

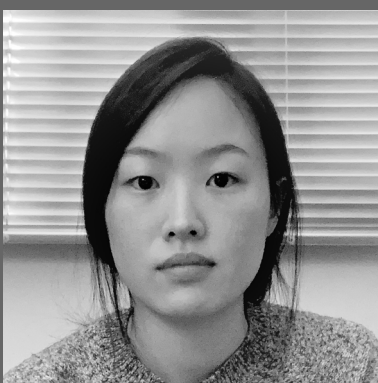


# ‘Creativity’ in rural Japan: *Sōzō nōson* and its implications in regional revitalization policies

a virtual lecture by **Shilla Lee**

In public discourse today, rural Japan is growingly described in diverse perspectives. Not limited to urban centers anymore, popular magazines such as Forbes Japan refer to rural areas as ‘creative’ and ‘innovative’. In a similar manner, recent scholarship highlights cases of entrepreneurs and migrants starting innovative businesses or building new lifestyles in the countryside. These findings broaden our perception of rural Japan beyond the image of *furusato* – the native place – to more progressive views. In this presentation, I would like to explore municipal policies, a subject usually lacking closer attention in discussions. Based on ethnographic fieldwork on the revitalization policy of *sōzō nōson* (creative village) in Tamba Sasayama (Hyogo prefecture), I show how the idea of ‘creativity’ is fostered by collective initiatives led by the local government and discuss how this could contribute to our understanding of Japan’s changing rurality.

Thursday  
2020-11-26  
18:30~20:00  
online



<https://japanologie.univie.ac.at/onlinelectures/>

**Shilla Lee** is a PhD candidate at Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. Her research focuses on the notion of creativity in regional revitalization policies and the cooperative activities of traditional craftsmen in Japan. She conducted fieldwork in Tamba Sasayama (Hyogo prefecture) in 2018-2019 and is currently working on her dissertation.