

RUDOLF FÜRST



Rudolf Fürst is the head of the Centre for EU-Asia Relations, since 1998 employed at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, with his current position as a Senior Researcher. Simultaneously, he was an external lecturer at The Institute of Politology, the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague and at the Metropolitan University Prague. In his classes and research works, he focuses on Post-Maoism Reform China, China's foreign policy, and Europe-Chinese relations.

In 2009 he gained Ph.D. in International Relations at the Faculty of Social Science at Charles University. From July to August 2015 he was a visiting scholar at the Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, Berkeley. In autumn 2017 he attended the Fudan Fellowship visiting scholar program, in Shanghai, with his topic Sino-European Relations: Central and Eastern Europe Revisited within the One Belt One Road Initiative. In November 2019 Mr. Fürst stayed at the University of Macau as a visiting scholar. Since March 2015 he has been a member of the European Think-tank Network on China.

YUKARI AKEDA



Yukari Akeda is lecturer at Department of Economics and Sustainability, Faculty of Economics, Dokkyo University, Japan. She teaches several courses including EU Studies, International Relations and Global Governance. She was Deputy Director of International Economy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan from 2015 to 2017, working on the EU-Japan EPA negotiations. As a member of JP negotiating team, she had attended 9 formal Negotiation Rounds and numerous inter-sessional negotiations which led to the finalization of agreement in December 2017. She was in charge of chapters such as Rules on Trade in Goods, Customs and Trade Facilitation, Trade Remedies, Competition, Subsidies, and State-owned Enterprises, in addition to giving advises to the team as an EU expert.

After the post, she stayed at St. Antony's College, Oxford University, between October 2017 to August 2018 as an Academic Visitor of European Studies Centre to reflect her experiences during the EPA negotiations and to prepare for academic papers and books.

Prior to joining the Ministry, she was a Research Assistant Professor at Graduate School of Law, Keio University, Tokyo (2008-2011), and Senior Researcher at the EU Studies Institute in Tokyo (2008-2014). She also joined the project sponsored by the JP Ministry of Education to explore the establishment of Joint Graduate School on EU Studies in Tokyo as a Project Manager (2008-2011). Before that, she had lectured IR and EU studies at several universities in Tokyo.

She holds an M.A. in Law from Graduate School of Law, Keio University. Akeda's current research interests are European Green Deal, EU-Japan EPA in a context of regional (Asian) and global trade governance, trade and sustainable development, and regulatory cooperation between the EU and Japan.

TAKASHI HOSODA



Takashi Hosoda, Ph.D., is a lecturer in Asian security and security cooperation between Asia and Europe at Faculty of Social Science, Charles University in Prague and a research fellow of Foreign Policy Center Tokyo in Japan. After he obtained a Ph.D., he worked at Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) as a research assistant, and Japanese Embassy in the Czech Republic as a regional researcher. His academic interests include: Security cooperation between Asia and Europe, Maritime security, U.S. stationing forces and its impact to regional security in Asian and Europe, and Nuclear proliferation. He was invited as a panelist for South China Sea international conference in Hanoi (Nov. 2019) or Roundtable meeting on South China Sea Issue at the university of Hamburg (Jan. 2020). His latest article “European politics, security and Transatlantic relations” will be published as a chapter of a book titled ‘Kaigai Jijo Nenkan (World Security Year book 2020)’ at beginning of April.

DAVID HUTT



David Hutt is a freelance political journalist based between the Czech Republic and the UK, covering European foreign affairs and EU-Asia relations. He was previously based in Cambodia for five years, covering Asian politics. He is Southeast Asia Columnist for the Diplomat and a correspondent for Asia Times. His articles have appeared in the Nikkei Asian Review, South China Morning Post, Forbes, World Politics Review, Visegrad Insight, amongst others. He was formerly a reporter at the Southeast Asia Globe and editor of Focus ASEAN, and served as president of the Overseas Press Club of Cambodia between 2018 and 2019. He is also a visiting fellow at Future Forum, a Phnom Penh-based think-tank, and a contributor of political and economic risk analysis for a number of international consultancies.

JAN SÝKORA



Associate Professor in Japanese Studies at the Institute of Asian Studies, Charles University in Prague. Being educated both in Asian studies (Ph.D., Charles University) and economics (M.A., Saga University, Japan), he majored in Japanese economic history with a special focus on economic thought in early modern and modern Japan. He worked as a Visiting Professor at Osaka University (2005-2006, 2017), Kansai University (2012), Seinan Gakuin University (2000-01) and Nichibun in Kyoto (1997-98). His field of studies covers social-economic and intellectual history of early modern and modern Japan, and topical issues of the contemporary Japanese society. He is currently focusing on the phenomenon of the consumption and consumerism in East Asia. He often lectures at the universities in Europe (Oxford Books University, Universität Heidelberg, Ruhr Universität Bochum, Lund University) and in Japan (Ritsumeikan APU, Osaka University, Kansai University)

MICHAL KOLMAŠ



Michal Kolmaš is an assistant professor and deputy head of the Asian studies department at Metropolitan University Prague. He holds Ph.D. in international relations from Charles University and specializes in Japanese foreign policy, national identity and the reflections of climate change in contemporary political discourse. He spent two years as a researcher at Hokkaido University and Akita International University in Japan. His publications include the book *National identity and Japanese revisionism* (Routledge, 2019) and several articles in academic journals such as *The Pacific Review*, *Social Science Japan Journal*, *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* and others. He is a recipient of several research grants, including a Czech Science Foundation and the Japanese Foundation standard projects.

KAORU NATSUDA



Dr. Kaoru Natsuda is a professor at the College of International Management, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan and a visiting professor at Budapest Business School (BGE), Hungary. He was formerly a visiting scholar at Institute of East Asian Studies, Charles University in Prague. He obtained his Ph.D in Economics from the University of Sydney, Australia, and his MA in International Development Studies from the University of Bradford, UK. His research interests include industrial development, rural development, and political economy in Asia and Central Europe. He published papers in many journals including *Review of International Political Economy*, *European Journal of Development Research*, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, *Global Networks*, *European Planning Studies*, *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, *Asian Economic Journal*, *Asia Europe Journal*, *Singapore Economic Review* and *Bulletin of the Indonesian Economic Studies*. His new book (co-authored with Dr. John Thoburn), “Automotive Industrialisation: Industrial Policy and Development in Southeast Asia” is forthcoming from Routledge in 2020. He serves as a senior associate editor of *PSU Research Review* and an editorial board member of *International Journal of Development Issues*.

RÓBERT VANCEL



Róbert Vancel is a PhD student at the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. He also works as a researcher at the Central European Institute of Asian Studies and the UMB Data & Society Lab. His long-term interest is Japan's foreign and security policy. He completed his master's degree in 2017 by defending diploma thesis The specifics of Japanese identity and its impact on foreign policy. His dissertation research focuses on the position of Japan in East Asia.

As a PhD student, he assists in the lecturing of subjects such as Territorial Studies - Asia, Regional Security or Political Geography. As part of his work at the Central European Institute of Asian Studies, he comments on Japanese political events and as an editor he is also involved in the creation of the CEEasia newsletter aimed at connecting Asia and the CEE region. In 2016, Róbert participated in the short-term MIRAI exchange program in Japan. During his studies he completed an internship at the Center for Asian Studies at the University of Economics in Prague.

Outside the academic and research area, he focuses on the development and defence of the non-governmental sector as a project manager at the Ekopolis Foundation.