17 – 18 JAN 2023

GRAPHIC NARRATIVES

Thinking through Visual Research

This workshop is jointly organised by the Asia Research Institute, and the NUS Department of Japanese Studies; with support from the Ministry of Education Academic Research Grant Tier 1.

Visual narratives are a central part of many cultures across Asia, both historically and in the present. They are fast gaining traction as media for conducting, analysing, and communicating complex research. In recent times, comics are increasingly prominent across social science, public health, and humanities scholarship–as evidenced by a growing number of academic publications. This workshop brings together researchers with backgrounds in literary studies, anthropology, visual studies, art history and practice, sociology, and other related fields to discuss synergistic approaches to this rich, hybrid medium. Our aim is to open new directions in the studies of graphic narratives from Asia, including but not limited to formal analysis, comics in teaching, and non-fiction comics.

Our two-day workshop at the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore includes presentations from scholars and artists interested in visual storytelling. The workshop aims to foster conversations on graphic narratives, particularly, comics, and their numerous conceptual and methodological possibilities.

WORKSHOP CONVENORS
Assoc. Prof. Deborah Shamoon
Department of Japanese Studies,
National University of Singapore

Dr. V. Chitra
Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
National University of Singapore

ARI
ASIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
National University of Singapore

日本研究学科
FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES · NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
DEPARTMENT OF JAPANESE STUDIES

ARI.NUS.EDU.SG/EVENTS/GRAPHIC-NARRATIVES/

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	**TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023**
10:00 – 10:15	**WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS** **DEBORAH SHAMOON** | National University of Singapore **CHITRA VENKATARAMANI** | National University of Singapore
10:15 – 11:15	**OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS** CHAIRPERSON **KHADEEJA AMENDA** | National University of Singapore
10.15 **VIA ZOOM**	Comics-Making as Way of Thinking **NICK SOUSANIS** | San Francisco State University
11.00	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
11:15 – 11:45	BREAK
11:45 – 13:15	**PANEL 1** CHAIRPERSON **RYAN LIM** | National University of Singapore
11:45	Shirato Sanpei's Ninja Manga and the Politics of Action **DEBORAH SHAMOON** | National University of Singapore
12:05 **VIA ZOOM**	How to Read Stasis, Stillness, and Silence in Manga: Kamimura Kazuo's *Co-Habitation Age* **JON HOLT** | Portland State University
12:25 **VIA ZOOM**	Drawing the Carnal Body in *Gekiga*: The Body Politics of Characters in Japanese Comics **SHIGE (CJ) SUZUKI** | The City University of New York (CUNY)
12:45	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
13:15 – 14:30	LUNCH
14:30 – 16:00	**PANEL 2** CHAIRPERSON **NATALIE LIE** | National University of Singapore
14:30	Rigid Recounting: Martial Law Memories **KARL IAN UY CHENG CHUA** | Hitotsubashi University
14:50	The Promise of a Communitarian Disablement: Dyesbel, the Mermaid Subject of the Post World War II, Ableist Bodies of the Nation-State Violence, and the Populism of Popular Literature **JOSE MARI B. CUARTERO** | University of the Philippines Diliman
15:10	Visual Rhetoric and History: Unveiling the Contours of 'Naxalbari Movement' in Sumit Kumar's *Amar Bari Tomar Bari Naxalbari* **PARTHA BHATTACHARJEE** | SRM University-Ap, Andhra Pradesh **PRIYANKA TRIPATHI** | Indian Institute of Technology Patna
15:30	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
16:00 – 16:30	BREAK

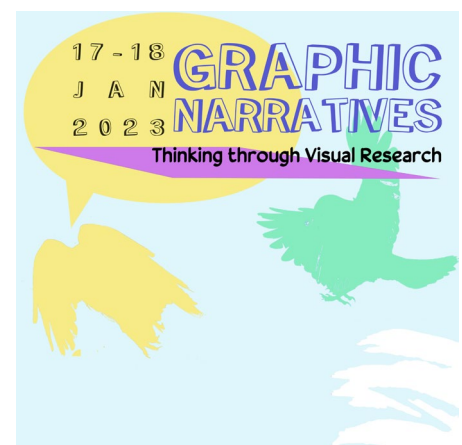| SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023
16:30 – 17:30	**PANEL 3** CHAIRPERSON **SITI UMAIRAH BTE ADNAN** | National University of Singapore
16:30	Rappelling the Infinite Scroll: Possibilities and Implications of Verticality in Korean Webtoons **HYUNG-GU LYNN** | University of British Columbia
16:50 **VIA ZOOM**	"You have Special Powers": Creative Care, Graphic Medicine, and Dementia **LIVINE ANCY A** | National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli **SATHYARAJ VENKATESAN** | National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli
17:10	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
17:30	END OF DAY 1
18:00	WORKSHOP DINNER (FOR PRESENTERS, CHAIRPERSONS AND ORGANISERS ONLY)

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2023
10:20 – 11:30	**PANEL 4** CHAIRPERSON **LI CHONGJING** | National University of Singapore
10:20	Cartographic Poetry and the Production of Poetic Space through Image-text **REX SANDRO M. NEPOMUCENO** | University of the Philippines Diliman
10:40	Documenting 'The Aliens' (Foreigners) Experience in Japan in Jejon Di Jepun Comic Series through Ethno-GRAPHIC Research **SURAYA BINTI MD NASIR** | Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI)
11:00	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
11:30 – 12:30	LUNCH
12:30 – 14:00	**PANEL 5** CHAIRPERSON **ZACHARY GOH** | National University of Singapore
12:30	Graphic Narratives of Architecture and the Built Environment **LAI CHEE KIEN** | National University of Singapore
12:50	Mapping What's Worth: An Ethnographic Approach to Environmental Mapping **ZEN TEH** | Environmental Artist and Educator **SADAF ANSARI** | National University of Singapore **CHUA SIEW CHIN** | National University of Singapore
13:10	Teaching Multimodal Literacy through Comics **JASON BANTA** | National University of Singapore
13:30	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
14:00 – 14:30	BREAK

| SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2023
14:30 – 16:00	**PANEL 6** CHAIRPERSON **PRIYAM SINHA** | National University of Singapore
14:30 **VIA ZOOM**	Ethnography: The Language of Drawing in Ethnographic Research **MARIA VIRGINIA MORATTI** | University of Turin
14:50	Teaching Comics, Teaching with Comics **V. CHITRA** | National University of Singapore
15:10 **VIA ZOOM**	Anthropography of Nature **FREDERIC JOULIAN** | Advanced School for Social Sciences, Marseille **DANIEL NILES** | Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyoto
15:30	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
16:00 – 16:30	BREAK
16:30 – 17:30	**CLOSING KEYNOTE ADDRESS** CHAIRPERSON **NUPUR CHOUDHARY** | National University of Singapore
16:30	Graphic Ethnography: Comics Realism and its Potentials for Social Sciences **CLAUDIO SOPRANZETTI** | Central European University
17:15	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
17:30 – 18:00	**CLOSING REMARKS & PUBLICATION PLANS** **DEBORAH SHAMOON** | National University of Singapore **CHITRA VENKATARAMANI** | National University of Singapore
18:00	END OF WORKSHOP
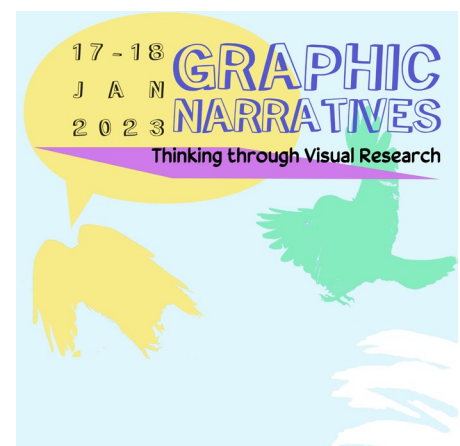
OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Comics-Making as Way of Thinking

Nick Sousanis
San Francisco State University
nsousanis@gmail.com

Nick Sousanis will present on his approach to making comics as scholarship, drawing from *Unflattening*, originally his doctoral dissertation written and drawn entirely as comics and other works. A look at the affordances of the comics form via analysis of exemplars from across the comics field will set up a discussion of his process, and how deep consideration for form while exploring content pushes the work beyond illustration and generates new means for expression and understanding. This will also encompass the way formal constraints guide his creative process and serve as critical tools in his teaching practice to help students expand their own thinking through comics-making.

He is an Eisner-winning comics author and an associate professor of Humanities and Liberal Studies at San Francisco State University, where he started and runs a Comics Studies program. He received his doctorate in education at Teachers College, Columbia University in 2014, where he wrote and drew his dissertation entirely in comic book form. Titled *Unflattening*, it argues for the importance of visual thinking in teaching and learning, and was published by Harvard University Press in 2015. *Unflattening* received the 2016 American Publishers Awards for Professional and Scholarly Excellence (PROSE Award) in Humanities, the Lynd Ward Prize for best Graphic Novel of 2015, and was nominated for an Eisner Award for Best Scholarly/Academic work. To date, *Unflattening* has been translated into French, Korean, Portuguese, Serbian, Polish, Italian, and Chinese (details here).

CLOSING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Graphic Ethnography:
Comics Realism and its Potentials for Social Sciences

Claudio Sopranzetti
Central European University
sopranzettic@ceu.edu

This talks explores how realism is produced in literary writing, in ethnographic writing and more largely in social science research so to pose some of the questions that emerged in these field to comic studies and begin to offer some pointers as to what comics can offers to those conversations about realism and to social scientists at large. The trajectory begins with the idea that any form of producing and translating knowledge, whether in written form, graphic form, or the juxtaposition of the two, needs necessarily to deal with the question of reality, how it represents it and how it conceptualizes it. In this talk, therefore, I will provide an exploration of this potential through an analysis of the complex relation between realism and abstraction, description and theory in ethnography and comic-based research so to start to sketch out some of the unique possibilities offered by comics to social science research.

Claudio Sopranzetti is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Central European University and a Quodam Fellow at Oxford University All Souls College. He is the author of *Red Journeys* (University of Washington Press, 2012) and Owners of the Map (University of California Press, 2019), which was awarded the Margaret Mead Award for Public Anthropology. Together with Sara Fabbri and Chiara Natalucci, he co-authored the ethnographic comics *The King of Bangkok* (University of Toronto Press, 2021). The book received the 2022 PROSE Award for best non fictional graphic novel, the 2021 Foreword INDIES Bronze Medal for Graphic Novels & Comics, and 2021 Thai Editors Choice Award.

Shirato Sanpei's Ninja Manga and the Politics of Action

Deborah Shamoon
National University of Singapore
dshamoon@nus.edu.sg

Artist and writer Shirato Sanpei's *Ninja bugeichō* (Ninja Arts Manual, 1959-1962) was a major part of the ninja boom in postwar Japan. Shirato founded *Garo* magazine in 1964 in order to publish his next ninja series, *Kamuiden* (The Legend of Kamui, 1964-1986). *Kamuiden* is a story of how marginalized groups are pitted against each other by those in power, to prevent popular revolution. Shirato, who was active in the New Left student movement, also used the Edo period setting to show the roots of Communism in Japanese culture. Shirato worked with a team of artists, most notably Kojima Gōseki, Tsuge Yoshiharu, Mizuki Shigeru, and Okamoto Tetsuji. Biographer Mōri Jinpachi credits Kojima with shifting Shirato's art to a more photorealistic, cinematic style. The confluence of jidaigeki (historical) setting, cinematic movement, and leftist political ideology in *Kamuiden* informed the development of gekiga and seinen manga in the 1960s and 1970s. This presentation will examine the connection between film and jidaigeki manga in the portrayal of movement and action, and how manga developed its characteristic "in the moment" style.

Deborah Shamoon is Associate Professor in the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. Her field of research is modern Japanese literature and popular culture, with an emphasis on manga, gender studies, and visual analysis. She is the author of *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls' Culture in Japan* (2012), which examines the historical development of shōjo manga (romance comics). She is currently working on a book length study of formal analysis of manga in the 1950s and 1960s.

How to Read Stasis, Stillness, and Silence in Manga: Kamimura Kazuo's *Co-Habitation Age*

Jon Holt

Portland State University
joholt@pdx.edu

Any non-Japanese person reading manga probably notices how blank space, blank moments, or quiet verbal blanks often occurs on the page. Japanese artists are not lazy or unimaginative; quite the contrary, they are exceptionally skilled at using negative space or a lack of dialogue to convey intense feeling or plot tension. Sometimes they even repeat these blanks, which only heightens the reading experience. In this paper, I discuss the importance of these mood-heavy scenes in manga and how instructors can take advantage of them in class to discuss how the Japanese perceive time, action, and communication, often able to absorb the slightest cues of context from what appears to be nothing. Scott McCloud (*Understanding Comics*, 1993) and Natsume Fusanosuke (*Manga wa naze omoshiroi no ka*, 1997), experts on comic sequentiality, have different opinions on how to read mood in manga, and I will discuss the relative strengths and weakness of using them as aids in manga analysis for the classroom setting. Manga can take "comics closure" to the extremes, but we can only grasp their artistic achievements if we pay attention to their still frames and blank pages. I will offer my own hybrid analysis approach that I have used in teaching all kinds of manga for nearly a decade in the university classroom. Applying it to gekiga auteur Kamimura Kazuo and his *Co-Habitation Age* (*Dōsei jidai*, 1972-1973), I will demonstrate how even two of manga's most famous and intense lovers often communicated best across blankness and silence.

Jon Holt is Professor of Japanese at Portland State University. His research interests include modern Japanese poetry, Japanese Buddhism, and manga. His recent publications include "Ishii Takashi, Beyond 1979: *Ero Gekiga* Godfather, *GARO* Inheritor, or Shōjo Manga Artist" (*International Journal of Comic Art*, 2019), "X-Rated and Excessively Long: Ji-Amari in Hayashi Amari's Tanka" (*U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*, 2018), and the forthcoming articles "Unexpected Wins: Curating Comics and Teaching Manga from the Dark Horse Comics Collection" (with Elsa Loftis) in the edited volume *Comic Books, Special Collections, and the Academic Library* (ACRL Publishing) and "Type Five and Beyond: Tools to Teach Manga in the College Classroom" in the edited volume *Exploring Comics and Graphic Novels in the Classroom* (IGI Global). Together with Teppei Fukuda, he has published a number of translations in English of essays by Natsume Fusanosuke in journals such as *The Comics Journal, ImageTexT*, *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, *International Journal of Comic Art*, and *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*.

Drawing the Carnal Body in *Gekiga*:
The Body Politics of Characters in Japanese Comics

Shige (CJ) Suzuki
The City University of New York (CUNY)
cybercjay@gmail.com; shigeru.suzuki@baruch.cuny.edu

Manga historians agree that the rise of *gekiga* (lit. "dramatic pictures") in the mid-20th century breathed life into "story magna" (long-form narrative comics) for young adult and adult readers with a new set of themes and drawing styles. Among *gekiga*'s myriad aesthetic and storytelling innovations, as Japanese manga critic Natsume Fusanosuke has emphasized, was the tendency of *gekiga* artists of the 1960s to begin to draw their characters' bodies more "naturalistically," depicting anatomical elements such as characters' joints and muscles with higher fidelity (Natsume 2020, 308). Unlike the cartoony character designs that had previously been dominant in manga—typified by Tezuka-esque curvy plastic lines and abstract bodies with big eyes— bodies in the works of *gekiga* began to be drawn as something corporeal, muscular, and vigorous, in turn revealing their volatility, vulnerability, and fragility.

Focusing on a representative sample of *gekiga* titles—with special attention to linework—by Shirato Sanpei, Hirata Hiroshi, and Miyaya Kazuhiro, this paper discusses how the spectacle of the body takes center stage in their visual storytelling. In doing so, it also illuminates that the *gekiga*'s corporeal concern was, in fact, shaped by a set of larger, wide-ranging contemporary cultural discourses about the body encompassing the fields of literature, theater, cinema, and postwar art in the tumultuous countercultural sixties. I argue that these artists' *gekiga* works postulate the body as a contested site where the transgressions and collisions in the realms of aesthetics and politics took place.

Shige (CJ) Suzuki, PhD is an Associate Professor of Modern Languages and Comparative Literature at Baruch College, CUNY specializing in comparative literature, film, and popular culture. His current research interests include Japanese speculative fiction in different media forms, examined through the lens of posthumanism, and manga/comics (graphic novels) in conversation with media theories and visual culture studies. Along with numerous papers on manga and other visual media, he is the author forthcoming book *Manga: A Critical Guide* (co-authored by Dr Ronald Stewart, published by Bloomsbury in 2022). His writings can be found at https://baruch-cuny.academia.edu/CJ

Rigid Recounting: Martial Law Memories

Karl Ian Uy Cheng Chua
Hitotsubashi University
kchengchua@gmail.com

On 30 June 2022, the Philippines inaugurated Ferdinand "Bongbong" Romualdez Marcos Jr. as the 17th president of the Philippines. This came as a disappointment as it coincided with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the declaration of Martial Law by Bongbong Marcos' father. While political pundits looked at the ubiquity of "fake news" in the information space, I argue that this is a result of what Morris-Suzuki posits as the "historiography of oblivion" particularly on how popular culture narrates contemporary history.

There were several komiks, animation and children's books focused on re-telling the events of Martial Law. However, unlike academic articles or history textbooks, the advantage of such creative media is that they are not bound by the rigid rules of formal educational materials. This means that the medium's creators could creatively tell their stories. Despite the truthfulness of narratives, the results of the elections show the rejection of 31 million Filipinos towards this history. This paper will study the samples and try to understand the gradual loss of affect from Filipinos who have consumed the narratives to explain the results of the recent elections.

Karl Ian Uy Cheng Chua received his Doctorate in Social Science from Hitotsubashi University. He was former Director of the Japanese Studies Program of the Ateneo de Manila University. He authored *Covid-19 and Popular Culture in Southeast Asia Digital Responses to the Pandemic* for Kyoto University Center for Southeast Asian Studies Covid Chronicles series, and *Japanese Representation in Philippine Media* as a section for The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity. He has been an Asia Public Intellectual Junior Fellow, and is currently a Japan Foundation Japanese Studies Fellow. He is part of the Editorial board of the Social Sciences Diliman and East Asian Journal of Popular Culture. He is a steering committee member of the Japanese Studies Association of Southeast Asia (JSA-ASEAN)

The Promise of a Communitarian Disablement: Dyesbel, the Mermaid Subject of the Post World War II, Ableist Bodies of the Nation-State Violence, and the Populism of Popular Literature

Jose Mari Cuartero
University of the Philippines Diliman
jbcuartero@up.edu.ph

The paper explores Mars Ravelo's Dyesebel, a serialized comics with 28 issues during the Post-World War II Philippines, appearing in newsstands in 1952 about the mermaid subject named, Dyesebel. In the breadth of this comics, the foray into the depth of this work deconstructs and closely reads the figure of Dyesebel as a character and bodily subject who has endured a life that has evolved into being a subject of mass violence and populist uprising against the abnormality and disability of the populism of the ableist bodies, and the mythology of a fairytale heterosexual romance. With the illustration of Dyesbel as a subject of nation-state's ableist violence, the paper also exposes the complicated historicity of such political predicament as the comics is also historicized within the print capitalism of the post-World War II, wedged into the broader vision of building and imagining the community—a nation in a period of recovery from the world's most damaging and deadliest war in modern history. At the heart of Post-World War II history, the paper also complicates the complicitous relationship between popular literature and populism, a kind of contradiction and at the same time the contingency of the former from the latter, yet also a necessary visual culture in the face of wrecked, infrastructural debris, and war casualties. Lastly, the paper also mobilizes the power of comics as a technique to deconstruct the archives and historiography of nationalist histories to confront the bodily trauma from World War II in the Pacific region by the American Empire.

Jose Mari Cuartero is a faculty member of the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of the Philippines Diliman, the same institution where he finished both his undergraduate and master's degrees. His research interests are broadly shaped by interdisciplinary relationships between comparative literature and anthropology, which fork into different paths, such as critical theory, migration, 19th century Philippines, folklore, and the archives of Isabelo de Los Reyes. The breadth of his research interests has also allowed him to engage in decolonial education by producing a high school textbook with colleagues that places Filipino migrant writers at the center of world literature, and eventually, by giving queer pedagogy training through folklore to public school teachers. The latitude of his work and engagement has led him to publish some articles in Kritika Kultura and Philippine Studies. Recently, he wrote a few articles for an online newspaper, the *CoverStory*.

Visual Rhetoric and History: Unveiling the Contours of 'Naxalbari Movement' in Sumit Kumar's *Amar Bari Tomar Bari Naxalbari*

Partha Bhattacharjee
SRM University-*AP*, Andhra Pradesh
partha.b@srmap.edu.in

Priyanka Tripathi
Indian Institute of Technology Patna
priyankatripathi@iitp.ac.in

Graphic Narratives, as testimonial of social change with boulevard of mingled feelings, become apt for highlighting the history (Chute 2008; 2014), and place the "lived experience(s)" inside the panels with the implementation of images, illustrations, dictions, and texts. Theorists noted the prospect of complex multimodal verbal-visual method over the regular narrative (Sontag 2003; Butler 2005; Hirsch 2004, 2012; Whitlock 2006; Dale Jacobs 2014). Illustrated in an unconventional way, the tripartite pattern in Sumit Kumar's *Amar Bari Tomar Bari Naxalbari* (2015) cascades the brutal truth and appalling reality behind the emergence of Naxalbari Movement which is described in a mix of three languages: Hindi, Bangla, and English. The satirical comic book travels back and forth (often seeming to be *in medias res*) in time with an intention to synchronise the events, ranging from pre-independence Hyderabad, post-independence Andhra Pradesh, and finally to Dandkaranya. Neither an autobiography, nor a superhero–*Amar Bari* is just meant to be another form of Indian "Alternative Comics," serialised on "Newslaundry" and it focusses only on the history of "maoist situation." Kumar made the graphic narrative a special one with the characters - The Owl (Ullu Dada) often comments in a sarcastic tone and the Tortoise (Adwaita) is the eyewitness of the historical events. Ullu Dada said Naxalite Movement initially emerged out of the dark political nexus of "The Bureaucrats," "The Politicians," and "The Corporations" (Kumar 33) etc. Positioning this article at intersection of Comics Studies, Historical Studies, and Memory Studies, we investigate how Kumar's unique style of "coloring only the characters that spoke," attaching the insinuating photographs (often playing the role of *punctum*, Barthes 26), and sequences coupling with "restrained" and "general" arthrology, help the historical graphic narrative in attaining the aesthetic quality and how visual rhetoric and comics become important visual-verbal medium in understanding the trajectory of Naxalite Movement in India.

Partha Bhattacharjee is currently working as an Assistant Professor of English in SRM University-*AP*, Andhra Pradesh (4th July 2022 – till date). He has earned his Doctoral Degree from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Patna on 15th April 2019 under the supervision of Dr Priyanka Tripathi, Associate Professor of English and Head. He has published with reputed journals, *Journal of Visual Communication in Medicine* (Taylor & Francis, Q1), *Studies in Comics* (Q2), *Journal of International Women's Studies*, *Journal of Gender Studies* (Taylor & Francis, Q1), *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Taylor & Francis, Q1), *The Translator* (Taylor & Francis Q1), *IUP Journal of English Studies* (Q3), to name a few. He (along with Dr Priyanka Tripathi) received funds from Postcolonial Studies Association, UK for organizing an International Conference on Postcolonial Studies in Comics and Graphic Narratives from South Asia at IIT Patna (25th – 26th September 2021). His Scopus id is 57208188001.

Priyanka Tripathi is an Associate Professor of English and Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Patna. She is also the Co-Executive Editor of the *Journal of International Women's Studies* (published by Bridgewater State University). She has been awarded Visiting Research Fellowship (2022-23), by IASH, the University of Edinburgh for her project titled, "Optimizing Caste Intersectionality: A Decolonial Reading of Gender-based Violence in Select Subaltern Fiction in India". She has published extensively in *Indian Literature*, *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, *GeoHumanities*, and *Economic and Political Weekly* amongst others. She has received several grants: JIWS fellowship 2021-22 (Bridgewater State University), Shastri Conference and Lecture Series Grant (SCLSG) 2021-22, Post-colonial Association grant 2020-21, CIIL conference grant 2020 amongst others. She has also worked on several government-sponsored projects related to gender issues. Her forthcoming monograph with Bloomsbury is titled, *The Gendered War: Evaluating Feminist Ethnographic Narratives of the 1971 War of Bangladesh*. She works in the area of Gender Studies, South Asian Fiction, GeoHumanities, and Graphic Novels. Her ORCiD is https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9522-3391.

Rappelling the Infinite Scroll:
Possibilities and Implications of Verticality in Korean Webtoons

Hyung-Gu Lynn
University of British Columbia
hlynn@mail.ubc.ca

The emergence, circulation, and growth of South Korean webtoons has attracted rapidly burgeoning academic attention, ranging from close readings of specific titles, dense economic analyses, to passing references within the larger context of the Korean wave. There remains, however, a relative lacuna in studies of the implications of this media on aesthetics and storytelling. What are the larger implications, if any, of webtoons as a format or media for existing forms of and approaches to graphic narratives? Through textual, paratextual, and contextual analysis of individual Korean titles and authors, the paper takes an analytical tour through six motifs – accessibility, mobility, hapticity, verticality, boundlessness, and infinity – that in turn serve as rubrics for understanding potential innovations, limitations, and implications of webtoons within the larger field of comics and graphic narratives.

Hyung-Gu Lynn is the Editor of the journal *Pacific Affairs* and AECL/KEPCO Chair in Korean Research in the Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia. His research deals with popular culture, publid diplomacy, colonialism, migration, globalization, and development, largely focused on Japan, South Korea, and North Korea. Recent publications include, "History of Korea 1905-1945," in Jeonghun Han, Ramon Pardo, and Youngho Cho, eds. *Oxford Handbook of Korean Politics* (Oxford UP, 2022); "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration in China, Korea, and Japan," with Eunice Kang, and Apichai Shipper, in Nukhet Sandal, ed. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (Oxford UP, 2021); "Japan-South Korea International Relations," in Sojin Lim, and Niki Alsford, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary South Korea* (Routledge, 2021); "Mobilities and Migrations in Modern East Asia," *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 20, no. 2 (2020); and "Korean Webtoons: Explaining Growth," *Institute of Korean Studies Annual (Kyushu)* 16 (2016).

"You have Special Powers":
Creative Care, Graphic Medicine, and Dementia

Livine Ancy A
National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli
livine2212@gmail.com

Sathyaraj Venkatesan
National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli

Graphic medicine medicine—an interdisciplinary field of healthcare and comics—provides diverse resource to articulate the complex experiential realities of illness and caregiving as well as opens multiple interpretive possibilities to understand the intricacies of these experiential realities. In doing, the verbo-visual medium sensitizes the readers to the lived realities, alters stereotypical socio-cultural mediation of illness and incentivize nuanced approaches towards illness and care. The present article investigates how comics can deconstruct reductive conceptions about dementia and dementia care through inviting alternative perspectives toward the illness. Caring for dementia sufferers is demanding, monotonous, and unglamorous work, often fraught with unpredictable challenges as any other severe chronic conditions. Additionally, absence of curative imperatives, incremental physical and cognitive deterioration despite the quality of care provided, impossibility to resume normal life, and awaiting an inevitable death makes the lives of dementia sufferers and their caregivers more grueling. This essay argues that perfusing creativity with care practices is one of the adept ways to mitigate such burdens of caregiving, thereby aiding healthy management of illness. As such, graphic medicine through its verbal and visual affordances ushers and illustrates novel ways and means to cope with challenges of chronic illnesses. The article, after reviewing the major tenets of graphic medicine seeks to close read Dana Walrath's *Aliceheimer's: Alzheimer's Through the Looking Glass* (2013) to demonstrate how creativity transforms care as a meaningful and as a constructive practice in the context of dementia. The article also investigates how such distinctive caring practices challenge the predominant perspectives of dementia (such as social death) and aid in finding meaning in the alternative experiential realities of the sufferer. It concludes by demonstrating that such creative practices help in retaining the personhood and humanity of the care-receiver.

Livine Ancy A is a Research Scholar in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Institute of Technology, Trichy. Her research concentrates on Graphic Medicine, Health Humanities, and visual care studies. She has co-authored four Scopus indexed research articles.

Sathyaraj Venkatesan is Professor of English in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli, where he specializes in health humanities and comics studies, with an emphasis on graphic medicine. He is the author of nine book and over hundred research articles that span African American literature, health humanities, graphic medicine, film studies, and other literary and cultural studies disciplines.

Cartographic Poetry and the Production of Poetic Space through Image-text

Rex Sandro M. Nepomuceno
University of the Philippines Diliman
rmnepomuceno@up.edu.ph

Comics as an evolving form is at constant negotiation with its treatment of space and time. Art comics and comics poetry, for example, disrupt spatial and temporal conventions of comics' grammar and transcend the dimensions of narrative and sequentiality. They tend to emphasize the capabilities of the visual in carrying sustained meaning-making or employ multiple modalities to replicate a register akin to that of poetry. Experimentations such as these require experimental reading—a defamiliarization with traditional modes of consumption and thus, a potential recasting of the role of readers themselves, e.g. as collaborators. My own creative work as a poet has also been preoccupied with the hybridity of image-text, the poetics and rhetoric of space-time, and the heuristic and collaborative value of its creative process. Particularly, I have worked towards what I refer to as *cartographic poetry*, a technique that combines map-making and cartographic imagery with poetic text. Although the categorization of these map-poems cannot (and arguably should not) easily fall under the broad coverage of graphic narratives or even the genre of comics poetry, they do share the same characteristic usage of artifice, multimodality, segmentivity, and simultaneity. Maps also employ their own grammar and rhetoric which can be disrupted and reconstructed along with the poetic language it is combined with. In cartographic poetry, narrative space (such as in traditional comics) is sidelined by the production of poetic space that favors tactics of exploration, not dissimilar to the experimental practices of psychogeography, and the resulting multiplicity of situations.

Rex Sandro M. Nepomuceno teaches rhetoric and public address at the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts, University of the Philippines Diliman. He took his masters in Creative Writing in Filipino from the same university where he worked on his graduate thesis on experimental cartographic poetry. His work revolves around rhetoric, poetics, discourse, space, and experimental literature. He is the of the author of the poetry collection *Apolohiya sa Imbensiyon ng Isang Isla / Apology on the Invention of an Island* (Aklat Ulagad, 2022) and the play *Getsemani* (2021). His research and creative output have also appeared in Philippine Humanities Review, Sentro ng Wikang Filipino's Agos, and various independent anthologies and small-press publications.

Documenting 'The Aliens' (Foreigners) Experience in Japan in Jejon Di Jepun Comic Series through Ethno-Graphic Research

Suraya binti Md Nasir

Sultan Idris Education University
suraya.mn@fskik.upsi.edu.my

The paper is a reflective ethnography through the use of comics (ethno-graphic) in documenting the researcher's experience as "alien" or foreigners in Japan. The purpose of this research is to examine and reflect on the researcher's journey of the experience as a female Muslim living in a Japan as a post-graduate student, developing cultural competence, and navigating cross-cultural interactions. This paper also explores how international students are able to access to education in a native-speaking country such as Japan through the case study of Kyoto Seika University, as observed by the researcher. These concepts are explored in depth through a first-person auto-ethnographic style using comics and participant observatory as a methodology that highlights a personal narrative accompanied by analysis through the lenses cross-cultural theory.

Suraya Md Nasir is a senior lecturer of Faculty of Art, Computing Creative Industry at Sultan Idris Education University. Her work focuses on cultural studies, more specifically, her work examines the effect of manga and anime on the establishment of new identity in Malaysian young artist. She is interested in how new media facilitates social interaction. She is currently venturing into ethno-Graphic, an ethno/graphic storytelling of using graphic narratives such as comics and illustrations in communicating research. She is also a comic practitioner with over 10 years of experience which goes her pen name, Jonsuraya.

Graphic Narratives of Architecture and the Built Environment

Lai Chee Kien
National University of Singapore
cheekien.lai@gmail.com

After teaching architecture design / history for over twenty years, it is apparent that students wish to make forms and environments, and are less concerned, if at all, with social, economic, and political contexts of those spaces. Unless they are brought on tours to sites and locations, or are involved in participatory design, it is harder to explain concepts and situations to them, especially historical ones.

The teaching of architecture is primarily visual, so comics and graphic narratives are good texts to convey such ideas and scenarios. This paper is a discussion of two roles I developed over the course of teaching, as (i) a user and (ii) a co-author of graphic narratives.

In teaching, I have used Lat's books to analyze the Malay kampong house for students, as he was able to capture them in detail. I also used his short work "The Trip" from *Liquid City Vol. 1* (2008) to discuss an informal settlement outside Kuala Lumpur, which few experience as users. To illustrate industrial parks and the funerary craft industry, I used "Paper City" by Dave Chua and Koh Hong Teng from *Liquid City Vol. 2* (2010).

I worked with Hong Teng to translate my tours of the (now altered) railway and colonial heritage in *Last Train from Tanjong Pagar* (2014). The collaboration continued with *Building Memories: People, Architecture, Independence* (2016, Book of the Year 2017) about Independence-era architecture in Singapore, and *The Garden of Foolish Indulgences* (2016) about a literati orchard now part of Thomson Park.

Lai Chee Kien is an architectural and urban historian, and a registered architect in Singapore. He graduated with a PhD in History of Architecture & Urban Design from UC Berkeley [2005], and taught at NUS and SUTD from 1998-2019. His publications include *A Brief History of Malayan Art* (1999), *Building Merdeka: Independence Architecture in Kuala Lumpur* (2007), *Through the Lens of Lee Kip Lin* (2015) [Best Non-Fiction Title, 2016], *Building Memories: People, Architecture, Independence* (2016) [Book of the Year], *The Merdeka Interviews: Architects, Engineers and Artists of Malaysia's Independence* (2018), *The Singapore Chronicles: Architecture* (2019), *Early Hawkers in Singapore: 1920s and 1930s* (2020), and *Cords to Histories: Life and Architecture in Southeast Asia* (2021) [in Chinese. Asia Magazine (HK) Book List 2021, Lianhe Zaobao Book List 2021]. He researches on histories of art, architecture, settlements, urbanism and landscapes in Southeast Asia.

Mapping What's Worth:
An Ethnographic Approach to Environmental Mapping

Zen Teh
Environmental Artist and Educator
admin@zenteh.com

Sadaf Ansari
National University of Singapore
sadaf@nus.edu.sg

Chua Siew Chin
National University of Singapore
siewchin@nus.edu.sg

Sense of place characterizes the relationship between people and spatial settings; it influences how we interact, value and perceive the affordances of a place. It is shaped deeply by our experience of a place, and can be instrumental in imagining its future. A critical question is—how do we think about the sense of place in cities where places and people are constantly changing?

We conducted a 2-day workshop across two Asian cities witnessing rapid transformation - Singapore and Phnom Penh. We used environmental mapping as an ethnographic tool that visually captures the intersections of culture, environment, history, politics and economics in the urban fabric. Workshop participants were invited to explore their notion of sense of place through foot-led ethnography of a selected neighbourhood, drawing interconnections between disparate objects, spaces and people in a collaborative art installation.

The workshop aims to enable participants to a) develop an ethnographic interest in their local communities, b) examine their individual and collective cultural identity and sense of place, c) draw interconnections between the environment and the sociocultural dimensions of their daily lives, and d) use art as a means to facilitate social, cultural and environmental awareness

We adopted the Arts Based Engagement Ethnography (ABBE) framework where participants expressed ideas, perceptions and experiences in ways beyond the use of denotative language. In employing environmental mapping and collaborative art, ABBE provokes and enables participants to reflect and record their experience creatively, using the visual vocabulary of images, maps, sketches, and artifacts. (245 words)

Zen Teh: An artist, educator and art researcher interested in interdisciplinary studies of nature and human behavior. Her art practice spans across photography, sculpture and installation art, and draws on the belief that learning is built upon our innate curiosity towards natural phenomena and experiences of the everyday. Zen is currently pursuing a Master's in Arts (Research) at National Institute of Education, NTU.

Sadaf Ansari: A Senior Lecturer at the Ridge View Residential College (NUS), Sadaf is an architect from the School of Planning and Architecture (India), with a Master's in Architecture & Urbanism (MIT). Her teaching focuses on the human experience, interaction with, and connection to places. By extension, she also examines built heritage in urban settings undergoing transformation or contestation.

Chua Siew Chin: A Senior Lecturer at the Department of Biological Sciences (NUS), Siew Chin is a forest ecologist with a PhD in Environmental Science, Policy and Management (UC Berkeley). Her teaching focuses on understanding feedbacks occurring in human-impacted ecosystems, ecosystem restoration and developing students' ecological consciousness with their environment. She also examines issues of environmental sustainability in cities.

Teaching Multimodal Literacy through Comics

Jason Banta
National University of Singapore
jason.banta@nus.edu.sg

This presentation will highlight the benefits of using comics to teach multimodal discourse in a first- year critical thinking course in an ASEAN (specifically Singapore) university. Multimodal analysis and discourse are increasingly recognized as powerful tools for teaching critical thinking (Kay et al. 2017). Comics are the ideal media for practicing multimodal and critical analysis strategies (Schmidt 2019). In a series of classroom activities, I present students with a clear framework, adopted from McCloud (1994) for reading the formal elements of comics. Then we move on to an in-depth study of the 2014 *Ms Marvel: No Normal* graphic novel. Ms Marvel, as a multimodal superhero herself, provides fertile materials for class discussions on a complex interaction between form and narrative with a non-white, non-male, young adult character. The culmination of this series of activities is a formal paper in which the students analyse focused evidence from the graphic novel through a social psychological lens. The presentation argues that integrating formal comic analysis into the critical thinking classroom enhances multimodal outcomes (as evidenced by performance markers in the later work) and general student engagement (as evidenced by student feedback for the exercise).

Jason Banta is a lecturer in the Centre for English Language Communication at the National University of Singapore. He has served as coordinator for the critical thinking and academic literacy modules taught by the Centre. He holds a PhD in Classical Greek and Latin Literatures and Language and MAs in Classics, Art History and Classical Archaeology. He teaches courses on popular culture, the figure of the hero in media, and Science Fiction and postcolonialism.

Ethnography:
The Language of Drawing in Ethnographic Research

Maria Virginia Moratti
University of Turin
maria.moratti@edu.unito.it

How do we express the interpretations behind our perceptions? Mostly, with words. As Causey (2017) said, verbal language has long been used by anthropology to attempt to organise human experiences, the majority of which are dependent on our visual perceptions, translating a visual input into a verbal code.

From our childhood, we learn to see things through words: a quick glance is enough to distinguish a pen from a book. An essential process, although it always makes us more likely to see the things we expect to see. Drawing, on the other hand, needs thorough and extensive observation and can help us interpret images differently from what we are used to. The following images are an excerpt from the fieldwork notes I realized during the interviews for an animated documentary I'm working on entitled Fili, and that moved me to study anthropology.

The Italian word *fili* means threads. This is a project threading the stories and memories of people who have left everything behind. An animated *carnet de voyage* that leads from Italy to Nigeria, Somalia, Pakistan, Moldova and the Ivory Coast, accompanying the voices and memories of its protagonists. Link to the teaser: https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/719225128 (password: fili)

What does it mean to see while drawing? For this paper, I propose to explore the possibilities and challenges of drawing as a method for ethnographic research rather than just a way to illustrate an otherwise written text.

Maria Virginia Moratti is an Italian illustrator and animation filmmaker with a BA in architecture from IUAV University (Venice), and a BA in animation filmmaking from Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia (Turin). In 2019, she earned a 1st Level MA in Immigration from Ca'Foscari University (Venice), and right after she started developing "FILI - Threads" an animated documentary about memories and migrations. In 2020, she attended the Open Workshop artistic residency at VIA University College (Viborg, Denmark), and she took part in the professional training program on animated documentaries, ANIDOX:LAB. Fascinated by the possibilities of drawing as an ethnographic research method, she is currently pursuing a MA in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of Turin.

Teaching Comics, Teaching with Comics

V. Chitra

National University of Singapore
soccv@nus.edu.sg

In this paper, I chart the evolution of a lower-level undergraduate class that introduces comics as a medium. Starting from 2018 onwards, this class involved constant experimentation with a challenging syllabus. Some of the biggest problems to overcome were to convey the idea that there was, indeed, nothing novel about the act of drawing, that comics were a "serious" medium to think with, and that this was not a medium that was skill dependent. The syllabus was designed and redesigned with these challenges in mind and includes a number of drawing exercises that take the students through the fundamentals of this medium. A big part of this class is the group-based final project, which is drawing a 16-page comic. The paper reflects on both the pedagogical possibilities comics open for the academy as well as the possibilities for research and communication that it opens for students.

V. Chitra is an anthropologist at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the National University of Singapore (NUS). She has a PhD in anthropology from the Johns Hopkins University and prior to her appointment at NUS, was a postdoctoral scholar at the Mittal South Asia Institute at Harvard University. Her work intersects environmental studies, science and technology studies, and visual studies. Chitra has a background in design and her work is multimodal often combining images, particularly comics, and text.

Anthropography of Nature

Frederic Joulian
Advanced School for Social Sciences
frederic.joulian@ehess.fr

Daniel Niles
Research Institute for Humanity and Nature
dniles@chikyu.ac.jp

This paper examines the potential of graphic narrative to improve understanding of human interactions with nature, in past, present, and future. We begin from the idea that humankind's most important knowledge of nature has been long been conveyed through material culture and the arts, including graphic media, song, story, and dance. The power of these media (or modes) is evidenced in their persistence through time and across cultures; the 'stories' they tell often link the human world into much wider non-human fields of significance. Our project joins anthropologists and geographers (to begin) with manga artists in joint field research into objects that illuminate natural-social interactions and agencies: traditional paper- and charcoal-making in Japan, bamboo construction in the Indian Ocean, and several other cases. The narratives we develop shed light on different forms of non-scientific knowledge of nature, especially the kinds of temporal and spatial interactions that are of such significance to contemporary environmental change, but have to date proven very difficult to convey in formal scientific terms. By putting the descriptive dimension (anthropo*graphy*) before the discursive dimension (anthropo*logy*) we suggest that the making of manga and other forms of graphic narrative may be an important methodological tool in the field and mode of environmental communication.

Frédéric Joulian is an anthropologist at the Advanced School for Social Sciences, he was deputy director of the Social Anthropology Laboratory at the Collège de France and head of the interdisciplinary program *Evolution, Natures and Cultures* and directed the interdisciplinary journal *Techniques&culture* from 2006 to 2016. His research focuses on evolutionary processes and the meanings of technical and cultural phenomena over time and on human-animal interactions in Africa and Europe. His main publications include: *La Nature est-elle culturelle?* Éditions Errance (1998)[...] He coordinated with Y.-P. Tastevin and the MuCEM the edition of a collective work on the question of the remainder and waste, entitled *"Fixing the World, Excess, Remainder and Innovation"* (2016) [...]. He is also devoting himself to an editorial project "*Anthropographiks*" associating Human sciences and Manga which gave rise in 2021 to an exhibition *Washi, from Mulburry to Manga, the art of paper in Japan*, in partnership with Seika University and to a book just published on the arts of learning and transmission *Waza, the inefable art of learning*, with A. Takada, X. Tian and M. Shimada (2021) Kyoto Univ, Seika Univ. and the RIHN.

Daniel Niles is a human-environmental geographer at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyoto, and the creative director at Eocene Arts. His research examines how different forms of traditional environmental knowledge remain sensible through time, and the continuing relevance of these longstanding fields of experience to the Anthropocene. He has served as Visiting Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin; Visiting Researcher at the Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley; and as consultant in agricultural heritage for the FAO. Recent publications include Sustainable agrifood systems for a post-growth world (Nature Sustainability 2022); Anthropocene and Asia: Investigation, Critique, and Contribution from the Environmental Humanities Perspective (Edited with Masahiro Terada, in Japanese, Kyoto University Press, 2021), "The charcoal forest: sensing the agencies of nature" in Forms of Experienced Environments (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2020), and "Science and the experience of nature" (with N. Tachimoto, Nature Sustainability, 2018).

About the Chairpersons and Organisers

Deborah Shamoon is Associate Professor in the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. Her field of research is modern Japanese literature and popular culture, with an emphasis on manga, gender studies, and visual analysis. She is the author of *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls' Culture in Japan* (2012), which examines the historical development of shōjo manga (romance comics). She is currently working on a book length study of formal analysis of manga in the 1950s and 1960s.

Khadeeja Amenda is a year two graduate student in the Cultural Studies in Asia programme based in the Department of Communication and New Media, National University of Singapore. Her area of research interest includes sound studies, sensory studies and visual culture. She has done her MPhil from the Centre for Media Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Li Chongjing is a master student in the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. Her field of research Japanese popular culture, with an emphasis on television industry, gender studies, and visual analysis.

Natalie Lie is a 2nd-year master's student at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in the Department of Japanese Studies. She is particularly interested in exploring queer histories and hope to give voice to these oft-forgotten stories through her research. Her current work brings together her two passions of film and queer history, examining queer film festivals and activism in Japan.

Nupur Choudhary is a graduate student in the South Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore. Her research interests include folk art representation, art and culture, and art anthropology in India. Her current research is on the vernacular visual culture of Mithila art and is a practitioner of the same art she studies. She completed her masters from Nalanda University from the School of Historical Studies (India) and have worked with UNESCO and Ministry of Culture in India on various art-based projects.

Priyam Sinha is a doctoral candidate at the Department of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore. Her thesis is an ethnography of the New Bollywood culture, focussing on the filmmaking practitioners' perspectives. It lies at the intersection of disability, gender, sexuality and film studies, making it interdisciplinary. She holds a Master's degree in Women's Studies from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University. Her articles have been published in *The Economic and Political Weekly, The Routledge Handbook of Exclusion, Inequality and Stigma in India, and The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies,* among others. She has also been a co-author in the National Heritage Board Project, Hidden *Heritage: Minority South Asian Communities in Singapore,* which was launched on 28 May 2022.

Ryan Lim is an MA candidate at the Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore. He researches Japanese artistic production from the 1970s and its relation to emerging political logics, by considering theories of media, affect and genre. He is also a film writer.

Siti Umairah Bte Adnan is a first year Masters student with the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. She is currently researching on the representation of indigenous Ainu girls in Japanese manga.

V. Chitra is an anthropologist at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the National University of Singapore (NUS). She has a PhD in anthropology from the Johns Hopkins University and prior to her appointment at NUS, was a postdoctoral scholar at the Mittal South Asia Institute at Harvard University. Her work intersects environmental studies, science and technology studies, and visual studies. Chitra has a background in design and her work is multimodal often combining images, particularly comics, and text.

Zachary Goh is a Master's student at the Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore. His research interests are Japanese popular culture, Japanese language and linguistics, and fan communities. His current research is on Japanese voice actors, or seiyū, and how their multiple performative identities converge and intertwine to create a unique kind of celebrity figure.