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u:japan lectures

SEASON 2 | SPRING 2021

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 - #2 2021-03-11 **Nora Kottmann & Elisabeth Scherer** (DIJ & HHU Düsseldorf) **Love in the Time of COVID-19**
 - #3 2021-03-18 **Anne Aronsson** (Universität Zürich) **Conceptualizing Robotic Agency**
 - #4 2021-03-25 **Katharina Hülsmann** (HHU Düsseldorf) **Transcultural Potentials of Dōjinshi Culture**
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Japanese Studies



Geschlecht und Faschismus in Darstellungen der japanischen Siedlungs- aktivitäten in der Mandschurei

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Jasmin Rückert



Thursday
2021-03-04
18:30~20:00
online

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Geschlecht und Faschismus in Darstellungen der japanischen Siedlungs- aktivitäten in der Mandschurei

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Jasmin Rückert

Thursday
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18:30~20:00
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Während des Bestehens des „Puppenstaats“ Manchukuo investierten der japanische Staat und in der Mandschurei ansässige japanische Firmen mit unterschiedlichen Mitteln in die Verbreitung propagandistischer Repräsentationen der Region. Ein Beispiel für solche Propagandaproduktionen ist die Zeitschrift *Manshū Gurafu* („Manchuria

dschurischen Gesellschaft für Amateurfotografie prägten das Magazin maßgeblich. Sie bedienten sich stilistisch unter anderem aus dem Kanon sowjetischer Propaganda um die technologische Überlegenheit und einen von Japan angeleiteten Modernisierungsprozess des besetzten Gebiets zu demonstrieren. Gleichzeitig wurde über *Manshū Gurafu* auch das Bild eines idyllischen, utopischen und zur Besiedlung durch japanische Siedler bereitstehenden Landes vermittelt. Die Darstellungen der japanischen Siedler und Siedlungsaktivitäten stehen im Fokus dieses Vortrags. Insbesondere wird dabei die Inszenierung von Geschlecht, Jugend und Gemeinschaft und deren ideologische Aufladung in den Blick genommen. Die Analyse der Zeitschrift ist Teil eines DFG-geförderten Projekts zur Untersuchung visueller japanischer Propaganda unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Ästhetiken, die sich geschlechtlicher Darstellungen bedienen.



Jasmin Rückert studierte an der Universität Wien und der Universität Paris VII Diderot Japanologie, Kunstgeschichte und Gender Studies. Seit 2017 arbeitet sie als wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin an der Heinrich Heine Universität Düsseldorf und ist dort Projektmitarbeiterin bei Prof. Dr. Andrea Germer in dem Forschungsprojekt „Faschismus und Geschlecht: Visuelle Propaganda im Japan der Kriegszeit“.

Graph“), die im Mittelpunkt dieses Vortrages steht und unter Berücksichtigung des zeitgeschichtlichen Kontextes vorgestellt wird. *Manshū Gurafu* wurde zwischen 1932 und 1944 herausgegeben und von der Südmandschurischen Eisenbahn finanziert. Der frühere Avantgarde-Fotograf Fuchikami Hakuyō und seine Kollegen in der Man-

schlecht, Jugend und Gemeinschaft und deren ideologische Aufladung in den Blick genommen. Die Analyse der Zeitschrift ist Teil eines DFG-geförderten Projekts zur Untersuchung visueller japanischer Propaganda unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Ästhetiken, die sich geschlechtlicher Darstellungen bedienen.

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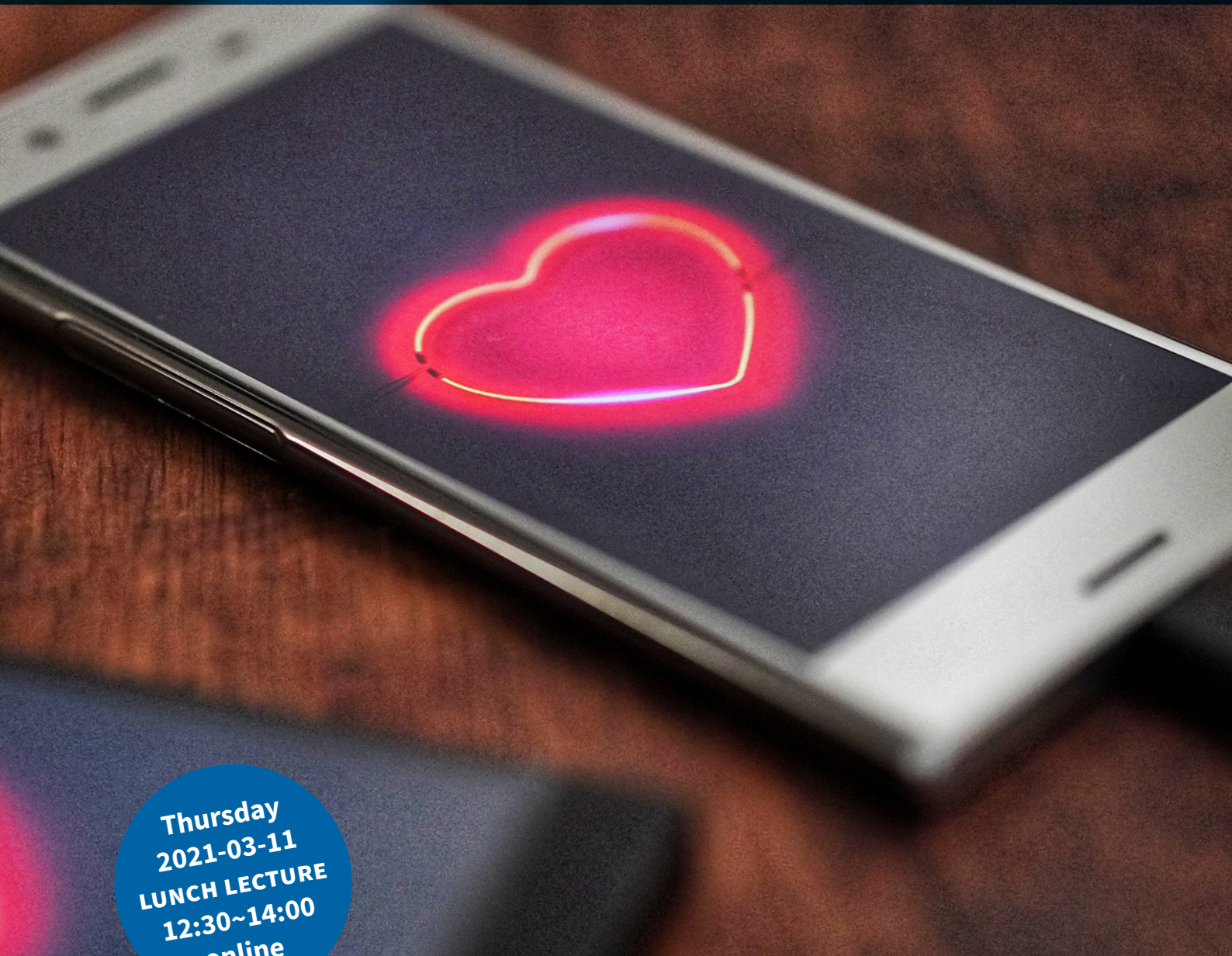
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Love in the Time of COVID-19

The 'New Normal' in the TV Series *#rimorabu* ("Remote Love")

A virtual *u:japan lecture* by Nora Kottmann & Elisabeth Scherer



Thursday
2021-03-11
LUNCH LECTURE
12:30~14:00
online

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



Love in the Time of COVID-19 The ‘New Normal’ in the TV Series *#rimorabu* (“Remote Love”)

A virtual *u: japan* lecture by Nora Kottmann & Elisabeth Scherer

Television series in Japan frequently deal with life plans and life choices of (young) adults and, in so doing, serve as a way to negotiate societal normality. Often, one focus of these series is on unmarried women (,singles’) of different age groups. One such example is the recent television series *#rimorabu. Futsū no koi wa jadō* (*#remote love. Ordinary love is a wrong course*; NTV 2020) which aired from mid-October to late December 2020. The series is situated in the context of the ongoing pandemic

and discusses how calls for self-restraint and the avoidance of ‘the 3Cs’ – closed spaces, crowds and close contact situations – affect the dating- and love-life of unmarried individuals. In our talk, we address challenges on the production side, critically discuss depictions of a ‘new normal’ in the context of current single- and gender-discourses in Japan and show that the series, while being extremely up-to date on the one hand, falls back on old narrative patterns on the other hand.



Elisabeth Scherer is a Japanese studies researcher and e-learning professional at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf. Her areas of research interest include popular culture, intermedia, rituals and gender studies. She is the editor of *Reconsidering the Cultural Significance of NHK’s Morning Dramas* (special issue of *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture*, 2019).



Thursday
2021-03-11
LUNCH LECTURE
12:30~14:00
online

Nora Kottmann is Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo. Her research focuses on issues related to gender, intimacy, mobility, space, and (not) belonging. Recent publications include the co-edited volume *Studying Japan. Handbook of Research Designs, Fieldwork and Methods* (2020; with Cornelia Reiher).



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Conceptualizing Robotic Agency

Social Robots in Elder Care in Contemporary Japan

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Anne Aronsson

Thursday
2021-03-18
18:30~20:00
online



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



Conceptualizing Robotic Agency Social Robots in Elder Care in Contemporary Japan

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Anne Aronsson

Thursday
2021-03-18
18:30~20:00
online

Japan is a hyper-aging society; it has one of the highest life expectancies in the world and is undergoing a demographic transition that Western nations have yet to experience. The Japanese government is encouraging robotic solutions to address its elder care labor shortage, and authorities have therefore adopted an agenda of introducing social robots. However, increasing numbers of people in Japan are becoming emotionally attached to anthropomorphic machines, and their introduction into elder care may

tween humans attributing agency to a being and those beings having the inherent ability to produce agency and how we might understand that difference if unable to access the minds of other humans, let alone nonhumans, some of which are not even alive in the classical sense. Using the example of an interaction between an elderly woman and a social robot, I engage with these questions; discuss linguistic, attributed, and inherent agencies; and suggest that a processual type of agency might be most appropriate for understanding human-robot interaction. Machines are already embedded in our lives, but, as we start to treat machines as if they are almost human, we may begin to develop habits that cause us to treat humans as almost machines. We therefore need to consider not only what social robots can do, both now



Dr. Anne Stefanie Aronsson is a postdoctoral fellow in the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies at the University of Zurich and her current research focuses on elderly care in Japan and the use of robotic care devices, with a focus on social robots and emerging emotional technologies. She obtained her doctor's degree in socio-cultural anthropology from Yale University, United States.

She has authored several publications, including "Social Robots in Elderly Care: The Turn Toward Machines in Contemporary Japan," *Japanese Review of Cultural Anthropology*, as well as her monograph *Career Women in Contemporary Japan: Pursuing Identities, Fashioning Lives*. New York: Routledge.

thus be perceived as contentious by elders, caregivers, and family members. By exploring human engagement with social robots in the care context, this presentation argues that rapid technological advances in the twenty-first century will see robots achieve some level of agency, contributing to human society by carving out unique roles for themselves and by bonding with humans. Nevertheless, the questions remain of whether there should be a difference be-

and in the future, but also what humans will become by increasingly forming relationships with machines. I suggest that elderly people can develop an emotional attachment to social robots by attributing agency to them, and, as machine-learning routines grow more sophisticated, those robots will eventually interact with humans in such an insightful way that the division between attributed and inherent nonhuman agency might become meaningless.

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Transcultural Potentials of *dōjinshi* Culture

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Katharina Hülsmann

Thursday
2021-03-25
18:30~20:00
online

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Transcultural Potentials of *dōjinshi* Culture

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Katharina Hülsmann

Thursday
2021-03-25
18:30~20:00
online

In this talk I will present findings of an ethnographic study of *dōjinshi* (amateur comics) culture that I conducted for my PhD thesis. *Dōjinshi* is a term that is used to describe subcultural publications in Japan that are usually self-published and exchanged at specialised events. Most of the works exchanged at these gatherings make use of scenar-

they are mainly being exchanged in printed form and not digitally over the internet. The fan artists thus utilise a robust infrastructure to produce and exchange their works with like-minded fans.

I will illustrate how Japanese *dōjinshi* artists produce cultural capital and social capital within their communities and how they navigate conflicts with outsiders, such as media right holders, and within their own community. For my field study, I focussed on Japanese *dōjinshi* artists who produce fan works based on western entertainment media franchises, such as the Marvel Cinematic Universe. One of the focus points of my study was to trace the potentials for

transcultural spreading of Japanese fan works and fannish exchange within local and global fan communities. The talk thus aims to give a brief overview of how *dōjinshi* exchange and the local community functions, and then delves deeper into the examination of *dōjinshi* culture as a potentially transcultural phenomenon.



Katharina Hülsmann is a PhD candidate at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Germany. She is co-editor of the German-language volume *Japanische Populärkultur und Gender* [Japanese Popular Culture and Gender] (2016). In 2017 she conducted field work supported by a PhD grant from the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo (DIJ). Her research interests include representations of gender in popular culture and fannish works, fan/producer relationships in the digital age, comics studies, as well as transcultural dynamics of fandom.

ios and characters from commercially published media, such as manga, anime, games, movies or television series and can be classified as fan works, poaching from media franchises and offering a vehicle for creative expression. What sets these works apart from fannish forms of expression, like fan fiction, in the anglophone sphere, is, that

transcultural spreading of Japanese fan works and fannish exchange within local and global fan communities. The talk thus aims to give a brief overview of how *dōjinshi* exchange and the local community functions, and then delves deeper into the examination of *dōjinshi* culture as a potentially transcultural phenomenon.

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Local Governance in Okinawa A Case Study from Oku

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Gabriele Vogt

Thursday
2021-04-15
18:30~20:00
online

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Local Governance in Okinawa A Case Study from Oku

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Gabriele Vogt

Thursday
2021-04-15
18:30~20:00
online

Oku, a hamlet of less than 200 inhabitants in Okinawa's Yanbaru region, is known as a place of alternative economy, rich social capital and vivid local self-governance. The basis to this is the hamlet's local shop, the so-called *kyōdōten* (共同店). Founded in the early 20th century as a private initiative, to ensure the distribution of Oku's rich forest

has expanded beyond the shop administration and shaped the model of governance within the hamlet itself. The Oku *kyōdōten* model has spread in Okinawa and occasionally beyond, and today, while several shops already had to close their shutters amidst population aging, outmigration and the wider distribution of chain supermarkets, several dozen cooperatively run shops still persist.



Gabriele Vogt holds the Chair of Japanese Studies / Social Sciences at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany. She has been studying local politics and civic engagement in Okinawa for more than twenty years, and has also extensively researched population aging, eldercare and international migration to Japan. Among her recent publications is a co-authored piece with Ken V. L. Hijino, "Identity politics in Okinawan elections: The emergence of regional populism" (*Japan Forum*, 33:1, 2021), and a monograph entitled *Population aging and international health-caregiver migration to Japan* (Springer, 2018).

resources, and later of agricultural products such as tea and citrus fruits, the *kyōdōten* as a cooperatively run shop has taken over a central economic position in the hamlet. It has served as a meeting point for the hamlet's inhabitants and various local organizations, thereby providing a space for community-building. Its organizational structure, which is based on principles of direct democracy

administrative autonomy from outside governance on a municipal level. Today, however, against the backdrop of demographic change and developmental initiatives in Yanbaru, the store's future is anything but certain. By analyzing the *kyōdōten* model, I assess the potential and the limitations of economic vitality, social support and political autonomy in the marginalized regions of Japan.

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From Glass to Plastics

The Packaging Revolution of Postwar Japan

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Katarzyna J. Cwiertka



Thursday
2021-04-22
18:30~20:00
online

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From Glass to Plastics

The Packaging Revolution of Postwar Japan

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Katarzyna J. Cwiertka

Thursday
2021-04-22
18:30~20:00
online

In May 2020 the Abe government launched an ambitious strategy of reducing Japan's disposable plastic waste by 25 percent within the next decade. Although it remains to be seen how far the government will succeed in this mission, a much more interesting question is why the country has turned into the world's second-highest user per capita of plastic packaging. Plastic has infiltrated the Japanese packaging market at a phenomenal speed. In terms of quantity (expressed in weight), its share more than doubled during the last three decades of the twentieth century, from around 9% in the

1970s to around 19% in the early 2000s. Since plastic is relatively light compared to other packaging materials, its success becomes even more apparent from the perspective of value. Comprising just 4.6% of the total value of Japanese packaging industry in 1958, by 2005 it skyrocketed to 30%. This paper will explore the forces behind the packaging revolution that took place in Japan during the 1950s and 1960, and the impact of these early decades on the rise of the culture of wrapping as we know it today.



Katarzyna J. Cwiertka is Chair of Modern Japan Studies at Leiden University. She is an expert on food history of modern Japan and Korea, both as a domain of culture and as a window into historical inquiry that extends beyond the realm of cuisine and nutrition. Cwiertka is the author of *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (Reaktion Books 2006), *Cuisine, Colonialism and Cold War: Food in Twentieth Century Korea* (Reaktion Books 2012), *Himerareta washokushi* (Shinsensha 2016), and *Branding Japanese Food: From Meibutsu to Washoku* (University of Hawaii Press 2020). She has also edited several volumes with a larger geographical focus, including *Asian Food: The Global and the Local* (University of Hawai'i Press 2002), *Critical Readings on Food in East Asia* (Brill 2012), *Food and War in Mid-Twentieth-Century East Asia* (Ashgate 2013), and *Consuming Life Post-Bubble Japan: A Trans-disciplinary Perspective* (Amsterdam University Press 2018). Currently, Cwiertka is working on a book manuscript on the history of food packaging in Japan.

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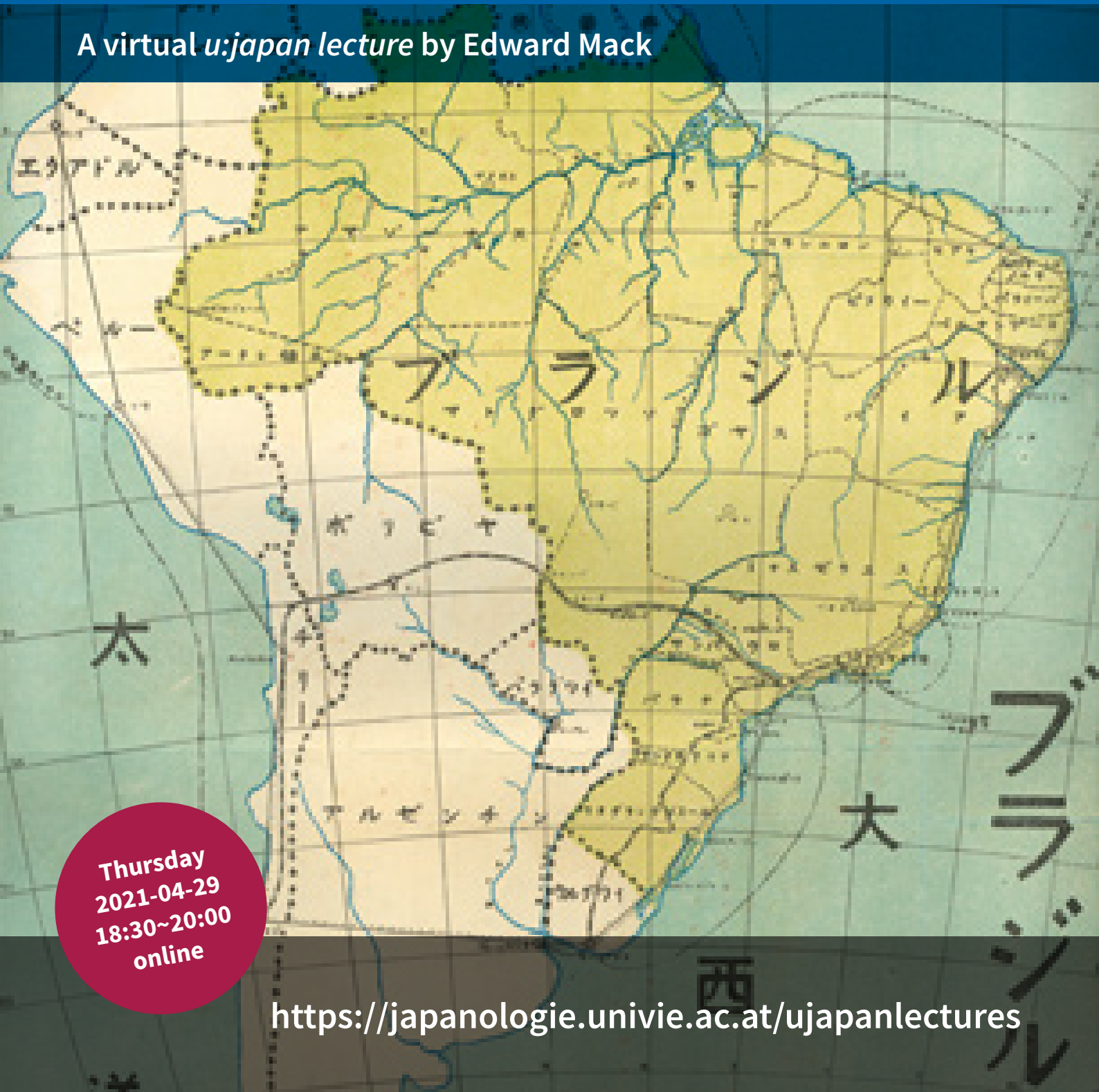
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Japanese Literary Nationalism and Brazil, 1908-1941

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Edward Mack



Thursday
2021-04-29
18:30~20:00
online

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Japanese Literary Nationalism and Brazil, 1908-1941

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Edward Mack

Thursday
2021-04-29
18:30~20:00
online

In this talk I will present a history of the marketplace for Japanese-language literary texts in Brazil, prior to the Second World War, and an analysis of an award-winning story written there during that period, Sonobe Takeo's "An Age of Speculative Farming" 園部武夫「賭博農時代」(1932), after which I will speak briefly about what I think they tell us about "modern Japanese literature."

The talk will add to a growing discourse on the colonial and minority literary practices that chal-

lenges a naturalized conception of a homogeneous ethnic nation-state and an unproblematic national literary culture. This study tries to extend this challenge, by drawing attention to another "marginal" element, that of the migrant, or diasporic, communities in the Americas. Rather than merely making the rubric of national literature more inclusive, or proposing an alternative rubric, however, I will speculate on the necessity and impact of such collective rubrics themselves.



Edward Mack is Associate Professor of Japanese at the University of Washington in Seattle. His first book, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value* (Duke, 2010), combined an empirical study of the literary publishing industry in Japan with a disciplinary critique focused on the notion of literary "purity." His forthcoming book, *Acquired Alterity: Migration, Identity, and Literary Nationalism* (California, 2021), is structured similarly, combining a history of Japanese-language literary activities in Brazil with a continuation of the disciplinary critique, this time focused on the concept of the nation as it is applied to literary texts.

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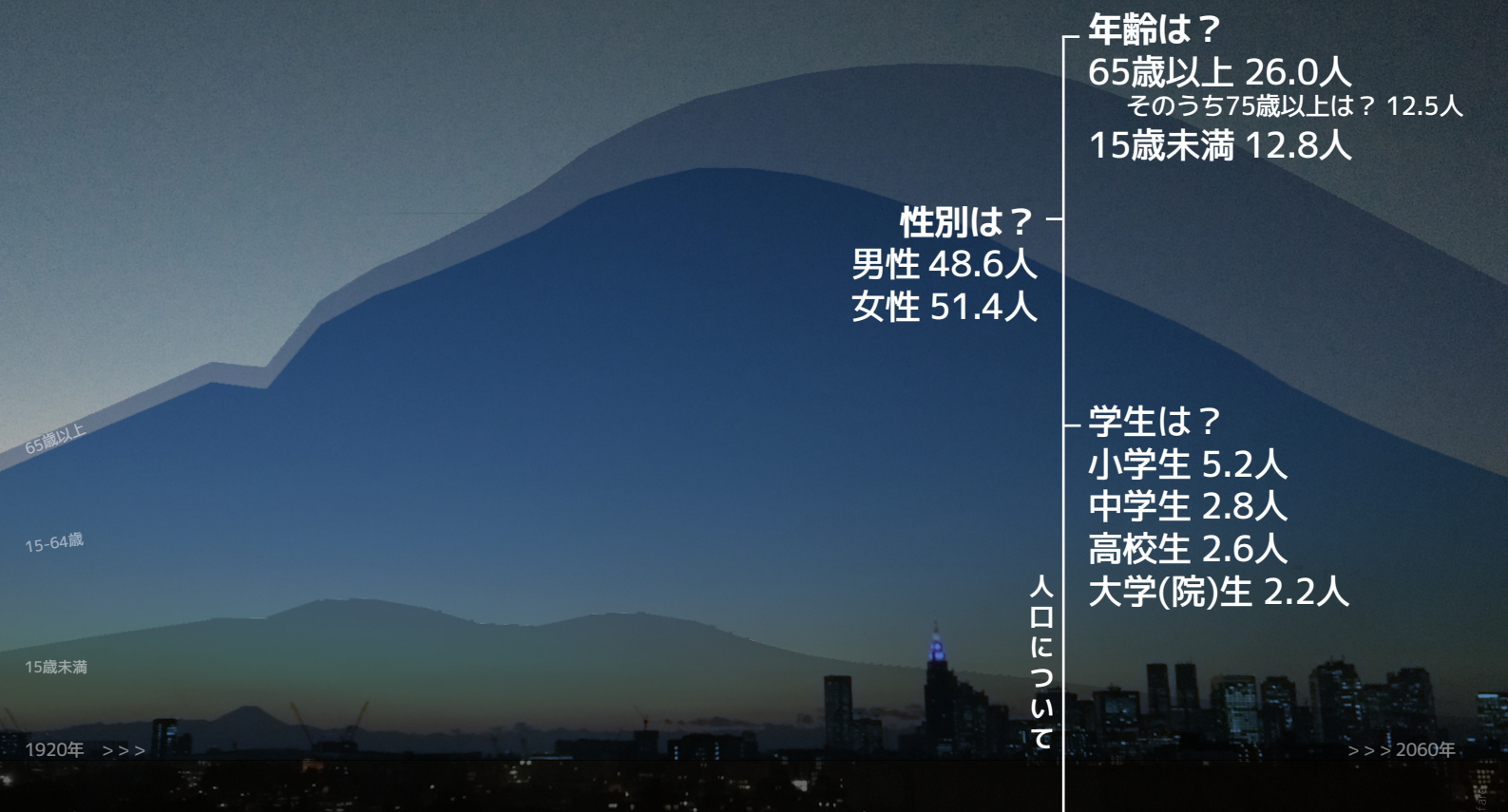


Science for Governing Japan's Population

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Aya Homei

Thursday
2021-05-06
18:30~20:00
online

100人でみた日本



日本を100人の国に例えてみました。
それぞれの直近の数字である。
(平成22年~平成26年)

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Science for Governing Japan's Population

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Aya Homei

Thursday
2021-05-06
18:30~20:00
online

In Japan and elsewhere, population is seen as a fundamental index for a nation's political economy. Also, the demographic knowledge is regarded as key to understand the societies that comprise the nation. For this reason, population issues such as ageing population and low fertility have been a matter of concern for the government for long, and

reviewing the medico-scientific fields and practices emerged in Japan between the 1860s and 1950s that were mobilized by the concept of population. I show how the notion of population we are familiar with today – in Japanese, *jinkō* – and the fact that population became a natural object of state inquiry and policy, are both a product of the political transformation of Japan into a modern nation state and an empire in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the development of modern science and medicine that kept a symbiotic relationship with the political change.

By showing the symbiotic relationship between science and the state's effort to govern Japan's



Aya Homei is Lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Manchester. She has been studying the politics and practice of reproduction and population in modern Japan, and more recently, family planning, development politics and health diplomacy in northeastern Asia. Among her recent works include the special issue she co-edited with Professor Yoko Matsubara at Ritsumeikan University ("Critical approaches to reproduction and population in post-war Japan", *Japan Forum*, 2021). Currently, Aya is preparing a monograph, *Science for Governing Japan's Population*.

policymakers have collaborated with population experts to come up with solutions to these problems.

But where do these assumptions about, and political actions for, the population come from historically? What role has the science of population played in the governing of Japan's population? In this presentation, I will tackle these questions by

population, I argue that the science of population was directly shaped by the ideologies, institutional agendas and socio-political conditions that surrounded the science, and that the official policies established as a result of this symbiotic relationship ultimately became somewhat detached from the demands of people's everyday lives.

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How independently oriented values induce positive outcomes in Japanese interdependent organizations

A virtual *u: japan* lecture by Uchida Yukiko

Thursday
2021-05-20
12:30~14:00
online

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



How independently oriented values induce positive outcomes in Japanese interdependent organizations

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Uchida Yukiko

Thursday
2021-05-20
12:30~14:00
online

How do Japanese workers seek and feel well-being? How do we foster and maintain cultural values (e.g., independence, interdependence) in our daily activities? This talk aims to provide direct evidence for the theoretical assumption that cultural values and systems exist at the group level (organization) and that they are functionated under the corresponding socio-ecological contexts such as job mobility. We collected data from various business organizations in Japan. Each organization has its own values. For example, in some organizations, independent-oriented culture (e.g., promotion-oriented, competition-oriented) could become dominant,

while other organizations are more likely to sustain traditional interdependent-oriented culture (e.g., prevention-focused, group harmony-oriented). Using a large-scale survey with a sample over 3,000 employees working in Japanese organizations, we examined the prediction that independence orientation at the organization-level promotes positive outcomes (e.g. cooperative social interactions) only under high job mobility environments. Our findings carry important theoretical implications in understanding how cultural psychological constructs interact with local socio-ecological environments to constitute self-sustaining cultural systems.

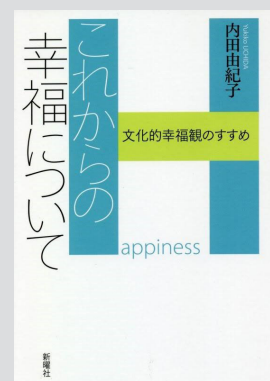


Dr. Uchida Yukiko is currently a professor of social and cultural psychology at the Kokoro Research Center, Kyoto University.

Upon receiving her PhD in social psychology from Kyoto University in 2003, she started her academic career as a visiting researcher at the University of Michigan and Stanford University. Since 2008, she has been based at the Kokoro Research Center.

As a cultural psychologist, she studies the psychological mechanisms behind the experience of emotions like well-being. She is a 2019-20 Berggruen fellow at CASBS, Stanford University.

<http://kokoro.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en2/staff-en/yukiko-uchida-en/>



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From Private to Public and Back? The Townscape Councils of Kyoto

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Christoph Brumann

Thursday
2021-05-27
18:30~20:00
online



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Yooni Wata
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From Private to Public and Back? The Townscape Councils of Kyoto

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Christoph Brumann

Thursday
2021-05-27
18:30~20:00
online

For over half a century, Kyoto has not just been a stronghold of history and tradition but also of conflicts about the built environment and how to shape it. The famous townscape debates (*keikan ronsō*) reached a climax around 2000 and provoked the new building code of 2007 that regulated heights, shapes, designs and views to a degree unseen in Japan. Daring as this imposition of public control on privately owned urban space appeared at the time, it is widely seen as a success today. Instead of following up with more fine-grained rules for individual neighbourhoods, however, Kyoto City introduced the “local townscape councils” (*chiiki keikanzukuri kyōgikai*) of which there are a dozen by now. Whenever such a group forms and receives the mayor’s blessing, builders must consult it for building anything within their territory, in the assumption that locals know best what fits their area. Building on two decades of ethnographic

fieldwork, the lecture discusses the experience and significance of these townscape councils. The city’s move of empowering the locals may appear regressive, as a re-privatisation of what had just been made more public. Closer inspection reveals, however, that the councils are not the local layperson’s voice they are made to be, and tacit cooperation with city officials also arises. Reviewing cases observed in 2019/20, I will show that the councils, despite the non-binding nature of the consultations, can achieve major improvements. When builders do not care for their local reputation and instead wish to profit from real estate speculation and hotel construction fed by the (pre-Covid) tourist boom, however, limitations are obvious and frustration is mounting. A full sharing of urban space therefore has still some way to go, even in the Japanese city that has gone furthest in making it a public concern.



Christoph Brumann is Head of Research Group at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, and Honorary Professor of Anthropology at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. His earlier work on Japan led to the book *Tradition, Democracy and the Townscape of Kyoto: Claiming A Right to the Past* (2012), the co-edited volumes *Making Japanese Heritage* (2010) and *Urban Spaces in Japan: Cultural and Social Perspectives* (2012), and articles and book chapters on these topics as well as on utopian communes and gift-giving practices. He also wrote *The Best We Share: Nation, Culture and World-Making in the UNESCO World Heritage Arena* (2021) and *Die Kunst des Teilens: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zu den Überlebensbedingungen kommunitärer Gruppen* (1998), co-edited *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives* (2016) and *Monks, Money, and Morality: The Balancing Act of Contemporary Buddhism* (2021), and published numerous anthropological journal articles, including on the concept of culture and the cultural consequences of globalisation.

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Zen and the Art of Ending Taishō Democracy

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Brian A. Victoria

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Zen and the Art of Ending Taishō Democracy

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In the case of Germany, the manner in which the Nazi's rose to power has been carefully researched and documented. With the notable exception of the role the Nazis may have played in the Reichstag fire of February 27, 1933, there remains little to be discovered. However, in the case of Japan, the same cannot be said. That is to say, the debate continues as to what led to, and who was responsible for, the demise of democratic governance in Japan, a period popularly known as "Taishō democracy" (1926-1933).

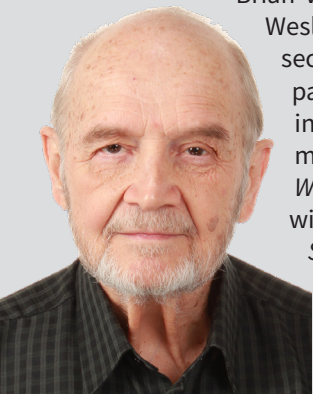
resulted in the death of Japan's prime minister, Inukai Tsuyoshi. Taken together, the death of these three men brought an end to political party-based cabinets reflecting the will of the voters. From then on, through the end of WW II, Emperor Hirohito and his advisors appointed and removed successive prime ministers.

Until the recent publication of my book, *Zen Terror in Prewar Japan: Portrait of an Assassin*, the role

the Zen school of Buddhism played in the incidents described above has remained completely unknown. That said, the claim is not made that the Zen faith of Inoue Nisshō, leader of the terrorist band, was the cause of the killings that took place. Instead, Zen is identified as what may be called an "enabling mechanism" whose doctrines, as well as praxis, served to make the killings possible, i.e., by providing

both the ethical justification and the spiritual/mental strength required for the band's terrorist acts.

This presentation will begin with an introduction to the political and historical dimensions of the two incidents described above. Thereafter, the focus will shift to an examination of the nature of Zen in prewar Japan that enabled it to serve as an enabling mechanism for terrorist acts and, concurrently, the demise of democracy in prewar Japan.



Brian Victoria is a native of Omaha, Nebraska and graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University. He holds a M.A. in Buddhist Studies from Sōtō Zen sect-affiliated Komazawa University in Tokyo, and a Ph.D. from the Department of Religious Studies at Temple University. Brian's major writings include *Zen Terror in Prewar Japan: Portrait of an Assassin* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), *Zen At War* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); *Zen War Stories* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); *Zen Master Dōgen*, coauthored with Yokoi Yūhō (Weatherhill, 1976); and a translation of *The Zen Life by Sato Koji* (Weatherhill, 1972). In addition, many of Brian's journal articles may be found on thezenseite here: <http://www.thezenseite.com> Brian is currently a non-resident Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies and a fully ordained Buddhist priest in the Sōtō Zen sect.

There can be little doubt that the Blood Oath Corps Incident (*Ketsumeidan Jiken*) of spring 1932 played an important role in Japan's gradual slide into totalitarianism. The importance of this incident is further strengthened by the May 15th Incident of 1932, for in reality it was but the second stage of the Blood Oath Corps Incident. While the first incident resulted in the deaths of only two Japanese leaders, a politician and a businessman, the second stage

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Revitalizing rural Japan through crafts

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Cornelia Reiher

Thursday
2021-06-17
18:30~20:00
online



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National revitalization programs and policies for rural areas in Japan are based on the concept of homogenous and single-issued local identities. This approach has proved to be inapt to fight regional inequality, economic decline in rural areas and related problems such as depopulation and aging. Nevertheless, revitalization strategies in rural Japan

national Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. This title comes with privileges, but also constrains creativity and excludes new and innovative actors. In my presentation, I compare two towns in rural Kyūshū and their different approaches to “traditional” crafts and art in their revitalization strategies to discuss how cultural heritage in the realm of crafts can enable or



Cornelia Reiher is professor of Japanese Studies at Freie Universität Berlin and vice director of the Graduate School of East Asian Studies. Her main research interests include rural Japan, food studies, globalization and science and technology studies.

Her recent publications include a special issue on fieldwork in Japan (2018), book chapters on transnational protest movement(s) in Asia (2019), and urban-rural migration in Japan (2020) and the methods handbook *Studying Japan: Handbook of research designs, fieldwork and methods* (2020, co-edited with Nora Kottmann).

often reduce local complexity to one or two features/products. These features can be “traditional” crafts like pottery, lacquer ware, Japanese paper (*washi*) or textiles. Japanese crafts are admired for their high quality and those preserving traditional crafts techniques are designated bearers of intangible cultural property (or “living national treasures”) under the

constrain rural revitalization in Japan. While Arita (Saga Prefecture) is famous for its 400 years of porcelain production and home of several “living national treasures”, Taketa (Ōita Prefecture) has no acknowledged crafts tradition. However, the town’s mayor is inviting urbanites with new ideas for the revitalization/establishment of a local crafts tradition in order to attract

tourists and to revitalize the local economy. The emerging hybrid forms of “traditional” crafts in both cases will shed light on the power relations between national and local policymakers, craftsmen and the institutions shaping and preserving cultural heritage and “traditional” crafts in Japan.

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A hug on trash day ハグは資源ゴミの日 Actualising social order through household waste disposal practices

A hybrid *u:japan* lecture by Brigitte Steger

Thursday
2021-06-24
18:30~20:00
live & online



This lecture takes place at the Campus of the University of Vienna.
For more information and to register for the live event please visit

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



A hug on trash day ハグは資源ゴミの日

Actualising social order through household waste disposal practices

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'We hug on Tuesdays. That's easy to remember as it is recyclables rubbish day.' This is how Mikuri in the popular TV drama 'Nigeru wa haji da ga yaku ni tatsu' ('The Full-time Wife Escapist'; TBS 2016) lays out one of the contractual conditions for her marriage of convenience. In so doing, she inadvertently indicates the extent to which waste disposal and recycling practices structure daily life in Japan.

Following the realisation that Japan needed to increase recycling rates in order to deal with its growing amount of household waste, the 'Containers and Packaging Recycling Law' (*Yōki hōsō risaikuru-hō*) that was implemented in 1997 has reorganised waste disposal and recycling practices. Municipalities are now in charge of collecting and handling waste, and residents follow detailed rules that govern the sorting

and disposal of their household waste.

There are considerable regional differences, but the two basic categories are 'rubbish' (*gomi*), which is mostly incinerated before being taken to landfill, and 'resources' (*shigen*), which are collected for recycling.

In this presentation Steger analyses notions of cleanliness and the categorisation of household waste and examines how individuals, households and neighbourhoods deal with their rubbish. Steger argues that cleanliness and litter-free streets are not simply a cultural characteristic of Japanese society but the result of everyday practices of waste sorting and disposal that actualise the social order. The presentation is based on the preliminary findings of her ongoing research project 'Rubbish! Disposing waste, negotiating community'.

Brigitte Steger (PhD Vienna) is a Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Modern Japanese Studies at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Downing College. In her research, she has always been intrigued by questions of the cultural and social embeddedness of seemingly natural, bodily matters and daily life. Her main research projects have dealt with notions of sleep, time and cleanliness, which have also guided her investigation of life in tsunami evacuation shelters in Yamada town, Iwate prefecture.

Steger is the chair of the Japanese Gender Research Group at Cambridge, which recently published *Beyond Kawaii: Studying Japanese Femininities at Cambridge* (Lit 2020), and is also Secretary General of JAWS, the Japan Anthropology Workshop. She is a Co-Investigator at the Cambridge Circular Plastics Centre (CirPlas) and leads a project on 'Cleanliness, convenience and good citizenship: Plastic and waste in everyday life'. Her project team has launched the publication of the special collection titled 'The bag and beyond: Social science and the social life of plastic' in *Worldwide Waste: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* (2021). Steger has recently published an article on the ethnologist Oka Masao, the founder in 1938 of the Institut für Japankunde at the University of Vienna, and is currently working on a book-length manuscript on sleep habits during the Heian period.



This lecture is presented live at the Campus of the University of Vienna (registration required).



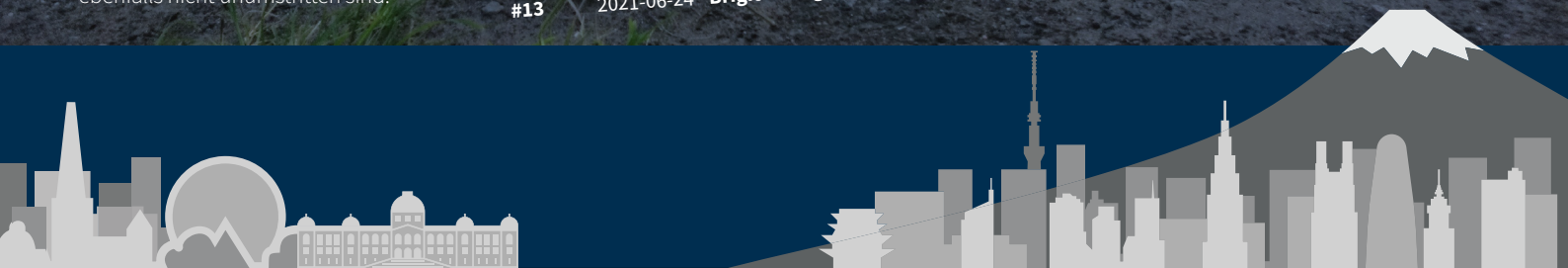
u:japan lectures

SEASON 2 | SPRING 2021

Die Wiener Schule der Japanforschung verfügt über eine lange Tradition der innovativen Auseinandersetzung mit Themen am Puls der Zeit. Im Rahmen von *Campus Aktuell* bietet die Japanologie im Sommersemester 2021 die Vortragsreihe *u:japan lectures* an. Immer donnerstags referieren Expert*innen zu aktuellen Themen aus den Bereichen Gesellschaft und Kultur Japans.

Japan wird 2021 wieder große mediale Beachtung finden: Die Welt erinnert sich an das Tōhoku-Erdbeben am 11. März vor zehn Jahren. Der daraus resultierende Tsunami und die Kernschmelze im Atomkraftwerk Fukushima I hatten große internationale Auswirkungen und warfen Fragen zur Verfasstheit der gegenwärtigen japanischen Gesellschaft auf. Darüber hinaus sollen diesen Sommer die Corona-bedingt verschobenen Olympischen Sommerspiele und Paralympics in Tokyo stattfinden, welche ebenfalls nicht unumstritten sind.

- #1 2021-03-04 **Jasmin Rückert** (HHU Düsseldorf) **Geschlecht und Faschismus**
- #2 2021-03-11 **Nora Kottmann & Elisabeth Scherer** (DIJ & HHU Düsseldorf) **Love in the Time of COVID-19**
- #3 2021-03-18 **Anne Aronsson** (Universität Zürich) **Conceptualizing Robotic Agency**
- #4 2021-03-25 **Katharina Hülsmann** (HHU Düsseldorf) **Transcultural Potentials of Dōjinshi Culture**
- #5 2021-04-15 **Gabriele Vogt** (LMU München) **Local Governance in Okinawa**
- #6 2021-04-22 **Katarzyna J. Cwiertka** (Leiden University) **The packaging revolution of postwar Japan**
- #7 2021-04-29 **Edward Mack** (University of Washington) **Japanese Literary Nationalism**
- #8 2021-05-06 **Aya Homei** (Manchester University) **Science for Governing Japan's Population**
- #9 2021-05-20 **Uchida Yukiko** (Kyoto University) **Interdependent well-being**
- #10 2021-05-27 **Christoph Brumann** (MPIEF) **From Private to Public and Back? The Townscape Councils of Kyoto**
- #11 2021-06-10 **Sabine Frühstück** (UC Santa Barbara) **East Asia, Bodies, Antibodies**
- #12 2021-06-17 **Conny Reiher** (Freie Universität Berlin) **Revitalizing rural Japan through crafts**
- #13 2021-06-24 **Brigitte Steger** (Cambridge University) **Waste disposal as consumption work**



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