

"ART-ICULATING ASIA": Creativity, Resilience, and Heritage- Preservation in Contexts of Gender, Diaspora and Minoritization

22.-23.01.2026

ORGANISATION TEAM:

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VENUE:

Center for
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CONCEPT NOTE

With a focus on the vibrant field of art and craft production in Asia and its diasporas, this workshop explores the aesthetic dimension of cultural identity politics and processes of subject formation, especially in relation to the articulation of belonging and of notions of 'Asianness'. Taking the intrinsic link between aesthetics and politics (Jaques Rancière 2003) as a starting point, and following Tim Ingold's concept of making as a knowledge-producing process, our workshop builds on the productivity of life experiences to shape the worlds people in and from Asia dwell in. The workshop's major aim is to understand arts and crafts production as productive sites in which 'experiential knowledge' - or *sens pratique* (Bourdieu 1980) - is both produced and distributed while at the same time providing a resource for articulating hitherto 'untold stories' about identity, belonging and self-making. Collecting empirical case studies from the fields of art, cultural and creative industries, we address cultural entrepreneurship, heritage preservation and the emerging field of 'artivism'. We are interested in how in particular women, members of diasporic and migrant communities as well as members of otherwise minoritized groups utilize art and crafts production as an empowering resource to navigate individual desires for self-realization and personal freedom with collective security issues and social constraints. Moreover, we are interested in how arts and handicraft industries open up spaces for articulating revitalized, remade or endangered cultural identities and selves (Stuart Hall 1981) in politically volatile and economically contingent contexts.

Tackling creativity through the lens of connectivity and of improvisation (Maruška Svašek 2016), we pledge for an extended definition of 'entrepreneurship' that highlights the co-constitutive relationship between experiential knowledge and the entrepreneurial self as a key resource for strengthening resilience in volatile contexts — contexts that are shaped by global economy on the one hand and by authoritarian regimes and/or patriarchal orders on the other. The same goes for 'artivism': while we are interested in everyday/micro politics of aesthetics through arts and crafts, the workshop addresses the power and potentiality of artistic performativity and representation to trans/form not only society but also the self. Finally, with 'art-iculating Asia', the workshop pursues a decolonial and decentring approach that builds on compiling 'untold stories' about identity and belonging, owned and expressed by minoritized people and groups who remain largely unheard, marginalized, and ignored in the established academic knowledge production about Asia.

The peer-review publication following the workshop aims to anchor art and craft production as well as heritage studies more firmly in New Area Studies while also linking these study fields with aesthetic-cum-lifeworld approaches. The publication will also argue for a stronger integration of knowledge repertoires and epistemologies (local, Muslim, female, indigenous) that are based on existential experience, materiality, and on sensory perceptions.

Invited participants present their work in reference to the workshop rationale and submit a short version of the paper (6 - 7 pages) until December 31, 2025. The workshop is part of the project "Women's pathways to professionalization in Muslim Asia."

Reconfiguring religious knowledge, gender, and connectivity", a subproject of 'Shaping Asia Network', and is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

22. JANUARY 2026

09:00 – 09:20 am	Intro & Welcome
09:20 – 10:00 am	Noorman Abdullah: Provoking the Colonial Gaze: Art Museums, Monuments and Decolonial Pedagogy in Higher Education
10:00 – 10:40 am	Kelvin E.Y. Low: Between Art, Memory, and Migration: Samsui Women History as Palimpsestic
10:40 – 11:10 am	Coffee Break
11:10 – 11:50 am	Sepideh Taravati: The Feminine Text(ile): Iranian Nomadic Chanteh as a Site of Agency and Memory Resilience (<i>online</i>)
11:50 – 12:30 pm	Aisalkyn Botoeva: The Art of Survival: Cultural Work as Civic Resistance
12:30 – 01:30 pm	Lunch Break
01:30 – 02:10 pm	Claudia Derichs / Jelena Golubović: Brave spaces: Communicating and networking through activism in Southeast Asia
02:10 – 02:50 pm	Camilla Kussl: Collective strategies by Ruangrupa and their translation for documenta fifteen
02:50 – 03:30 pm	Barbara Geilhorn: Performing Rural Futures: Aesthetic Politics, Heritage, and Subject Formation in the Japanese Periphery
03:30 – 04:10 pm	Coffee & Open Ending
04:10 – 05:10 pm	Herlambang Bayu Aji: Art performance “Shadow play”
07:00 pm	Joint Dinner: <u>Das Wirtshaus 1802 im Bültmannshof</u> ; Kurt-Schumacher-Str. 17a; 33615 Bielefeld

23. JANUARY 2026

09:00 – 09:20 am	Intro & Check-In
09:20 – 10:00 am	Arnika Fuhrmann: Trans-Asia Talent: Optimization and Refusal in the Work of Actor-Model Chutimon “Aokbaeb” Chuengcharoensukying
10:00 – 10:40 am	Thomas Stodulka: Art-ivism as Ecological Care: Permaculture, Youth, and Transformative Practice in Timor-Leste
10:40 – 11:10 am	Coffee Break
11:10 – 11:50 am	Mukaddas Mijit: Geopoetics: Materializing 'Untold Stories' of Uyghur Inheritance and Connectivity in a Liminal Space
11:50 – 12:30 pm	Rie Mori: Clothing and Sartorial Practices of the Ainu in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries: Focusing on Intercultural Interactions and Exchanges (<i>online</i>)
12:30 – 01:30 pm	Lunch Break
01:30 – 02:10 pm	Tobias Stefan: Woven fabrics - Interwoven Biographies: Creative engagements with textiles in a “New Uzbekistan”
02:10 – 02:50 pm	Manja Stephan: Roots and paths: creativity and productivity of life experiences in Uzbek and Kazakh women’s heritage entrepreneurship
02:50 – 03:10 pm	Coffee Break
03:10 – 03:40 pm	Wrap-Up & Feedback Session