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//Welcome!

Dear readers,

We are delighted to present you the second MIRA Newsletter. We hope that you all enjoyed a pleasant, restful summer (although we all know well that summers are made for catching up on the research on hold during the teaching months) and are now ready to lose yourself in the contemplation of momiji to decompress from the usually busy autumn.

At MIRA, we have had a busy time since the first newsletter last spring. We were in Pontevedra (Spain) for the Mutual Images 7th Workshop co-organised with the University of Vigo and the dx5 research group and in Messina (Italy) for our 1st Summer School hosted by the University of Messina. We are now working hard, with a wide range of new and old partner institutions, to offer you several events in 2020 both in Europe and Japan. You will find in this newsletter more information about the next event that will be held in June 2020 at Ryukoku University (Kyoto, Japan). Information and CFP about other future events will be posted on the website when available and, of course, you’ll be able to read more about it in the next newsletter.

As we head towards the end of 2019, I am more than ever aware of the dedication of the amazing team of volunteers who made MIRA possible and grateful for their enthusiasm, hard work and companionship. Working in close relationship with people from many different places is an extraordinary chance both on the professional and personal level. Every event we organize allows me to meet wonderful new people, those who help organize at the hosting institution but also participants and audiences. We are all gathered for several days in a room bursting with thoughts and ideas. But abstract concepts are nothing without the people shaping them, they are less rich without discussion. We do our best to create events where everyone feels equally entitled to participate and present their research. We keep our events small so every participant gets a chance to talk with everybody. I have been personally involved in the organization of all the events since the creation of MIRA and got to meet and interact with a large number of people. The human connections were and remain one of the most important specificities of MIRA.

I want to thank the editorial and scientific board members, the peer-reviewers and the proof-readers who help make Mutual Images Journal possible. Their knowledge and time are greatly appreciated.

I wish you a pleasant reading and hope to see you at one of our future events!

Dr. Aurore Yamagata-Montoya,
President of Mutual Images

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This summer we held our 7th Mutual Images International Workshop at the University of Vigo, Spain, in collaboration with dx5. Titled, “Painting East: Artistic Relations between Japan and the West (Artists, Aesthetics, Artworks)”, this workshop focused primarily on visual arts and drew contributions from scholars across the world, who gave papers on as diverse subjects as graphic design movements, anime in the Arab world and Japanese influences in the Canaries! In all, across the two days, there were 6 panels and 19 papers, not to mention the panel discussions and the academic debate that continued during breaks and into the evenings.

We would like to thank everyone involved in making this workshop a massive success—Mutual Images colleagues, our friends at the University of Vigo, and not least the presenters. We hope that networks made during the event continue to grow and lead to future collaboration.

MIRA’s aim is to support academics in their research and dissemination thereof, both through our workshops and other events, as well as through our peer-reviewed academic publication, Mutual Images Journal. As a non-profit organisation, any income we generate goes into supporting these activities, and to supplement this, we have launched a Mutual Images Patreon account. If you are not familiar with Patreon, it is a website which connects creators with the public, allowing for individuals to set up monthly donations to support these creators, in return for exclusive perks and benefits. Check out our Patreon, and give what you can:
dx5 (Digital & Graphic Art Research) contribution is part of the commitment promoted since the beginning of the university’s researching-teaching transfer program in 2004. Its perspective is divided into three scopes: scientific-technical, theoretical-conceptual and artistic-practical. It also focuses on the primary objective of sharing its lines of research and spread out the results (internal or external) in relation to the topics carried out, both into national or international university level as well as in the professional field of the artistic sector.

The group’s panel strongly believes in the fusion of Art Disciplines to achieve a greater enrichment of contents and advancement of knowledge; we faithfully support the crossed dialogue between different areas and environments. In short, we are interested in what happens at the “border of opposites” lived as an experience of relationships, interactions and growth, since, in epistemological terms, there are no categories that can be a priori above others in a conceptual level.

From a thematic level, dx5 (Digital & Graphic Art Research) is interested in the reflection and dissemination of the concept of “original múltiple” (English = multiple originals) in 21st century art as a model for the construction of meaning in epistemological, technical and social approaches. We are convinced that this is one of the most remarkable resources in current artistic activity, focused on existing mechanisms in order to produce increasingly higher levels of communication, which, in conceptual terms, create networks of knowledge. At this time, we have designed and developed several strands of research which centre on the ‘Engraved image of expanded field’ -exploring, from the threefold perspective that is characteristic of our group- the realities that connect the ideas of multiple original with the practice of Contemporary Art. We believe that the graphic symbols that define the 21st century are part of a different context that has to do with the aesthetics of the complex.

Our attention comes from the dialogue and the relationship between Art and Technology, where the concept of matrix as a generator of multiple, transports us to an increasingly polyhedral and nuanced society. We are interested in diving into the meaning of “print” beyond the conventional theoretical understanding, and traditional ways of production or uses. We consider the concept of “impression” as a complex anthropological fact in the creation of images (artwork: sculpture, installations, video, graphics) in the “age of technical and digital reproducibility”, which is directly related to the following ideas:

- Fingerprint, foot track, memory.
- The latent image.
- The intangible matrix, the imprint of the invisible -the union of opposites as transmitters of inverse similarities: positive-negative, empty-full, concave- convex, etc.
- The confrontation and dialogue of opposites: visible- invisible, male-female, private/public, etc.
- The concept and praxis of the Original Multiple, frequency is the message.
- The matrix as a series-generating element.
- Repetition and transformation.
- Presence-absence.
- The unfolded double, the reversed double.
- The shadow, the specular image.
- Multiplicity, multioptrics and fragmentary nature -expansion of the concept of authorship.
- Dissemination and the loss of the aura.
- Strata of digital image.
- Viewer-issuer, networks.
- Ultraphotographic aspects, digital writings.
- Appropriation and palimpsest.

Within our process of reflective evolution and maturation of thought, for the last three years we have developed a project funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation. This project goes in depth into two concepts that, in our opinion, are present in Contemporary Art in a very interesting way and have, moreover, an important perspective on the future. These concepts are COMPLEXITY AND SUSTAINABILITY. We think that this evolution has been transcendental and has progressed in the last years from unique-unit, and has moved on to that which is dichotomous, from duality to multiplicity, and from multiplicity to complexity (thought and production). We have always inhabited a “complex” world, and from the responsible understanding of that concept of complexity we will find, in our view, the key to the sustainable future of the system. The episteme based on the simplified models of knowledge –in our opinion- has been unable to solve the inconsistencies and paradoxes that constantly arise at both theoretical and practical levels.

Thus, we are especially interested in what we call “creation of vague limits”, where new proposals emerge separately from the confrontation of opposites. New paths that lead to neural approaches, paths that, being formulated from the dialogue between art and science, shall generate open models, by providing, innovating and creating new complex hypotheses. Synchronous, multioptric solutions to diachronic-monofocal proposals. We believe that the collective construction of experience provides richer pathways geared towards banishing, little by little, the myth of hierarchical objectivity as an obsolete model.

In this equation, we also believe that the interaction of Art with Science and other disciplines of knowledge works as a paradigm of the dissolution of borders by acting as a fundamental incentive which places us in a multidisciplinary perspective for the greater advancement of knowledge.

The relationship and dialog between Art and Science, between ‘intuitive knowledge and scientific knowledge’, is more and more common, more necessary and, therefore, more supported as a method for the progress of thought and human knowledge. It provides us with new ways of working to build enhanced senses of constantly reintegrated knowledge, with new contributions from different areas; the conjunction of these two ways of assuming, understanding, living and inhabiting the world is already a reality. For this reason, we consider it relevant to reflect on what is happening in that border, in that vague, fluid, unknown, soft, sometimes invisible boundary where the constructs of thought assuming -considered to be of “high culture”- are integrated with the daily lives of people reacting to their diversity. It just goes beyond what is evident, which exists between both intuitive and rational types of knowledge, with a perspective of common social contribution.
In Physics, dark matter cannot be seen, but it is known that it exists and is infinitely greater in volume and importance than what our perception can analyse. Perhaps the key of existence and Art is in what we do not see, which is also greater, as it makes us restructure the paradoxical as apparent reality, being aware that Art is no stranger to this. Human beings are limited and any assertion implies a denial, and therefore it is relative. Observing the world from that boundary between what is visible and what is invisible, from our point of view, can certainly help us continue to seek, continue to ask questions; ultimately continue to question ourselves as a basic principle of uncertainty, within such a complex world increasingly full of ‘dogmas’. The fact that what we regard as obvious and evident, is being questioned, helps us understand that life’s mechanisms resemble those of Art, that the convoluted complexities of our thoughts are only part of a large universe of ideas that are constantly rewritten. The code to deciphering what is obtuse may lie in considering complexity as a method, in the supplementary diversity which reflects the current reality of Multiple Contemporary Art; in the mystery of the series, in paradoxes, aporias and dilemmas, in the magic contained in the use of repetition and transformation as a living road; the important thing about the road is the intention, the persistence of the search, the interaction, the processes of action-reaction.

“Complexity is not a foundation, it is the regulatory principle that never loses sight of reality of the phenomenological tissue in which we are immerse and which constitutes our world”

Edgar Morin

This approach leads us to become interested in the relationship between East and West, more specifically in Japan as a paradigm of the contradiction seen as the prelude to complexity and its relationship with the rest of the world. Footprint, contradiction, memory, ... Thus, we can find in this line of research, that we could define as "relationship between opposites and complexity, society, thought and art", several conceptual and formal constants, which are repeated as transversal chains throughout the different proposals and research projects.

At the formal level, the singular and the plural are staged through the accumulation of elements that make up a more complex whole and drawings and scenarios that tell us about other dimensions, liquid or invisible, litanies of different concepts and works that give us, on the one hand, a view of that universe of thousands of elements (inhabitants, mass realities, microchips, etc.) that is Japan on the outside, and on the other hand, those thousands of hidden whispering details that speak of gestures, looks, silences, subtleties, shadows, ironies, haikus ... This leads us to the wonderful contradiction of emptiness and fullness, that is so evident in this society and culture: zen versus the crowd. Derived from the above, another interesting constant to develop in this line of research is the previously cited binomial of the visible and the invisible. In order to be observed, something things need to be approached closely, while others require moving away to a distance in order to have a global vision and, at the same time, a specific one. All of them indexes of the unfailing paradigm of the Japanese contradiction: animate/inanimate, death/life, old/new, masculine/femene, solitude/multitud, capitalism/socialism, natural/artificial, person/character, interior/exterior, city/island, traditional/technology, multiple/unique, spiritual/material, temple/office, empty/full, city/rural, visible/invisible, word/image, moral/pornography, simplicity/complexity, restraint/spontaneity, the small/the majestic, body/mind, public/private, present/future, reality/fiction.

Ana Soler Baena
Director, dx5
PAINTING EAST:
ARTISTIC RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE WEST
[ARTISTS, AESTHETICS, ARTWORKS]

MONDAY
19.06.03

ARTS & AESTHETICS
UNTIL THE 11TH CENTURY

10:00
ATLAMQOM SANG KOREN
Czech University

10:30
ELETTA GORN
Independent Scholar and Artist

11:00
MARKO KURASAKI
University of Toa

11:30
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

ARTS & AESTHETICS
20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES

12:00
SEABRING TIRSON
University of Minnesota

12:30
NOMIAO FERREIRA
University of Helsinki

13:00
LORETTO LARABARRA BERMUDES
Nako. - Nature&Senses & Landscape Research Institute

13:25
ULRICA NEAJLUKA
HNAR: SENSING ART and Design
Fernanda Ibáñez

14:00
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

PHOTOGRAPHY

17:30
ANÁBAL UTRERA DOMÍNGUEZ
University of the Arts, Madrid

17:55
ESTH COLE
University of Oregon, History Department
University of Tokyo (Affiliated Researcher)

18:10
ANTONIO JUÁREZ SÁNCHEZ
UNED - Universidad de Europa, Madrid

18:45
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

DESING & FASHION

14:00
TERRA PEREZ CONDEGRAS
University of Galicia

14:30
TEODORA JAMORA ZUÑIGA
UNAM - Universidad de Guadalajara

15:00
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

TUESDAY
19.06.04

POPULAR CULTURE
MANICA AND JAPANESE

16:00
OSCAR GARCIA ARANZ
Pompeu Fabra University

16:30
ARUBA DAVIES
Political Science Institute (Dorothy P. Benner)
San Jose State University

17:00
SWAN TERRA
University of Vigo

17:30
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

POPULAR CULTURE
TECHNOLOGY

12:00
IKE RODRÍGUEZ BOLODLA
Complutense University of Madrid

12:30
URANIA VVERDAZ
University of Vigo

13:00
CHAIR
Dr. Ana Salo Barra
Director of A+I - digital & graphic art, research

DÍAS
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AUGUSTO 2020

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VIII - International Research Workshop “Mutual Images”

Ryukoku University
Kyoto, 5-8 June 2020

JAPAN PILGRIMAGES
Experiences and motivations behind cultural and spiritual peregrinations from and to East Asia
Pilgrimages are a phenomenon as old as humanity with relevant consequences in the social, economic and cultural lives of countries and regions. On an individual level, there are many motivations behind the pilgrim experience where identity aspects such as religious affiliation, spiritual beliefs, tradition or mere curiosity play an important role. In recent years, the cultural industries and tourism industries have also developed sophisticated strategies in order to reach new audiences and gain market share. Content producers have obtained the sponsorship of national agencies in order to develop their products as a way of reinforcing National Branding. National agencies focused on tourism and development have found that representations of cultural heritage through fictional media positively impacts tourism through these Media Pilgrimages (also referred to as Content Tourism or Media Tourism), and media representations become a relevant tool for regional development.

The aim of the symposium was born from two ideas which correspond with relevant pillars of modern East Asian economies but also to many post-industrial societies. The first is the common cultural background of East Asian countries like Japan, Korea or China. These commonalities have made possible the rise of economic and cultural transnational flows which include as a main vortex pilgrimage destinations. The second, corresponding to a more contemporary shared meaning, is the consequence of the relevance of creative and cultural industries and their influence on the collective global imagination.

With this purpose, graduate students, scholars, independent researchers, and industry practitioners are invited to submit papers and presentations for this workshop. You can find a list of suggested topics on the website linked below.

Proposals are to be submitted by the webform on the conference webpage https://www.mutualimages.org/2020-workshop

The deadline for applications is 30th November 2019

Questions about the event can be directly addressed to the Organising Committee at japanpilgrimages2020@gmail.com
The latest volume of the journal is out now, and comprises two parts. The first part includes articles based on papers on Japanese pop culture. The second section centres around the theme of our 8th International Workshop, which was held at Cardiff University in May 2018. The theme ‘Mediatised Images of Japan in Europe: Through the Media Kaleidoscope’ drew contributions from a diverse range of scholars, interrogating the representation of Japan in the media as well as individual perceptions.

**Editorial**
Marco Pellitteri & Christopher J. Hayes

**Articles:**
Tina Rosner, ‘Layers of the Traditional in Popular Performing Arts: Object and Voice as Character: Vocaloid Opera AOI’


Oana Birlea, ‘From Kawaii to Sophisticated Beauty Ideals: A Case Study of Shiseidō Beauty Print Advertisements in Europe’

**Special Section:**
Christopher J. Hayes, ‘Section Editorial: Mediatised Images of Japan in Europe: Through the Media Kaleidoscope’


Andreas Eichleter, ‘The Outsider Perspective—The Treaty Port Press, the Meiji Restoration and the Image of a Modern Japan’


Christopher J. Hayes, ‘Utopia or Uprising? Conflicting Discourses of Japanese Robotics in the British Press’

**Reviews:**
Marco Pellitteri, *Teaching Japanese Popular Culture* (Deborah Shamoon & Chris McMorran, Eds.)

Bounthavy Suvilay, Exhibition review, *The Citi Exhibition: Manga* マンガ, British Museum

Bounthavy Suvilay, *The Citi Exhibition: Manga* マンガ (Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere & Ryoko Matsuba, Eds.)

*The latest issue can be read online here:*
We are currently putting together the final touches to the next volume of our journal, due to be published in autumn/winter this year. However, we are always on the lookout for contributions to future volumes and welcome submissions for articles and book reviews.

About the Journal

*Mutual Images Journal* is an open access, double-blind peer-reviewed academic journal, created and edited by the scholarly and independent Mutual Images Research Association. The first volume was published in Summer 2016, the second in Winter 2017, and since then, two volumes per year are issued, in Spring and Autumn.

Journal’s Scope and Fields of Interest

Its field of interest is the analysis and discussion of the ever-changing, multifaceted relations between Europe and Asia, and between specific European countries or regions and specific Asian countries or regions. A privileged area of investigation concerns the mutual cultural influences between Japan and other cultures, with a special emphasis on visual cultures, media studies and the cultural imaginary.

Our journal mainly hosts contributions from the proceedings of the Mutual Images Research Association’s workshops. The first three workshops held in Japan and France focused on the relationships between Japan and Europe. Since 2015, the range of events we offered has significantly widened and researchers focusing on the interactions between Japan and other non-European cultures are also invited to apply to workshops.

However, this journal is open to contributions (papers, reviews, interviews etc.) from scholars and researchers interested in the mutual relations between Europe and Asia from the perspective of human and social sciences, regardless of their involvement in our events.

As an international journal, *Mutual Images Journal* uses English as a lingua franca and strives for multi-, inter- and/or trans-disciplinary perspectives.

As an Open Access Journal, it provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

Submissions

Submissions are welcome through our online submission system, and we encourage contributions from both well-established scholars and early career researchers, including doctoral candidates. You can find our style guide on our website, as well as general author guidelines. It is important that articles are submitted without author information, so that your article can be sent for peer review without any risk of bias.
As an association interested in promoting research among students, for some time we had wanted to design a summer school that could meet the desires and needs of a new generation of students from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds. A school that could at the same time be structured as a workshop, a full-immersion situation with an outstanding range of international teachers, and a social environment that could encourage some bit of fun. That is why our summer school, despite having being quite intensive (about eight hours a day of lessons), has also been characterised by a high degree of human interaction during and after the sessions, especially during the meals, and thanks to a one-day cultural tour on the last day.

Outside of classes, our students greatly enjoyed exploring the city and its sights and taking in traditional Sicilian cuisine in the evenings.

**Students**
Our students, spanning from 20 to 40 years of age, came from Chinese, German, and Italian universities; they were undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students, and one of them was actually a PhD holder, who was attracted by the programme and the venue as well. Some of the students – those coming from Chinese universities – were fully funded by their athenaeums for their participation, and other were partly funded. All in all, the registration fee to join the school was more than reasonable, and lower than that required by the majority of other summer schools in Europe and overseas.

**Summary of academic activities**
We had the pleasure to host academics from Chinese, Japanese, and Italian and other European universities, for a total of 20 lessons and a final exam, which gave the students access to university credits. The disciplinary fields upon which the event’s teaching and discussion slots were based were literary studies, aesthetics, visual studies and cultural studies, and media sociology. The general range of themes was furthermore informed by the growing importance of the inter-regional dynamics involving the cultural diplomacy between/among the considered regions and countries, and the role of the circulation of the creative industries’ output involved in the mutual receptions/perceptions of the national/cultural contexts at the centre of the school’s inter-disciplinary discussions and analyses.

**Student satisfaction and value of the programme**
MIRA has always had as a main goal to help young researchers and encourage students who wish to become academics. The Summer School is one of the practical developments of our philosophy. We gathered Master’s students with experienced academics from various horizons to share their knowledge and further question the dynamics between cultures. The Summer School enriches the range of events MIRA organizes by enabling a more active participation for younger minds who may not have started doing research or do not feel

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**Venue**
The Summer School and Lectures was hosted by the Department of Ancient and Modern Civilisations (DiCAM) at the University of Messina, with the Patronage of the University’s Rectorate. We were lucky to host the programme in such a beautiful and historic city, a harbor city situated on the island of Sicily.
yet comfortable presenting it. They are full participants and encouraged to voice their own opinions.

The level of satisfaction of the students participating in the 2019 programme was high, praising all aspects of the course: the didactic activities, the human interactions, the accommodation, the venue (both the university’s classroom, a prestigious and elegantly furnished room of the University of Messina, Faculty of Law; and Messina itself, a beautiful Italian town in front of the Mediterranean Sea), the local food and the restaurant choices made by the organising committee, and the final tour.

Feedback from the participants praised the lecturers and their sessions. One student was particularly struck by the lectures by Professors Tiziana Lippiello and Francesco Serratore, which gave them ‘a deep impression about how people in different cultural contexts think of China and [its] culture’. Outside of studies, students praised the settings and the opportunity it provided them to learn about Italy, especially its ‘ancient architecture and long history’.

Finally, feedback showed how the summer school facilitated the development of networks and friendships, as participants bonded over the programme, which we hope will lead to future research collaboration.

Overall, we are very happy with our first summer school, which would not have been possible without the generous support of the Hoso Bunka Foundation. We hope to build on this year’s success, and grow MIRA’s offerings and visibility within the academic community.

Dr Aurore Yamagata-Montoya, President of MIRA & Dr Marco Pellitteri, Vice-President of MIRA
Director of the Summer School

https://www.hbf.or.jp/eng/
Dr Christopher J Hayes, who is responsible for communications and design at MIRA, has recently taken up a research fellowship at the Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives, in Kyoto. For the next six months, he will be conducting research on the impact of two major, global events on tourism in Kyoto and tourists’ perceptions about Japan. These events are the recent Rugby World Cup, and the 2020 Summer Olympics & Paralympics, which will be held in Tokyo.

While neither event is being held in Kyoto, it is likely that tourism in the area, and indeed across Japan, will increase during these events. Indeed, at the time of writing, Dr Hayes has been carrying out surveys and observations of tourists in Kyoto, and has found that many, quite possibly the majority, during the period are indeed rugby fans. While he hasn’t been able to talk to every single one, fortunately their jerseys and Rugby World Cup-branded merchandise gives them away!

Dr Hayes’ research background British perceptions of Japan, with a particular focus on news media depictions of Japan, and the stereotypes that pervade the discourse. You can read some of Dr Hayes’ research in the most recent issue of the Mutual Images journal.

He is still interested in British and other foreign perceptions of Japan, but is now interested in how visiting Japan can affect these perceptions (if it does at all). He is particularly interested in visitors to Japan during events like the Rugby World Cup or the Olympics, because these represent atypical tourists. Rugby fans visiting Japan are in the country primarily for the games, rather than sightseeing. They do not necessarily have a pre-existing interest in Japan and may have had no previous intentions of visiting the country, before Japan was announced as host. Typical visitors to Japan are likely to be interested in the country, be it the history or the popular culture, and they will have planned their trip in detail. Even before visiting the country, they are likely to know more than the average person about Japan, due to this interest.

Coming to Japan with no prior interest in the country, how do these visitors engage with the country and the culture, if they do at all? Dr Hayes is interested in exploring how these atypical tourists spend their time outside of watching rugby games, and to see how their knowledge of Japan develops.

He is also interested in the specific impact that this has on the city and prefecture of Kyoto. While not a host city or region for either event, Kyoto has featured in travel guides for rugby fans and in the itineraries of package tours for rugby fans to the Rugby World Cup. Being only 2 hours from Tokyo on the Shinkansen, it is also highly likely that Olympics ticket-holders will take a trip to Kyoto, too. How is the city and the prefecture preparing? Are the museums expecting massive increases? Are they having to think differently about how they present themselves to sports fans, who may have slightly different interests to their normal tourists?

His research is still very much in its early stages, but he will be sure to keep us updated!

Dr Hayes will be in Kyoto until mid-March 2019.

You can follow him on Twitter @HayesChrisJ

or email him at cjhayes@gmx.com
What can I do with a B.A. in Japanese Studies? (affectionately known by its URL, Shinpai Deshou), is a blog I founded almost ten years ago to address the absence of information about Japan-focused career paths. Parents, friends, and strangers constantly asked me this question, and it continues to bring people to my digital door. At the end of my B.A. and my M.A., I asked those around me about their decisions and what led them there. But I soon realized that who I knew often limited me to academic circles, and that others (especially those without extensive institutional resources) might face similar challenges learning about the diverse opportunities available to them.

Shinpai Deshou has since evolved into a virtual community where people can share information about the experiences, skills, and resources that helped them along the way. Though very little was on the internet when Shinpai Deshou began, digital resources have since exploded in number, so now the blog also serves to help navigate the abundance of materials available online.

Shinpai Deshou offers a wide variety of Japan-related content, such as:

- **Short Articles** from people with varied experiences with Japan and Japanese, including those in graduate school, living abroad, studying the language, working in translation, technology, business, politics, education, and everything in between.
- **Announcements**: Information on upcoming events, conferences, and job opportunities
- **Resources**, such as information on local Japan societies, major art collections, job-search websites in English and Japanese.

The mission of Shinpai Deshou is to give everyone—from the high schooler just starting to think about the possibilities ahead to the experienced worker changing careers—examples of what one can do with their skills and make informed decisions about the vague and imposing question: What am I going to do next?

Shinpai Deshou, a labor of love, is run primarily by an army of one, and I am always seeking diverse guest writers to offer new perspectives on their Japan-centric experiences. What advice can you offer someone starting out? What are the demands of and skills required for your particular career in the Japan sphere? How did you get there? Pitches for new pieces that help alleviate the shinpai for the Japanese Studies community are always welcome!

Check out the site at [https://shinpaideshou.com/](https://shinpaideshou.com/)

Paula R. Curtis is a historian of premodern Japan, specializing in the medieval period. She is currently a Postdoctoral Associate and Lecturer in History at the Yale Macmillan Center Council on East Asian Studies. More information on her various online projects can be found at: [http://prcurtis.com/](http://prcurtis.com/). Contact: shinpai.deshou@gmail.com.
The Sembazuru Centre for Japanese Studies [SCJS], the first centre of its kind in Babeş-Bolyai University (Romania), was founded in 2008 by Prof. Dr. Rodica Frentiu together with the Department for Asian Languages and Literature, when the Japanese Language and Literature major was added to the Faculty of Letters’ curricula. Located in Cluj-Napoca, the centre is open to anyone interested in Japanese language and culture and aims to bring Japanese culture closer by organizing different workshops and events.

SCJS is an implicit step in acknowledging the research activity in this field and it plays a vital role in consolidating Babes-Bolyai University’s school of Japanese studies. The Sembazuru Centre for Japanese Studies has supported and completed the analytical curriculum of the Japanese Language and Literature major, initiating various actions to broaden and consolidate relationships with universities and organizations from Japan. Our main objectives are:

• Creating a team of researchers (teachers, master’s degree students, PhD students) in the field of Japanese studies;
• Designing research projects that contribute to the foundation of a Japanese studies school in our university;
• Publishing the research results in specialized journals (rated CNCSAS, BDI/ISI indexed) and in individual or collective volumes;
• Completing the analytical curriculum of Japanese Language and Literature major through extracurricular activities: workshops, lectures, conferences, round tables, with the help of renowned specialists, in order to offer the students a direct and authentic connection with the cultural and academic Japanese area;
• Promoting Japanese language, literature and culture through various collaborations within educational and cultural programs for the general public, targeting different age groups or social categories (students, university students, professors, diverse associations);
• Developing relationships with Japanese universities and organisations;
• Providing donations to the book fund for the Japanese Studies Library.

Having as a starting point the desire to encourage Japanese studies in Romania, the centres’ founding member, Prof. Dr. Habil. Rodica Frentiu, internationally awarded calligraphy artist and author of numerous Japanese-Romanian translations and books concerned with Japanese language and culture from a poetics and cultural semiotics perspective, along Lect. Dr. Florina Ilis, award winning writer specialized in Japanese literature and culture have managed to create a professional environment for young researchers interested in Japanology. Currently, three PhD students (Oana-Maria Birlea, Ioana Tosu, Ciliana Tudorica) are conducting research on various aspects of Japanese language and culture like advertising discourse, pop-culture (manga translation) and calligraphy under the auspices of Prof. Dr. Habil. Rodica Frentiu, while contributing to the development of the centre.

SCJS aims to promote a better understanding of Japanese language and culture by holding regular events, classes and workshops including: sumi-e, renzuru, chirigami, mizuhiki, origami, Japanese language & culture summer courses, Japanese theatre lectures, calligraphy exhibitions etc. The activities are organized with the help of volunteers and Japanese professors. SCJS is seeking to encourage and engage the community in art practices and appreciation towards Japanese culture and values. For more details and collaborations please visit our website/Facebook page: [http://lett.ubbcluj.ro/sembazuru/](http://lett.ubbcluj.ro/sembazuru/); [www.facebook.com/SembazuruCluj](http://www.facebook.com/SembazuruCluj).
Member Interview:
José Andrés Santiago Iglesias

In each newsletter, we find out more about one of our members or collaborators through an in-depth interview about their research, their career and their current activities.

In this issue, we interview Dr José Andrés Santiago Iglesias, Fine Arts Faculty at the University of Vigo, who is involved with the research group dx5, our partner for this year’s international workshop.

Can you tell us a little about yourself?
I am a visual artist and an academic, currently working as a “distinguished researcher” at the Fine Arts Faculty at the University of Vigo (Universidade de Vigo, Spain) —which sounds very fancy, but ultimately it just means I am a postdoctoral researcher with an ongoing funded research project. My current research is focused on expanded-field comics, manga and anime studies in Spain from a theoretical perspective. I got my degree in Fine Arts in 2004, and a few months later —as soon as I joined the doctoral program— I became a member of the dx5 - digital & graphic art research group, specialized in contemporary expanded-field graphic art. I have always believed that scholars with a background in Fine Arts must learn to balance a “double life” of sorts: one of a scholarly researcher —which in Fine Arts involves both the humanities field and scientific research— and a different life as visual and plastic artists, which also demands a solid theoretical research, but with a totally different output.

I finished my PhD in 2010, with a dissertation about manga’s aesthetics and potential and how it relates to contemporary art. Just a few months later, it was revised into a book entitled Manga. Del cuadro flotante a la viñeta japonesa (Comanegra, 2010). Since the existing literature on manga studies in Spanish was quite scarce back them, this book opened new opportunities in this research field. Actually, just a few months later I joined the newly-founded Spanish Association of Critics and Researches of Comics (ACDCÓmic - Asociación de Críticos y Divulgadores de Cómic). I am also a former fellow of the Japan Foundation’s Japanese Studies Program, which allowed me to spend two months in Japan in 2012, focused on a project about the otaku and the mangaesque in Spain. There I met Professor Jaqueline Berndt at Seika University, and got deeply impressed by the transdisciplinary approach of their seminars; thus, two years later I went back to Kyoto, as an
invited researcher at the Graduate School of Manga (Kyoto Seika University, 2014 - 2016), as part of a postdoctoral program financed by the Regional Government of Galicia (Spain). Being part of this inspiring and challenging community of scholars definitely changed how I approach manga and anime studies. Therefore, I am currently leading a research line within the dx5 research group, entitled “Estudios Transdisciplinaires sobre Cómic (ETC)” [Transdisciplinary Comics Studies] which involves a triennial Ministry-funded research project focused on expanded-field comics and anime studies. In a few months, I expect to present a new book published by Stockholm University press.

Although I have been teaching at the Fine Arts school since I entered the PhD program, these last couple of years I have been in charge of more subjects and far more involved with my students. Moreover, I am also mentoring a PhD student which — I must admit — makes me realize I can no longer be considered a “young researcher”.

What can you tell us about your research?

There are many ways to approach manga and anime studies — from a sociological, anthropological, economical, narratological perspective, etc. — but since I am a trained artist, I always believed I should address both media from the arts perspective, and thus I focus on material and aesthetic aspects, involving rhythm, form, colour, shots and montage, or komawari, but also production related issues (like printing, bindings, graphic design, etc). Consequently, I also take into consideration media ecology issues, specially when it comes to the digital breakthrough in comics and manga, and how some necessary production issues are transforming some of manga’s most well-defined aesthetic traits.

I am also deeply interested in the boundaries between manga and anime and other artistic media, and thus I also explore the notion of mangaesque and animesque, specially within the Spanish and European scene. Over the last few years I have been working on a series of papers about the mangaesque and the animesque, addressing in each one a different facet of them, and working with different and noteworthy case studies.

You often travel to Japan, where you have many professional and personal interests. Can you tell us more about this?

I don’t travel to Japan as much as I would like to — it is far, it is pretty expensive and the ongoing (and quite demanding) research projects occupy most of my time off — but I still have many friends in Japan I’m in contact with. Japan is still the ultimate Mecca you eventually have to return to, but having a large network of friends and colleagues working on the same field provides an amazing feedback. Nevertheless, I am always looking for a new chance to go back... Maybe 2020?

I first traveled to Japan in 2006, in regard to a research project we were working at the dx5 research group. Strangely enough, it was not a manga or anime related issue, but a project with Epson involving their micro-piezoelectric printheads technology! We were
working with the European branch in order to adapt Epson’s plotter machines to work better with artistic papers, more suited to the traditional drawing and engraving mix-media techniques. In 2008 I went back to Japan as part of my PhD thesis research, and then again in 2012 as a Japan Foundation fellow. In all these three occasion I chose Kyoto as my headquarters and I have been in love with the city ever-since. There is an emotional attachment which I can hardly explain, but every-time I go back to Kyoto it feels like home, no matter the amount time it has been in-between. Thus, between April 2014 and April 2016 I lived there, working as an invited postdoctoral researcher at the Graduate School of Manga (Kyoto Seika University).

You have been writing about your research on manga in Spanish. Can you tell about the general audience and academic interest in Spain for manga and Japanese popular culture more widely?

It may sound as a cliche, but manga and anime are incredibly popular among the Spanish audience. There is also a growing academic community working on comics studies (some of them established for a long period) fuelled by a remarkable generation of comics authors, working not only in Spain but also in France, in many mainstream series in the USA, and Japan. However, there has been a historical deficit of scientific publications about manga and anime in Spain, despite being one of the largest European consumers. So far, the existing literature has drawn mostly from U.S. American sources or lacked the required academic rigour. There is a strong fan-based community and many non-scientific books already published, but while many of them are noteworthy fan-oriented publications, they do not stand to academic standards. Thus, by focusing on the Spanish market (within a larger European scene) and publishing both in English and Spanish I hope to advance the study of manga and anime in Spain.

However, we must also understand than Spain represents just a very small portion of the Spanish-speaking academic realm. There is also a noticeable growth of manga and anime studies in Latin American academia, and many times — driven by a slightly Eurocentric bias — we fail to acknowledge its undeniable importance; and that’s simply wrong. I write in English, aimed at a different audience, but I believe I should also write in Spanish for a Spanish speaking audience. Despite the large substratum of readers and viewers, as well as academics interested in this research field, there are not high-standard publications in Spanish language. With this thriving community of young researchers in Latin America, I feel challenged (in the most positive way) and motivated to answer that energy and enthusiasm.

You are not only a researcher but also an artist. Can you tell us about your artistic work and how it relates to your research interests?

Ultimately, my academic research and artistic practice are like the two faces of a coin. At the beginning I thought I would be able to handle both research and art as two different, unrelated parts of my work, just to discover they are perfectly intertwined and utterly co-dependent. At every step of my research, my
artistic production has been nurtured, tested and stimulated by many of my findings, the places I’ve visited and the amazing people I’ve met over the years; and vice-versa.

As a Fine Arts research group, we do not only work with papers and proceedings, but also with artist books and exhibitions. Over the last 15 years, many of my artworks and solo exhibitions were intimately related to my research journeys. In 2008, three dx5 professors published a photography book —entitled *A Ding in Japan*— depicting a collection of pictures we took while visiting the country. Graphic art and sequentiality pay an important role in my artworks, but also printing techniques, visual referents from Japanese popular culture, the richness of craftsmanship and the texture and tactility of paper and other hand-made materials.

Lately it has become more difficult to combine teaching and researching, while trying to find enough time to spend on my art! As I am right now, fully invested into my research project, I realize that I have been neglecting artistic production. However, as I explained before, theoretical research also fuels my artistic facet, and I can sincerely state that I have never been as creative or full of ideas as I am right now. I guess once I have finished the ongoing projects I will finally find the time to devote myself to a new series of artworks. Every time I have been in Japan was on an academic leave... Maybe it is time to go back with an artistic project in mind.

**Selected works by Dr Santiago Iglesias:**
Funding Opportunities

Doctoral Studies

MPhil in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies (Japanese Studies) at the University of Cambridge: funding opportunities
The Iain Drayton Studentship for Japanese Studies (tenable only at Trinity Hall College) This studentship is to support a student undertaking the MPhil in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Japanese Studies). The studentship is open to Home, EU and overseas applicants and will offer full or partial funding depending on the fee status of the successful candidate. For more information go to: https://www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/study-with-us/graduates/studentships-and-funding/

PhD in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies (Japanese Studies) at the University of Cambridge: funding opportunities
Cambridge Toshiba Japan and the World Graduate Scholarship Quick Japan and the World Graduate Scholarship Applicants should apply to take a PhD in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies (Japanese Studies) at the University, via the University's online application process https://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/.

Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Sasakawa Japanese Studies Postgraduate Studentship supports the development of Japanese Studies in the UK. The Programme provides up to 30 postgraduate studentships annually for PhD and Master’s students, each worth £10,000. Individuals may not apply directly to the Foundation as the application procedure is only through nomination by institutions e.g. UK universities and institutes of higher education. Those institutions interested in applying should in the first instance contact the Foundation’s London Office for further information and to confirm their eligibility.

For more information, visit: http://www.gbsf.org.uk/studentships/

Fellowships

Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures
Robert & Lisa Sainsbury Fellowships
Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Fellowships provide recipients with an opportunity to work in a scholarly environment conducive to completing a publication project. The Fellowships are available to academics who have received a PhD in any area of Japanese culture. Preference will be given to Early Career Researchers working in the fields of visual studies, including but not limited to history of art, cultural heritage, archaeology, architecture, film studies, and digital humanities. During their appointment Fellows are encouraged to contribute to our Third Thursday Lecture Series and to organise a symposium in Norwich. They may also contribute to the Japan Research Centre Seminar Series at SOAS.

For more information, visit: https://sainsbury-institute.org/fellowship-category/robert-and-lisa-sainsbury-fellows/

Stanford University, Center for East Asian Studies
2020-21 Chinese Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship
The Center for East Asian Studies at Stanford University is pleased to offer a postdoctoral fellowship in Chinese Studies for the 2020-21 academic year. This award is open to scholars in the humanities and social sciences studying any historical period. The fellowship will begin September 1, 2020 and end August 31, 2021, with a 12-month stipend of approximately $60,000.

For more information, visit: https://ceas.stanford.edu/opportunities/postdoctoral-fellowship-chinese-studies

CNEAS Visiting Fellows Call for Applications
(Fellowship period two to six months in October 2020-September 2021)
The Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University, is seeking visiting fellows. Our center has a visiting fellowship program to promote cooperative research activities with distinguished researchers in Northeast Asian Studies who belong to research institutes abroad. In this program, researchers accepted as visiting scholars will be provided with traveling costs from/to home countries and a salary to cover living expenses in Japan*, as well as various research resources of the Center and opportunities to carry out cooperative research with CNEAS staff and faculty.

For more information, visit: http://www.cneas.tohoku.ac.jp/e_data/fellowship_e.html

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Conference News & Calls for Papers

23-24th January 2020
Fluid Images — Fluid Text: Comics’ Mobility Across Time, Space and Artistic Media, Cardiff University, UK
Submission Deadline: 30th November 2019
https://www.academia.edu/40631527/
Call for Papers Jan 2020 Fluid Images Fluid Text Comics Mobility Across Time Space and Artistic Media Cardiff University Deadline for proposals 30 November 2019

5-7th March 2020
Fourth Baltic Alliance for Asian Studies (BAAS) Conference 2020, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
Submission Deadlines: Panels, 2nd December 2019, Individual Papers, 20th December

5-6th June 2020
‘Reassessing Chinese Independent Cinema: Past, Present... and Future?’, Newcastle University, UK
Submission Deadline: 10th December 2019
https://research.ncl.ac.uk/chinaindiecinema/

12-13th June 2020
ASPAC (Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast) Conference, University of Hawai‘i, Hilo, Hawai‘i
Submission Deadline: 29th February 2020
https://hilo.hawaii.edu/conferences/ASPAC/

23-25th July 2020
The 7th Inter-Asia Popular Music Studies (IAPMS) Conference, Sunway University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Submission Deadline: 15th December 2019

5-8th August 2020
‘Comics and Technology’, 3rd Annual Conference of the Comics Studies Society, Henderson State University, Arkansas, USA
Submission Deadline: 15th January 2020
http://comicssociety.org/conference/cfp/

If you spot any conferences you think members would be interested in, be sure to drop us a line at mutualimages@gmail.com