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JAPAN ANTHROPOLOGY WORKSHOP NEWSLETTER NO. 46

AUGUST 2011

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JAWS Officers

Secretary-General:

John Traphagan
jtrap@uts.cc.utexas.edu
Dept. of Religious Studies
University of Texas at Austin
Tel: +1 521 232 0874

Advisory Board:

D.P. (Lola) Martinez
dm6@soas.ac.uk
Department of Anthropology and Sociology
The School of Oriental and African Studies
The University of London

Joy Hendry
jhendry@brookes.ac.uk
School of Social Science and Law
Oxford Brookes University

Roger Goodman
roger.goodman@nissan.ox.ac.uk
Oxford University

Dixon Wong
hwwongc@hkucc.hku.hk
The University of Hong Kong

Hon. Japanese Representatives:

Teigo Yoshida
3-17-19 Minami-cho
Kichijōji, Musashino-shi
Tokyo 180-0003, Japan

Hirochika Nakamaki
nakahiro@idc.minpaku.ac.jp
10-1 Senri Expo Park, Suita-shi
Osaka 565-8511, Japan
Tel: +81 6 6876-2151
Fax: +81 6 6878-7503

Treasurer:

Anne-Mette Fisker-Nielsen
af3@soas.ac.uk
The School of Oriental and African Studies
The University of London

Newsletter Editors:

Andrea De Antoni
a.deantoni@zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp
Center for Research in Humanities
Kyoto University

Emma Cook
e.cook@soas.ac.uk
Waseda University
Fax: +44 (0)161 275-3031

Blai Guarné
Blai.Guarne@uab.cat
East Asian Studies Program
Autonomous University of Barcelona

Web Manager:

Christopher R. Feldman
cf@japananthropologyworkshop.org
Center for East Asian Studies
University of Texas at Austin

JAWS RoutledgeCurzon Series:

Editorial Board:

Joy Hendry *Senior Editor* (jhendry@brookes.ac.uk)
Pamela Asquith (pamela.asquith@ualberta.ca)
Eyal Ben-Ari (mseba@mscc.huji.ac.il)
Hirochika Nakamaki (nakahiro@idc.minpaku.ac.jp)
Kirsten Refsing (kre@hum.ku.dk)
Wendy Smith
(wendy.smith@buseco.monash.edu.au)

EAJS Liaison Officer:

Brigitte Steger
bs382@cam.ac.uk
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Cambridge
Tel: +44 (0)1223 335140
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 335110

Student Council :

Sébastien Boret
sboret@brookes.ac.uk
Oxford Brookes University

Fabio Gygi
fabio_gygi@yahoo.com
University College London

Philomena Keet
philomena@mac.com
The School of Oriental and African Studies
The University of London

Katja Ferstl
katya.ferstl@googlemail.com
Munich University

Isabelle Prochaska
isaselle@yahoo.co.jp
University of Vienna

FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

John W. Traphagan

Dear Members,

Welcome to the summer 2011 edition of the JAWS Newsletter. This summer has included a successful regional workshop in Otago in July, focused on the topic “Beyond Oceans: Re-thinking Japan's Place in Pacific Anthropology” and will also have a gathering of JAWS members at the EAJS conference in Tallinn. As usual, it has been a busy summer for JAWS, with members presenting their research in a variety of international venues. Look to the website for information about future meetings, including a proposed JAWS conference in Pittsburgh, PA during 2012. The website URL is www.japananthropologyworkshop.org.

The association continues to thrive due to the continued successes of its members and the hard work of its officers. As always, I am thankful to our treasurer, Anne-Mette Fisker Nielson, for her efforts to centralize the funding for the association. Also, the newsletter, under the leadership of Andrea De Antoni, Emma Cook, and Blai Guarné, has shifted from paper to electronic circulation. Over the next few months, we will be working on improving our system for renewing memberships and will be sending out membership renewal notices later in the year.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the EAJS conference in Tallinn. The JAWS business meeting will be held on Wednesday, the 24th between 1:30 and 2:30pm. I hope to see you there!

FROM THE TREASURER

Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen

Last year we closed the Hang Seng account in Hong Kong and opened a new account with the Co-operative Bank in the UK. The other account that was kept in the Netherlands and previously facilitated cheaper money transfers for European members has also been closed. The JAWS account in the UK therefore now holds:

TOTAL £7756.02

We are now 179 members in JAWS, with six new members joining this year.

As you probably know, payment of the yearly membership fee of £15 now can be made through PAYPAL. Simply go online to www.japananthropologyworkshop.org and click “subscribe”. When you subscribe there from then on there will be an automatic yearly withdrawal of £15 or the equivalent in your own currency from your account.

Regarding members who paid before this system was put in place, and who have not paid their fees after the summer of 2010, could I please ask that you to pay through this new payment system?

If for some reason it is not possible for you to use PAYPAL you can also make a direct payment into the account. Transfer of money is free for people with accounts in the UK, but will likely incur a cost for members from outside the UK (which was why we chose the PAYPAL system). Please let me know if you want to make a direct debit and I will send you the details.

For new members, or for updating current membership information, there is a membership form on the website just below where you “subscribe” for membership. Please fill this in and post or email it to me and I can add your details to the membership list. My email is af3@soas.ac.uk.

If you no longer wish to subscribe to JAWS membership, simply click “unsubscribe” on the JAWS website. Any other queries, please send me an email.

FROM THE EDITORS

Emma Cook, Andrea De Antoni, Blai Guarné

Since the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster that occurred in Japan on the 11th of March 2011, anthropologists have been writing, blogging, researching and volunteering in the hardest hit areas. As such, we think we cannot avoid mentioning a few things that have come up recently and to propose some reflections about the relationship between such tragic events and anthropology.

The first and most immediate issue that arose right after the tsunami and the nuclear disaster in Fukushima Prefecture was how they were narrated by the media, both nationally and transnationally. Videos and print news swamped media networks across the world and also circulated through the internet, particularly via social networks. On the one hand, distrust of the relationship between political institutions and the media soon became evident in public debate both inside and outside Japan. This had different implications for different social communities even in the same place, as Daniel White (Rice University) pointed out in *Anthropology News* (May 2011). On the other, particularly in international media, a first wave that tended to narrate the disaster as an apocalypse that affected all of Japan emerged, thus showing the influence of narratives of Japan as a homogenized “small country”, or an “island country” (*shimaguni*), on a transnational level. Later, stereotypes of “The Japanese” as calm, persevering, enduring, and an orderly people were spread by the media. These aspects regarding processes of perception and identification of Japan as a nation state, as well as their influence on processes of nation branding on a transnational level, should be further investigated from an anthropological perspective.

As for the localities involved, in order to have a complete anthropological understanding of the consequences of the tragedy, Tom Gill (Meiji Gakuin University), in a roundtable discussion at the last ASCJ conference (June 25-26, 2011), suggested that we will have to wait to see what kinds of marginal groups emerge from this time (not only that of groups that have been exposed to radiation but the disaster victims as a whole). If we agree that a process of Othering occurs in the wake of disasters by means of which labels are attached to some specific people – for instance when exploring the kinds of medicalised language that gets used such as PTSD etc. – this is also a topic that definitely warrants further anthropological research.

Another essential aspect that arises is of course the ethics of doing an anthropology of disaster, and how to study the discourses that spring up around them. An outstanding

question here focuses on the ethics of depicting the aftermath of destructive events, of doing research in disaster areas and how to figure out what is intrusive and potentially damaging to people and what is not. These questions point to the central issue of ethnography and its limits as a discursive project where textual descriptions and narrated voices represent the world through the anthropologist's gaze. Although these issues were radically pointed out during the postmodernist debate that shook anthropology in the 80's and 90's, anthropologists and ethnologists seem not to have been able to find a commonly agreed solution in more than twenty years. Thus, most of the ethics and politics of doing fieldwork research in disaster areas are still left to the sensitivity of the individual researcher, or they are negotiated among researchers within the boundaries of their particular institutions (Faculties, Departments, and Associations). This results in different approaches that are not always compatible.

In recent months a number of texts compiled by journalists and academics have started to come out focusing on individual stories of survival, proceeds of which go to raise money for reconstruction efforts. Indeed, bookshops in Japan now have entire shelves devoted to the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami. A number of academics in Japan have been heavily involved with volunteering efforts and in getting such opportunities out there on the grapevine through mailing lists such as H-Japan. JAWS members email list itself, along with others such as EASIANTH, and the EAJS list, worked as a virtual network to communicate and share information among scholars during the days of the triple disaster. Concurrently, there was a general trend among Japanese anthropologists and researchers to restrain themselves from going to the disaster areas for research, in order not to interfere with the work of institutions and volunteers and, of course, not to bother people affected by the disaster. They generally preferred to rely on internet based data, trying to gather and organize them in thematic databases.

Two initiatives that we especially want to bring to JAWS members' attention regarding such databases are the projects occurring at the Reischauer Institute of Japan Studies at Harvard and the website of the journal 'Cultural Anthropology'. The Reischauer Institute of Japan Studies has started a digital archive project to capture and archive websites related to the events of March 2011 in a variety of languages. Individuals can also send websites, emails, and personal accounts to be archived. Their website is <http://www.jdarchive.org/>.

Meanwhile, the 'Cultural Anthropology' website has started a new forum to report on current "hot spots" in the world from the perspective of anthropologists and others on the scene. David H. Slater (Sophia University) is the guest editor of its first report on the

topic of '3.11 Politics in Disaster Japan: Fear and Anger, Possibility and Hope'. They ask for contributions that document both the fear and anger of the past months, but also the hope and possibility of a new 3.11 politics in post-disaster Japan. The website is: <http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/409>.

These will likely be a substantial resource for people who wish to write and research on topics related to the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear issues as well as on reconstruction efforts.

Following this initiative, we also invite JAWS members to share related projects and start a discussion on the questions raised above on the forum of our website.

JAWS PUBLICATION NEWS

Joy Hendry

We seem to have been inundated with good proposals for the JAWS series in the last few months, so it is a bit disappointing only to be able to tell you of one that is actually in press to date. This is a good one, however, and I am pretty sure that it will be followed by several others in the not too distant future. Good books are worth waiting for and the one that has just gone to press will be no exception. It is Christoph Brumann's study of the townspeople of Kyoto and their involvement in the city's extraordinary reconstruction projects that have filled the last couple of decades. Entitled *Tradition, Democracy and the Townscape of Kyoto: Claiming a Right to the Past*, the book is a big one, with plenty of illustration, and it documents a crucial period in the development of the city.

Two books that were in press when the last newsletter came out have now appeared, and they include an excellent collection of papers presented at more than one JAWS Workshop, and an unusually moving monograph. The first is *Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation*, edited by Richard Ronald and Allison Alexy, and the second Yeeshan Yang's *Abandoned Japanese in Postwar Manchuria: The Lives of War Orphans and Wives in Two Countries*. All our books (see complete list below) can be ordered through the website by JAWS members at the paperback price, and all those that have been out for a year, can be ordered as paperbacks direct from the publisher. The books are also available as e-books.

There are five more books in the final stages of preparation – or so their authors and editors tell us – so keep watching this space to see the exciting new work as it goes to press. In case you have ideas for monographs or collections, write and let me know, and I will send you the guidelines for making a proposal.

Latest publications:

Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation

Edited by Richard Ronald and Allison Alexy

Abandoned Japanese in Postwar Manchuria: The Lives of War Orphans and Wives in Two Countries

Yeeshan Chan

Previously Published:

A Japanese View of Nature: The World of Living Things

Kinji Imanishi. Translated by Pamela J. Asquith, Heita Kawakatsu, Shusuke Yagi and Hiroyuki Takasaki; edited and introduced by Pamela J. Asquith

Japan's Changing Generations: Are Japanese Young People Creating A New Society?

Edited by Gordon Mathews and Bruce White

Community Volunteers in Japan: Everyday Stories of Social Change

Lynne Nakano

The Care of the Elderly in Japan

Yongmei Wu

Nature, Ritual and Society in Japan's Ryukyu Islands

Arne Røkkum

Dismantling the East West Dichotomy: Essays in Honour of Jan van Bremen

Edited by Joy Hendry and Dixon Wong

Psychotherapy and Religion in Japan: The Japanese Introspection Practice of Naikan

Chikako Ozawa-de Silva

Pilgrimages and Spiritual Quests in Japan

Edited by Maria Rodriguez del Alisal, Instituto de Japonologia, Madrid, Peter Ackermann, University of Erlangen, and D.P. Martinez, University of London

Japan and the Culture of Copying

Edited by Rupert Cox

Primary School in Japan: Self, individuality and learning in elementary education

Peter Cave

Globalization and Japanese Organization Culture: An Ethnography of a Japanese Corporation in France

Mitchell Sedgwick

Japanese Tourism and the Culture of Travel

Edited by Sylvie Guichard-Anguis and Okpyo Moon

Making Japanese Heritage

Edited by Christoph Brumann and Rupert Cox

Japanese Women, Class and the Tea Ceremony: The voices of tea practitioners in northern Japan

Kaeko Chiba

JAWS WORKSHOP 2011 REVIEW

Beyond Oceans: Re-thinking Japan's Place in Pacific Anthropology

Otago University, Dunedin (New Zealand)

10-11 July 2011



Workshop Report

Danilo GIAMBRA

giada375@student.otago.ac.nz

The University of Otago

The *JAWS Otago 2011* took place at the University of Otago (Dunedin, New Zealand) on the 10th and 11th of July, organized by Dr. Erica Baffelli, Dr. Shelley Brunt and Prof. Henry Johnson. Prof. Emer. Joy Hendry (Oxford Brookes) joined the workshop as keynote speaker and significantly contributed with her speech and comments to combine different views and approaches under the main theme of this workshop. Participants mostly gathered from the Pacific area, however a multiplicity of nationalities and research backgrounds have made this academic event of wide scope.

Beyond Oceans: Rethinking Japan's place in Pacific Anthropology – the main theme of the workshop – has been an occasion to re-discuss the importance of re-linking Japan to the Pacific area, focusing on the multiple ties that bind cultures across a common space. Like the waves travelling the shores of this shared ocean, cultural flows not only transport “material” from one side to the other, but they mix it, slowly but continuously re-creating and re-shaping what is known.

Prof. Emer. Joy Hendry's opening address raised several possible areas for research that could bring Japan into a Pacific cultural zone: language, both direct and indirect, including the use of politeness, protocol and material culture such as gifts, masks and tattoos; conceptions and constructions of houses and family; ideas of religion and spirituality; and, finally her own recent area of interest, namely scientific knowledge such as astronomy, navigational skills and "an understanding of Moana or Mother Ocean (海) that has provided sustenance since time immemorial for the people of the Pacific".

The first session of the workshop was dedicated to an exploration of “Japan and New Zealand”, taking into account a multiplicity of cultural aspects and mutual influences, ranging from education to religion and art. Rachael Burke (Massey University) presented a paper on early childhood education in New Zealand and Japan, focusing on implicit cultural practices and using videos to provide a comparative view. Dr Erica Baffelli (University of Otago) presented the case of the Japanese “New Religion” *Happy Science's* new New Zealand branch, focusing on the group's thirst of universalism and its communicative strategies over the “traditional” and “new media”. Nancy Earth (University of Otago) proposed a paper on Dunedin's ceramists and the Japanese influences on their works, while exploring the reasons of such after the “western denouncement of oriental aesthetics”. At the end of the first session, Dunedin's *O-Taiko* ensemble offered an exciting Japanese *taiko* performance in the chilly outside court, while an elegant Dunedin ceramists' pottery exhibition was held in the warmer inside. As Dr. Dennitza Gabrakova pointed out, these initiatives “had a very stimulating effect in complimenting our verbal argumentation with different media of expression”.

The second session of the workshop focused on “Sounds and Dances”. Dr. Shelley Brunt (University of Otago) started the session with a paper on *NHK's Red and White Song Contest*, looking closely to her fieldwork experience in Japan with this “highly structured institution”. Drs. Carolyn Stevens and Tamara Koh (University of Melbourne) introduced their new research project on sound's role in mediating relationships

between public and private spheres in Japan, delighting their audience with a very pleasant and interesting presentation.

Dr. Dennitza Gabrakova (City University of Hong Kong) started the third session of the workshop presenting a paper on Imafuku Ryuta's 'Archipelago'-Theory (群島論) and exploring the relationship between cultural anthropology and poetry. Following, Prof. Kiyoshi Ueda (Hosei University) introduced his work on "State Shinto" and presented the case of "The Association for the Studies of Japan".

To summarize and discuss the main topics of this intense day, Dr. Bruce White (Doshisha University) provided a comprehensive commentary, re-discussing the Pacific as a definite cultural area and questioning the Pacific/Western dichotomy. Playing DEF TECH's *Catch the Wave* in the background, the first day of the JAWS Otago was over. Further discussion and networking continued during the night at the elegant Luna Restaurant. Dinner was the perfect occasion to re-discuss specific topics and ideas in a relaxed way, but also a social moment to reconnect with colleagues, as well as to start new academic relationships for future projects.

The second day of the workshop started with Prof. Elena Kolesova's (Unitec Institute of Technology) paper on the Russo-Japanese War history textbooks in Russia and Japan, providing a comparative analysis of how history is narrated in the two countries to serve the ideologies of irresponsibility and face- protection.

To complete the workshop, a session was dedicated to "New Research". Danilo Giambra (University of Otago) presented a paper on the Japanese "New Religions" and the "Japanese Internet", providing an overview of this Internet "variety" and introducing some methodological issues in researching religion online. Iwami Tadashi (University of Otago) explored the discursive construction of political identities of Japan, taking into account the so-called "Pacifist" and "Normal" Japan under a post-modernist constructivist perspective.

The JAWS Otago 2011 was an important and pleasant academic event that started a productive discussion on Japan and the Pacific. As Dr. Shelley Brunt pointed out, organizing the workshop in single sessions contributed to its success, as it was possible to follow all the presentations. More than enough time was devoted to discussion and many new ideas were presented as a base for future research.

KEYNOTE: Japan and Pacific Anthropology: Some Ideas for New Research

Professor Joy Hendry, Oxford Brookes University

SESSION ONE: Japan and New Zealand

Chair: Shelley Brunt, University of Otago

Bringing implicit cultural practice into focus: Early childhood education in New Zealand and Japan

Rachael Burke, Massey University, Auckland

Within the New Zealand early childhood context, many teachers regard independence, creativity and empowerment as important goals for children. In contrast, Japanese centres value socialisation, cooperation and interdependence. This paper is based on ethnographic research conducted at early childhood settings in New Zealand and Japan, and follows Joseph Tobin's *Preschool in three cultures* methodology which utilised film to present comparative views of preschools through the eyes of teachers. Following observation of centre sessions in New Zealand and Japan, a 'typical' day was filmed in each country, then edited and screened back to teachers. Members of each culture were then (re)filmed as they critically analysed both their own country's early childhood practice and made judgements about the other centre in the study. This method views film less as data but more as a means of exploring and stimulating discussion around how early childhood settings incorporate implicit cultural values into pedagogy and practice.

Happy Science: Japanese "New Religions" in New Zealand

Erica Baffelli, University of Otago

The group Kōfuku no Kagaku (Happy Science) was founded in 1986 by Ōkawa Ryūhō. Until the early 1990s, the expansion of the group outside Japan took place largely unofficially, through followers working or studying in Europe and America. From 1994, in order to fulfil the leader's prophecy and to turn "all the inhabitants of the earth" into "makers of happiness", the group began to promote missionary work. In 1994 Ōkawa

launched the “Big Bang Project” (*biggu ban keikaku*), with the aim of spreading the Buddha’s teaching around the world. As Cornille (2000) observes, Ōkawa considers universalism a necessary and important characteristic for any contemporary religion, the aim of which is that of being accepted all over the world. The group’s strategy of overseas expansion, which revolves around the use of publications, websites, and recently, digital radio, is directly related to the consolidation of the group in the second half of the 1990s, as it provided a means of both fulfilling the universalistic prophecy of the leader, and of providing the members with a proof of the group’s success.

This paper discusses some later developments in Happy Science’s overseas mission, using the New Zealand branch as a case study.

Catching Clay Waves: Japanese Influences on Contemporary Dunedin Ceramists

Nancy Earth, University of Otago

Bernard Leach (1887 – 1979), a Japanese-influenced British studio potter and lecturer, introduced an Orientalist aesthetic through his *A Potter’s Book* (1940), having a global impact on emerging potters, including those in colonial New Zealand searching for guidance. Subsequent New Zealand visits of Leach in 1962 and Hamada Shoji, Japanese artist-potter and Living National Treasure, in 1965, helped to establish the Anglo-Oriental ideal. However, from the 1970s onwards, opposing modernist European-influenced potters challenged it by arguing that local potters had become imitators without a spiritual tradition. Additionally, the subsequent reduction of government import tariffs, which had insured a 30-year period of flourishing local potting culture, disposed of many livelihoods.

After the denouncement of Oriental aesthetics by Western ceramists and media, why do contemporary Dunedin ceramists, Neil Grant, Marion Familton, Jo Howard, and Peter Gregory, continue to resist and create Japanese-influenced utilitarian ware? This paper focuses on these New Zealand ceramists within a wider Pacific anthropology of Japanese cultural flows.

SESSION TWO: Sounds and Dances

Chair: Bruce White, Doshisha University

Rehearsing in the Field: Researching NHK's Red and White Song Contest

Shelley Brunt, University of Otago

Ethnographic fieldwork is a key part of an anthropologist's methodological approach, but in many cases, the resulting publications are often devoid of the scholar's individual experiences while in the field. Drawing inspiration from Joy Henry's *An Anthropologist in Japan: Glimpses of Life in the Field* (1999), as well as T. Bestor, Steinhoff and V. Bestor's (eds) *Doing Fieldwork in Japan* (2003), this self-reflective paper brings to the fore my own experiences in the field while researching the televised 'Red and White Song Contest' (*Kōhaku Utagassen*) at the television station NHK in Tokyo over a 10+ year period. From the initial research as a PhD student in 1999, to my most recent fieldtrip in January 2011, I consider the various strategies employed in order to gain information about, and access to, this highly structured Japanese institution. In doing so, it sheds light on the challenges faced and the benefits gained from life the field, and draws attention to the ways one can gain entry into a closed world.

Making Sense of Sound in Japan

Carolyn Stevens and Tamara Kohn, University of Melbourne

This presentation arises from a larger joint research proposal on sound's pivotal role in mediating relationships between public and private spheres in Japan. We focus on 'sonic practice' as a way of understanding the situated, embodied means by which sound is made significant, in places such as train stations and *dojos* (the case studies on offer today). In this presentation, we hope to spur discussion on the following questions: How does sound create boundaries between people in some contexts, yet in others, work to bring them together in a dense urban environment? How are people's daily lives structured by sound, and, in turn, how is human agency manifested in sonic practices?

Rethinking the Cultural History of the Japanese Body: Francophone Criticism & the Japanese avant-garde Dance Form, *butoh*, 1880-1990

Jonathan W. Marshall, University of Otago

The Japanese avant-garde dance form of *butoh* has most frequently been described in nationalist and trans-nationalist ethnographic terms. *Butoh* constitutes both a forceful statement of Japanese identity—and especially on the nature of the Japanese body—as well as refusing any classification of Japanese embodiment or of the Japanese psyche in purely national terms. The aim of this paper is to examine this discourse, drawing in the first instance on Francophone criticism of *butoh*. Francophone authors have drawn attention to the origins of *butoh* within Europe's own avant-garde traditions, notably Surrealism and Expressionism. What is rarely noted though is that these Continental forms arose out of post-war cultural criticism (1880s France; France, Germany and Austria, 1917-1933) and the relation of these cultural critiques to Franco-European neuropsychiatry—notably Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud, both of whose research on modernist trauma and psychophysical symptoms were widely cited by European artists. Considered in this light, the French, German and Austrian avant-gardes can be seen to have modelled and prefigured the colonised space of post-war Japan and its bodily aesthetics. *Butoh* acted in this sense as a *corporeal archive* in which the historical memory of Western cultural modernity came back to haunt and inhabit the Oriental body, a “Grand-Guignol qui a mal tourné” in Patrice Pavis’ words. *Butoh*’s corporeal language of “nerves,” “tendons,” “electricity” and deathly “larval” forms problematizes not only the body, culture and race, but also criticism and *history itself*. Not simply an embodied relic of modernity, *butoh* conflates difference even as it constructs it, disarticulating the socially located being whilst simultaneously carving a space for the Japanese subject. This paper therefore constitutes a heuristic attempt to think through the problem of history and corporeal criticism, in which *butoh*, Surrealism, Expressionism and other cultural objects can be seen to conform to Derrida’s concept of “the hauntological,” a set of embodied images which traumatically echo modernity’s own tendency to reproduce, disseminate, multiply and reify images across time, space and discourse, carving material effects in the body, even as the full presence of history and of the past is refused.

SESSION THREE

Chair: Erica Baffelli, University of Otago

Imafuku Ryuta's 'Archipelago'-theory as "Japanese" Cultural Anthropology.

Dennitza Gabrakova, City University of Hong Kong

Imafuku Ryuta is an important contemporary cultural anthropologist and critic. The publication of his major work "Archipelago - A World Theory" (2008) demonstrated his stylistic virtuosity in re-arranging poetic material with the possibility to imagine an "original" Japanese cultural theory. The aesthetic impact of Imafuku's work, however, requires a more profound exploration of the way it re-inscribes the historical and cultural "insular" entity of Japan into an archipelagic vision with a strong if not explicit postcolonial aspect. Drawing on Trinh T. Minh-ha's ideas on the interdependence of theory and poetry, I would like to reflect in depth on the relationship between cultural anthropology and poetry as dramatized in the collaboration between Imafuku and the famous Japanese poet Yoshimasu

Gozo, where we can locate the origin of the archipelago concept. I would like to extend the above problematic to investigating the interpenetration of cultural anthropology with literature using material from Ariyoshi Sawako (postwar writer who accompanied Hatanaka Sachiko during her fieldwork in Papua New Guinea) and Ikezawa Natsuki's work on the former territories of the Japanese Empire in the South Pacific.

"State Shinto" as a Contemporary Religious Phenomenon: The Association for Studies of Japan as a Case Study

Kiyoshi Ueda, Hosei University

This paper examines the ongoing influence of "State Shinto" (*kokka Shinto*) in postwar Japan. Despite its abolition as the state religion in 1945, its supporters preserved/promoted its views of the relations between Shinto, National History (*kokushi*), and Nation, and managed to influence several national debates on key issues. The paper considers, for example, the activities of the Association for Studies of Japan (*Nihongaku kyokai*), formed in the early 1950s by disciples of Hiraizumi Kiyoshi (1895-1984), Professor of National History at Tokyo Imperial University until 1945; the Association

remains active today. The study is based on archival research and fieldwork conducted over several years, in which I interviewed devotees of “State Shinto” and observed both private ceremonies and public commemorations. The paper combines historical methodology with approaches used by anthropology and religious studies to explore this “national religion” as a contemporary religious phenomenon.

COMMENTARY: Japanese Anthropology in the Pacific

Bruce White, Doshisha University

SESSION FOUR

Chair: Henry Johnson, University of Otago

Talking past each other: A comparative study of the narrative strategies and descriptions of the Russo-Japanese War in Japanese and Russian history textbooks, ca. 1997-2010

Elena Kolesova, Unitec Institute of Technology

This presentation compares the depictions of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) in Russian and Japanese history textbooks published over the last fifteen years. Our findings demonstrate that the textbooks employ subtle, and not so subtle, strategies to present the war to serve the ideologies of irresponsibility and face-protection. Our research seeks to contribute to the understanding of the didactic messages expressed through these strategies, and to the nature of the ambivalent bi-national relations. It aims to add a comparative element to the field of textbook analysis that could not have been achieved through a study focused on a single-nation.

The ideology of irresponsibility and the ideology of face-protection do not mean that Russian and Japanese textbooks fabricate history. The textbooks are factually accurate and often are based on similar historical facts. However, the ideologies are expressed differently in Russian and Japanese textbooks. The result is that the textbook narratives may deter students from critical engagement of the issues and the lessons to be learnt from the war.

SESSION FIVE: New Research

Chair: Elena Kolesova, Unitec Institute of Technology

The religious “Japanese Internet”: overview and research methodology

Danilo Giambra, University of Otago

The Internet has become a multicultural and multilingual environment, declined in different interconnected manifestations, each one showing specific characteristics. For example, the Internet the Japanese speaking users can access in their mother tongue represents an interesting case of study, being the Japanese the fourth most used language in the WWW in 2010.

In order to provide an analysis about if and how the “Japanese Internet” is becoming a fertile environment for a participatory interactive religious dialogue, in this paper I will introduce an overview of contemporary use of the Internet by the Japanese speaking users, explaining how the “Japanese Internet” is different from the other “Internets” and dwelling on the role played by the Japanese language in defining it. Furthermore, I will explore the presence of Japanese “religiosity” on the web, in particular I will discuss methodological approaches to the analysis of the religious “Japanese Internet”.

The Construction of Identities within Japanese Foreign Policy Practice

Tadashi Iwami, University of Otago

My project examines the discursive construction of political identities of Japan within its foreign policy practice. From the post-modernist constructivist analytical framework, focusing particularly on seemingly two contested identities, namely a ‘Pacifist’ Japan and a ‘Normal’ Japan, it attempts to explicate how these two identities have played an important role in the recent explicit announcements of the government on peacebuilding operations. Whilst aiming at this as the central goal for this project, it is an early stage for me to answer this key enquiry, therefore, in this presentation, I will focus on two dimensions in this presentation: 1) a brief overview of works on Japanese politics and identity, and 2) key elements of the analytical framework.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Professor Henry Johnson, University of Otago

RESEARCH REPORTS

A Shrinking Circle

Festival, Leadership and Institutional Changes in a Japanese Fishing Village.

Giovanni BULIAN

giovannibulian@hotmail.com

The University of Siena

In recent decades, the theme of institution has reassumed a key role in the analysis of regional dynamics of state societies such as Japan, raising important debates that have finally ditched the contributions of post-war rural ethnography. The theme of my research aims to give an overview on the transformation of organizational systems in a small Japanese fishing community, by linking aspects of the local political culture with national and prefectural government policies. Moreover, my thesis focuses also on a series of economic and social issues that characterize contemporary rural Japan. The social and economic reality of rural Japan is presented as a “peripheral”, plagued by problems such as aging population, unemployment and emigration in urban areas (Traphagan & Knight 2003), and therefore the lack of generational activities in the primary and secondary sectors. In particular, communities living in *ritō* (“remote island”) are those who experience more several difficulties in terms of economy and social life. Geographical dislocation, insularity, increased vulnerability to weather events (cyclones, tsunamis, storm surges) compared to coastal areas, a fragile ecological system (the delicate balance between the natural environment and traditional fishing techniques) and seawater pollution are the main factors that affect the welfare of local communities.

Over the past fifty years, the Japanese government has approved a number of legislative measures to promote the economic and social development of remote islands. The “Law for the Improvement of Sea Routes for Remote Islands” (*ritōkōroseibihō*), promulgated July 4, 1952 (hereinafter abbreviated as “Remote Islands Law”, (*ritōhō*), was the first measure of government intervention in the communities stationed on remote islands. Municipalities that administer remote islands on the basis of these laws have the task of developing a regional economic program, which is financially and legally supported by the central government. The economic and financial crisis was decisive in the political issues of readjustment and reorganization of the productive sectors. In the fisheries sector, which is the main economic activity of communities living in remote islands,

thanks to the Law for the Promotion of Incorporation of Fishing Cooperative Associations promulgated in 2002, several local fishing cooperatives (*gyogyōkumiai*) were merged together to improve fish productivity through a centralized administrative system. The transformations that took place at the organizational level in fish cooperatives have resulted in a further change in the internal policies of the fishing community.

From ethnographic analysis of these processes, a series of issues related to institutional microphysics and topics such as the negotiation of values in the remodeling of local societies, the strategies of cultural adaptation, social groups and local identity processes emerge. In order to shed light on these issues, my research aims to highlight the relationship between the organization and strategies with local religious institutions which have dealt with the economic, social and demographic transformations in Kamishima ("Island of God"), a small fishing community stationed at the entrance of Ise Bay. Specifically, my ethnographic research focuses on the complex celebration of the New Year (*shōgatsu*). The main features of *shōgatsu* in Kamishima are a series of religious ceremonies, collectively called *gētā matsuri*, which take place between December and January (Kokubo 1983). Originally, the financial administration of these events was managed and performed by the *miyamochi* ("person in charge") and *inkyoshu* ("group of elderly retired"): the *miyamochi*, elected according to specific selection criteria (seniority, economic stability, health, etc.), the *miyamochi* is responsible for organizing the rituals and ceremonies of the community, whereas the *inkyoshu* is an organization composed by those who have already played this role (Tanabe & Tanabe 1980). The *miyamochi* was originally connected to the organizational system of *seko* ("district"), based on the historical configuration of the settlement. Kamishima is divided into three districts named *higashi seko* ("eastern district"), *naka seko* ("center district") and *minami seko* ("southern district"), and represent, together with *chōnaikai* ("neighborhood associations") and *gyōkyōkumiai*, the executive organs of the community.

The worsening demographic situation of the community caused a deep readjustment of the organizational system of *miyamochi*: the lack of parents and children who attend the *miyamochi* during the celebrations and the heavy financial burden represent the leading cause of renunciation from the elders to carry out this task. To address these issues, over the last decade, the fishing cooperative association of Kamishima covered expenses for religious celebrations, providing also its headquarters to celebrate the major ceremonial events. Founded in 1943, the cooperative of Kamishima manages the local fishing trade, and in 2003, the cooperative merged with the *gyōkyōkumiai* of Toba, becoming a single cooperative entity, including also other cooperatives in the region of the Ise Bay. Because of its financial skills and higher revenues from the experience gained by the new

administrative reality, it was decided to entrust the *gyōgyokumiai* with the responsibility to manage the funds of the religious events of in the main Shinto shrine. In addition, in order to reduce the commitments of *miyamochi*, the cooperative has established funding for *miyamochi*. The *kumiaichō* (“Director of the fishing cooperative association”) started to play a key role in the organization and administration of financial events of the religious community, because, in addition to managing finances, he has the task of negotiating the role of *miyamochi* with candidates. In many cases, he also plays the role of *chonaikaichō* (“Director of the neighborhood association”), and *rojinkaichō* (“Director of pensioners association”), and of *kannushi* (shinto priest) of in the local shinto shrine. The centralization of institutional roles in one person shows that the role of *kumiaichō* is vital to the community.

The analysis of institutional transformations that have involved this community, took a wider scope than the single ethnographic topic, in order to highlight how the “processes of the institutional infiltration” have actually made their way in the complicated web of social relationships, strongly rooted in the territory, which characterize the life of this community. The analysis of these social processes raises also questions on the organizational dynamics of Kamishima, which can be taken as a case study to understand the relationship between central government authorities and rural communities (center-periphery), and power relations among members of the community (local leadership).

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Anthropology of Conservation

Modus Operandi on Conservation of Lacquerware

Leonor Leiria

leonorleiria@gmail.com

Oxford Brookes University

In 1993 the Conservators Colin Pearson and Robert Ferguson established the *Code of Practice for Conservation and Training*. It was presented at the Committee for Conservation of the International Council of Museums – ICOM-CC - during the 10th Triennial Meeting held in Washington, DC and established anthropology as one of the subject-matters for the basic curriculum of conservation/restoration course studies. However, the discipline of anthropology has never been implemented among universities' academic syllabi on conservation/restoration studies all over the world. Later on, in 1996 the Conservators Lena Wikström and Ulrich Schiefl published the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer's Organisation, the ECCO Professional Guidelines, that included in the theoretical instruction for conservation/restoration studies the discipline of ethnology as a basic requirement. Again, with few exceptions, ethnology was absent from the academic curricula of the conservation/restoration courses in universities.

This thesis aims to contribute towards the establishment of an Anthropology of Conservation by analysing cultural-determined practices of conservation taking place in different spatial and temporal realities by Conservators with specific formations. Because *Namban* lacquerware exhibit tokens of different cultures and the cultural sense of value determines the *modus operandi* of conservation treatments, Western countries and Japan conserve lacquerware differently.

Namban lacquerware embodies endogenous and exogenous ethnic features exhibiting tokens of cultural fusion, attributed to the result of cross-cultural encounters between Europeans and Japanese people. By the fact of having employed different techniques and materials for conservation of sixteenth and seventeenth century *Namban* lacquerware, these items are more susceptible to criticisms among scholars, particularly when conservation treatments change the constituent materials, latent shape, and iconography present on the surface of the lacquerware. Therefore, it is well known that practices of conservation change objects' meanings, yet conservation treatments permit having lacquerware on display and accessible to the public.

Anthropology of Conservation is here developed based on the premise that despite the conservation of cultural heritage being grounded on International Conventions,¹ the practice of conservation of inalienable objects is far from being universal. Indeed, relativism is perceived in concepts embedded in the Japanese definition for conservation by distinguishing *hozon* from the restoration term *fukugen*. Both concepts differ from the Western meaning for the same words.

Conservation is far beyond treatments, and relative evaluations are constantly present in the decision-making of conservation to define states of decay, iconographic significance and modes of displaying objects. Indeed, social aspects regarding conservation of lacquerware are present in the main questions raised, like: What kind of lacquerware shall be conserved? Why have these particular items been chosen to be conserved? How are these objects being conserved? How will conservation treatment influence human perception? Is Japanese and Western perception of a conserved lacquerware similar? By whom and with what kind of formation are lacquerware being conserved? Where will the conservation treatment take place? We may infer that conservation is indeed a social, cultural, political and economical practice (Peters and Sully 2006). Indeed, formation of professional conservators, daily practices, decision-making, reports of conservation and how conservation institutes and organizations operate in the field belongs to the social sciences realm and should be explicitly incorporated in the curricula of conservation/restoration studies in universities.

The thesis focuses on three main issues: first, the *modus operandi* in conservation and conservation training in the field of lacquerware, highlighting intangible forms of conservation through transmission of skills and knowhow. This issue is exemplified with my own experience of training in the conservation of lacquerware in Japan at the *Urushi* section of the Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties; second, analyse temporal concerns with the life-span of objects, particularly focusing on anachronisms and semantic changes perceived in conserved lacquerware; third, examine tangible forms of conservation of lacquerware by highlighting the current state of objects

¹ At the international level, one of the non-governmental organisations that plays a crucial role in establishing the codes and conventions for an International agreement on conservation of cultural properties is the ICOM – International Council of Museums since 1930s, belonging to UNESCO – United Nations, Scientific and Cultural Organization. In the case of conservation of lacquer three organisations of ICOM has carried out fundamental work: the ICOM-CC –International Committee for Conservation; the ICCROM – International Study Centre for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property; and ICOM committee for Conservation Group on Lacquer.

and practices of replacement of the original – *gensaku* by the copy *mosha* and *mokoku*. Particular emphasis is given to the practice of the construction of *simulacra*.

The appendix entitled *Monography of Lacquer-Trees* identify taxonomically the sources of lacquer belonging to the material constitution of a series of museological objects proceeding from Asia in order to distinguish them from Japanese lacquer. Lacquer-trees were identified in terms of chronological taxonomy, their geographical distribution, and topographical arrangement in Japanese landscape.

A year of multi-sited fieldwork was carried out in Southern Europe *viz.*, Vatican City, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. It was not focused on the conventional anthropological fieldwork of selecting a geographical area of research, but instead, was focused on *Namban* lacquerware.

Alternative methodologies applied to the study of *Namban* lacquerware in order to achieve a new understanding within the anthropological framework resulted in bibliographical research on primary and secondary sources, direct observation of objects on museums and botanical dried-specimens on the herbaria, participant observation, case-studies, photo elicitation interviews, laboratorial programme through *experimento-predictive* methodology, and reports of conservation treatments of lacquerware. Lastly, it is my belief that conservation studies both in Western countries and in Japan will benefit in epistemological and methodological terms by incorporating an anthropological approach to an area that has been dominated by the hard sciences.

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TOMORROW'S RESEARCHERS TODAY: A REVIEW OF PH.D. PROJECTS

In its online form, the JAWS Newsletter will maintain this feature to keep members up-to-date about ongoing new research and researchers in the anthropology of Japan all over the world. The aim of this section is to give current and recently graduated Ph.D. students, who carry on anthropological-like research on Japan, the opportunity to introduce themselves and to let us know their projects. As during the previous Editorship, the students do not necessarily have to be enrolled in an anthropology program: interdisciplinarity and any approach that is likely to provide anthropologists with suggestions and ideas are most welcome. We hope that Ph.D. students will offer their collaboration, and that supervisors encourage their students to submit.

Transnational Intimacies

Turkish - Japanese Couples and Balancing of Moderate Islamic Turkish Model with Japanese Culture

DANE, Zeliha Muge

mdane@suou.waseda.jp

Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies, Waseda University

The increasing impact of globalization and the resulting high level of interaction between transnational communities have been blurring boundaries between cultures and facilitating people's movement across borders. This in return has resulted in the increase of transnational couple formations and marriages. As the emergence of family is considered to be the outcome of historical and social circumstances to be evaluated through individual experiences in terms of time, place and social situations, in this complex global era the decision-making process for transnational family formation sums up to more than its emotional, social and economic components. Transnational marriages require a quite complex intimacy balance on behalf of the spouses as these entail bargaining and blending of cultural differences as well as overcoming a possible language/communication barrier and challenges of bi-cultural child rearing.

This research focuses on transnational relationships and marriages that are negotiated across and beyond Turkish and Japanese national and cultural boundaries. The aim is to analyze the transnational intimacy of these couples in relation to problems they face and solutions they formulate with emphasis on the blend of Turkey's relatively moderate Islamic based culture with Japanese culture by analyzing the dynamics of these

marriages with reference to the forces that draw them together, preserve their unity as a family, and break them apart. The aim is to shed light on how these couples negotiate and balance their cultural and religious differences in their everyday life, to what extent external actors such as in-laws and society at large influences their relationship, and whether or not they feel as if they have made concessions on their cultural identity as a result of their transnational marriage. Objectives of this research are to assess a better understanding of transnational marriages of these two cultures by focusing on (1) how significant their encounter and decision process to get married is (if significant), (2) how does having at least one spouse using a foreign language to communicate affect their intimacy and communication, (3) how do they choose to raise their children in terms of culture, religion, language and schooling, and how do they negotiate the child rearing process, (4) to what extent do their in-laws and the society they live in influence their marital decisions, and (5) how does religion, religiosity and Islamic culture play out in their marriages.

There is a great variety in the negotiation mechanisms that Turkish – Japanese couples have developed throughout their marriage years, and gender roles assigned by both societies seem to play an important role in the creation and maintenance of the balance of power within these transnational families. One common point stressed by all spouses interviewed for this research was the awareness of the necessity to make cultural concessions in order to make their transnational marriage work.

Learning Not to Labor: How a Day Laborers' District Became a Welfare Town

Jieun KIM

jinikim@umich.edu

University of Michigan

I am a fourth-year PhD student in the department of anthropology at the University of Michigan, and my advisor is Professor Jennifer Robertson. I am currently halfway through my dissertational research in Kotobuki District of Yokohama City, which started in October 2010, building on five months of preliminary research during the summers of 2008 and 2009. My research aims to explore the significance of local activities (*chiiki katsudou*) in urban settings as a response to the long-term recession and aging society in Japan.

Kotobuki, also used to be known as the nation's third largest *yoseba* (labor exchange market, or a day laborer's district), is a three hundred square meters' neighborhood, in which more than 80% of the residents are living on social welfare (*seikatsu hogo*). Given the growing emphasis on 'self-responsibility' following the collapse of the bubble economy in Japan, it comes to a surprise that such a place lacking any economic productivity should exist right at the heart of Japan's second largest city, Yokohama.

In an attempt to resolve this conundrum, my research focuses particularly on two aspects: firstly the systematization of local support networks, and secondly, the spatial possibilities of densely structured single room occupancies. As an enclave of various minorities from *zainichi* to the homeless, Kotobuki developed a distinctive form of local autonomy. A variety of local activities and self-help networks spontaneously emerged to complement the lack of institutional support. While the community was held together with anti-capitalist and anti-governmental consciousness in the 1970s~80s, the decrease in day laboring jobs entailed changes in the local agenda from the right to labor to the right to survive. By appealing to the sense of emergency, the local groups could implement makeshift measures and mobilize a large number of volunteers to secure the survival of the residents, from winter struggle (*ettou tousou*) to soup kitchens (*takidashi*), night visits ("patrolling"), and free clinics. Notably, the success in the systematization of these activities came from the lack of consensus and loose structure that came to characterize the governmentality of Kotobuki today.

It should be noted that 'a place to stay' (*ibasho*) serves as a keyword in these activities, which leads to the second focal point of my research. Securing a place of one's need or desire has been the very foundational force in the making of Kotobuki and the intensification of its distinctive spatial features. Ever since the *zainichi* Korean landowners and the day laborers were forced to move to the reclaimed land of Kotobuki in the late 1950s, the district became denser with flophouses that evolved more and more suitable to those who are excluded from the society, from the homeless to the mentally or physically challenged. As the rooms barely afford to fit one person and most residential functions are scattered throughout the district, the spatial conventions dividing the private and the public spheres tend to be violated in Kotobuki. It is also such spatial indecisiveness that attracts volunteers and artists to find their "*ibasho*" in Kotobuki in pursuing their activities.

Grounding on these two aspects, I hope to discuss how the experiences in Kotobuki induce people to redefine and question the given premises of civic ethics, the division between the public and the private, the value of labor and life in a neoliberal economy.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

AAA (American Anthropological Association)

“Traces, Tidemarks and Legacies”

November 16-20, 2011, Montreal, Canada

<http://www.aaanet.org/meetings/>

Traces, tidemarks and legacies are words that evoke the shifting and changeable character of differences that nevertheless persist, perhaps in altered form, as differences. Traces leave hints and reminders of half-forgotten things, relations and thoughts. Tidemarks leave indicators of where things have got to so far: this might be a strongly guarded distinction or just a line in the sand that disappears or shifts location the next day. Legacies imply pasts (imagined, asserted or remembered) that become entangled with the present and potential future, both informing and perhaps defining new differences. The traces, tidemarks and legacies of past and possible future distinctions—partially remembered, partially re-created and partially invented (by anthropologists as much as by anybody else)—make the world a multiply occupied place. And it is this process of how differences are made, marked, removed, maintained and altered within that multiply occupied place that is the focus for the 2011 theme.

The topic is important now because we are living through a time when most distinctions—between disciplines, places, environments, peoples, objects, biological and non-biological entities, times, languages, beliefs, epistemologies and ontologies—have been thoroughly challenged, both intellectually and morally. Indeed, the distinction between the intellectual and the moral has itself been repeatedly questioned. Yet these challenges have not led to the disappearance or reduction of differences. Moreover, massively increased communication, interaction and the ability to blend entities that were never blended before has not led to the disappearance of differences, either. Nevertheless, something significant has happened; the meaning and location of differences, both intellectually and morally, have been rearranged. The 2011 theme invites participants to reflect on how all fields of anthropology, whose own locations have also been rearranged, are engaging with these shifting realities in which we live, within and across disciplines and regions.

Montréal is an ideal location in which to consider such matters, given its rich history of being a multiply occupied place. Montréal's residents are actively engaged with

questions of making, marking, removing and remaking differences. This not only involves the city and its own traces and tidemarks but also the city's internationally renowned cultural, performance arts, media and design sectors, all of which are making significant contributions to the transnational debates about how to rearrange the traces, tidemarks and legacies that confront the world today.

Meeting guidelines and rules for participation are available by [clicking here](#).

ASA (Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth)

“Vital Powers and Politics: Human Interactions with Living Things”

September 13-16, 2011, the Lampeter campus of Prifysgol Cymru y Drindod Dewi Sant /
University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

<http://www.theasa.org/conferences/asa11/index.shtml>

The [Firth lecture](#) will be given by Professor Tim Ingold, University of Aberdeen. The [RAI presidential address](#) will be given by Prof. Roy Ellen, University of Kent.

BAJS (British Association of Japanese Studies)

2011, September 8, St. Anthony's College, Oxford University

<http://www.bajs.org.uk/conferences/>

Papers are presented in a variety of specialist areas and offer an opportunity to keep abreast of current scholarly thought and research in Japanese Studies. In addition, there is a plenary session to which the Association, with the support of sponsors, invites well-known academics and public intellectuals. Some of the papers presented at the conference are published in the Association's publication, *Japan Forum*.

The Conference is open to non-members who share an interest in Japanese Studies.

EAPCA (East Asia Popular Culture Association)

“Inaugural Conference 2011”

2011, September 1-4, Howard International House, Taipei, Taiwan

<https://sites.google.com/site/2011eapca/>

East Asia Popular Culture Symposium

“Cool New Asia: Asian Popular Culture in a Local Context”

2011, 25-26 November, Oakridge House, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland,
New Zealand

<http://www.unitec.ac.nz/creative-industries-business/performing-screen-arts/conferences/east-asian.cfm>

As popular culture flows and consumption opportunities become increasingly ubiquitous, what is often overlooked is the marked and local specificity of the popular culture texts themselves. In multicultural societies there is growing interest expressed by different agencies to utilise popular culture for their own purposes. We are particularly interested in the theme of the emerging conflict between different agencies performing popular culture, especially as popular culture texts are used, misused or abused in the pursuit of singularly local objectives and stable cultural identities. Questions of ownership, authenticity and the production/negotiating of identity are central when considering the role diasporic and immigrant communities play in any local environment.

This symposium seeks to bring together scholars and practitioners from across the spectrum of popular culture production and theorisation, leading to new understandings of the ways in which international popular culture and particularly East Asian popular culture is produced and consumed in a local context. (Abstracts due by August 31th).

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS:

We would also like to mention the following website, thinking that it can be useful to JAWS Members: *Anthropology Conference Worldwide: Upcoming Events in Anthropology, Cultural Studies and Related Fields*:

<http://www.conferencealerts.com/anthropology.htm>

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Family Name	Personal Name	Academic Affiliation	Country	e-mail
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ALEXY	ALLISON		USA	allison.alex@gmail.com
BACHNIK	JANE		JAPAN	bachnik@cba.att.ne.jp
BAFELLI	ERICA	Lecturer in Asian Religions, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Otago	NEW ZEALAND	erica.baffelli@otago.ac.nz
BALMUS	PETRA		JAPAN	bpetra@white.plala.or.jp
BEILLEVAIRE	PATRICK	EHSS	FRANCE	Patrick.Beillevaire@ehess.fr
BEN-ARI	EYAL	Professor, Sociology and Anthropology	ISRAEL	mseba@mscc.huji.ac.il
BESTOR	THEODORE	Harvard University	USA	bestor@wjh.harvard.edu
BIBLIOTHEEK KUL	UNIVERSITEITS	LSIN-tijdschriftenadminis tratie	BELGIUM	
BORET	SEBASTIEN	PhD student, Oxford Brookes University	UK	sboret@hotmail.com ; sboret@brookes.ac.uk
BORNER-MOUER	ELIZABETH.	Dept. of East Asian Studies, University of Zurich	SWITZERLAND	e.borner-mouer@bluewin.ch
BRADLEY	WILLIAM S.	Professor, Faculty of Intercultural Communication, Ryukoku University	JAPAN	william@world.ryukoku.ac.jp
BREADEN	JEREMY	PhD Candidate, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne	AUSTRALIA	breadenj@unimelb.edu.au
BROWN	KEITH		USA	Keith Brown [lkb@pitt.edu]

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CAVE	PETER	The University of Manchester	UNITED KINGDOM	petercav@hkucc.hku.hk
CHRISTENSEN	PAUL	University of Hawaii	USA	paulchri@hawaii.edu
CLAMMER	JOHN	Sophia University	JAPAN	
CLARK	SCOTT	Rose-Hulman Inst. of Technology	USA	scott.f.clark@rose-hulman.edu
CLOSE	NATALIE		JAPAN	natalie.close@anu.edu.au
COOK	EMMA	JSPS Postdoctoral fellow Waseda University	JAPAN	e.cook@soas.ac.uk
CORT	LOUISE A.	Curator for Ceramics, Freer and Sackler Galleries Smithsonian Institute	USA	louise.cort@asia.si.edu / ORTLO@SI.EDU
COX	RUPERT A.	Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester	UK	r.cox2@btinternet.com
CREIGHTON	MILLIE		CANADA	milliecr@interchange.ubc.ca
CROSS	TIM	Associate Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Fukuoka University, Japan	JAPAN	tim@fukuoka-u.ac.jp
CWIERTKA	KATARZYNA	Ph.D. Centre for Japanese and Korean Studies, Leiden University	NETHER LANDS	K.J.Cwierka@let.leidenuniv.nl
DALES	LAURA		JAPAN	lauradales09@gmail.com
DALLAIS	PHILIPPE	Ethnographic Museum of Zurich University, Curator Assistant, Lecturer	SWITZER LAND	phil.dallais@vmz.unizh.ch
DE ANTONI	ANDREA	Kyoto University	JAPAN	a.deantoni@zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp
DELANEY	ALYNE E.		DENMARK	ad@ifm.dk

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

DUNN	CYNTHIA	Dept. Sociol-Anth-Criminology	USA	Cyndi.Dunn@uni.edu
DUTEIL-OGATA	FABIENNE		FRANCE	fabdutogata@yahoo.fr
EARTH	NANCY	University of Otago	NEW ZEALAND	urearth7nz@gmail.com
ESENBEL	SELÇUK	Bogazici University	TURKEY	esenbel@boun.edu.tr
FELDMAN	R. CHRISTOPHER	University of Texas at Austin	USA	FELDMAN_CHRIS@mail.utexas.edu
FERSTL	KATJA		GERMANY	katja.ferstl@googlemail.com
FISKER-NIELSEN	ANNE METTE	SOAS University of London	U.K.	annemettefn@hotmail.com
FOREMAN	KELLY	Wayne State University	USA	kforeman69@hotmail.com
FRAZER	ANNA	Oxford Brookes University	UK	czech_anna@hotmail.com
FREIBERG	FREDA	Japanese Studies Centre, Melbourne	AUSTRIA	freda@nex.net.au
FRÜHSTÜCK	SABINE	Associate Professor, UC Santa Barbara	USA	fruhstuc@earthlink.net
FUKUZAWA	REBECCA	Professor, Hosei University	JAPAN	fukuzawa@k.hosei.ac.jp
GAITANIDIS	IOANNIS	National Institute of Japanese Studies, White Rose East Asia Centre University of Leeds	UK	eas5ig@leeds.ac.uk
GELBTUCH	MAYA	Faculty of Law, Niigata University	JAPAN	maya@jura.niigata-u.ac.jp
GETREUER-KARGL	INGRID	Department of East Asian Studies - Japanese Studies	AUSTRIA	ingrid.getreuer-kargl@univie.ac.at
GIAMBRA	DANILO	University of Otago	NEW ZEALAND	giambradanilo@gmail.com
GILL	TOM	Professor, Faculty of International Studies, Meiji Gakuin University	JAPAN	gill@k.meijigakuin.ac.jp
GOLDSTEIN-GIDONI	OFRA	Dept. of Sociol. and Anthropology	ISRAEL	ofrag@post.tau.ac.il

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

GOODMAN	ROGER	Nissan Professor of Modern Japanese Studies, University of Oxford	UK	roger.goodman@nissan.ox.ac.uk
GORDON	JERMAINE	University of Chicago	USA	ranma_chan4@hotmail.com
GRABURN	NELSON		USA	graburn@uclink4.berkeley.edu
GRIMES-MACLELLAN	DAWN M.	University of Illinois	USA	maclelln@gol.com (invalid)
GUARNÉ	BLAI	Inter-Asia Research Group, East Asian Studies Program, Autonomous University of Barcelona	SPAIN	Blai.Guarne@uab.cat
GUICHARD-ANGUIS	SYLVIE	Laboratoire Espace, Nature et Culture CNRS/Paris-Sorbonne Paris 4, Institut de Géographie	FRANCE	sguichard_anguis@hotmail.com
GYGI	FABIO	41 returned, new address provided June 2008	UK	fabio_gygi@yahoo.com
HAYASHI	ISAO	National Museum of Ethnology	JAPAN	isaki@idc.minpaku.ac.jp
HENDRY	JOY	Professor of Social Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University	UK	jhendry@brookes.ac.uk
HILL	JACQUETTA	Department of Anthropology and Educational Psychology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	USA	j-hill@uiuc.edu
HO	SWEE LIN	Assistant Professor, School of International Studies, Catholic University of Korea	SOUTH KOREA	justswee@gmail.com

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

HOOD	CHRISTOPHER	Director, Japanese Studies Center, Cardiff University	UK	hoodcp@Cardiff.ac.uk
HORIGUCHI (formerly Kaneko)	SACHIKO	Adjunct instructor in English, Sophia University	JAPAN	sachiko.horiguchi@gmail.com
HORNE	JOHN D.		UK	JohnH@mhie.ac.uk
INTERNATIONAL HOUSE of JAPAN			JAPAN	
IKEDA	KEIKO		JAPAN	
IMAMURA	ANNE	United States Department of State, National Foreign Affairs Training Center	USA	AnneEi@aol.com
IMOTO	YUKI	Postdoctoral fellow, Keio University (DPhil Oxon 2009)	JAPAN	yuki.aop@gmail.com
IWATAKE	MIKAKO		FINLAND	mikako.iwatake@helsinki.fi
JAPANESE LIBRARY	BODLEIAN		UK	
JENIKE	BRENDA ROBB	Lawrence University	USA	brenda.jenike@lawrence.edu
JOLIVET	MURIEL	Professor, Sophia University, Department of French Studies	JAPAN	mrpjolivet@hotmail.com
JONES	SIMEON		JAPAN	yarbooo@yahoo.com
KANEKO	SACHIKO		JAPAN	sachiko.kaneko@gmail.com
KEET	PHILOMENA		UK	philomenakeet@gmail.com
KELLY	WILLIAM H.		UK	w.kelly@brookes.ac.uk
KELLY	WILLIAM W.	Department of Anthropology	USA	william.kelly@yale.edu
KENNEY	ELIZABETH	Kansai Gaidai University	JAPAN	elizabethkenney@runbox.com
KENT	PAULINE		JAPAN	pauline@world.ryukoku.ac.jp
KINSELLA	SHARON		UK	sharon@kinsellaresearch.com
KIRSCH	GRISELDIS		UK	gk10@soas.ac.uk

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

KLIEN	SUSANNE	German Institute for Japanese Studies	JAPAN	klien@dijitokyo.org
KNECHT	PETER		JAPAN	knecht.peter@gmail.com
KOIZUMI	KYOKO	School of Social Information Studies, Otsuma Women's University	JAPAN	koizumi@otsuma.ac.jp
KOSAKA	EINAR YOHSUKE	Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University	NORWAY	Taslehoff@gmail.com
KRAUSE	LIV NYLAND	MA student, Institute of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen	DENMARK	livn@hotmail.com
KREINER	JOSEF	Japanologisches Seminar, Universität Bonn	GERMANY	japanologie@uni-bonn.de
KULY	LISA	Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University	CANADA	Lisa Kuly <lk83@cornell.edu>
KUSUMOTO	WAKAKO	Shibusawa Ei-ichi Memorial Foundation	JAPAN	w_kusumoto@ybb.ne.jp
LAURENT	ERICK L.		JAPAN	erick@gifu-keizai.ac.jp
LEIRA	LEONOR		UK	02208948@brookes.ac.uk
LINHART	RUTH	Fellow of the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna, Austria	AUSTRIA	ruth.linhart@chello.at
LONG	SUSAN ORPETT	Dept. of Sociology, John Carroll University	USA	long@jcu.edu
LOW	MORRIS	University of Queensland	AUSTRALIA	m.low@uq.edu.au
LUNSING	WIM		NETHERLANDS	wim0wim@hotmail.com
MACLACHLAN	LIZ		SINGAPORE	lizmac6@gmail.com
MacNaughton	ANDREW	Department of Japanese Studies, University of Hong Kong	HONG KONG	andosan@ymail.com

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

MANZENREITER	WOLFRAM	Institute for Japanese Studies	AUSTRIA	Wolfram.Manzenreiter@univie.ac.at
MARTIN	RUTH		UK	ruthkmartin@blueyonder.co.uk
MARTINEZ	DOLORES P.		UK	DM6@soas.ac.uk
MATHEWS	GORDON	Dept. of Anthropology	S.A.R. CHINA	cmgordon@cuhk.edu.hk
MATSUNAGA	LOUELLA		UK	llmatsunaga@brookes.ac.uk
MCVEIGH	BRIAN	University of Arizona	USA	bmcveigh@email.arizona.edu
MINPAKU	HEAD LIBRARIAN		JAPAN	
MOCK	JOHN A.		JAPAN	mock99@cameo.plala.or.jp
MOEN	DARRELL G.	Shibaura Institute of Technology, Faculty of Systems Engineering	JAPAN	moen@sic.shibaura-it.ac.jp
MOLLE	ANDREA	Nanzan University	JAPAN	andrea.molle@gmail.com
MOON (KIM)	OKPYO	Professor of Anthropology, Academy of Korean Studies	KOREA	opmoon@aks.ac.kr
MORI	SHUNTA	Professor, Dept. of Cultural Policy and Management, Shizuoka University of Art and Culture	JAPAN	mori@suac.ac.jp
NAKAMAKI	HIROCHIKA	Department of Human Sciences	JAPAN	nakahiro@idc.minpaku.ac.jp
NAKANO	LYNNE	Dept. of Japanese Studies	S.A.R. CHINA	lynnenakano@cuhk.edu.hk
NAKANO	YOSHIKO	Department of Japanese Studies	S.A.R. CHINA	ynakano@hkucc.hku.hk
NIAS LIBRARY		Department of Social Welfare	DENMARK	
OCCHI	DEBRA J.	Miyazaki International College	JAPAN	docchi@miyazaki-mic.ac.jp
OEDEWALD	MARKUS	PhD student. University of Helsinki, Finland	FINLAND	markus.oedewald@liiketalousopisto.fi

OHNUKI-TIERNEY	EMIKO	The Kluge Distinguished Chair of Modern Culture, The John W. Kluge Center, The Library of Congress (Feb 1 - Jul 31)/ l'Institut d'Etudes Avancées-Paris, the French Government (Fall 2009)	USA	ehnuakit@wisc.edu
OMORI	HISAKO	McMaster Univ., Dept. Religious Studies	CANADA	omorih@mcmaster.ca
OSHIMA	KAZUNORI	Former Professor, Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan	JAPAN	koshima@s4.dion.ne.jp
Ostasienwissenschaft aftern	Fachbibliothek	McMaster University	Austria	gabriele.pauer@univie.ac.at
PADOAN	TATSUMA	PhD Candidate, Ca' Foscari University of Venice/ Research Student, Keio University of Tokyo	ITALY	tatsuma.padoan@unive.it
PLATH	DAVID W.		USA	d-plath@uiuc.edu
PLATZ	ANEMONE	Aarhus University	DENMARK	ostap@hum.au.dk
POOLE	GREGORY	Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba	JAPAN	gregspoole@gmail.com
PROCHASKA	ISABELLE	Department of Asian Studies, University of Vienna	AUSTRIA	isabelle@yahoo.co.jp
RAVERI	MASSIMO	Ca'Foscari, University of Venice	ITALY	raveri@unive.it
READER	IAN	University of Manchester	UK	ian.reader@manchester.ac.uk
REFSING	KIRSTEN	Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen	DENMARK	kre@hum.ku.dk
REISEL	MARY	Ph.D. candidate, Temple University	JAPAN	maryrei@hotmail.com , reisel@tuj.ac.jp

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

ROBERTS	GLEENDA		JAPAN	jengsr@twics.com
ROBERTSON	STEPHEN	University of Oxford	UK	stephen.robertson@anthro.ox.ac.uk
ROKKUM	ARNE	Dept. of Ethnography, Mus. Cultural History	NORWAY	arne.rokkum@khm.uio.no
ROKKUM	NAOMI ICHIHARA	Department of Sociology, University of Oslo	NORWAY	naomiir@gmail.com
RONALD	RICHARD	Institute for Housing Urban and Mobility Studies, Delft University of Technology	NETHERLANDS	r.ronald@tudelft.nl
ROWE	MARK	McMaster University	CANADA	rowemar@mcmaster.ca
RUPP	KATHERINE H.		USA	k-rupp-8@alumni.uchicago.edu
SAHIN	ESRA GOKCE	Harvard University	USA	egsahin@fas.harvard.edu
SAKAI	JUNKO	newsletter 41 returned		sakaijun@jlc.tufts.ac.jp (ERROR)
SATO	SHIHO	Ph.D. candidate, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences	NORWAY	shiho.sato@nih.no
SAWKINS	PHILIP		GERMANY	snikwas1@yahoo.co.uk
SCHNELL	SCOTT		USA	scott-schnell@uiowa.edu
SEDGWICK	MITCHELL	Director, Europe Japan Research Centre; Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University	UK	msedgwick@brookes.ac.uk
SHACKLETON	MICHAEL	Faculty of Foreign Languages, Osaka Gakuin University	JAPAN	mshackleton@hotmail.com
SHIMIZU	AKITOSHI	Himeiji institute of Technology	JAPAN	
SHIMIZU	KENSUKE	Student studying for a doctoral degree, European Ethnology, University of Turku, Finland	FINLAND	kenshi@utu.fi

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

SHULMAN	FRANK JOSEPH		USA	fs9@umail.umd.edu (invalid)
SLATER	DAVID		JAPAN	d-slater@hoffman.cc.sophia.ac.jp
SMITH	RACHEL	Oxford Brookes University, MA student	UK	rach@pttv.co.uk
SMITH	WENDY	Senior Lecturer, Dept. Management, Monash University	AUSTRA LIA	wendy.smith@buseco.monash.edu.au
STEGER	BRIGITTE	University Lecturer in Modern Japanese Studies (Society) Dept. of East Asian Studies, University of Cambridge	UK	bs382@cam.ac.uk
STEVENS	CAROLYN	Deputy Director, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne	AUSTRA LIA	css@unimelb.edu.au
STINCHECUM	AMANDA MAYER	Institute of Japanese Studies		amandams1@verizon.net
STOCKWIN	J. A. A. (Arthur)	Nissan Inst. of Japanese Studies	UK	arthur.stockwin@nissan.ox.ac.uk
STURTZ SREETHARAN	CINDI	Assistant Professor, California State University, Sacramento	USA	cstrtz@saclink.csus.edu
SUMIHARA	NORIYA	Tenri University	JAPAN	sumihara@sta.tenri-u.ac.jp
SUNAGAWA	KAZUNORI	Chuo University	JAPAN	gah03406@nifty.ne.jp
SUZUKI	HIKARU			hikarusuzuki@smu.edu.sg
THOMAS	JULIA ADENEY	Associate Prof, Dept. of History, University of Notre Dame	USA	thomasjna@aol.com
TORSELLO	DAVIDE	University of Bergamo Italy	ITALY	davide.torsello@unibg.it
TRAPHAGAN	JOHN	Dept. of Asian Studies, Univ. of Texas at Austin	USA	jtrap@mail.utexas.edu
TSUJI	YOHKO	Dept. of Anthropology, Cornell University Ithaca, NY 14853	USA	yt33@cornell.edu

REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS

UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN		Inst. for Asian and African Studies	NETHERLANDS	p.l.wijsman@let.leidenuniv.nl
URRU	LUIGI	Universita degli studi di Milano-Bicocca	ITALY	luigi.urrui@unimib.it (invalid)
VOLLMER	KLAUS	Chair of Japanese Studies, LMU Munich University	GERMANY	Klaus.Vollmer@ostasien.fak12.uni-muenchen.de
VOS	KEN	Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde	NETHERLANDS	kenvos@rmv.nl
WADA	MAO	SOAS University of London	UK	149193@soas.ac.uk
WAKAMATSU	FUMITAKA	Harvard University	UK	wakamats@fas.harvard.edu
WATANABE	TOSHIO	Director, Research Centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation/Chelsea College of Art and Design	UK	Tpwatanabe@aol.com
WHITE	BRUCE	Dept. of Social Studies, Doshisha University	JAPAN	bwhite@oicd.net
WHITE	MERRY	Anthropology Department, Boston University	USA	corky@bu.edu
WHITELAW	GAVIN	Associate Professor of Anthropology	JAPAN	whitelaw@icu.ac.jp
WIECZOREK	IRIS	GIGA Institute of Asian Affairs	GERMANY	wieczorek@giga-hamburg.de
WILLIS	DAVID BLAKE	Professor of Anthropology and Education Department of Contemporary Societies Soai University	JAPAN	dwillis108@gmail.com
WINKEL	MARGARITA	Centre of Japanese Studies	NETHERLANDS	m.winkel@let.leidenuniv.nl
WONG	Heung Wah (Dixon)	Japanese Studies, Univ. Hong	S.A.R. CHINA	hwwongc@hkucc.hku.hk

WOOD	DONALD C.	Akita University Graduate School of Medicine, Department of Medical Information Science and Global Issues in Medicine	JAPAN	wood@med.akita-u.ac.jp
YAMAGUCHI	MASAO		JAPAN	
YAMAKI	KEIKO	Doctoral student, Graduate University for Advanced Studies	JAPAN	yamaki@idc.minpaku.ac.jp
YAMAMOTO	BEVERLY	Assistant Professor, Osaka University	JAPAN	bevyamamoto@hus.osaka-u.ac.jp
YANO	CHRIS	University of Hawaii	USA	cryano@hawaii.edu
YOSHIDA	TEIGO		JAPAN	<u>no email</u>
