MA student in Chinese

B.A., Theater and Chinese, Michigan State University, 2024

Research interests: Chinese, Comparative Literature, Drama Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies History, Literature, Queer Studies



Tessa Hansman

MA student in Japanese literature

B.A., Japanese, University of Washington, 2025

Research interests: Ainu History & Culture, Dialects in Japanese, Geisha Culture & Its Depiction in Literary/Visual Arts, Heian Period Female Writers, Japanese, Nō Theater

NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS CONTINUED

**Junyoung Kim**

PhD student in Asian Languages and Cultures

B.A., American Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2024

Research interests: Film/Cinema, Gender and Sexuality, Korean Queer Politics and Activism Writing Systems

**Hannah Moore**

MA student in Japanese literature

B.A., Linguistics and Cultural Studies, Seattle Pacific University, 2017

Research interests: Japanese, Literature, Localization, Sociolinguistics, Translation and Interpretation, Visual Culture

**Mana Washino**

MA student in Japanese linguistics

B.A., Global Liberal Studies, Nanzan University

Research interests: Applied Linguistics, Japanese, Language Pedagogy, Second Language Acquisition

**Linhe Li**

PhD student in Chinese

B.A., Chinese Language and Literature & European Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2021

M.A., East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University, 2023

Research interests: Art History, Chinese Comparative Literature, Literature, Medieval Poetry and Poetics, Premodern, Asian Studies, Silk Road

**Yihan Wang**

MA student in Buddhist Studies

M.A., Art History and Sanskrit, University of Tsukuba, 2025

B.A., Religion and Asian Studies, Sarah Lawrence College, 2021

Research interests: Art History, Buddhist Studies, Digital Humanities, Indo-European Linguistics, Religion, Silk Road, Textual Studies, Translation and Interpretation

CURRENT AL&L GRADUATE STUDENTS AND ALUMNI CONVERGE IN CANBERRA

At the recent 15th International Conference on the Early Modern Literatures of North India (ICEMLNI) in Canberra, Australia, the department was represented by current graduate students, **Anjali Yadav** and **Vishnupriya Goswami**, along with department alumnus, **Christopher Diamond**. Now a lecturer at the Australian National University, Diamond welcomed the current students to Canberra, marking a meaningful reunion of the department. The conference provided a platform for the students to engage with the global scholarly community in the field of North Indian Literature. The gathering highlighted strong academic ties nurtured within the department and reflected how its alumni continue to contribute to the global scholarly community.

Our alumnus, Chris Diamond, who is now senior lecturer at ANU is organizing in Canberra, Australia the 15th International Conference of Early Modern Literature of North India (July 3 through 6th 2025). This is the major venue in our field, first convened in the 1980s by Winand Callewaert in Leuven, Belgium and Monika Horstmann in Bonn, Germany, two of my mentors. Two of our current graduate students, Anjali Yadav and Vishnupriya Goswami had the opportunity to present their current research, and Vishnupriya also gave an Odissi dance recital! Chris kindly gave me the opportunity to attend online, and I am pleased to say that they performed very well, their work was very well received, and they got good feedback.



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WASHIN KAI LECTURE

Dr. Ted Mack, Department of Asian Languages & Literature,
University of Washington

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 | 5:30 PM, Kane Hall 210

2026 ANDREW L. MARKUS MEMORIAL LECTURE

Dr. Richard Williams, Department of Music, SOAS University of London

Monday, May 11, 2026 | 5:30 PM, Kane Hall 225

ASIAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURE CONVOCATION CEREMONY AND RECEPTION

Friday, June 12, 2026 | 3:30 PM, Kane Hall 210

Asia Notes is the annual newsletter of the Department of Asian Languages & Literature in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Seattle.

Editorial Staff: Ben Rost, Kirk Van Scoyoc, and Micah Sprouffske

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Akbar and Tansen visit Swami Haridas in Vrindavan, eighteenth-century painting.

SAVE THE DATE