



## **Keynote Abstracts**

### **Lee, Seung Hyok. Japan's relations with North Korea and its implications on Japanese national security**

Japanese security is undergoing a significant transformation as a result of the unending missile/nuclear provocations from North Korea and the increasingly threatening rise of China. Although the biggest current concern around Japanese security is understandably focused on the US-China rivalry in the Asia-Pacific region and Japan's role within that framework, I will argue that North Korea constitutes an equally significant factor in deciding the trajectory of Japanese national security thinking. Worsening images of North Korea in the minds of the Japanese public have provided both society and government with a rationale for Japan's gradual post-Cold War security transformations. In this talk, I will first

provide a historical overview of Japan-North Korea interactions on both the social and political levels, highlighting the fact that North Korea-related issues have been embedded in Japanese domestic politics throughout the postwar period. I will also emphasize the significance of the 2000s in transforming the nature of the bilateral relations in the minds of Japanese public. I will conclude the talk explaining how such historical trajectory has led to the current Japanese reaction to North Korean security threats, and the unlikelihood of improved bilateral relations in the foreseeable future.

**Nagy, Stephen. The Japan-China Paradox: Coexistence through engagement, resilience, and deterrence**

Japan's position in the Indo-Pacific is complex. It is deeply embedded in the politico-economy of the region with large economic footprints in ASEAN and the greater China region. At the same time, territorial issues, history, and competing security imperatives with China and to a lesser degree South Korea, continue to be sources of instability in the region driven by domestic politics in each country.

Despite this Japan-China paradox, Japan remains wedded to deepening economic relations with its largest neighbour based on the pursuit of coexistence through engagement, investing in resilience and deterrence. This approach includes: 1) a selective accommodation of China's rise; 2) deeply integrating Japan into the Indo-Pacific politico-economy and rules-making process; 3) tightening the Japan-U.S. alliance and cementing the U.S. into the region; and 4) diversifying and deepening its strategic partnerships.

By discussing these four approaches, this dialogue will highlight the nuanced approach to how Japan views and engages with China and the region through leveraging its extensive economic ties, commitment to development and its security partnerships such as the US-Japan alliance, the Quad and the recently signed Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement.

**Tadokoro, Masayuki. Is Japan Still Relevant Today?**

Ever for a long time since the West discovered Japan in the 16th century, Japan was an object of indoctrination for the West. Not surprisingly, It was regarded as an underdeveloped example of the dominant Western model, which was sometimes represented as a good student, sometimes as a delinquent and sometimes as a comical imitator.

The Japanese catch-up with Western modernity was probably completed by the 1980s. At the same time, modernisation of East Asian countries in contrast with Japan's economic stagnation rendered Japan banal boring. At the same time, views emphasising Japan's otherness lost their appeal. In fact, Japan over the past "lost three decades" became a country that shared many problems with Western countries. And in several respects, it offers a leading example of postmodern challenges.

However, with geopolitical tensions on the rise, the world seems to be undergoing a re-modernisation. Japan's role is taking on new meaning in the context of global challenges to liberal democracy. Japan is now a frontline state between an authoritarian China and an

increasingly unreliable US. Its geopolitical role will be of vital importance for the fate of liberal democracies.

### **Mokottunas Kitahara. Beliefs and Myths of the Ainu People**

This presentation will discuss the history of the Ainu people, new laws regarding the Ainu people and cultural continuity with North American indigenous peoples (including fishing gear for catching salmon, rituals to welcome the first salmon, folklore about the rainbow and legends of heroes born by the power of the sun).

Despite differences in the places where they have lived and their history, the Ainu and Canadian First Nations have much in common in terms of traditional culture and the social status and difficulties they face today. We would be greatly strengthened by knowing each other.

## Abstracts

### **Baycroft, Anne. "Japanese Buddhists, American Christians, and the Development of Modern Typography in Japan"**

In the mid-nineteenth century, Protestant missionaries ran the largest mission press in the world—the American Presbyterian Mission Press (APMP)—in Shanghai, China. This press printed millions of pages of Chinese and Japanese language texts every year using metal fonts of type developed specifically for religious printing. This paper explores the early exposure of Japanese Buddhist scholars to the modern, typographically printed books of the APMP in Shanghai through a study of the movement, reproduction, and dissemination of APMP publications in Japan during the first years of the Meiji era 明治時代 (1868-1912).

Japanese intellectual-scholar monks like Ugai Testujō 養鷗徹定 (1814-1981) engaged in theological discourses with Christian missionaries in China by reproducing and responding to the Chinese language scholarship printed by the mission press. The movement of printed books between China and Japan also fostered technological exchange. Coincidentally, Japanese Buddhists were some of the first adopters of modern typographic printing in Japan. They used this technology to increase the scale of educational and transportable Buddhist literature throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Operating independent of direct Protestant missionizing, yet tangential to the global outlook of missionary printing, Jōdo 浄土 and Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗 Buddhists endeavored to refine the teachings of their sect into authoritative, accessible, and transportable books. Secular and Buddhist printers alike wanted *Kanji*, *kana*, commentary, annotation, reading marks, and punctuation, all of which

could be achieved with the modern typography developed by American Presbyterian missionaries in China.

**Covatta, Alice. Architecture as spatial and social fabric: Japanese perspectives to reduce social isolation in high density**

Tokyo is the paradigm of a city growing denser over time (Ashihara, 1992). Faced with multiple opportunities and challenges, this metropolis has always been a pioneer in exploring new solutions for high-density housing (Boontharm & Radovic, 2012). In recent years, cases of social isolation have rapidly increased due to densification and the change in lifestyle towards the atomization of Japanese society (Maki et al., 2019). Isolation results in a quantitative and qualitative lack of social contacts (Delisle, 1988), a situation that involves few social contacts and roles, as well as an absence of mutually enriching relationships with others (Clifford, 2018). At a time when the risks associated with social isolation are growing in global cities (Adli et al., 2017), especially in the face of the consequences of COVID-19 on interpersonal relationships (Yamada et al., 2021), it seems necessary, even urgent, to explore architectural solutions for contemporary cohabitation, in order to better understand the role that architecture should play in promoting social interactions in high-density areas. The objective is to understand which architectural forms target development towards densification while integrating strategies to reduce social isolation. These practices have the potential to provide better urban resilience and improve mental health, from Tokyo to global metropolises. We began the research by consulting articles, site visits, videos, exhibitions and books. This led us to four recently completed projects that share the same urban

challenges within high-density residential neighborhoods in Tokyo. These were selected for their recent construction (2009-2014) and are located in high-density residential monofunctional neighborhoods. In addition, the architects of these projects have affirmed their intention to increase social interaction between residents through an innovative layout. The selected projects are: Apartment with a small restaurant (Naka Architect' Studio 2014), Dragon Village (Eureka 2013), House for seven people (Mio Tsuneyama/mnm 2013) and Yokohama Apartment (Osumu Nishida+Erika Nakagawa 2009). The method of typomorphological analysis has been developed to reveal the physical and spatial structure of the selected projects, based on detailed classification by types of the elements that shape its urban form: open spaces, buildings or streets. The analysis reveals that each project integrates urban spaces (i.e. loggia, verandas, alleys..) into the building's design. These urban types are designed to facilitate interaction and act as catalysts for daily encounters and occasional events. Even if they often have an interstitial character, the study highlights how these types act at multiple scales to strengthen the link between social space and personal space, but also between the building and the neighborhood.

### **Creighton, Millie. Japan's 'Art Seto' and Global Uses of Tourism to Offset Rural Depopulation**

Japan is an archipelagic country comprised entirely of islands. However, Japan's four 'main islands' are considered more central than its thousands of other islands. These 'other' islands held vibrant communities of smaller cities, towns, and villages. With the triple

forces of rural exodus, low birth rate, and aging population these communities struggle for survival. The Seto Inland Sea islands developed an international art (and architecture) festival, the Seto Inland Sea International Art Triennale, to attract tourists. The broader concept 'Art Seto' includes art visible then and other times. Occurring every three years, the festival highlights world famous museums and resort hotels built on these islands by renowned Japanese architects, and installations of Japanese and foreign artists. 'Art Seto' allows the communities to 'survive,' but one question is whether incoming flows of foreign and Japanese outsiders really constitute community survival. However, locals redefine their identities rather than simply being caught in globalization, while tourists navigate Seto Inland Sea island hopping via different travel mobilities. My presentation also explores social, environmental and human rights issues 'Art Seto' addresses such as rural youth suicides, environmental degradation, and Japan's previous incarceration of Hansen's Disease (aka Leprosy) patients. I also present recent research done in November 2022 on four islands that are only part of the festival during autumn. While showing how rural and remote communities in Japan resist decline via tourism, I resist the notion that this represents a declining Japan, and instead relate this to global movements of rural and smaller communities in developed countries adopting tourism incentives to survive through regional celebrations, art, music, theatre or film festivals, or recreating themselves as so-called book towns, etc.

**Dahl, Shayne. Signs of Hope in a Forgotten Mountain: Shugendo, Counterculture, and Rural Revitalization**

In a small farming village, high in the mountains of Western Japan, oral history tells that a



nearby summit is a dyad of the womb and diamond realms in esoteric Buddhism. Yet, no one, not even the oldest living resident in this rapidly depopulated village, know what this means or where, exactly, the realms might be. In July 2022, a young mountain ascetic who recently moved into a growing countercultural community near the mountain discovered the realm sites while wandering by intuition through the trees. He then organized a community excavation, finding unusual rock formations that soon became new sites of worship. In this presentation, I consider how the local archaeological discovery of the realm sites has affected religion in the community, intensifying their felt connection to the ancestral past as well as inspiring waking visions of an imminent spiritual revolution. This paper considers especially how despite outward signs of decline in Japanese society related to a low birth rate and rapidly ageing population, millennials are repopulating formerly depopulated rural communities and seeking to revitalize local communities, reimagining Japan from the periphery.

**Fujiwara, Gideon. *Utakai Hajime* in Modern Japan: The Imperial New Year Poetry Ceremony from Meiji to Contemporary Society**

In the New Year, Japan's imperial court hosts a ceremony to present readings of *waka* poetry by members of the imperial family and general public, composed on a preannounced theme. For several centuries this *Utakai hajime* ceremony had been conducted exclusively within the court, but in the early years of the Meiji period (1868-1912) the court began to accept poems from the general populace. Such changes reflect larger developments in both society and the practice of the poetic form, as well as efforts to make the modern monarchs visible

to the public and build a nation of subjects who would also partake in *waka* composition passed down for over a millennium.

This presentation examines how the *Utakai hajime* has been developed and popularized over the course of its modern history. I look at how the court gradually engaged a broader demographic of people across lines of gender, class, age, geography, and ethnicity to compose and submit *waka* for this annual ritual. Through such examples I explore how the poetry and ceremony itself was developed through Japan's tumultuous era of modern reforms, empire, and wartime and postwar societies.

#### **Ha, Linh. ASEAN-QUAD synergies in Indo-Pacific? Evaluating Japan's bridging role**

In Southeast Asia, Japan stands out as the QUAD member that understands the region the best and is most willing to cater to the needs of individual regional states. Japan's reputation as the most trusted partner in the region and its unique brand of development diplomacy have been consistently highlighted in The State of Southeast Asia's annual survey reports. Additionally, Japan is considered a leading player in the QUAD and a crucial link between member states. The idea of the QUAD was initially proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007 while the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific was first introduced by Abe in 2016, creating a foundation for ASEAN and other QUAD members to formulate their own Indo-Pacific versions. This paper aims to answer the following questions:

1. Why is Japan uniquely positioned to serve as a bridge between ASEAN and the QUAD for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region?

2. Can Japan successfully fulfill this role, and what are its strengths and limitations in doing so?
3. How will ASEAN respond to Japan's involvement in shaping partnerships with the QUAD?
4. Do other QUAD members share the same objectives as Japan regarding ASEAN?

**Harrison, Scott and Momo Sakudo. Are immigration policies the end-all solution to Japan's rapid population decline?**

Japan's population is shrinking and ageing at an alarming rate, but even the best natal policies and programs cannot completely solve what is an inherently multidimensional issue. Prime Minister Kishida Fumio spoke directly to this issue during his opening speech at the 2023 Parliamentary session when he said that Japan was on the "brink of social dysfunction" due to the declining birthrates. While efforts to support the equality of women and children in Japan are needed and notable, Japan's population decline is not only about birthrates. In the short to medium term, immigration will also play an essential role in addressing the challenges of population decline and offset labour shortages. Currently, in the absence of a national immigration system, Japan has piecemeal migration policies overseen by several ministries and agencies. And discussions of a more holistic, national system have historically been a political taboo. However, the increase of foreign residents in Japan despite a national immigration system and the growing number of migration-related policies are a nod of recognition for Japan's shifting priorities. While migration alone will not solve Japan's demographic challenges, realities on the ground point to both Japan's need for immigration and that change is already in

the air.

## **Hashimoto, Atsuko and David Telfer. Historic and Heritage Tourism Along the Tōkaidō**

### **Road in Edo Japan**

The legendary Tōkaidō Road built during the Edo period (1603-1867) connected Edo (Tokyo) the home of the shogun, with Kyoto, the home of the emperor. Along the road were 53 post-stations (*shuku*) that served the many travellers from pilgrims to great lords (*daimyo*) traversing the road offering food, supplies and accommodation. Guidebooks and literature of the time along with the images of woodblock prints fostered a sense of adventure awaiting those setting out on the 12-day trip between the two cities. The policy of *sankin-kōtai* (alternate attendance for *daimyō* in Edo and in their domains) also saw great processions of *daimyō* accompanied by thousands of retainers travelling along the Tōkaidō. This presentation first examines historic tourism along the Tōkaidō Road through Edo period travel guides and literature as well as through Utagawa Hiroshige's woodblock print series '53 Stations of the Tōkaidō'. It then examines contemporary heritage tourism of the preserved post-station of Seki and the reconstructed checkpoint of Hakone offering a look back on travel during the Edo period. An examination of both historic travel and contemporary heritage tourism offers insights into the continuing lore of the Tōkaidō Road.

**Iwata, Shinsuke and Kentaro Okada. The Appeal of Canada in Travel Media for Women: Focusing on the "Rurubu Canada" Series**

The purpose of this presentation is to explore how the attractiveness of Canada has been represented in tourism through a content analysis of travel media, with a focus on understanding the grassroots aspects of international relations between Japan and Canada.

The analysis primarily centers around Japan's travel media for women, specifically one of the country's most popular travel guidebook series, "Rurubu Canada." The aim is to clarify how the appeal of Canada has been portrayed in the series over the past 20 years.

The analysis reveals the following three points. Firstly, geographically, Canada's attractiveness is primarily concentrated in two regions: the west (British Columbia and Alberta) and the east (Ontario, southern Quebec, and Prince Edward Island). Central Canada, for example, is rarely chosen as a main attraction, even if there are parts to showcase it.

Secondly, a significant portion of Canada's attractions is based on natural resources, such as the Canadian Rockies, Niagara Falls, fall foliage, glaciers, auroras, and wildlife. Even sections on "Anne of Green Gables" emphasize the natural landscape surrounding Green Gables, presenting it as an integral component of Canada's natural beauty.

And thirdly, it is evident that the multicultural aspect of Canada is largely overlooked, as indicated by the rarity of the term "multiculturalism." While cultural elements related to indigenous peoples are often displayed in souvenirs and other products, and ethnic towns

have been highlighted in Toronto in recent years, it can be argued that they have deviated from the national image of Canada as a multicultural nation.

**Kato, Ken; Kimiko Katuyama and James Tiessen. Research Ethics Committees for Medical Research in Japan**

The development of medical care can be seen as the result of medical research. However, it is undeniable that some research has been conducted in such a way as to trample on the dignity of people and animals. Against this background, and especially in light of the reflections on human subjects' cases against prisoners of war during World War II, research ethics in medical research, as represented by the Helsinki Declaration of the World Medical Association, has become important. In Japan, medical research is conducted by the "Ethical Guidelines for Life Sciences and Medical Research Involving Human Subjects" and other guidelines. In this process, research ethics committees play an important role, but not all research ethics committees can conduct sufficient ethical reviews. This is because, for example, many hospitals have ethics committees. Although ethics committees are required to include people who represent the public, there is a shortage of people who can conduct ethics reviews from such a position. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the current status of research ethics committees in medical research in Japan by comparing it with Canada and to provide clues for considering how an effective research ethics committee, including its organizational structure, should be organized.

**Kovalio, Jacob. Japan and Canada between 2020-2023: similarities and differences**

The presentation is a comparative *tour d'horizon* of the most salient elements in the

domestic and foreign policies of the two nations.

**Lipsy, Phillip. Japan as a harbinger?**

Why study Japan? Research on contemporary Japanese politics and foreign policy faces headwinds from the relative geopolitical decline of Japan and scholars skeptical about single-country studies. An overview of Japanese politics publications in English-language journals over the past four decades suggests the subfield remains active and robust. However, there is still room to grow. I argue that Japan is a harbinger state, which experiences many challenges before others in the international system. As such, studying Japan can inform both scholars and policymakers about the political challenges other countries are likely to confront in the future. In turn, scholarship on Japan offers a critical opportunity to develop theoretical insights, assess early empirical evidence, and offer policy lessons about emerging challenges and the political contestation surrounding them. I consider the reasons why Japan so often emerges as a harbinger across issue areas and suggest areas for ongoing scholarly attention.

**Matsui, Shige. Facing the Disastrous Lowest Child-birth Rate and the Drastically Aging Society: Vital Importance of the Constitutional Right to Sexual Autonomy**

Japan is facing a disastrous lowest child-birth rate. The number of child born is rapidly declining. As a result, the number of people in the working age is dropping rapidly and Japanese society is facing a serious labor shortage. On the other hand, the people are

aging so fast. With the significant speed of aging, the huge number of seniors is necessitating the government care. The government must come up with the effective and promising measure to face both evident tendencies. Probably, the government would need a miracle to solve this most daunting task. Regardless of the international conflict or any kind of natural disasters, these internal conflict could possibly ruin the Japanese government and the Japanese society. The government has been enthusiastically promoting marriage and child-birth. Yet, the government measures so far fail to stop this dilemma. The government need to find a much better solution. However, in order to adopt any measures, it is vital to remember that each individual should have a right to sexual autonomy. Indeed, the right to sexual autonomy needs to be constitutionally protected and should be granted the prime importance in adopting any government measures or in implementing them. This paper highlights the importance of the right to sexual autonomy and cast serious doubt whether the government realizes this primary constitutional mandate.

**Ogata, Ken. *Sunset of the samurai: A study of deinstitutionalization processes***

The Meiji Restoration in 1868 marked the relegitimation of the Emperor as the sole head of state, replacing the former Tokugawa Shogun government. The Restoration enabled societal level institutional change, transforming Japan from an agrarian feudal society, into a modern industrialized nation by the advent of the twentieth century. Restoration leaders used the past (Heian period) as the basis for creating the future (restoration of Imperial rule), while dismantling contrary elements of the past (demise of the samurai).



Key to the success of Japan's subsequent modernization was the delegitimation and deinstitutionalization of the samurai class. However, deinstitutionalization did not occur rapidly as suggested by the precipitating jolt institutional change literature, but rather required considerable creative destruction by the new Imperial government over a ten-year period (1868-77), culminating with the Satsuma Rebellion and death of Saigo Takamori.

Despite the critical role of deinstitutionalization to institutional change, few studies have been conducted of this process. As such, limited theorizing of the deinstitutionalization process has occurred, with much presumed about its characteristics and trajectory. Building upon Oliver's (1992) three suggested pathways for deinstitutionalization (rejection, replacement, dissipation), and Scott's (2008) institutional pillars framework (regulatory, normative, cultural-cognitive), this paper traces the efforts of the new Imperial government to deinstitutionalize the samurai, and how their actions disrupted and dismantled associated institutional pillars and supporting social structures. Based upon this case study of the samurai, a framework for deinstitutionalization processes is proposed, with an emphasis upon elaborating the dissipation pathway of institutional demise.

### **Ota, Norio. Language education at a crossroads**

Humanities, and languages in particular, have been experiencing an onslaught in university education for many years. In the US, for example, 651 foreign language courses were eliminated in three years between 2013 and 2016. (Johnson 2019) In Canada the same trend

has been observed in recent years. In this presentation, aspects of language teaching which have been ignored for a long time will be discussed, by focusing on educational aims involved in language learning. The narrative approach proposed in Ota (2021) to enhance advanced and post-advanced Japanese language courses is one of such attempts.

In the second part of this paper, the computer technology and the Internet, which have changed the field of language teaching and learning immensely in the past forty years, will be discussed in reference to the emergence of generative artificial intelligence, which is expected to revolutionize the field further. The spearhead of this trend is ChatGPT, with which a professional or an academic in any field could write very cohesive papers, theses and even dissertations. In language courses an intermediate student, for example, could come up with an almost perfect essay in Japanese. This is already happening. A translation assignment is more accurate now based on powerful computing and big data. Is this the beginning of AI taking over the language teaching profession?

#### References:

Johnson, Steven (2019) "Colleges Lose a 'Stunning' 651 Foreign-Language Programs in 3 Years", *The Chronicle of higher education*, January 22, 2019.

Ota, Norio (2021) 'Narrative-based advanced and post-advanced Japanese language courses', a paper presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Japan Studies Association Annual Conference (on line) at Thompson Rivers University, October 1-3, 2021.

**Murphy, Thomas. Middle Power Cyber Security Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: An Analysis Through the Lens of Neo-Middle-Power Diplomacy**

As technology has advanced and our world has become increasingly interconnected, cyberspace has become an invisible but consequential battlefield in great power competition. The Indo-Pacific is a region that has found itself particularly vulnerable in this new reality – the paucity of institutions, heterogeneity in development, and the region being the primary zone of US-China strategic competition fueling these vulnerabilities. Data from private and public sectors are targeted as both state and non-state actors seek to take advantage of this relatively underdeveloped security environment. What is clear is that the domain of cyberspace provides a multitude of national security threats posed by states, non-state actors and state sponsored actors. Despite this, in the published Indo-Pacific strategies of middle powers such as Canada, cybersecurity takes a backseat to hard security, energy security, and economic security issues – underrepresented in comparison despite its critical importance. Using the concept of neo-middle power diplomacy, this paper examines why the limited cybersecurity cooperation among middle powers in the Indo-Pacific has taken the shape it has. This paper finds that the two most promising areas of cooperation in cybersecurity for middle powers are through confidence building measures and capacity building measures, and that this cooperation stems from a lack of an institutional framework, a gap in cyber capabilities in the region, the variety of challenges middle powers face from cyberspace, and the rapid development of offensive cyber capabilities. Through

actively pursuing these two measures, middle powers are able to become more effective, capable, and autonomous stakeholders within the Indo-Pacific.

**Nedal, Dani K. How Urban Vulnerability Promotes Peace: Evidence from Cross-National Statistics and a Longitudinal Study of Japan**

How do states deal with vulnerability? Some scholars identify vulnerability as a leading cause of aggressive behavior. Vulnerability raises the costs of inaction and the risk of predation. Preventive action is advised and concerns over relative gains prevail. Intense security competition and aggressive behavior follow. Others propose that states respond by avoiding conflict, and even by cooperating to mitigate perceived vulnerabilities.

Heightened vulnerability, in this view, does not necessarily promote predatory behavior, but may instead engender caution, inhibition, or pro-social behavior. I focus on a single critical source of national vulnerability in the modern age – the vulnerability of cities to modern war – and one related source of inequality among countries – their levels of urban concentration. In some countries, like the United States or Spain, population (as well as wealth and power) is dispersed throughout various cities, while others, like South Korea or Sudan, feature one or two dominant urban centers. As a result, the strategic significance of cities and overall degrees of vulnerability differ considerably from country to country.

Through a quantitative analysis of urban concentration and interstate conflict, I show that states more often deal with urban vulnerability by avoiding conflict, not seeking it out.

Japan, one of the most urbanized and concentrated countries, was one of the first to grasp the challenges posed by urban vulnerability. A longitudinal study of Japanese

security policy throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century illustrates the predominantly cautionary responses to urban vulnerability as well as a critical, outlier, case of tragically self-defeating aggressive behavior.

**Pavlenko, Svitlana. The Japanese consulate in Odesa and the hunt for Japanese spies during the 1900-1930s**

Odesa is a South Ukrainian port city. It became a powerful trade center in the 19th century. Almost 20 foreign consulates have worked there. Among them was the Japanese one, which worked during 1889 – 1909 and 1926–1937. The Japanese-Russian and then Japanese-Soviet relations influenced the consulate's work. For the first 15 years, the Russian secret police did not pay any attention to the activity of the Japanese consulate in Odesa. Even from 1903 to January 1904, the counter-intelligent didn't assume that consul Kametaro Iijima could work as a Japanese spy agent. However, he was doing it. Everything changed after the Russian-Japan war. From 1907 Russian secret police tried to watch out for the consulate's workers and other guests from Japan. The State Archive of Odesa Region keeps the report 1907 about watching for vice-consul Naohiko Fukuda. Although the secret police did it very carefully and tried to avoid any influences on the consulate's activity.

The opposite situation was during the Soviet era. Japan was an ideological and political enemy of the Soviet State. The Soviet secret police didn't only watch out for the Japanese in Odesa they also had secret agents among consulate workers and checked out each document that was sent to or from the consulate. The Soviet counter-intelligent service believed that all the Japanese, who were in the USSA worked for a Japanese spy system. It

is why the secret police tried to paralyze the work of the consulate. Of course, they didn't get any evidence.

**Reiffenstein, Tim. Geographies of elite Tokyo ramen noodle shops. Or where can we expect to see sidewalk queues in Tokyo?**

This article examines the geographies of elite Tokyo ramen noodle shops. It does this first by using Arc GIS to map ten years of locational data (2012-2021) of prominent and emergent Tokyo ramen shops, here defined according to *Tokyo Ramen of the Year* magazine's curated annual rankings in established and rookie categories. Outside of Tokyo's core, elite shop distributions radiate outwards along the rail lines. Within Tokyo's core, GIS kernel density highlights agglomerations of elite shops in an arc from Kanda to Takadanobaba. Shops outside these hot zones calculate that quality will attract committed customers to make the trek to suburban and ex-urban locales, often to wait in a lengthy queue when they arrive. Consequently, the second part of the paper analyzes ramen consumer time-space accounts of elite shop visits, as published on peer-to-peer site *Ramen Database*. These complementary approaches position the paper to argue that elite ramen shops command unique time geography commitments from their customers. These time costs sit at odds with the quick and affordable identity of ramen characterized by the moniker b-kyu gurume (b class gourmet).

**Sinclair, Paul. Japan Doubles Down on English: How Foreign Language Education Policy Reflects Japan's Political Priorities in East Asia**

This presentation indirectly tackles the conference's "Japan in Perilous Times" theme by asking how Japan's language education policy reflects the country's current geopolitical priorities. Our presentation begins with a brief historical tour of Japan's approaches to languages like English, French and German, which had cultural value, and languages like Chinese, Korean, and Russian, which had utilitarian value. Then we move our focus to the present. Looking back over the past two decades, we argue the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology began to strategically focus its resources on English language education at the turn of the 21st century. For example, we explore the 2002 "Strategy to cultivate Japanese who can actually use English" and the gradual spread of English programming through elementary schools. While the Foreign Language Section of the Central Council for Education intoned its support for languages other than English during its deliberations in the mid-2000s, the Council's real interest was English education, we show. And the Monbukagakushō redoubled its efforts as it began to prepare its citizens for the 2020 Olympics, striving for "top-class English proficiency in Asia" [italics mine]. We then discuss how, during the same period, lukewarm support of Chinese, Korean, and "languages other than English," stymied the education of those languages even when enthusiasm for the languages was growing amongst the public. To make our case, we discuss Japanese universities' tepid efforts to establish language programs for Korean and Chinese in the past two decades, recent policies for National Center for

University Entrance Examinations regarding foreign languages other than English, and Japan's support for the US hardline position on China's Confucius Institutes.

**Seko, Yukari and James Tiessen. Aging well with culturally appropriate food: Meal provision for *Nikkei* seniors in Canada**

Food is a vital resource for healthy aging. Meal programs for older adults, such as "Meals on Wheels" (meal delivery to home) and Congregate Community Dining (CCD) that provides an opportunity for participants to eat together have proven effective in mitigating food insecurity and promoting psychosocial well-being. However, existing research in Canada focuses predominantly on the nutritional value of these programs. Less attention is paid to their social aspects, particularly in culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

In this presentation, we explore CCD programs for older Canadians of Japanese cultural backgrounds (*Nikkei*) delivered by the Momiji Health Care Society (MHCS) in the Greater Toronto Area. We discuss *Nikkei* seniors' experiences and memories related to food in their own lives, what meaning they may associate with Japanese-style meals, and whether and how the CCD program has contributed to aging well in place. Further, we examine how the MHCS has navigated challenges to deliver this program over many years and adapted to a changing environment during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation concludes with a discussion on the meaning and function of "Japanese culture" in the multicultural city of Toronto where residents' ethnocultural identities are in constant flux.



**Somerville, Matthew. Nihonjin Kyoushi Dake!?: The Perceptions of a Non-Native Speaking Teacher in a high-intermediate Japanese language class.**

Previous research has highlighted challenges faced by non-native speaking teachers (NNSTs) due to the pervasive beliefs favoring native-speaking teachers (NSTs) for their perceived linguistic and pedagogical capabilities. This divide, upheld by students, teachers, and administrators, impacts students' learning experiences and escalates NNSTs' anxieties, confidence issues, and workplace challenges. While NNST research on instructors within English and other language fields has received attention, limited focus is given to NSTs in the Canadian JFL context.

This presentation aims to address this gap by examining an NNST in high-intermediate Japanese class within a Canadian post-secondary setting. Utilizing qualitative tools (pre- and post-course open-ended questions, reflexive journal entries, language logs, and interviews) and quantitative data (pre-and post-course Likert scale questionnaires), the study investigates the instructional practices employed by the NNST and the perceptions and beliefs held by both students and the instructor regarding the NNST's qualifications.

The results from this study shed light on NNSTs' capabilities and students' perceptions of their instructors. These findings contribute to the specialized NNST research field, offering empirical and practical implications for research, language teaching, teacher education, and professional development within the Canadian JFL field. In alignment with the conference theme "Japan in Perilous Times," this presentation underscores the social challenges NNSTs confront due to long-standing NST biases while offering recommendations aimed at empowering NNSTs within the JFL field in Canada.

**Telfer, David and Atsuko Hashimoto. The Growth of *Kominka* Restoration as Heritage Tourism in Japan**

The conversion of old storage and industrial buildings in or near ports into shops, restaurants, museums, and other tourist facilities to redevelop the region and its economy has occurred in many places such as Otaru, Yokohama, Kurashiki, and Moji in Japan. In a similar vein, *kominka*, or old residential houses, often with thatched roofs, are recently attracting new attention as part of *kominka* projects in remote rural areas to establish tourism as a new economic activity. *Kominka* used to be considered old-fashioned with cumbersome maintenance issues, and many home-owners starting in the 1970s changed them into modern homes with contemporary building materials. Exceptions to this modernization were in cultural heritage designated areas like Shirakawagō in Gifu where the entire community of *kominka* buildings were conserved. Recently preserving individual *kominka* houses has become part of tourism redevelopment strategies as they are transferred into fashionable accommodations, shops, cafés, and restaurants while maintaining the historic character of the buildings. In some cases, individual *kominka* are relocated while others are preserved in place as part of a larger cluster of *kominka*. Interestingly, it has been non-Japanese who have pointed out the value of the *kominka* and have been restoring them in rural areas which are attracting increasing numbers of tourists. This presentation will examine successful *kominka* project cases including Kyoto, Kawaba, Ojika Island and Iya Valley highlighting their potential as tool for rejuvenation through tourism.

**Telfer, Kyoko. Talking chairs and godly cats: Mediating the cultural trauma of the 3/11 disaster in Shinkai's *Suzume no Tojimari* (2022)**

This paper argues that Makoto Shinkai's animated film *Suzume no Tojimari* reinscribes a narrative of resilience and remembrance of the 3/11 tsunami and earthquake disaster as a means of mediating a collective cultural trauma. Through a literature review and close textual analysis of the film, this analysis follows three lines of inquiry to demonstrate how Shinkai integrates the 3/11 disaster into narratives of a mythic past, the historical past, and present cultural consciousness as part of the mediation process. Regarding the mythic past, analysis considers the fantastical elements of the film and locates them within the wider context of Indigenous Shinto religion. In attributing the cause of natural disasters to mythical creatures, Shinkai provides an instigator of this specific cultural trauma while also complicating the question of culpability. Situating the film's events into a connected geographic context, the road trip genre also situates both the characters and the 3/11 disaster into a historical tradition of natural disasters by featuring locations that have experienced past earthquakes and tsunamis. Narrativising 3/11 as part of a history of natural disasters softens its immediacy and establishes it as a past event. With its setting in the present day, the film represents past and present through the framework of the titular character's coming of age. Presenting memory as a key characteristic of achieving adulthood, the lasting impact of 3/11 as a cultural trauma is acknowledged, then neutralized. Finally, the translation of *Suzume no Tojimari's* extratextual elements into tangible fan experiences will be briefly considered.

### **Takagaki, Cary. The apocalypse genre in manga and anime: where's the 'peril'?**

In 1988, during the height of the bubble period, two remarkably different anime were released in Japan. One was the bucolic, nostalgic look back to a simpler 1950s Japan, Miyazaki Hayao's *My Neighbour Totoro*. The other was an apocalyptic anime set in a corrupt, violence plagued future Tokyo, Otomo Katsuhiro's *Akira*. Miyazaki's *Totoro* could be seen as an attempt to recapture interpersonal and family values that seemed to be slipping away in the economy driven 1980s where money was plentiful and consumerism was reaching unprecedented heights. But what had given rise to the bleak nihilistic future that *Akira* foretold? Moreover, it was only one of other similarly themed manga and anime, such as *Grey*, and *Appleseed*. These all had their origins during the bubble period and were followed by other apocalypse themed manga and anime such as *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. Yet Japan was the second largest economy in the world at the time and the pressing concerns over climate change and terrorism were over a decade away. So what explains the end of the world narratives that drove these manga and anime? This paper looks for the "peril" that had induced such anxieties in these genres of popular culture aimed at Japanese youth.

### **Waldichuk, Tom. Culture and Environmental Attitudes in Japan**

Attitudes toward the environment in Japan, *e.g.*, concern for the environment, do not seem to differ with those of people from other developed countries such as Canada. Environmental attitudes do differ when comparing Japanese residents with those residents of poorer countries with a lower GDP per capita. Regardless of country, statistically significant attitude differences exist among all people based on social demographic

variables such as gender, age, education, and income. Political party affiliation, trust in others, and post-material values can also affect attitudes. Researchers note that historically Christian values have negatively influenced the development of pro-environmental values in Western countries, whereas in East Asian societies the presence of Buddhism and Confucianism may have led to more eco-friendly values and attitudes. However, it is difficult to measure the influence of religion – or more broadly culture -- on environmental attitudes. The purpose of this talk is to describe – based on a literature review and using examples -- how religion and culture have influenced environmental values, attitudes, and behaviours in Japan. How do these attitudes vary with those of other East Asian nations? I then reflect on first, how culture can influence modern-day environmental attitudes, such as attitudes toward climate change and the preservation of green space, and second, the importance of considering culture when making global comparisons of environmental attitudes.

**Winberg, William. EU, Germany and cooperation within Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific**

Since the second premiership of Prime minister Shinzo Abe, there's been a shift towards a more proactive Japan in the realm of foreign policy. A once passive Japan, (in)famously "free riding" on American power projection in the Pacific, is now engaging in its extended neighborhood in a previously unseen manner. The Abe administration formally launched its "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) strategy in 2016, which has since become the cornerstone and guiding rationale of its approach to foreign policy.

In light of the increasingly hostile security environment in which Japan finds itself, it has become increasingly evident that Japan must seek to strengthen its security posture. The Japanese government launching the FOIP highlights the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region.

Simultaneously, the security situation in Europe is deteriorating at a similar rate. Japanese government white papers repeatedly name the European Union as one of the key partners for Japan and within the FOIP framework. The EU formally adopted a strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, mirroring Japan's view of the importance of the region. Countries within the EU have done the same. Japan and the EU similarly work primarily as value-based actors, promoting liberal values of freedom of navigation and commerce, as opposed to focusing on traditional security. Japan's FOIP strategy has a clear emphasis on liberal values of ensuring inclusive and rule-based norms in the Indo-Pacific region, which makes the like-minded EU a natural partner for cooperation, as evidenced by the recently agreed upon bilateral free trade and strategic partnership agreements.

The goal of the research is to map current areas of cooperation between EU, Germany and Japan and subsequently explore what future potential there is for further cooperation within the FOIP framework. In part due to its novelty and complexity, Japan's FOIP is woefully understudied in political science as it relates to cooperation with both the EU and Germany. The running hypothesis for this case study is that there is a need and possibility for increased cooperation between Europe and Japan. The recently agreed upon aforementioned agreements and the sudden launch of various European Indo-Pacific strategies is testament to the existing common ground with similar interests in the region.

The overall aim of the study is to shed light on how Japan and its European counterparts ought to approach the Indo-Pacific region in the coming years.

**Yabuki-Soh, Noriko. Rethinking technology-enhanced learning in higher education: A university Japanese writing course example**

In this uncertain post-COVID era of higher education, the effective use of online technology is once again in constant debate after the return to in-person teaching and learning, and the release of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, has raised academic integrity concerns. It is therefore increasingly important for educators to adapt their teaching and assessment practices to such realities: the current situation in teaching Japanese as a foreign language in universities is no exception. This study reports on the development of the Intermediate Written Communication in Japanese course that adopted the globally networked learning (GNL) approach. The study presents the process of organizing and implementing the GNL portion of this new Japanese writing course, which was offered in 2022-2023. In collaboration with the university's international centre, where the author teaches, and its counterpart office in a sister-university in Japan, students who were enrolled in the course were connected with the student community in Japan and various other locations around the world solely through their writing, which was accomplished through the use of online platforms such as Google Docs. As for student assessments, portfolios and formative assessment that focused on in-process evaluations were primarily used so that students could monitor their own progress. Survey results suggested that, overall, participants found this project helped enhance student learning. After discussing the pros and cons of technology-enhanced learning, the study makes pedagogical suggestions that show how this model of teaching and learning could benefit language learners and be adapted to courses in other disciplines.

### **Yamamoto, Ai. Girl Warrior Narratives in *Shōjo no Tomo***

This presentation will discuss Ōike Tadao's *Inochi no kagiri* (To the Death), which was serialized from 1942 to 1945 in the girls' magazine *Shōjo no tomo*. Ōike wrote many stories inspired by historical incidents from the Meiji Restoration for educational purposes, and this text can be understood as one of them. The propagandistic story draws upon historical incidents to encourage female readers to die for the nation. At the same time, however, it complicates expected gender roles for girls in its depiction of woman fighters. Even in the final stage of the Fifteen Years War, women were not conscripted to fight in Japan. Given such circumstances, depicting a girl on the battlefield could contradict or even subvert conventional norms. *Inochi no kagiri* shows a submissive girl turning into a brutal fighter who kills even her own sister for the cause. Stories in girls' magazines often functioned to support patriarchy by showing readers role models who fit into patriarchal gender norms. The submissiveness of the protagonist in *Inochi no kagiri* adheres to patriarchy, but her transformation in the battlefield cannot be so easily contained. By analyzing her transformation, I argue that this story unintentionally destabilizes patriarchal gender norms through the use of wartime sentiment.

### **Zhou, Jiajia. Clarifying the threat of populism: Japan as a case of curtailment and not absence**

The rise of populism has been viewed as closely related to instances of democratic backsliding (Berman 2021). Populists often advance particularly authoritarian modes of rule, which demand a rolling back of democratic norms and institutions (Levitsky and Ziblatt



2018). However, even though populist rhetoric has been observed alongside worrying trends, the universe of cases does not present clear evidence and explanation for the suggested relationship.

In this paper, I develop a theory to discern the populist threat from its rhetoric. I attempt to bridge the gap between micro-level explanations of politician strategy and voter demands on one hand and macro-level explanations of crisis and globalization on the other by offering a deeper understanding of parties, party system structures, and policy competition. I test my hypotheses in a cross-national analysis of democratic party systems, followed by a case study of Japan focusing on the Koizumi administration. I utilize a mixed methods approach involving unsupervised text analysis, statistical methods, and process tracing. This paper calls into question existing views of the populist threat as firstly, resulting from the ideology or electoral strategy of individual political actors and secondly, being uniquely tied to the challenges of globalization. More broadly, the paper aims to bring clarity to questions of a phenomenon that involves both seemingly genuine pursuits of stronger representation and potential threats to democratic stability.