

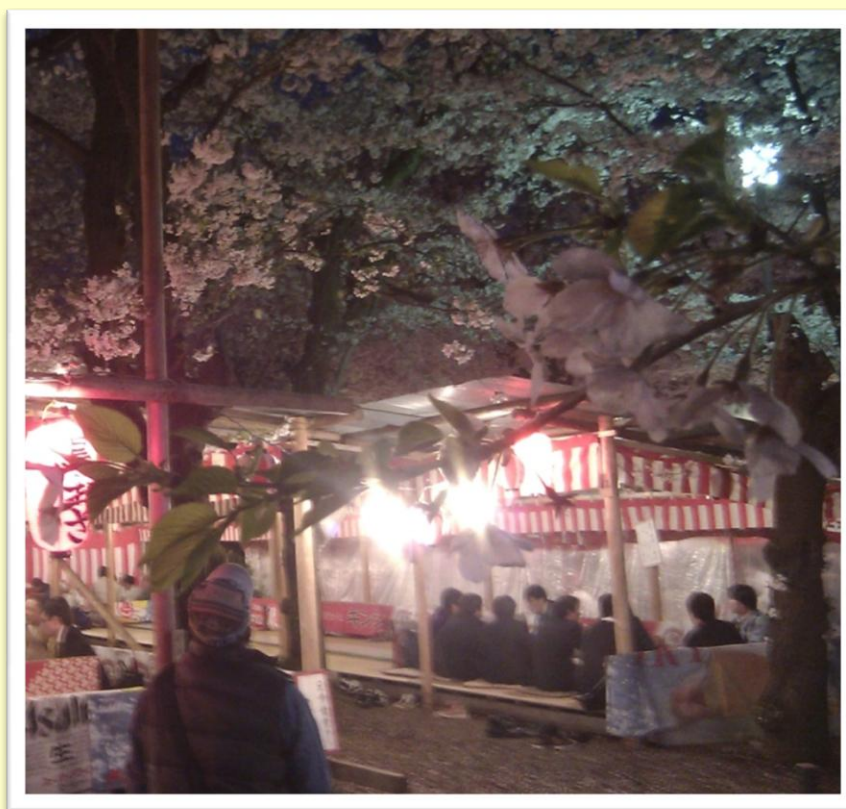
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Japan Anthropology Workshop

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JAPAN ANTHROPOLOGY WORKSHOP NEWSLETTER NO. 48

MARCH 2013

FROM THE JAWS OFFICERS

FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL	6
FROM THE TREASURER	7
FROM THE EDITORS	8

JAWS NEWS

JAWS PUBLICATION NEWS	11
JAWS CONFERENCE 2013 REVIEW	15
Conference Report	15
Panels and Individual Presentations Abstracts	19
TOMORROW'S RESEARCHERS TODAY: A REVIEW OF PH.D. PROJECTS	42
REGISTER OF JAWS MEMBERS	46

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FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

John W. Traphagan

Welcome to another issue of the JAWS Newsletter. Summer vacation is now coming to an end and many of us are returning to campus from summer research trips. I was fortunate to spend a month in Iwate, which was a very pleasant break from the Austin heat and lack of rain.

Quite a bit is going on in relation to future conferences. Members of JAWS are working on panels for the JASCA/AJJ conference that will be held in Tokyo in May of 2014, as well as the EAJIS conference in Ljubljana in September of 2014. In addition to holding JAWS along with EAJIS, the Ljubljana meeting will also represent Brigitte Steger's taking over the helm of JAWS as the new Secretary General.

There have also been some interesting and intellectually stimulating discussions on the JAWS listserv concerning ideas about panels for these conferences, and I encourage members to make as much use as possible of the JAWS listserv to communicate with members of the Japan anthropology community and also to exchange ideas related to both research and teaching. I hope to see many of you in Tokyo or Ljubljana (or both).

FROM THE TREASURER

Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen

The JAWS account is with the Co-operative Bank in the UK.

It held, on March 7, 2013 a Total £8400.

(Total £8097 (September 2012 including minus US\$107 for web fees)

(Total in March 2012 £7840)

It currently holds as of May 13, 2013:

A Total of £ 8679.31

This includes most recent paid membership fees of £ 279 since last update in March

Still to come are royalties from Routledge:

These Royalties include back payment from March 2009 £329.72, June 11 payment of £508.78, and March 2012 of a total of £ 359.95. **Total £ 1198.45**

We currently have 134 members. Thank you to everyone who has paid outstanding fees and who has paid online or set up a direct debit. There are still some outstanding fees however. If you are in doubt about this, please contact me on af3@soas.ac.uk

Also, if you are not receiving information via the JAWS listserv, which you are entitled to as a member of JAWS, it could be that we do not have your up to date email address. Please let me know if that is the case.

Currently the biggest benefit of membership is the 70% discount on JAWS books, which is a substantial amount off a hardback copy. To sign up for membership or to pay via PayPal simply go to www.japananthropologyworkshop.org and click "subscribe". There will be an automatic yearly withdrawal of £15 or the equivalent in own currency.

It is possible to pay directly into the account. From a UK bank account, setting up a direct debit is free. Members outside the UK may incur extra cost for transferring money to the UK but this will depend on the bank.

The Co-operative bank

Account title JAPAN ANTHROPOLOGY WORKSHOP (JAWS),

Account holder (Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen)

Sort code: 089299

Account no. 65416587

FROM THE EDITORS

Blai Guarné, Emma Cook, Andrea De Antoni

Time flies and summer is almost over before issuing this new Newsletter. In our last issue we announced the forthcoming celebration of the 23rd JAWS Conference at the University of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania from 7th to 9th of March 2013. Under the general theme of "Mobility in Japan," more than forty panelists and discussants presented their works in eight panels focused on the following topics: "Women's and Men's Mobility of Social Roles and Lifestyles in Post-bubble Japan," "Psychological Mobility and Subjective Transformations in Japan," "Mobility Through and Beyond the Lifecourse," "Japanese Identity on the Move," "Bodies and Lives in Motion, Localizing Goods and Services," "Multiple Selves: Social Identities in Globalizing Japan," and "Language Contact: Histories, Identities, and Ideologies through Japanese Language."

Prof. Glenda Roberts of the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies at Waseda University delivered the keynote address "'Graying Gap Society' Meets 'Immigration Nation': How is Japan Imagining Mobilities in Its Future?," and Professors David Plath (University of Illinois), L. Keith Brown (University of Pittsburgh), and John W. Traphagan (The University of Texas at Austin) organized a Plenary Session on the topic of "Terms of Fieldwork" that, through the consideration of the ethno-filmic project *Can't Go Native*, set a discussion on ongoing issues in fieldwork research and the anthropology of Japan.

Coincident with the conference were parallel activities such as a theatre performance by the Tokyo's Seinendan Theater Company, and the "Annual High School Japanese Speech Contest" that is hosted yearly by the University of Pittsburgh. Overall, the conference in Pittsburg was a great opportunity for discussing ideas, sharing knowledge and meeting people, enjoying the characteristic atmosphere of intellectual collaboration and scholarly exchange of the JAWS meetings. Thanks are due to the Conference Convenor, Prof. Blaine P. Connor (University of Pittsburgh), for a fantastic organization and to the University of Pittsburgh for its generous support holding the meeting.

As usual, we have included a "JAWS Meeting Report" in this issue of the Newsletter, where the members can find more details about the Conference, as well as all the abstracts. This time the report was kindly compiled by Stephanie Oeben, a Ph.D. Candidate at Oxford Brookes University. This is a fine example of the kind of collaboration that young scholars, Ph.D. Candidates and even MA Students in an advanced state can have with us and JAWS. Let us encourage again all the members to foster collaboration with the Newsletter among their students and to promote the

submission of papers to be published in the “Research Report” and “Tomorrow’s Researchers Today” sections (the guidelines for submission can be found on the “Newsletter” page in the JAWS Website).

2013 came full of new chances to renew stimulating interaction such as the 17th World Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, recently held at the University of Manchester (5-10 August, 2013) which had a large participation of anthropologists who specialized on Japan. Coming up, the 14th International Conference of European Association of Japanese Studies will be held at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia from August 27-30 in 2014. This forthcoming EAJS conference will hold a JAWS meeting in which Prof. Brigitte Steger (University of Cambridge) will take over as General Secretary of JAWS from Prof. John W. Traphagan. Along with the JAWS meeting, the EAJS section on “Anthropology and Sociology” will take place, convened by Wolfram Manzenreiter (University of Vienna) and Barbara Holthus (DIJ Tokyo), and the new section on “Media Studies,” convened by Blai Guarné (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) and Griseldis Kirsch (SOAS, University of London), will start a new area for the anthropology of Japan at the EAJS.

2014 will also bring us the 30th anniversary of JAWS and the 50th anniversary of JASCA (Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology). To celebrate such special events JAWS will hold a commemorative panel at the 2014 JASCA conference that is currently being defined and that will probably focus on methodological and fieldwork issues. Brigitte Steger is coordinating this effort and Bruce White (Doshisha University) is working on linking the JAWS presence to the AJJ (Anthropology of Japan in Japan) participation at the conference. The JASCA Conference will be held as a joint conference with the IUAES Inter-Congress 2014, from 15th to 18th of May, 2014, in Chiba City (Greater Tokyo), and it will be a unique opportunity for discussing and exchanging perspectives and knowledge. Moreover, it will also provide great possibilities to get to know the works of the best Japanese anthropologists, who are (too) often overlooked in the English-speaking/writing anthropological environment. Although these scholars do not necessarily focus on Japan, some Japanese anthropologists have produced extremely innovative and provocative theoretical frameworks and this Joint-Conference will be a wonderful opportunity to deepen our knowledge of them and their work and, possibly, start new collaborations and research projects. Needless to say, it will also be a great chance for enjoying the celebration of JAWS and JASCA research endeavours. In short, the year ahead provides us more great opportunities for producing, discussing and disseminating our research work on and in Japan.

Finally, in conclusion, one last note is due about the Newsletter and its practical realization. Starting from this issue, the date of the Newsletter changes from the format

“Month Year” to “Season Year” (Spring-Summer and Autumn-Winter), though keeping the same bi-yearly pace, in order to extend the submission period and give to all the JAWS members a broader possibility to send us their contributions. We are already looking forward to your Contributions for the “Autumn-Winter” Issue and welcome any comments you may have.

JAWS PUBLICATION NEWS

Joy Hendry

Routledge has been quite speedy with the books that were in press for the last report. They are now all out and available, and two of them were even on show at the recent JAWS conference, where they were raffled at the end of the proceedings! They are:

Genaro Castro-Vasquez, *Language, Education and Citizenship in Japan* – a monograph, based on fieldwork with immigrant children learning Japanese as they attend school in their new country, which takes us into quite an unusual new area of Japanese society.

Carolyn Stevens, *Disability in Japan* – is another monograph that covers a new field in the anthropology of Japan, and her approach is both interesting and comprehensive. It covers the subject from personal, professional and theoretical angles that she is careful to place within a broad comparative context.

Suzuki Hikaru, *Death and Dying in Contemporary Japan* is a comprehensive collection of state-of-the-art work on this rapidly changing field. Some of the papers were presented at a JAWS conference, but Hikaru has also drawn in Japanese scholars whose work she herself translated. The authors comprise Gordon Mathews, Susan Long and Sawa Kurotani who address the subject of the meaning of life and dying; Diasuke Tanaka, Hikaru herself and Haruyo Inoue on the professionalization of funerals; and Iwayumi Suzuki, Satsuki Kawano, Sebastien Boret and Christopher Hood on new burial practices in Japan – a really good resource for the subject, and our series!

In press at present, we have three exciting new volumes, all based on doctoral theses, but all also reworked to make mature reading. I am particularly pleased to welcome emerging scholars to the JAWS series because it enables us to offer our members some of the latest work appearing at a great price, and it offers an immediate outlet for the authors through some of the most influential and discerning scholars in the field! These books comprise:

Sebastien Penmellen Boret's *Japanese Tree Burial: Innovation, Ecology and the Culture of Death* on new forms of burial that he summarizes in Suzuki's volume, but which he develops in his own work to place in the context of interesting and rather convincing ecological arguments, as well as reporting an unusually wide range of views of the family in Japan.

Tullio Federico Lobetti's *Ascetic Practices in Japanese Religion*, a very graphic and visceral account of his field research in the heart of mountainous Japan which brings the reader

into close contact with his companions in a way that has not really been achieved before, at the same time illustrating the great value of participant observation for understanding any society (stop press, book now published!).

Mark Watson's *Japan's Ainu Minority in Tokyo: Urban Indigeneity and Cultural Politics*, has just come into the publication process as I write and I am really enjoying reading it. It is the first book in our series to address the subject of Ainu people, and this work is set very much in the important contemporary context in indigenous studies of examining the seemingly counter-intuitive case of people living away from their area with which they are usually associated.

We have, as usual, several other volumes at various prior stages. One has been contracted and submitted, and it is our second annotated translation, but this time from an early account of Japan in Portuguese. It has already appeared in Japanese, and the agreed title with us will be *The First European Description of Japan, 1585: Striking Contrasts in The Customs of Europe and Japan*, by Luis Frois, S.J., edited with notes on the period and the customs of the time by Daniel Reff, Richard Danford and Robin Gill.

Don't forget to use the latest password to get your discount. If you type in ARK93 that gives you 70% off the hardback title, and there should be paperbacks on demand eighteen months after the books first appear. There is also a password to give JAWS members a 20% discount on all other Routledge books, and it is ARK89 (Expires 30/06/2014).

If you have ideas for monographs or collections, do write and let me know, and I will send you the guidelines for making a proposal. We try to turn a decision round within a few weeks where possible.

Full list in order of publication:

A Japanese View of Nature: The World of Living Things by 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

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

Tradition, Democracy and the Townscape of Kyoto: Claiming a Right to the Past, Christoph Brumann

Religion and Politics in Contemporary Japan: Sōka Gakkai Youth and Kōmeito

Anne Mette Fisker-Nielson

Language, Education and Citizenship in Japan

Genaro Castro-Vasquez

Disability in Japan

Carolyn Stevens

Death and Dying in Contemporary Japan

Edited by Suzuki Hikaru

JAWS CONFERENCE 2013 REVIEW

Mobility in Japan

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh (PA)

7-9 March 2013



Conference Report

Stephanie Oeben

Oxford Brookes University

For this issue of the JAWS Newsletter I have the privilege to review the 23rd JAWS conference, which took place from 7th to 9th March 2013 in the 'City of Bridges' – Pittsburgh. Most panels were held in the elegant amenities of the Pittsburgh Athletic Association (PAA). This year's conference was kindly sponsored by JAWS, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Texas at Austin. Many thanks go to

Conference convener Blaine P. Connor from the University of Pittsburgh, Secretary General John W. Traphagan from the University of Texas at Austin and the presenters and members who came together to make this conference on the topic of “*Mobility in Japan*” into a stimulating and successful academic gathering.

The conference was laid out in eight panels and one keynote over the course of three days. Each panel ran successively as to allow everyone to hear everyone’s papers.

Following a warm welcome and opening speech, the first panel titled “*Women’s and men’s mobility of social roles and lifestyles in post-bubble Japan*” had three papers on post-bubble Japan’s diversity of lifestyles. The papers presented various aspects of different life plans, ranging from the magazines for housewives to salarymen to single-women living and working abroad. The speakers went beyond the presentation of ethnographic accounts and questioned gender roles, ethnicity and other aspects of Japanese society. In their papers they discussed the matter of mobility and immobility not only as a spatial issue, but also as processes of change in Japanese society in general.

The second panel “*Psychological mobility and subjective transformations in Japan*” raised the question of how one navigates through geographic, social, inner psychic terrains and the temporalities of life courses. The five papers brought together a combination of subjects, which were portrayed in great ethnographic detail. Their subjects ranged from an emotionally withdrawn *hikikomori*, to former foster care wards whose bodily markings show traces of past traumas, to the ‘uncanny valley’ when feelings of familiarity with humanoid replicas convert into revulsion, to anti-nuclear protesters in front of the Prime Minister’s residence and its layers of online mediation, and finally to those Japanese labelled as *hōkō onchi* (directionally tone-deaf) and how they, in spite of being inept at navigating urban spaces, display a great skill at getting around online.

Under the title of “*Mobility through and beyond the life course*”, panel three had six papers outlining an extensive variety of topics from a wide-ranging selection of day-to-day issues in Japan. The first paper focused on higher education and academic mobility in order to increase the global competitiveness of Japan. Two papers considered women’s roles in Japanese society; the preliminary findings of research on intimacy and late childbearing seemed to indicate a gain in status and respect through motherhood, while the other paper focused on career women and their professional mobility and gender equity in the work place. The next two papers spanned from early childhood and the use of *ema* in the socialization process of young children to the relationship between the living and the dead and how death is symbolically represented in narratives, places, and the border between different planes of experience. In the final paper of this panel we

dove into the world of professional baseball and the case of Yu Darvish, a half-Iranian-half-Japanese sportsman who is famous in both Japan and the United States.

The first day finished in the auditorium of the Frick Fine Arts Building with two videos from the anthropological film *"Can't Go Native"* and a presentation of Keith Brown's lifelong work in Mizusawa. The title of the session *"Terms of fieldwork"* exemplified with its play on words the essence of this panel: on the one hand it discussed the issues of short- and long-term fieldwork, but on the other hand it also pointed out that a researcher has to carefully consider on which terms he or she engages and interacts with their participants.

"Japanese identities on the move" was the title of the first panel of the second day of the conference. In the panel the panellists discussed the sense of Japaneseness that may be found inside and outside Japan but that appears to persist despite all changes. Among these, there were two papers on spatial mobility. One was about the competitive world of taxi companies in Kyoto and the other about an anthropologist's first journey to Japan in the 1970s by ship. The third paper of the panel examined the positive and negative aspects of Japanese businessmen working abroad for their company in a factory close to the US-Mexican border and how those men coped with change in Japan in times of crisis. The fourth paper looked at movement across the virtual boundary and examined how Japanese gamers recreate their identities online in order to form and participate in online communities. The final paper was offered in the form of a video detailing the history of *butoh* dance and showing *ankoku butoh* (dance of utter darkness) as an aesthetic expression of post-war Japan.

After the lunch-break there were seven papers on the sixth panel with the overarching theme of *"Bodies and lives in motion, localizing goods and services"*. The speakers presented on a wide-ranging spectrum of issues. The first paper looked at Senri New Town, which was built to ease the housing in Osaka prefecture. It emphasised the similarities to the biblical Exodus and where it differed. The paper was followed by an ethnographic study of volunteer workers in northeast Japan that showed the experiences and personal gains for some of the younger volunteers. The next panellists presented on the Japanese video game market in Hong Kong and how the companies, consumers and software pirates along with other groups work together in the localization process, and how a narration through photographs of *kokeshi* (regionally specific folk art dolls) depicts the journey of dolls re-enacting times of crisis as ways of softening human suffering. Those papers were followed by presentations on the history and development of *conbini* culture in Japan using the example of 7-Eleven; the historical and modern role of *kumiai* (guilds) in the artistic communities which manufacture traditional crafts; and finally the

commodification of language and etiquette seen in the standardized self-presentation of Japanese corporations.

The seventh panel considered social and cultural ramifications of globalization, attempting to cope with the impact of recent developments on various aspects of Japanese society. Under the title of *“Multiple selves: social identities in globalizing Japan”* three papers analysed a continuing erosion of the social structure characterizing post-war Japan and raised questions regarding individuals' sense of self and belonging to Japanese society nowadays. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted on family relations, work organization and social activism, the panellists argued that social identity is not simply being transformed due to recent developments, but exemplified the varied ways through which individuals experience and form their self-identity in globalizing Japan.

The keynote address by Glenda Roberts underlined the problems of Japan's “graying gap society” and the “immigration nation” as a partial solution to revitalize the economy, to counter the demographic decline, and to recognise the already present migrants. Through government policy reports and interviews with bureaucrats, politicians and civil society organization representatives, her research illustrated that while the political regime is bringing back a more pro-immigration stance, the prospect for any “opening up” of Japan remains to be seen. In her paper Glenda Roberts attributed this to the failures of various past policies and to the economic recessions of the last twenty years. The keynote was followed by a gala dinner and a social evening of bowling in the PAA's very own bowling alley.

The final day of the conference started with the last panel under the title *“Language contact: histories, identities, and ideologies through Japanese language”*. The five papers in this panel demonstrated how sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological approaches contribute to the understanding of cultural practices; for example, through analysing the use of personal pronouns among male and female Junior High school students. In addition, all papers introduced sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological studies, and investigated how Japanese serves as a tool to reflect historical and cultural changes. The papers depicted the changes in dialects in the northern parts of Japan as well as the reconstruction of cultural practices in intercultural situations with Japanese women living in Britain. The final paper analysed virtual family spaces where Japanese living in America use video chat to communicate with family members back in Japan.

The conference came to a conclusion with the JAWS business meeting. The event proved to be an overall intellectually enriching experience and an excellent opportunity to share views, exchange feedback and offer new insights on many research areas as all the

presentations received interested responses and sparked lively discussions during the conference and beyond.

All paper abstracts are reprinted below. Gathered together they might serve as a good memory of the time spent in Pittsburgh, as well as provide a useful reminder of 'who presented on what' in case one is interested in contacting any of the presenters for future collaboration or information sharing.

Panels and Individual Presentations Abstracts

Panel 1:

Women's and Men's Mobility of Social Roles and Lifestyles in Post-bubble Japan

Organizer: Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni, Tel Aviv University

Economic Heroes and the Intimate Political Economy of Contemporary Japan

Allison Alexy, The University of Virginia

For much of the postwar, there has been a clear economic hero in Japan: the salaryman worker. An anonymous, dutiful, white-collar worker committed to his company's success, this salaryman became a key symbol of Japanese strength in the surprising economic recovery after World War II. Yet salarymen were only made possible by particular forms of domestic intimacy, and the salaryman and the intimacy that sustains him are increasingly coming into question in the contemporary moment. For requirements of basic living – food, clean clothes, paid bills – a salaryman relied on his wife, who often accomplished all tasks surrounding the household and children. In the two decades of recession after the Japanese economic bubble burst in 1991, the salaryman's primacy has been increasingly challenged in both economic and intimate realms. In an effort to downsize, Japanese companies are less willing to hire so-called "lifetime" workers and instead now build business models on legions of "contract" workers who can easily be laid off. Simultaneously, the Japanese divorce rate has increased to approximately 35% and is driven by people ending marriages that conform to the "salaryman" ideals popular a generation before. Concurrently, freeta (part-time workers) have increased both in numbers and popularity, leading to new ideals and practices linking employment with intimacy. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in the mid- and late-2000s with single, married, and divorcing men and women, this

presentation examines discourse and practice to analyze how contemporary Japanese relate intimacy, security, and employment.

The "New-style Housewife": Are Housewives the "Winners" in Post-Bubble Japan?

Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni, Tel Aviv University

The Howl of the Loser Dogs (*Makeinu no tōboe*), a book published in 2003 that celebrates the advantages of single life for women, has drawn not less attention than *The Age of Marriage Hunting* ("Konkatsu" Jidai), another bestseller by the active scholar and social critic Yamada Masahiro. Following his scolding of the "parasite singles" (1999), Yamada urges young single men to actively seek a spouse, similarly to the way they should seek "proper" work. In my presentation I will raise some questions with regard to this dichotomy between "winners" and "losers."

My perspective comes from the study of housewives in contemporary Japan. Recent surveys and government official statements attest to the ongoing (or maybe even renewed) aspiration of young women not only to get married but also to become housewives. The "orientation for a new type of housewife" (*shin sengyō shufu shikō*), observed in the end of the 1990s is summarized in the expression: "A man [husband] works full-time and shares housework. A woman [wife] does housework and pursues hobbies (or hobby-based work)". Based on an ethnography of housewives and an analysis of current media and market ideas, I will show how the Japanese State is actively involved in the production of this "new-style happy housewife". On the other hand, I will show how new ideas, worries and insecurities, usually regarded as limited to the world of the so-called "losers," actually have impact on the lives and concepts of the allegedly "winners."

Mobility and Single Women's Life Choices

Lynne Nakano, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

This paper argues that physical mobility is part of a package of unprecedented freedoms available to single women today. This package of freedoms includes the ability to choose educational institutions, workplaces, hobbies, romantic partners, and to decide whether or not to marry. At the same time, physical mobility may impede single women's upward social mobility and lead to insecurity and instability. By being mobile, single women are able to take advantage of opportunities to improve their educational and employment prospects and develop financial independence. Moving away from one's

hometown frees women of the constraints imposed by family and neighbors. Travel allows women to expand their experiences of the world. However, mobility also brings disadvantages to single women. For women who wish to marry, mobility makes marriage more difficult as men may not wish to marry women with more travel or overseas experience than themselves. Travel and mobility may also raise women's expectations in a marriage partner, such that single women may wish to find someone at least as mobile as themselves. Mobility may result in a decline in work opportunities as the frequent changing of workplaces and the lack of continuity may negatively affect women's career trajectory and salaries. Mobility creates instability as single women may not be sure how long they will remain where they currently live, and expect that they may be called upon to return their hometowns to care for elderly parents. This study suggests that many single women are nonetheless adapting to lifestyles of instability which they find preferable to marrying inappropriately.

Discussant:

Glenda Roberts, Waseda University

Panel 2:

Psychological Mobility and Subjective Transformations in Japan

Organizer: Joshua Roth, Mount Holyoke College

The Housebound Hikikomori and Flights of the Imaginary

Ellen Rubinstein, Mount Holyoke College

Hikikomori have often been characterized by their lack of mobility, typified in the image of the young adult male who rarely ventures beyond the confines of his home or engages meaningfully with the wider world. Hiro, a 35-year-old hikikomori whom I visited on several occasions, exemplified this type, yet early on I found that although the entirety of Hiro's material life played out within the two rooms of his apartment, he escaped his present circumstances through memories of a mysterious woman he had met many years ago. These memories structured Hiro's interactions with his caregivers and created among them a new social reality that transcended spatial and temporal boundaries, bringing past into present and blurring the distinction between isolation and sociability. I use my interactions with Hiro and his caregivers as a heuristic for understanding how mobility is as much psychological as it is corporeal, a journey

through private imaginaries that have the potential to shape local social worlds of new identities and meanings.

Theorizing Experience: Politics of Chance in Japanese State Care

Kathryn Goldfarb, Harvard University

How does the past shape an understanding of future possibilities, one's "psychological mobility" through time? This paper addresses the ways that youth who grew up in Japanese children's homes conceptualize the role of past deprivations in shaping their futures, particularly having been deprived a trusted caregiver. A perspective embracing the role of chance in life, arguing that one's bad past does not necessarily determine the future, is a core argument of a Tokyo self-help group for former children's home residents. This view aligns neatly with (neo)liberal models of the "self-responsible" subject, who can "struggle on" to transcend former traumas and deprivations. However, a perspective less accepted within this group is the argument that past loss forms a rule for the future and indelibly shapes life possibilities. This view constitutes an explicit critique of Japanese state welfare failures and the long-term consequences of existing outside durable networks of caregiving kin.

This paper centers on analysis of a board game that members of the self-help group created, in which all players begin at the same "start line" — "leaving the children's home" — and whose fates are determined by the roll of a dice. I engage with the concept of "psychological mobility" to argue that divergent theorizations of change and chance in the lives of former children's home residents illuminate political and existential crises at the heart of Japanese welfare provisioning.

Anthropomorphism, "Dimensionality," and the "Uncanny Valley"

Shunsuke Nozawa, Dartmouth College

In 1970 Japanese robotics engineer Mori Masahiro proposed a hypothesis – based on "intuition" – that "a person's response to a humanlike robot would abruptly shift from empathy to revulsion as it approached, but failed to attain, a lifelike appearance." Mori characterized this movement of the mind as *bukimi no tani*, translated in 2005 in English as "the uncanny valley." The "valley" would be located at a threshold of the curve created on an imaginary coordinate plane by the variable of "affinity" as a non-"monotonic" function of "human likeness." Interestingly, this notion took more than a few decades to reach a wider audience. Today often spoken of in relation to

developments in digital technology and virtual communication (e.g. 3D modeling), the idiom of “uncanny valley” circulates globally and seems to haunt people in a rather heterogeneous range of fields, not simply robotics and neuroscience, but also philosophy, design, medicine, science fiction, cinema, music, video gaming, etc.

By charting one form of mobility, Mori’s idea circulating across cultures, this paper explores another movement, one afforded by that idea: the mind moving along a gradient but disoriented cline of affect. Situating the uncanny valley as an interstitial space where aesthetic judgment is ideologized, I discuss how its imaginative (‘intuitive’) topology comes to underscore the ludic discourse of “character anthropomorphism” (*kyara gijinka*) in Japanese popular culture and resonate with the metaphor of “dimensionality” that imaginatively mediates a movement, a gap, between virtual (*nijigen*, “2D”) and actual (*sanjigen*, “3D”).

Molecular Politics of Embodiment at the Kantei-mae Protests

Love Kindstrand, University of Chicago

This summer, a few dozen protesters gathering weekly in front of the Prime Minister’s official residence (Kantei-mae) grew into the hundreds of thousands. Week after week, anti-nuclear protesters mobilizing through social media have surrounded Japan’s spatial locus of power, dispersing en masse just two hours later. Within the limited timespace of the protest, performative practices like open mics and collective chanting developed through protesters’ assiduous negotiation with the conceptual-semiotic void between indignation and legitimacy.

The post-Fukushima explosion of public dissent revived a range of transversal dialogues long marked by their absence in Japanese public discourse, the impact of which continues to reverberate along the fractures and fault lines of a society often considered politically paralyzed. It was in the tension between the hypermediated self-imagination of the crowd and the corporeal immediacy of the protest body that the weekly Kantei-mae protests became the prime site for a spatial enactment of this collective coming-to-consciousness.

In this brief ethnography of the Kantei-mae phenomenon, I attempt to delineate the multitudinous geographies of protest throughout which virtual advocacy and commentary intersect and merge with the actual spaces and logistics of protest. I confront the protest space and its extensions into the virtual as an immediate space of representation, and the fundamental extimacy of the crowd as the locus of its constitutive and reproductive power.

“Hōkō onchi: Way-finding and the Emergence of ‘Directional Tone-Deafness’ in Japan”

Joshua Hotaka Roth, Mount Holyoke College

Take a wrong turn and show up late to an appointment in Japan and it is quite likely that someone will label you “hōkō onchi” (directionally tone-deaf). The term was coined in the late 1960s, and now hundreds of thousands of Japanese identify themselves as “hōkō onchi.” The term is much more widely used than any equivalent in English. I suggest that the rise of this cultural category in Japan is linked to expectations of competence in a data-driven society. While initially used as a term to informally label those who fail to live up to expectations, in recent years it has been embraced by some as a positive mode of being that opens up alternative forms of knowledge. I further suggest the reasons why mobility and way-finding ability serve as privileged metaphors for engaging such expectations. The way-finding literature in anthropology can start us thinking about some of these questions, although it soon becomes apparent that its own conceptual blinders limit it. This paper suggests that by examining the ways in which people lose their way we may better understand the way in which people learn to find their way, as well as understand the shifts in broader cultural contexts.

Panel 3:

Mobility Through and Beyond the Lifecourse

Seeking the Best and Brightest: How Japan Fares in the Global Competition for Talent

Ayumi Takenaka, Bryn Mawr College

This paper examines how Japan fares in the global competition for talent by focusing on the globalization of higher education. In the context of growing talent competition around the world, Japan has tried to globalize its higher education by diversifying university campuses and implementing English-medium courses. Through government initiated programs, such as the “Global 30” and “Asian Gateway” projects, the number of international students has indeed grown, as has the number of students who stay on to work in Japan after graduation. Who goes to Japan to study in the first place? Who stays, who moves on, and why? And what do the patterns of academic mobility tell us about Japan’s internationalization efforts and their outcomes?

Drawing upon 60 interviews conducted with international students and graduates in Japan during 2009-2011, this paper addresses some paradoxical consequences of Japan’s

globalization efforts. Namely, various globalization initiatives have not necessarily led to growing interactions between foreign and domestic students, as aimed by these initiatives. In addition, the more universities and the government try to globalize the country's higher education, the more foreign students, particularly the best and brightest, are likely to view and use Japan as a stepping-stone to move on to third countries.

'Emphasised Femininity' and Hegemonic Gender Relationships among Japanese Mothers: the Case of Late Childbearing (*kōrei shussan*)

Genaro Castro-Vázquez, Nanyang Technological University

This paper presents preliminary findings from a research on intimacy and reproduction in nowadays Japan. From a symbolic interaction perspective, the paper draws on the construct of 'emphasised femininity' (Connell 1987) to shed light on current late-childbearing (*kōrei shussan*) tendencies among Japanese women.

A set of two, 60-minute, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 56 Japanese mothers to explore how meaning and subjectivity are entangled in their practices of late-childbearing. 29-45 aged mothers were acquired through snowball sampling and interviewed in Kanagawa and Tokyo. 27 of them have experienced late-childbearing.

An initial analysis of interview-transcripts suggests that late childrearing appears to be a strategy to gain access to the 'patriarchal dividend' (Connell 1995) embedded in motherhood, which makes women 'respectable'. Within pronatalism, pregnant women are a form of emphasised femininity that helps women rank higher in the Japanese hierarchical gender order. Moreover, late-childrearing occurs within homosocial relationships of power and appears to be a response to the pressure of peers and older mothers. Finally, late-childrearing seems to be the result of a strategy against becoming a stereotypical 'full-time house wife'. Nevertheless, most of the late-childbearing mothers grapple with the double-shift of homemaking and full-time jobs almost alone.

Avoiding Bad Moves: Relocation, Work/Family Conflict, and Japanese Career Women

Blaine P. Connor, University of Pittsburgh

Relocation can lead to professional growth and career advancement, but can also lead to work/family conflict. In this talk I will present the stories of three Japanese career women whose relocations led to personal crises. These crises resulted from a workplace policy which made periodic relocation obligatory for male and female employees alike.

By analyzing how they faced these crises and what gave rise to them, I aim to shed light on issues of work-life balance, gender equity, and obstacles to social and cultural change.

Ema and Early Childhood Socialization in Japan

Benjamin Cox, University of Texas at Austin, and John W. Traphagan, University of Texas at Austin

Ema tablets are a conspicuous yet under-researched aspect of Japanese ritual. This paper explores the use and provides a preliminary analysis of these tablets as they relate to early childhood education. Among the *ema* on display in 2006 at an urban shrine in Iwate prefecture were a surprising number penned—in whole or in part—by students at the shrine's day nursery. While the mere presence of such tablets indicates their use in instilling an appreciation for this aspect of shrine worship before a child begins primary school, the content and style of these inscriptions further reveal that children are also encouraged to make tablets in order to reinforce a central lesson of Japanese preschool education: the importance of *shūdan seikatsu*, or group living.

Encountering the Dead in Japan

Blaine P. Connor, University of Pittsburgh, and John W. Traphagan, University of Texas at Austin

This article considers personal narratives of encounters with the dead among Japanese, drawing upon recollections of visitations in dreams and encounters with *muenbotoke* and other spirits. We draw upon ethnographic data collected over several years of research in rural, northern Japan to explore three questions: (1) How are relationships between the living and dead conceptualized, experienced, and symbolically represented? (2) How do people interpret the meanings of encounters with the dead? (3) What is the tie between the dead and certain places, and why is that significant? The narratives of our informants present a window into understanding how Japanese negotiate the margins between life and death and at times transcend the symbolic border between different planes of experience.

Yu Darvish in Texas: Haafu Identity and Athletic Celebrity

Paul Christensen, Union College

In December 2011 the Nippon Ham Fighters of Nippon Professional Baseball “posted” Yu Darvish, making him eligible to field contract offers from Major League Baseball teams in the United States. By December 19 the Texas Rangers had won the posting process, a six year agreement was signed, and the next round of Darvish’s athletic endeavors would occur outside Japan. This movement by Darvish also adds an important twist to this global circulation of elite athletes, and all the cultural, nationalistic, and political implications embodied within. The popular curiosity and media-driven celebrity around Darvish stems in part from his association, as the son of an Iranian father and Japanese mother, with the label *haafu* (half) as a major component of his public identity. However, my position here is that while Darvish’s *haafu*-ness complicates an already jumbled picture of conflating racial, cultural, athletic, and nationalistic categories, the generated attention on either side of the Pacific is ultimately superficial. Darvish’s fame has not induced conversation in Japan or the United States on ethnicity and athletics, or substantially curtailed often essentializing and overly deterministic interpretations of cultural difference frequently invoked by sports media in the two countries. In short, Darvish’s already pervasive celebrity in Japan, and escalating level of popular attention in the United States, has done little to substantially impact larger social issues linked to discussion of *haafu* in Japan or the interplay between global identity politics and sports.

Panel 4:

Terms of Fieldwork

Organizer: David Plath, University of Illinois

A discussion of anthropological research and the *Can’t Go Native* multi-film project, with excerpts from *More About Mizusawa*.

Panellists: David W. Plath, University of Illinois

L. Keith Brown, University of Pittsburgh

John W. Traphagan, University of Texas at Austin

Panel 5:

Japanese Identity on the Move

Organizer: Joy Hendry, Oxford Brookes University

Japanese Identity on the High Seas: Setting a Historical Scene

Joy Hendry, Oxford Brookes University

This short introductory paper proposes to share some ideas from the long-term personal experience of an anthropologist who first travelled to Japan on a Japanese ship bound home from Brazil, which offered her Japanese language practice and cultural events before she even stepped on shore. These kinds of activities are now found all over the world, as Japan's economy boomed, and such exports helped to mend the bad feelings that lingered after the Second World War. By chance, the return from her last trip to Japan was eventually by way of a Japanese community celebrating its 100 years of existence in Brazil, and the main contribution to the theme of the session will be presented in an account of the everyday continuing Japaneseness among a community of people who are also very well adapted to Brazilian life.

Japan on the Move through Game Space

Stephanie Oeben, Oxford Brookes University

Game space is a term coined by T.L. Taylor, who was one of the first to write an ethnography on virtual communities in America. Game space comprises both online and offline space where people interact with one another. In my paper I would trail how Japanese gamers move through game space. How they carry offline (real life) cultural norms into the online (virtual) environment and how offline and online 'life' differs from each other. In comparison to Europeans, who have overlapping social worlds, I would talk about the compartmentalisation found among Japanese. This means that in general, Japanese will keep their online and offline networks separate. If possible, I would also like to talk about three Japanese men who defy this rule, but their example is just perfect to show how online and offline game space can intersect.

Sharing Company in Japan: Homes, Lives, Loss and the Necessary Pretence of Recovery in Post-11 March Tohoku

Mitchell Sedgwick, Oxford Brookes University

As it happens, in the winter of 2011, I was sharing ethnographic time with a group of Japanese managers overseeing a maquiladora (free trade zone) factory on the US-Mexican border. Their home factories and offices, however, are in Miyagi-ken, in Tohoku which, as we know, suffered a devastating earthquake and tsunami that has set in motion the most significant crisis in Japan since the end of the Second World War. With relatives missing, homes damaged and their home factory inundated, this paper recounts an intimate drama experienced in real time, but in the remote: their streaming of live Japanese news, as aftershocks spread through the region, as they desperately sought to get through to loved ones, and as they gradually considered personal and economic consequences to themselves, their colleagues, their communities, their company and their futures. While they, their families, their colleagues and friends, their communities and their company are irrevocably damaged, through an unexpected return to the traditional analysis of the company *as* family, or kin, this paper considers the necessary pretence of ‘recovery’ as they go forward in crisis one step at a time.

Auto-Mobility in Kyoto: The Role of the Taxi in the Transport of Tradition, Identity, Information and Status

Bruce White, Doshisha University

Kyoto attracts 50 million tourists per year and moving these people around from site to site are thousands of taxis run by an army of drivers and a huge variety of companies. When the short-burst tourist seasons end the 1.5 million locals are the company’s bread and butter and they are fought for through a bewildering array of Unique Selling Points (USP) that desperately attempt to distinguish one cab experience from another. Various, companies market on: Price, Understanding of Local Kyoto Customs, Ecological Sustainability, Cleanliness, Timeliness, and Politeness. Despite these USP claims, drivers can exhibit opinions and behaviour contrary to their company’s brand image, and are themselves massively diverse in terms of age, background, and attitude.

Into this frenzied world of competition, survival and flux move the passengers who range from the accidental tourist to the most conservative Kyoto local. For tourists, the journeys from A to B are a chance for drivers to share some of their knowledge about the historic city. For the locals however, drivers more often act as nodes of local knowledge

and gossip as they connect the most entertaining stories/information of the week with each subsequent passenger.

This work-in-progress research attempts to see how the world of the Kyoto taxi dynamically mediates the social lives of drivers and passengers alike. It reveals an intense search for status and legitimacy; acts as a “vehicle” for the expression of complex local traditions; and exposes the deep need to form a sense of local community across divisions of class, geography, and generation.

‘Reborn Always and Everywhere:’ *Butoh* Dance Beyond Japanese Identity

Paola Esposito, Oxford Brookes University

Video available [here](#).

Panel 6:

Bodies and Lives in Motion, Localizing Goods and Services

Senri New Town as an *Exodus* from Osaka

Hirochika Nakamaki

This paper aims to interpret the history of Senri New Town (a northern suburb of Osaka City) by referencing myth, specifically as contained in the Book of Exodus and to some extent the *Kojiki* and *Manyōshū*. Construction of Senri New Town was intended to resolve a housing shortage and release people from foul living conditions. Following the scenario of the Exodus from Egypt, my interpretation is that Osaka Prefecture planned and staged an Exodus from Osaka for people suffering from the housing shortage, and likened the Senri hills to the Promised Land. The paper will discuss a number of examples in which the New Town parallels the biblical account, including indigenous resistance and a population divided into twelve units. But several interesting points of divergence will also be considered, such as the means of defining the chosen people, the basis of their communal bond, and the nature of their covenant or contract with a higher authority. One obvious point of departure is that in the New Town construction of religious facilities has been considered taboo. Kamishinden, a pre-existing village located at the center of Senri New Town, would seem to represent a violation of this principle. The existence of Kamishinden can be interpreted through the theory of ‘Hollow Construction of Japanese Mythology’ as postulated by Hayao Kawai. Lastly, the

Emperor Showa's visit to Senri New Town and to inspect the proposed exposition site which would be organized four years later, can be interpreted according to precedent described in the Manyoshu.

Disaster Volunteering in Tohoku: Purpose in Life, Strategy, Self-Complacency?

Susanne Klien, German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo

In this ethnographic study I discuss individuals between 20 and 40 who have come to northeast Japan from all over the country to engage in volunteer work. The empirical data obtained during fieldwork since April 2011 suggests that for many, engaging in volunteer activities has a profound impact on their values and lives, but many among those I encountered had already been seeking opportunities to change their lives before the disaster; volunteering has turned out as a welcome opportunity to rethink and reshape their lives.

To date, ethnographic studies of individual volunteering experiences are still rare (Stevens 1997, Osawa 2001, Nakano 2005). Contrary to the commonly held belief that volunteering is all about altruism and empathy, I argue that many volunteers in fact pursue their own interests while helping others. The aim of this paper is to document the experiences and transformations of selected younger volunteers, some of whom try to overcome *hikikomori* by choosing volunteering as a "first career", others have abandoned their regular employment in Tokyo and consider volunteering as a strategic choice to set the path for their "second career". My data shows that regardless of the multiple reasons of individuals, volunteering provides an arena of re-integration into and engagement with society rather than "retreat from society" (Stevens 1997). Volunteering constitutes a milieu where the reshaping of individual identities occurs and the ongoing transition from structured lifetime employment to more self-determined alternative lifestyles with work, leisure and life often being wrapped into one is salient.

Material Mobilities: Enacting Traumas, Remembering, and Recoveries in Post Disaster Japan

Jennifer E. McDowell, University of Pittsburgh- Dept of Anthropology

This presentation is concerned with how material culture moves through post disaster landscapes via narrative and pictorial performances. Expanding on Kershaw's concept of "performativity of reminiscence", I will explore how the images of kokeshi, highly

recognized and regionally specific folk art dolls, move beyond the already captive collector audience to embrace greater Japanese populations in the process of regional aid and recovery. One prominent kokeshi centric aid project depicts kokeshi photographically returning “home” to the tsunami devastated landscapes of the Tōhoku coast. The photographic journey unfolds as the dolls re-enact scenarios of trauma with the intention of encouraging regional recovery and regional memory. Layered with the dolls’ performance, the narrator, speaking through the kokeshi itself, intentionally blurs the meaning between object and human suffering. As displaced people and objects like the kokeshi continue to move back into the region, these nonprofit aid campaigns have evolved to remind residents of their Tōhoku roots even if they were not necessarily able to return to their original residences. Like the people, kokeshi are depicted as victims of the disasters, and one of the many personal objects washed away by the great tsunami wave or toppled during the earthquake. Its human form and perceived likeness to the residents of Tōhoku allow it to express human suffering and to be used as a gentle traveler within landscapes of trauma.

From Family Computer to “Red-White Machine”: The Localization of Japanese Video Games in Hong Kong

Chi Hang WONG, The University of Hong Kong

Since making its debut in 1970s, video game industry has developed into a multi-billion dollar business. The article begins with analyzing how Japanese video game companies, led by Nintendo, found the huge potential of consumer market in video games and expanded their influence to oversea markets. Focus then will be shifted to the video game market of Hong Kong. While studying the process of how Japanese video games has been imported to Hong Kong, the author also points out that the Japanese video games have been localized in the processes of re-production, circulation, and consumption due the differences in language and culture between Hong Kong gamers and their Japanese counterparts. The article have located console companies, game developers, distributors, piracy, retailers, game magazines and players themselves as the seven major players in the process of localization of Japanese video game in Hong Kong. The author suggests, studies on localization of cultural products should not only focus on certain players, such as consumers and producers. Instead, the scope should be expanded by carefully studying each players and the interaction between them. Combining the study on the history of local social development, researchers should be able to have better understanding on the topic.

7-Eleven in Japan: A Convenient Union of Conbini and Culture

Michael J. Wahl, University of Oxford , Nell T. Hartley, Robert Morris University

7-Eleven Japan has seen sales increase in every year, from 700 million Yen in 1974 to nearly 3 trillion Yen in 2010, influenced neighbors with over 20,000 stores across East and South Asia in just over a decade, and even acquired its licensor, US company, 7-Eleven, Inc. in 2005! In a nation, traditionally difficult for foreign companies and concepts to penetrate, how did 7-Eleven create a new retail segment that has continued to see exceptional growth from its first store in 1974 to more than 14,000 stores in 2012? It appears that culture has dictated the success of the conbini in Japan. This paper will review the history of 7-Eleven relating to its entrance into the Japanese market, exploring the growth and success of the company, as well as the conbini, in Japanese society. The company and segment's success in Japan and its Asian neighbors, in addition to the difficulties seen by the licensor in the US warrants an attempt to identify the cultural factors involved. With over 42,000 convenience stores in a nation roughly the size of the state of California, this paper seeks possible explanations for the unorthodox success of the convenience retail model in Japan.

***Kumiai*: Traditional Craft Guilds and Socio-Economic Mobility among Tokyo Artisans**

Robert Pontsioen, Smithsonian Institution

In this paper I investigate the historical and contemporary nature and role of *kumiai* (guilds) within the artisanal communities that produce the designated traditional crafts of Tokyo. Conventional understandings of guilds, particularly those of medieval Europe, tend to assume that guilds limit the range of socio-economic mobility of its members by tightly controlling the entry and training of new members, setting rigid market prices, maintaining monopolies over product distribution, etc. In contrast, based on historical sources and information gleaned during fieldwork among practicing Tokyo craft makers and craft guild leaders, I argue that craft guilds in Tokyo are instead primarily concerned with procuring scarce craft materials, promoting craft businesses, maintaining and enhancing craft skills and product quality, and securing the future of struggling crafting traditions. I demonstrate the way in which traditional craft *kumiai* are closely linked to the governmental systems for designating and supporting traditional crafts at the national and prefectural levels, and why individual craft masters usually engage these important governmental support systems through their membership in

official *kumiai*. I conclude with a consideration of the effectiveness of *kumiai* efforts to improve the socio-economic position of traditional craft producers in Tokyo today.

Bowing Incorrectly: Standardizing the Presentation of Self in Corporate Japan

Cyndi Dunn, University of Northern Iowa

In a context in which the quality of service is an essential determinant of corporate success, corporations around the world increasingly seek to regiment employees' presentation of self such that communicative performances themselves become a commodity. This paper examines this commodification of language in the context of seminars in business etiquette offered to new employees at Japanese companies. Through a focus on activities such as greetings, bowing, and politeness strategies, these courses attempt to standardize employees' everyday presentation of self in order to present a collective corporate image. Although this training shares certain features with global trends towards the commodification of language, it is also rooted in traditional Japanese etiquette and aesthetics. The analysis explores how Japanese business etiquette training appropriates employees' bodies to create a positive corporate image while reinforcing an ideology of standardization.

Panel 7:

Multiple Selves: Social Identities in Globalizing Japan

Organizers: Dalit Bloch, Tel Aviv University and Avital Baikovich, Tel Aviv University

Marital Intimacy at the Crossroads of Changes

Dalit Bloch, Tel Aviv University

In recent decades the Japanese family has undergone various changes in its structure, boundaries, relations with the state and intra-family relations. Husband-wife relations have also changed over the last generations, and have acquired new meanings in both popular and individual perception. However, these changes have not taken place in a vacuum; while couple relations are subjective and private, they are nevertheless inseparable from a wide range of transformations that have shaped contemporary Japanese society, as well as from global trends outside Japan. At the same time (and without overlooking hurdles and conflicts), marital partnership has gained new

meanings as a site of self expression, wellbeing, agency and free choice, and has become invested with emotional vocabulary of affection, support and more.

Based on extensive fieldwork and interviews with Japanese men and women aged 28-40, this paper explores changing notions of marital intimacy and partnership and their social meanings in contemporary Japan. It portrays how young husbands and wives establish themselves as a couple - a distinct social unit within the wider frames of family and society. This process involves new understandings of what life together as a couple may mean, and generates new practices as an extension of – as well as a workable alternative to – husband-wife relations in previous generations. I therefore propose to see the conjugal couple as a symbolic site of an inter-generational gap that reflects and produces social changes, and as a focal point of friction between social constraints and individual agency.

Going Global? Ideology and identity in a Japanese Subsidiary

Avital Baikovich, Tel Aviv University

Multinational corporations are often perceived as main distributors of globalization. In Japan, multinational firms became increasingly dominant market players, holding significant implications for Japan's work arena. These processes were argued to induce the deterioration of the traditional organizational systems in post-industrial Japan: the decline of the Japanese management model along its employment systems, quick job transitions motivated by payment incentives, incoming global workforce etc. Criticizing the tendency of recent theorists to present a problematic image of Japanese firms evolving towards a homogenization of global management and business models, this paper explores the ways global trends affect and shape the character and dynamics of a Japanese company. Based on an ethnographic study of the Japanese subsidiary of a global hi-tech corporation based in Tokyo, this research exposes the ideological and practical means of a multinational corporation in building and shaping members' social identities. Additionally, it examines how members understand their organizational reality and respond to it, while uncovering the meanings and processes through which individuals construct and experience their identities within a global subsidiary in Japan. Looking at the ways globalization is being mediated into Japan's business context, this study illustrates how multinational firms, rapidly growing in Japan, facilitate new discourses of self and subjectivity. Providing alternative workplaces for their members within Japan's labor market, individuals construct and manage the interplay between their social identities and other sub- identities against which they emerge, striving to

achieve personal interests and goals in their struggle to overcome the complexity of Japanese society today.

"Goodbye Underclass Society" – A Case of Social Innovation Beyond the Disparity Debate

Julia Obinger, University of Zurich

Younger generations' reactions to socio-economic shift in light of globalization and neoliberal reform are central issues in present sociological research in Japan, but diagnoses often lack perspectives on social innovation. While rising disparity and insecurity are persistent problems, current developments should also make way for alternative readings beyond 'black-and-white' interpretations of the 'winners' and 'losers'-model of Japanese society. Within this context, this paper offers a tentative mapping of possibilities for alternative social participation and identity construction in urban Japan, based on a case study of individuals affiliated to the network Shirōto no Ran (Amateur's Riot) in Kōenji, Tōkyō. Though a marginal group of no more than a few dozen actors, I see them as an avant-garde in creating and living alternative forms of sociality in urban Japan. Based on their fundamental ideal of 'anarchy' as emancipation from oppressive social conventions and norms, their lifestyles radically disengage from traditional and idealized notions of career, success and wealth in Japan. But instead of practicing 'social exit' or striving for systemic revolution, they presently create new networks and spaces – virtual and real, local and transnational – within which they experiment with new modes of community building and economic agency, as well as flexible forms of political, social and cultural participation. Employing self-references like 'paupers' and 'amateurs', and shouting 'goodbye underclass society' they construct their image of self in playful opposition to dominant prescriptions, replacing feelings of insecurity and vulnerability by that of empowerment.

Discussant:

Allison Alexy, University of Virginia

Keynote Address

Introductory Remarks: Jennifer Creamer, Associate Director of the University Center for International Studies and Interim Co-Director of the Asian Studies Center, University of Pittsburgh

John W. Traphagan, Secretary General, Japan Anthropology Workshop

“Graying Gap Society” Meets “Immigration Nation”: How is Japan Imagining Mobilities in Its Future?

Glenda S. Roberts, Waseda University

In recent years up to today, various influential voices in Japan have proposed that the country open itself to immigration as a partial solution to revitalize the economy, to prop up the demographic decline, and in recognition of already present streams of migration who entered through “side” or “back” doors. Where will Japan go from here? This paper traces connections among developments in migration policy in recent years by way of examining relevant discourses on migration from government policy reports, interviews with bureaucrats, politicians and civil society organization representatives and other stakeholders. While pro-immigration voices are present, the prospect for any “opening up” of Japan remains murky, due in no small part to the failures evident in various policies up to now as well as to the economic recessions of the past two decades, exacerbated by the disastrous earthquake and nuclear accident of 3/11. The recent change in political regimes, however, is bringing back a more ‘pro’ immigration rhetoric.

Panel 8:

Language Contact: Histories, Identities, and Ideologies through Japanese Language

Organizer: Chiho Sunakawa, The University of Texas at Austin

Migration and Japanese Language in Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kuril Islands: Their Socio-Cultural Histories and Linguistic Outcomes

Yoshiyuki Asahi, National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics

This paper aims to examine how Japanese migration to Hokkaido, Sakhalin and the Kuril islands gave its impact on the formation of the local Japanese dialects. Historically speaking, these three islands had had quite similar migration patterns. Eventually, their

linguistic situations became extremely similar. Research questions, then, arise: how did these three Japanese dialects develop in their migration histories? If the linguistic situations are similar, to what extent are their linguistic structures similar? As each island has more or less different history especially after 1945, how does this difference in history give an affect onto their linguistic structure?

The author conducted sociolinguistic interviews in both Hokkaido and Sakhalin to from 2003 (in Sakhalin), 2005 (in Hokkaido), and 2009 (for Kuril ex-islanders in Hokkaido). Based upon these data, this paper raises two variables (accentuation patterns, and intervocalic voicing) in three islands. Results in the accentuation pattern are that whilst the actuation pattern in Hokkaido Japanese has changed towards the accentuation patterns in Tokyo Japanese, Sakhalin and Kuril Japanese has had more idiosyncratic tendencies. In the same way, intervocalic voicing is less observed in Hokkaido Japanese than in Sakhalin and Kuril Japanese (Tokyo Japanese does not have this voicing phenomena.). These results indicate that it may be true that these three Japanese developed in the similar ways especially until 1945, but their linguistic structures have become different in each Japanese after Japan lost their communities in Sakhalin and the Kuril Island, and standardization process has been emphasized since 1950s throughout Japan.

Performing “Japanese” in Brazil: Language Ideologies in a Japanese Brazilian Cultural Association in São Paulo, Brazil

Tomoko Pujara Sakuma, The University of Texas at Austin

This paper presents a sociolinguistic study of ideologies about language, culture and ethnicity among Japanese immigrants and descendants (hereafter, Nikkeis) in Brazil who gather at a local Japanese cultural association, searching for what it means to be “Japanese”. This study is based on interview data and ethnographic data gathered primarily from participant observations of various social gatherings hosted by the association including Karaoke club, Haiku club and Japanese language courses. Nikkeis are an overwhelmingly celebrated minority group in Brazil. In this context, the cultural association serves as a site where symbolic cultural differences are constructed by those Nikkeis who strive to identify themselves as a prestigious minority. This study examines the way in which the Japanese language is employed as one of the important resources in performing the Nikkei identity, while Portuguese as a means of communication is becoming increasingly indispensable for cultural transmission. It shows how members of the association, including both Japanese monolinguals and Portuguese monolinguals,

are in constant negotiation, trying to strike a balance between symbolic values of Japanese, pragmatic needs for Portuguese, as well as their own language competencies. By doing so, this paper demonstrates how ethnicity, culture and language define and redefine one another as they interact and transform over time. It aims to contribute to the Japan study by underscoring the role of language ideologies in rationalizing linguistic as well as cultural choices.

Clear Messages Without Clear “Representations”?: The Strategic Conversation Style used by Japanese Women Living in Intercultural Situations

Kaori Hata, Rikkyo University

The goal of this paper is to discuss how narratives constitute an important linguistic and cultural context where Japanese speakers evaluate/reconstruct their experiences in their lives. Specifically, I investigate how Japanese women living in the United Kingdom express their tangled identities coming from their original Japaneseness and internalised social norms in their living places. In this paper, I focus on narratives about two events: 1) their childbirth/childcare, and 2) the recent East Japan Earthquake and the subsequent explosions at the nuclear power plants. These two events are particularly important and sensitive opportunities for Japanese women as immigrants because they need to confront the gaps of social norms in the two communities they belong/belonged to. Applying positioning theory, a method to illustrate identities represented in the narratives (Bamberg: 2004, Bamberg and Georgakopoulou: 2008), I reveal how resources of communication (e.g. deictic expressions like pronouns, gestures, dysfluency, and laughter) are used as integral elements of interpreting narrative messages. It is often said that Japanese speakers are difficult to understand because they do not express their opinions in clear-cut expressions, especially when they try to avoid discussing sensitive issues. However, even without clear-cut expressions, there are certain forms of expressions that imply their opinions, so that the participants of conversation can probe and find the speakers’ intentions in it. In order to make these structures understandable, this paper illustrates how Japanese women strategically use these resources for communicating their message when they should expose their normative consciousness under the intercultural situation.

A Virtual Dwelling: the (Re)construction of Families Through Webcam Talk

Chiho Sunakawa, The University of Texas at Austin

Developments in communication technologies provide us with means to easily gather with others in different parts of the world. Focusing on webcam interactions between diasporic Japanese families in the United States and their extended families in Japan, this paper examines how dispersed family members manage emotional, social, geographic, and temporal distances across households. More specifically, I investigate how goal-oriented activities, such as sharing meal time, playing role-play games, mothering, and taking a family photo are collaboratively achieved across spaces.

The data for this paper consist of ethnographic observation, interviews, and video-recorded webcam interactions. Drawing on ethnomethodology, I particularly focus on video-recorded webcam conversations in order to analyze how participants make coherent courses of actions in webcam talk. Detailed analyses of talk and spatial arrangements in webcam interactions allow us to understand how participants share experiences, build relationships, and demonstrate various roles and responsibilities.

By looking at the process in which goal-oriented activities are achieved through talk, I discuss how family members co-construct the translocal and transgenerational perpetuation of a “family” in webcam interactions. I argue that even though families do not live together or close to each other, the interactional activities that are consistently made through webcams create a virtual living space for the families to habituate the presence of extended family members in their ordinary lives. The audio-visual access of a webcam does not simply connect two distant home spaces, but it creates a center for familial, affective, and cultural attachments.

Muddling Feminine/Masculine Terrains: The Practices and Ideologies of Japanese Junior High School Students’ Gender-Crossing Pronouns

Ayumi Miyazaki, International Christian University

This paper analyzes how Japanese junior high school girls and boys use, negotiate and interpret non-traditional gendered language, in particular, their first-person pronouns, including the feminine “*atashi*,” the newly created, less feminine “*uchi*,” the masculine “*boku*,” the ultra-masculine “*ore*,” and other creative pronominal and non-pronominal words, and how in doing so, they travel between and shift feminine and masculine terrains by changing the interpretations of feminine and masculine pronouns. Girls and boys in my research site employ varieties of non-traditional, gender-crossing first-person

pronouns and constantly switch their pronouns according to their context and social relationships. Many students switch their pronouns in a single setting, in some cases, from the most feminine one to the most masculine one. While navigating these dynamic uses of gendered pronouns, girls and boys create complex sets of language ideologies, which Inoue (2006: 18) defines as an assemblage of “metapragmatic” statements, which in turn cover various forms of people’s “reflective social practices of language use,” including “everyday commentaries about how people speak.” Students’ everyday activities of reporting, marking, validating, making fun of, and criticizing one another’s first-person pronoun uses create new sets of indexical meanings of gendered pronouns. Girls’ and boy’s gender-crossing practices thus question seemingly divided spaces of male/female and masculinity/femininity. Girls and boys do not just move between two different terrains, but muddle and shift femininities/masculinities by resignifying (Butler 1997) gendered pronouns. Gendered linguistic practices in Japanese mark such dynamic constructions of femininities/masculinities and gender identities through everyday interactions.

Discussant:

Cyndi Dunn, University of Northern Iowa.

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 programme: 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.

Body Assemblages: Japanese Organ Transplants at the Intersections Between Legal Institutions, Clinical Practice, and Body Economies

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Between September 2011 and October 2012 I was based in Tokyo as an exchange researcher at Waseda University to conduct the fieldwork for my dissertation. As a PhD candidate at the School of Oriental and African Studies, in my thesis I address the topic of transplantation in Japan.

In Japan, the redefinition of death on neurological criteria (brain death) to allow organ procurement for transplantation purposes has been the subject of one of the most controversial and long-lasting public debates on bio-ethics. Building on the seminal work of Lock (2002) and on Japanese literature on the topic, I explore the tensions between the ethics of organ procurement and the increasing demand for this life saving technology.

While proposing a legal anthropological analysis of the 1997 Japanese Act on Organ Transplants with reference to the concept of uncertainty, I explore the way in which the legal regulation on biotechnologies enable and/or constrain people's choices, judgments, and actions. I present the life histories of paediatric patients who, being legally unable to receive a transplant in Japan, travelled to America for a new heart. On the base of the interviews conducted with these patients' families, I thus describe the political, moral,

and informal economy of travels abroad for transplantation purposes (kaigai tokō ishoku). While casting a light on a problem largely reported on Japanese media and yet poorly address in academic literature, I aim at discussing the global economies of human body parts in relation to biotechnologies (Waldby 2006). Furthermore, I analyse the issue of patienthood, focusing on the increasingly important role of patients as new political subjects (Novas 2006), and the emergent forms of sociality shaped around medically shared histories and biologically informed political agendas (Rabinow 2005, Rose 2007).

Following on the discussion about the recent reform to the Act on Organ Transplants, strongly advocated for by the transplant patients' lobby, I thus analyse the current situation of organ donation. Drawing on interviews with intensive care physicians and neurosurgeons, I analyse brain death at the intersection between legal institutions and clinical practice (Aita 2011), as a way of describing the redefinition of body ontologies and personhood through biotechnologies.

By bringing together the opposite needs by which transplantation is shaped, I aim at elucidating the tensions between the medically driven enterprise of saving life and the uncertainties surrounding the definition of death. Caught between the need of increasing access to life-saving medical treatment, and the ethical boundaries concerning the use of body parts as therapeutic resources, transplantation remains a bioethics dilemma always open, and a modern anthropological problem. In the gaps, intersections, and frictions between the need to receive and the problems of donating, considerable room is left for the constant renegotiation of the way we conceive and use our bodies, and thus, ultimately, of the way we think and experience who we are.

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The Angry Death and the Blind Shamans of Japan

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In the North-East of Japan the last representatives of a peculiar shamanism can still be found: the shamanism of the *itako* イタコ, the blind female shamans. They undoubtedly represent a peculiarity of the place; blind since birth, or from a very young age, they “choose” the shamanic activity as a consequence of this physical disability. For this very reason, different scholars and anthropologists questioned the authenticity of their shamanic experience, and even the possibility to consider them as “shamanic”. Nevertheless, I argue that their role, path, and their whole experience allow us to put them in the shamanistic phenomenon. Their specialty resides in the preferential communication with the dead through the ritual called *Kuchiyose*. In particular, they get in contact with a specific type of dead, the spirits who can't find peace, banned from the ancestors' society, and who represent a threat to the living. The *itako* can therefore allow the angry ghosts to communicate with their living relatives in order to have their needs satisfied, and their anguish eased.

The purpose of my research is to face two different sets of questions: first of all, why is the task to communicate with these dangerous spirits carried on by the *itako* and not by other specialists in the official and institutional religions (who usually perform rituals more similar to exorcisms)? Is it still possible to explain it with the concept of impurity (*kegare*), and the particular relationship between impurity, death and women in the Japanese belief system? That is to say, are the *itako* impure, being women, and therefore more suited to connect with the dead, or is it their close relationship with death that pushes them towards impurity? And in contemporary practice, what is the proper meaning of *kegare*, in connection with women and death? Second, what is the specific social function that they acquire in embracing this activity?

The first step of my research will be carrying out fieldwork in Tohoku (Miyagi, Iwate and Aomori Prefectures), where I will collect mainly direct accounts of *itako* life stories and rituals by interviewing *itako*, clients, and other people of interest, and an accurate study of different texts and the material culture. Then my biggest effort will lead to a theoretic elaboration of the above mentioned issues, reconsidering all the *loci classici* of the topic of shamanism in Japan: the particular role of women, the fundamental importance of *kegare*, ideas of ontological and sociological liminality, processual death.

In particular, I would like to analyze the following thematic areas:

- Historicizing the female shaman issue, considering its transformations through time, its confrontation with the great institutionalized religions, and its interactions with other specialists of spirits.
- Proposing a reconsideration of the canonic theories about impurity and pollution (e.g. Shintani) in order to investigate if *kegare* covers different realities and meanings.
- Lastly, analyzing the contemporary evolution of the idea of angry ghosts, the complex of premature death, and of unfulfilled desires involved in these symbolic universes.

I would really appreciate discussions with students and scholars interested in similar topics, so please feel free to contact me via email if you are interested!

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