



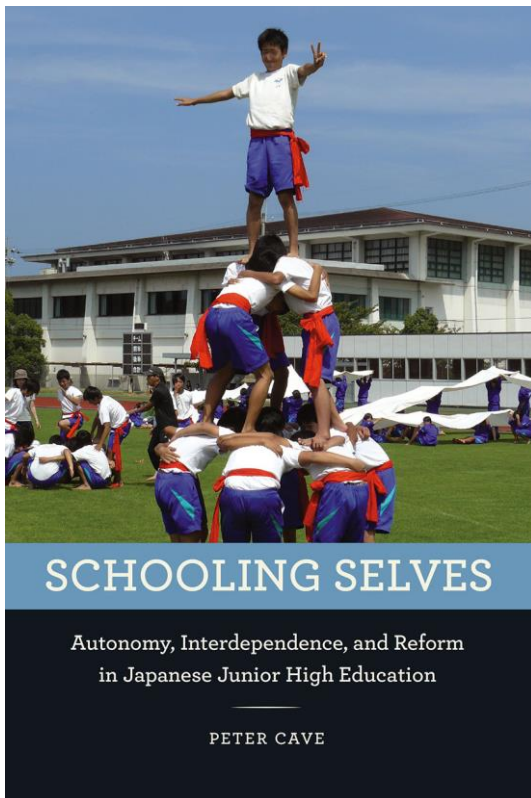
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# VORTRAG

**Donnerstag, 13. Oktober 2016, 18:30**

**Peter Cave**  
*(University of Manchester)*

*Junior High School Reform in Contemporary Japan:  
The Limits of Individualization*



In 1998, the Japanese government published a revised national school curriculum which introduced the biggest curricular changes for forty years. The professed aim was to promote autonomous thinking and learning on the one hand, and improve children's social and emotional skills on the other. This lecture is based on ethnographic research in Japanese junior high schools between 1994 and 2007, reported in the author's recent book, *Schooling Selves*. It examines how junior high schools implemented the reformed curriculum, transforming it to emphasize socialization over the development of independent learning. It considers why the reforms were less successful than initially hoped. It also considers what the entire process tells us about Japanese society as a whole. In the 1980s, Japan was commonly called a 'group-oriented' society; now, researchers often point to individualization or neoliberalism in Japan. Has Japan really changed that much? How should we think about 'groupism' and 'individualization' in Japan?

**Peter Cave** is Senior Lecturer in Japanese Studies in the School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures, the University of Manchester. He is a social anthropologist and has published widely on education in Japan, including the books *Primary School in Japan* and *Schooling Selves*. Recently he has been engaged in a major research project about childhood and education in Japan before 1945, about which more information can be seen at the website: <http://www.japanese-childhood.manchester.ac.uk/en/home/>