**Presenter: Amanda Foote**  (University of Calgary) (They/them) (PhD) (group of presenters, still waiting on other names as they are waiting for finalize who all is coming)

**Title: Woyuha Hnebi Bathtabi: Îethka Museum Collections Around the World**

**Abstract:** The Îethka of Mînîthnî traditionally lived in the foothills of what is today called southern Alberta. It was there that they met Methodist missionary family, the McDougall's. Among innumerable other changes to the community, the McDougall family was likely the first to export cultural property out of the hands of Îethkabi and into collections around the world. The McDougalls were likely the first, but certainly not the last, and a parade of anthropologists, ethnologists, artists, and collectors has continued to facilitate removals of Îethka belongings, living objects, and knowledge over the last 160 years. Then as now, Îethka have balanced their needs against the settler economy and have negotiated the difficult decisions and legal impositions that have separated them from their belongings.

One current iteration of this advocacy for material culture rests with a group of researchers who have been asked by community members to investigate Îethka belongings in museums and the kinds of relationships that are possible with them. To that end our group has visited museums across the continent and worked through arduous processes of finding and identifying Îethka belongings in museums around the world. Together we've investigated the conditions under which belongings are held. Some of us have conducted interviews with museum staff, while others have engaged in revivals of traditional practices as a result of findings. Our presentation details our engaged process, and reveals some anticipated findings, including some recommendations for museum staff and others engaging in extractive activities. Our presentation includes film clips, and art.

**Presenter: Nakita Valerio** (University of Alberta) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** Rituals of Remembering: Narrativizing Qur'anic Memorization Among Huffaz (Memorizers of the Qur'an) in Canada

**Abstract:** The memorization of the Qur'an is a practice as old as revelation. Its completion to memory is considered a communal obligation, is the accomplishment of millions of Muslims around the world and is the aspiration of millions more. However, literature on Qur'anic memorization falls along repeated topic lines, including marginal subsumption within a broader discussion of recitation; scientific examinations of its cognitive and/or health impact; co-optation or repression by states or orthopraxic forces (and related resistances); and practical pedagogical approaches. When memorizers are engaged, they are often anonymized and homogenized, collapsing what personal narratives they have into a series of generalized observations to guide practitioners. In Canada, the topic of Qur'an memorization is almost entirely unexplored, despite the growing presence of tahfiz programs in major cities and graduates who started/completed their memorization in Canada where the Qur'an is less

present in the soundscape overall. This original ethnographic account, derived from interviews with memorizers of the Qur'an in Edmonton, Canada, aims to overturn these tendencies by centering the stories and journeys of huffaz to better understand memorization: as a ritual practice unto itself, with its own habits and trajectories for individual and collective change. This article argues through these testimonies that memorization is not simply committing the verses of the Qur'an to memory, but a highly ritualized, relational language performance-practice immersed in transnationality and global networks, the learning of which is internalized to transform understandings of self, community and futurity, and which, if given space, can be narrated for deeper understanding.

**Presenter: Julia-Rose Miller** (University of Saskatchewan) (she/they) (MA)

**Title:** Public Resistance and Government Ambivalence: the Rise and Fall of Edmonton's Order of the Ku Klux Klan c. 1929-1933

**Abstract:** In July of 1929, in Vermillion Alberta, a cross could be seen burning on a hill overlooking the town. This fiery effigy would mark the beginning of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK or Klan) in Alberta. This day was no ordinary one, in fact it had been Orangemen's Day, a huge celebration put on by the local Orange Lodge which drew massive crowds. Among those invited to speak was one J.J. Maloney, who would go on to found, and head Alberta's Order of the KKK in the following months. This Klan would establish itself in Alberta's capital city, Edmonton, a place which Maloney had deemed the "Rome of the West" and begin their efforts to eradicate Catholicism in Canada. The Klan was able to rise to power in Alberta, though Edmonton specifically, because of deeply rooted anti-catholic sentiments tied to fears around immigration, already being preyed on by the present and powerful Orange Order, and they were able to maintain this power for a brief period because of ambivalence by those in positions of power towards their actions. However, unlike in Saskatchewan, due to public pressure, and the weight of the Depression, the Klan was unable to maintain a power-base beyond a few years in Alberta, ultimately leading to a near total collapse within a year of their leader being forced to flee town.

**Name: Bethany McMillan** (University of Alberta) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** Peter Fidler's Mapmaking Transformation in the Fur Trade

**Abstract:** The HBC's first official surveyor, Philip Turnor, trained Peter Fidler alongside David Thompson at Cumberland House in 1789. Fidler recorded observations and mapped the hinterland he traveled through for the rest of his life. Trade remained paramount for the HBC. Fidler's mapping style transformed over time. Fidler developed a hybridized style of mapping. He incorporated practical elements of Indigenous navigation over the Western regard for

mathematical accuracy and geographic coordinates. This research evaluates the evolution of Fidler's mapmaking, as he deviated from his surveyor training and developed an Indigenized style. Fidler's career illuminates the heterogeneity of traders as he stands in contrast to his contemporary, Thompson. Fidler's work as an HBC servant reveals a colonial interest in claiming space through mapmaking. It is important to acknowledge the imperial presence within the HBC as a chartered company and the power it attempted to assert in the hinterland of the fur trade.

**Presenter: Ashley Callahan** (University of Highlands and Islands in Scotland) (she/her) (MLitt)

**Title:** Saints, Sinners, and Something in Between: Representations and Constructions of Women in the *Scotichronicon*

**Abstract:** This paper examines the representation of women in Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*, focusing on how the chronicle constructs gendered archetypes to reinforce contemporary socio-political ideologies in 15th-century Scotland. Bower's text categorizes women as exemplary figures, dangerous threats or morally ambiguous characters who blur traditional binaries. By analyzing these representations, this study seeks to reveal how the *Scotichronicon* functions as both a historical record and a didactic tool that negotiates anxieties surrounding female agency and influence while revealing how gendered narratives in Scotland were influenced by transregional intellectual and religious currents. The idealized depictions of saintly queens, noble benefactors, and virtuous mothers align with medieval Christian virtues, emphasizing women's roles in dynastic legitimacy, religious patronage, and moral education. Conversely, treacherous wives, sexually transgressive figures, and women associated with devilry serve to reinforce patriarchal fears about female agency and influence. However, Bower also includes women whose actions complicate these rigid categories—figures who, despite breaking conventional gender norms, are justified when their behaviour aligns with national, religious or moral imperatives. This strategic flexibility in representation underscores the complexities of medieval gender ideology, revealing that women's roles in society were both contested and contingent on broader political concerns. By positioning the Scotichronicon within the framework of medieval historiography and gender studies, this research contributes to broader discussions on the intersection of gender, power, and historical narrative. It highlights how chronicles were not only reflective of contemporary gender expectations but also instrumental in shaping them, making Bower's work a valuable source for understanding the nuanced roles and perceptions of women in medieval Scotland.

**Presenter:** Michael Gillingham (University of Alberta) (he/him) (PhD)

**Title:** More than "Leopold Bloom"? The "Irish Jew" as Literary Character and Irish Citizen

**Abstract:** Ireland historically has never had a huge population of Jews and it is only recently that the dwindling population of Irish Jews has slightly increased. The literary character "Irish

Jew" has been featured in some important Irish novels including Maria Edgeworth's Castle Rackrent and James Joyce's Ulysses. Recent publications including the novel Nine Paper Folds Make a Swan by Ruth Gilligan and the poetry collection Jewtown by Simon Lewis have renewed interest in the "Irish Jew" and the Irish Jewish community. I'll be discussing these two works of literature and their respective authors as I discuss both the literary character "Irish Jew" and actual Irish Jews. Issues of Irish national identity and belonging are implicated in both texts. Questions about religious practice are also raised. I will also be discussing recent critical reactions to these texts and the relationship these texts have to the larger tradition of Irish literature as represented by Edgeworth's Castle Rackrent and Joyce's Ulysses.

**Presenter: István Dávid Vácz** (Eötvös Loránd University in Hungary) (he/him) (PhD)

**Title:** The British Geopolitics and the German Challenge in Persia between 1905-1914

**Abstract:** The rise of the German Empire was one of the defining events of the long 19th century, fundamentally altering geopolitical dynamics and influencing regions far beyond Europe. Persia, a critical arena of British and Russian imperial rivalry, was not immune to these changes. Germany's growing presence in Persia brought substantial geopolitical challenges, with its influence manifesting in political, economic, and infrastructural domains. The Baghdad Railway project, expanding trade networks, and increased diplomatic engagement highlighted Germany's ambitions.

This study examines how British geopolitical actors perceived and responded to these challenges, focusing on the discourse and strategies they employed to counter German advances in Persia. It argues that the emergence of German interests posed a potential threat to the geopolitical status quo and the British influence, particularly in the financial, commercial, and strategic spheres. Within the British geopolitical framework, actors most exposed to German competition were the first to emphasise these challenges. Their arguments aligned with the strategy of Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary.

Grounded in British archival sources and contemporary journals, the research adopts a critical and structural geopolitical perspective to explore the broader implications of this imperial competition. By analysing these dynamics, the study offers new insights into Britain's strategic objectives and its efforts to maintain influence in Persia amidst the shifting power structures of the early 20th century.

**Presenter:** Rachel Carroll(University of Alberta) (BA)

**Title:** The Irish Identity: Nationalism, Sport, and Belonging in 19th Century Ireland

**Abstract:** For my topic, I am presenting on my current findings for my thesis. The focus for my thesis is on the development of Irish nationalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

through Gaelic sports, with a specific emphasis on Hurling. To begin my presentation, I will explain my interest in the topic and why this topic is important to the historical and anthropological study of sport and nationalism. I then give a brief background in the development and history of Hurling in Ireland at the local level, including its purpose and importance to working-class communities in Ireland. I explain how Hurling and Gaelic sports has affected the formation and discovery of an Irish identity for these people and how this relates to Irish nationalism. An anthropological emphasis will be placed on how Hurling supported traditions and ideas of family, kinship, belonging, and community from the Irish peasantry and working-class perspective. A slide or two will examine briefly the broad scope of Irish nationalism and Ireland's search for a national identity, providing historic justifications as to why the Irish desired separation and upliftment in identity from the English and their preconceived stereotypes. From there, I explore Hurling's importance to Irish nationalist organizations and societies, such as the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association), and the effects of the Hurling's institutionalization on Irish nationalism. The concluding section of my presentation focuses on the modern practice of Hurling and how it compares with its 19th century counterpart regarding its function and ideas regarding nationalism, identity, and belonging. I mention both professional national-level games as well as amateur local games in contemporary Ireland and how globalization has affected a person's ability to draw on a uniformed sense of nationalism and national identity. The main idea I hope people pulling out of my presentation is for people to consider how non-elites and non-political Irish people developed and created a sense of Irishness in their own lives through cultural practices and community, and how that connected to the push for or against nationalism in the late 19th/early 20th century.

**Presenter: Alexsandra Debinska** (University of Silesia in Poland) (she/they) (PhD)

**Title:** Homo prostheticus- reconstructing the bodies of war invalids of the Second Polish Republic (1918-1939)

**Abstract:** The purpose of this speech is to present the concept of *"homo prostheticus"*—an attempt to rehabilitate bodies mutilated during the First World War within its historical context and literary representations.

With the outbreak of the First World War (1914–1918), historical and cultural reality surpassed the existing languages used to describe and symbolize the world, including literary ones. This was the first military conflict in which technology played a key role in wounding, dismembering, and permanently mutilating the bodies of more than 20 million soldiers. As a result of wartime confrontations between machines, the human—specifically male—body was transformed into one that was wounded, limbless, and faceless. However, the end of the war did not bring relief. In the Second Republic of Poland, demobilized disabled soldiers numbered approximately 420,000. Faced with the trauma of war, the loss of sovereignty, and the challenges of social reintegration, war-disabled veterans felt condemned to passivity—isolated and deemed unnecessary. Marginalized by society, they were often unable to fulfill the cultural expectations tied to hegemonic masculinity. The answer to the crisis for mutilated bodies was to be technology again. Disabled veterans were subjected to rehabilitation, enduring arduous exercises, and outfitted with prosthetic limbs. They were meant to become something superior to an organic man: *homo prostheticus*.

**Presenter: Mackenzie O'Neill** (University of Alberta) (he/him) (MA)

**Title:** Creating Cosmic Companions: Anthropomorphizing Robotic Spacecraft during the Cold War,

1969-1975.

**Abstract:** This paper will explore how the United States and Soviet Union anthropomorphized robotic

spacecraft, imbuing technological instruments with human-like qualities. Drawing on previous

scholarship on American space history, I examine both nations' challenges in generating and

sustaining public and government enthusiasm for space programs that lacked humans

venturing into the cosmos. In the United States, anthropomorphizing space probes acted as a

method of sharing these programs in a way that engaged and related with humanity.

Depictions of spacecraft, such as the Voyager and Mariner probes, tended to personify these

machines despite often facing resistance from engineers and scientists.

This paper builds on these secondary sources by examining Soviet space propaganda in popular

media, such as literature, newspapers, and periodicals, and analyzes how the USSR portrayed

its space probes. My analysis spans part of the Cold War period, specifically the Apollo Program

era of the late 1960s and early 1970s. During this period, robotic programs became a critical

component of Soviet propaganda to ease the failure of competing with the United States in a

crewed lunar landing. I focus specifically on the Soviet lunar rovers, Lunokhod-1 and Lunokhod-

2, the "Moonwalkers." This paper compares and contrasts how the Soviet Union and the United

States depicted their robotic programs. By analyzing Cold War propaganda, this paper

investigates whether common themes emerged between the two largest competitors in space

during the twentieth century. Additionally, this analysis helps define the challenges these

nations collectively faced in depicting space exploration without human explorers at the

Forefront.
**Presenter:** Dylan Moucka (University of Colorado) (he/him) (MA)

**Title:** For the Independence of Our Fatherland and that of our Sister Nations": 1849, Polish Emigres, and International-Nationalism in La Tribune des Peuples

**Abstract:** This paper focuses on the transnational makeup of La Tribune des Peuples, a newspaper founded by Polish émigrés in Paris during the European revolutions of 1848-49. The paper consisted of permanent and contributing writers from many nationalities and ideological backgrounds, including Polish democrats, German communists, Belgian socialists, Italian republicans, Russian radicals, Spanish anarchists, Romanian and Croatian revolutionaries, and French leftists, utopian socialists, and feminists. All of these various worldviews resulted in a paper that was simultaneously emblematic of the nationalist sentiments of its time and unique in regard to the cooperation among nationalities. La Tribune des Peuples reported on the revolutions across Europe and provided a space for these various nationalists to freely express themselves. I argue that this paper demonstrates a unique form of international cooperation within the history of nationalism in Europe since each of these nationalists hoped that their efforts would strengthen the cause of their own nation and others against the empires that oppressed them.

**Presenter:** [Stefan Cismaru](University of Alberta) (BA)

**Title:** Voivode of Strife: A Re-Examination of Michael the Brave

**Abstract:** The history of Romania, and in fact most Balkan countries, has throughout the 19th-20th centuries has been dominated by nationalist thought. A central feature of this approach is the lionization of key historical figures, typically military or political leaders, into national heroes. Hungary has Janos Hunyadi and Matthias Corvinus, Serbia has Lazar Hrebeljanović and Miloš Obilić, and Romania has, among others Stephen the Great and Michael the Brave. While the extent of this nationalist rhetoric in academia varies circumstantially (in the case of Romania, the zenith was likely during the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's attempts to legitimize his unpopular regime via invoking a veritable pantheon of historical rulers), in the popular consciousness, mythologized portraits of these great men remain to the modern day, immortalized in monuments, names, and literature. In the case of Michael the Brave (1558-1601, in Romanian, Mihai Viteazul), the narrative is one of a heroic military leader and unifier, who cast off the yoke of Ottoman oppression via strategic genius.

Elements in Michael's history that are far less emphasized are that for all his reputation as the scourge of the Turks, Michael in fact initially came to power through Ottoman support. His most famous victory at Calugareni (1595), though impressive, was followed by an immediate retreat. And ultimately, his grand unification of what geographical regions imperfectly resemble modern-day Romania lasted only a few short years, before his assassination by the order of a general on his own side of the war.

Modern academic scholarship with critical distance from the nation itself has made important strides in analyzing the symbolic treatment of these national heroes. But where it tends to falter (except in certain cases with popular culture links, like the familiar name of Vlad Tepes) is in examining figures like Michael in the context of the epoch they participated in.

I thus have approached Michael through a lens of international relations and diplomacy, emphasizing the interactions, direct and indirect, between Michael and his contemporaries. To this end, my research has focused only slightly on Romanian sources or documents attributed to Michael himself or his followers. Rather, I have dealt with a selection of documents drawn from the surrounding international context- correspondence of the Ottomans, who initially supported, then waged war against Michael, replies and propaganda of the Holy Roman empire, which had similarly tumultuous relations with the prince, and reports from British diplomats observing as a neutral but interested party. My hope is ultimately to extract Michael the Brave from his pedestal as one of the modern Romanian nation's greatest heroes, and instead place him where he himself lived, the Balkan principalities of the late 16th century- a space between vast but troubled empires, characterized by shifting allegiances, uncertain fronts, and diverse, dynamic actors.

**Presenter: Yahaya Halidu** (University of Texas-Austin) (he/him) (PhD)

**Title:** The Impact of British Imperialism on Colonial Ghana: The Roles of Chiefs and 'Educated Elites' in Promoting, Aiding and facilitating Imperial Practices in the Gold Coast. (1874-1960)

**Abstract:** This study explores the impact of British imperialism on states in colonial Ghana. The study attempts to examine colonial Ghanaian states' social, political, and economic structures both within the context of the colonial power structure and among the local states. Extensive literature exists on the history of Ghana as well as on colonialism. However, most of the works shed light on African responses and reactions to colonialism rather than how their approaches aided the social transformations that occurred. The present study seeks to challenge that by highlighting the role of the Traditional Rulers and educated Gold Coasters in tandem with the British imperial policies. To unravel this, the study requires the explanation of longitudinal social transformations, overtime politico-economic activities, natives' propositions, British imperial policies, and their denouement. In brief, the work seeks to highlight the role of the Traditional Rulers and educated Gold Coasters in what could be classified as the processes of institutionalization and bureaucratization in colonial Ghana. The study used archival sources with secondary sources. A corpus of first-hand data on colonial records, chieftaincy, reports of committees of inquiry, etc., provided vital information on imperial and local policies that profoundly influenced change in Ghana. The archival documents explicated how deeply the Traditional Rulers were involved in establishing Indirect Rule in the country. Adding information from the memoirs of both imperial and local officials further clarified the nature of their interactions.

**Presenter: Petra Bezděková** (University of Alberta/Wirth Institute/Palacky University of Czech Republic) (did not list pronouns) (PhD)

**Title:** The Hidden Cold War Legacy in Global Development Aid

**Abstract:** This paper explores the historical and contemporary factors contributing to the marginalization of economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights within international development policies. Drawing on the historical legacy of Cold War ideologies, it explores how competing geopolitical priorities during this period created a divide between ESC rights and civil and political (CP) rights. While CP rights were elevated as "universal," ESC rights were often tied to economic dependency and sidelined in global frameworks. This ideological dichotomy transcended national boundaries, influencing donor-recipient dynamics and shaping development policies across regions.

The study situates this historical legacy within the context of contemporary global crises – pandemics, climate change, and armed conflicts – which have further exposed the fragility of systems meant to uphold ESC rights. These crises underscore the critical interdependence of rights and development, revealing gaps in international aid networks and exchanges. Using European Union's development assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa as a case study, the paper explores how global historical processes and transnational interactions continue to affect the prioritization of rights in development policies.

This research highlights the historical interconnections and power dynamics that continue to shape global development frameworks. It invites reflection on the evolving role of development aid networks, offering a timely contribution to understanding the nexus between rights, development, and global crises.

**Presenter: Deepro Chakraborty** (University of Alberta) (did not list pronouns) (PhD)

**Title:** Tracing Author Variants in Śitikaṇṭhasvāmin's Bālabodhinīprakāśa

**Abstract:** In order to prepare critical editions of premodern texts, philologists most often rely on a method of textual criticism called Lachmann's method. It involves collations of manuscripts of a particular text to build their genealogy, based on which the editor reconstructs the original text as closely as possible. However, this method works under the precondition that an author produced only a single version of a text, thereby overlooking the possibility of author variants—i.e. instances where the author transmits more than one version of the text. Ignoring author variants may result in the loss of the author's original composition. While author variants are quite common in modern textual productions, tracing their existence in premodern Sanskrit texts is challenging due to the scarcity of autographs, or author's original copies of the text. Autographs with author's own corrections or multiple autographs of the same text could decisively confirm the presence of author variants. In their absence, philologists often attribute variant readings to alterations by copyists rather than by the author.

Jürgen Hanneder, in his To Edit or not to Edit, addressed this issue in the context of Sanskrit philology, identifying a few potential cases of author variants in certain Sanskrit works from Kashmir. Substantiating this discussion, this paper will present a new evidence of author variants, namely in Śitikaṇṭhasvāmin's Bālabodhinīprakāśa, a fifteenth-century commentary on Jagaddhara's Bālabodhinī. By analyzing textual variants, I argue that even in the absence of an autograph, they point to a plausible case of author variants—a rare occurrence among premodern Sanskrit literature.

**Presenter: Yaqi Wang** (University of Alberta) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** The "Business Card" of Chinese Mountaineering: Constructing Climber Identities and Institutionalizing Climbing Sports in Tibet

**Abstract:** Similar to the relationship between Everest climbers and Sherpa guides, Tibetan climbers have played a crucial role in Chinese mountaineering expeditions as a minority group under the leadership of the People's Republic of China. This article explores the evolution of Tibetan climbers' identities and the institutionalization of climbing activities in Tibet since the 1950s, when China launched its first modern mountaineering project in collaboration with the Soviet Union as a political endeavor.

Drawing on archival research from books, newspapers, and travel logs, this study addresses three interrelated questions: (1) During the 1950s (preparation for the first summit) and 1960s (preparation for the first scientific exploration), how were Tibet — its climbers, local governments, and residents — included in the "socialist" climbing projects? (2) In the 1970s and 1980s, as China reopened its mountains to foreign climbers, how did the Tibetan government and individual climbers assert their agency within cross-cultural interactions with Western climbers? (3) Since the late 20th century, how has the PRC government institutionalized climbing activities in Tibet, constructing this minority group with a unique political status as a "business card" of Chinese mountaineering?

By analyzing this particular sport history, I argue that Tibetan climbers' agency and contributions are embedded in a neoimperialist framework, where institutionalization has both constrained and created opportunities. Unlike the Sherpas, local Tibetan governments have gained unexpected leverage in diplomacy and regional governance. This evolving dynamic reflects a negotiation between the central government, local authorities, and individual climbers, each pursuing distinct goals within the broader mountaineering narratives.

**Presenter: Kostya Tebenev** (University of Alberta) (he/him) (PhD)

**Title:** Political restraints but gender flexibility? Women in tailors' guild in Salzburg of the 16th and 17 centuries

**Abstract:** Guilds in Salzburg never had a political weight guilds had in free imperial cities or even in princely territories. After archbishop Matthäus Lang von Wellenburg completely banned guilds as independent political organizations in the City and Police ordinance ('Stadt- und Polizeiorgning') of 1524, they cease to be a political force altogether.

That is not to say that guilds were unimportant. On the contrary, they played crucial role in providing necessary goods and services to the archbishopric and wider urban and rural populations. Among them, tailors' guild was not only one of the most prominent, but also one of the oldest. It had well-established network of workshops, altar in the main Cathedral, hostel for wandering journeymen and one of the oldest confraternities dating at least from 1452.

Tailors' guilds documents, such as Inventory and Account books ('Inventur' and 'Rechnungsbuch') as well as Confraternity records ('Bruderschaftsbuch') reveal surprising variety of women's presence in the everyday life of the guild. Mother of accepted apprentices are mentioned alongside their husbands, women were employed in hostels for journeymen, women routinely would become members of tailors' guild confraternity. This level of participation complicates standard narrative of women's exclusion from guild life. In this paper, I will examine the relations between political status of tailors' guild in Salzburg and women's status in the guild.

**Presenter: Anthony Gallipoli** (University of Alberta) (MA)

**Title:** Reifications of Rome: The Republican Legionary Standards

**Abstract:** Scholarship on the Roman military standards has overwhelmingly focused on the imperial standards. Little attention has been directed towards the Republican standards and the five animals that were depicted on them. The scholarship that does address the Republican standards views the animals solely as theriomorphic representations, with no consideration of the significance of the animals themselves. Furthermore, previous research on this topic does not offer an overall hypothesis regarding the significance of the standards.

Unlike all previous research, this paper stands alone in its pursuit to address the individual significance of the five animals on the Republican standards: eagle, wolf, Minotaur, horse, and wild boar. This paper exists as an original contribution to the field of classical studies, especially for the subfields of Roman culture, religion, mythology, politics, and military.

The evidence used to support the thesis of this paper includes numismatics, Latin epigraphy, and material evidence such as ancient scabbards and mirrors. Moreover, mythological fables, historical accounts, religious festivals, and political-military events are used to further support

this paper's central argument. By using this varied evidence, I am able to postulate a new theory that each of the animals depicted on the standards possessed varying levels of totemic significance.

My research underscores the transnational flow of ideas in the ancient world and highlights the historical interconnectedness of the ancient Mediterranean. In closing, this paper demonstrates the significance of the five animals on the standards and emphasizes their importance for the expansion of the Roman Republic.

**Presenter: Julia Stanski** (University of Alberta) (she/her) (MA)

**Title:**  Patterns of Practice and Power:  Urban and Rural Domestic Service in Western Canada, c. 1880–1920

**Abstract:** This study explores the daily lives and power relations with their employers of urban and rural domestic servants in Canada's prairie west. It focuses on the lands now known as Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba between approximately 1880 and 1920, when expanding settler populations were driving a strong demand for domestic labour and new economic and demographic pressures were transforming the profession. Based on newspaper archives and the autobiographical writings of two servants from early twentieth-century western Canada, the paper argues that throughout this period, the day-to-day lives of rural and urban domestics differed significantly in their types of work and their relationships with their employers. Across these differences, however, both rural and urban servants and employers shared similar means of asserting power within these relationships. The article finds that although the structure of domestic service gave employers ultimate power over their servants, the high demand and short supply of female domestic labour during these years gave both rural and urban servants more relative power to choose their situations and negotiate conditions. Finally, it cautions that the personal circumstances of how badly an employer needed help and how badly a servant needed work were key to shaping individual power relationships.

**Presenter: Aditi Khare** (University of Alberta) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** South Asian Painted and Printed Cotton Textiles as Relational Objects in the Indian Ocean Network: A material culture study, c. 1670-1750

**Abstract:** Theorist Homi Bhabha proposed that 'What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial […] is to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences' (Bhabha, 1994). This paper applies Bhabha's theoretical framework to painted and printed Indian cottons in early modern overland and oceanic textile trade networks (c.1670-1750). As global commodities that shaped our world, the study of these fabrics has long

been plagued by questions of origin, identity, and authenticity. Ironically, the numerous investigations into their intellectual and design innovations generally exclude South Asians as designers, artists, and tastemakers. By considering these textiles as relational objects present in Bhabha's 'In-Between' spaces, this paper highlights the indigenous and transcultural knowledge systems that informed their visual language.

It uses various material sources (miniature paintings, manuscripts, trade samples, and ancient instructional texts) to visualise the global landscape which shaped early modern design. Simultaneously, it focuses on the intra-Asian exchange systems in the Indian Ocean network and their influences on early cotton design.

In considering these fabrics as relational products of encounters, this methodology de-emphasises the European intellectual prowess often highlighted in the colonial mindset. It studies knowledge exchanges from a non-static perspective – how were the textiles influenced by early modern consumers? Did their designs respond to the popular culture in key trading centres in the network? How did their makers use various global influences to draw inspiration for their product? This paper aims to re-center the textiles themselves as a fluid and transitional body of knowledge.

**Presenter: Alisa Kuzmina** (University of Minnesota) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** The McClellan Case: Navigating Love, Diplomacy, and U.S.-Soviet Relations

**Abstract:** According to the State Department, "the McClellan case" was the longest-running instance of forced separation between an American citizen, Woodford McClellan, and his Soviet wife, Irina McClellan. The case came to symbolize the volatile nature of U.S.-Soviet relations, as well as the couple's persistent efforts to hold the Soviet government accountable to the third basket of the Helsinki Accords tied to family reunification. In this presentation I examine the first two years in Irina and Woodford's life as an emerging couple— what Italian sociologist Francesco Alberoni described as a "collective movement" in itself. Set against the backdrop of détente in the early 1970s, their two-year courtship followed by marriage in May 1974 laid the foundation for the challenges that followed—their forced separation and ongoing efforts to reunite.

While their experiences were grounded in physical reality—the actual space in which they saw each other, touched each other, and spoke—I show that their relationship also existed in a liminal space. This liminality intensified when they were apart, but also when they were together, as they had to navigate their connection through additional channels: the people required to negotiate private space (e.g. the friends of friends whom Irina had to rely on to provide a room for them), the visa arrangements Woodford had to secure, constant KGB involvement.

**Presenter: Sri Sahtvik Rayala (SATHVIK is preferred name)** (Harvard University) (he/him) (MA)

**Title:** Trading Pearls of Poetry: Pearls from Hormuz in Classical Tĕlugu Literature

**Abstract:** "Maybe it desirously thought that the Hormuz pearls were madhūka flowers."

Tĕnāli Rāmakṛṣṇa, Pāṇḍuraṅgamāhātmyamu (4.23)


A popular cliché purports that trade connects distant lands and peoples. Less uttered but equally true, however, is the fact that trade shapes the literatures and mythologies of the peoples that it connects and, by doing so, lends itself to study via those media. In this paper, then, I endeavor to explore the early modern Indian Ocean pearl trade through the classical corpus of Tĕlugu, a Dravidian language utilized primarily in coastal and interior southeastern India. Specifically, I magnify the oceanic trade of Hormuz pearls and its evident importance to the early modern Tĕlugu-speaking lands. To do so, I meticulously track references to a particular type of pearl called hurumañji mutyamu, a term that appears in several Tĕlugu poems from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries like Tĕnāli Rāmakṛṣṇa's Pāṇḍuraṅgamāhātmyamu. As the Teluguized locution hurumañji intimates, these pearls were procured from Hormuz, meaning that transregional trade contemporaneous with Vijayanagara and later Nāyaka states changed how Tĕlugu poets wrote about and described their mythic pasts. In addition to this claim, I also seek to suggest that the propensity of references to Hormuz pearls in classical Tĕlugu poetry from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicates a devaluation, in the Tĕlugu lands, of the novelty of pearls derived from trade with Śrīlaṅka and the Tamiḻ lands bordering the Gulf of Mannar.

**Presenter: Garrett Caldwell** (University of Alberta) (he/him) (MA)


**Title:** From Motherhood to the Battlefield: The Paradox and Duality of the League of German Girls (Bund Deutscher Mädel) in the Third Reich


**Abstract:**     During the waning months of World War II, the League of German Girls (Bund

Deutscher Mädel or BDM), originally envisioned as a bastion of traditional gender roles within Nazi ideology, became an essential component of Germany's total war effort. While early BDM programming sought to prepare young women for motherhood and domestic life in service of the Volksgemeinschaft or People's Community, the demands of war transformed these roles. This analysis examines the paradoxical evolution of the BDM, where ideological rhetoric emphasizing Kinder, Kirche, Küche (children, church, kitchen) gave way to increasingly active, militarized contributions from its female members.

    Drawing on state documents, autobiographical accounts, propaganda, and oral histories,

this paper explores the experiences of BDM members as they transitioned from domestic

preparation to wartime labor and combat roles. It traces the formation of the BDM, its

ideological underpinnings, and its integration into key wartime programs such as the Pflichtjahr, Osteinsatz, and the Reichsarbeitsdienst (RAD). The study culminates in an examination of the breakdown of traditional gender norms during the war's final stages, as young women, like 15-

year-old Barbie Densk, took up arms alongside male counterparts in Germany's desperate last stand against the Allies.

This research highlights the duality of empowerment and exploitation within the BDM experience, as members navigated newfound autonomy while remaining deeply embedded in Nazi ideology. By employing political and everyday history (Alltagsgeschichte), this study illuminates the shifting gender dynamics of Nazi Germany, offering a nuanced perspective on the role of young women in the Third Reich's collapse.

**Presenter: Dasha Guliak** (University of Saskatchewan) (she/her) (PhD)

**Title:** Cat got your Tongue? Twentieth Century Christian Women and Non-Human Companionship in Canada

**Abstract:** The radical incorporation of animals into the analysis of history is aligned with the historical methodologies and theories that emerged within feminist and queer histories as these fields challenge our taken-for-granted perceptions and constructions of the past. This presentation focuses on Canadian Christian women who frequently drew on their kinship with cats in the early to mid-twentieth century. An analysis of these human-animal cohabitations and kinships, how they were perceived and represented in letters and church papers, and the contexts they took place within, offer insight in the role of pets and human-animal bonds in shaping the Canadian missionary experience and identity. This research offers a way to expand our understanding of Canadian Christian women past the human experience and expectations of heteronormativity, and consider the complex bonds formed between women and cats, how the existence of these cats reimagines the heteronormative space and home, and how pets offered an alternative to human progeny within the Christian church.

This paper interrogates the close relationships that Canadian Christian women had with cats through an analysis of newspapers, folklore, poetry, and letters. It highlights how during the twentieth century Canada cultivated a narrowly defined and often tense definition of acceptable relationality with cats as demonstrated through folklore and newspaper discourses. These discourses were highly gendered. Thus, Christian women's relationships with cats, as companions in the foreign missions' fields or as 'children' in their marriages, serve to understand how cats transcended and challenged heteronormative and acceptable standards of womanhood and heterosexual marriages.