Annual JS6770 Graduate Student Conference:

Japan from Meiji to Heisei

09:30 a.m. – 04:30 p.m.
Wednesday 17th April 2019 | 令和元年 4 月 17 日水曜日
AS8-05-50 Seminar Room

Morning Sessions

09:40 a.m.
Coffee and Sign-in

09:55 a.m.
Opening Remarks
A/P LIM Beng Choo (Department of Japanese Studies)

Session I
Moderator: A/P LIM Beng Choo

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.
CRAWFORD Robert, “Kagoshima’s Tokugawa legacy Did Kagoshima’s Tokugawa Past Doom its Efforts at Modernisation to Failure?”

10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Session II
Moderator: GAO Ming

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.
CHANDRA Fransiska Widya, “The Next Step: Data Visualisations as an Approach to Traditional Japanese Theatre Projects”

11:30 – 12:00 p.m.
CHAN Hui Hsien, “Redefining Shukatsu – Planning Beyond Funerals and Graves”

12:00 – 13:00 p.m.
Lunch Break
Afternoon Sessions

Session III
Moderator: LOH KAZUHARA Eve

13:00 – 13:30 p.m.
LU Zihui Amethy, “Intermediality on the Stage of Japanese 2.5-Dimensional Theater”

13:30 – 14:00 p.m.

Session IV
Moderator: LU Zihui Amethy

14:00 – 14:30 p.m.
PAPYAN Diana, “Handa Taki (1871-1956), the Japanese Gardener Who Lived Abroad”

14:30 – 15:00 p.m.
LOH KAZUHARA Eve, “Tanaka Isson's Amami Ōshima Paintings: From Motifs of Liminality to Invisibility in the Japanese Art World”

15:00 – 15:15 pm
Coffee Break

Session V
Moderator: CHANDRA Fransiska Widya

15:15 – 16:15 p.m.
LIANG Guang, “Potential Applications of Studies on "New Words" in Modern Chinese”

16:15- 16:45 p.m.
Abstracts

SESSION I

CRAWFORD Robert, “Kagoshima’s Tokugawa legacy Did Kagoshima’s Tokugawa Past Doom its Efforts at Modernisation to Failure?"
Supervisor: A/P Timothy Amos

Kagoshima opposed many of the key policies of early Meiji. It prevaricated on samurai stipend reform, delayed implementation of the new land tax and trailed the rest of the country in school enrolment. The Seinan War would break the back of its resistance but even after the war, the prefecture continued to lag Japan’s modernisation. This paper looks at one aspect of Kagoshima’s Meiji struggles – the degree to which its Tokugawa social structure undermined its efforts to change. It will argue that there were indeed many areas in which its Tokugawa legacy created peculiar issues for the prefecture. However, it will also caution against creating too monolithic an interpretation of Kagoshima’s Tokugawa social structure and placing too much emphasis on the conservative and unique aspects of its social system. There was too much variety in the Tokugawa domain, too much flexibility in the system and too much commonality with the rest of Japan for the Tokugawa past to shoulder all the blame for Kagoshima’s Meiji travails.

Supervisor: A/P Timothy Amos

In this project, I argue that in order to understand how the Japanese empire operated in the infamous “puppet state” of Manchukuo (1932-1945), we must pay close attention to the motives and logics of policy changes. This is particularly true in the case of opium regulations. Two salient periods are worth deeper investigation: the “gradual prohibition” (zenkinshugi) period from 1932 to 1937 and the “total prohibition” (dankinshugi) period from 1937 until the final years of Manchukuo. I will focus on discussion of the abolition of extraterritorial rights and official economic development plans. To revitalize labor supply was another major consideration in putting an end to opium smoking too. My analysis demonstrates how the Japanese authority came to realize over time that the long-term socio-economic losses would far outweigh the short-term economic gains. This logic therefore justifies its meticulously
orchestrated campaigns and ordinances of opium eradication in the “total prohibition” period. The period thus marks a significant change of policy direction. Using both official and private documentation and a range of supplemental sources, I highlight the importance of the “total prohibition” period vis-à-vis previous rounds of ordinances and laws on opium suppression. Finally, in contrast to the existing histories of opium in East Asia, which approach opium revenues as the primary reason behind all opium ordinances and laws, this project challenges and increases our understanding of the paradoxical character of Japanese imperialism by examining their motives in eradicating opium plantation and consumption collectively. This was an exceptional period and a watershed in the history of “poppy imperialism” in Manchukuo.

SESSION II

CHANDRA Fransiska Widya, “The Next Step: Data Visualisations as an Approach to Traditional Japanese Theatre Projects”
Supervisor: A/P Lim Beng Choo

While Digital Humanities as an approach to scholarship has begun to flourish in other humanities disciplines, such as history and literary studies, in the field of theatre studies, particularly in traditional Japanese theatre, Digital Humanities is still in its infancy. Through the examination of Digital Humanities projects in traditional Japanese studies, I analyse the methodology and technologies that have been used in the field’s research, focusing on data visualisations. I then analyse projects in the broader field of theatre studies. I then argue that data visualisations as is one key trajectory Digital Humanities projects in traditional Japanese theatre should follow. There is great potential in this tool which can interpret large datasets for patterns and trends which might not have been apparent before – this would supplement traditional methods in theatre studies.

CHAN Hui Hsien, “Redefining Shukatsu – Planning Beyond Funerals and Graves”
Supervisor: A/P Thang Leng Leng

In Japan, Shukatsu was conventionally viewed as activities undertaken by the elderly to prepare for their funerals and graves. With a prolonged life expectancy, Shukatsu could be a series of activities to better prepare the elderly in their aging. In this paper, I will examine how modern day Shukatsu activities have evolved from its original form. I will illustrate how postwar
demographic shifts and social-cultural changes have altered the elderly’s perceptions on aging, and how these transitions have changed elderly’s expectations of support and posthumous care from their children. In a rapidly aging Japan, I will explore how Shukatsu has evolved to planning beyond end-of-life activities. I will further examine the motivations for the who include Shukatsu activities as part of their later life.

SESSION III

LU Zihui Amethy, “Intermediality on the Stage of Japanese 2.5-Dimensional Theater”
Supervisor: A/P Lim Beng Choo

In this paper, I will analyze the phenomenon of intermediality on the stage of Japanese 2.5-dimensional theater (2.5D theater) within the context of Japanese media culture. To faithfully reproduce the fictional world appeared in original works of anime, all 2.5D productions have to adopt various media on the stage, which give rise to intermediality in the performance. According to existing scholarship, intermediality is deliberately created in experimental performances to alienate and disturb the audience. Similar to experimental theater, intermediality also leads to general dislocation and discomfort among Japanese 2.5D theater audiences. However, I argue that instead of alienating spectators, these feelings are well accepted by Japanese audiences, as most of these audience members were brought up in the already fragmented Japanese postmodern media culture. Through this paper, I hope to show that despite the perceived gaps in performance, intermediality can also appear in theatrical productions meant for entertainment purposes, and that the perception of intermediality should be examined with consideration of cultural specificity.

Supervisor: Dr Konrad Kalicki

The latest change in April this year in Japanese immigration policy further demonstrates the government’s increasing reliance on foreign labour. Many advocates claim that the policy is an extension of the current Technical Intern Training Program (TITP). The TITP is a controversial programme since trainees are in fact treated as de facto labours. Moreover, the authorised organisations have failed to protect trainees’ rights. As a result, the advocacy groups have taken over this role. In this paper, I argue that the insufficient support from the Japanese
government has hindered the advocacy groups’ provision of individual-oriented services. I will first show that the TITP does not have sufficient contingency measures and proper guidelines for issues regarding daily life and working condition of the trainees. Then, through a case study with trainees in a shelter, I will examine and analyse the factors that have often caused a long processing time before any dispute could resolve.

SESSION IV

PAPYAN Diana, “Handa Taki (1871-1956), the Japanese Gardener Who Lived Abroad”
Supervisor: A/P Lim Beng Choo

Handa Taki, a female Japanese gardener, was known to not only a Japanese garden designer, but also an English speaker, biologist, teacher of mathematics and natural sciences and many more. When she was thirty-five, Handa Taki moved to Britain to earn the Royal Horticultural Society’s Certificate qualification. While attending a two-year course at Studley College in Warwickshire, London, Handa Taki helped with the creation of a Japanese garden at Cowden Castle in Clackmannanshire, Scotland.

LOH KAZUHARA Eve, “Tanaka Isson's Amami Ōshima Paintings: From Motifs of Liminality to Invisibility in the Japanese Art World”
Supervisor: Dr. Nozomi Naoi

This paper describes the recurring motifs of boundaries and intersections in Tanaka Isson's 'tropical forest' paintings (1962-1974) of Amami Ōshima. Through an examination of key paintings, I posit that liminal motifs in Isson’s paintings reference intersections of the realms between man, nature and the sacred. They also reveal the artist's inner worlds and allude to his position in relation to the Japanese art world.

SESSION V

LIANG Guang, “Potential Applications of Studies on "New Words" in Modern Chinese”
Supervisor: A/P Emi Morita

The “new words” in Modern Chinese is an important topic in multiple disciplinaries including Chinese lexicology, etymology, history of Chinese, theory of translation as well as the communicative history between Chinese and other languages, especially Japanese. This article intends to review studies on the borrowing of words between Japan and China, reconstruct the process of the creation and spreading of “new words” in Modern Chinese and discuss the how existing studies can be applied. Based on a criticism of the merits and problematics of existing applications related to the studies of “new words” in Modern Chinese, this article uses words
that have not been looked into as examples to discuss how the related studies can be applied to language education as well as pedagogies.

Supervisor: A/P Hendrik Meyer-Ohle

Different modes of transport have impacted on urban structure — the rail induces concentration while the automobile enables low-density decentralization. The galactic suburbs in United States and railway conglomerates’ castle town suburbs in Japan illustrate this with their vivid contrasts from each other. This paper analyzes the formative years of 1920s, when the form of suburbanization decisively diverged between Japan and United States. The Japanese government exhorted rail-centered suburbanization that prescribed the concentration of retail and residential patterns, whereas United States abandoned trains and set off automobile-centered suburbanization, initiating the dispersion of retail and residential location. This paper visualizes the diversification in the decade with cutting-edge GIS technologies, based on various statistics, including national censuses.