

Special Seminar

Cross-Cultural Dynamics and Identity Formation in Malaysia



Date and Time

May 15 (Fri), 2026, 16:00–18:00



Venue

Seminar Room 427 (Institute for Global Area Studies),
Research & Lecture Building,
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

No registration required.



**The Mediatization of the Korean Wave
among Malaysian Youth**

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Institute of Ethnic Studies,
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia



**Between State-Defined Ethnic Categories:
The Construction of the Peranakan Indian
Community in Malaysia**

Miki Kashiwa

Center for Southeast Asian Studies,
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Moderator & Coordinator



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Language
English

Co-organized by: Institute for Global Area Studies



The Mediatization of the Korean Wave among Malaysian Youth

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Nurul Akqmie binti Badrul Hisham

Abstract

The Korean Wave or Hallyu, a term established in the late 1990s to describe the rapid diffusion of South Korean cultural exports, has evolved from a regional trend into a global phenomenon that offers a significant alternative to Western popular culture. While the growth of Hallyu is fundamentally driven by the celebrity effect and the high visibility of icons, its trajectory in Malaysia presents a unique case study in cultural reception. This study examines the decade-long development of Hallyu in Malaysia, specifically investigating the phenomenon's resilience despite early scholarly hypotheses suggesting that religious and cultural differences might limit its integration into Muslim-majority societies. Utilizing a longitudinal perspective on the Malaysian media ecosystem from 2016 to 2026, this research identifies that Hallyu's sustained presence is a result of both evolving digital media infrastructures and complex local cultural filters. The findings highlight a distinctive intersection between globalized fandom dynamics and local institutional frameworks, particularly regarding the role of authority in addressing public discourse surrounding fan-celebrity interactions. Ultimately, this research posits that in the Malaysian context, Hallyu is a phenomenon characterized by continuous negotiation between global media trends, local identity and state-level cultural regulation.

Bio

Dr. Nurul Akqmie Binti Badrul Hisham is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), where she serves as the Chair's Manager for the UNESCO Chair on Social Practices in Intercultural Communication and Social Cohesion. She also holds key leadership roles as a Board of Directors (BOD) member of The Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (ORBICOM) and as the advisor for the UNESCO UKM Club. A PhD graduate in Communication from UKM and recipient of the prestigious Hadiah Samsudin A. Rahim award, her work spans international platforms such as ASEA-UNINET and YSEASLI. Her current research focuses on the intersection of intercultural communication, mediatization, screen studies, and youth cultures.





Between State-Defined Ethnic Categories: The Construction of the Peranakan Indian Community in Malaysia

Miki Kashiwa

Abstract

In the contemporary world marked by the rise of exclusionism, how can diverse people forge connections? In Malaysia, nation-building has been pursued through the categorization of the population into the “three major ethnic groups” (Malay, Chinese, and Indian). Yet, some communities fall outside this framework, among which Peranakan communities are a notable example. Derived from the local term *anak* (“child”), “Peranakan” generally refers to locally born people of foreign ancestry. Among them, Peranakan Indians have actively formed a community that incorporates individuals across ethnic, religious, and caste boundaries. Although their continued existence has often been considered precarious due to urban migration and increasing intermarriage, a community that identifies itself and is recognized by others as “Peranakan Indians” persists to this day. This study examines how this community has been constructed, with particular attention to its association, the management of communal land and temples, and religious practices. The analysis draws on approximately fifteen months of intermittent fieldwork conducted between 2019 and 2025 in Malacca.

Bio

Dr. Miki Kashiwa is a Research Associate at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University. She received her B.A. in Language and Area Studies from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies in 2019, and her Ph.D. in Area Studies from the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University, in 2026. She is the author of *Rethinking Ethnic Categories in the Malay World: A Case Study of Peranakan Indians* (Doctoral dissertation, 2026), as well as “Building Inclusive Communities: Lessons from Localised Indian Community in Malaysia, Focusing on Organization, Land and Temples” (*Southeast Asia: History and Culture*, 54, pp. 48–67, 2025), and “Cultivating Respect and Trust: The Inclusive Coexistence Between Peranakan Indians and Chinese in Malaysia—Exploring Organization, Living Space, and Religion” (*Journal of Ethnic and Diversity Studies*, 3(1), pp. 1–16, 2025).

