



EASt Activity Report 2023-2025

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About EAST

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Established in 2016 under the auspices of ULB's Maison des Sciences Humaines (MSH), EAST aims to underscore the importance of the **Humanities and Social Sciences** while promoting **interdisciplinary collaboration** to enhance our understanding of the world, both past and present.

Serving as a catalyst for **promoting research on East Asia at ULB**, EAST organizes guest lectures, seminars, conferences, and workshops covering a wide array of topics related to one of the most dynamic regions in the world.

Located in the heart of Brussels, EAST is a **unique initiative within the Belgian academic community**, well-positioned to engage with students, policymakers, and the broader Brussels community interested in East Asian studies.

In 2017, EAST joined the **French Asian Studies Research Group** for a 5-year mandate/agreement, which was renewed in 2022. The GIS Asie, or Groupement d'Intérêt Scientifique Études asiatiques, is a network that federates the French and Belgian Asian studies community. The network brings together more than 40 research units, involving over 1,500 researchers.

Since 2025, EAST is also a member of the **European Alliance for Asian Studies** (EAAS), an alliance of institutions from throughout Europe dedicated to serving all Asia Scholars within Europe and beyond.

I- TEAM OVERVIEW



Kicking-off the year seminar, 2024

Team Overview

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During the academic year 2023-2024, the organization of EAST has undergone some changes. Vanessa Frangville took a new position as the Director of the Maison des Sciences Humaines at ULB and handed over the direction of EAST to Virginie Arantes and Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot.

As of June 2025, EAST includes **53 members**. Within 2023 and 2025, **4 PhD fellows graduated**.

A majority of associated fellows are former EAST PhD or postdoctoral fellows who wished to maintain a link with EAST. EAST has therefore become a **global network that fosters lifelong connections** between scholars across the world.

For a detailed overview, please visit our [EAST](#) page.



EAST annual picnic in 2024



EAST Members

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Coordinators

- Fresnoza-Flot, Asuncion (academic)
- Arantes, Virginie (postdoc)

1. Allard, Aurélien
2. Decharneux, Baudouin
3. Foret, François
4. Frangville, Vanessa
5. He, Wen
6. Kellner, Thierry
7. Kurita, Kyosuke
8. Lauwaert, Françoise
9. Petit, Pierre
10. Richaud, Lisa
11. Vanhaesebrouck, Karel

Academics

Postdoctoral Researchers

1. Chung Yin Kwan, Tommy
2. Hayakawa, Miyako
3. Le Meur, Mikaëla
4. Lutz, Paul-David,
5. Mijit, Mukaddas
6. Monteil, Lucas
7. Sizaïre, Laure
8. SJ Ponce, Floramante
9. Van Daele, Raphaël

1. Airlangga, Turin
2. D'Aprile Natsuko
3. Keomanichanh, Mimy
4. Stoclet, Eugénie

Fellows who obtained
their PhDs between
2023-25



EASt Members

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1. Chen, Cai
2. Imin, Sonya
3. Jeon-Kosova, Inhwa
4. Loutfi, Nadine
5. Nguyen, Van Minh
6. Ponce, Aaron Raphael
7. Sun, Jin
8. Vongsouphanh, Amphone
9. Wong, Jing-Syuan

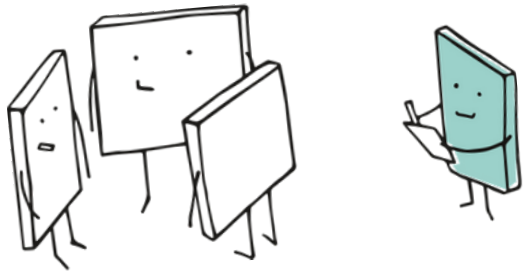
Doctoral
Students

Associated
Members

1. Agboton, Kenny
2. Bonneels, Pierre
3. Bottero, Marion
4. Chatelard, Solange
5. Cheung, Herbary
6. Dulery, Juliette
7. Gaffric, Gwennaël
8. Gönül, Hacer
9. Henry , Kevin
10. Jortay, Coraline
11. Lagman, John Francis
12. Lichaa, Flora
13. Lissoir, Marie-Pierre
14. Montenair, Marie
15. Nessel, Camille
16. Ponjaert, Frederik
17. Wilhelm, Isabelle
18. Zhang, Chenchen

Internships

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As an international research platform based in Brussels, EAST benefits from both its strong reputation and strategic location, attracting students in search of internships and professional opportunities.

Hosting interns has been a highly productive and enriching experience for EAST. Interns contributed actively to the center's day-to-day operations while bringing fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the team.

EAST plans to continue recruiting interns in the coming years to strengthen its activities

Between 2022 and 2025, EAST welcomed several interns who contributed meaningfully to both daily operations and strategic projects.

Anh Minh Pham (ULB) joined EAST from September 2022 to February 2023, and continued as a student assistant until October 2023. **Maëlwenn Chaperon** (Sciences Po Toulouse) carried out her internship from September to December 2023. In 2024, **Léa Thyssens** (ULB) joined from September to December and extended her involvement with a student job in January 2025. Most recently, **Léo Jeannenot** (UCL) joined the team from January to April 2025.

Interns supported various tasks including website and social media updates, event coordination, and report writing. Their contributions were especially valuable in producing the 2018–2023 EAST activity report.

While internships are typically unpaid in Belgium, EAST provided student contracts ("jobiste") whenever possible to acknowledge and support their work.

For a complete overview of our past interns, please visit this [page](#).

II- RESEARCH



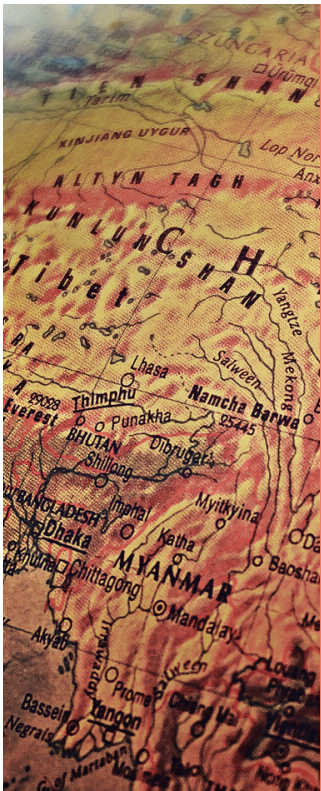
LABOUR team in Vientiane, November 2024

Research Areas

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Rooted in original and interdisciplinary research and teaching, EAST focuses on **five main research axes**:

1. **Migration and Mobility**, exploring the complexities of migration, including diasporic experiences, transnational networks, and the socio-cultural impacts of migration flows.
2. **Gender and Family Dynamics**, examining the intersections of gender, family structures, and social roles, with a focus on mixed couples and gendered migration patterns.
3. **Youth and Public Spaces**, investigating the role of public spaces as sites for cultural expression and social interaction, highlighting the impact of artistic and literary practices on identity and public discourse.
4. **State-Society Interactions**, analyzing the interplay between state policies and societal responses, focusing on governance, political frameworks, and civil society, including discussions on political sociology and grassroots movements.
5. **Norms and Cultural Practices**, delving into how cultural norms and practices shape social behaviors and identities within East Asian societies.

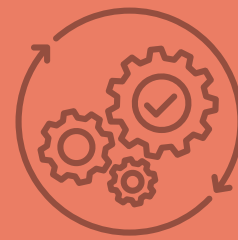


Space-wise, EAST's main expertise is on the East Asian region, from North to South. **China, Japan** and **Taiwan** stand out, underscoring their strategic importance, reflecting their economic and geopolitical weight. Southeast Asian countries also rank high in EAST concerns, with strong teams on **Laos, Vietnam, Thailand** and the **Philippines**.

Besides, studies of Central Asia also developed within EAST in recent years, with scholars working in **Kazakhstan, Kirghiztan** and **Uzbekistan**.

Finally, **Asian diasporas** are the focus of several members.

Research Projects



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EASt's research covers a wide-range of topics as well as temporal and geographical areas. This research includes several individual projects, but also collective and funded projects that are highlighted below.

In 2021, EASt successfully completed its **ARC project on Youth and Public Spaces** in EASt Asia.

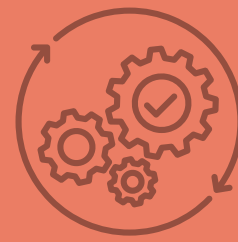
Many EASt members are currently involved individually or collectively in 5 EU-funded projects:

- **3 MSCA-RISE projects** (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions- Research and Innovation Staff Exchange) including several Asian countries (Laos, Philippines, Kazakhstan, Vietnam etc).
- **1 Horizon-Widera project** including 3 European universities.
- **1 Horizon RIA project** (Research and Innovation Actions) coordinated by the ULB and gathering 6 EU partners and 7 Asian partners.

Besides, EASt also hosted a **FNRS-funded MIS project** titled TEM-OUIGEXIL: Bearing Witness to Traumatic Experiences: Cultural Productions of Uyghurs in Exile; and two **JSPS** (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)-**funded projects**.

Finally, EASt is also actively involved in **BelMix**, a research network based at the ULB, focusing on the intersections of migration and intimacy.

LABOUR 2023-2026



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MSCA-RISE

[Website here](#)

LABOUR aims to tackle informal employment in Asia by building post-COV19 solutions to precariousness through case-study based evidence on Bhutan, Laos, Maldives, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Pierre Petit is the academic coordinator of this project for the ULB.

Vanessa Frangville and **Pierre Petit** benefited from this programme in Fall 2024 for a 5-week research stay in Vientiane, Laos. Pierre Petit conducted research on the production and circulation of Buddhist talismans in Vientiane, while Vanessa Frangville led research on the Lao-Chinese communities in Vientiane. This programme will also support a second fieldwork during the summer 2025.

Floramante SJ Ponce also conducted research for 8 months in Laos, investigating how the external power that Lao amulets can muster helps fix Lao people's broken interiorities, which are caused by post-pandemic economic shocks, rapid societal and digital transitions, and ecological disruptions. **Amphone Vongsouphanh** also conducted research in Laos through the project, on community dialogue and movements, rural development, and community organizing



Chinese temple in Vientiane
Photo by V. Frangville, 2024



HORIZON-MSCA

[Website here](#)

“PRELAB: Precarious Labour in Asia: Exploring Challenges and Solution to Labour Insecurity through Case-Study-Based Evidence from 8 Asian Countries” is a network including academic and development organisations, all with a major focus on informality and development

Pierre Petit and **Vanessa Frangville** are the academic coordinators of this project for the ULB.

As of June 2025, three EASt members have benefited from this project. **Mimy Keomanichanh** did a 2-month fieldwork during Spring 2025 on the everyday use of auspicious objects among Lao Buddhists in the province of Champassak, in Southern Laos. In the meantime, **Van Minh Nguyen** conducted ethnographic fieldwork on the religious practices of Vietnamese Catholics in Hue and Quang Tri. **Aaron Ponce** will also start a 3-month fieldwork in the Philippines in Fall 2025.



Marial Sanctuary near Quang Tri,
Photo by Van Minh Nguyen, 2025

FEMENA 2026-2030



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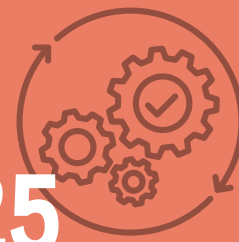
HORIZON TMA MSCA

"FEMENA: FEMale ENTrepreneurs in Asia: Innovation, Policies, Challenges and Opportunities in: Laos, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam"

Pierre Petit and **Vanessa Frangville** are the academic coordinators of this project for the ULB.

This project will start from 2026.

REMOTE XUAR 2023-2025



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Remote
Ethnography
X U A R

[Website here](#)

This project titled “Remote ethnography of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region” (REMOTE XUAR) seeks to gain and share a deeper understanding of a region mostly inaccessible to research and the site of massive state violence, labour exploitation and rights violations. The project is led in partnership with the ULB, the [Palacky University Olomouc](#) (project coordinator) and the [Würzburg University](#).

Vanessa Frangville is the academic coordinator of this project for the ULB.

Vanessa Frangville, **Mukaddas Mijit** and **Sonya Imin** have all benefited from the project to conduct fieldwork and archival research in Europe, Central Asia and Australia. They also contributed to the project through blogposts, op-eds, a Podcast series, articles, conference presentations and workshops.



Pawlan Uyghur Youth Center
Photo by Sonya Imin, 2024

ASPIRE 2023-2025



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[Website here](#)

This research project aims to map the extent to which spatial mobility policies at the EU and national levels consider aspiring (re)migrants' behaviour, to identify the micro- and meso-level drivers of (re)migration aspiration and/or intention, and to determine the temporality of aspiring (re)migrants' decision-making. It brings together six European partners and seven Asian partners.

Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot is the academic coordinator of this project.



AspirE ULB team lunch, Jan. 2025

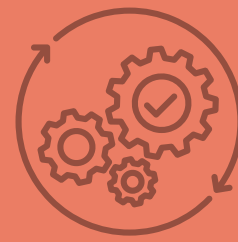
Thanks to AspirE's funding, **Miyako Hayakawa** and **Tommy Kwan** were able to conduct fieldwork in Japan and Hong Kong respectively.

Likewise, Lucas Monteil and **Laure Sizaire** carried out their fieldwork in Belgium with the support of AspirE.

Mimy Keomanichanh (current postdoctoral fellow in Belgium-based AspirE team) has been analysing L. Sizaire's collected data. **Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot**, **Vanessa Frangville** and Maëlwenn Chaperon contributed to the mobility policy analysis for the Belgium case study.

Antoine Roblain, on the other hand, has been collaborating with the above researchers within the project's WP3 tasks.

Frederik Ponjaert (collaborator) and Catherine Gonzalez (AspirE's project manager) have been coordinating the project with A. Fresnoza-Flot.



[Website here](#)

This project was **awarded the ULB's Science Communication Award** in 2025.



Vanessa Frangville is the academic coordinator of this project for the ULB.

This project looks at the Uyghur diaspora and its cultural and artistic production that draws the world's attention and bears witness to the various abuses perpetrated at home by the Chinese government. It also aims to understand new expressions of nostalgia in Uyghur cultural production and the relationships between individual trauma and collective struggle, as well as the emerging role of Uyghur art in community building.

Based on participant observation, interviews and in-depth analysis of texts produced by Uyghur artists (broadly including written and oral texts but also various artwork in different formats and styles), this project, including **Vanessa Frangville, Mukaddas Mijit** and **Sonya Imin**, seeks to tackle new transmedia forms of testimonies in the Uyghur case.



Podcast cover by Kashgar Galaxy

JSPS-funded Projects



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COVID-19 pandemic and Filipino migrants in Belgium and France (2021-2024) - The **Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)** KAKENHI funded this research.

This case study examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of Filipino migrant domestic workers in Brussels and Paris. **Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot** conducted the policy content and social context analysis. The case study was part of the larger research project entitled "A comparative research on mobilities, representations and social relationships among migrant workers under the Pandemic" coordinated by Itaru Nagasaka (anthropologist, Hiroshima University).

Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot is the academic coordinator of this project for the ULB.

Karel Vanhaesebrouck is the academic coordinator of this project for the ULB.

Towards a Transnational Dramaturgy - Japanese and Belgian/European Perspectives (2023-2025) - This project was funded by the **FNRS** and **Japan Society for the Promotion of Science**.

This project in collaboration with the University of Waseda, Tokyo, aims to stimulate transcultural perspectives both on theatre historiography and on contemporary theatre practices, challenging established narratives on theatre history and contemporary performing arts which often take the context of the nation-state for granted or, the other way around, reduce the complexity of transcultural hybridization to postmodern globalization.



[Website here](#)

BelMix is a research network based at the Université libre de Bruxelles, focusing on the intersections of migration and intimacy. It investigates how intimate relationships, such as familial, romantic, and sexual connections, are influenced by migration and social diversity.



The initiative emphasizes interdisciplinary studies, connecting sociology, anthropology, and related fields to understand mixedness and migratory dynamics.

BelMix also offers different types of activities to promote the project, such as

- Academic seminars
- Research projects
- Collaborative publications
- BelMix Seminar Series
- Round tables
- Workshops

Several EAST members are also involved in this project.



III- ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS



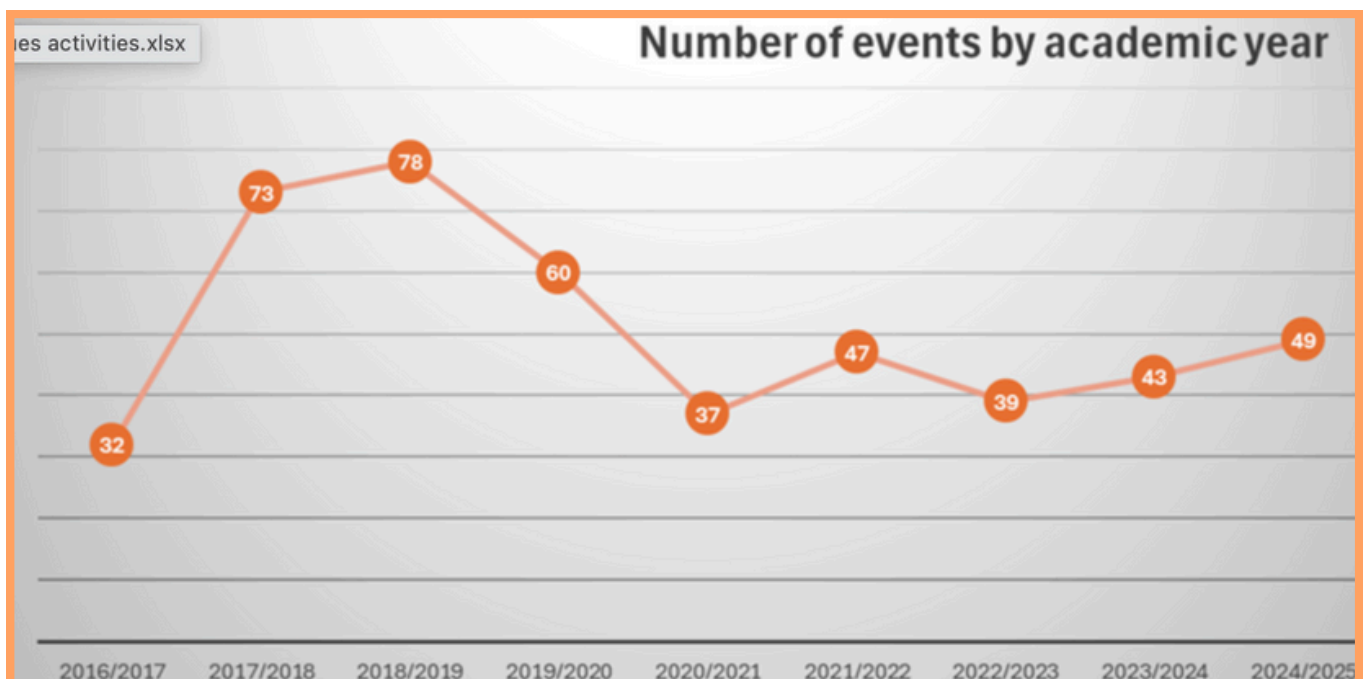
Events

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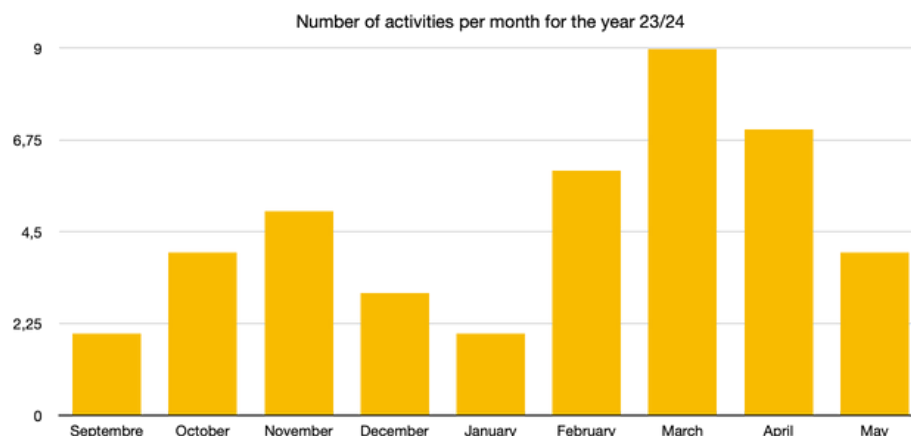
458

Since it was founded, EAST has organised more than 450 events. During the year 23/24, EAST held **43** events, and **49** in 24/25.

Since the end of pandemic, EAST has resumed a more sustained rhythm of events.



Every year, a **peak** of activity is observed **between February and May**, when MSH guest professors are hosted. Here is an example for 2023/2024:



MSH Guest Professors

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With the help of the MSH, EAST welcomed during the academic 2023/2024 6 guest professors mostly from France.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Names</u>	<u>Title of the event</u>	<u>Home institution</u>
November 2023	Édouard L'Hérisson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Le processus d'expansion japonaise en Mandchourie durant la première moitié du XXe siècle" 	INALCO
February 2024	Françoise Robin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "State-Supported Literature against State-Operated Amnesia : The Case of Tibetan Literature in Today's People's Republic of China" 	INALCO
March 2024	Guibourg Delamotte	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Political Narratives in Europe and Asia Compared" 	INALCO
April 2024	Catherine Scheer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "From murderer to hero: memory politics in the highlands of Cambodia" 	EHESS, EFEO
April 2024	Rossella Ferrari	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Virtual Materiality and Technologies of the Real in Chinese Documentary Theatre" "Transnational Chinese Theatres: Intercultural Performance Networks in East Asia" 	University of Vienne
May 2024	Roderick Galam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Chronicle of a debt fulfilled and ties that bind: Intergenerational contract in Filipino families and its incorporation into Filipino youths' adult identity" "Filipino seafaring labour migration and the crewing of the global maritime industry: a multi-scalar analysis" 	Oxford Brookes University

In addition to the MSH guest professors, EAST has welcomed other guests as part of 'Cours-conférence' such as Chun-chun (sha) TING; Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière; Jiawen SUN; etc.

MSH Guest Professors

P23

With the support of the MSH, EAST welcomed a new cohort of guest professors during the 2024-2025 academic year. This included **Katia Buffetrille** (CDAT – EPHE), **Betty de Hart** (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), **Oliver Tappe** (University of Heidelberg), **Isabelle Thireau** (EHESS, CNRS), and **Ioan Trifu** (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), further strengthening EAST's international academic network.

In 2024-2025, EAST continued to consolidate its role as a dynamic platform for interdisciplinary exchange at ULB. The center co-organized a diverse range of academic events, including **public lectures, seminars, and workshops**, often in collaboration with the MSH, the Institute of Sociology, and other research groups such as LAMC, STRIGES, and HERICOL. These initiatives fostered **rich synergies across disciplines** including anthropology, migration studies, law, urban studies, and performance.

The year was marked by a **strong engagement with themes such as visual and embodied methodologies, transnational and interracial family dynamics, and the socio-political impacts of development strategies in Asia**. EAST's active participation in university-wide seminar cycles and its support for visiting scholars helped reinforce its visibility and commitment to critical and situated approaches to Asian studies. Through these activities, EAST not only **strengthened its institutional partnerships** but also contributed to **broadening public and academic conversations** on Asia in a global context.

ULB

Les livres de l'IS Séminaires

Vendredi 28 février 2025 - Salle Janne
Pouvoir et ne pas pouvoir
Discussions politiques et anthropologiques
(avec Jean-Louis Genard)
Fabrizio Corbelli (GRAP)

Lundi 17 mars 2025 - Salle Rokkan
Un autre regard sur les marchés de l'art
Anne-Sophie Kadermecker (CREAAC)

Mercredi 9 avril 2025 - Salle Janne
Compromised Bodies - Cultural Imperialism, Agency, and the Ban on "Female Genital Mutilation" in Senegal
Sarah O'Neill (LAMC)

Vendredi 16 mai 2025 - Salle Rokkan
Les valeurs de l'Europe, un enjeu démocratique
Justine Lacroix (ICP)

Lundi 16 juin 2025 - Salle Rokkan
Anthropology & Photography
Pierre Petit & Mikaela Le Meur (LAMC)

12h15 à 14h00
Salle Janne / Rokkan
15ème / 12ème étage

Informations & inscription
(pré-inscription obligatoire)
reganath@ulb.be

BelMix Seminar Series

10 am - 11:30 am (Brussels Time) Room 5.15.215 - hybrid Zoom Building 5 (15th floor), ULB

25 October
Mobile Orientations: What does a focus on emotions, gender and sexuality add to the understanding of migration processes?
Nick Mal - University of Leicester, UK

21 November
The storytelling of heterosexual marriage in the production of the TV reality show Married at First Sight in Poland
Alicia Kandach - École des hautes études en sciences sociales, France

5 December
Same-sex marriage and mobility in African societies
Agnes van der Velden - University College London, UK

2024

14 February
Boundary Dissolution? The (un)making of individual boundaries in Sino-Comptee couples residing in Congo (DRC)
Cécile Chappé - Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

14 March
Break Couples: UK-EU couples and the UK family migration regime
Katharine Channing - University of Bristol, UK

18 April
The 'painful problem' of mixed marriages and relationships: interracialised couples and the law from the interbellum to the postcolonial period (1920s-1970s)
Betty de Hart - Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands

16 May
Filipino migrant women and their transnational families: overcoming the perpetrator-victim narrative
Bettina Beer - University of Lucerne, Switzerland

2025

Organizing committee: Cai Chen, Anandini Frensdorf-Pot, Mikaela Kadermecker, Florence Heymans, Mimi Karamanlidou, Gabriel Alberto Ceballos Rodriguez, and Laura Sjaastad
Contact: belmix@ulb.be

COURS-CONFERENCE
PUBLIC SPACE IN LATE SOCIALIST EAST ASIA
SOCA-555

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
LISA SCHWAB (ULB)
"UNIVERSITY OF DISPLACED: AFFLICTIVES OF PUBLIC SPACE IN A GLOBAL PUBLIC PARK"

TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
OLIVER TAPPE (UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG)
"FROM 'HOMELAND' TO 'LATE SOCIALIST PUBLIC SPACE IN LATE SOCIALIST AND CHINA'S NEW CITY"

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
VAN MINH NGUYEN (ULB)
"TO BEYOND THE FLOOD: TRACING THE SOCIAL SPACE IN LATE SOCIALIST AND CHINA'S NEW CITY"

TUESDAY 11 MARCH - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
PIERRE PETIT (ULB)
"PUBLIC SPACES IN RURAL SETTINGS: THE CASE OF A VILLAGE IN UPGRADE LAND"

TUESDAY 18 MARCH - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
VANESSA FRANKVILLE (ULB)
"THE RECONFIGURATION OF PUBLIC SPACES IN THE 'UPPER REGION'"

TUESDAY 1 APRIL - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
ERIKVA NORDSTRØM (UNIVERSITY OF OSLO)
"KINDHOODS AS INFRASTRUCTURE: GLOBAL CHINA'S INFRASTRUCTURAL CONNECTIONS AND RELEASES"

TUESDAY 9 APRIL - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
VANESSA FRANKVILLE (ULB) / FREDERICK STATE UNIVERSITY
"KINDHOODS AND THE SPATIAL POLITICS OF RECONFIGURATION IN URBAN CHINA"

TUESDAY 23 APRIL - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
ISABELLE THIREAU (EHESS / PROF. INVITE MSH)
"FROM TIGHT TO AT A DISTANCE: PERIODS OF PUBLICITIES OF PUBLIC SPACES IN URBAN CHINA"

TUESDAY 6 MAY - 2-4 PM P2.1.304
FREDERICK STATE UNIVERSITY
"LOW STYLE URBANISM AND HETEROGENEITY IN LAOS"

FREE ENTRANCE, NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED
STRAINS BY COURTESY: LISA SCHWAB
CONTACT: EAST@ULB.BE

ORIEB455

PRATIQUES ARTISTIQUES DE L'ASIE

LE 14 MARS 2025 DE 14H À 18H
SALLE UD6.203

COURS CONFERENCE PAR NATHALIE GAUTHARD (UNIVERSITÉ D'ARTOIS)

RENSEIGNEMENTS : VANESSA.FRANKVILLE@ULB.BE
ENTRÉE LIBRE, SANS INSCRIPTION

Routledge Book Series

P24

A key achievement of EAST's proliferation as a research entity was the **creation in 2018 of the book series “Routledge Contemporary Asian Societies”** that aims at providing an original and distinctive contribution to current debates on evolutions shaping societies, cultures, politics and media across Northeast and Southeast Asia.

This series allows EAST to offer an **original take on inter-disciplinarity**; reach new audiences, both with regards to possible authors as well as readers; enjoy a uniquely supportive institutional environment; and profit from its timeliness. The series is managed and directed by Vanessa Frangville and Frederik Ponjaert.

Currently, EAST's Routledge Collection consists of five books: three edited volumes and two monographs, including EAST members and external collaborators.

Two other edited volumes are in preparation for 2025 and 2026, including one submitted to the series by exclusively external contributors, showing that **EAST series has gained visibility and relevance in the field of Asian Studies**.

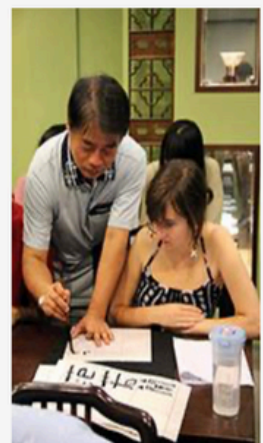


Flora Lichaa, Ma Ran, Nakajima Seio,
Contemporary Chinese Art Cinema

IV- ULB CONTRIBUTION

Clara Vanden Broeck | Professeure d'anglais et de mandarin

“*Mon master à l'ULB a été un véritable atout pour mon avenir professionnel. Cette formation m'a permis d'acquérir une maîtrise approfondie du mandarin et une compréhension des cultures asiatiques, ce que j'ai pu mettre en pratique dès mon premier poste.*”



© C. Vanden Broeck

Testimony from a MA student in China studies, 2025



Teaching programs on Asia

P26

EASt has significantly enriched ULB's course offerings on Asia in both English and French, leveraging its expertise and extensive networks. The inclusion of guest professors from the MSH network further enhances the curriculum, providing valuable insights into areas not addressed by EASt's core team.

Since 2023, the Institut d'Études Européennes has partnered with Waseda University to offer a double master's degree program in European Studies with a focus on EU-Asia relations.

Current teaching on Asia at ULB



Language courses:

- Chinois perfectionnement I-IV (SUN Jin, EASt member)/ MA level
- Etudes de textes chinois I-II (SUN Jin, EASt member)/ MA level
- Initiation au chinois classique I-II (SUN Jin, EASt member)/ MA level
- Expression orale chinois (SUN Jin, EASt member)/ MA level
- Langue japonaise initiation I-II (WATANABE Shizuka)/ BA level
- Langue japonaise I-II (WATANABE Shizuka)/ BA level
- Langue japonaise pratique (WATANABE Shizuka)/ BA level
- Other courses in Chinese-French translation (BA and MA levels)

Content classes:

- *BA in Japanese language and literature:*
 - Histoire et culture japonaises I-III (A. Allard, EASt member)
- *MA in China Studies:*
 - Culture et société du monde chinois (V. Frangville/ HE Wen, EASt members)
 - Littératures chinoises (V. Frangville/ HE Wen, EASt members)
 - Pratiques artistiques de l'Asie (V. Frangville/ LIU Chanyueh, EASt members)
 - Cinémas de l'Asie (V. Frangville, EASt member)
- *MA in anthropology:*
 - Culture, history and society East Asia (V. Frangville/P. Petit, EASt members)
 - State and society in East Asia (V. Frangville/P. Petit, EASt members)
- *MA in Political science:*
 - La politique étrangère chinoise depuis 1949 (T. Kellner, EASt member)
 - Questions politiques d'actualité en Chine (T. Kellner, EASt member)
- *MA in Philosophy:*
 - Philosophie asiatique (B. Decharneux, EASt member)
- Other courses in Chinese-French translation (BA and MA levels)

Exchange programs



P27

EASt directly contributed to the establishment of several international Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with partners in Asia, promoting student, teaching staff and researchers exchange as well as joint research projects and publications.

Over the past few years, EASt members also joined ULB delegations' travels to China, Taiwan, South Korea or Japan, sharing in-depth perspectives with ULB authorities on potential partners and collaborations, and serving as an important interface between the ULB and Asian universities and scholars.

Some of the MoUs involving EASt members

2024: **Yonsei University**, South Korea

2023: **University of Wuhan**, China (*student exchange program*)

2023: **Hiroshima University**, Japan (*student exchange program*)

2021: **National University of Laos** (*students & scholars exchange, joint research projects*)

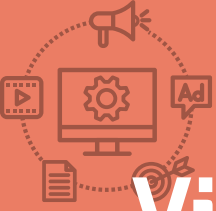
2021: **Mahidol University**, Thailand

2019 : **University of the Philippines**

2018: **Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS)/ Research Institute for Japanese Studies** (*staff exchange program*)

2018: **National Taiwan Normal University**





Visibility Of Asian Studies

P28

Visibility is key for any academic institution. To promote East Asian studies at ULB, EAST has developed several tools, including a joint **MSH/EAST YouTube channel**, a monthly newsletter, and an active presence on social media.

In 2024, EAST deleted its Twitter account in response to changes in the platform's management under Elon Musk. The team has since created new accounts on **Bluesky** and **Instagram**.

380+

subscribers to EAST newsletter

1500+ followers



80+ followers



25+ followers



1300+
followers



as of June 2025

Since 2025, with the help of interns, EAST produced **short video clips**, including street interviews and talks, shared on our social networks.

Our main street interview was **viewed 2208 times** within a few days.

To see more videos in French and in English: click [here](#).



**Micro-trottoir sur le
campus - EAST**

EAST ADDED ON 15/05/2025

Public Outreach

P29

While EAST is not policy-oriented but research-oriented, its **members' expertise is often sought after by policymakers**. Members of EAST are regularly invited to share their expertise at the **EU Parliament, Belgian federal and regional Parliaments, Belgian and foreign Ministries of Foreign affairs**, and other foreign institutions.

Sharing the most up to date information based on both theoretical and empirical knowledge, **they are regularly invited on various media broadcasts (radio, TV, press...)** as commentators and analysts.

2023- 2025

EAST members public outreach

200+

media appearances

50+

invitations by NGOs and other civil society actors

10+

requests to join to EU/national/ regional parliament hearings or consultancy committee



In that sense, EAST largely contributes to ULB's public outreach, drawing on a wide range expertise and incorporating multiple perspectives in public debates.

In addition to publications on academic platforms, EAST members have also developed **podcasts** in recent years, notably through these various projects.

These podcasts are increasingly a **significant tool for different research projects' visibility** too.

There are currently **three podcast series available**: the remote chay podcast, AspirE and UYGHUR ART IN EXILE



EASt partnerships

P30

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POSITION PAPER ON ASIA STUDIES IN EUROPE



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UNITIES

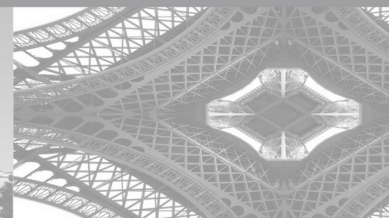
UNITIES



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IRSEA



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EASt



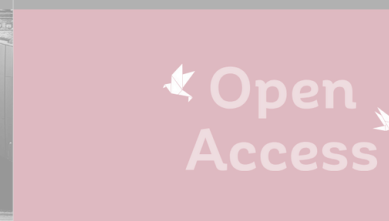
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KAS



LUND
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From 2023 to 2025, EASt organized a wide range of events, often in collaboration with partner institutions such as the Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, Hiroshima University, the University of Milan, the Waseda Brussels Office (WBO), and various ULB departments.

During this period, EASt hosted around ten “Cours-Conférences” and took part in events connected to its various EU-funded projects.

In 2024, EASt also joined the **European Alliance for Asian Studies** (EAAS), with the aim of further expanding its academic networks and fostering new exchanges of ideas, expertise, and people in the field of Asian studies.

V- PERSPECTIVES





What's next?

P32

- In 2025-2026, EAST will host 2 guest professors and one professor from Waseda University under the ULB “international professorship” scheme.
- EAST will welcome a new academic member whose expertise is on Japan and Japanese Nô theater, Magali Bugne, who will join the ULB from Sept. 2025.
- Several changes have been made in the teaching programs, adding one MA in East Asia Studies and one MA in Japanese studies starting from Sept. 2025 at the Faculty of Lettres, Translation and Communication.
- An EAST LinkedIn account will be considered.
- In September 2026, EAST will have to relocate from the MSH to a different platform. The creation of a Centre for Area Studies at ULB with other MSH teams is under discussion.
-

Through these strategic developments, EAST is preparing for its next phase as a key player in interdisciplinary Asian Studies in Europe.

FINAL VERSION

by Virginie Arantes & Vanessa Frangville
with the help of Léa Thyssens
June 2025

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[@east brussels - Instagram](#)

[@east-ulb.bsky.social — Bluesky](#)

[EASSt, ULB Center for East Asian Studies](#)

